

Issues in the Zionist Council Crisis

By ABRAHAM CHAPMAN

Dr. Stephen S. Wise and Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver have resigned from their offices in the American Zionist Emergency Council.

What is the background of the conflict and what are the issues involved?

First, it must be clear that it is not only an issue of Zionist affairs. The conflict is over policy and tactics to be pursued in fighting against the White Paper and for the national rights of the Yishuv in Palestine. This is a matter of concern for the entire Jewish people. All Jews are therefore interested in this struggle.

For some time it was clear that there were two tendencies in American Zionism. The first is the Rabbi Wise-Dr. Goldstein tendency, supported by a majority of American Zionists. Dr. Wise and Dr. Goldstein have built their policies on Palestine and their Zionist program on the premise that the solution of Palestine's problems depends upon a victory of the United Nations. They have developed their activities in the framework of unqualified support of President Roosevelt's policies in America.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, on the other hand, has pursued a policy of working with the anti-Roosevelt forces and has isolated the fight for the rights of the Jews in Palestine from the strengthening of President Roosevelt's position in America.

CONVENTION ACTION

At the last Zionist convention a short time ago, the Wise-Goldstein policy was overwhelmingly upheld, as is apparent from Dr. Goldstein's presidential report and the resolutions of the convention.

President Roosevelt has made it clear that the United States Government never gave its support to the White Paper and that the U. S. looks favorably upon the ultimate establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine.

This is part of the broad background. The immediate conflict arose following the deferment of action on the Palestine Resolution by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. From all the stories in the press (there have been no official statements), this is what emerges:

The State Department asked the Zionist leadership not to press for action by the Senate now. The question involved was one of time. The State Department did not in any way indicate any retreat whatsoever from the anti-White Paper policy enunciated by President Roosevelt as Chief Executive

of the United States. The reason for asking for the deferment is obvious. A serious difference of opinion had arisen between the United States and Britain on Greece, Italy and Belgium. This was not the favorable time for the U. S. Government to speak out on the question of Palestine. Rabbi Wise, pursuing a policy of unqualified support for the President, agreed not to press for action at this moment, according to press reports. Rabbi Silver, on the other hand, went ahead with pressure for action and played into the hands of the defeatists, the enemies of the President and the enemies of the Yishuv.

Such notorious enemies of the President as George E. Sokolsky, John O'Donnell and the New York Daily News, made capital out of the pressure for action and launched an offensive against the President and Rabbi Wise. Rabbi Silver worked closely with Sen. Taft and other Hoover Republicans. This is a dangerous policy for the Jews as well as for the Zionist movement.

AUTHORS OF WHITE PAPER

It must never be forgotten that it was Munich and Chamberlain who fathered the bastard White Paper in Palestine and the White Paper will never be abrogated by alliances with the Munichmen here. It appears further that Dr. Silver pursued his policy against the will of the majority of the American Zionist Emergency Council.

Dr. Wise, being asked whether it was true that he had resigned from the American Zionist Emergency Council, made the following reply:

"One week ago I resigned the office of chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council. I did so because, as I stated in my letter of resignation, I felt that it was impossible for me to remain chairman of a body, one of the leaders of which—the chairman of the Executive Committee—had deliberately and persistently contravened the decisions of the Council in a matter of supreme

importance to the lasting hurt of our sacred cause.' At Wednesday's nearly all-night session of the Emergency Council, the resignation was not acted upon, but a motion was passed inviting all the officers of the Executive Committee to resign, in order that it might be free to act upon all resignations at the same time. I believe a meeting is to be held in the near future. I could not return to the service of the Zionist Emergency Council unless the reconstituting of the Council gave assurance that no officer would again be permitted to contravene its considered and final decisions."

Dr. Wise will make no further comment upon the present decision.

RABBI SILVER RESIGNS

At the Zionist Emergency Council last week a motion was introduced to censor Rabbi Silver. This motion was defeated by a very small minority. In the early hours of the morning Rabbi Silver resigned because he felt there was no confidence in his policies, as the Morning Journal reported.

Dr. Wise has the support of the majority of the Zionist movement. He had the support of the entire Zionist Organization of America and Hadassah. Rabbi Silver was supported by the Mizrahi and the Poale Zion. The Zionist Organization of America and Hadassah embrace a membership of more than 250,000. The Mizrahi and the Poale Zion are small Zionist minority movements. The Zionist Emergency Council is a body comprising these four organizations.

The fight against the White Paper must continue and must be developed. But the fight must be concentrated against the friends of the White Paper and not against President Roosevelt.

It is clear that the question of a correct policy for the struggle for the rights of the Yishuv is a matter of concern to all Jews. It is also clear that the question of full support of President Roosevelt is a matter of concern to American national unity as a whole.

— Worth Repeating —

CHINA'S NEW DEMOCRACY is discussed by Mao Tse-tung, chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, in a pamphlet of that title, in which he says as to the popular character of the New Democracy's culture: The culture of New Democracy is popular in character. It should serve the purpose of the toiling masses, which occupy more than 90 percent of the whole Chinese population, and should gradually become their own culture. . . . Therefore, all the progressive cultural workers should have their own cultural troops in the anti-Japanese war, and these troops are nothing more than the people and the masses.