

What Jewish Conference Achieved

By Abraham Chapman

PART II

A glaring omission of the American Jewish Conference was its failure even to mention the Soviet Union in any of its resolutions. Dr. Wise's plea for collaboration with the Soviet Jews was not acted upon by the Conference as a whole. Henry Monks's tribute to the Soviet Jews was not embodied in any of the Calls or resolutions of the Conference.

If the Conference expressed what 99 per cent of the American Jews feel deeply it would, at the very least, have expressed the profound gratitude of the American Jews to the Soviet Union for its singular and decisive assistance to the Jewish people.

The failure of the Conference to take cognizance of the Soviet Jews and the Soviet Union, the only country in the world in which anti-Semitism has been outlawed and wiped out, contrasts glaringly with the gigantic reception which American Jewry is giving to the Soviet Jewish delegates consisting of Prof. Mikhoels and Itzik Feffer. Many of the leaders on the platform, participated in the reception of Mikhoels and Feffer. Many, if not a majority, of the delegates, participated in the tributes to Mikhoels and Feffer and the Soviet Jews. But the only chance the delegates got to voice their sentiment on this question was in their warm applause greeting Dr. Wise's and Henry Monks's references to the Soviet Jews.

Each delegate to the Conference received a specially-prepared study entitled "A Survey of Facts and Opinions on Problems of Post-War Jewry in Europe and Palestine." The introduction to the study points out:

"At the outbreak of the second World War in 1939, some 8,250,000 Jews lived in the European countries now occupied or dominated by the Axis. Less than three years later, in July, 1942, probably only 5,000,000 remained, of which the great majority was concentrated in Poland and occupied Soviet territory. Of those who escaped, 1,600,000 were evacuated by the Soviet Government from Eastern Poland, White Russia and the Ukraine and later transported to various parts of Asiatic Russia. Another 150,000 reached Palestine, the United States, and other overseas lands."

This is one of the momentous facts of the war, and the delegates were informed of it. The Soviet Government alone did its times

more than the rest of the entire world put together to save Jews from destruction at the hands of the fascist hordes. If we add to this the singular role of the Red Army in killing Nazis it is clear that were it not for the Soviet Union, not a single Jew would be alive in Europe today. This is no incidental fact. It is basic to the existence of the Jewish people today, and must be basic to any policy for Jewish survival.

Where were the delegates who truly desire collaboration with the Soviet Union, who recognize the urgency of strengthening the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition, who came to expression in the receptions for Mikhoels and Feffer? They didn't assert themselves, they didn't fight for their policy, their voice wasn't heard at the Conference.

A major part of the deliberations of the Conference was devoted to the question of Palestine. This is in keeping with the concern and interest of the majority of American Jews in the life and future of the Jewish community in Palestine. The Jews in Palestine are confronted with many problems. The Jews in Palestine, who have already written a glorious chapter in the war effort of the United Nations, desire to make an even greater contribution to victory, militarily and otherwise. But they have been meeting restrictions and discrimination. This is of concern to American Jewry as a whole. The industry developed by the Jews in Palestine has geared itself for the war effort and is in a position to make a significant contribution to the war effort. But here too restrictions have been met adversely affecting the war effort as well as the economic life of the Jews in Palestine.

In the discussions now taking place on the future of the Near East certain forces are ready to sacrifice the national rights and interests of the Jews in Palestine. This is of concern to all American Jews.

There are forces today which are

trying to sow antagonisms and conflicts between the Jews and the Arabs, in jeopardy of the future life and national interests of both people. The common anti-fascist interests of both peoples, the common interest of Jews and Arabs in strengthening the Anglo-Soviet American coalition to march to victory with the United Nations opens great opportunities for eliminating conflicts and for unity between Arabs and Jews.

The Palestine resolution of the American Jewish Conference, unfortunately, offered no concrete answers to these many problems, in the solution of which Zionists and non-Zionists can and should work together. The basis exists today for uniting all American Jews to help the Jewish community in Palestine, to advance its interests and development and to help meet its problems. Dr. Wise and some other Zionist leaders tried to find a basis of agreement between the Zionists and the non-Zionists on the question of Palestine. But the majority of the Zionist leaders pressed for a political Zionist resolution by the Conference. The resolution passed, because it is a maximum political Zionist expression, cannot unite American Jewry as a whole, and cannot receive the support of all American Jews because American Jewry as a whole is not composed of political Zionists.

The Jews in America, welcoming and greeting the beginnings of Jewish unity achieved at the Conference, will now intensify their efforts to broaden the unity achieved and to broaden the program to meet the needs and the demands of the Jewish unity movement. The Jewish people will support every step taken by the Interim Committee of the Conference in the interests of the Jewish people. At the same time the Jewish people will have to press and act in such a way to steer the American Jewish Conference along a people's program of win-the-war action which will truly unite the Jewish people as a whole.



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**"A STAMP A DAY
FOR THE MAN
WHO IS AWAY"**

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