

Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry

Report to the United States Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom

Lausanne, Switzerland, April 20, 1946

Chapter I

Recommendations and Comments: The European Problem

Recommendation No. 1. We have to report that such information as we received about countries other than Palestine gave no hope of substantial assistance in finding homes for Jews wishing or impelled to leave Europe.

But Palestine alone cannot meet the emigration needs of the Jewish victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution; the whole world shares responsibility for them and indeed for the resettlement of all "displaced persons".

We therefore recommend that our Governments together, and in association with other countries, should endeavor immediately to find new homes for all such "displaced persons", irrespective of creed or nationality, whose ties with their former communities have been irreparably broken.

Recommendation No. 2. We recommend (a) that 100,000 certificates be authorized immediately for the admission into Palestine of Jews who have been the victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution; (b) that these certificates be awarded as far as possible in 1946 and that actual immigration be pushed forward as rapidly as conditions will permit.

The number of Jewish survivors of Nazi and Fascist persecution with whom we have to deal far exceeds 100,000; indeed there are more than that number in Germany, Austria and Italy alone. Although nearly a year has passed since their liberation, the majority of those in Germany and Austria are still living in assembly centers, the so-called "camps," island communities in the midst of those at whose hands they suffered so much.

In their interests and in the interests of Europe, the centers should be closed and their camp life ended. Most of them have cogent reasons for wishing to leave Europe. Many are the sole survivors of their families and few have any ties binding them to the countries in which they used to live.

Recommendation No. 3. In order to dispose, once and for all, of the exclusive claims of Jews and Arabs to Palestine, we regard it as essential that a clear statement of the following principles should be made:

I. That Jew shall not dominate Arab and Arab shall not dominate Jew in Palestine. II. That Palestine shall be neither a Jewish state nor an Arab state. III. That the form of government ultimately to be established, shall, under international guarantees, fully protect and preserve the interests in the Holy Land of Christendom and of the Moslem and Jewish faiths.

Thus Palestine must ultimately become a state which guards the rights and interests of Moslems, Jews and Christians alike; and accords to the inhabitants, as a whole, the fullest measure of self-government, consistent with the three paramount principles set forth above.

Throughout the long and bloody struggle of Jew and Arab for dominance in Palestine, each crying fiercely: "This land is mine"- except for the brief reference in the Report of the Royal Commission (hereinafter referred to as the Peel Report) and the little evidence, written and oral, that we received on this point-the great interest of the Christian World in Palestine has been completely overlooked, glossed over or brushed aside.

We, therefore, emphatically declare that Palestine is a Holy Land, sacred to Christian, to Jew and to Moslem alike; and because it is a Holy Land, Palestine is not, and can never become, a land which any race or religion can justly claim as its very own.

CHAPTER II

The Position of the Jews in Europe

9. In the cold print of a report it is not possible accurately to portray our feelings with regard to the suffering deliberately inflicted by the Germans on those Jews who fell into their hands. The visit of our subcommittee to the [ghetto in Warsaw](#) has left on their minds an impression which will forever remain. Areas of that city on which formerly stood large buildings are now a mass of brick rubble, covering the bodies of numberless unknown Jews. Adjoining the ghetto there still stands an old barracks used as a place for killing Jews. Viewing this in the cold grey light of a February day one could imagine the depths of human suffering there endured. In the courtyards of the barracks were pits containing human ash and human bones. The effect of that place on Jews who came searching, so often in vain, for any trace of their dear ones, can be left to the imagination.

When we remember that at Maidanek and Oswiecim and many other centers a deliberate policy of extermination, coupled with indescribable suffering, was inflicted upon the Jews, of whom it is estimated that certainly not less than five millions perished, we can well understand and sympathize with the intense desire of the surviving Jews to depart from localities so full of such poignant memories. It must also be understood that this happened in what were regarded as civilized communities.

10. There can scarcely be a Jew in Europe who has not suffered in greater or less degree either himself or herself or by the loss of relatives. Many non-Jews of all nationalities also suffered in the concentration camps and many of them died. This must not be forgotten. We are concerned in this report with the living survivors of European Jewry. We could harrow the feelings of those who read this Report by repetition of accounts we received of German frightfulness. We do not propose to do so. We wish to present a picture of the general situation as we saw it. Few of the older people survived; not many children, for special efforts seem to have been made to destroy them. The majority of the children who survived are orphans. The majority of the remaining survivors are young and middle-aged people. The latter escaped death only by their strong physique enabling them to sustain either the ordeals of forced labor in concentration camps, or the privations accompanying hiding. The young people have had little or no education save that of cruelty. It is not too much to say that they all owe their lives to liberation by the United Nations.

11. These Jewish survivors have not emerged from their ordeals unscathed either physically or mentally. It is rare indeed to find a complete Jewish family. Those who return to their old homes find them destroyed or occupied by others, their businesses gone or else in other hands. They search for relatives, frequently undertaking long journeys on hearing a rumor that one has been seen in another part of the country or in

another center. Such was the system of the Germans that it is difficult for them ever to establish the death of their dear ones. They are faced also with very great difficulties in securing the restitution of their property. In Germany and in Poland, which were often described to us as "the cemetery of European Jewry," a Jew may see in the face of any man he looks upon the murderer of his family. It is understandable that few find themselves able to face such conditions

12. In Poland, Hungary and Rumania, the chief desire is to get out, to get away somewhere where there is a chance of building up a new life, of finding some happiness, of living in peace and in security. In Germany also, where the number of Jews has been reduced from about 500,000 in 1933 to about 20,000 now, and most traces of Jewish life have been destroyed, there is a similar desire on the part of a large proportion of the survivors to make a home elsewhere, preferably in Palestine. In Czechoslovakia, particularly in Bohemia and Moravia, and in Austria, the position in regard to the reestablishment of the Jewish populations is more hopeful. The vast majority of the Jewish displaced persons and migrants, however, believe that the only place which offers a prospect is Palestine.

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227. Statement by the President Following the Adjournment of the Palestine Conference in London

October 4, 1946

I HAVE LEARNED with deep regret that the meetings of the Palestine Conference in London have been adjourned and are not to be resumed until December 16, 1946. In the light of this situation it is appropriate to examine the record of the Administration's efforts in this field, efforts which have been supported in and out of Congress by members of both political parties, and to state my views on the situation as it now exists.

It will be recalled that when Mr. Earl Harrison reported on September 29, 1945, concerning the condition of displaced persons in Europe, I immediately urged that steps be taken to relieve the situation of these persons to the extent at least of admitting 100,000 Jews into Palestine.¹ In response to this suggestion the British Government invited the Government of the United States to cooperate in setting up a joint Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, an invitation which this Government was happy to accept in the hope that its participation would help to alleviate the situation of the displaced Jews in Europe and would assist in finding a solution for the difficult and complex problem of Palestine itself. The urgency with which this Government regarded the matter is reflected in the fact that a 120-day limit was set for the completion of the Committee's task.

¹ See Item 187, 1945 volume, this series, p. 467.

The unanimous report of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry was made on April 20, 1946, and I was gratified to note that among the recommendations contained in the Report was an endorsement of my previous suggestion that 100,000 Jews be admitted into Palestine. The Administration immediately concerned itself with devising ways and means for transporting the 100,000 and caring for them upon their arrival. With this in mind, experts were sent to London in June 1946 to work out provisionally the actual travel arrangements. The British Government cooperated with this group, but made it clear that in its view the report must be considered as a whole and that the issue of the 100,000 could not be considered separately.

On June 11 I announced the establishment of a Cabinet Committee on Palestine and Related Problems, composed of the Secretaries of State, War and Treasury, to assist me in considering the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. The Alternates of this Cabinet Committee, headed by Ambassador Henry F. Grady, departed for London on July 10, 1946, to discuss with British Government representatives how the Report might best be implemented. The Alternates submitted on July 24, 1946, a report, commonly referred to as the Morrison plan, advocating a scheme of provincial autonomy which might lead ultimately to a bi-national state or to partition. However, opposition to this plan developed among members of the major political parties in the United States--both in the Congress and throughout the country. In accordance with the principle which I have consistently tried to follow, of having a maximum degree of unity within the country and between the parties on major elements of American foreign policy, I could not give my support to this plan.

I have, nevertheless, maintained my deep interest in the matter and have repeatedly made known and have urged that steps be taken at the earliest possible moment to admit 100,000 Jewish refugees to Palestine.

In the meantime, this Government was informed of the efforts of the British Government to bring to London representatives of the Arabs and Jews, with a view to finding a solution to this distressing problem. I expressed the hope that as a result of these conversations a fair solution of the Palestine problem could be found. While all the parties invited had not found themselves able to attend, I had hoped that there was still a possibility that representatives of the Jewish Agency might take part. If so, the prospect for an agreed and constructive settlement would have been enhanced.

The British Government presented to the Conference the so-called Morrison plan for provincial autonomy and stated that the Conference was open to other proposals. Meanwhile, the Jewish Agency proposed a solution of the Palestine problem by means of the creation of a viable Jewish state in control of its own immigration and economic policies in an adequate area of Palestine instead of in the whole of Palestine. It proposed furthermore the immediate issuance of certificates for 100,000 Jewish immigrants. This proposal received widespread attention in the United States, both in the press and in public forums. From the discussion which has ensued it is my belief that a solution along these lines would command the support of public opinion in the United States. I cannot believe that the gap between the proposals which have been put forward is too great to be bridged by men of reason and good will. To such a solution our Government could give its support.

In the light of the situation which has now developed, I wish to state my views as succinctly as possible:

1. In view of the fact that winter will come on before the Conference can be resumed, I believe and urge that substantial immigration into Palestine cannot await a solution to the Palestine problem and that it should begin at once. Preparations for this movement have already been made by this Government and it is ready to lend its immediate assistance.

2. I state again, as I have on previous occasions, that the immigration laws of other countries, including the United States, should be liberalized with a view to the admission of displaced persons. I am prepared to make such a recommendation to the Congress and to continue as energetically as possible collaboration with other countries on the whole problem of displaced persons.

3. Furthermore, should a workable solution for Palestine be devised, I would be willing to recommend to the Congress a plan for economic assistance for the development of that country.

In the light of the terrible ordeal which the Jewish people of Europe endured during the recent war and the crisis now existing, I cannot believe that a program of immediate action along the lines suggested above could not be worked out with the cooperation of all people concerned. The Administration will continue to do everything it can to this end.

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