

**GENERAL  
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## SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE

## VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH MEETING (PUBLIC)

Held at the Y.M.C.A. Building  
Jerusalem, Palestine  
Thursday, 10 July 1947 at 9:00 a.m.

## PRESENT:

The CHAIRMAN:	Mr. Sandstrom	Sweden
	Mr. Hood	Australia
	Mr. Rend	Canada
	Mr. Lisicky	Czechoslovakia
	Mr. Garcia Granados	Guatemala
	Sir Abdur Rahman	India
	Mr. Entezam	Iran
	Mr. Blom	Netherlands
	Mr. Garcia Salazar	Peru
	Mr. Fabregat	Uruguay
	Mr. Brilej	Yugoslavia

SECRETARIAT: Mr. Hoo Assistant Secretary-General  
Mr. Garcia Robles Secretary

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CHAIRMAN: I call the meeting to order.

The agenda for today's meeting contains, first, public hearing of representatives of the Vaad Leumi; second, public hearing of representatives of the Chief Rabbinate; third, public hearing of representatives of Agudath Israel. The Jewish Women's Organizations of Palestine are not ready to appear today.

Have you any questions, Mr. Fabregat?

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Dr. Eliash and Dr. Katznelson, will you please come up to the platform?

(Dr. Eliash and Dr. Katznelson took seats at the table).

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): In point (7) of your statement did you say that the educational system - or the benefits of the educational system - of the Government is purely Arab? I should like to know what you mean when you say a "purely Arab" educational system.

Dr. KATZNELSON: The educational system in Palestine is composed of two official public school systems called (1) the Public Arab school system and (2) the public Hebrew school system. The Public Arab school system is administered and maintained by the Government; the Public Hebrew school system is administered and maintained by the Vaad Leumi. That is the official name and the official status. As a matter of fact, the Arab school system is not only Arab in name; it is Arabic in the language of instruction and in the composition <sup>of</sup> <sup>its</sup> the school population. It is <sup>also</sup> one hundred percent Arabic in the composition of the teaching staff. That means these schools are in practice available only to Arab pupils. The Hebrew school system is recognized by the Government as the official Public Hebrew school system.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): Who approved the educational system in the Jewish school, and who controls the educational system? Not the Government?

Dr. KATZNELSON: No. It is controlled by the Vaad Leumi Department of Education and supervised by the Government Department of Education.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): And on the Arab side who controls?

Dr. KATZNELSON: The Government Department of Education.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): I have seen some interesting schools for your Jewish children in several places; e.g. Tel Aviv. If those schools are not supported by the Government budget...

budget, are they maintained by additional city taxes which increase the taxation of that place?

Dr. KATZNELSON: The system of financing the Hebrew school system - that is, the Vaad Leumi school system - is the following. Schools are maintained by the Vaad Leumi and the Jewish local authorities. The sources of budget are as follows. ~~municipal taxes~~. All Jewish local authorities <sup>impose</sup> have special rates for education. That is the first source of income.

The second source of income is, <sup>I regret to say, is tuition</sup> ~~unfortunately, I must say, tuition fees, even in~~

/elementary schools...

elementary schools, with the exception of Tel Aviv. In all the other towns and colonies there is still in existence a system of tuition fees which, in our opinion, is not <sup>a good one</sup> ~~right~~. Tuition fees mean school fees paid by the pupils for education, and we are not in a position to abolish it as it is abolished, for example, in Government Arab schools. They are free of charge. We cannot do it because our funds are too short to satisfy the requirements of the Jewish community. That is the second source.

The third source is a grant by the Jewish Agency to the Vaad Leumi, from ~~the~~ Zionist fund, which, during the current year amounted to LP 200,000.

The last source is a grant contributed by the Government, as explained yesterday. It amounts to some 25% of the total Government educational budget, ~~but it is allocated for the same number of children. In the Government schools the Government spends four times as much.~~ As you see from the statistical tables in our memorandum, the number of pupils in the Vaad Leumi schools and the Government Arab schools is approximately the same - about 90,000. But the sum spent by the Government on the Arab schools is <sup>three</sup> ~~four~~ times as much as on the Vaad Leumi schools, and that is the reason for our contention. In our opinion, the Government's contribution to education should be either in proportion to the number of children attending the schools or <sup>to</sup> ~~of~~ local contribution. That means a system of pound per pound in proportion to the local authorities' contribution in order to stimulate more and more local effort for the expansion of the educational system. But the Government approved quite a different formula which is, in our opinion, discriminatory, because an Arabic pupil in a Government school costs the Government <sup>three</sup> ~~four~~ times as much as a Jewish pupil in a Vaad Leumi school.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay) : You mentioned also the tuberculosis problem in Palestine. How formidable is the problem, and what are the provisions taken by the Government to prevent it ? I want to know also which groups of the

/population

population, as far as age or race are concerned, are more affected by the tuberculosis problem.

Dr. KATZNELSON : For many years we have been pressing Government health authorities to embark on a systematic campaign against tuberculosis. ~~The Government made a survey in 1935.~~ In our opinion it was an urgent duty on the part of the Government because <sup>tuberculosis</sup> ~~it~~ is an infectious disease and a danger to the community as a whole--Jews and Arabs alike. In 1935 the Government made a survey, in spite of the fact that long before then there was no doubt that there was such a problem in Palestine. The Government expert submitted a report, and in my statement I gave a quotation from this report indicating that the problem of tuberculosis among all communities in Palestine is of sufficient gravity to warrant systematic attention on modern lines and the development of research. The time lost and the failure of the Government to take active measures has made the position more serious.

The report included a series of recommendations for the establishment of dispensaries and hospitals, but unfortunately, since then very little has been done. There are a few Government dispensaries in certain towns, but no Government hospitals for tuberculosis.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay) : The dispensaries are only in the cities ?

Dr. KATZNELSON : Only in the cities. For that reason we had no alternative but to go on with our own programme and to extend our institutions. For example, we have a hospital at Safad. It was a very small beginning, with some 35 beds. It has now 100 beds. In Jerusalem, Hadassah is now <sup>planning</sup> ~~trying~~ to erect a tuberculosis hospital with 200 beds. We asked the Government to contribute 25 per cent to the capital cost, taking upon ourselves 75 per cent. It was only a few months ago. The Government refused for lack of funds. We have again to try to find from Jewish sources certain funds in order to go on, because we must do it. That is the position with regard to tuberculosis.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay) : You spoke about the Jewish doctors. What

significance has the discrimination against them in the development of hospital assistance in Palestine ? This is point (7).

Dr. KATZNELSON : The boycott on Jewish doctors was a purely political <sup>one</sup> issue proclaimed by the Arab Medical Society nearly a year ago, at the beginning of 1946. But according to our information it had no affect on the Arab public. ~~The Arab public~~ continued to use our medical services, particularly in Jerusalem and not only Palestine Arabs, but also patients from neighbouring Arab countries are attending our institutions, and, I hope, to their complete satisfaction. At any rate, we have a lot of evidence from very prominent Arab visitors from neighbouring countries illustrating the most cordial hospitality afforded to them in our medical institutions.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay) : According to certain information acquired by members of the Committee, the Administration of Palestine in 1934 spent 6.24 per cent of the budget for education and 5.1 per cent for health; in 1944-1945 only 2.9 per cent went to education and 2.7 per cent to health. Are those figures in accordance with your knowledge of the subject, and are they reasonable as compared with those of some other countries ?

Dr. KATZNELSON : Yes, it was one of our constant complaints that the allocation for social services, education and health in the Government budget is relatively very small. It never exceeded 5 per cent for health and about the same for education. There was no allocation before the war for social welfare activities at all; for example, for child welfare and other welfare institutions. Recently a very slight improvement occurred and in the <sup>current</sup> ~~last~~ financial year Government estimates showed an increased allocation for social services, education, health and social welfare, <sup>totalling</sup> ~~of~~ nearly 12 per cent: 5 per cent for health, 5 per cent for education, and some 2 per cent for social welfare. But it is certainly--in the light of the present <sup>high</sup> ~~position in Palestine of the~~ cost of living in Palestine the ~~high prices~~ <sup>an</sup> an increase which is not effective because it is ~~an increase~~ caused by <sup>an</sup> increase in salaries and in administrative costs.

/It provided

It provided <sup>so few</sup> ~~very little~~ additional facilities <sup>medical</sup> ~~for the medical~~ institutions, and <sup>as to be</sup> ~~for that reason was~~ absolutely inadequate to satisfy the requirements of both communities, Jews and Arabs alike. And, as I explained in my statement, the reasons <sup>by the Government</sup> ~~given~~ are reasons of security. Those reasons, in our opinion, are not convincing, because, as a matter of fact, on March 31, 1947, the end of the last financial year, the Government had a surplus of nearly LP 6 million, and a part of the surplus should be allocated at least for capital expenditure, <sup>for</sup> ~~in~~ the extension of hospitals, ~~schools~~, and school buildings. Perhaps you have seen that in most of our schools in Tel-Aviv the pupils attend school <sup>in two shifts.</sup> ~~twice a day.~~ ~~The arrangements are made in two shifts.~~ Certainly it is very bad, but nothing can be done because the Government ~~again~~ intends to use <sup>its</sup> ~~this~~ surplus revenue for some specific purposes, such as the maintenance of the internees in Cyprus, and <sup>for</sup> ~~in~~ other <sup>purposes</sup> ~~ways~~ which are certainly very far from being productive.

CHAIRMAN: I would like to ask a question in this connection. Did the fall in percentage of the expenditure allocated to schools and health also mean a fall in the absolute figures of money allocated to those aims?

Dr. KATZNELSON:

Mr. ELLISH: No, the Government allocation as a whole increased -- that is an increase, certainly, in the absolute figures. But, as I explained, in terms of services it provides very little more because it is absorbed by the high cost of living, and the increases in salaries, and so on. For that reason there is not much progress due to this increase. But, in relation to a project of some LP 25 million we consider an allocation of only one million for health, for all medical services, absolutely inadequate. I cannot give accurate information with regard to the position in other countries, but I do know about the Western countries. I can

state that England's expenditure on social services amounts to nearly ten pounds per person, while the Palestine Government's expenditure on all social services is merely one pound per person. Here we have some two and a half million pounds for all social services, with a population of some <sup>two</sup> twenty million. That is a little more than one pound per person. That is one-tenth of the expenditure now existing in a country like England.

CHAIRMAN: The fall in percentage was thus due to the increase of the total expenditure and, therefore, the percentage became less?

Dr. KATZNELSON:

Mr. ELIASH: No, the percentage remained as it was, more or less, about five percent for health, and about the same for education. But, the absolute figure is higher, because I explained the reason for the difference in the absolute figure which is mainly due to the change of conditions in the country.

CHAIRMAN: To which fields of Government activities did the increased expenditure go?

Dr. KATZNELSON:

Mr. ELIASH: There is an increase from year to year in the Government budget on the so-called "security items". It is £7 million as against one million for health, one million and a quarter for education in the Palestine Estimates for 1947-1948 now published, and there is also an increase in the administration costs, a very considerable increase in the overhead expenditure,

/but unfortunately...



but unfortunately the amount for social services is out of proportion to the requirements and the needs of the community.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): Do you think that the present laws of Palestine coincide with the scope of the Mandate as granted to the Mandatory Power? I am now speaking about the discriminatory sense of the Land Law and the Irrigation Bill.

CHAIRMAN: That has already been stressed by the organizations who have testified here. They consider it a discrimination.

Dr.  
Mr. ELIASH: As regards the Land Law, or the Land Transfers Regulations \* as they are called, of 1940, the purpose of the discrimination appears both in the Order-in-Council, which made it possible to promulgate that law, and in the law

/itself .....

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\* Palestine Gazette No. 988, 1940, Supplement 2, page 327.

itself. The special amendment to the Order-in-Council, which is known as Article 16 B,\* gave special power to the High Commissioner to make regulations which may be made applicable only to transfers of land from Arabs to Jews, or to other persons not being Arabs; or from Jews to Arabs, or to other persons not being Jews; or from Arabs or Jews to any bodies of persons corporate or unincorporate. So that the very power which was given to the High Commissioner under Article 16 D of the Order-in-Council foresees and envisages discriminatory legislation. And the regulations themselves, which were published in 1940, make it perfectly clear that in certain zones the transfer of land should only be allowed to Palestinian Arabs. No question can arise that these regulations are discriminatory by their very nature.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay) : How was the Land Law enacted ?

Dr.

Mr. ELIASH : Well, it was enacted first of all by means of a special amendment of the Order-in-Council. Without that amendment it would have been quite impossible, because the Order-in-Council prohibited enacting laws which are discriminatory in nature. The Order-in-Council provided originally in Article 17.1 (c) ~~xxx~~ "That no Ordinance shall be promulgated which shall be in any way repugnant to or <sup>inconsistent</sup> ~~consistent~~ with the provisions of the Mandate". Also that "No Ordinance shall be promulgated which shall tend to discriminate in any way between the inhabitants of Palestine on the ground of race, religion, or language." And, as a matter of fact, the power of His Majesty, which was reserved to Him under Article 89, ~~xxx~~ of the original Order-in-Council, also contains a provision at the end: "There shall be reserved to His Majesty, His heirs and Successors, the right of advice of His or their Privy Council from time to time to make all such laws or ordinances in Palestine in accordance with the Mandate conferred on Him." So, it was found necessary to make a special amendment of the Order-in-Council giving power to the High Commissioner / to make

\* Palestine Gazette No. 898, 1939: Supplement No.2, page 461.

~~xxx~~ Drayton: Laws of Palestine, Vol. III, page 2591.

~~xxx~~ Drayton: Laws of Palestine, Vol. III, page 2589.

to make regulations in regard to sales of land which would be discriminatory by their very nature. And, it is in using that power that these regulations were published in 1940. As I stated yesterday, they were challenged in the Palestine Court recently, and the Courts held that it was the duty of His Majesty not to discriminate as laid down in the Mandate. And, as the Mandate is in the nature of a covenant between the Principal Allied Powers and His Majesty, it is for the Principal Allied Powers or their successors to lodge any complaint in that regard. The Municipal Courts of Palestine are bound by that legislation and can entertain no action or complaint by anyone representing the population of Palestine.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): This Committee has received several communications indicating inadequate accommodation and health conditions for prisoners at the assembly camps. Have you information as to who is in charge of medical services and the conditions of these people?

Dr.  
Mr. ELIASH: I do not quite get the sense of the question. Is it about prisons in general?

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): Yes, about the living conditions, conditions of health in the camps of detention. Of course, as I understand it, the camps of detention have the name here of assembly camps.

CHAIRMAN: Which camps do you mean?

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): Cyprus, and the camps of detention in Palestine.

Dr.  
Mr. ELIASH: With regard to Cyprus, my friend Dr. Katznelson mentioned yesterday that steps were being taken by outside groups to supplement the scanty provisions for the comfort and upkeep of inmates which are made by the Government and its agents in Cyprus. As regards the detention camps in Palestine, they are a part of the general prison system in Palestine and, therefore, medical attention there is taken over by the Government and the Department of Health, which is also in charge of the medical services of the prisoners in general. In addition we have the camps

/outside of

outside of Palestine in which political detainees are kept. I have no information as to what arrangements are made in these camps and by whom they are provided.

<sup>Dr.</sup>~~Mr.~~ KATZNELSON : With regard to Cyprus, ~~first of all~~, Jewish authorities here in Palestine, in cooperation with the Joint Distribution Committee-- that is the American <sup>Jewish</sup> Relief Organization-- are doing their utmost to improve medical conditions in the Cyprus camps. ~~But I must say that~~ <sup>We have</sup> sent a medical mission to Cyprus and a nursing staff, and now a special mission is going to enquire into the state of mental health. But, all our efforts are certainly not very effective in view of the very hard, I may say inhuman, sanitary conditions in the camps.

/For instance,

For instance, if there is an absolute shortage of water, and water must be distributed in very modest rations, or if there is such overcrowding in the tents and huts that families are living together, certainly medical facilities are not sufficient in order to improve the conditions of health in these camps. We are doing our best, and I must say of the military medical authorities that they are very helpful. There is a ~~medical~~ <sup>300</sup> military hospital at Nicosia where some 3,000 beds are kept for internees, but these ~~methods~~ <sup>measures</sup> are merely palliatives <sup>in view</sup> ~~of~~ existing conditions. With ~~60,000~~ <sup>16,000</sup> people <sup>living</sup> in insanitary conditions without sufficient quantities of water, without light, and without the minimum requirements with regard to housing, all these efforts are, to a great extent, made in vain.

~~or~~ <sup>Dr.</sup> MR. FABREGAT (Uruguay): And the 2,000 children are in the same condition in the Cyprus camp?

<sup>Dr.</sup> MR. KATZNELSON : Yes. There is a separate <sup>cantonment</sup> ~~village, a~~ ~~separate canton~~, for 2,000 children within the camp.

CHAIRMAN : I suppose the Cyprus camps are not under the jurisdiction of the Palestine Administration?

<sup>Dr.</sup> MR. KATZNELSON : No, Sir.

CHAIRMAN : They are under the administration of the Cyprus authorities?

<sup>Dr.</sup> MR. KATZNELSON : Yes, Sir.

CHAIRMAN : Are there any other questions?

MR. FABREGAT (Uruguay) : Excuse me for my questioning this morning. I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN : Does anyone else wish to ask any questions?

<sup>Dr.</sup> MR. ELIASH : May I be permitted to amend a statement <sup>made</sup> which I ~~read~~ in reply to the representative of the Netherlands, with regard to the amount of labour legislation in Palestine.

I have since checked it up and it is quite correct, as I have said, that no international labour conventions have been made applicable in Palestine, but some additional legislation has been passed which more or less follows the line of some of these conventions. In addition to the Workman's Compensation Ordinance which I mentioned yesterday and which has recently been redrafted, there is this new draft of 19 June, 1947; there is also a Trade Unions Bill, another draft of which has also been published for information in the same Gazette; and I should have mentioned two Employment Ordinances which exist. One is the Employment of Children and Young Persons Ordinance (1945), and the other is the Employment of Women Ordinance, which also endeavour to embody some of these provisions of the Convention. There is, further, an Accidents and Occupational Diseases (Notification) Ordinance, and there is, of course, a Department of Labour Ordinance which provides the machinery for dealing with these labour matters. There is also a Trade Boards Ordinance and a Factories Ordinance which deals with the inspection of factories; I have ascertained that some inspectors do arrange for inspection of factories and places of employment.

There is also a booklet\* which I wanted to pass to you, in which the representative of the Netherlands would be interested, on social welfare and social insurance in Palestine, and I was quite correct in saying yesterday that for social insurance legislation, nothing so far has been done. There is no compulsory health insurance, no infirmity or old age or death insurance, no unemployment or maternity insurance. I think this booklet would give information up to 1947.

Then there are one or two further points which I wanted  
/to amend

\* "Social Policy and Social Insurance in Palestine" by  
I. Kanievsky.

to amend in connection with yesterday, and which have not been fully answered.

The question was put yesterday with regard to the resolutions of the Elected Assembly on the political problems of Palestine. Resolutions on this matter were passed at two sessions of the present Assembly, which was elected in August, 1944.

The first resolution was passed in December, 1944, and I have here a copy of this resolution. Do you desire me to give it out, Mr. Chairman, or shall I read out the resolution as it was passed ?

CHAIRMAN : Please read it out.

Dr.

Mr. ELIASH : It was passed in December, 1944, and consists of five paragraphs :

"1. The Elected Assembly appeals to Great Britain, the United States, the U.S.S.R., and the Allied Powers, who are to decide the fundamentals of the new world order, to seek a solution also to the problem of the Jewish nation's exile from its homeland, and to grant the demands of the World Zionist Organization:

(a) to open the gates of Palestine to Jewish immigration;

(b) to vest in the Jewish Agency authority over immigration into Palestine and to grant it the necessary power to develop and build up the country, as well as to cultivate its uninhabited wastelands.

(c) to establish a Jewish State in Palestine which will fit into the new world structure..

2. The Elected Assembly demands of the Allied Powers international pledges and guarantees of concrete aid towards the implementation of the Zionist project : free mass immigration and wide-scale colonization for the purpose of concentrating the Jewish nation in its homeland and securing its political independence.

/3. The Elected

3. The Elected Assembly asserts that any plan for the partition of Palestine is contrary to the historic, religious, and national ties of the People of Israel with the Land of Israel and is in contradiction to the recognized rights of the Jewish People, its needs and claims and to the development capacity of the country, and declares that the entire Yishuv will vigorously oppose any such plan.

4. The Elected Assembly declares that the aim of the Yishuv and the Zionist Movement is to cooperate with the Arabs of Palestine in a spirit of mutual aid, on the basis of equal political, religious, economic and cultural rights for every inhabitant of this country, without domination or hegemony.

5. The Elected Assembly demands that Great Britain abolish forthwith the White Paper with all its decrees, which render null and void the pledges contained in the Palestine Mandate and the Balfour Declaration."

That was in the 1944 resolution. This was followed by a resolution passed in May, 1947, after the United Nations Special Assembly on Palestine, and representatives will find a considerable modification of the first, particularly with reference to the third paragraph, which is not contained in this one. This consists of the following :

/"The Elected Assembly



"The Elected Assembly of the Jewish Community of Palestine, at its Session on 20-22 May, 1947, passed a vote of sincere appreciation and thanks to the representatives of the Jewish Agency for their appearance before the United Nations Special Assembly on Palestine.

"The Elected Assembly identifies itself with their repudiation of the policy of the Mandatory and with their presentation of the claims of the Jewish People to the restoration of its independence in its historic homeland, namely, to a Jewish State.

"The Elected Assembly regards this solution as the surest way to forming a bond of friendship between the Jewish People, and the Palestine Arabs and neighbouring countries.

"The Elected Assembly strongly emphasises the duties incumbent upon the Mandatory, so long as it bears the responsibility, to fulfil its fundamental undertakings and to give the Jewish nation its full right to immigration and settlement in its homeland."

This resolution was adopted by 67 votes against 23, with 14 abstentions. Those who voted against were the Labour Unity group and the Hashomer Hatzair. The Elected Assembly numbers 171 delegates and its composition is given here in figures; two-thirds of the Elected Assembly belong to the General Federation of Jewish Labour, the remaining one-third is composed of representatives of the religious and General Zionists, forming the right wing of the Assembly. A further point which requires illustration is the question of the particular reason for the relatively low rate of voting at the last elections in 1944. On this point I would make the following explanation.

Since the establishment of the Elected Assembly the rate of participation in the elections has been between 57-77 per cent of the total. At the last elections the rate was 67 per cent. One of the reasons for this

relatively low rate is the abstention of certain groups of electors, who insisted upon changes in the present electoral law, a demand which was not acceptable to the majority of the Elected Assembly.

CHAIRMAN: I thank you, Dr. Eliash and Dr. Katznelson.

PUBLIC HEARING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHIEF RABBINATE

CHAIRMAN: The next item on the Agenda is the public hearing of representatives of the Chief Rabbi. I understand the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Herzog, will speak first, and I invite him to take a seat at the table.

(Dr. Herzog took a seat at the table).

CHIEF RABBI DR. HERZOG: To plead the spiritual cause of my people, I have the honour to appear before you as the representative of the Chief Rabbinate of the Holy Land. As spokesman of the religion of Israel, which, to us, is so dear, so sacred, in the name of the Thorath Israel, of the Talmud in the widest signification of that, to us, so majestic, so awe-inspiring a term, in the name of the Torah which embodies our fundamental national charter, our oldest title is Eretz Israel or Palestine as the Land of Israel.

The recent tragic events in Palestine have placed the physical suffering of the Jews in the forefront of international discussion. Yet this is only the external aspect of that timeless issue. The basic cause of our suffering is our homelessness for the past two thousand years, and that bitter homelessness involves not only the torment of the body but also the suffering of the spirit, of what we call in Hebrew Shechina. The Jewish national revival, of which you have seen the evidence in your travels in this country, has its ultimate roots in the realm of the spirit. It represents a new phase, in a sense of culmination, of that unique phenomenon of faith and suffering which is Jewish history.

Ours is a great quest for freedom, freedom from physical oppression, freedom from everlasting dependence upon goodwill and tolerance, but above all, freedom from spiritual bondage. Our national history, which begins with

the Divine redemption of our people from Egyptian slavery, is something unique, without parallel in the annals of man. In a pilgrimage of forty years under the scorching sun of the Sinai Desert, far away from the habitations of men, their memories still fresh with the lesson of man's inhumanity to man, their souls exalted by the impact of manifest providential guidance, our ancestors were vouchsafed that communion with the Divine, that revelation, which has for all time determined our place in history.

The message of the spirit was no abstract formula. It called for translation into the living reality of a national life in a concrete land. The record of that national life, its endeavours, achievements and failings, has become the textbook of humanity. In pursuit of this holy mission, we have endured a martyrdom that has no parallel in the history of the nations. The present return is but the latest phase of that unending quest. It is a protest against an exile which is scorching our soul as it is breaking our body. We are seeking new roots in mother earth so that the soul of our people may live anew. We are seeking them in the land of our fathers, in the land in which so much that is sacred and dear to us first took shape and form. The survival of the Jewish people represents a case which is sui generis. There is no parallel to a people preserving its laws and institutions, its language and traditions, its attachment to the land of its origin, and the hope of its eventual return and restoration during more than eighteen centuries of dispersal all over the globe. The Jews are not the only people, not the only small people, whose independence was crushed by mighty neighbours. Other nations suffered the same fate, but they reacted differently. When Imperial Rome drove the nation into exile, the Jews might have accepted defeat and disappeared in the melting pot of the Oriental and Hellenistic civilizations surrounding them. Or, alternatively, they might have left the country en masse and set up their commonwealth in another part of the Middle East, as did other nations before and after them.

The Jews did neither. They chose a very different course. Their

state had been destroyed, their sanctuary burned to the ground, many thousands had been sold into slavery, the great families decimated by executions, the mass of the people pauperized. Emigration offered the only alternative to extinction. A remnant remained, clinging stubbornly to the ancestral soil, but the bulk of the nation went into exile. Jews they were, and Jews they remained wherever fate dispersed them. They never gave up their national identity and their religious heritage. Not all phases of their long exile were periods of suffering. At times - as, for instance, in Moslem Spain - they enjoyed a considerable measure of freedom and economic prosperity. But even then they never ceased to cling with their heart and soul to the country which for all time remained to them the Eretz Israel, "Land of Israel."

What is the source of this unbreakable attachment? It is the experience of the spirit whose impact is recorded in the pages of the Bible and in our post-Biblical sacred literature. It is this experience which has for all time moulded the character and destiny both of the Jewish people and of Palestine.

My friends, it has become fashionable in this cynical age to make light of matters of the spirit and our case has been a principal sufferer from the soulless interpretation of historical record. I was deeply pained to see in the Supplement to the "Survey of Palestine" which was presented to you by the Government of Palestine, an account of Jewish history in Palestine which seeks to reduce the glorious pages of the Bible to a miserable recital of tribal worship and tribal warfare. The Old Testament is quoted as a record of the vicissitudes and the trials undergone by the Hebrews during their rule of Palestine which is arbitrarily fixed at one thousand years, but there is no word to indicate what that period signified in spiritual and cultural terms. While this Survey gives every detail of the sacred associations of Palestine for Christians and Moslems, it is completely silent on the message of Hebrew prophecy which went out from

these hills. It has nothing to say of the moral challenge of Isaiah and Jeremiah, of Amos and Micah, of the "cry from the depths" of the Hebrew Psalmist, of the heart-searching and inspiring message of Job, of the pristine beauty of the Book of Ruth, of the anguish of the Lamentations. No mention is made of the high level of political, economic and cultural life which flourished in the golden age of Hebrew rule and to which modern excavation bears ever-increasing testimony. Not a word is said of the great academies founded by the Men of the Great Assembly at the beginning of the rebuilding of the second Temple, nothing of the great developments of the post-Biblical era, as recorded in the Mishnah and the Talmud.

On contemplating this pathetic vacuum of the Palestine Government, one cannot help feeling that a good deal of the failure of the Government's handling of present-day problems may be explained by its unsympathetic, uncomprehending and shallow interpretation of Jewish history.

The first Hebrew Commonwealth was destroyed by the overwhelming might of the Chaldean Empire. The bulk of the nation was carried into Babylonian captivity, but from the first hour of their exile they never ceased to pray for their return. They refused to accept an alien land as their home. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning, Let my tongue cleave unto the roof of my mouth if I remember thee not, if I set not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy." Even before they were driven into exile, their eventual return had been predicted to them in prophetic messages of unsurpassed fervour: "I will return the captivity of my people and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them" - thus had been the divine message through Amos, the Shepherd of Tekoa. Jeremiah, the agonized witness of the destruction of Jerusalem, sent a message from his Egyptian exile to the captives in Babylon: "Again will I build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel... Behold I will gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth. They shall come with weeping and with supplications will I lead them... And their soul shall be as a watered garden."

On the ascendancy of the Persian Empire under the great Cyrus, the Second Rebuilding began. It continued after the destruction of the former by Alexander the Great, until Palestine fell under the sway of Syria, whose rulers tried to break the spirit of the nation and <sup>L</sup>Hellenize the country. The attempt led to the great religious and national revolt of the Maccabees, which result in the re-establishment of the Jewish kingdom all over Palestine and Trans-Jordan, and which gave rise to a new era of spiritual creativeness and material prosperity that lasted until Imperial Rome conquered Judaea.

The Romans adopted a policy of repression and attrition which forced the bulk of the nation into exile. Thus began its national martyrdom, but to whatever part of the globe they were driven, they maintained the memory of Zion with a fierce tenacity. They did not give up their sacred title deeds to their return. It was from the pages of the Bible and post-Biblical literature that they drew strength in the vicissitudes of exile and those pages vibrated with the atmosphere of Palestine. The memories of the land and its clime, its forests and vineyards, its cities and palaces, and above all, of Jerusalem and its sanctuary, became an integral part of the consciousness of the Jewish people. That is why the Jews never disappeared as a distinctive entity. That is why they never attempted to build for themselves a national political life anywhere else. For the sake of their spiritual heritage, they assumed the terrible burden of exile. They did so because they could not do otherwise.

They wove the memory of Zion into every phase of their personal and communal lives. From the cradle to the grave religious rites, prayers and benedictions associated the Jew with the national Destruction and the hope of the Return. At the infant's initiation into the Abrahamic covenant prayers are recited that he might be granted to go in pilgrimage to Jerusalem. At the wedding ceremony the prayer is uttered that "Soon may there be heard in the cities of Judaea and in the streets of Jerusalem the voice of joy and gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride, that Zion may re-gather in her midst her languishing children." At the burial a handful of

earth from the soil of Palestine is placed under the head of the dead so that he might rest in the ancestral soil. What efforts were not made by poor Jews in every age to secure the small sack of Palestinian earth to be placed in their graves. Exhumation of the dead is, generally speaking, prohibited in our religion but for the purpose of re-burial in Palestine it is not only permitted but encouraged. Wherever the Jew prays he turns his face towards Jerusalem, Palestine! In our liturgy, in the daily prayers and benedictions, Zion and Jerusalem and the prayer for the ingathering of the exiles and the rebuilding of Jerusalem hold a central place. The devout Jew would rise at midnight and sit on the floor, his head covered with ashes to mourn the destruction of Jerusalem and pray for the restitution of her glory. In prayers of mystical ecstasy Zion is described as the "mother waiting for the return of her scattered children," as "the mourning widow refusing to be consoled" "Next year in Jerusalem" is the conclusion of the solemn rituals of the Passover Night and the Day of Atonement. In distant lands we pray for rain and dew when Palestine needs them. Our greatest post talmudic authority, Maimonides, asserts that the validity of the Jewish calendar, fixing the holy festival and the Day of Atonement, which is binding on Jews all over the world, depends ultimately upon the presence of a Jewish community in Palestine which, if not a fact de jure, always remains the centre of Jewish religious authority. In Jewish law, a concrete law, a husband could compel the wife and vice versa, the wife could compel the husband, under such legal sanction as was available, to migrate to Palestine.

In the same way the longing for Zion pervaded the Hebrew literature. Though the Jews everywhere acquired the language of their environment, Hebrew remained their medium of prayer, study and literary expression. The return to Zion was equally a central theme in Jewish legal, mystic and homiletical literature. Laws and precepts applying to the soil and its produce in Palestine formed the subject of deep study and research in the

/Diaspora.

Diaspora. In fact the whole framework of Palestine life was kept in existence in institutional form so that it might be set into motion again when the hour of the Return came.

All their existence was rooted, as it were, in a distant land which few ever had a chance of seeing with their own eyes. For whether Palestine was under the sway of the Byzantines, the Arabs, the Crusaders, the Mongol invaders, the Mamelukes or the Turks, there was never any chance of a Jewish mass return. That chance has only come in our generation, and it has not failed to be grasped. But at all times individual Jews or groups made the "ascent" (the "Aliya") to the Holy Land and there were periods when the longing for the return flared up in Messianic movements of fierce ecstasy which shook the whole framework of Jewish life in the Diaspora.

The mystical flame has not died out; it is alive everywhere in the effort of reconstruction which you see springing up in this country. To say nothing of the orthodox settlements and of the hundreds of synagogues and religious institutions, it is my firm conviction that beneath all the external trappings of the national rebuilding there surges an intense longing, not only for a refuge but no less so for a spiritual regeneration. This yearning has found expression in the renaissance of the Hebrew language and literature but no less so in a marked degree in the revival of religious study and research in the ever-growing number of the Yishuv's outstanding religious colleges, including the greatest in the world, whose number far exceeds the proportion of the Jewish population in Palestine. Zion has already become the centre of sacred learning for world Jewry. Monumental religio-legal publications have been started here which seem to foreshadow the fulfilment of the prophecy that "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem". The Palestine Chief Rabbinate, about which my revered colleague will speak to you shortly, is one further illustration of this development. Unfriendly critics sometimes describe our national effort as a piece of secular materialism. Nothing is further



from the truth. As my saintly predecessor, Rabbi Kook of blessed memory, repeatedly declared, consciously or unconsciously, the new builders are inspired by the ideal of old. That ideal, we feel convinced, we fervently believe, will ultimately come to shape the life and the outlook of the whole Jewish community.

There are enemies of our people who affect a pseudo-spiritual concern for its religious future, and go about saying that all the Jews need is a so-called "spiritual centre", a great religious academy, a university, a central Rabbinical Synod, but no land, no settlements, no towns, no industry, no commonwealth.

Here I stand to give the lie to these hypocritical assertions. Spiritual life, particularly in the case of our people, cannot flourish if it is divorced from reality. We cannot be creative unless our lives have roots in the soil. The Jewish Sabbath, the central pillar of Judaism, is crumbling to pieces in the Diaspora under the weight of present-day economic conditions and the stress of minority existence. The preservation of Judaism in its religious aspect, to say nothing of the national and historic aspects, depends in no small measure on the revival of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine. Nor only our religious schools, colleges and academies, but also our villages and settlements are dear to us. Our religious and national aspirations find their most significant expression in the building of Jewish religious academies alongside agricultural settlements.

It is this inter-weaving of physical reality with the life of the spirit, this sanctification of human effort, which constitutes our distinctive contribution or rather, one of our distinctive contributions, to the stock of civilized mankind. It was this idea of a Jewish spiritual renaissance based on a national restoration which inspired the many non-Jewish friends and supporters of the Zionist cause from the age of the English Puritans to the days of Byron, Shaftesbury and George Eliot. It was these inspired Christian Zionists who paved the way for the adoption of

the policy of the Balfour Declaration in our own day. Leading Anglican divines like the late Archbishops of Canterbury, Dr Land and Dr. Temple, and religious laymen like Lloyd George and Lord Balfour, were ardent supporters of Zionism. When, in 1937, the Royal Commission, in proposing partition, excluded Jerusalem from the area of the Jewish State, the late Archbishop Dr. Land made a statement in the House of Lords from which I should like to quote here:

"There is one point here on which I feel the Jews have some legitimate grievance in the proposals made by the Royal Commission. That is the position of Jerusalem itself. It seems to me extremely difficult to justify fulfilling the ideals of Zionism by excluding them from any place in Zion. How is it possible for us not to sympathise in this matter with the Jews? We all remember their age-long resolve, lament, and longing:

'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning.'"

They cannot forget Jerusalem."

And finally permit me to quote Lord Balfour himself. In the great speech which he made on the tenth anniversary of his historic declaration, he said words on the spiritual aspects of Zionism which are very opposite to these days when the effort is made to reduce the Jewish question to a merely humanitarian concern for displaced refugees: "I could never have thrown myself" said Lord Balfour, "with the enthusiasm which I have always felt for this cause into it if it had been merely a question of taking out of most unhappy conditions a certain number of the Jewish race and re-planting them in the land of their forefathers. If it had been merely that, I should have been, I hope, an enthusiast for the cause. But I think it is going to be much more than that. I hope and I believe that the highly endowed people who have done so much for Western civilisation in some of the highest walks of human effort will do even more, if you give them the chance, in the original land of their inspiration, to carry out the work side by side with all the great civilised nations of the world - the chance to work side by side with them for the common advancement of knowledge".

Humanity stands at the crossroads of history and there is no greater challenge to it than the Jewish problem. A promising beginning has been made in this country towards the solution of that age-old problem, but the light from Zion shines against the background of the terrible catastrophe which has befallen our people in Europe. I spent six months last year visiting the remnants of our people on the European continent wandering amidst the ash-heaps of what was ten years ago a third of Israel. I saw the fine work UNRRA had done for them and I would like to take this opportunity of recording my deep appreciation of their devoted efforts and of expressing the hope that the new organisation I.R.O. will maintain that noble tradition of succour as long as circumstances call for it. But these camps cannot continue. Conditions in them have almost reached breaking-point. Nothing material can console the mother whose baby was torn from her breast by mad dogs in Belsen or Dachau, or the orphans who saw their parents buried alive and the ground heaving afterwards from their agonised movements. These well-nigh lost remnants must be rehabilitated in spirit, and that rehabilitation can only be effected among their own people in the land for which their spirit longs and where the torment of the past will be forgotten in building the future.

I urge upon you, Gentlemen, to visit these camps and to see the position for yourselves. These people have endured what no human being has ever been called upon to suffer, and it seems to me essential that those who have come to investigate the Palestine question should carry away with them also a direct impression of that most acute aspect of the problem. For let there be no mistake about it: these Jewish survivors in Europe are an integral part of the political scene of Palestine. It is for their sake, no less than for ours, that we plead that the White Paper be abolished and a political settlement be made that will enable their speedy transfer to Palestine.

And while I am on this point, permit me to deal with one special issue which has been repeatedly raised in connection with the proposed political

settlement. It has been alleged that if a Jewish Commonwealth were to be set up in this country, non-Jewish religions would be adversely affected thereby. On this point I should like to repeat what I said last year to the Anglo-American Committee. We, the Chief Rabbis of Palestine, stand here to declare that the Jewish people will not in any form whatsoever seek to impose its religion or traditions on people of other faiths by force, by persuasion, by legislation or by any other means. In the Jewish Commonwealth every community will have full autonomy in administering its religious and cultural affairs in accordance with its traditions within a framework similar to that provided for in the Mandate. Every community will administer freely its own institutions without any interference whatsoever on the part of the State. The Holy Places of the several religions should be under the guardianship of those to whom they are sacred.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, you are about to sit in judgment on a case which is without precedent or parallel, on a case which is unique. Judge us not, I solemnly appeal to you, by ordinary canons. Forget your books of law and jurisprudence. Forget all the talk and all the thought of proscription and ousting, and so on. All this will not help us in the least.

You have before you a case for which there is no precedent. You are at this critical point to decide whether that great history of the people called Israel, that four thousand-year-old-history, which has given to mankind two great religions, which has given to humanity the moral and spiritual outlook of the world, which has given to humanity that great ideal of everlasting peace -- which, alas, we have not yet reached -- whether that great, wonderful history of this unique people shall lose itself in the gigantic ash-heaps, in the immense mass graves of six million Jews, including 1,200,000 babes and sucklings, or whether that history shall now bring issue in something great and noble, which will form part and parcel of a great divine plan in the history of mankind.

I am at the end of my remarks. The world is again going through the crucible of change. Common men and women in all lands long for peace and for a revival of the spirit. We need to rediscover the basic truths on which all true civilisation rests -- the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Peace and justice are indivisible. The world will not find its peace until it

relieves its conscience of this grave burden -- the homelessness of one of the most ancient of its peoples.

I pray to our Father in Heaven that your deliberations may help in bringing about a lasting solution of that most grievous and most challenging problem of our day.

CHAIRMAN : I thank you, Your Eminence.

I recognize His Eminence, Rabbi Ben Zion Ouziel.

(Rabbi Ben Zion Ouziel, Richon-Le-Zion, Chief Rabbi of Palestine, spoke in Hebrew. No interpretation of his speech was made, but the following translation was distributed.)

RABBI BEN ZION OUZIEL : It is a point of honour for us to extend to you at the outset our sincere welcome on your important appearance in the Holy City of Jerusalem, the city of God, to take up your exalted and most responsible task which is so vital for the peace of Israel and the peace of the world. May you be blessed, the distinguished emissaries of all the nations of the world, who are also, according to our conviction, the emissaries of God, the ruler of all kingdoms and the King of the world.

We hope and pray that the Almighty will bless your work which is designed to put an end to the martyrdom and wanderings of the people of Israel that have been continuing now for two thousand years, and to restore to them their freedom and their peace of mind, their land, their state and their dignity among all the nations of the world, as befits a nation so ancient that has given law and ethics to all the nations of the world and has made weighty and substantial contributions to all field of human endeavour, to science, learning and social progress, even in the course of their long dispersion, while they were driven from one country to another and from one nation to another. We pray that the Almighty will extend His divine grace and countenance to your work, will guide you in the path of truth and impart His wisdom to you, so that your names will be blessed and praised forever after.

Your Excellencies, on behalf of all the Jewish communities which are still extant throughout the Jewish Diaspora, including the Sephardic communities in the Middle East and in European countries and the United States of America as well as of those Jewish communities which have been completely destroyed, and on behalf of the millions of the sons of Israel who have been savagely

massacred by the Nazis and their satellites before the eyes of all the nations who watched passively the shedding of their innocent blood, we join our voice to that of the Palestine Yishuv and of the supreme bodies of the Jewish community of Palestine and to the voice of the people of Israel in their dispersion, and their accredited representatives - the members of the Jewish Agency. We appeal to you with an outcry which comes out of the depths of our heart, and from a suffering of thousands of years of dispersion, and humiliating wandering, and say to you: Palestine is unique among all the countries of the world as the land on which the providential countenance has been concentrated, a country of which it was said in the Scriptures: "the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." It was therefore preeminently distinguished and made unique as the cradle of prophecy in which the prophets of Israel, who are the prophets of all mankind, prophesied on Israel, their dispersion and their redemption, and on all the nations of the world, and who proclaimed the advent of peace on the basis of truth and righteousness, and whose prophetic messages have remained and will remain forever after the treasured spiritual heritage of Israel as well as of all mankind. This land which is held in sacred veneration by all nations and all faiths was given to Israel as their perpetual possession, through the first Patriarch of our nation, as the Scriptures said: "And I will give unto thee and to thy seed the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession." By a miracle, the sons of Israel took possession of the country on their entry into it under their leader Joshua, as also much later, under Ezra and Nehemiah.

The Romans who conquered and usurped all nations have also conquered this country by their sword. Since then it has been the wish of the Almighty, enunciated through the mouth of our lawgiver Moses, that the people of Israel should be scattered and dispersed. "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all

peoples from the one end of the earth even unto the other." But so strong was their unshakeable faith in the divine promise ("That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity and have compassion upon thee and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed and then shall possess it, and He will do thee good and multiply thee above thy fathers.") that the people of Israel have never abandoned their hope and aspiration to return to their land.

In their firm faith in the law of Israel which is the eternal law, Israel have never acquiesced and will never acquiesce in the rape of their country and their freedom by violence. That is why there was no time in history when Jewish settlement ceased in the land of Israel which has been designated "the land of life", for there is no life for the people of Israel without the land of Israel.

For centuries after the destruction of the Second Temple there was a mass settlement of Jews in Jerusalem in defiance of Emperor Hadrian's prohibition which decreed that any Jew who set foot on the soil of Jerusalem would be liable to the death penalty. There was also a large Jewish settlement in Galilee, which constituted the bulk of the Jewish population of Palestine. That dynamic community of Galilee engaged in agriculture and domestic industries, and cultivated its legal and ethical literature which was crystallised by the composition of the Mishnah and the "Jerusalem Talmud". After the Spanish Exile that Yishuv received important and valuable accretions from among the exiles who included some of the most eminent rabbinical authorities. Thus reinforced, that community has revived the Yishuv in Galilee and Jerusalem and has cultivated our elaborate legal and mystical literature which culminated in the composition of the "Shulhan Aruch" (the Jewish Code of Conduct) and in the standard works of Jewish mysticism.

Notwithstanding the persecutions and the anti-Jewish decrees, the libellous accusations levelled at us, and the inhuman treatment to which we



were subjected, and in spite of the life of misery and agony which we were compelled to lead and in which has been fulfilled the most bitter prophecy of the Pentateuch: "And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest" and the vision of the prophet of our dispersion:- "Wherefore I gave them also statues that were not good and judgments whereby they should not live", it was thanks to the wonderful divine will that we managed to survive in our dispersion as well as to exist in the divine land in which, and particularly in Jerusalem, a Jewish settlement survived, for as the great Maimonides wrote, "it was far from the will of God that the sons of Israel should be absent from Palestine in which it was promised to them that the signs of nationhood would never disappear."

Absorbed by this faith, our forefathers took an oath of allegiance and fidelity to their land: "If I forget thee O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning". We have lived up to that oath of fidelity throughout the generations of our dispersion, and have remembered the Holy Land in our thoughts and our actions and in all our movements, and religious even in the last moments of the life of every dying Jew, by scattering the dust of Palestine into his eyes, and have passed it on to our children and to posterity.

No Jew or Jewess has ever agreed of his or her own free will to remove his or her residence from Palestine to a foreign country, because of his (or her) love of the country and his obedience to the commands of Jewish law which expressly forbade such desertion, save where a Jew is exposed to famine or is in danger of his life.

(Maimonides. Kings. V, 5, 6)

During the last few decades, the people of Israel throughout their dispersion were inspired by the Almighty God, and driven to go to the land of their forefathers, rebuild it and bring its wilderness back to life. That was the origin of the modern agricultural settlements which were established before World War I, which were the main and basic foundation of the Balfour Declaration. That was how Jewish

immigration from all parts of the Jewish Diaspora turned to Palestine in fulfilment of the prophet's prophecy: "Who are those that fly as a cloud and as the doves to their windows?"

All Israel, in Palestine as well as in the Diaspora, had hoped to see in the Balfour Declaration which was given by His Majesty's Government the continuation of the famous declaration given by Cyrus to our forefathers. Inspired by that declaration and driven by their faith, Jews came to Palestine singly and in groups from all parts of the world. By the grace of God we built entire and well equipped towns, villages and agricultural settlements, including some that based their life entirely on religious foundations.

We built great houses of religious worship in which thousands of our people pursue daily their religious studies and offer their prayers, and a network of religious schools, elementary, secondary and high (Talmud Torahs and Yeshivoth) was established in all parts of the country in which laws and Jewish traditions were taught and cultivated.

Thanks to the concentrated efforts of the individual and the community, we restored to life and prosperity arid and waste lands which we acquired justly and fairly, we tapped the underground waters hitherto unexplored and unused, so that they might turn into a blessing the unirrigated land which was a curse to the people of the country. The fertility thereby reaped to the soil of Palestine is a living monument of the initiative and energy of our pioneering brethren, and testifies to the truth of the biblical appellation of the country as a land flowing with milk and honey.

The gathering in this land of all the scattered remnants of the people of Israel brought about the union and rallying of the people, by the resuscitation of their original Hebrew language, the language of the Prophets, which has come to be used again both as the vernacular of the people and as the language of literature, learning and research, and it is yearly making substantial strides in both directions. It

tions. It has also resulted in the wonderful cohesion and organization of all the Jews of Palestine under the aegis of the "Knesset Israel" (The Jewish Community of Palestine) which is distinguished for its union.

During the period which has elapsed since the issue of the Balfour Declaration a very important communal development has taken place in the form of the fusion of the two tribes of Israel, the Sephardim and Ashkenazim, who through the curse of the Diaspora have had to lead a separate communal existence in the East as well as in the West.

During the term of office of the first High Commissioner, our co-religionist Sir Herbert Samuel, a combined Rabbinical Council (better known as The Chief Rabbinate) was constituted under the joint presidencies of two Chief Rabbis, one each representing the Sephardic and Ashkenazic community respectively. That Council acts as a religious Court of Appeal which hears appeals from all local rabbinical offices, exercising jurisdiction in all such cases as are within its jurisdiction under Palestine Order-in-Council, 1922, as well as acting as an arbitration community under the Jewish Community Rules, 1926.

The re-constitution of that important body is regarded by us as the fulfilment of the biblical prophecies which envisaged the redemption of Zion through the processes of justice and righteousness administered by Jewish Judges. It is also a fulfilment of the vision of the prophet who foresaw the foregathering of all the tribes of Israel and their fusion into one united nation.

To our great distress, however, obstacles were placed by the Government of Palestine in the way of the realization of these noble prophetic visions, the Government having limited and restricted the jurisdiction of the Rabbinate and confined it to Palestine citizens, and worse still, to those of them who are officially members of the recognized community (Knesset Israel), a curtailment of rights which never existed throughout the history of the Jewish people. We venture to express our hope that that defect will be made good, by

/conferring on

conferring on Jewish religious courts full jurisdiction applicable to all Jews of Palestine, similar to that which was conferred on Moslem religious courts.

In those years of intensified Jewish effort which brought a blessing to the country and all its people, we have never found real rest and quiet, and our work was disturbed by the riots and disturbances launched by our Arab neighbours, with whom we have always lived and intend to live in relations of amity. These disturbances followed the continuous instigation which was helped by outside sources with malicious intent, and were designed to undermine and destroy the work we have started with innumerable sacrifices of life and property. To these setbacks must be added the ravages of the war which have definitely retarded and slackened our work. Some of our ancient settlements in the country have had to be abandoned, e.g., Ramleh, Shechem, Gaza, Hebron and Pekiin, while the Safad community has had a miraculous and narrow escape. We were constrained to abandon a large area of our Jerusalem settlement too, because of the danger to which we would have been exposed had we continued to live there. These facts are additional evidence which points to the existence of numerous other Jewish settlements which were successively and utterly destroyed, so utterly that not even relics of Jewish cemeteries could be found in their former sites. They will also explain the paucity of our number in the Palestine before World War I.

But our growth in this country and the expansion of our constructive work in it point to the intense and single-minded devotion of our people to the revival of their ancient land; they also point to the tremendous blessing in all spheres of life which will directly result from the return of Israel to their ancient homeland from which a true and permanent peace will radiate to all parts of the world.

It is with great distress, however, that we must record our profound disappointments at the constantly increasing restrictions

on immigration which have been decreed by the Mandatory Government, restrictions which have culminated in the white Paper that have virtually invalidated a solemn international pledge, restricted our settlement numerically and geographically, and purported to crystallize our community into a permanent minority, and, worse still, one that will be alien in its own land, for the bulk of the country has been closed to Jewish settlement under that White Paper.

That ruthless and cruel measure has closed the country to scores of thousands of our refugee brethren who, at the risk of their lives had hoped to find safety in this country after having escaped the barbarities and outrages of their cruel persecutors.

I cannot describe to you in words the tragic calamity that has befallen us as a result of the savagery of the Nazis and their satellites. The story in all its bestiality is only too well known, and anyone born in the image of God must be filled with shame at the monstrous outrages which have led to the extermination of six million Jews and Jewesses, including children and infants, among whom were some of the most learned and eminent of our people. Who knows how many of our children still remain among non-Jews leading a life of captives and prisoners? Although over two years have elapsed since the Armistice, nevertheless scores of thousands of our people are still behind barbed wire in the concentration camps or wandering about from place to place without finding any rest for their weary souls. Mention should be made of the anti-Jewish riots which were organized during the war and since V-Day in Tripoli, Iraq, and Egypt, and of the rule of terror which prevails in Syria and Afghanistan. These outbreaks were grim evidence of the present condition of our brethren in those countries and of the even darker future that awaits them there. In face of that tragic plight so unique in its bitterness, that characterises the life of Israel in the years of their dispersion, Your Excellencies will <sup>the</sup> better appreciate the justification for the outcry of Israel in their agony <sup>when they</sup>

when they appeal to the civilised world in words of deep humanity: Have we not the same Father, the same God? Why, therefore, are we so singled out and discriminated against? Why are we worse than all nations?

The one and only remedy is the restoration of Israel to their state and their freedom in which they might develop and utilise their gifts, reconstruct the land and the soil by the sweat of their brow for the good of all those who inhabit the land, without any discrimination, as we are commanded by our law: "But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one **born** among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself . . . and shall not vex him" (Leviticus 19,34).

By the standard of those high ethical precepts, we shall treat our neighbours whom we recognise today, and shall hereafter recognise as full-fledged citizens with absolutely equal rights as regards the exercise of their religious worship, the observance of their religion and all other civil rights. Restore Israel to their land and state, so that he might be a member of the comity of nations and make his own specific contribution to progress and enlightenment for his own benefit and for the benefit of the whole world.

This statement gives expression to some only of my feelings and my pain. I can only conclude with the prayer that you might be the trusty agents of Providence, of the God of Israel who is the God of the Universe, so that by your work, you shall fulfill the prophecy of the prophet: "I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in my anger and in my fury and in great wrath; and I will bring them again into this place and I will cause them to dwell safely . . . I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land, assured with my whole heart and my whole soul." (Jeremiah 32. 37, 41).

CHAIRMAN: I thank Your Eminence.

I am now going to adjourn the hearing for ten minutes, but I shall be obliged if Your Eminence would stay for the questions that

The hearing is adjourned for ten minutes.

(The hearing adjourned for ten minutes.)

CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, the meeting is called to order. Will His Eminence Chief Rabbi Dr. I. Herzog, and His Eminence Rabbi Ben Zion Ouziel kindly come up to the platform.

(His Eminence Chief Rabbi Dr. I. Herzog and His Eminence Rabbi Ben Zion Ouziel took their seats at the table.)

CHAIRMAN: I, for my part, have no questions to ask. Does someone on the Committee want to ask some questions?

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Mr. Chairman, I have very great respect for spiritual and religious heads of every community, and hold them in reverence. But, in my humble view, they should remain above political controversies. And, out of respect for their positions, I shall not put questions in regard to political matters, which were inter-mixed in their speeches, but would just put a few questions which do not concern politics.

Your Eminence, <sup>are</sup> ~~cannot~~ those who, although they were once Jews, now believe in Christ as one of the Holy Trinity? *to be regarded as Jew*

RABBI HERZOG: I have the honour of replying to the distinguished Indian delegate, Sir Abdur Rahman. A distinction must be drawn between a good Jew and one who is not a good Jew. The adoption of another faith does not make the Jew into a non-Jew from the Jewish religio-legal aspect. I will give you an instance: Marriage between a Jew and a non-Jew is, in our law, not valid. Marriage is a religious bond. The same thing is true between a Jew and a Christian woman, or any other religion. But, marriage between a Jewess and a renegade Jew can only be dissolved through divorce as prescribed by the Laws of Moses. In short, "a Jew who has abandoned Judaism for another faith continues in a legal sense to be a Jew, but he is certainly not a good Jew - he is a renegade Jew."

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN: Would you therefore regard Christ as a Jew in religion as he was so by descent?

RABBI HERZOG: I do not know. I think, Sir Abdur Rahman, you are treading upon very delicate ground. I do not think it is advisable to introduce this subject. But, of course He was a Jew. There is no question about it that He was a Jew.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): What was the extent of the Kingdoms of Kings David and Solomon, peace be on their souls, in Palestine?

RABBI HERZOG: Well, it was very, very wide. It extended practically from Wadi el Arish into Syria. I do not have a map before me just now. If you desire precise details I can let you have them.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Please, Your Eminence.

RABBI HERZOG: David and Solomon - I can let you have it.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): When did they rule over these countries?

RABBI HERZOG: About the 9th Century before the Christian era.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): My last question is, Your Eminence, which of the tribes grew out of Ishmael, son of Hagar and Abraham, peace be on their souls?

RABBI HERZOG: You know that Ishmael and Isaac were the sons of Abraham.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): I am only asking of Ishmael.

RABBI HERZOG: The Arabic tribes.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): The Arabic tribes were the outgrowth of Ishmael?

RABBI HERZOG: Yes.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): And the Edomites?

RABBI HERZOG: The Edomites were the sons of Esau. Esau was the son of Isaac. The Edomites came from Esau.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): The Arab tribes were the outgrowth of Ishmael?

RABBI HERZOG: Ishmael, yes.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): That is all.



CHAIRMAN: Does any other member want to put some questions?

(No response)

CHAIRMAN: Then, I thank your Eminences. The next item on the agenda is the hearing of representatives of Agudath Israel. Will Rabbis Lewin, Klein and Glikman-Porush come up on the platform.

Hearing of Representatives of Agudath Israel

(Rabbis Lewin, Klein and Glikman-Porush took their seats at the table.)

CHAIRMAN: I recognize Rabbi I. M. Lewin (Chairman of Agudath Israel). (Rabbi Lewin spoke in Hebrew.)

RABBI I. M. LEWIN: In the name of World and Palestine Agudath Israel, I wish to welcome you here and say how much we all hope that you may succeed in your task.

I think this is a first and unique event in history of representatives of fifty-five nations organised in the United Nations having come to the Holy Land, to Jerusalem, in order to hold an enquiry into the question of Palestine and of the Jewish People.

We appear before you as the representatives of independent orthodox Jewry organised in Agudath Israel in Palestine and all over the world.

It is our view that Divine Torah alone forms the eternal constitution of the Jewish people, and that it, and it alone serves as the foundation and essence of the existence of the Jewish people as the nation of the Lord; that Torah alone is the soul and backbone of that nation, and that whatever is formative in Palestine and within the Jewish people can be of lasting value and can have a right of existence only inasmuch as it is connected with and flowing from, the Almighty's Torah.

This, our view, presents an unbroken tradition of above 3,000 years, one that has for ever been absolutely based on the Bible and its teachings, both written and oral, and that is independent and

uninfluenced from any other spiritual foundation. In making this short address to you, I should like to assist you in solving the difficult problem in connection with which you have come here from this our point of view.

First of all: we declare the following to be our main aspiration, in which we feel united with the entire Jewish people.

The land of Israel and the People of Israel form one complete entity forever inseparable. In practice we demand, therefore, that the gates of the Holy Land be opened to all Jews wishing to come here; that the absorptive capacity of the Land be developed to the only possible limit; and that a political regime be established capable of guaranteeing free immigration, the development of the country and exploitation to the full of its absorptive capacity.

You have been able to ascertain details of our demands in the memorandum which we have submitted to the Committee.

/This demand

This demand of ours we hold to be dictated by justice and morality, and I should like to state reasons for my assertion. You will, gentlemen, before going deeper into your assignment, have to clear your minds on the question as to the essential meaning of what we call the "Jewish People."

May I, as a son of an old people, speak to you in a language as peculiarly singular as the People of Israel.

In 2,000 years this people has been wandering over the face of the earth and has failed to find a resting place under its feet; it has undergone the most hellish and inhuman sufferings and has been tossed about the wheels of nations, rulers, governments, regimes and parties.

The forms of war against the Jews have been varied, and evil plans, campaigns and persecutions have incessantly changed: but the People of Israel has preserved its life and existence outliving its torturers and persecutors who have vanished from the arena of History. You can destroy or assimilate large parts, but no power in the world can liquidate it or bring into oblivion the living memory of its past.

Since mankind split into nations, when the world turned against its Creator, the war of man against man has started. Then rose Abraham our Father and demonstrated that there is a Divine Leader guiding the world. It was Abraham our Father who revealed to the world its Creator, who brought the Lord's message to mankind. To him the Lord promised that he should be father of that Israel, which was to fulfil a sacred destiny: "You are my witnesses, saith the Lord". "This people I have created that they shall tell my glory"; who shall go through History as the Lord's nation and demonstrate in their very being and existence that there is a Creator unto this world.

It has thus been the destiny of Israel to realise in its life those great ethical principles laid down in the Torah and the messages of its Prophets.

By far the greater part of the Torah's precepts depends for realisation on active settlement in the Land of Israel. In the Land of Israel, and nowhere else.

nowhere else, can Israel fulfil the mighty mission with which the Almighty has entrusted it.

The Land of Israel was promised to the first Jew, to Abraham our Father; and from the day on which the Lord spoke: "For all the land which thou seest, to thee and to thy seed shall I give it until eternity", there has been woven an eternal connection between the people of Israel and its Lord.

In the Torah, in the Prophets, and in the words of our sages the idea finds forever recurring expression, that the final destiny of the land of Israel as the Land of the Lord, and the destiny of Israel as the People of the Lord, which become realised only when joined together, when both shall be bound to the Creator of Heaven and Earth.

In this Land alone it is given to the Jew to reach spiritual elevation and completion. Here men of Israel have reached the extreme light of human achievement: Prophecy. Here the Prophets have seen their visions. The air of this our Land our great teachers of the Law have breathed, those giant leaders of the People of Israel, those greatest of its holy men.

That connection of the Jewish people with Palestine has remained unbroken also after our people's expulsion from its soil by the Romans.

There have at all times been Jews who left the comfort, or comparative comfort, of the countries of their dispersion and in often immediate danger of life flocked to Jewish Land, land that was waste and utterly destitute. The degree of Israel's loyalty to its land was reflected in the land's loyalty to its people. Not a single one of the country's conquerors throughout past centuries succeeded in returning to blossom the land's destitution. The Torah's words: "And your enemies shall be waste on it", was literally fulfilled. The land refused its yield to the stranger. The people of the Diaspora was become barren in the distance, longing and yearning for the land; and the land remained barren, longing for its sons.

On your recent tour you have seen with your own eyes the great wonder:

/the barrenness

the barrenness of parts of this land uninhabited by Jews, and blossoming freshness wherever the Jew has grown attached in love, sacrifice, and devotion, to the soil of the land. May, that this miraculous sight before your eyes shall become living evidence and manifest proof of the metaphysical connection linking Israel with the Land of Israel, a connection imprinted by the Divine Creator from the days of Abraham to the end of Messianic days.

In the course of 2,000 years of dispersion we have been persecuted to unending lengths, but these two treasures: the Lord's Torah and the Lord's Land, we have never forgotten.

The Jew's love of his land knows no limits; it suffers no comparison with what is called love of country. In his land the Jew sees not merely the land of his birth but land hallowed by the Divine Creator, the cradle of prophecy chosen by Him and whereon rest the eyes of the Lord your Lord from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

From the moment of his birth to his departure from the world, in all his thoughts and contemplations, during his meals, in his hour of mourning and of joy, the Jew raises the land of Israel to his lips in prayer for his return to the Land. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget", is the oath we have taken, and the very course of our history speaks out to the fact that not for a single moment have we forgotten the Land of Israel.

The settlement of Palestine stands out in the commandments of the Law of Torah. And ever since the beginning of our dispersion settlement has never ceased. Every stone, plant, each grain of sand of our land has been dear and hallowed to us for the love of people and land is in truth a divine inspiration forever present in the soul of every Jew.

It is, then, only natural that we can imagine the nation's existence in its land on no other but the Torah's foundations.

A well-known statesman has said that there is a war going on between Jews and gentiles. We cannot, with regret, admit this. There has been

is going on a wholly one-sided war against the Jew. As I have stressed before, that war is being conducted in many different forms and for various excuses. That war runs like a red line throughout history from Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Haman, Titus, Torquemada, Chamilnitzki, up to Hitler. How many are the persecutions run over our heads, and why should we have been so persecuted ?

/ Are not we all

Are not we all sons of one father, has not one God created us all?

Have we not brought to the world the recognition of God? How many are the values of goodness, truth, magnificence, righteousness and justice which the nations have accepted at the hand of this most ancient of their number? Why, then, are we persecuted?

Our answer to all this is: Whenever the forces of evil have risen in rebellion against the Creator of the world they have spent their ire against this people, the People of Israel; their hatred against Israel sprang from a hatred against the preachings of Torah, the visions of the Prophets.

You have come here in the name of the United Nations. In your own time the disaster occurred. We should be in need today of an Isaiah, a Jeremiah, to pronounce their probation against the nations.

We are sustained by knowledge of a Lord, the Leader of Creation. We are persuaded that no amount of suffering and cruelty is ever lost; that the sufferings of our people through thousands of years are summed up in one total account. There is justice and there is a judge in this world. But what happened during the years 1940-1945 is unprecedented in the annals of world history.

It may appear boring to reopen the chapter of the destruction of six million Jews, but we cannot help repeating and again repeating the subject; six million Jews have perished. Europe's Jewry has been put to destruction.

The slaughter took place in Poland. It was my privilege to have been one of Poland's three million Jews. They stand in front of my eyes. Every one of them a world to himself, a heavy treasure of Torah and life's wisdom. We look about forlorn for one-third of our people, but in quality by far the most important part. Europe once contained the reservoir of our people, the brain and heart of world Jewry. But all that has vanished from the face of the earth, vanished in the most cruel and most horrible deaths, the victims of unrivalled sadism and evil ingenuity. Old and young burned alive.

I lived in Poland. I lived the life a Jew lived there. I was brought up on the principles of faithful Judaism. I lived among my people, my family. My brothers and sisters were done away. Three of my beloved grandchildren were burned together with all the other children of Israel; in all 1-1/2 million Jewish children, innocent and ignorant of sin, of whom every one might have become the pride of our people and of mankind.

I am one of those who as if by miracle was saved from the wide-open jaws of the monster. I do not know why I of all should have been privileged to escape the fire that enveloped us all in the crematories of Trabllynka and Aushwitz, or is it that I should be their messenger to bring their cries before you?

We, of Agudath Israel, have suffered perhaps the greatest losses. The best of our leaders and friends are no more.

Six million Jewish souls stand crying before you, their blood storms and cannot find rest; it moves the very foundations of the universe. One and a half million children! When has the world heard of such a like? When has such war happened? Can you at all imagine the meaning of these words? One and a half million dear children, whose hands we were not allowed to kiss before they ascended to the flames to be burnt alive in the ovens. How can mankind, how can any human being stand such unimaginable sadism.

And how they went from us? In sanctifying His great name, in speaking thus to their oppressors: You may destroy our bodies, but never our souls! Their blood continues to storm and shake the foundations of all living. World, world, where art thou? And through you may I ask the world: Where is their conscience?

Truly, the freedom-loving nations fought Hitler, but not our fight. Hitler's fight against the Jews preceded the World War by five years.

Hitler sent up experimental balloons to find out how far the world was prepared to let him go in his evil. When in 1939 the refugee vessel "St. Louis" with her 700 Jewish passengers on board was cruising the seas, there was not a single country, including America, that was ready to accept the Jews, to



the accompaniment of Hitler's barbaric laughter. Having accomplished minor "action", that is to say, slaughter of Jews on a small scale, before the eyes of a silent world, he proceeded to larger "action". Again the world was silent. And so at last he continued on his path of insane cruelty to the work of most awful destruction the world has ever witnessed.

I do not propose to put before you here facts showing how Jews might have been saved, and a world stood by our blood motionless.

While the White Paper bears undoubtedly a great share in the responsibility for inactivity in the rescue of Jews, the world at large, and particularly the Great Powers, cannot be freed from answering this charge.

We do not feel ourselves sitting in the dock. Permit me to say that it might be more rightful to place in it all those who must accept responsibility for the destruction of our people.

We cannot believe that in any natural way it will be possible to comfort us and to find a substitute for our disaster, for the loss of six million  
32 brothers. What then is the problem?

33 There have remained alive one and a half million Jews who have escaped destruction.

Jews have no longer any place in the world. They must therefore be enabled to return home, to the land of their fathers. You will have to visit the camps yourselves, see their position, find out what has happened, what is there still to be seen. You will then convince yourselves that Jews no longer can nor want to stay in the European graveyard. They simply cannot go on living where their families and everything dearest to them was murdered. In a part of those camps which Hitler had set up for them, complete with barbed wire, these our unfortunate brothers continue living an imprisoned life within a world liberated two years ago.

You have toured the country. You have seen wonderful cities and flourishing settlements. All this could have been worked only by that enormous love for Eretz-Israel. Beginning with the so-called "Old Yishuv"

maintained Jewish settlement in past generations, those orthodox Jews who became the founders of Petah Tiqvah, the mother of our settlements, and others more, from all those who laid the foundations for the modern Yishuv, right down to our contemporary builders, who with the sweat of their brows moistened the desert land and transformed it into the greenery of settled land.

You have also seen the destitution awaiting hands, awaiting its builders. The land awaiting the Jews, the Jews expectant for the land: how can their reunion be stopped?

The Jews have become mere remnants, one in a town, two in a family, having lost their dearest and nearest, and whose only desire is to come up to the Land of Israel and kiss its stones: how can one deprive them of this?

Here, within the Yishuv itself, there is not a house where there is not one dead. And should there have been left a survivor in the dispersion whose only longing is for coming here and joining his family, and his family here aching for the last survivor of its house; how can they be kept separated?

We have not stolen a thing from the Arabs. Whatever we took we have dearly paid for. Their standard of living we have raised, we who have gone through exile and have learnt to value the lives of others. The Jewish people wants peace with the Arab people. There is room for us all in this country.

Mending but little the unrighteous done to the people of Israel, there is need for good will, for finding the courage in your hearts to a decisive and energetic step.

The United Nations will be bound, we should think, to brace themselves for really generous action, action that will not merely permit the Jewish people to return to its land, but to aid it in developing the country and settle it.

If you are willed to set mankind on a moral basis, on a basis of justice, the union of nations, and the repair of our world, repair then the great injustice done to the People of the Lord.

The Creator, who seeth and observeth the world, what has that world done for His people?

Hitler, starting with the Jews, wanted to enslave and destroy an entire world. If you wish to help return the world into its joint, you will have to start repairing the injustice done to the Jewish people.

In 1914 the First World War started, and its result was the creation of a "League of Nations". Mankind was then filled with the hope that at last we were approaching disarmament and the brotherhood of nations.

With the world starting to reconstruct the devastation left from the war, the Balfour Declaration was given as a measure of compensation for the sufferings of the Jewish people. Had there been a will to fulfil it in the spirit in which it was given, who knows but that the world might have been saved a renewed outbreak of the flames of war. The Declaration was not materialized, and disarmament turned into preparation for a second world war. We are once again going through all that. The world is trying to rebuild the ruins left by the last war and has organised in the United Nations for the establishment of peace. The world will need the grace of Heaven to prevent itself from falling into the most awful and most deadly of all wars. May the world be privileged of such grace by rendering justice to the Jewish people.

We are fortified and confident in the knowledge that our redemption will be by the Lord, and that we are approaching that redemption.

Just like the days of our exodus from the first exile, the exile of Egypt, through the desert, to the Lord's revelation on Mount Sinai, so are we wandering today through the desert of nations, stepping forth towards Israel's redemption and that of the entire world.

Thus we trust in the Almighty that He may help us!

But the day of reckoning will come and the question go out to the nations of the world: What have you done? Where were you when great parts of the People of the Lord were murdered?

/What have....

What have you done to repair and make good the terrible evil?

Who will measure the benefit to the nations and to mankind should they be able to give affirmative reply in now doing the first important step on behalf of our suffering people?

An historical feat will have been accomplished, gentlemen, in your assistance towards such aim. May the Almighty help you and stand by you. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN: I thank you, Rabbi Lewin.

I recognize Rabbi Klein.

(Rabbi Klein spoke in Hebrew)

Rabbi KLEIN: I have been charged with the important and honourable task of welcoming you as a member of our Central Executive and Central Agudath-Israel in Palestine.

3 Central Agudath Israel constitutes the territorial branch of the World Organisation, and is responsible for matters of education, religious communities, and other Palestinian matters as pointed out in our joint memorandum.

7 Agudath Israel is the organisation of the People of the Torah. A tradition unbroken for over 3000 years speaks in our voice.

Central Agudath Israel represents within its ranks also a great many native inhabitants of Palestine and numerous generations in the past who came to this country from an attachment to the Holy Land, and who have done very much for the upbuilding of the country.

We would ask you to recommend the opening of the country's gates to our brothers and sisters and thereby to rescue thousands and tens of thousands from physical and moral deterioration; and in this connection to wipe out the White Paper with its racial discrimination against us, a discrimination the like of which was not heard in Palestine since the days of <sup>H</sup>Adrian, that notorious Jew-Baiter.

Unrestricted immigration and the chance to develop the land in order that its sons may return and live here a life of rest and dignity, these are our demands.

Moreover, we shall stress that we, orthodox Jews, who comprehend the Torah as the ultimate life-aim of our people and the foundation of all its existence, we who do not recognise popular sovereignty apart from the sovereignty of the Torah, we demand most emphatically that in this Land of Israel everything shall be done in accordance with the Laws of the Torah, and that to all our organisations <sup>and to all our congregations</sup> there shall be accorded an absolute legal freedom to act entirely according to our conceptions.

We see in the fact that the United Nations have sent out a fact-finding committee here, a revelation of the conscience of the world which has finally stirred in favour of the oppressed people of Israel.

We do firmly believe that Israel's redemption shall come as witnessed by our Prophets on the mouth of the Almighty, the Leader of the Universe.

And we believe that the Almighty helps those in search of Justice and Truth to find them, and may He guide your hearts to finding justice and righteousness.

Do then recommend such steps as we have asked.

May the Almighty's blessing be in your work.

CHAIRMAN: I thank you, Rabbi Klein.

I recognize Rabbi Glikman-Porush.

(Rabbi Glikman-Porush spoke in Hebrew)

Rabbi GLIKMAN-PORUSH: May I be permitted to address you briefly on events in our lives here, in this Holy Land, during the past generations.

I am a native of Jerusalem, a member of a family which has been living in Jerusalem uninterruptedly for eight generations.

My forefathers came to Palestine under great self-sacrifice, after a dangerous voyage of months. With love and devotion they took upon themselves great privation, knowing full well that conditions of life in Palestine then were far from comfortable, but it was this, their only desire, just as this Land of Israel is the heart's desire of every Jew; for over half of the precepts of the Torah are for their realisation entirely dependent on life in this Holy Land, and are devoid of meaning abroad.

Relations between ourselves and the Arab neighbour were extremely good; we lived in one and the same yard with the Arabs, and there was real friendship between us. In those days we would journey from Jerusalem to Tiberias or Safad through Arab towns and villages for three days and three nights on a cart or on the back of a donkey without any fear. Frequently we would night in Arab villages or in towns inhabited solely by Arabs, and never an apprehension of fear of the Arabs would rise in our minds.

As a native of this country and one permanently domiciled here, I would state from definite knowledge that at the time of the publication of the Balfour Declaration on the reconstitution of the National Home for the Jews in Palestine neither the Arab leaders nor the Arab masses thought anything but that Palestine had in reality been given to the Jews. At that very time the territories of the Ottoman Empire were divided into various states for the Arabs, such as Iraq, Hejaz and Syria, and the territory which we were always wont to call "Eretz-Israel" was believed as in fact having been given to the Jews.

That relation between ourselves and the Arab neighbours remained excellent even after the Balfour Declaration, and right down to the events of 1936 we would call on the heads and notables of the Arabs at the time of their feasts, among them the Mufti of Jerusalem, at the offices of the Supreme Moslem Council or at his residence.

It was the orthodox Jews who had come to Palestine who built Jerusalem and its surrounding fifty-two quarters. They built the towns of Tiberias and Safad; they built the quarters on the outskirts of Jaffa; they laid the foundations of the agricultural settlement in Palestine, in Judea, in Samaria, and in Galilee. A great many of them were carried away in early youth by malaria and swamp fever. We never wavered, here we saw the fulfilment of one of the precepts of the Torah. It was our faith that inspired us, that in our lives and our deaths we were laying the foundation-stone for the Jewish Yishuv here in the Land of Israel, the Land of the Torah.

As one of the natives of this country, and as one whose family have been domiciled here for many generations, I can bear evidence on the astounding development which Jewish immigration has brought to us in Palestine. We, natives of Palestine, know that the entire population of the country, both Jews and Arabs, heartily greeted the rise in the standard of living and that tremendous uplift in the atmosphere of this country as a result of Jewish immigration.

Let me, then, ask you to wipe off from this country and from ourselves the shameful blot of the White Paper.

May there be given us a chance in this land, chosen by Supreme Providence,  
to bring a sure home to the people of the Lord and the Torah of the Lord.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Are the Arab tribes living in Syria, Lebanon, Palestine or Trans-Jordan the descendants of Ishmael?

CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

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All these are recommendations which refer to the Jewish community, but it seems to me that we all, and you, too, are conscious that the question which we are considering is a question of Palestine: this means that it is not a question of the Jewish community alone, but also the question of the other population in Palestine, the question of the Arab side, too.

As you make here some recommendations regarding the Jewish community, I should like very much to hear your recommendations in regard to the whole question of Palestine.

Rabbi LEWIN (Interpretation from Hebrew): We have already expressed orally as well as in our memorandum, that what we ask is unrestricted immigration and the possibility to develop the country to its full absorptive capacity.

Mr. BRILEJ (Yugoslavia): I know this, but this refers only to the Jewish community, but on the question of the whole of Palestine, taking into account that there are in Palestine 1,200,000 Arabs?

Rabbi LEWIN (Interpretation from Hebrew): We believe Jews and Arabs can live in peace. We have raised tremendously their standard of living. All that Jewish immigration could bring to them is great benefit. In all differences between one community and another there will have to be political negotiations. If those should lead to no results, a supreme authority, the United Nations, would have to decide on the basis of Justice and right. I think that in the Holy Land a start should be made, an attempt should be made, to settle political differences, not by bloodshed, but by political negotiation. I am convinced that justice is with us. If the United Nations make a decision they will, of course, have to safeguard the authority of the supreme body, and only thus can there come peace and order.

I should like that the Palestine problem serve as a first trial and I wish you success in giving that to us and the whole world.

CHAIRMAN: Any more questions? If not, then I thank you.

We have now gone through the agenda for today. The hearing is adjourned until tomorrow morning at 11:30.

(The meeting adjourned at 12:35 o'clock p.m.)