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# PROMISES TO ARABS AND JEWS

## MR. SHERTOK ON PALESTINE AS JEWRY'S LAST HOPE

- 8 JAN 1939

Mr. M. Shertok, head of the Jewish Agency Political Department in Palestine, expressed his conviction that the vital Jewish interests had been marked down as the next sacrifice on the altar of appeasement, when he addressed the Order of Ancient Maccabees' annual convention in Manchester last Sunday.

He quoted as obvious evidences of what was going on behind the scenes the "conspiracy of silence" which was operating in Parliament and the inspired press to divorce consideration of the refugee problem entirely from Palestine and the Government's refusal of any and every request to allow the Jews of Palestine to help in regard to the refugees.

### THE CONFERENCE PROPOSAL

In view of the plain fact that Palestine was now almost Jewry's last hope of dignified survival, they must alter their plans in regard to the forthcoming conference with the Government, and he suggested it was necessary to counter the Government's decision to bring the whole Arab world into the discussions by insisting that the Jewish world position be considered in assessing the claims of Arabs and Jews in Palestine. They must renew their claim to free immigration into the whole of Western Palestine.

Zionism was created by Jewish misery and fed by Jewish misery; the Jewish National Home was a fight against time to save the remnant of Jewry and the plea that the sudden new emergency was an excuse for slowing down this work of human salvation was sheer nonsense.

It as an admitted fact that Palestine and only Palestine could at once take 20,000 to 30,000 refugees and in a short time could absorb 100,000 without any damage to the country's economy.

### BRITISH DESIRE FOR PEACE

"The British Government is facing a difficult problem which affects its very existence, its immediate future, and its distant future, and it is trying to solve the problem according to its own lights. It is looking everywhere for a short cut to peace and security, and in the process it is prepared to sacrifice a great many things. It has sacrificed Czech-Slovakia and other countries and it has sacrificed some of its own vital interests. The Arab opposition in Palestine derives from those same forces which have been triumphant in Central and South-eastern Europe and the British Government may feel that it is now necessary to sacrifice the Jews.

"Stupidity is not one of our Jewish characteristics and we can face the facts when we see them. We cannot blame the Government for acting according to its lights and we know full

well that to be with Great Britain and have her with us must be the cornerstone of any Jewish policy in the world today. But we are entitled to show the error of a plan which means death and ruin to millions.

### POSITIONS COMPARED

"I submit that our policy now must be to say to the Government; 'Very well, you have the spokesmen of the entire Arab race in the other room; in this room are the representatives of the entire Jewish race. Let us compare the position and needs of the two races, what the Arabs were promised and what they received, what we were promised and received. There are your Arabs, 95 per cent of them completely independent, owners of vast territories, their progress secured and their future assured, with ample scope for development for all time. And here are your Jews, being ground to death before the eyes of the world, desperate and not knowing where to turn, the very lives of millions depending on finding a haven. What then is the relative need for this little Palestine of Arab and Jew?'"