OF 700
Palestine
1939-1943
April 26, 1939

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

FOR PREPARATION OF REPLY

FOR MY SIGNATURE.

F. D. R.

Letter from Hon. William Green, President, American Federation of Labor, Washington, D. C., 4/25/39 to the President. Suggests that President transmit to the British Government the earnest appeal of the American Federation of Labor to maintain the "Open Door" in Palestine, to carry out the Balfour Declaration and to respond to world opinion in favor of the creation of Palestine as a Homeland for the Jewish people.
My dear Mr. Green:

I fully appreciate your interest in the Palestine problem as expressed in your letter of April 25. As you know, I have on numerous occasions expressed my sympathy in the idea of establishing a National Home for the Jews in Palestine and, notwithstanding all the difficulties incident to the achievement of that objective, I have been heartened by the progress which has been made and by the remarkable accomplishments of the Jewish settlers in that country.

I have kept before the British Government the interest which our people have in Palestine and I have every reason to believe that that Government is fully cognizant of public opinion on the matter in this country.

As you have no doubt observed from the press, the British Government held a conference on Palestine recently in London in which Arab and Jewish delegations participated with a view to reaching an agreement regarding future policy in Palestine. That conference, as you know, ended on March 17, 1930 without such a mutual agreement having been reached.

I understand that the British Government may make public shortly a statement concerning its policy in Palestine. I have been given official assurances on a number of occasions by the British authorities, however, that this Government would be kept fully informed of any proposals which may be put forward to the Council of the League for the modification of the Palestine
Mandate and that, if any question should arise regarding the treaty rights of the United States, the British Government would enter into discussions with us immediately. I am told, however, that under the terms of our Palestine Mandate Convention with Great Britain we are unable to prevent modifications in the Mandate. Our legal right is limited to our ability to decline to accept as applicable to American interests any modifications unless we have given our assent to them. Our treaty rights in this regard were defined, as you may recall, in a statement regarding Palestine issued on October 14, 1935 by the Department of State.

You may be sure that at this critical juncture of world affairs we are giving full and appropriate consideration to all the diverse factors involved in the Palestine problem and that the unhappy plight of Jewish refugees is not the least of my concerns.

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. William Green, President
American Federation of Labor
Washington, D. C.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON
April 28, 1939

My dear Mr. President:

Pursuant to your request I enclose a draft reply to Mr. William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, in answer to his letter to you of April 25 regarding Palestine.

Faithfully yours,

Enclosures:

Letter dated April 25 from Mr. William Green, together with reply.

The President,
The White House.
American Federation of Labor
Washington, D.C.

April 25, 1939.

To the President,
The White House, Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. President:

I am turning to you in an emergency because it would seem that I cannot render service in dealing with the emergency referred to except through you. In order that you may know what it is and why I am writing you I quote a telegram which I received from the official representative of the Palestine Labour Federation, Tel Aviv, Palestine. It reads as follows:

"Green, President
American Federation of Labor
Washington,

"Strangely urge you make supreme effort avert imminent calamity. Jewish people stop contemplated British policy reduces Palestine Jews to third of population and confined to small strip of country means turning Jewish national home into ghetto and Palestine Jewry into bondservants of Arabs. Stop British people appalled by dictators' disregard international undertakings yet British government prepared to discard international undertakings to Jewish people stop while thousands Jews fleeing horrors persecution forced to roam the seas H.M.G. adopts political maximum immigration preventing rescue even closest relatives and refugees admission refugees reaching shores of Palestine stop Jewish labour will not submit proposed Arab rule even if supported British bayonets nor will intended policy proving terrorists' success restore peace but arouse hatred and bloodshed stop at this tragic hour we appeal to you to do all possible to prevent British government putting proposals into effect.

Goldie Meyerson
Palestine Labour Federation"

Please note that this message which I am bringing to your attention concludes with an appeal to me to do all possible to prevent the British Government from putting into effect the proposals outlined.

It occurred to me that through means which are available to you you might transmit to the British Government the earnest appeal of the American Federation of Labor to maintain the "Open
Door" in Palestine, to carry out the Balfour Declaration and to respond to world opinion in favor of the creation of Palestine as a Homeland for the Jewish people.

I sincerely appeal to you in the name of and in behalf of the Officers and Members of the American Federation of Labor to exercise your powerful influence in the furtherance of such a praiseworthy policy. I feel sure and certain that you share the point of view of the membership of the American Federation of Labor, as herein expressed, regarding the establishment of a Jewish Homeland in Palestine.

I will be personally and officially grateful to you for anything you may do in response to the appeal made by the Representative of the Palestine Labour Federation.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

President,
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 19, 1939

MEMORANDUM FOR
THE STATE DEPARTMENT

FOR PREPARATION OF REPLY
FOR MY SIGNATURE.

F. D. R.

Letter from Cong. William I. Sirovicn, 6/6/39 to the President. Writes of the Nazi threat to Christianity as well as Judaism and says that history proves the enemy of the Jew is always the enemy of the Christian. Give lengthy explanation of Nazi imperialistic aims and anti-semitic propaganda which will soon direct itself toward the Christian. Tells of the Nazi propaganda in Palestine among the Islam against the Jews and the threat to Christianity if they are allowed to succeed. It is with these considerations in mind that he urgently requests the President to make the most pressing representations to the
British government that this Nation looks to the carrying out of the letter and spirit of the Balfour Declaration. The White Paper of May 17, 1939, which attempts to abrogate Palestine as a homeland for the Jews is unacceptable to the American People.
To Marvin McIntyre from
Congressman Emanuel Celler

During a recent visit to Secretary Hull, I discussed with him the terrible plight of the hapless Jews in Nazi controlled Europe and, particularly, pointed out the need for our taking a definite stand in vigorous opposition to the so-called Malcolm MacDonald White Paper which limits and then finally prohibits Jewish immigration into Palestine after 1944.

This White Paper violates:

1. The Balfour Declaration accepted by the Congress of the United States
2. The treaty signed by Prime Minister Chamberlain and Secretary of State Kellogg in 1924.

It was condemned by Churchill as a "breach of faith."

The Jews in New York and other areas like Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, Cleveland are greatly exercised over the failure of our Administration to condemn the MacDonald White Paper.

I presented all this to Cordell Hull and he listened earnestly and attentively. I am fully aware of the difficulties under which he and the President are laboring concerning the rescue of Jews, I told him. Cordell stated to me quite plainly that as to the so-called MacDonald White Paper, the matter, as far as the Administration is concerned, is still "unfrozen." I expressed the hope that he might in a letter to me state that conclusion.

Hull, subsequently, did send me a letter wherein he did state, "I may say in all candor that I have given the questions relating to Palestine much further consideration and attention. They are, as you know, very complicated and intricate and require much conference and consultation both inside and outside of this Government. There are many problems which arise out of them both as of the present and as of the future. They are still open and are continuing to receive my serious attention."

A reasonable interpretation of the words of this quotation might well be that as far as our Administration is concerned, the MacDonald White Paper
is still being considered and may be the subject of continued negotiations and, finally, as Hull put it to me, it is "unfrozen."

There may be, however, some doubt whether I have the right, in view of the quotation, to make a public statement to that effect. I wish to be scrupulously careful. Frankly, I believe I do have the right. Nevertheless, I do not wish to do anything that would be untoward or embarrassing. It would have been most efficacious if I could have gotten clearance to make that statement.

The nub of this letter is the political repercussions that would flow from such a crystal-clear, unqualified statement.

I repeat what I said to the Secretary: Great good could come therefrom.

Particularly I have in mind that we are naturally concerned with the New York local situation. Some of Governor Dewey's advisors in New York are eminent Jews. His closest advisor and original sponsor is a Jew. They, undoubtedly, are giving thought to the subject of Palestine and the advisability of prevailing upon the British Foreign Office to keep open the gates to that haven. It would not surprise me in the least to have Governor Dewey make a pronouncement in the not too distant future to the effect that Palestine cannot be liquidated as a homeland for the Jews and that the MacDonald White Paper must be abrogated since it is violative of the treaty and declaration of our Congress.

Frankly, as far as the race of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is concerned, he would steal the show right from under our noses. He has lots of political canniness. You may recall that at Mackinac Island, his pronouncement concerning an Angl-American alliance blacked out all other political pronouncements, despite the fact he simply took a leaf out of Walter Lippman's recent book. He could easily steal the show again.

I cannot too strongly emphasize the political echoes of such a pronouncement whether by the President or Dewey.
LEVINTHAL, Louis E.
President, Zionist Organization of America,
Washington, D. C.,
Sept. 3, 1943.

Writes the President requesting message for 46th annual convention of this organization which will meet at Columbus, Ohio, Sept. 11th.--Mr. Levinthal's letter was transmitted to the President by letter from Sen. Robert F. Wagner of New York on Sept. 7th.--Mr. Hassett, Sept. 8th, sent memo. to the Dept. of State asking for draft to be prepared.--The State Dept., Sept. 9th, (initialled C.H.) sent memo. to Mr. Hassett enclosing enclosing draft of letter for Mr. Levinthal and one for Senator Wagner.------

Attached is memo. for Mr. Latta from Mr. Hassett, of Sept. 10th.--The President, on Sept. 9th, wrote to Judge Levinthal expressing horror at the cruelties visited upon the Jews by the Axis. The President said the attitude of this Government in regard to these atrocities was ably expressed by the Sec. of State in the statement he issued on Oct. 30, 1942. The President said that all feasible measures are being adopted to lessen the sufferings of the persecuted Jews of Europe. The President said he was confident that the helpful contributions made by American citizens toward the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine would be continued. --The President, Sept. 9th, wrote to Senator Wagner enclosing copy of the letter he sent to Judge Levinthal.
June 22, 1939

My dear Mr. Sirovich:

I have received your letter of June 6, 1939, concerning certain aspects of the Palestine problem in the light of the recent British statement of policy.

So far as the treaty rights of the United States are concerned, they were clearly set forth in a public statement issued by the Department of State on October 14, 1938, which I have no doubt is familiar to you. The position of this Government, as explained in that statement, remains unaffected, of course, by any subsequent developments.

I need hardly reassure you that we continue to bear in mind the interest which our people have in Palestine. That interest has been kept before the British Government which, I am sure, is fully informed of public opinion on the matter in the United States.

Very sincerely yours,

The Honorable
William L. Sirovich, House of Representatives.

NE PHA/LS
6/21/39
The Jewish and Christian Churches are guided and inspired by the Bible which is a book of man, of spiritual man, of man with his individual soul and his individual relations to God and to his fellow man. But since to the present day the Biblical spirit continues to spell Man, the contemporary totalitarian and authoritarian states pronounce the Christian and Jewish Churches to be their arch enemies.

In the totalitarian scheme of things there is no room for the Bible nor for what it represents spiritually and ethically, for Biblicism and totalitarianism are polaric forces. The one grants man freedom, calling upon him to choose between good and evil and teaching him that his is the freedom to choose, while the other deprives him of this freedom, asserting that the state alone may make his decisions for him. In the latter day totalitarian and authoritarian states Biblical influences are being ruthlessly counteracted and the reading of the Bible discouraged. Not so long ago a German court granted a divorce to a woman whose only complaint against her husband being that he was a constant Bible reader.

Even those Nazis who are not entirely addicted to paganism would reduce the Bible to a few portions of the New Testament which they would intermix with Nazi idolatrous doctrines of blood, race, soil, and the state as a deity, revealing itself in omnipotence. But in the Christian scheme of things the state is not so much an institution of force as a spiritual establishment with ethical and intellectual obligations toward the individual; while blood, race and soil are recognized as forces of nature, not of the spirit. Nature which is a-ethical cannot possibly be man's guide, pathfinder or teacher, and hence Christianity cannot accept the doctrines of blood and soil as a substitute for God and the spirit. Nazi naturalism depriving man of his dignity and holiness and Christian idealism claiming for man dignity and freedom represent two antagonistic forces between whom no compromise is possible. Their conflict is one of rising pagan naturalism against traditional religious idealism -- in short, the struggle of paganism versus Biblicism.

Like every naturalistic force, Nazism too is imperialistic in its motives. It is animated by an inner drive to extend its rule in all directions and to impose its ideology upon all nations. Its missionaries travel the world over so as to preach the dogma of Nazism, to plant the seed
of Germanic paganism and to diffuse the doctrine of antisemitism. In Anglo-Saxon countries they are particularly active. Just as the communists are working for world revolution because they recognize that so long as Russia remains the only communist state so long is its future uncertain, so do the Nazi leaders in Berlin fully understand that Nazi Germany can perpetuate itself only if a considerable section of the world were to be overwhelmed by the Nazi spirit. This imperialistic drive of Nazism is gathering momentum daily, and moving from strength to strength because of its appeal to the baser instincts and prejudices of man. In the United States alone the Nazi movement now claims some 200,000 followers. The main content of Nazi propaganda everywhere are antisemitism, authoritarianism and attacks upon democracy.

Nazi Jew hatred implies much more than the social and political antisemitism of pre-Aryan days. It implies a war upon the Bible, the greatest spiritual force in white man's history. In the final analysis it implies not only the destruction of the synagogue but the annihilation of the church as well. If the Bible is eliminated the entire fabric of Christianity must collapse. The Nazis believing a naturalistic world must necessarily battle the Bible with its purely spiritual outlook upon life. This explains best the statement so often made by Nazi leaders that the war upon Judaism will not end with the destruction of German Jewry, for the enemy is not so much the Jew as his book, the Bible. The Nazis are sensible of the fact that Biblical idealism overwhelmed and defeated naturalistic Rome and if left untouched will one day overcome and destroy Nazism as well. Hence the Bible and its creator, the Jew, must be annihilated, and its present adherents, Christian and Jewish, weakened and uprooted.

This is not the first time that Christianity and Judaism have jointly been threatened with destruction by a common enemy. During the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. the Manicheans represented as sinister a threat to the church and the synagogue as Nazism does today. St. Augustine who secured the victory of Christianity over Manicheism, thereby preserved the synagogue from destruction as well. This victory may be regarded to be one of the most fateful in the history of the world.

Throughout all ages when sinister forces arose to oppose Christianity they attacked the synagogue at the same time, because both Biblical religions, in spite of their many metaphysical and theological differences share the anthropocentric world view which alone raises man to the dignity of a spiritual being and endows his life with meaning and significance. In the Old Testament this anthropocentric outlook found its most powerful expression in the story of the man Moses, who caused God to change His decree.
In the New Testament the Son of Man becomes the Son of God. Both Testaments express man's spiritual character and dignity, and the possibility of his spiritual development. Both exhort man to be good, to be guided by the idea of the good and to express his love for God by demonstrating his love for his fellowman. Both scriptures portray the character of the Messiah who symbolizes man's spiritual future. In both Testaments man is uplifted from the realm of nature into the realm of spirituality. For these reasons all the forces of naturalism and materialism continue to wage war upon the Bible and its representatives, Christianity and Judaism. Today this battle against Biblicalism has assumed world wide proportions and is being fought with extraordinary bitterness upon every continent on earth.

To bring about the red millennium the communist comrades everywhere attack capitalism. To bring about the brown millennium the Nazi Aryans attack Judaism everywhere. With certified Germanic efficiency the Nazis are seeking to undermine the position of the Jew even in his own ancestral land, Palestine, so that it shall not be even a land of refuge for him. There they have established an intimate contact with the Arabs and have inspired a reign of terror against the Jew. German diplomatic and consular representatives in the Holy Land have allied themselves openly with the Arab terrorists, supplying them with arms and cold hard cash. Almost all the guns confiscated from these Arabs have been of German manufacture. The Nazi-arab concord, assuming the form of an open alliance against the Jew is easily traceable to the fact that in the Mohammedan, as in the Nazi state, the religious or ethnic minority, in accordance with the unbending logic of the totalitarian principle, is outlawed. This state demands not only political loyalty but the full surrender of the human personality -- its mind and its emotions as well. Just as there exists in Germany a Nazi "mathematics," a Nazi "physics," a Nazi "jurisprudence," a Nazi "philosophy," and a Nazi "literature," so in Mohammedan lands a Mohammedan "science," a Mohammedan "literature," and a Mohammedan "philosophy," are to be found.

These striking similarities between the Moslem and the Nazi states reveal the Arabs as the Nazis of the East, and the Nazis the Arabs of the West. In both instances the ideal to be attained is the absolute control of the state over the individual. Hence the schools of the Moslems and the Nazis are not educational establishments in the western sense of the term, but training centers for their respective ideologies, Islamic or Nazi. Both types of commonwealths assert that the state is omniscient, omnipotent and imperialistic. Although their attitudes toward the Bible is dissimilar, the effects of their policies lead to similar consequences. The Nazis in their relentless war upon the Bible and the Arabs in their merciless war against the Jew, if carried out to the bitter end, would destroy the possibility of Biblical life in Palestine and ultimately exterminate the spirit of the Bible from that land; then Biblical land will become Koran land, and both Biblical religions severed from their roots altogether. The consummation of this program will free the Arabs from both
antagonists, Judaism and Christianity, simultaneously. The new Arab states of the Near East are resolved to be Islamic in the fullest degree. The fate of the Christian Assyrians in the Iraq and of the Jews in the Yemen and in all other Arab countries, exemplifies worst Arab totalitarianism, resulting in cruel religious intolerance and in war upon religious minorities. To protect the one-half million Christians in the Lebanon from Arab persecution, the French Government in granting independence to Syria, was compelled to carve out Christian Lebanon as a separate state. The experiences of non-Moslems in Islamic countries fully justifies such measures. The fear is therefore but too well founded that if Bibleland becomes Koranland, not only the Jewish population of almost one-half million souls, but also its Christian group of 110,000 will be doomed.

Neither Judaism nor Christianity can afford to permit their common spiritual motherland to come under the dominion of totalitarian and authoritarian Islam. A celebrated American statesman, the late Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, expressed this conviction soon after the English conquest of Palestine. In an address delivered at the Hotel Astor, New York City, on June 13th, 1922, he stated:

"Because of my belief in religious freedom and in religious tolerance, I never could accept in patience the thought that Jerusalem and Palestine should be under the control of the Mohammedans, as they have been since 1244 with only a brief interval. I had, of course, intense sympathy with the Crusaders and it seems to me a great wrong that Palestine should be under Moslem rule."

Henry Cabot Lodge expressed thereby not his own conviction alone, but that of all thinking Christians throughout the centuries. A thousand years ago when the Crescent drove the Cross from Palestine, Christendom arose as one to wrest the birthplace of the Bible from the forces of Islam. In this struggle many hundreds of thousands of Christians yielded up their lives. The traditions springing from these memorable events has made it possible for a European Prince to still bear the proud title of King of Jerusalem. Today, as in ages past, Jerusalem is as much a source of inspiration to Christianity as to Judaism, for certain of the most memorable events and fateful moments in the formation of both Biblical religions transpired within the walls of the Holy City. Christianity and Judaism without Palestine are as unthinkable as Islam without Mecca or Buddhism without Benares. It is therefore obvious that the preservation of Palestine as Bibleland must be one of the main postulates of the Christian Church. Nazism is not only a threat to Christianity and Judaism alike in the West, but because of its alliance with Pan-Islamism, it is menacing the position of both Biblical religions in the East as well.
During the past thousand years both Biblical religions faced a common enemy in the West: a horror from within, a phenomenon of Neo-Manicheism in its various manifestations -- Bogomilism, Catharism, Panlickism, etc. These Neo-Manichean anti-Christian sects of the middle ages, at the church, simultaneously planted everywhere the seed of Jew hatred. The ferocious attacks against the Biblical mother religion during the middle ages originated not in Christian but in anti-Christian sources. The spiritual leaders of Christianity repeatedly have protected the people of the book against the insidious attacks of sinister and malevolent forces emanating from these various anti-Christian sects. This fact disproves the argument of those who are engaged in disseminating Jew-hatred that Christianity itself has been waging a war against Judaism.

While the church was engaged in grappling with the destructive elements boring from within, it was simultaneously occupied in a life and death struggle with Islam for the liberation of the Holy Land. It required a supreme effort to break the predominance of the Koran in Palestine, though even for a brief period. Not war upon Islam per se was the objective of the Crusaders, but to wrest Palestine, the land of the Nativity and of the people of Jesus, from the hostile Moslems, for even medieval Christendom, whose vision was impaired in some respects, was fully sensible that Biblical religiosity can grow and prosper only when it is not severed from its motherland.

Today Christianity stands in the self same position of peril which it finally succeeded in overcoming nine centuries ago. In the West, Neo-Manicheanism boring from within in the guise of paganized Nazi Christianity, seeks to undermine Biblical religiosity. The officials of the German nation publicly are making common cause with these new tendencies, advocating boldly the purging of Biblical elements from within Christianity. These manifestations express themselves in ruthless attacks upon synagogue and church alike.

In the East Christianity is facing the threat of Islamic expansion in its attempt to overwhelm and dominate Palestine. This Pan-Islamic drive expresses itself in the wholesale murder of innocent Jews engaged in tilling the soil in the land of their forefathers. Tomorrow it may well assume the form of massacres of devout Christians whose presence in the Holy Land is motivated solely by Christian religious devotion. Just as in the West the ruthless war against Judaism is but a smoke screen, the true objective of that war -- the elimination of the Bible from the life of white man -- so the attack of the forces of Pan-Islam against the Jew in Palestine is but the signal for a war of revitalized Islam against both Biblical religions and its representatives. The pious Moslem hates Christian and Jew with equal fury, and if for the time being he appears content with making his attacks upon the second it is only because he does not feel himself to be strong enough to move against the former as well.
Today the Christian Church is in duty bound to continue the great Christian historical traditions and struggles so as to preserve the spiritual life of western man. It cannot permit the monsters called race, blood and soil, to overwhelm the soul and spirit which devout Christians have fostered and preserved, throughout the centuries so as to overcome beastliness and to develop a serene spiritual happiness for man. Neither can the Christian Church permit the spring of its spiritual energies to pass under the control of hostile elements that seek to destroy it. This spring is Palestine, the scene of the Old and the New Testaments. The land in which the psalmists have sung, the prophets have exhorted man to be good, and the Redeemer has preached the gospel of piety, goodness, humility and justice, must continue to serve the Biblical religions as a source of inspiration.

It is with these larger considerations in mind, spelling destiny to the entire Christian and Jewish world, that I turn to you today, Mr. President. I urgently request that you make the most pressing representations to His Majesty's Government of the fact that the American people and its Government continue to look to it to carry into execution the letter and spirit of the Balfour Declaration. In that historic document His Majesty's Government has expressed its solemn pledge to establish a Jewish Homeland in Palestine. Hence the White Paper of May 17, 1939, which attempts to abrogate that Homeland, is as unacceptable to the American people and its Government as is the lawless conduct of the international treaty breakers in Czechoslovakia, Albania and Manchuria.

America must not become a Hitlerland and Bibleland must not become Koranland.

With every good and kind wish, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

William I. Sirovich
December 7, 1942

Respectfully referred to the
Department of State.

M. H. McIntyre
Secretary to the President

ROKACH,
Mayor,
Tel Aviv,
Palestine.

Cable to the President dated 12/3/42.

"Municipal Council Tel Aviv gathered solemn session to mourn victims Nazi atrocities perpetrated helpless Jewry join heart rending appeal voiced by National Assembly Palestinian Jewry to you and other leaders 'World's fighting Democracy do all humanly possibly stay hand of destruction and save form demonly clutches bleeding remnants Israel succor refugees at your gates. Let priority of rescue be given to children. Warn master demons they will repay horrors with their own blood.'"
August 23, 1943.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Will you be good enough
to reply to the enclosed letter
from Congressman Celler?

F. D. R.

Letter from Cong. Emmanuel Celler, 9/12/43, to the President, in reference to the situation concerning Palestine. Suggests various names who would render a true unbiased report upon examination of the entire Palestinian situation.

September 27, 1943

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE PRESIDENT

Emmanuel Celler asked me to be sure and see this got to you. Personally, I don't think Manny will help the cause any by undue activity along this line.

MFM
August 13, 1943.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE:

I think you should read this and if you think it advisable send for Congressman Celler and have a talk with him.

F.D.R.

Letter from Cong. Emanuel Celler, 8/11/43, to the President, enclosing a copy of his statement, "The Betrayal of Palestine", dated 8/12/43.