

# Jewish Labor views the Arab Worker

*(The entire political world is awaiting the Report of the Royal Commission. With special anxiety it is being expected by those hundreds of thousands of young Jews, victims of anti-Semitism and of Fascism, for whom Palestine is the only haven of refuge. For them, indeed, it is the only territory on which they can establish a free life of their own, a healthy economic and cultural existence, based on labor and social productivity. The Commission may recommend that the narrow channels through which they have hitherto been allowed to enter Palestine be widened, or it may seek to reduce them still further. But, whatever the recommendation, it must be realized that the Zionist Labor Movement has existed before the Mandate, and it will continue to labor, to struggle and to exert its rights, whether the Report be favorable to its aspirations or not. For it is the working Jew, returning to creative life, who is the main and determining factor in the complexity of forces at work in Palestine. The following pages offer our readers a summary of the stand taken by the Jewish Labor Movement of Palestine in relation to the Arab workers of the country. The memoranda (from which this material is taken) and the oral evidence submitted by representatives of the Histadrut to the Royal Commission is published as "Palestine Labor's Case Before The Royal Commission".)*

## I. ARAB PLACE IN THE HISTADRUT

*"The process of the development of the labor movement in Palestine clearly shows that the Jews (that is the Jewish workers organized in the General Federation of Jewish Labor) are concerned with the welfare of the worker in general, irrespective of race and religion." (Miraat A-Sbark, February, 1935).*

*"Although the number of Arab workers in Jaffa is probably greater than that of those in Haifa, the labor movement is very much stronger in the latter town. This is due to the fact that in Haifa the Arab workers are in constant contact with Jewish workers and are consequently more receptive to working-class ideas." (Falastin, May, 1935).*

**T**Hese quotations, taken from the Arabic press in Palestine, show the direct as well as the indirect influence which the Jewish workers' movement in Palestine had on the conception and formation of an Arab labor movement. From the very first, Arab labor manifested a pronounced tendency towards a *rapprochement*

with the Jewish workers' movement whenever it was left free to develop along its own lines. The workers of both communities—the Jews, consciously, and the Arabs, instinctively—realized that there exists a real and organic basis for the establishment of friendly relations between them.

As to the Jewish worker, when he first came to Palestine in pre-War years, he found a society built up on a feudal system. The chief economic activity in Palestine was agriculture, and both tenants and agricultural laborers lived under conditions of extreme poverty and in a state of degradation which in some parts of the country approximated slavery. (Traces of slavery may still be found, at the present day, in certain districts of Transjordan).

In the sphere of urban economy, which included handicrafts, industry and building, the employers

had a free hand in determining the conditions under which the Arab worked. In this connection, the Turkish Government had proved itself to be nothing more than the instrument of the big landowners, merchants and industrialists. The Arab religious leaders were also ready to further the ends of the employers by proving to the Arab worker that the privilege of working for hard taskmasters was granted him by the grace of heaven, and that his duty was to carry out their commands unhesitatingly. In view of this state of affairs, the Jewish workers considered it their duty to raise the Arab worker from his exploited and degraded position, for which his employers, backed by the Government and the clergy, were responsible. They felt themselves ethically bound to assist in the abolition of conditions which led to poverty and oppression wherever they existed in the country; and also they wished to make impossible the existence in Palestine of a large group of workers whose poor conditions of living and of work constituted a permanent danger to their own standing as workers and to their standards of living. In the opinion of the Jewish worker the aim of Jewry and of the Zionist Organization to create a mutual understanding between Jews and Arabs in Palestine could only be furthered by co-operation between the working classes of the two peoples—that is, a co-operation based on their common vital interests.

It was during the years following the war that this feeling of the Jewish worker towards the Arab worker found a convenient opportunity for open expression. At the second Convention of the General Federation of Jewish Labor (the Histadrut) held in January 1924, at which its constitution was drawn up, it was decided that "the creation of friendly relations with the Arab worker in Palestine" should constitute one of the primary tasks of the Histadrut. After nearly four years of experimental work in the field of organizing Arab labor in Palestine, especially strong at the time of the spontaneous strikes which broke out successively at Haifa and Jaffa, the third Convention of the General Federation of Jewish Labor, held in July, 1927, came, *inter alia*, to the following decisions:

*"This convention recognizes the need for co-operation between Jewish and Arab workers in all vital matters of mutual interest.*

*"For this purpose an Inter-community League of the workers of Palestine shall be established on the basis of autonomous national units.*

*"The official language of the League shall be Hebrew and Arabic."*

After the convention, the new Executive Committee which had just been elected drew up a scheme which provided for the formation of the Palestine Labor League, and it was on this basis that the rules governing the League were drawn up, among them being the following:

*"The aims: To unite all the workers of Palestine, regardless of religion, race or nationality, in one League, for the purpose of bettering their economic, social and cultural conditions.*

*"To conduct educational and social activities among the members of the League.*

*"The Authority of the League and the sphere of its activities: The League shall found institutions for mutual aid in case of sickness (sick fund), of unemployment (unemployment fund), of labor disputes (strike fund), and other institutions such as loans and savings, and credit societies. Until such institutions are formed by the League, members of the League will be assisted in case of need by the above-mentioned institutions already existing in the Jewish section of the League."*

Criticism has been levelled against the General Federation of Jewish Labor for its policy of setting up separate autonomous trade unions for Jewish and Arab workers. But there were a variety of reasons which led the Executive Committee to this decision, some of which are the differences of language, custom and education, and standards of living in general; and also the existence of special tasks and duties, inherent in the Jewish Labor Movement, in which it was considered it would be unsuitable to involve the Arab worker.\*

## ORGANIZING THE ARAB WORKER

*Railways, Post and Telegraph Departments*

THE FIRST attempts to organize Arab workers were made among the employees of the Government departments of Railways, Post and Telegraphs. In these departments, Jews and Arabs had been employed side by side since 1919. Their condition of work and wages were identical and were based on the standards of living of the Arab worker whose needs were of a lower category than those of the Jews. In the course of their work, Arabs and Jews came into daily contact with one another, and they were faced with the same problems relating to their work. It was also impossible for one section of these employees to solve such problems without the co-operation of the other section. From the very beginning, therefore, attempts to organize these workers were made on the basis of a joint trade union. After an experimental period, the question was finally brought up for discussion at the second Council meeting of the General Federation of Jewish Labor which was held at Tel Aviv in 1923, and the following resolution was adopted: "This Council instructs the Executive Committee to determine ways and means for affiliation and mutual assistance of the Jewish and Arab workers employed in the Railways, Postal and Telegraph services."

The organization which was subsequently set up was an autonomous body having reciprocal re-

\* See "Arab Worker and the Histadrut" by S. Zemach, "Jewish Frontier", March, 1937.

lations with the General Federation of Jewish Labor. It is to be regretted that, in spite of protracted negotiations with the Government in this connection, neither the Central Administration nor the appropriate Government department has as yet taken steps to recognize it. It may, therefore, be inferred that the chief reasons which occasioned this attitude are to be found in the opposition of the authorities to the very fact that this union has established reciprocal relations not only with workers' institutions in Palestine, but also with labor organizations abroad with aims similar to its own, and to the fact that it is affiliated with the International Workers' Federation in Amsterdam and with the International of Postal Workers in Vienna. In fact, the severing of these contacts was one among several restrictive demands made by the Government as the price of recognition of the union.

All the Jews employed in the Railways, Postal and Telegraph services became members of the union, as did also a good number of Arabs; but at times of general resentment and discontent the whole body of the departments' employees authorized the union to treat with appropriate Government authorities on its behalf.

In the early post-war years the union began negotiations with the Government, and these have been continued right up to the present time, with only occasional concessions being granted. Although the Arabs were discouraged by these poor results, they did not lose faith in the union and continue to support its activities. It should be emphasized that had the organization agreed to the conditions which the Government wished to impose, its members would have been deprived of the facilities provided by the various institutions of the General Federation of Jewish Labor (i. e. Sick Fund, Loans and Savings Co-operative societies, etc.), while the Government itself would not have made arrangements for alternative facilities of this kind.

## PALESTINE LABOR LEAGUE

### *The Haifa Branch*

**T**HE SERIES OF STRIKES which broke out among the Arab workers of Haifa and Jaffa during 1924-25, and the resultant applications for advice and help made by the strikers in practically every instance to the General Federation of Labor, culminated in the foundation at Haifa, in 1925, of a General Labor Club, formed on the initiative of the General Federation of Jewish Labor. The chief activities of this Club were to provide cultural amenities which included evening courses for both Jews and Arabs in the three official languages, lectures, library facilities, newspapers, etc. As an immediate result of these attempts to organize the Arab worker, 250 Arabs joined the Club.

During 1926-27, the Drusian revolt which broke out in Syria and which paralysed the economic life of Damascus, caused a large influx of skilled workers into Palestine, especially at Haifa. These workers were prepared to work for lower wages than the Palestinian Arabs had been receiving, and the consequent competition had the effect of lowering the standards of living of the Haifa Arab worker in general, and of undermining the foundations of the General Labor Club's carefully built up organizational activities. Immediately after the disturbances of 1929, and, as a psychological reaction from them, some score of the older members of the Club met together, and with the help of the Haifa Council of Jewish Workers, founded the club anew and recommenced its activities.

The chief concern of the Club at this time was the provision of cultural and sports facilities for its members. In 1932, a dispute arose between the Arab workers in Haifa harbor and their Arab employer, and the workers turned for help both to the Haifa Jewish workers' Council and to the management of the Club. As a consequence of the intervention of these two organizations the dispute was settled in favor of the workers, who thereupon joined the Club in a body. It was this occurrence which brought about a renewal of trade union activities.

Towards the end of the same year, one of the largest Arab strikes broke out at Haifa among the Arabs employed by Arab contractors at the quarries of the "Nesher" Cement factory. The strikers, numbering about 130 men, were all of them from the rural districts of Palestine, and they received a wage of 10 piastres (2/-) for a working day of from 12 to 14 hours. In addition, they were compelled to buy all their provisions at the canteen owned by their works' contractors which supplied them with goods of inferior quality at higher than market prices. The attitude of the contractor and his foreman towards the workers was distinctly harsh and uncompromising. Immediately after the declaration of the strike, the strikers applied to the Haifa branch of the Palestine Labor League for guidance and help.

The Palestine Labor League responded by supplying the strikers with food, provided from monies raised by voluntary contributions from Jewish workers all over Palestine. The strike was ultimately settled in favor of the workers, and as a result their wages were raised by 2½ piastres (6d) a day and their hours of work reduced to nine. The strikers joined the Palestine Labor League *en bloc*, forming a trade union of quarry workers within it. For ten months following the settlement of the strike, the contractor made various attempts to break up the

trade unions of the Palestine Labor League, but without success, and at the end of this period he declared a lock-out. The 70 Jewish workers employed in a department of the "Nesher" Cement factory which worked in conjunction with the quarries, thereupon went on strike in sympathy, and the remaining 250 Jewish workers in the factory were also ready to join the strikers. The contractor then suggested that the whole matter should be brought for arbitration before the District Commissioner, who appointed one of the District Officers as arbitrator. The effects of the decision given in this case which led to the disintegration of the quarry workers union, will be dealt with at a later stage.

From this time on, the scope of the activities of the Haifa branch of the Palestine Labor League was increased, so that in its peak days, the Club could boast of more than 500 members who were organized into something more than 10 trade unions including carpenters, stone-cutters, employees of the Shell Company, tile factory workers, quarry workers and others.

### *The Jaffa Branch*

**T**HE PALESTINE LABOR LEAGUE established a branch at Jaffa during the early part of 1934, after the Jaffa port workers had approached the General Federation of Jewish Labor with a view to obtaining assistance for the formation of a trade union. These workers were of two categories, namely, the stevedores and the lighter-men. The former were paid by the day, and when there was specially heavy traffic, they were expected to work up to eighteen hours a day. The lighter-men were paid according to a traditional system whereby they received a share of one-third of the total takings of the lighter on which they worked. In practice, they had no control whatever over the receipts brought in by their boat and their income was liable to fluctuate in accordance with the whim of their employers. Besides, the position of both stevedores and lighter-men was jeopardized by the influx of foreign workers who came in great numbers from Syria and Egypt and monopolized certain branches of work, and who were, in general, prepared to work for lower wages than the local workers would normally accept. The latter, therefore, demanded that they should be given preference over them where the allocation of work was concerned. In addition, owing to the dangerous nature of their work, accidents, fatal and less serious, frequently occurred, but the men were quite unaware of the existence of workers' compensation rights, and their employers profited from their ignorance and did not pay compensation for accidents.

The task of organizing the Jaffa port workers was so successful that 85% of the Arab port workers joined the Palestine Labor League, which figure included some 400 stevedores and lighter-men. Once these workers had been organized, the Government was approached with a view to interesting them in the welfare of the Arab worker in the port of Jaffa, in the hope that they might take steps to improve their conditions of labor. In 1934, negotiations were begun and were still in progress at the outbreak of the recent disturbances. During this period of two years, a memorandum was sent to the High Commissioner and various Government officials were approached, but without anything tangible resulting. At the beginning of 1935, extra pressure was brought to bear on the Government, as a result of which a committee was set up "to investigate and report on the conditions of labor existing in the port of Jaffa, including wages, hours of work, conditions of employment and stevedore charges." It was only a year after the final committee meeting that the Palestine Labor League came to hear that a report had been drawn up by the Committee on the basis of which the central authorities had arrived at certain conclusions, and that they were willing to grant some of the workers' demands. Unfortunately these conclusions have not, up till now, been put into effect.

Further fruitless negotiations with the Government were entered into on behalf of the lighter-men, who demanded that they be granted facilities for checking the daily takings of each individual lighter, one third of which was their due as wages divided among them equally, since they were certain that the full amount was not being paid to them and that they were not getting a square deal. Improvements in this connection could very easily have been effected, since their employers were themselves organized in a cooperative which was registered with the Government and to whose accounts they had access and control, and whose scale of tariffs was also fixed by the Government who could keep an additional check on the amount of work done by the lighter-men through the Customs Department. In spite of all this, the lighter-men's request to be given access to these figures was not granted.

In addition to the trade union activities of the Jaffa port workers described above, the Jaffa branch of the Palestine Labor League was able to form two other small trade unions, one for workers in a tannery and the other for the workers in a cigarette factory. Attempts to improve their conditions of work yielded good results, and they were also instrumental in bringing about an increase in wages.

### Mutual Aid

IT HAS ALREADY been noted that the Arab members of the Palestine Labor League and of the inter-community union of the employees in Railways, Postal and Telegraph services (in addition to the Jewish members of the latter) were able to make use of various services for mutual aid and assistance through the General Federation of Jewish Labor. These facilities were theirs in return for contributory payments which were made at a very much lower rate than those of the Jewish members of the General Federation of Jewish Labor, and the Arab members of the Palestine Labor League made extensive use of this opportunity. Hundreds of Arabs went for medical advice to the efficient staff of the Sick Fund of the General Federation of Jewish Labor, while the total amount of money loaned to Arabs through the Loans and Savings Cooperative Fund, in Haifa and Jaffa alone, was in the neighborhood of LP2,000. Further assistance was extended to Arab workers by the legal advisers of the General Federation of Jewish Labor, and in many cases of accidents and death while at work, when the worker was in complete ignorance of the existence of compensation laws, legal damages were claimed and awarded through the intervention of the Histadrut.

### THE GOVERNMENT AGAINST ORGANIZED ARAB WORKER

IN THE COURSE of their efforts to organize the Arab worker both Arabs and Jews were met with firm and strongly organized obstruction both from the Arab employers and from the Arab national and religious leaders, and, what is even more surprising and greatly to be deplored, from the Government itself, which showed a complete lack of sympathy for, and, on occasions even actively interfered with this spontaneous manifestation of cooperative effort between Jews and Arabs. It has already been remarked that the dispute between the Arab workers at the quarries of the "Nesher" Cement factory and their contractor was brought for arbitration before one of the District Officers at Haifa. This Government arbitrator made an award in which he stated that many of the demands made by the workers were justified, and should be granted by the contractor. In spite of this, he omitted to make it binding on the contractor to recognize the representatives of the Haifa branch of the Palestine Labor League who were deputed by the workers to deal with them on their behalf. The workers concerned, as has already been mentioned, were all Arabs coming from rural dis-

tricts, and they were, therefore, inexperienced and ignorant of the means at their disposal for the safeguarding their interests. The provisos of the award were, therefore, never enforced by the contractor, because the representatives of the Palestine Labor League were denied the authority to deal with him on behalf of the workers. Neither did the Government take any steps to see that the award in which they appeared has been drawn up by its own appointed arbitrator.

It has already been noted that the Government had repeatedly turned a deaf ear to all the reasonable demands made by Jaffa port workers. In this connection, the representatives of the Palestine Labor League were given to understand that had the matter not been one involving the cooperation of Jews and Arabs, there would have been every likelihood that the Government could have seen its way to adopting a more sympathetic attitude towards these demands.

No less significant was the fact that in the law courts, also, there was shown a lack of sympathy with the efforts at cooperation between Jews and Arabs. This is borne out by a case at Jaffa where the magistrate went so far as to rebuke one of the Arab officers of the Jaffa branch of the Palestine Labor League for his activities in this connection and instructed him to desist from them.

The police force, also, and especially its Arab members, took strong action, on the slightest pretext, against Arab workers who were organized within the Palestine Labor League, and on one occasion went so far as to arrest four members of the committee of the Port Workers' Union as they were walking peacefully through the streets, for the ostensible reason that they were agitating for a strike, not in itself a legal cause for arrest.

### CAUSES FOR GRIEVANCE

THE CONCLUSION to be drawn from these attempts to organize Arab labor are self-evident. From the very outset the workers organized in the General Federation of Jewish Labor have realized that *it was their duty to organize the Arab worker in order to raise his standard of living and protect him from exploitation. The Jewish worker stretched out a helping hand to the backward sections of the Arab workers in Palestine, not only on ethical grounds but on grounds of real and vital common interests. The Jewish worker realized that it was to his own advantage to have at his side, instead of a backward and ignorant laborer, a conscious and organized worker who can stand by him and play his part in the furtherance of labor interests in Palestine.*

All endeavors to organize the Arab worker have, however, met with strong opposition from

the Arab employers and clergy, as well as from the present political leaders of the Arab population. These elements of the Arab community objected to the attempt to raise the standard of living of the Arab laborer, and also to the possibility of an understanding between Jewish and Arab workers. But the real cause for grievance of the Jewish labor movement lies in the fact that in spite of various statements made by the High Commissioner in favor of cooperation between Jewish and Arab workers, the Government au-

thorities have not only not encouraged joint Jewish Arab trade union activity, but have in most cases placed obstacles in the way of such activity. A more liberal attitude on the part of the Government towards this sphere of work of the General Federation of Jewish Labor would be advantageous to the economic and social development of the country as a whole, and would open up new possibilities for a Jewish-Arab understanding which would consequently lead to the establishment of lasting peace in Palestine.

## II. MUTUAL RIGHTS DEFINED

ONE: THE PRINCIPAL TASK of the Zionist Movement is not merely to bring as many Jews as possible into Palestine, but, at the same time from the economic anomalies that afflict them in the Diaspora, to build in Palestine a Jewish community with a normal economic structure. The source of the tragedy of the Jewish people in most countries of the world lies in the fact that not only are they minorities, always and everywhere dependent on the goodwill and the momentary mood of the majority, but that they are also restricted—whether by law or because of the inherent tendency of the economic development, to the performance of specifically limited economic functions.

2. Throughout the centuries the Jews have suffered by reason of the fact that they have not been rooted in the soil, have had no agricultural basis. They were excluded from many branches of physical work. They were compelled to concentrate in trade, banking, commercial mediation, export. Their participation in industry was confined to a few branches of the production of daily requirements, such as foodstuffs, clothing, furniture, etc. It is, indeed, this special economic function which, among other causes, has repeatedly led, throughout the course of Jewish history to those tragic clashes of economic interest between Jews and Gentiles, which have occurred as soon as Gentiles became fit to take over for themselves economic functions hitherto performed by Jews. Here may be seen one of the many sources of anti-Semitism.

Prof. Roscher, the well-known German economist, wrote in the seventies of the past century:

*"Jews have been, so to say, the commercial guardians of the new nations, for the benefit of the latter. But every guardianship becomes burdensome when it desires to last after the charge has become of age.*

*"The persecutions against the Jews in the late middle ages were, to a great extent, a product of commercial jealousy; they were closely connected with the first upspring of the national commercial state."*

3. This unbalanced situation, with all its disadvantages and dangers, must be avoided in Palestine if Zionism is to achieve its main task—the creation of a normal Jewish people in the country of the great Jewish past. That is why the only

means of achieving a realization of the Zionist aim must lie in the creation of a numerically strong and ever-growing Jewish working population, rooted in all branches of production; in agriculture, industry, transport, etc. To quote Theodor Herzl, the founder of political Zionism:

*"It is under the sign of labor that the Jewish people is going to Palestine . . . At that moment when the Jewish peasant will again hold the plough firmly in his hands, the Jewish question will be solved."*

4. By efforts of which little is known in the outside world, but which can be truly called heroic, the Jewish youth, unaccustomed though it was to the work of cultivating the soil, and to the difficult conditions of the country, has laid the cornerstone of a Jewish agriculture which is the admiration of every observer. They have established agricultural colonies and settlements of workers on co-operative and collective lines. Thousands of them have become wage-earners in the private Jewish plantation colonies. They have built, and are building, roads and bridges, are hewing stones, afforesting stony hills, draining swamps, driving motorcars and buses; working in the Dead Sea Potash Works, and insofar as they are permitted, in the Railways and the ports, in the construction of houses, and all kinds of industrial work.

It was the ideal of work that inspired this youth, before it came to Palestine, and sustained it when it arrived to work for itself, and for the creation of the maximum opportunities for those who are to come later. It is this ideal which gave these young men and women the strength to endure all the difficulties which have beset them, and to transform themselves into workers on the barren soil of Palestine and in the young industries of the country. It is this ideal of the regeneration of the Jewish people, of its conversion into a nation of productive workers, which is the source of our struggle for the employment of Jewish labor in all branches of work created by the influx of Jewish capital, be it national or private.

5. We foresee the greatest danger, both to the realization of the Zionist ideal, and to the establishment of a basically sound relationship between

Jews and Arabs, in the possibility that the Jews might be the owners of the land and of the main industrial enterprises, while the working population might be composed primarily of Arabs. This would, in many ways, be a grave hindrance to the realization of the Zionist aim. It would confine Jewish immigration mainly to the capitalist and employing class, and would practically exclude the Jewish working masses and the Jewish youth from participation in the upbuilding of the national home. Can there be a National Home, it may be asked, which is not founded on the broad basis of a working population, engaged in agriculture and industry?

In actual fact, such a development would provide a new and dangerous source of future Jewish-Arab friction; a friction based on class and social distinctions, and complicated by national differences.

It is our object, therefore, to ensure that the Jews coming to Palestine shall not exploit the labor of others, but shall work for themselves in all branches of the country's economy. We see the solution of the Jewish-Arab problem in terms of the co-existence of two peoples, who are not only equal in rights, but who are both connected economically with the land, and who both take their equal share in the shaping and the happiness of the country.

6. As the situation stands at present, the whole field of employment in this country is divided, as regards the employer, into three categories:

(a) The Arab section, where the employers are Arabs. This section is, at least for the time being, the absolute monopoly of the Arab worker. Jewish labor has no share in it, primarily by reason of its wage-level and of the differences in the standard of life.

It is not this section of the country's economy which the Jewish worker desires to capture, either wholly or in part. The position in Palestine differs from that in other countries of immigration, in which the resident worker may, rightly or wrongly, fear a lowering of his wages or even loss of work as a result of competition from the new-comers. The Jewish worker, immigrating into Palestine, represents a higher standard of life and higher wages, as compared with the Arab worker. The latter is not, therefore, in this sphere of work, in any danger of competition from the Jewish worker. On the contrary, Jewish immigration (which has to so great a degree reshaped the entire economic structure of the country) has, among other results beneficial to the Arab population, led to the creation of new and extensive work, which the Arab working masses would not otherwise have enjoyed. We will mention only certain of the more obvious examples. According to Government figures the Arabs had in 1928 about 40,000 dunam of orange groves.

In 1935 the figure stood at 135,000 dunam. Olive plantations, which are almost entirely Arab, grew between 1931 and 1935 from 270,000 to 510,000 dunam; land under fig cultivation from 70,000 to 109,000 dunam, etc. It is clear that this must imply the employment of thousands of fresh Arab workers.

In house-building, Arab investment was £415,000 in 1930 and £1,500,000 in 1935, which implies a trebling of the numbers of Arab workers engaged in the building trade.

Arab industry has also shown a considerable development. According to the Government report of 1933 there were, in that year, nearly 2,300 Arab industrial enterprises, as compared with 1,235 just prior to the war. Here again there is a marked expansion of the Arab labor market.

In other words, the Arab section of the Palestine economy has been enabled very largely, as a result of the vitalizing influence of Jewish economic initiative and of the flow of Jewish capital into the Arab economy, to broaden its scope of activity and to absorb thousands of new Arab workers.

(b) The second employing group is that of Public Works, including Government and Municipal works, in which both Arabs and Jews are employed. Here, even should the Jewish worker receive his proper share of employment—which he does not—the number of Arab workers would have grown by thousands during the past few years.

The various Government offices; the municipalities in the mixed Arab-Jewish cities; the Palestine railways; the posts and the telephone services; the Customs; the Departments of Health and Education; Public Works Department; the Haifa harbor construction works; the Police Department and the Transjordan Frontier Force—all those and other sources of employment have attracted thousands of Arab manual and clerical workers. The direct connection between the creation or, at least, the extension of these and similar works and the Jewish immigration is self-evident. No better evidence of this connection can be adduced than the fact that on the very day after the close of the Arab anti-Jewish strike, a delegation of those interested in the work of the Jaffa harbor visited the High Commissioner in order to persuade him to bring pressure to bear on the Jews, to induce them to return to the Port. Arab efforts in this direction continue even today.

To the section with which we are now dealing may be added semi-public works, such as the Palestine Electric Corporation, the Dead Sea Concession and the Nesher Cement factory in Haifa, in which hundreds of Arabs are employed. None of these enterprises would have come into existence had it not been for Jewish initiative and, at least partly, Jewish capital investment; and (in the case

## On Discovering America

### by Pearl Buck

After long residence in China, an alien in a foreign land, Pearl Buck recently returned to find herself a stranger in her own country, an immigrant among immigrants. She was amazed by the hatred Americans have for each other; hatred of black for white; of Jew and Gentile; of native-born and foreign-born.

In the current issue of SURVEY GRAPHIC Miss Buck makes a moving challenge to all who foment prejudice against the aliens on our shores. "We are all immigrants, we Americans," she says. "When we cease to allow people to come in from all over the world we shall gradually begin to die, as other nations are dying. New people . . . are life. We can't do without them."

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of Electricity and Cement production) the Jewish consuming public created by Jewish immigration.

(c) The third economic section comprises the purely Jewish undertakings. It is primarily in this section that the Jewish worker must defend himself from displacement by the cheap unorganized Arab labor of Palestine and of other countries. (The second aim of the Jewish worker is to secure his fair share in the public works section.) As long as the Arab sphere of the Palestine economy, strengthened and enlarged by Jewish immigration, is hermetically sealed to the Jewish worker, should not the Jewish sphere, created entirely by Jewish capital, private and national, be reserved to the Jewish worker? Would not the result of an alternative policy be the disappearance of Jewish labor from the most important branches of work? The *sine qua non* of solidarity between Jewish and Arab labor is surely that Jewish labor should exist. It cannot be the replacement of existing and prospective Jewish workers by Arab labor.

7. The attitude of Jewish labor towards the Arab working population may be described as follows:

We fully and wholeheartedly recognize the right of the Arab worker to live and work in Palestine, and are prepared to co-operate with him and help him to achieve a higher standard of living. On the other hand, we expect him to give complete and unreserved recognition to our right to live and work in Palestine, and to the right of the Jewish people to immigrate and settle in the country, a right limited only by their own ability to develop its resources and its economic absorptive capacity. We, for our part, recognize that the Arab worker has a prior right to all opportunities for work arising in the Arab sphere of the country's economy; as also a right to his fair share in all public works, whether government, municipal or semi-public. But we expect also a realization of the prior right of Jewish workers and immigrants in all works created by Jewish capital investment and initiative, and—to a fair degree—in all public works our share must necessarily grow in proportion to the growth through immigration, or our numerical strength.

In other words, the Jewish worker recognizes the rights of the Arab worker. He is not, however, prepared to abandon his own right to live and work, and to surrender his own place of work to his Arab co-worker.

On the basis of such mutual respect of each for the other's place in the country's economy, the Jewish Labor Movement has, for many years, been striving to build up a permanent Jewish-Arab Labor co-operation. It has proved the sincerity of its desire in action, and has even achieved certain practical, though modest, results.