

WORLD LABOUR

and the

JEWISH PEOPLE

Submitted to the Delegates of
the 44th Annual Conference
of the Labour Party.

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The Jewish Case before the
World Trade Union Conference

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FOREWORD

By GEORGE ISAACS, M.P.,

Chairman, British Trades Union Congress

I readily respond to the invitation to write a foreword to this pamphlet which describes the discussions on Palestine during the World Trade Union Conference. The case for the Jewish people had the support of the great majority of the Conference. A delegate from Latin-America put a concrete point when he said: "Anti-Semitism is a problem that concerns all the freedom-loving people of the world, because it breeds Fascism, and by the breeding of Fascism, not only Arabs, not only Jews, but the whole world is menaced." A Canadian delegate reminded the Conference that "English and French have resided side by side in the Dominion of Canada for nearly 200 years without friction of this kind."

Mr. Locker showed commendable restraint in his appeal to the Conference and gained support by the sheer merit of his case. In this pamphlet he does not hesitate to give in full not only the speeches made to the Conference by the Arab delegate, but also part of a speech that was not delivered on account of the time limit. The examples, not the arguments, of the Jewish delegates, convinced the Conference that it should support the declaration that "thorough-going remedies must be found through international action for the wrongs inflicted on Jewish people." The subsequent disclosures of the horrible brutality of the German camps at Buchenwald and Beljen amply justify the claim of the Conference that the protection of Jews against oppression, discrimination and spoliation in any country must be one of the responsibilities of any new international authority.

Finally, let me emphasise that although I bear a name closely associated with the Jewish race, I am not a Jew, but of British ancestry from Cornish forebears. I have had the opportunity to see for myself the amazing results of Jewish activity in Palestine; I have heard the voices of those who have found full freedom after a lifetime of vindictive oppression, and have examined the problem with which those responsible for the great undertaking were confronted. Because of that knowledge, and also as President of the World Conference that heard the case stated by supporters and opponents, I appreciate the moderation of those who spoke for people who have undergone such suffering.

The World Trade Union Conference has declared itself as striving for Freedom and Justice to all, irrespective of race or language, colour or creed, and in that spirit I commend this pamphlet.

NOTE

The delegation of the General Federation of Jewish Labour in Palestine (*Histadruth*) to the World Trade Union Conference consisted of Berl Locker, Aharon Rabinovitch (delegates), Israel Idelson, Mordechai Oren (observers), Ephraim Broido, Isaac Nathani and Baruch Rosenthal (who acted as members of the delegation for internal consultation).

The delegation submitted to the Conference a pamphlet, "Histadruth—General Federation of Jewish Labour in Palestine: Facts and Figures," and a stencilled memorandum, entitled "A Survey of Arab Labour Organisation in Palestine."

The delegation was among the 14 national delegations invited to send a representative to the Committee on the Attitude to the Peate Settlement. Mr. Berl Locker was appointed.

Mr. Locker (Palestine) was elected member of the Conference Committee (consisting of 42 members), representing the Mediterranean zone of the British Commonwealth. His substitute is Mr. A. Ziartidas (Cyprus).

APPENDIX A.

From the Discussion of Post-War Reconstruction and Trade Union Demands.

Mr. A. Rabinovitz (General Federation of Jewish Labour, Palestine) : Mr. President, I would like to propose an amendment, which I believe the Committee will accept, to paragraph 4 of the Declaration. The first three lines read as follows : " This World Trade Union Conference therefore calls upon the Governments of the United Nations to do all within their power to provide relief on an increasing scale to the liberated countries," and then I propose to make a comma instead of a full stop, and to add, " as well as to the sections of population of other countries which have been direct victims of Nazi persecution," which means, first of all, the trade unionists, Socialists, Communists, and Jews who have been detained in concentration camps in Italy, Germany and Austria, and who will have been fortunate enough to survive until liberation. I do not believe the Conference will leave all these people without international relief, and I hope it will adopt my proposal.

Mr. C. N. Gallie (Reporter, Committee on Post-War Reconstruction and Immediate Trade Union Demands) : Mr. President, we recommend that you accept that addendum to the first sentence of paragraph 4, and we do that in order to avoid unnecessary discussion and to help you to come to a conclusion at once.

APPENDIX B.

From the Discussion of the Report of the Credentials Committee.

Mr. A. Carrillo (Reporter of the Credentials Committee) : The Committee report a perplexing situation in regard to the Palestine Arab Delegations. The Committee received a request for the disqualification of the representation from one of these bodies.

The information at the disposal of the T.U.C. was put in our hands, and after consideration of same, we have accepted the allocations suggested by the T.U.C. as follows :—

Palestine Labour League (an Arab body co-operating with the General Federation of Jewish Labour)—one observer.

The Arab Workers' Society (the larger of the two Arab bodies independent of the Federation of Jewish Labour)—one delegate and one observer.

Federation of Arab Trade Unions and Labour Societies (the smaller of the two Arab bodies independent of the General Federation of Jewish Labour)—one observer.

Mr. B. Locker (General Federation of Jewish Labour, Palestine) : I do not want to take up the time of the Conference and I am not going to raise any discussion. It was the General Federation of Jewish Labour in Palestine which proposed that one of the delegations should not be admitted. We will not vote against the report, but what I am saying is without prejudice to our later steps to make certain that only *bona-fide* Trade Union organisations are connected with the World Trade Union Movement.

The Second Report of the Credentials Committee was adopted.

APPENDIX C.

LABOUR PARTY POLICY ON PALESTINE, 1944.

The last Labour Party statement on "The International Post-War Settlement" includes the section on Palestine, given below. Since its adoption by the Party Conference in December, 1944, it has become official Labour Party policy.

PALESTINE.

Here we have halted half-way, irresolute between conflicting policies. But there is surely neither hope nor meaning in a "Jewish National Home," unless we are prepared to let Jews, if they wish, enter this tiny land in such numbers as to become a majority. There was a strong case for this before the war. There is an irresistible case now, after the unspeakable atrocities of the cold and calculated German Nazi plan to kill all Jews in Europe. Here, too, in Palestine surely is a case, on human grounds and to promote a stable settlement, for transfer of population. Let the Arabs be encouraged to move out, as the Jews move in. Let them be compensated handsomely for their land and let their settlement elsewhere be carefully organised and generously financed. The Arabs have many wide territories of their own; they must not claim to exclude the Jews from this small area of Palestine, less than the size of Wales. Indeed, we should re-examine also the possibility of extending the present Palestinian boundaries, by agreement with Egypt, Syria or Transjordan. Moreover, we should seek to win the full sympathy and support both of the American and Russian Governments for the execution of this Palestinian policy.

APPENDIX D.

DECLARATION OF EUROPEAN SOCIALIST PARTIES, MARCH, 1945

In March, 1945, representatives of Socialist Parties in most countries in Europe assembled in London for a conference at the invitation of the British Labour Party. One of its resolutions, given below, dealt with the Jewish position.

"The International Labour Movement has never accepted any discrimination between the populations of different races or creeds in any country in which they have been settled. It has always put forward the useful principle of the equality of rights, and steadily opposed anti-Semitism.

“ This Conference of Socialist Parties demands full reparation for the crimes which Germany has committed:

“ The time has come, moreover, when the civilised world must recognise the existence of Palestine as a fact and must guarantee to the Jewish people the full opportunity for achievement of their National home.”



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