

IS THERE A SOLUTION FOR PALESTINE?

A Zionist Supports the Proposal for Partition

MAURICE SAMUEL

THE conflict between Jews and Arabs in Palestine is one between two nationalisms and two disparate economies; to some extent it is inherent in the divergent ambitions of the two peoples, to some extent it is artificially stimulated by a confused and inept British imperialism on the one hand, by skillful Italian intrigue on the other. If there is a solution of the problem, it must be looked for in the respective economic structures of Arab and Jewish life and in the real dynamic forces at play; plans for an accommodation based on nothing more than good wishes and high ideologies are of no value.

The Jewish economy in Palestine is Western, that is, highly capitalist and highly proletarian. The Arab economy is still largely feudal. The Jewish standard of living is based on European concepts; the Arab standard is Asiatic. Ninety percent of the Jewish workers (over 100,000 in number) are organized in the Jewish Labor Federation. Eighty percent of the Arabs are *fellahin* working their own or leased lands, or nomads. Out of a population of over 900,000 Arabs perhaps forty thousand may be regarded as urban workers susceptible (but still incapable) of the same type of organization as the Jews. Practically all the Jewish workers, whether in the cities or on the farms, whether living in communes, participating in cooperatives, or hiring themselves out, are full-time workers. A large proportion of Arab workers are seasonal workers only, with plots of land cultivated by themselves and their families.

The labor struggle between the Jews and the Arabs, the most important single factor standing in the way of a rapprochement from below, cannot be resolved until there is a certain homogeneity of economic structure. The Jewish fight against Arab labor—mitigated by occasional, spasmodic efforts to organize Arab labor—has been only in part the effort to maintain Jewish positions for Jewish immigrants pressing frantically for admission to the country. It has also been in part the struggle to prevent the Jewish standard of living from being pressed down to the Arab level. Jewish employers did not engage Arab workers by the thousands in their orange groves in order to create an understanding

In an effort to clarify the issues and to compare conflicting viewpoints on one of the most pressing problems of our time, NEW MASSES asked Maurice Samuel and Paul Novick, whose article follows on page 5, to state their respective solutions for Palestine. Both writers were given the further opportunity to comment on each other's article and these comments follow on pages 7 and 8. We invite our readers to send us their reactions to these articles and comments. Representative letters will appear in an early issue.—THE EDITORS.

with the Arabs, but for the simpler reason that Arabs worked for two-thirds and sometimes for half of the wages of Jewish workers.

There are two ways of creating a relative homogeneity of economic structure. One is to suspend Jewish immigration, leaving the Jews as a permanent minority to be gradually forced *downward* into the Arab economy. The Arabs outnumber the Jews by two to one. There is an immense reservoir of cheap indigenous labor among the Arabs. In time the Jews would come down to the Asiatic level of the Jews of Yemen and Irak, leaving a few survivors among the possessing class.

The other way is to create an area within which a Jewish majority can absorb an Arab minority *upward* into the Jewish economy. If this were feasible, it would be desirable. It is not feasible.

If Jewish immigration into Palestine could

be maintained at the level of fifty thousand a year for the next twenty years, the population of Palestine (allowing for natural increase on both sides) would be half Arab, half Jewish. But the exacerbation of national passions has reached a stage which makes such immigration, for such a long period, practically impossible. Continuous outbreaks of violence will not prevent the influx of Jews who would rather face the dangers and hardships of Palestine than the certainty of extinction in Germany and Poland; but these outbreaks lower the absorptive capacity of the country—as it is, in fact, intended that they should. Moreover, the longer the period of time which elapses before stabilization, the deeper the hostility and the more difficult the stabilization.

There is at present, as the British Royal Commission has pointed out, an area within which the Jews are already a majority; it comprises roughly some 2,500 square miles. It contains about 325,000 Jews to some 300,000 Arabs. This is not yet, for the purposes of economic absorption *upward*, an effective majority. Jewish immigration into Palestine has for the most part tended to concentrate within this area, and continues to show the same tendency. In that area there can be created, in the course of seven or eight years, an independent state with a Jewish majority capable not only of resisting the perpetual downward pull of Arab life, but of counteracting it, and raising the minority to its own level.

There is no solution of the Arab-Jewish problem which has not to face a transitional period of unrest, a continuation of what is taking place today. But the creation of conditions promising ultimate stability *within a reasonable stretch of time*, and on the basis of actualities, is what the partition proposal, as above outlined, envisages.

Within such a state, where the political, economic, and social outlook is dominated by the higher living conditions and the Western training of the Jews, there can be an opportunity to create a stable and progressive society; but as a minority the Jews cannot force through, on the Palestinian population as a whole, their plans for the control of capitalist

enterprise, for labor legislation, for social welfare. The nationalist struggle becomes, in Arab hands, an instrument for the blocking of all progressive efforts threatening the feudal structure of the country.

Is such a state, with an ultimate population of one and a half to two millions, three-quarters or four-fifths Jewish, practical and feasible? This issue can be debated ad infinitum. Those who have seen the extraordinary achievements of the Jews in Palestine till now, believe in its possibility. In any case, my impression, after ten years of partial residence in and continuous contact with Palestine, is that the Jews are ready to try. They would continue, for this purpose, to receive the help of Jews throughout the world.

This partition solution of the Arab-Jewish problem is opposed by two groups among the non-Zionist Jews:

1. Bourgeois assimilationists, who want Zionism to be a total political failure so that they shall not be embarrassed by the existence anywhere in the world of a permanent and identifiable Jewish body politic.

2. Communists, who want the liquidation of Zionism because they object to the deflection of Jewish attention, in any country, away from the local class struggle and toward the creation of a Jewish homeland.

The grounds of opposition are, in both these cases, irrelevant to the Arab-Jewish problem in Palestine; and in examining the proposals of both the bourgeois assimilationists and the Communists, care should be taken to distinguish between the real impulse behind the proposals (furtherance of assimilation or pursuit of Communist strategy) and their ostensible purpose, i.e., the accommodation of the Arab-Jewish quarrel.

The partition solution is also opposed by two groups among Zionists and semi-Zionists: (1) the bitter-enders; (2) the pacifist-defeatists (mostly clerical-academic). In the case of (1) the demand is still for the complete fulfillment of the mandate; in the case of (2) the proposal, like that of the Communists (and bourgeois assimilationists) is that the Jews shall attempt to reach a direct understanding with the Arabs by first agreeing to accept a permanent minority status.

Insofar as this last proposal deals with Palestine realities, its proponents make several claims for it. First, that it will lead to an Arab-Jewish alliance, and at last make possible effective action against British imperialism. Second, and as a corollary of the first, that it will checkmate the intrigues of the Italian fascists, posing today among the Palestinian Arabs (and others) as the "defenders of Arab liberty." Third, that it will counteract the growth of fascism among Jews and Arabs alike. As their strongest objection to the partition plan, they cite the difficulty of creating and maintaining a small Jewish state which, containing an Arabia *irredenta*, will be a constant source of friction and a tempting basis for further intrigue.

This objection alone is valid, while the

three affirmations are, I believe, founded on illusions. But let us see whether this objection is not more than offset by similar, graver difficulties inherent in the plan to make of the Jews a permanent minority. The existence of a Jewish minority population occupying a different economic level and constituting a different, more progressive economic structure, than the Arabs, is in itself an excellent opportunity for the intrusion of outsiders with their own game to play. Behind the nationalist struggle in Palestine, and coextensive with it, is the struggle between the dying feudal order and the emergent bourgeois order. The Jews are the spearhead of the change, which is proceeding in Palestine more rapidly than in any other backward country. But together with the introduction of modern capitalism, the Jews are responsible for a feature which was absent from the first introduction of capitalism elsewhere: namely, a parallel and powerful labor movement and labor ideology, namely, in the Histadruth. The transition among the Arabs would, if left to itself, proceed more slowly, and would be attended by the worst features of Oriental capitalism. Thus, in reality, there is a double struggle; the Arab landowners want to retain as many feudal features in the country as they can. The slowly emergent Arab bourgeoisie (which owes its very inception to the presence of the Jews) wants to keep capitalist development in Palestine what it was in Europe a hundred years ago. The nationalist fight against the Jews serves both purposes,

and masks for the time being the internal struggle among the Arabs.

There is an instructive parallelism between Italian intervention in Palestine (for it is not less than that) and German-Italian intervention in Spain. It was not militarist strategy alone which led to these adventures. In both Spain and Palestine the foreign fascist powers find their natural allies in the landowning aristocracy (in Palestine the *effendis*) and the primitive capitalists. In both countries they attempt to inject the religious issue in an attack on the modernizing elements which they fear and hate. In both countries this attempt has been attended only by partial success; the religious anti-Jewish motif is dying out among the Arabs, as it is, in the case of Spanish loyalists, beginning to break among the Catholics. This although the Grand Mufti (head of the big landowning Husseini clan) attempted to revive pan-Moslem anti-Zionism by stating before the Royal Commission that the Jews had designs on the Mosque of Omar. In Palestine, as in Spain, the accusation against the liberalizing elements is that they are all Communists; this was for years the chief substance of Arab propaganda against the Jews.

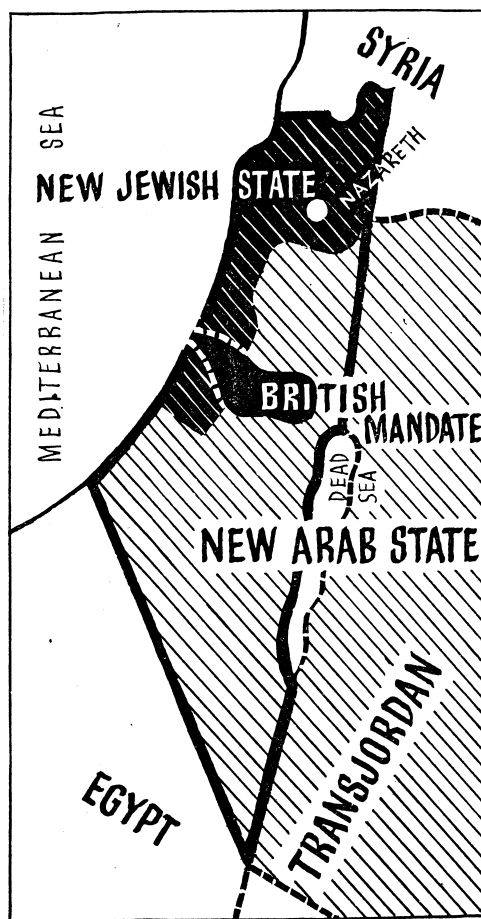
But it happens that in Palestine the liberalizing elements are almost exclusively Jewish; Arab social development has not yet reached a stage at which a modern, class-conscious, liberalizing element of significant dimensions can emerge. Hence, intervention in Palestine must take the form of an ostensible pro-Arab ideal, and help in suppressing Jewish immigration and initiative. *This game can be played better in a Palestine which contains a liberalizing Jewish minority than in a state in which an Arab minority is drawn upward into a progressive Jewish economy.*

The revealing parallel goes much further than we can pursue it here. It is enough to mention the role of England, as dubious and shifty in Palestine as it is in Spain, and dictated by a similar confusion of motives issuing with changing force from class impulses and fears for the empire.

It is true that the creation of a Jewish state will create other opportunities for intrigue. But the existence of any state with a minority is bound up with such possibilities. The question we must face is whether there is not a much more reasonable hope of minimizing these opportunities by the creation of homogeneous *upward* economy than by intensifying and prolonging the complex economic struggle in Palestine as a whole, *with the progressive elements placed at a fatal disadvantage.*

Let us now take the three affirmative reasons given for leaving the Jews as a permanent minority in Palestine.

The belief that the Jews, outnumbered and outvoted by the Arabs, will be permitted to live in peace is, to one familiar with the character of the struggle in Palestine, fantastic. Not only will Jewish immigration be permanently suspended, but there will begin a tre-



The Partition of Palestine Proposed by the British Commission

PEACE BY UNDERSTANDING

A Communist Rejects the Partition of Palestine

PAUL NOVICK

mendous pressure to force the Jews out. Already Arab leaders have declared, over and over again, that "there are too many Jews in the country," a sinister and familiar slogan.

The Grand Mufti, who is the nominal leader of the revolt against the Jewish homeland, but who is backed by extremists even more anti-Jewish than he, revealed the Arab attitude bluntly before the Peel Commission.

Question: Does His Eminence think that this country can assimilate the 400,000 Jews in the country?

Answer: No.

Question: Some of them would have to be removed by a process kindly or painful as the case may be?

Answer: We must leave all this to the future.

But the pressure against the Jews will be downward as well as outward. Far from arresting the growth of fascism, the situation will encourage in the Arabs the fascism of conquest, in the Jews the fascism of despair.

At the present time Jewish fascism in Palestine is insignificant in numbers (though capable of much mischief) for a number of reasons, internal and external. The struggle to maintain the higher social level is bound up with a generally progressive economic ideology. Jewish immigration cannot proceed on the basis of a backward economy. A progressive economic ideology inevitably implies a progressive ideology.

Further, Jewish Palestine draws its support from a world Jewry which is predominantly anti-fascist. That support is linked up with the possibilities of sending into Palestine large numbers of Jewish refugees, who in turn bring in a renewal of anti-fascist ideology as well as generally higher economic and political standards. If immigration possibilities into Palestine are destroyed, then Palestine will be deprived of vital moral and economic assistance; the Jewish community, declining gradually into an Asiatic minority, will lose contact with the Western world. It will then be as useful for lifting the level of the country, or any part of it, as the wretched Jewish minority in Yemen. On the other hand, if the Jews are to be assured even of physical safety, it will again be with the assistance of England. What hope, then, that under these circumstances they will be able to contribute in a fight against British imperialism?

The attempt to reach an Arab-Jewish understanding must be preceded by the attempt to create the common economic basis of such an understanding. In the absence of such a basis, talk of understanding is dangerous wishful thinking.

The path of the proposed Jewish state is definitely not an easy one. But there are hundreds of thousands of Jews within Palestine, and hundreds of thousands waiting outside of Palestine, willing to take it. As against this, the proposal for a permanent minority position is a death sentence against the Jewish community of Palestine, and an indefinite postponement of the prospect of an anti-imperialist bloc—all in the name of Arab-Jewish peace.

TWELVE Jews were murdered in Palestine on July 21. Before that, a bomb was thrown into a crowd of Arabs in Jerusalem, killing nine and wounding more than a score. Before that, Jews driving in an automobile on one of the streets of Haifa were set upon and murdered, amongst them the brother-in-law of Dr. Chaim Weizmann, president of the World Zionist Organization. This and other acts of murder and terror in Haifa came in retaliation to a bombing outrage in that city, during which many Arabs were killed and wounded.

In the course of ten days between July 5 and July 15, sixty-six Arabs and twenty-nine Jews were killed, 176 Arabs and 101 Jews were wounded. Usually, Jewish casualties are the more numerous.

The present bloodshed is but an episode in a situation which has prevailed in Palestine for years. The bloody toll has been particularly high since the mass Arab outbreaks of April 1936.

When blood is being shed, it is hard to talk of past mistakes and future plans. When a Jewish settlement is in danger of attack, it must protect itself. It cries out against terroristic attacks. When passengers traveling in an Arab bus are sniped at, they want the guilty caught and rendered harmless. Terrorism is the plague of the country. There are burning hatreds abroad, the result of deep-set grievances and wrongdoings, as well as the result of a violent nationalism and chauvinism. Imperialist and fascist agents have been busy sowing discord and hatred. The mere fact that Jews and Arabs travel in separate buses is an indication of the sad state of affairs. Yet, *because* of the acute seriousness of the situation, a solution for Palestine is one of the paramount issues of the day.

During the past twenty years, something basic in Palestine's position has made for national strife and bloodshed, although for generations before, Jews and Arabs had lived together peacefully. That "something" is the policy of British imperialism, of Arab leadership, and of political Zionism. These must be renounced if peace is to be attained.

A time has come when even British Royal Commissions are forced to admit things which they would not admit before. The Peel Commission, in its report issued July 8, 1937, after months of investigation in Palestine, has admitted that the Balfour Declaration of Nov. 2, 1917, promising a Jewish national home in Palestine, "was determined by the

exigencies of war . . . in order to enlist the Jewish support for the Allies" (p. 24). It admits that promises were made by Britain both to the Arabs and the Jews. It admits that the British mandate over Palestine, which was supposed to be the instrument for the establishment of the Jewish national home, is unworkable. It admits that at bottom an Arab rebellion is taking place in Palestine, a struggle for self-government.

Thus, the designs of British imperialism on Palestine and the sinister use which it has made of Jews and Arabs are now openly recognized. London's Chatham House, the unofficial forum of the British Colonial Office, admitted as much in its Information Department Paper No. 20, (*Great Britain and Palestine 1915-1936*). This study states that Palestine "is a vital problem for Great Britain. . . . It is the eastern outpost against any potential threat to the Suez Canal; it is the outlet of the oil pipe line from Mosul; it is the halting place on the international air route to India and beyond, and it is a starting point towards the desert motor road to Asia" (p. 9). One may add it is Britain's only stretch of coast on the Asiatic mainland facing the inflammable waters of the Mediterranean. "Augur," the *New York Times* correspondent in London, another mouthpiece of the Colonial Office, divulged some time ago (*New York Times*, Jan. 19, 1936) that "The [British] air force, even more than the navy, needs solidly established bases. . . . In that part of the world [Near East] they exist only in Palestine. . . . In the seat of the native population of Arabia the Palestinian Jews stand isolated, an outpost of Europe, and, if rightly handled, an element of strength for the empire. . . . Military experts say a Jewish militia of fifty thousand men may be a reality tomorrow." That this was not a mere guess was subsequently shown by a statement from Mrs. Edgar Dugdale, niece and biographer of the late Lord Balfour, author of the Balfour Declaration, to Webb Miller of the *United Press* about eight months ago. According to Mr. Miller's dispatch of Dec. 21, 1937, Mrs. Dugdale, who must have known the sentiments and intentions of Lord Balfour, stated: "Palestine is a key point of imperial communications and a key point to the Near East as far as 'power' [military] politics on the Mediterranean is concerned. If a Jewish state were founded we might expect that within the next ten years two million

Jewish young men and women would settle in the country. Out of that number it is not impossible to expect the formation of a national defense force of fifty thousand men."

Clearly, it was and is the design of British imperialism to use Jewish and Arab blood in order to conquer and control Palestine as a military outpost of the British empire. Clearly, British imperialism exploited the age-old craving of the Jewish people for statehood and the profound sentiment of religious and other Jews for Palestine in order to attain its own ends. A persecuted, hounded, and pogromized people was promised liberation and self-rule as a means of extracting from this people more blood and material resources and manpower to build a strategic base for the empire.

It is by no means my intention to emphasize the role of "perfidious Albion" solely to justify a position taken years ago, important as that may be. Recognition of the role of British imperialism is of *immediate* importance. Once the designs and machinations of British imperialism are recognized, the basic fault in the tragic Palestine situation can be understood. It likewise has to be recognized that all Jews and Arabs who strive for peace must renounce and fight British imperialism as the main enemy of the population of Palestine. It is British imperialism's policy of "Divide and rule" which has set the country on fire. Those Arab and Jewish leaders who have based their policies on British domination of Palestine, have been at fault. Without a recognition of these basic elements a solution is impossible.

The time has come for the leadership of the Zionist movement to admit that it was a tragic mistake (if not worse) to accept and proclaim Balfour's tricky declaration as the Magna Carta for the Jewish people. Now that a part of this leadership, foremost among whom is Dr. Weizmann, admits that the mandate, that other imperialist document, is unworkable and that it failed to fulfill the widely heralded hopes placed upon it, it is time to admit that *any other* British imperialist scheme will not fulfill the aims of Zionism but will only result in more strife and disturbances.

This applies to the plan to partition the small land of Palestine (ten thousand square miles, about the size of Vermont) into three parts. One-tenth (including Jerusalem) is to be kept permanently by Britain under a new mandate. Two-tenths, two thousand square miles or somewhat more (about the size of Delaware), is to be developed into a Jewish state, with the cities of Haifa, Safed, and Acre "temporarily" kept by Britain.

The purpose of this scheme was candidly outlined by Lord Balfour's niece.

On the other hand, leaders of the Arab movement have been playing with fascism and have accepted the assistance and guidance of Mussolini and Hitler. This is particularly true of some Arabian puppet rulers, from Hedjaz and other Arab countries, who heretofore served Great Britain. The Arab people will clearly not attain liberation with the aid of Nazi and fascist pyromaniacs. By becoming

the allies and pawns of fascism, these leaders are preparing the worst possible enslavement of the Arab people.

It is this fascist element, introduced into the situation in Palestine some time ago, which has been producing a bloody harvest. To a great extent, the terror is the result of a struggle of *two* fascist forces, those of Arab fascist-terrorists and those of Jewish fascists, the Revisionists (or New Zionists), both working for the same fascist master, as the very well informed *Week* of London has testified. "Terroristic bands of both people (Jewish and Arab)," the *Week* of July 13, 1938, states, "are being financed from Rome and Berlin. . . . The Italians, for instance, now frankly assert that the success of certain groups of Jewish terrorists in Palestine is due to the fact (they say) that the Italian government placed at the disposal of a certain well known Revisionist organization a training ship."

These Arab and Jewish terrorists do not represent their people. Leaders of the Jewish Agency in Palestine, of the Histadruth (Palestine Jewish Labor Federation), and the Chief Rabbi have recently condemned the Revisionists in the sharpest terms as "murderers" who "stab the Jewish community in the back." The labor Zionist paper *Davar* opened a veritable barrage against the Revisionists, as did the general Zionist paper *Haaretz*. Last year, Arab leaders publicly condemned violence and asserted that a speedy understanding between Arabs and Jews is urgently needed. The economic situation both for Jews and Arabs is deplorable as a result of the constant turmoil.

The people of Palestine want a solution. What kind of a solution?

Palestine is a colonial country where a movement for liberation and self-rule is but natural. It is idle to talk about "agitators" keeping a people in turmoil for years. The Peel Commission report attempts at great length to prove that what has occurred in Palestine is a rebellion, a struggle for independence (pp. 104-119). Dr. J. L. Magnes, president of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, in his famous letter to the *New York Times* of July 18, 1937, emphasized that "rebellion" is a proper term for the Palestine events of 1936. A rebellion, of course, against imperialism. The same is true of the Arabs, north of Palestine in Syria and south of Palestine in Egypt.

But no colonial struggle is "pure and simple," particularly when fascism poses as the savior of Islam, when the very important Jewish minority must have its national rights safeguarded, and there is the need of helping Jewish refugees from fascist countries.

Under certain circumstances, the claim of "historic rights," even if it comes from a persecuted people with a legitimate craving for statehood, must be rejected. Under capitalism such claims can be solved only by war and by the subjugation of others. This cannot liberate the people instrumental in such subjugation. Under capitalism, "historic claims"

may lead to a general struggle for a re-division of the world.

Because of historic traditions, Jews will be drawn to Palestine. Since there is a considerable and important Jewish minority there, Palestine looms among the countries where Jewish refugees tend to seek a haven.

Heretofore, immigration into Palestine was conducted in a way to suit the needs of British imperialism and political Zionism. Great Britain wanted to have strategic points settled by Jews in areas along the railway lines, on the coast, along the northern frontier, etc. Political Zionism wanted more and more speedily to get a Jewish majority in the country. For these reasons, the economic conditions and possibilities of the *entire* population were hardly considered. In order to make room for new Jewish immigrants, Arab labor had to be kept out of Jewish settlements and even removed from settlements where Arabs for years had been employed by Jews. For the same reason, Arabs had to be kept out of the Histadruth.

This harmful method of immigration led to an almost complete separation between Jews and Arabs in Palestine. It was an additional factor of considerable weight for violent nationalism and chauvinism, for hatred and conflict. Such immigration must be renounced. Obviously, this necessitates rejection of the idea of a state based on British declarations and mandates. Those Zionists who have given up hope for past British plans must not, however, make the mistake of falling victims of the new British scheme of partitioning the country.

Jews as well as Arabs must face realities. Peace will come to Palestine only when Arabs recognize the economic and cultural importance of the Jewish minority for Palestine and for Arabistan generally. Jews have much to offer in building the country, as demonstrated by the upbuilding of their own community. Jews and Arabs have much to gain from each other if the upbuilding is done hand in hand, without discrimination against Arab or Jewish labor. Zionist leaders must recognize the folly and the danger of advocating a Jewish "state" and "majority." The deep sentiment, the justified desire for statehood among Jews, is of no avail if realities are overlooked.

Jewish statehood will be attained only under Socialist rule, as in the USSR where Biro-Bidjan is being developed into a Jewish Socialist Soviet Republic. Whether one agrees or disagrees with this viewpoint, Jews *are* a minority in Palestine, much as one may regret it (a Jewish majority in a given territory in Europe where they count in many millions would certainly be much more desirable). According to the Peel Commission report, there were in 1937 "at least" 400,000 Jews to 950,000 Arabs in Palestine. Peace and the introduction of a democratic and progressive order can be attained only on the basis of these realities. It is impossible to view the problem otherwise. Militant Arab chauvinists may be

ready for more bloodshed against the entrenched Jewish minority. Revisionists may proclaim that "Judea must be conquered by the sword." The overwhelming majority of Arabs and Jews reject violence and fascism.

One of the most important contributions toward a solution for Palestine was made by Dr. J. L. Magnes in his previously mentioned letter to the *New York Times*. Magnes states: "We have been returning to a small, already populated, even if not overpopulated, land and despite all 'rights' conferred on us by the states which won the war, these rights are a thousand times of less importance than the consent, if it is at all to be obtained, of the Arabs who live in the land and of the Arab peoples who will continue to be our neighbors even after British imperialism may have passed." Dr. Magnes would accept a new British mandate on Palestine on condition that "first, both Jews and Arabs are in Palestine as of right and not on sufferance; second, the chief reason for the mandatory's presence in Palestine is to endeavor to create conditions favorable to free and open negotiation of agreements between Jews and Arabs, such agreements to be incorporated progressively into the basic law of the land." Dr. Magnes feels that the partitioning of Palestine would create "terrible *irrendentas* on both sides of the new frontiers—new Balkans with their fierce *comitadjis* winked at by governments." There are many other points one can put forward against partition, but it is hard to disagree with Dr. Magnes on this point. Certainly his program is a program of peace.

Dr. Cyrus Adler, head of the American Jewish Committee, in a statement recently issued against the partition plan, called for a "working basis" between Jews and Arabs. Under the influence of its non-Zionist members, the Jewish Agency, at its session in Zurich, August 1937, adopted a resolution asking for a conference of Jews and Arabs under British auspices. Mr. Morris J. Karpf of New York, a non-Zionist member of the executive of the Jewish Agency, subsequently demanded such a conference irrespective of Britain's disapproval.

The Histadruth can truly play a historic role in helping to bring about a solution in Palestine. It is the best organized body in the country. Its left-wing elements have rejected partition (the Hashomer Hatzoir advocates an Arab-Jewish State on a parity basis). In a statement to the Peel Commission, the Histadruth declared: "The workers of both communities—the Jews, consciously, and the Arabs, instinctively—realize that there exists a real organic basis for the establishment of friendly relations between them." It deplored the fact that British rule has tried to prevent "Jewish-Arab trade-union activity." This Jewish-Arab activity, nay, the *unity* of Jewish and Arab labor for which the Communists have worked unceasingly, can be accomplished by the Histadruth. Such unity will guarantee a proper solution of the Jewish-Arab problem. Whatever

pledges by any international bodies drawn into the negotiations, it is organized labor and the unity of interests of Jewish and Arab toilers which will best uphold the rights of both nationalities.

On the Arab side, one of the leading Arab papers in Palestine, *Falastin*, stated about the Magnes plan: "Everyone, both Arab and Jew, should work to exploit the present existing eagerness for a settlement that may save the country" (*New York Times*, Dec. 12, 1937). The *Falastin* is certainly not alone among the Arabs but the Arab toiling masses will clearly have to play the main role in effecting an understanding with the Jews.

This will not be easy. Any plan for Palestine will encounter innumerable difficulties. Partitionment, for instance, announced last year, will take, according to its authors, at least two years before even an attempted introduction of the plan is made. Adherents of the plan admit that many years will pass before peace is restored. There is *no easy* solution for Palestine. But the new imperialist scheme of partition (laughable, if Palestine conditions were not so tragic) is even less workable than the mandate, and more perilous than the Balfour Declaration and the mandate put together. Partitionment is sure to keep the gates of Palestine closed to Jewish immigration for years (until the plan is put into effect) and leave little room for immigration later on. On the other hand, an understanding between Jews and Arabs which introduced peace to Palestine would no doubt continue the present temporary stoppage of immigration. But it would eventually open up possibilities for the settlement of great numbers of Jews in Palestine and other Arab countries. In the words of Dr. Magnes: "There should be many opportunities for proposing freely and openly negotiated agreements for limited periods between Jews and Arabs, between Jews of the world and Arabs of the world. . . . With Arab consent we could settle many hundreds of thousands of persecuted Jews in various Arab lands. That is worth a real price."

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Comment by Mr. Samuel

THE space allotted me will not permit of more than a few random remarks on Mr. Novick's article. Our basic difference of outlook must be referred to the articles themselves.

That British imperialism, Arab leadership, and political Zionism are responsible for the hostility between Jews and Arabs in Palestine is not an illuminating statement, and taken in conjunction with the statement preceding, that for generations before the war Jews and Arabs lived together in peace, it is misleading. It must be remembered that the pre-war Jewish population of Palestine was only about sixty thousand, as against 550,000 Arabs. A huge proportion of the Jews were supported by the contributions of religious

Jews abroad. Jewish influence on the Arab economy was *nil*. If the implication of the two statements is that any considerable, progressive Jewish community could have grown up without altering the balance of forces and the relation of Jews and Arabs, it must be rejected.

Further: long before the appearance of post-war Zionism, scores of Jews were killed in the colonies by Arab marauders, and a Jewish self-defence, that of the *shomrim*, was found necessary. That British imperialism has aggravated the hostility and helped give it a new character is perfectly true. That the Jews could have built a modern economy in Palestine without awakening hostility is a point of view which may be held by a few extreme philosophic idealists.

The statement that the terror is "to a great extent . . . the result of a struggle between two fascist forces, those of Arab fascist-terrorists and those of Jewish fascists, the Revisionists," is, I think, inaccurate. One might as intelligibly say that the struggle in Spain is largely the result of a struggle between loyalist fascists and rebel fascists. That acts by individual Jewish fascists have aggravated the situation is true. But it would be absurd and misleading to ignore one amazing and significant fact: the two-year period of self-denying discipline (the spring of 1936 to the summer of 1938) during which the Jewish community, under the most desperate provocation, held to a policy of non-retaliation—an extraordinary moral and political performance which the whole world watched with astonishment.

If Arab leadership is, among other factors, responsible for the present fury in Palestine, it is naive to pay attention to the fact that "last year Arab leaders publicly condemned violence and asserted that a speedy understanding between Jews and Arabs is profoundly needed." An understanding on what basis? Complete destruction of the Jewish position? Gradual extrusion of the Jewish population? Hitler too wants peace—on his terms.

The quotations from Rabbi Judah L. Magnes and Dr. Cyrus Adler, president of the Jewish Theological Seminary, add very little to a factual estimate of the position. "With Arab consent we could settle many hundreds of thousands of persecuted Jews in various Arab countries," says Dr. Magnes. So we could. We could do likewise with American consent, British consent, French consent, and anybody else's consent. What conceivable grounds are there for believing that the Arabs will extend a consent which the rest of the world withholds? Dr. Adler calls for a working basis for Jews and Arabs, and Mr. Morris J. Karpf will support an Arab-Jewish conference irrespective of British approval. The citing of these views in connection with the point of view adopted in Mr. Novick's article might lead one to believe that these gentlemen mean an understanding from below, on the basis of labor action. But the fact is, that on the whole these gentlemen mean nothing at all; they yearn for peace, and their

statements are just yearful expressions. As such they are of little use in the formulation of a practical policy.

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Comment by Mr. Novick

THE contemplated Jewish state will have an area of over two thousand square miles with a population of over 600,000, about three hundred persons to the square mile. Poland, also an agricultural country, having, however, a powerful industry and rich resources, has a density of 213. England has 506 and Belgium has 675, but these are extremely industrialized countries with huge resources, colonies, a tremendous market. Palestine has no coal, iron, timber (the *only* mineral, the Dead Sea potash deposits will be inside the Arab state). The Jewish state will have no Arab hinterland. How will it exist? Is it not fantastic to speak of doubling or even trebling its population? There is a limit to what the Jews from the outside can supply. Mandate Palestine with a promise for a state five times larger, including Jerusalem, could not get enough funds to suit Zionist plans.

2. The Jewish state will immediately have an Arab problem. About 48 percent of the population will be Arab. Out of the approximately four million dunam cultivable land within the state—a dunam is less than a quarter of an acre—three million is in the hands of Arabs.

3. Mr. Samuel agrees there is validity in the fear there will be an Arabia *irredenta* and a constant source of friction. Out of despair for the fate of the Jewish minority in an undivided Palestine he is nevertheless for partition. But, then, he offers no solution for peace. Dr. Magnes, who has been living in Palestine, disagrees with him. I do not think

the modern Jewish community in Palestine in the present age can be compared with the community which has developed in Yemen in the dark ages. With a strong Jewish-Arab labor movement the power of the Mufti (who was made powerful and rich by England) will be curtailed.

4. I fail to see the liberalism of a community resorting to racial discrimination—which *strengthens* the Muftis and the Effendis and is also bound to have a destructive effect on Jewish life itself. Jews throughout the world will suffer from such practice in "their" state.

5. Eventually (relatively soon) this state will have to close its doors against Jewish immigrants while some governments will more than ever force Jews to emigrate to "their" state. There is much to be said about the effect the Jewish state will have on Jews outside—90 percent, *the* Jewish people.

6. Partitioning and the creation of an Arab *irredenta* will certainly have the effect of driving Arabs towards fascism as a means of struggle against Britain. The participation of the Jews in the struggle against British imperialism will also be a means of warding off fascism from among the millions of Arabs throughout Arabistan and Africa. Jewish Communists and other anti-fascists already work along this line, and whatever is said about the Palestine (as about all other) Communists, they are aiming at the unity of the broad masses of Jews and Arabs, at a people's front in Palestine, and many of them have been persecuted by the imperialist oppressors because of this.

7. Mr. Samuel himself lists a variety of Zionist and other opponents of partition, so there is no reason to limit them to assimilationists and Communists. At the Zionist Congress in Zurich, August 1937, the vote was 304 to 158 on a motion to negotiate with Great Britain. In addition to the 158, seventy of the majority specified they were

against partition. At best, the vote was: 234 for, 228 against. Over sixty labor delegates were among the "nays." Non-Zionists are overwhelmingly against. Religious Jews are opposed because Jerusalem is outside the state.

8. The Jewish community is no doubt highly developed—*relatively*. Palestine is still to be industrialized. During the last boom period there were no more than two establishments employing three hundred workers and over. Mr. Samuel grants there are forty thousand Arab city workers. I think there are many more. But the Histadruth lists only 63,238 city workers (as of March 1937) including professionals, Zionist and Agency functionaries and *non-working* wives and youths of workers (Mr. A. Revusky in *Jews in Palestine* admits this is rather a "departure" from bona fide trade-union practice). True, there is an enormous difference of living standards. But, in the USA, certain people were afraid to organize the unorganized lest the better paid minority be dragged down. Powerful Jewish-Arab trade unions can attain high standards for all workers. On the other hand, I could quote figures to show that wages of Jewish workers were lowered because Jewish employers otherwise refused to substitute them for their old Arab workers. Our South is feudal while our North is industrialized, but the Civil War was fought to prevent partition, and progressive people now fight the "differentials" for the South. This is, of course, no analogy (analogies are never exact) but something to learn from. To cut the living body of a small country of ten thousand square miles; to take a narrow strip along the Mediterranean (at spots only eight miles wide) with one end of it severed by the British corridor from Jerusalem to Jaffa, with four of its five cities "temporarily" mandated to England, and all of it entangled in barbed wire—to proclaim *this* a state is to attempt a grim joke on the Jewish people. Certainly it will not bring peace.

