

Discussion Corner On Palestine Issue

In this issue LABOR ACTION begins its promised discussion on the vital and complex issue of Palestine. Our pages are open, for the next period, to any point of view our readers may wish to present. May we again point out, however, that contributions will be strictly limited to 1,000 words. In the interest of fairness to all, we urge contributors to stick to this request.—Editor.

Supports Creation Of Jewish State

Dear Editor:

I should like to take advantage of your offer of space to present a viewpoint on the Palestinian situation.

First, though, the question of the Histadruth's importance in the economy should be reopened. Dr. Bernard D. Weinryb, writing in the Jewish Review of January-March, 1946, states that, "According to estimates made for 1943, the share of the Histadruth in Jewish production was: in mixed farming 70 per cent, road transport 70 per cent, building undertakings 66 per cent... industry 10-12 per cent." Furthermore, within the percentage of industrial undertakings controlled by the Histadruth are to be found many of the so-called "basic industries," including the only plate-glass factory in the Near East, the largest iron foundry and the Palestine Portland Cement Co. (Nesher). It is active in promoting the sea and air branch of the economy, and most informed people agree that it is probably the most important single influence in Palestinian life. There is every reason to believe that in the Jewish state its strength will become even greater.

As to the analysis of the political situation, that seems to have been written and printed mainly to prove a point. While it is true that the Revisionists were quite strong in the last elections, it is doubtful that they will be able to repeat themselves this time. With partition, which the Revisionists have always vehemently opposed, accepted by the overwhelming majority of the Zionist movement, and sympathy for ITZL, which accounted for much, if not most, of their vote, on the wane, the possibility of the Revisionists playing a leading role in either the Congress or the Yishuv is not very great.

Agudath Israel, which was counted

as providing another 5,000 anti-labor votes, has always been outside the Jewish community, and considers Zionism a heretical movement. The question of whether they will participate in setting up the new state is, to my knowledge, still undecided. Ha-poel Hamizrabi, a workers' movement, would almost certainly not participate in a reactionary coalition.

The government, when set up, will probably consist of at least one representative from every sizeable party, thus assuring the government wide support in any decisions it makes and giving no group the right to irresponsible criticism of the administration. Labor will doubtless have the most important role in this government.

On the question of partition itself, I hold the following:

1) The Jews are a people. Like any other people, they have a right to their own language and culture.

2) Under socialism this right will not disappear; if anything, it will increase in strength.

3) The Jews, however, are in a peculiar position among the peoples of the world: they are a nation without a state.

4) Throughout the world, except in Palestine, the Jews are found in disproportionately large numbers in the middle and upper classes.

5) One of the aims of socialism is to see that every group has the proper occupational distribution.

6) The era of international socialism is most definitely not at hand.

7) Anti-Semitism will probably continue to be with us for some time to come.

8) The only way in which all the above statements can be reconciled is by establishing a Jewish state.

Such a state:

1) Will enable the Jewish people to develop its own destiny.

2) Will enable the Jews as a group to enter the struggle for a better social order.

3) Until such time as anti-Semitism is eliminated, it will provide a home for refugees.

4) It will enable the Jews to continue developing a normal economic structure.

5) It may prove to the world that there is such a thing as democratic socialism.

Yours very sincerely,

Airam ben Ephisyim.