Is this the Way?

A CALL TO JEWS

by
WALTER ZANDER

“ I have read your paper twice
& I was time & again both moved
& inspired by the courage, the straight
forwardness & the accuracy of your
arguments.”

Dr. Leo Baeck, former
Chief Rabbi of Berlin.

“I have been profoundly moved by
reading your pamphlet : to its courage
& insight there is little that I would
like to add.”

Rev. J. W Parkes, D.D.

This pamphlet is about Palestine

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And they will confess their iniquities....
Leviticus xxvi. 40.

Abstain from accusing others even in your most secret thoughts : accusations only destroy our peace of mind, they serve no purpose at all.
MACARIUS, *Starets of Optimo.*

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Introduction

THE DECISION OF THE United Nations to recommend the establishment of a Jewish state by the partition of Palestine has been the recognition of Jewish nationhood by the supreme forum of world opinion. Accordingly, it has been hailed by the Jewish national movement as an achievement of paramount significance and celebrated with rejoicing. At the same time, it is obvious that this decision is not the fulfilment but the beginning of the task which is fraught with tremendous difficulties. Whatever may have been in the past the aims and opinions of the various groups within the Jewish National Movement, a supreme united effort is required to overcome the present dangers and to turn the historic opportunity ultimately into a true fulfilment of the ancient and most cherished Jewish hopes.

The task of rebuilding a State out of the dis-integrated parts of the Jewish people - with their different experiences - would have been difficult enough even under conditions of peace and general approval. For it is a formidable problem to bridge a gap of two thousand years in the national history of a people. But all these difficulties have been multiplied by the fact that the decision of the United Nations could only be brought about against a determined and powerful opposition; and it would be disastrous to underrate the strength and significance of this resistance.

In the General Assembly of the United Nations thirty-three nations voted for and thirteen nations against the establishment

of a Jewish state. This was considerably more than the formally required two-thirds majority. Even if one counts, instead of the governments, the represented populations themselves, there remains a majority in favour of partition, although this majority is not very large. The thirty-three states in favour of the Jewish state have a total population of about 560 million, against 480 million of those who voted against it. But if one considers that the eleven nations who did not vote at all represent no less than 625 million people, it appears that out of the total populations represented in the General Assembly only 33.6 per cent. voted for partition, whilst 37.5 per cent. abstained and 28.9 per cent. opposed it: and the proportion of those in favour becomes probably even smaller if it is taken into account that more than 400 million people (including the peoples of North Africa, Burma, Manchuria, Indonesia and Japan) were not represented at all.

Infinitely more important, however, is the composition of the character of the two groups. The neighbours of the new Jewish state, without any exception - reaching from Egypt to Iraq and beyond to India, and from Greece and Turkey to Saudi Arabia - were united in their opposition, whilst most of those who declared themselves for the Jewish state are far removed from the scene of action. Many of them have only a small real interest in the matter themselves, and some of them could be induced to change their opinion from one day to the other, whilst the Arabs and their supporters feel strongly in the matter, and most of them consider the issue as their own.

But even more significant than the political issue is the fact that many of those who opposed partition are sincerely convinced that the legal and moral right is on their side and that the establishment of the Jewish state under the existing conditions is a breach of law and a violation of the established principles of national freedom and personality.

For many years it has been our custom to put the blame for every new difficulty and every new setback to our cause on the shoulders of others; and we have made great efforts to convince the world and ourselves that not-we, but outside forces were responsible for every resistance to our aims. “Arab absentee - landlords” or “Moslem religious fanatics,” “Fascist and Nazi agents,” and in recent years “British imperialists and anti-Semites”-all in turn were made responsible for our misfortunes. But great as the influence of all these groups was at their time, it is impossible to be satisfied with the belief that these outside forces were alone responsible for the course of events.

In 1889, when modern Zionism was just emerging, Ahad Ha’am, one of the greatest and most impartial Jewish thinkers of that time, wrote his famous essay, *“This is not the Way”* In this he raised his warning voice against certain features of the young movement, maintained that the return to Zion must be preceded by a “revival of the heart,” and foretold that otherwise the whole movement might end in disaster. In the face of Jewish progress and achievement, these words must often have appeared as the nightmare of a dreamer. But in view of the deep anxieties which we have to face at present, the opposition to our movement, the bloodshed in which we are involved, the crimes committed by our own brethren, the deep cleavages among our own ranks, and the uncertainty of the Jewish situation in the

world - with anti Jewish riots even in Britain - in view of all these dark signs, the words of the great thinker receive a new and poignant meaning.

As long as our political fate was mainly determined by other peoples, it was understandable that we were inclined to see the cause for our situation in the actions of others. But since we have taken again into our own hands the shaping of our political history, full responsibility rests now upon us, and this will require the greatest moral courage. We must ask fearlessly to what extent we ourselves have contributed to the present situation. Was our attitude perhaps such, as Ahad Ha'am assumed, that sooner or later it had to lead to the present conflicts? To raise such questions in no way exculpates from their mistakes other nations which are involved in the Palestinian issue. But there will be no lasting improvement of the situation until each party becomes aware of its own faults in the matter. We have to face the fact that our relations with those two peoples whose friendship should be our main concern - the Arabs and the British - have sadly broken down. Moreover, our whole movement is threatened from within by dissension, violence and moral confusion. Clarity was never more important than in this hour of danger and hope, and constructive criticism of our own work is needed for the sake of the very survival and the establishment of a truly independent and free community. It is on the basis of these considerations that the following lines are written.

Failure with the Arabs

The cardinal problem of the Palestinian issue can be summed up in the single sentence that we Jews had to build our National Home in a country in which another people is living. From this root all other difficulties have ultimately sprung, and although many outside influences - economic, political and religious - have affected the issue, the Jewish-Arab problem has remained the core of the matter. The solution of this problem was, therefore, the paramount task. But, instead of concentrating on this task all our efforts and creative energies, we have treated the Arab question, when it was remembered at all, as if it were of secondary importance.

This attitude goes back to the very beginning of the Jewish national movement. As early as 1891, Ahad Ha'am in his article, *"The Truth from Palestine"* warned us to give the Arab question the most careful consideration:

> "We abroad are accustomed to believe that the Arabs are all savages who are living on the level of animals, and who do not understand what is happening here around them. This, however, is a great mistake. The Arab, like all Semites, possesses a sharp intelligence and great cunning. The Arabs, and particularly the urban population, see through our activity in the country and its purpose, but they keep silent, since for the time being they do not fear any danger for their future. When, however, the life of our people in Palestine will have developed to such an extent that the indigenous population will feel threatened, then they will not easily give way any longer."

Again:

> "How careful must we be in dealing with an alien people in whose midst we want to settle. How essential is it to practise kindness and esteem towards them. . . . For if ever the Arab could consider the action of his rivals to be oppression or the robbing of his rights then, even if he keeps silent and waits for his time to come, the rage will remain alive in his heart."

In words which are too painful to repeat to-day, he complained how gravely our brethren failed in this elementary duty. Through nearly three decades he repeated his warnings, and in 1920-surveying his life's work-he summed up his criticism in the bitter words that *"since the beginning of the Palestinian colonisation we have always considered the Arab people as non-existent."*

The following years saw no fundamental change of this attitude. Instead of giving the highest priority to the Arab case, we gave it to our relations with Great Britain. Instead of concentrating our attention on the people who have been living in the country for more than a thousand years, we put our trust in those who happened to be their rulers for one generation. Accordingly, the centre of our political activities was London and not Jerusalem, and we succumbed to the superficial and portentous mistake that the fate of the country would be determined in the long run, not by the people itself, but by the ephemeral influence of the Mandatory Power. England, therefore, was paramount in our mind, and we exaggerated her importance for our future, both in the days of hope and in those of despair. It was the same fundamental attitude which made our early Palestinian settlers see in Britain the saviour from their

plight and caused in our days the unfortunate “illegal immigrants” to write on the funnels of their ships: “Our enemy is England.”

But not only did we fail to give the Arab problem first priority; we also deceived ourselves about the seriousness of Arab opposition. The years between the wars saw many outbreaks of Arab armed resistance against Jewish immigration, from the disturbances of 1920 and 1921 to the riots of 1929 and the revolt of 1936-9. The intensity increased with every new clash. But, unperturbed, we tried to persuade ourselves that the resistance of the Arabs was not real, but artificially manufactured. Every time we found another excuse to explain away the true meaning of the event. Every time we offered small remedies for a great disease, and utterly failed to face the reality of Arab resistance. In a world where from Algiers to Java the nations are yearning for independence, we made ourselves believe that in Palestine alone the indigenous population had no interest in national self-determination and self-government. And this in spite of the fact that the Palestinian Arabs have not only to face a static foreign rule, as had the Indians or Syrians, but a most dynamic change of their situation by the continuous flood of Jewish immigration into the country.

Failing to give the Arab problem its proper place and to recognise the seriousness of Arab opposition, we equally omitted to give adequate consideration to the question of how the two peoples could in fact live together within the Jewish commonwealth. Very little thought was given to this task, and the Anglo-American Committee of 1946 could, therefore, sum up the situation as follows:

> "It is not unfair to say that the Jewish community in Palestine has never, as a community, faced the problem of co-operation with the Arabs. It is significant that in the Jewish Agency's proposal for a Jewish state, the problem of handling a million and a quarter Arabs, is dealt with in the vaguest generalities."

Of course, we never aimed at harming the Arab in his economic or social position in the country. We paid for every yard of the land which we occupy, and we paid dearly. We took great care that no landless Arab population would be created; nor did we exploit Arab labour. We are, in fact, blamed for not using it enough. All impartial observers agree that the standard of living in the country has risen for all-but we failed as a community to grasp the elementary significance of the political issue.

This strange development sprang largely from the fact that the Jewish national movement entered Palestine in the train of the victors of the First World War. Jewish longing for the return to Palestine was, of course, ancient and sacred. But it did not take the shape of a political movement before the rise of modern nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century. The World War 1914-18, which brought the first realisation of Zionist hopes, ended with the victory of the West. Russia had collapsed; China was powerless; Japan stood aloof; and when Germany was conquered, it was the Western democracies which dominated the scene.

This domination, visibly expressed in the great assemblies of Paris and Versailles, was not limited to the military sphere. The ideals of the French Revolution, liberalism, progress and democracy had been the banner under which the war had been fought. They had profoundly influenced the minds of the

leading statesmen, and upon these ideals the new world was to be formed. The West stood at its zenith. But it had not yet accustomed itself to apply the ideals of democracy to the East, and very little thought was given at the time to the national independence of the Asiatic and African peoples. The superiority of the West, based on its achievements in nearly all spheres of life, appeared to be overwhelming; and if it did not justify the right to rule, it seemed at least to give the right of political, moral and even spiritual leadership.

The consent of the peoples of the Middle East to the new order under these conditions seemed hardly to be required. Two years before the Balfour Declaration, France and Britain, in a secret agreement, had divided between themselves their mutual spheres of influence throughout the Arab world without asking the consent of the indigenous populations; and although certain modifications had taken place in the days of Versailles, there was no fundamental change in the Western attitude.

One attempt, however, was made at that time to ascertain the will of the people. But the result was not encouraging for the Western Powers. Early in 1919 the victors had agreed that in Syria, Iraq and Palestine, where Western mandatory governments were to be established, the will of the local populations should be consulted before the mandatory was chosen. But soon afterwards France as well as Britain became reluctant to send out such an inter-Allied commission for this purpose, and it seemed advisable to both governments not to probe too deeply into the whole matter. President Wilson, however, anxious to ascertain the true position, sent out a purely American commission, which unofficially toured the country and, in due course, submitted the so-called King-Crane Report.

According to this report, the Arabs wanted complete independence immediately, though, if a temporary supervision was unavoidable, their first choice was the United States, their second Britain. Against a French mandate, they declared themselves with all possible determination. Regarding the Balfour Declaration, the commission expressed the opinion that its carrying out would lead to serious difficulties, and recommended therefore a substantial reduction of the Zionist programme. The Report did not attract much attention at the time; and the opposition of the local populations to the settlement was ignored for the time being. In all these developments Palestine played a comparatively small part. It shared the fate of the much bigger countries of the Middle East, and if the Powers did not consider Arab consent essential for the establishment of French rule in Syria and the British mandate in Iraq, it is natural that the Jews, whose claim to the Holy Land was infinitely stronger, did not insist on Arab consent for the establishment of the mandate over Palestine. In January, 1919, Dr. Weizmann had tried to secure Feisal's consent by a famous agreement but this became abortive because the Arabs did not obtain from the Powers that independence which they had made a condition of the treaty with the Jews. Thus the whole order in the Middle East was based by the Western Powers on the assumption that the consent of the local populations could be ultimately dispensed with.

But soon afterwards the Western Powers had to realise the instability of the edifice which had been erected. French rule in Syria and the Lebanon came to an end. Iraq and Transjordan were declared independent states. Britain agreed to negotiate the evacuation of Egypt. The right of Arab self-government was recognised by all, at least in theory. Most important, the

superiority of the West, in view of its failures and of the rising of the Eastern communities, remained no longer unchallenged. But whilst all other nations adapted themselves more or less to the demands of the new times, at least in the political sphere, we Jews alone refused any change. We alone still clung to a period which has passed. We alone still maintained that, as far as Palestine was concerned, Arab opposition to the establishment of the Jewish National Home could be ignored; and it must have appeared to the Arabs as though we were the only survivors of the world of Clemenceau and Lloyd George. It is a sad paradox that, by the force of circumstances, we were denying to the Arab in our own case those principles of democracy and self-determination for which we are fighting everywhere else so stubbornly; and, instead of taking up the challenge of such a situation, trying to find a bold and constructive way out, we have continued to behave as if the colonial era of the nineteenth century was still unchanged.

It was this - our Jewish unwillingness to face the realities of the situation - which has made opposition throughout the Arab world so adamant.Whilst thirty years ago the Arabs were divided among themselves and, as the Weizmann-Feisal agreement shows, inclined, at least under certain conditions, to reconcile themselves with the Jewish National Home, to-day they are united in their determined opposition against its development, if not its very existence; and for a long time both nations have been preparing for a full-scale military conflict.

Opposition against the Jewish National Home has grown solid and undivided from Morocco to the Indian border. But it is not restricted to the Arab world. Most of the Asiatic and African peoples have formed a most unfortunate conception of

the Jewish National Home. To them Jewish immigration into Palestine, against the will of the Arabs, appears to be one more of the violations of the rights of a native population with which they are so painfully familiar. In this respect, the attitude of India is a striking example. Not only the Moslem League and Pakistan, but the Congress Party and India identified themselves with the Arab case as well. As far back as 1938, under the tragic impression of the first pogroms in Germany, Mr. Gandhi wrote:

> "My sympathies are with the Jews... but my sympathy does not blind me to the requirements of justice. Palestine belongs to the Arabs in the same sense that England belongs to the English, and I have no doubt that the Jews are going about it in the wrong way."

In 1946, he repeated the same thought:

> "The Jews have erred grievously in seeking to impose themselves in Palestine with the aid of America and Britain and now with the aid of naked terrorism"

And in 1947 Pandit Nehru, at the first Pan-Asiatic Conference held in New Delhi, proclaimed that Palestine, in the opinion of India, is an Arab country. There is no doubt that these words expressed the feeling of most African and Asiatic peoples, and although we never intended to treat the Arabs as a colonial people, in their eyes we are linked up with the imperialist Powers on whom we have so largely relied. The votes on the Palestine question in the General Assembly were an exact reflection of this fact, and all peoples whoever in the past, directly or indirectly, were the objects of colonial policy were in opposition to the establishment of a Jewish state.

Under this aspect, the so-called minority report of the U.N.O. Committee, presented by India, Iran and Yugoslavia, which advocated the establishment of a Federation and Jewish immigration according to the economic capacity of the country over a period of three years, would have had invaluable advantages. It would have broken the iron front against the Jewish National Home which reaches from Morocco to Indonesia, and a determined concentration on the report might at least have led to an interim solution during which the pressure of the general political atmosphere could have been reduced.

. . . . .

To justify our claims, we have put forward strong and most impressive reasons. We have pleaded, with all the power which deepest conviction can give, the need of our homelessness. We have pleaded all the miseries of persecution, the millions of our dead, the despair in the camps of displaced persons, the burning longing and hope of those who, in unseaworthy vessels, cross the seas in their quest for home, and have not forgotten the less spectacular but very subtle pains of exile. We have compared our need with the vast possessions of the Arab nations, and have proclaimed our right to survive as a people and to restore once more our national life in the land which our forefathers have made a sanctuary to the world.

With all this we have aroused sympathy, but have not convinced the Arab peoples that the country is ours. Even Mr. Gandhi, a saintly man, maintained that his “sympathy does not make him blind to the requirements of justice.” What could we expect under these conditions from the Arabs? They regard themselves as the possessors of the country for more than a thousand years, and if that is true, even the most heart-breaking need of the Jewish people does not deprive them of this fact and all the rights arising from it. To what example can we point to show that the possessing nations of the world share voluntarily their possessions with the needy? As long as the vast, thinly populated areas of the globe are not open to all for free immigration, how can the Arabs be blamed for refusing such an obligation to us? And even the ancient and sacred connection of our people with the country, which for us is a powerful reality, will not induce the Arab to give up his right.

To him our return without his consent remains a forced invasion. Correspondingly, many of our people long ago gave up all hope for a peaceful solution, and prepared themselves ‘for conquest and defence of the country. If war in fact were the issue, I feel, it has to be admitted that rarely in human history have conquerors been driven by greater need than the Jews. Great countries, even continents, were conquered for a much less reason. The issue, however, is not war, but must be peace. And if we search through all that we have written and said through all these years to prove our case, we shall find that we have said everything to stress our *need*, but that we have omitted one thing which might have changed the whole relationship with the Arab: Never in the thirty years’ argument have we admitted that our return, justified as it appears to us, inevitably requires from the Arab a *sacrifice* of the first

magnitude - the sacrifice of giving up his right to rule himself. So much have we been involved in the problems of our own case that we have not even realised the position of our neighbour and what we were asking from him. Of course, we frequently pointed out the *benefits* which he derived from our coming: the rising standard of living, the improvement in the health service, and perhaps even social progress. But all this could make things only worse and was bound to insult the Arab if at the same time we did not stress equally the loss and sacrifice which our coming must have meant to him. The decisive point for him was not the profit he might make, but the *harm* and the *wounds* which he felt he received from our hands; and-paradoxical as it seems - a frank discussion of these wounds (and how to heal them) would have been infinitely more profitable than all talk of alleged advantages. Paramount in the Arab's consciousness was the violation of his right - in fact, of his whole national personality - and as long as we ignored this, his main concern, we were preaching to deaf ears. And even if we had preached with the tongues of angels - which, indeed, we did not - we could not have changed this fact.

. . . . .

The failure to address ourselves to the main point in the whole issue was not only a signal psychological blunder: it was much more than that. It sprang ultimately from lack of confidence and faith in our own cause. It was a belief which was afraid to face the full reality of the issue.

Nobody, of course, can prove that a wiser attitude would have led to a constructive solution of the problem. But it is safe to say that the method which we adopted has not only failed, but

was bound to lead to the present deadlock. It was exactly that attitude of which Ahad Ha'am had warned us: the attitude of the cheap and easy way, the short-cut to Utopia which, by ignoring the main issue, made the difficulties almost unsurmountable.

. . . . .

There have been in the past many attempts by noble idealists on the Jewish side to establish friendly relations and co-operation with the Arabs. The Ihud group under Dr. Judah Magnes, the venerable President of the Hebrew University, has been leading in these efforts. For the sake of peace, they proclaimed their willingness to restrict Jewish immigration to parity with the Arab population, and to satisfy themselves with a bi-national state in which the government of the country should be conducted jointly by the two peoples. On this basis they have offered time and again their friendship to the Arabs. But the more sceptical elements among the Jews could rightly point to the fact that these attempts, laudable as they were, have remained without success. They felt that under these conditions it was quite useless to reduce their claim, and that ultimately everything will depend in any case on force. "Show us," they challenged the idealists, "one single Arab group which has been willing to accept our friendship"; and no such group could be produced. But the reason of this failure was not necessarily the "hopeless obstinacy of the Arabs" (which does not leave any other way out than the sword), but also may have been a lack of realism on the side of the Jews. For what is required here is not the establishment of peace between two quarrelling parties among whom right and wrong may be equally divided. Our problem is how, if at all, the Arab can be compensated for the sacrifice which we ask from him. Even our idealists, moderate

as their demands are, have failed to set themselves this question. To the Arab, even our reduced claims remain infringements of his rights. Even a restricted immigration remains to him an immigration which he opposes, and even a bi-national government one in which he does not rule alone. More than moderation is required to solve this problem.

To find a *compensation* for the Arab's sacrifice was at all times the key to the matter. To this task all our faculties and thoughts ought to have been turned. This, and not the advertisement of our achievements, was the question to ponder on in our meetings, study groups and prayer-houses, both in Palestine and in the world abroad; not by enumerating complacently the more or less incidental advantages which accrue to the Arab as a result of Jewish colonisation, but by deliberate and sincere intention to do something for him, equivalent to what we ask him to grant to us. The needs and desires of human life are so manifold, and the requirements of the Arab peoples - eager to take their full share among modern nations - are so multifarious that, given the will and imagination on our side, there was a strong chance of finding a workable solution. Nobody can say what concrete suggestions might have grown out of these deliberations. There is no precedent for such a case. But the general principles might well be outlined.

In the material sphere it might have been possible to connect our compensation to the Arab step by step with the progress of the immigration itself. Thus the establishment of new Jewish settlements would have been much easier for the Arab to accept if it had brought at the same time new tractors or new school buildings to the neighbouring Arab villages; and although difficulties and objections would by no means have been

lacking, such procedure would at least have created a considerable interest among those who are most concerned, and the general application of this principle would have brought a direct and immediate benefit to him.

But there are other spheres of co-operation with the Arabs which are of infinitely greater importance. The sacrifice which we have asked from the Arabs is political. It can not therefore be compensated in the material or educational sphere alone, but must be redeemed in the political field itself. There, indeed, great possibilities existed. The Arabs had started their fight for independence from Western control almost alone, without friends or help. If we had been associated from the beginning with their movement for national independence, had sincerely allied ourselves with their demands and used our influence in the world to strengthen their case, instead of grudging every success if not opposing it, such help would have been of the utmost value to the Arabs. Our experience and position as mediators between East and West could have given us a great opportunity, and the Arabs might have found in us an ally in their case and learned to see in Israel a brother. The political alliance on the other side would have increased the possibility for material co-operation, and both combined might have attracted the help of all those who are interested in the development of the countries of the Middle East. As Mr. Gandhi said : “There are hundreds of ways to deal with the Arabs if the Jews will only discard the help of the bayonet.” These opportunities were lost.

Our failure to recognise the real situation has made a settlement with the Arabs nearly impossible. We ourselves have made the position of the moderate Arab untenable and that of

the Mufti almost unassailable. What on earth did we expect a moderate Arab to do if we showed so little imagination regarding the difficulties of his situation? We have frequently complained that the refusal of the British Government to increase the number of immigrants has driven a large proportion of the Jewish youth into the arms of terrorism. How much more is it true to say that our refusal to recognise the Arabs' sacrifice has brought about the united and determined opposition of the whole Arab world against the Jewish National Home.

Fifty years ago Ahad Ha'am warned us to show to the Arab, not only kindness, but esteem; and this shy and awkward man was a greater realist than most of his noisy and self-assured opponents. If we had followed his advice, Arab chivalry might have given us an unexpected, positive response. But we have failed, and this failure is not the result of intellectual shortcomings. It springs from a lack of moral courage.

Failure with the British

The second field which was to be of the utmost importance for the fate of the Jewish National Home was that of our relations with Great Britain. This period is now coming to an end. But what has developed between us during these years will remain alive for a long time to come. Great Britain was *the* country which enabled us to lay the foundations of our work. More than that, for many years Britain represented to us the whole Western world as far as it was benevolent to our cause. To-day these relations are almost destroyed, and we Jews have convinced ourselves that this was Britain's fault. Nobody will deny that Britain has greatly contributed to the deadlock by mingling the trust of the Mandate with imperial interests, by the exaggerated and broken promises of the Labour Party, by lack of vision and timely decision; but unless we realise to what extent the collapse of our relations was brought about by our own fundamental shortcomings we shall remain unable ever to restore the broken links and in addition shall endanger our relations with any people who may become our friends or allies in the future.

. . . . .

The thirty-year-long history of Jewish-British relations since the Balfour Declaration suffered from the very beginning from a fateful ambiguity, for which, I feel, a large share of the responsibility rests with us.

Everybody knows now that from the openings of the negotiations on the Jewish National Home in 1917 we Jews aimed at the establishment of a Jewish state, and the draft which Dr. Weizmann and our other negotiators submitted to the British Government in July of that year accordingly requested the "re-establishment of Palestine as the Jewish National Home." It is equally well known that the British Government, after careful deliberations and negotiations which lasted for more than three months, refused to undertake this obligation. Instead they offered in the Balfour Declaration something essentially different - namely, "the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine." Whatever the interpretation of this "National Home" was to be, it is beyond all doubt that it was meant to be less than we had asked for. This was perfectly clear to all concerned; and although the possibility of a future Jewish state was by no means excluded in fact, it was repeatedly mentioned in platform speeches of British statesmen at that time - it is equally certain that the British Government did not undertake any obligation in this respect. This was made abundantly clear when Mr. Churchill in 1922, in the first White Paper on Palestinian policy, declared:

> "Phrases have been used, such as: Palestine will become as Jewish as England is English. His Majesty's Government have no such aim in mind."

But in spite of these facts, we continued to act as if our original draft had not been refused, but accepted; and from this ambiguity sprang untold confusion and even misery.

Again Ahad Ha'am, who had partaken in the negotiations, alone among our leaders had the vision and the courage to draw

the attention of the Jewish people to this discrepancy between our hopes and their fulfilment. In 1920, in the Foreword to the third edition of his essays, he dealt with the question in great seriousness:

> "I do not believe that many words are required to explain the difference between the two formulations. If the British Government had accepted the text which we had suggested, the promise could have been so interpreted that the country, as it is to-day, was to be returned to the Jewish people on the strength of its historical right; that the Jewish people may rebuild the ruins, rule in future in the land and conduct its affairs according to its will without heeding the consent or the opposition of the present inhabitants. But the British Government, as explained explicitly in the Declaration, did not want to promise anything which might injure the present inhabitants of Palestine. For this reason they changed the Zionist formula and restricted its contents.
>
> "The initiated realised immediately the significance of this change. But some thought that it was just a variation of style without any particular intention, and they tried therefore later several times, when in the negotiations with the Government occasion arose, to translate the promise into their own text as if nothing had been changed. But every time they found in the reply of the Government a repetition of the formula which is contained in the Declaration itself. This showed that we have not to deal here with a phrase which might be expressed in different ways, but that the promise is limited in reality by this formula: thus far and no farther."

Furthermore

> "When the British Government promised to promote the establishment of a National Home for the Jewish people in Palestine and not, as it had been suggested, 'the re-establishment of Palestine as the Jewish National Home,' this promise had a twofold purpose: (1) the recognition of the historical right of the Jewish people to establish for itself in Palestine a National Home, in which the British Government promised to assist; (2) the refusal to abolish the right of the present inhabitants and to make the Jewish people the absolute ruler in the country."

In an almost prophetic manner, he summed up his apprehensions:

> "This and nothing more the leaders and writers should have told the people, lest it would see in its imagination more than exists in reality and later fall into despair and lose all confidence in our whole cause."

But such words were most unwelcome at the time, and no attention was paid to them in the general atmosphere of jubilation. They were never mentioned, and - in spite of the masses of paper which we Jews poured out on the subject of the Balfour Declaration - the essay from which the above quotations are taken has not up to the present day been published in English and is unknown to the large majority of the Jewish people. Twenty-six years later, Dr. Weizmann, in his last speech as President of the World Zionist Organisation, reminded the people of these warnings:

> "I remember how angry we were with the late Ahad Ha'am when,

in the honeymoon of the political triumph which surrounded the Balfour Declaration, he wrote an article that in the Balfour Declaration they were promised a National Home in Palestine, and not Palestine as a Jewish National Home. And there is a vast difference between one interpretation and the other."

But when these warnings were repeated, Jewish-British relations had already deteriorated almost beyond repair.

Although, therefore, the Balfour Declaration was much less favourable than we had expected, it was a mighty step towards the realisation of our hopes, and very much depended on the wisdom of our further action. If we had told our people at the time that what we had reached was only the first objective and that it was up to us to secure further stages by continued efforts and adequate negotiations with all concerned, its attention would have been directed towards the right aim and very much might have been achieved. Such a policy would have been the more appropriate since the Balfour Declaration in any case gave us sufficient time to lay the new foundations for Jewish life in the Holy Land and nurse it through its first essential stages. But here, as in the Arab case, we chose again the "cheap and easy way" of an ostrich policy and pretended that the problem which we had to solve did not exist.

"Do we not all know," wrote Ahad Ha'am, "how the Declaration was commented upon at its publication, and what boastful exaggerations many party men and writers from then till this day tried to read into it? The Jewish people heard it and believed that the end of the Galuth had come in reality, and that Palestine after a short space of time would be a Jewish state. The Arabs, whom, since the beginning of the Palestinian colonisation, we have always

considered as non-existent, heard it also, and they believed that the Jews had come in order to expel them from their soil and to deal with them at their pleasure. All this was bound to lead to frictions and embitterment on both sides and is largely responsible for that position which was revealed in all its ugliness by the events in Jerusalem during the recent Passover days."

The ugly events to which Ahad Ha'am alluded were the Arab riots of April, 1920, and an unbroken chain links these first disturbances with the appalling toll of murder and destruction which since then have fallen on the Holy Land.

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During the first years of the Mandate the question of the British obligation did not become acute. The size of the Jewish population in the country was so small that the claim for a Jewish state had no practical value, and as late as 1932 Dr. Weizmann himself publicly disowned such a demand. In fact, during the first ten years of the Mandate interest in our cause was so small that we were not able to develop the National Home even to the limits which the legal position gave us at the-time. But with the approaching catastrophe on the European continent the situation changed. Masses of immigrants pressed towards the country and paid little attention to what appeared to them to be formal objections. Legal considerations in the face of death seemed a mere travesty of justice. The National Home, whatever it had meant in the learned discussions of lawyers and diplomats twenty years before, to the haunted masses in their despair was the only reality which could save them from destruction. They had no doubt that, whatever the circumstances might be, it was Britain's duty to open the

country to all who wanted, and were able to enter. The more the catastrophe progressed the more passionate grew this conviction. After all, had not Britain, instead of France, secured the Mandate over the Holy Land, with its invaluable strategic position, the harbour of Haifa and the pipeline from Iraq, only for the purpose of building up the Jewish National Home? And was not the Mandate the only justification for their presence in the country? If she hesitated to fulfil her duty in the face of so much human misery, what else could be the reason but "the most shameless malice"? It was in full accordance with such lines of thought that Dr. Herzog, Chief Rabbi of Palestine, in his Easter broadcast in 1947, saw fit to describe the misfortunes of Britain, in obvious analogy to the Pharaonic plagues, as heavenly punishment for her maltreatment of the Jews.

Meanwhile, the main issue was almost forgotten, and nothing happened which could solve the Jewish-Arab problem. On the contrary, these relations steadily decayed. In 1936, the increased influx of immigrants led to the outbreak of the great Arab revolt which lasted for almost three years, until at last it was crushed by the British. At that time we did not yet consider the British as invaders and did not object to an application of British armed force in Palestine, to mass-imprisonment, collective punishment, destruction of whole villages, and execution of Arab patriots. The numerous police fortresses all over the country, which to-day appear to us as instruments of national oppression, were then erected to protect the Jews and were welcomed by the Jewish population. In those days Jews and British were still friends and Wingate's genius stirred the hearts and roused the love of Jewish youth.

In May, 1939, under the impression of the Arab revolt, the

British Government issued the ill-famed White Paper by which Jewish immigration - after a further admission of another 75,000 - was in future to be dependent on Arab consent. Soon afterwards the Second World War broke out, and Arab resistance came to an end. But the breathing-space did not bring any rapprochement; the gulf grew wider. Whilst the Mufti went to Berlin and there joined Hitler, the Zionist movement - in the Biltmore Programme - raised the claim for unrestricted control of immigration and officially demanded the establishment of Palestine as a Jewish state. This was the return to the original request of July, 1917. It was a deliberate step beyond the Balfour Declaration, and certainly more than either Britain or the League of Nations had ever promised. But in the face of the mass destruction of Jewish life on the Continent and the amazing successes of Jewish colonisation in Palestine itself, the claim appeared justified to the majority among us. Arab consent to the new and far-reaching demand seemed to be even less required now than thirty years before. The Nazis had linked up their propaganda with that of the Arab national movement; and whilst the Jews had been most eager to fight on the Allied side, the Arabs had been, to say the least, reluctant. Rashid Ali had even raised arms against Britain, and the Mufti himself had identified his cause with that of the Nazis. Were not, under these conditions, all previous hesitations to admit Jewish immigration into the Holy Land, and above all the hated White Paper, exposed and branded as appeasement? Could one not hope that they would end once and for all when victory was won? This was the cause for which the Jewish leaders pledged their word. There seemed, indeed, a chance that the attitude of the Arabs in the war might justify that of the Jews in peace, and that all our mistakes of the past would be blotted out by the glory of victory.

But victory was bound to bring a grievous disappointment. In spite of all the links which had been forged between many influential Arabs and the Nazis, in spite of all the active help which the Mufti and his friends had given to the Germans, the Arab national movement emerged from the war stronger than ever, and resistance against Jewish mass immigration remained as adamant as it had been before. Indeed, the assumption that this resistance would collapse together with Germany was as erroneous as would have been the belief that the national movement of India, Egypt or Indonesia would end with the Axis downfall; and to-day the position of the Arab peoples is stronger than at any time since their subjugation by the Turks.

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Not even the notorious White Paper disappeared. True, its worst part - the complete stopping of Jewish immigration, which certainly was incompatible with the idea of the Mandate, never came into force. For the British Government continued to admit at least a quota of 1,500 immigrants per month. But the other restrictions, particularly those concerning the acquisition of land, remained. Moreover, neither the Labour Government nor Mr. Churchill, neither the Anglo-American Committee nor any member of the United Nations, has ever suggested the restoration of free Jewish immigration into the whole of Palestine which was our demand when the White Paper was issued, and which remained our official demand until the decision of the United Nations.

The battle against the White Paper became for us the battle for the National Home and, to the Jewish mind, the White Paper became the source of all our troubles. “The White Paper,”

declared Dr. Weizmann in the opening address at the last Zionist Congress, “is directly responsible for the present troubled situation in Palestine,” and in this he certainly expressed the opinion of the overwhelming majority of his audience.

For us Jews the White Paper became indissolubly linked with the impossibility for innumerable innocent people in deadly peril of reaching the haven of safety. But did this White Paper really fall upon us one day unexpectedly like a thunderbolt from a blue sky? Was it not foreshadowed for years by a long series of unmistakable signs of bloodshed and riot? Was this document really the root of our trouble? Was it not only a very imperfect, heavy-handed, clumsy attempt to deal with a situation which in itself had become unbearable? Has the origin of this situation ever been anything else but the simple inescapable fact that we had to build our National Home in a country where another people is living, and that we lacked the imagination and the wisdom to master such a problem? And, lastly, is not this White Paper precisely one of those events which Ahad Ha’am had in his mind when he warned us that our right in the country is restricted by the formula, “Thus far and no farther,” and that the day would come when the people will awaken from their dream and “will fall into despair”?

That something of that kind would happen one day was to be foreseen. The White Paper was the point at which the dyke broke. But that it would break somewhere some day had long become unavoidable. It was impossible to pretend indefinitely that our right to enter the country was unlimited; that it was Britain’s duty to enforce the admission of every Jew for whom we could provide a living, until at last we reached the majority in the country. It was impossible to demand that Britain by this

method should do just what she had refused to do from the beginning - that is, to establish a Jewish state against the will of the Arab, and thereby run the risk of violence and even war. But so blind were we to the reality of the situation that when in 1937 Britain had accepted the Peel plan of partition - which once and for all would have abolished the need and even possibility for any White Paper - we Jews, who should have jumped at this solution, did not consider the plan as good enough.

It sometimes could appear from our utterances as if the White Paper was nothing but the work of sheer arbitrary British malice without which the doors of Palestine would have been wide open to us. But Arab opposition against handing over the country to us was certainly not less during the war than before, and did not decrease by the acceptance of the Biltmore Programme. Can we really maintain under these conditions that it would have been possible to force into Palestine - at a time when the war was in the balance or seemed even lost-all the tens or hundreds of thousands who might have escaped from the Continent and of whom we now dream? The riots which have shaken Palestine since the decision of the United Nations to recommend partition give the answer to this question. To blame the White Paper as the root of all our troubles was therefore just another attempt of escapism. It was a new attempt to evade again that problem which Ahad Ha’am unveiled to us so clearly and which, since then, by iron necessity, has grown to terrible proportions.

Under easier conditions it would perhaps have been possible at the end of the war to make a new start. There was even a moment when the Arab mind, which had been deeply impressed by the year-long successes of Fascists and Nazis, was thrown into confusion by their downfall. A new approach then might have found a certain readiness to respond. But no such attempt was made, and the gulf between the parties grew still wider.

The plan of the British Government, according to which 96,000 immigrants were to be admitted over a period of two years, and the decision on further immigration to be left to the High Commissioner - a scheme which would have given widespread relief to the refugees and plentiful constructive work to the people in Palestine themselves - was equally rejected by Jews and Arabs. We now embarked on a course which put the blame for our situation exclusively on others, and accordingly led to a campaign of ruthless vilification against Great Britain. Our failure to find a solution of the Arab problem increased the bitterness of our attitude - as if we wanted to compensate our shortcomings on one side by our claims on the other. The hopelessness of the general situation further threw its shadows over the picture, and it seems sometimes as if our capacity to see the reality of the situation in its right perspective has, as the result of so much sorrow, been partially darkened.

Suddenly our propagandists discovered that Great Britain had imperialist interests and poured forth their moral indignation upon such depravity. They forgot that these same imperialist interests had not been repellent to them as long as they seemed to be in harmony with the development of the Jewish National Home. Soon the campaign spread overseas. For many years Jewish writers and orators had hardly been able to

do enough in praising the humanity, unselfishness and wisdom of British statesmanship. But now we were told of British treachery and were invited to look beyond the ocean for "bigger and better" editions of the same qualities. Important groups of American Zionists began to pour out a powerful propaganda against England. They linked up with all other anti-British forces, and exerted not inconsiderable influence on American policy. But their presentation of the case was so one-sided and exaggerated, and so neglectful of the reality of the Arab case, that this influence is bound to be of very short duration; and it may even come back one day like a boomerang on American Jewry and deeply affect what has remained of the Jewish position in the Western world. In fact, these Zionist groups in America repeated in a cruder and coarser form all those fundamental mistakes which had previously been made over here. To them the shortcomings of Great Britain appeared as "malicious crimes." They replaced the methods of political discussion by "big salesmanship with streamline advertising" and in some cases Jewish publicity there even descended to the level of the late Julius Streicher. But the idea that we Jews ourselves have to bear a grave responsibility for the present situation and that it is our duty to recompense the Arab for the sacrifice which we ask from him was hardly ever mentioned.

Under these conditions of increasing bitterness and hostility, the outbreak of violence on the Jewish side and the growth of terrorism were an almost natural development. But the fundamental basis of the whole anti-British terror was the grotesque though sincere belief of the terrorists that Arab opposition to the establishment of a Jewish State in reality did not exist. This was expressed in amazing clarity as late as June, 1947, when the Commander of the Irgun Zwai Leumi, in his

interview with the Chairman of the U.N.O. Committee, declared that "Irgun does not believe in such a phenomenon as independent Arab opposition," and added: "All Arab opposition is instigated by the British themselves." If this assumption was really true, all the hesitations of Britain in the past to open the gates of Palestine to an unlimited flood of Jewish immigration were in fact the result of criminal malice and even deliberate participation in Hitler's plan of Jewish extermination, and every new act of Britain, short of handing over the country to us Jews, appeared as a new piece in the mosaic pattern of British hostility. Essentially - though not so radical - this became indeed the general attitude of large parts of the Jewish people in Palestine and particularly in the United States. For if, in the words of Ahad Ha'am, we considered the Arab people as non-existent, it was only logical that we denied the possibility of any serious Arab opposition. The simple statement that Arab opposition against Jewish mass immigration was not only natural but real should have been the most trivial of all commonplaces. But under the existing conditions it was fervently denied by masses of the Jewish people and thus took on for them almost the character of a revolutionary thesis.

Every national movement sooner or later has to face the issue of violence; and this issue is always the supreme test for the sense of reality and the moral courage of its leaders. But rarely in modern history was leadership less determined in face of such danger than our own.

To oppose the movement was difficult from the beginning, since we had accustomed ourselves to put all blame for our situation on the British. Official Zionist reaction to the outbreak of violence was therefore hesitant and undecided and lacked

completely constructive leadership. At first our leaders dissociated themselves from the movement by denouncing the terrorists as “criminals or lunatics”; and since the assassination of Lord Moyne this condemnation was repeated with great monotony at every single act of violence. Such an interpretation, however, was profoundly inadequate. For the terrorists were never lunatics or criminals in the ordinary sense of the word, but passionate, sincere, although misguided patriots who, after innumerable disappointments, had despaired of any solution by peace and persuasion, who, after centuries of Jewish persecution had risen to take up arms in their own cause and were resolved to sacrifice everything, including their lives, for what they believed to be the redemption of the people. To turn their devotion and sacrifice to constructive aims would have required great powers of imagination and infinitely more than negative protestations.

To make things worse, Zionist leadership took the line that the terrorist activities - deplorable as they were - were at least understandable in view of the Palestine policy of the British Government, and implied thereby that the ultimate political responsibility rested, not with us, but with the British. This, however, was in fact the abdication of Zionist leadership. For if events were indeed determined on one side by the British and on the other by the terrorists as their opponents, the official leaders of Zionism reduced themselves to the humiliating role of an impotent go-between. Instead of taking upon themselves the full responsibility for all that was done, which incidentally would have been in accordance with Jewish religious teaching, they tried to shift the responsibility to others. This attempt necessarily destroyed the foundations of their authority, for there can be no authority which shirks responsibility. Moreover,

the whole discussion took place, as it were, on two different planes: the terrorists threw in their lives, the leaders made *pronunciamentos*. But worst of all, in many decisive issues our attitude was ambiguous; and at least in the beginning much was privately condoned and even promoted which was publicly condemned. The whole campaign of violence and bloodshed developed, as Dr. Magnes said, in an atmosphere which countenanced the terror. The minds of many were divided between fear and hope; fear that the application of force might harm, and hope that it might ultimately further the national cause. About the moral issues themselves, there was widespread indecision and confusion.

There has been one example in our time of a different way to meet a similar emergency, and this stands out as a shining light of moral integrity and singleness of heart. When in the earlier years of the Indian movement for independence, Mr. Gandhi once was faced by the outbreak of violence against the police among his followers, he did not put the blame on the British Government, although his case would have been very strong indeed, nor did he limit himself to declamations. He took the full responsibility upon himself. He accepted the challenge which the rioters had thrown at him, and offered his own life against theirs. He called off the demonstration which he had ordered, and threatened to fast unto death unless the riots stopped. Nobody, including his opponents, could doubt the sincerity of his determination, and in one stroke he recaptured all authority and power of leadership which the hot-headed rioters had tried to snatch from him.

If only one among us had challenged the terrorists in time to turn their weapons against him before any more innocent blood

was shed, he might have changed the whole course of events. He would have deprived his opponents in the twinkling of an eye of the immeasurable advantage which they enjoy as long as they alone were ready to give their lives. He would have given a powerful inspiration far beyond the Jewish community itself, and might have restored the unity and dignity of the Jewish National Movement.

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Some of this spirit of self-sacrifice was revealed in the movement of "illegal immigration"; and in spite of the violence and propaganda with which it was connected, the devotion of the Jewish people to this central cause has made a profound impression which may have greatly contributed to the decision of the United Nations. When the 4,500 passengers of the *Exodus* persevered through endless weeks on the high seas, refusing in spite of their miserable conditions all invitations and pressure to land in France, and even preferred an enforced disembarkment in Germany to a voluntary landing anywhere else than in Palestine, they revealed to an astonished world the indestructible connection between the Jewish people and the Holy Land.

By an unfortunate combination of circumstances and shortcomings, the relations between Jews and British have deteriorated beyond anything which could be imagined when thirty years ago both set out upon their joint undertaking. Sympathy with the National Home, once strong and sincere in this country, has practically vanished. Great forces have become strongly anti-Zionist and even anti-Jewish. The Jewish position in Great Britain is profoundly shaken. Many Jews all over the

world have become for the first time in their history enemies of Britain, and bitterness and disappointment have tragically destroyed a wealth of human relationships.

Both sides have contributed gravely to the disaster. But however much the British have failed on their side, they have never promised us what we had asked them to give the Jewish state. Justice demands that this fact be fully recognised by all.

Through the different fields of our policy there has been running like a thread, as a characteristic element, the refusal to accept our share of guilt for the ever-increasing crisis. We have blamed everybody but ourselves; and very few among us Jews have indeed accepted before God and-man the full share of our responsibility for what has been done. Self-righteousness leads to isolation and despair about the alleged injustice of the world. But recognition of guilt releases the greatest creative forces and builds communities.

The hope that the situation in Palestine would ease, and Jews and Arabs would settle their differences as soon as the end of the Mandate and the withdrawal of the British were certain, has proved to be another sad illusion. The decision of the United Nations has been followed by an outbreak of violent riots, and as the year 1947 is drawing to its close the intensity of the conflict appears to increase. More and more it has become evident that outside forces have not been the decisive causes of the conflict. The conflict is springing from the unsolved problem of Jewish-Arab relationship, and although we Jews have tried for decades to minimise or evade the real issue, we have now, in this belated hour, to face it in all its implications.

In addition, the Jewish National Home is threatened for the first time in its history by the dangers of isolation. For nearly thirty years it formed practically a part of the British Empire, and, in spite of the recent tensions with the Mandatory Power, the National Home was safe under British protection. This is now to change, and the Mandate is to end, not because its purpose has been fulfilled and the young community has grown beyond the need for any further help, but because the continuation of the work has led to insurmountable difficulties.

But worst of all is the danger from within. The dragon's seed of political and moral terrorism and the abdication of Zionist leadership are bearing frightful fruit. Not only does terrorism, with its far-reaching aims and influence on the Palestinian scene, give the Arabs an excuse for claiming that even a small Jewish state may become a springboard for further expansion;

the terrorist movement - after having been tolerated during critical years in the past - is beginning to dominate the scene; and those whom Zionist leadership used to describe as “criminals” or “lunatics” are determining for all the course of events. Demonstration of violent force and a spirit of ruthless retaliation are becoming the essential elements in their struggle and carry with them the seeds of ultimate self-destruction.

The main task, as in all periods of the whole movement, remains the solution of the Jewish-Arab problem. It is obvious that ultimately peace with our neighbours is required if the Jewish state is to survive. At present we are trying to achieve this peace by force and to build up in feverish haste the military strength which is to guarantee our security. But under no conditions can force be enough. The very establishment of the Jewish state by force, with hundreds of thousands of hostile Arabs within its borders and millions around it, creates a hot-bed of continued underground warfare, sabotage, boycott and massacre, let alone the grave dangers facing the Jewish communities everywhere in the Arab world. Initial successes for us Jews may even ultimately share the fate of Napoleon’s and Hitler’s campaigns against Russia. At best, military successes will bring only temporary respite; and until we succeed to secure the goodwill of the Arabs a dark and portentous shadow remains over the National Home.

Since all acts are the results of an inner attitude, the first precondition for the achievement of this aim must be the full realisation that the establishment of the Jewish state requires from the Arabs a sacrifice of the first order. It is irrelevant in this connection that the Arabs did not rule themselves politically for many centuries (although during the last years of the Ottoman

Empire they enjoyed a certain autonomy). Decisive is the fact that the Arabs, like all other peoples, have the right of self-determination and at least a potential sovereignty, and that what we ask from them is surrender of this right. Only if we are aware of this fact, do the pre-conditions of any peaceful solution exist.

It is obvious that this situation creates a particular responsibility and obligation on our side. The spirit of mutual retaliation and vengeance - aiming at subduing the opponent by fear - is not only utterly senseless, but, as far as we Jews are concerned, fundamentally wrong. The Arabs react as probably every normal and primitive people would react when they feel threatened by a mass immigration of another people into the country which they have considered their own for many centuries. We Jews should have a deeper insight and should be able to see both sides of the problem. It is we who aim at a change of the existing conditions, and it is therefore our duty to find a solution. The initiative for this task must remain with us.

The spirit of responsibility must express itself first and foremost in our relations to the Arab population *within the Jewish state.* It is of the utmost importance that the constitution of the new state is framed with vision and in the spirit of tolerance. Everything must be done to assure the Arabs that required. The shortcomings of more than one generation cannot be made good within a few months. Many attempts will fail, such as an offer of medical help during the recent cholera epidemic in Egypt, and the way will be long and thorny. But the recognition that a debt is owed by us Jews to the Arabs for the sacrifice which our restoration must mean to them will enable us to persevere until at last we may succeed to win - as Mr. Gandhi said - the Arab’s heart.

Such efforts may help to break the isolation which surrounds the Jewish state, and if we can convince India and Pakistan that we do not aim at conquest and can secure their sympathy and mediation much will have been achieved. The more the centre of activities shifts from the capitals of the West to Jerusalem, Cairo, Karachi and Delhi, the easier will it be to integrate the Jewish National Home into the Eastern world in which it is situated and with which its fate is linked. The restoration of our relations with Great Britain is only slightly less important, but it will be easier to achieve. For the conflict never affected similarly vital issues. But here, too, the realisation that we ourselves are sharing the guilt for the deterioration of our mutual relations will be an essential precondition for a new beginning.

The simultaneous failure in the two main fields of our relations with the outside world was not the result of *tactical* mistakes, but sprang from *fundamental* shortcomings. It was ultimately due to a lack of moral courage to face the realities of our situation. If we are to succeed in the future, a complete change of this attitude is required. We must establish again "complete and unconditional truthfulness" both towards ourselves in our approach to the problems which surround us and in our relations to our neighbours. This truthfulness alone can create those conditions without which no stable relationship can be built.

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In the last analysis, our situation springs from spiritual causes and may even be connected with the foundations of our religious position. The isolation of the Jewish people in the

realm of politics may be a reflection of their unique position in the religious sphere. Israel's spiritual existence is based on its election among the nations. Whilst Christianity aims at the conquest of the globe and rejoices in its expansion, Israel is deeply concerned in its own preservation; and although our fathers have developed very lofty religious principles about the relation to the non-Jewish world, the present generation has not solved for itself the problem of spiritual communion with its neighbours. But without such a basis it is difficult to establish stable relations even in the political field.

On the other hand, these limitations are only of a temporary character. The conviction that our religious position is not yet final is a powerful driving force in our life. There is a deep longing in the Jewish heart for the establishment of an ultimate oneness of mankind, and the pious pray thrice daily to hasten the day "when He will be One and His Name be One." Throughout the ages the Jewish mind was imbued with a burning Messianic expectation, and was always ready for the imminent transformation of human history. The eyes of the Jews are turned towards the future, and Israel can be fully understood only on the eschatological plane. As Dostoevski said, in spite of their forty-century-old history, the final word about the Jews has not yet been spoken. Our history is not yet completed and a last and decisive event is still to come. Essentially, the Palestinian crisis is not political, but spiritual. To deal with the Jewish question without regarding the things of the spirit is to ignore the very essence of the issue. Through thousands of years Jewish life has seen the ultimate reality in the spirit and has found its deepest expression in religion. The restoration to the Holy Land must have its final meaning in our religious destiny. It must be more than the renascence of

Hebrew as a living language and the birth of a new literature and art, more than the revival of an ancient and venerable national civilisation, and even more than the creation of a new society. The return to Palestine is the pre-condition of a new era in our religious development - an era in which the present spiritual frustration will end and Israel will find its redemption.

The fate of the Jews is once again in the balance. If we fail in Palestine, it will be a catastrophe of the first magnitude; for the hope of return for vast numbers has taken the character of a religious belief. But if we succeed, and find there the salvation of Israel's soul - in spirit and in truth - then even two thousand years of wandering, with all their sorrows and tears, have not been too high a price for such fulfilment.

GERRARDS CROSS. December 30th, 1947