



LAND FOR RECONSTRUCTION

By JUDGE MORRIS ROTHENBERG

Honorary Chairman, Jewish National Fund of America; Co-Chairman, Council of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

"To prepare the land for the rescue, rehabilitation and absorption of large numbers of survivors of the Nazi massacres who will come to our shores;

"To make possible the settlement on the soil of the men and women from Eretz Israel and other lands who joined the armed forces of the United Nations for the defeat of the Axis and for the cause of freedom in a better world;

"To extend the foundation and the scope of the agricultural development in Jewish Palestine —

"This 'Kol Adamah' Convention calls upon the Zionist movement and upon all Jewish communities in the free part of the world to redouble their efforts for the soil acquisition and reclamation program of the Jewish National Fund and to place at the disposal of the Fund, in the forthcoming year, the sum of LP. 2,000,000 (\$8,000,000) for the above-described purpose."

THIS call has a direct bearing upon the two basic and urgent tasks of rescue and reconstruction which challenge today the minds and hearts of American Jewry. It was sounded at a unique assembly held on October 12th, 1943, in Jerusalem, on the summit of Mt. Scopus. On the spot where the Roman legions under Titus laid siege to the capital of the Second Jewish Commonwealth in the year 70 of the Christian era, the most distinguished personalities of Palestine Jewry, representatives of the

Yishuv's national institutions and delegates of pioneer settlements assembled to give heed to the agonizing cry of the surviving remnant of European Jewry and to plan for a new advance in the program of Jewish rescue and reconstruction.

The date coincided with the second anniversary of the death of Menahem Ussishkin, whose name has become synonymous with the struggle for and progress of *Geulah Ha'aretz*, the basic task of land acquisition and reclamation which faced during four decades—and faces today on an even larger scale—the builders, pioneers and defenders of the Jewish National Home in Palestine. The assemblage bore the name of a "Call of the Land" Convention after the title of a manifesto penned many years ago by Ussishkin in which he emphasized the indispensability of the soil as the foundation upon which the new structure is to rest.

SINCE its foundation forty-two years ago, the Keren Kayemeth, as a people's fund for the redemption of its Homeland, became the national instrument upon which the gigantic task of (Continued on page 68)

ENLISTED FOR THE DURATION . . .

The American Merchant Marine



We are often asked what American steamship companies are doing now that the Government has taken over, for use during the war, all merchant ships, and the Maritime Commission is building thousands more . . . Well, except for those operated by the Army and Navy, all merchant ships, old and new, are being managed and operated by American steamship companies under the direction, and for the account of, the War Shipping Administration. To all theaters of war and in serving the United Nations and other friendly countries, the companies of the American Merchant Marine and their personnel afloat and ashore are doing the greatest ocean transportation job in history.

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The Program of the U.P.A.

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tary, food and necessities for those on the home front, and permitting valuable shipping space that might otherwise be devoted to import to be used for more urgent cargo.

UNDER the stimulus of the Jewish Agency and with the land resources of the Jewish National Fund, staple crops, vegetables and dairy products have leaped by great percentages to provision the civilian population, as well as the military garrisons stationed in Palestine. Agricultural settlement, which has made these crop increases possible, is one of the basic policies of the Jewish Agency. There are now 276 Jewish agricultural settlements in Palestine, most of them established with or aided by funds of the Palestine Foundation Fund or on land of the Jewish National Fund. Twenty-eight of these settlements have been established since the beginning of the war.

Indissolubly linked with the development of the Jewish National Home is the land purchase, development and afforestation program of the Jewish National Fund. Despite all the difficulties which have confronted this agency, its achievements in recent decades have been notable indeed. As of

June 30, 1943, the Jewish National Fund had purchased, and holds in trust for the Jewish people, 652,293 dunams of land in Palestine (four dunams to the acre). Without this tireless effort to increase Jewish holdings of land in Palestine, that country would have been unable to find room for the hundreds of thousands who escaped from the Hitler terror to Palestine. Provision must be made on a continuing and expanding basis for the equally great, if not greater, numbers who will seek admission after the war and who must and will be granted asylum and a chance to rebuild their lives in dignity and security. Experience in Palestine and other parts of the world during the past two decades underlines the wisdom of acquiring land as the indispensable basis for any mass settlement scheme.

In the coming months and years, American Jews will have increasing opportunity to play a significant role in the settlement and upbuilding of the Jewish National Home. Their instrument of co-operation with the Yishuv, the United Palestine Appeal, must be utilized to the fullest extent so that there need be no halting in the progress toward the ultimate goal.

Land For Reconstruction

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preparing the land for the people was placed. The "Call of the Land" which it constantly sounded was at first but feebly audible. It found its first echo in the sensitive ears of those who are especially attuned to the lesson which Jewish homelessness, caused by national landlessness, has written on the tragic pages of the annals of the Diaspora. It met with the response of those who, as the events of the past several decades unfolded, gained an insight and a growing understanding of the problems of planning and practical action which underlie the question of Jewish national survival. Under its banner the creative energies of the Jewish masses in the large Jewish population centers in Eastern and Central Europe, in the British Commonwealth of Nations and in the United States were mobilized for the redemption of the soil which has as its aim the creation of a Homeland for the Jewish people. The pennies of the poor and the dollars of the well-to-do have been channelled through

this instrument of national redemptive action. The grand total shows an investment of approximately \$40,000,000 in the basic task of nation building. With these resources the Jewish National Fund gave to the world an irrefutable demonstration of Jewish capacity for pioneering work and achievement in agriculture. Year after year and decade after decade the Keren Kayemeth blazed new trails in the desert and wastelands and redeemed areas of Eretz Israel for the establishment of 167 agricultural colonies and 18 suburban settlements, which today constitute the backbone of Jewish Palestine.

When the hour of supreme crisis came and the devastating hurricane of hatred, persecution and slaughter swept over the Jewish communities of Continental Europe, the grains of national soil, gathered in Eretz Israel with so much devotion and perseverance, rose to the stature

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A SALUTE TO THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE



The Star of David hangs with the Hammer and Sickle, the Union Jack and Stars and Stripes at a meeting in tribute to the victorious Russian armies.



Mayor Rokach emerges from an ambulance which he inspected during a ceremony at the Town Hall of Tel Aviv. A number of ambulances and other medical supplies were contributed to aid Russia.

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of a Rock of Salvation. The assets which represented the toil and the sweat of a thousand years by the Jewish communities on the Rhine, on the Seine, on the Vistula, on the Bug and on the Dnieper crumbled into dust under the blood-soaked heels of the Nazi legions of death. Only the tiny dots of the new Jewish civilization and hope which grew out of the soil that was redeemed on the banks of the Jordan shone forth as towers of light and hope in the ocean of blood. Zion Redeemed is the haven at which the wrecked ship of Jewish life strives to anchor now.

IF RESCUE and reconstruction are to be effected as a result of constructive, long-range planning and in a manner that would prevent the recurrence of the tragic events which a bewildered world witnessed during the past year, Palestine must assume a position of primary importance. In the extension of the Jewish

National Home and the creation of such political and economic conditions that will lead ultimately to the establishment of the third Jewish Commonwealth, the tasks of today and of the post-war period are inseparably linked. This is not a mere assertion of Zionist doctrine; it is the inevitable conclusion to which a consideration of the facts as they stand out in the record of the Hitler decade must lead.

Since the advent of Hitlerism, 520,000 Jews left Continental Europe for overseas countries, uprooted and homeless refugees. More than *one-half* of this number — 300,000 men, women and children—found homes in Jewish Palestine — more than the total number of refugees that were admitted to all other countries including the United States of America. Nor has this process of life-saving and national renaissance been stopped, war conditions and provisions of the MacDonald

(Continued on next page)



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Land For Reconstruction

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White Paper to the contrary notwithstanding, since the outbreak of hostilities. During the four war years the Jewish population of Palestine has been increased by approximately 50,000 souls, and the major part of the increase was due to the influx and absorption of nearly 40,000 refugees from the gas chambers and charnel-houses that Hitler built for them.

Unswervingly performing its function, the Jewish National Fund accelerated the tempo of its work during the war even in those days when the Axis armies stood at the gates of Alexandria and invasion by the relentless foe seemed imminent. Since September, 1939, the Keren Kayemeth succeeded in enlarging the national land holdings by an additional 180,000 dunams of land and, cooperating with its sister-fund, the Keren Hayesod, provided the land, and in some instances part of the required resources, for the establishment of 23 new agricultural colonies in all parts of Palestine. These *new settlements* offered striking testimony of the epic part which has been and is being performed by the Jewish National Fund in the development of the Jewish National Home even during war times.

IN THE story of the second World War, the epic of the victory in the desert which started with the rout of Rommel's Afrika Korps at El Alamein and led to Italy's declaration of war upon Germany, already occupies a pre-eminent place. But the world has yet to learn and fully appreciate the part which Jewish Palestine, its manpower, its skilled services and its supplies, played in the miracle of El Alamein. In a Mediterranean over which the navies of Great Britain and the United States had to convoy every ship and protect with their guns and the lives of their men each ounce of *materiel* and supplies for the fighting armies, the industrial and agricultural production of Jewish Palestine, unstintingly given to the war effort, has been an asset of incalculable value. The story of Palestine's soil and its yield during those bleak months when each ton of shipping was more precious than gold must become a cogent part of this record of victory.

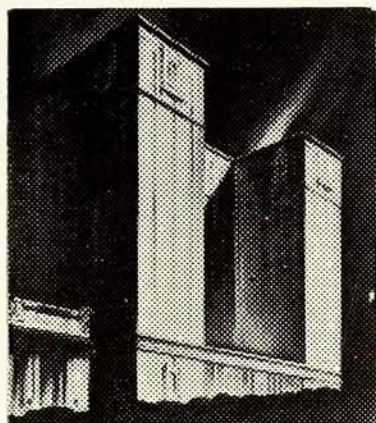
For Jewish Palestine's agriculture made a splendid contribution to the war effort when it enlarged considerably its output for the maintenance of the population as well as the armed forces. These included constantly increasing

numbers of the U. S. Flying Corps and other American military units. The network of irrigation has been considerably extended over the Jewish-owned land areas and mixed farming has developed greatly. Whereas before September, 1939, Jewish agriculture provided 34% of the Yishuv's requirements of milk, today it supplies 58%. Its egg production has risen from 37% to 64%, and vegetable production from 44% to 63% of consumption. Jewish production of potatoes, a crop which was introduced only on the eve of the war, now satisfies 55% of the needs. Settlements on the land of the Jewish National Fund provided 63% of all the Jewish milk output, 73% of poultry and eggs, 62% of cereals, 75% of vegetables, 82% of potatoes.

This increased production was made possible to a very considerable degree by the enlargement of the areas under cultivation. Whereas in 1937, the areas of the Jewish National Fund devoted to the growing of cereals and vegetables comprised 173,000 dunams, the cereal and vegetable crops in 1942 occupied an area of 304,800 dunams. The increase on privately-owned Jewish land is expressed by the figures of 156,000 dunams in 1937, as compared with 175,000 dunams in 1942. This production for Victory was greatly enhanced because the Jewish National Fund constantly brought within the country's cultivable area *new* land tracts which, reclaimed as people's property and placed at the disposal of willing fighters and tillers of the soil, was pressed into the service of freedom's cause. During the year 5703 (October, 1942-September, 1943), when new acquisitions amounted to approximately 50,000 dunams, the J.N.F. Land holdings reached the 650,000 dunam level.

THE fourth war year witnessed an unprecedented development in the fund raising and land acquisition work of the Jewish National Fund. Its world income reached the peak of LP. 1,100,000 toward which American Jewry contributed approximately \$4,000,000. This sum comprises the total of gifts given to the Keren Kayemeth as a result of its popular collections in the United States, the allocation it received from the United Jewish Appeal through the United Palestine Appeal, and a sum of approximately \$1,500,000 invested by public-spirited citizens in the 10 year 4%

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Palestine is not speculating about the shape of things to come. The Jewish Homeland is *already* grappling with the grave problem of the post-war period. To *live* it must grow and *expand*. For Eretz Israel, the tasks of rescue and reconstruction are *immediate* and feasible daily assignments. For the fulfillment of its historic task, the *Land* of Israel must be extended for the *rescue* of Israel. The land areas to be purchased and developed will implement the following program: (a) Provide a haven for the refugees, including children, who find their way to

Palestine during the war; (b) Absorb the mass immigration which will come to the shores of Eretz Israel in the post-war period; (c) Create the foundation for the settlement of Freedom's Fighters, the men and women who enlisted in the British and the Allied armies in the Middle East; (d) Make possible the implementation of housing and building programs adjoining the towns and larger villages; (e) Extend Jewish settlement to hitherto undeveloped parts of the country for the creation of new Jewish agricultural zones; (f) Consolidate the existing Jewish settlement areas.

A Sure and Certain End

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lenial tragedy remains as stark and as menacing as it ever was. It is a tragic fact which seems to escape so many students of anti-Semitism. The story of Jewish emancipation in Europe from the day after the French Revolution to the day before the Nazi revolution is the story of political positions captured in the face of stubborn and sullen opposition, which left our emancipated minority in each country encamped within an unbeaten and unreconciled opposition. At the slightest provocation, as soon as things got out of order, the opposition returned to the attack and inflicted grievous wounds.

And in our day, stirred by the political and economic struggles which have torn nations apart, this never-failing, never-reconciled opposition swept over the Jewish political and economic positions in Europe and completely demolished them. This has been our persistent problem. This is our immediate emergency which, unfortunately, has been immediate almost to every generation of our people in almost every country. What we are confronted with today is the frightful aggravation of a situation which has continuously darkened the pages of our history since the beginning of our dispersion.

There is but one solution for this persistent emergency in Jewish life, for national homelessness which is the source of our suffering and sorrow. That solution is a national home. The only solution is to normalize the political status of the Jewish people in the world by giving it a national basis in its national and historic home.

The world finally came to acknowledge the validity of this solution. In 1917 Great Britain issued the Balfour Declaration.

This declaration was not intended to be an immigrant aid scheme, an effort to open up a new avenue for Jewish immigration. Shortly before its issuance and for many years prior thereto, Jews in very large numbers were finding opportunities for immigration in many parts of the world, especially in the Western Hemisphere. The Balfour Declaration was a political, national act designed to rebuild the national life of the Jewish people in its homeland.

THIS was the interpretation of the purpose of the Balfour Declaration which was universally accepted by the statesmen of the world and by those who were responsible for the issuance of the Declaration. They were thinking in terms of a Jewish Commonwealth, or as many of them called it, a Jewish State which was to be the national outgrowth and evolution of the National Jewish Home.

Lloyd George, who was Prime Minister at the time the Balfour Declaration was issued, spoke of a Jewish Commonwealth. In 1919 President Wilson stated:

"I am persuaded that the Allied Nations, with the fullest concurrence of our government and people are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundations of a Jewish Commonwealth."

General Smuts, who was a member of the Imperial War Cabinet at the time, declared in 1919 that he envisaged an increasing stream of Jewish immigration into Palestine and in generations to come a great Jewish state rising there once more.

The great Winston Churchill, when he was Secretary of State in

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