

**N**EXT year, unless the British Government reverses its policy, Jewish migration to Palestine will cease. At that point in their history when escape means the difference between life and death to them, the Jews of Europe at any rate will find themselves before a closed door.

That is one reason why Dr. Michael Traub, official delegate for the Jewish Agency for Palestine, has been visiting New Zealand. When the present war began there were about 7,000,000 Jews in the European countries now under the Axis rule. Up to the end of last year, Dr. Traub explained in an interview, more than a third of those—approximately 2½ millions of men, women, and children—had been murdered. Unless some way of escape is found for the rest, millions more will die before the war ends. In other words, between four and five million Jews in Nazi Europe are at present in danger of annihilation, and it is a horrifying thought to their kinsmen in other parts of the world that the one corner of the earth to which so many of them have been hoping to escape will automatically close its doors next year.

### "To Appease the Arabs"

Dr. Traub admitted quite frankly that it is one thing to know of a refuge and another thing to reach it. The Axis Powers, he agreed, have no intention of letting the Jews go. Their intention is to murder them. But still, many do escape, and it has been a great comfort to them in the past to feel that there is one country outside which they can enter with some sense of security and of right. The question is: How much longer

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night, to bring it in order of battle to its alarm post with baggage loaded and assembled in the rear. . . . These results were obtained with astonishing economy of strength and labour. The soldiers were never harassed, whatever may have been the case with the officers, and were subjected neither to strain nor fatigue. Not a man was employed more than was absolutely necessary, and thus was attained the ideal of good outpost duty, vigilance maintained, energy husbanded and repose assured."

Though reports were frequent of Craufurd's tactlessness and severity, no one who encountered them allowed his final estimate of the man to be affected. The men of the Division who endured his severe training methods had one opportunity to test the command of another leader (Sir William Erskine), over the winter months, but when Craufurd returned on the very morning of the Battle of Fuentes de Onoro, he was greeted with ringing cheers.

The Division continued to build on its reputation, leading attacks, covering changes of position, and so on, until the Siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, where Craufurd himself led the storming of a breach, and received a mortal wound. Five days later (January 24, 1812), he was buried in the breach made by his men.

# PALESTINE FOR THE JEWS?

will they be able to feel that?

"The present position," Dr. Traub said, "is that the British Government, to appease the Arabs, issued the White Paper of 1939, the provisions of which were alien to the promise of the Balfour Declaration and to the spirit of the Jewish National Home. Under the terms of the White Paper, Jewish immigration to Palestine was limited to 75,000 during the following five years, and it is to cease completely on April 1, 1944. The implementation of this law will mean the frustration of the

hopes of hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees. Considering the ideals for which Great Britain and the United Nations are fighting, the Jewish people expect the Balfour Declaration to be kept. If it is, the way will be paved to a just and lasting solution of the Jewish problem and to the speedy development of Arab countries adjacent to the Jewish National Home."

Jews asked, therefore, that the Jewish Agency for Palestine be vested with the necessary authority for building up the country, and that Palestine, after the war, be established as a Jewish Commonwealth within the framework of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

### New Zealand Asked to Help

This, then, is the immediate purpose of Dr. Traub's visit. He is here to persuade the people of New Zealand to join with the people of Australia and all other parts of the British Commonwealth in getting the White Paper withdrawn. But he has a wider mission—a mission of general goodwill from Zionists everywhere to the people of the British Commonwealth everywhere. He is here to remind us not only of the Balfour Declaration, which promised the Jews Palestine as a national home, but of the fact that Germany as well as Britain promised the Jews a home during the last war, and that the Jews accepted Britain's offer and rejected Germany's. That has been quite definitely stated by Mr. Lloyd George, who was Prime Minister when the Balfour Declaration was made, and, of course, a party to it. Palestine as a home for Jews was not, Mr. Lloyd George said some time ago, "offered by us out of our abundant grace. It was a bargain in return for a valuable consideration given to us—the effective support of the Jews of the world to the Allied cause." Now, Dr. Traub says, Britain is in danger of repudiating that bargain to appease the Arabs—"Munich over again."

The British Foreign Secretary, in the House of Commons last December,



DR. MICHAEL TRAUB  
"Sympathy is not enough"

had condemned Nazi Germany's bestial policy towards the Jews in the strongest terms, and had expressed the horror and indignation of the civilised world. The Jewish people were deeply grateful for this great human declaration, but sympathy was not enough. It would not save human lives unless it was accompanied by practical measures.

It was also depressing to Jews that the Bermuda Refugee Conference last April, from which practical proposals were expected, had ended apparently in failure. According to reliable reports, the

two practical recommendations were that 80,000 refugees, Jewish and non-Jewish, now in neutral countries, should be removed to French North Africa, Cyrenaica, Libya and Abyssinia, and that an inter-Government committee should be established to feed and care for refugees in neutral countries.

"We are astonished that Palestine, which is able and ready to settle and absorb hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees from Europe, was not even mentioned as a country of refuge," Dr. Traub continued. "It surely cannot be the main task of the Refugee Conference to bring Jews from neutral countries to North Africa."

### Palestine's Advantage

Palestine, Dr. Traub insisted, should be given first preference for the settlement of Jewish refugees. It was unique among the countries of possible immigration because it was the one land on which Jews could go with international sanction, as of right and not on sufferance. The Jewish National Home was a country to which the Jews were entitled to claim admittance. "Jews going to their National Home are welcomed in every possible way by their fellow Jews. In a recent manifesto the Jews of Palestine solemnly declared their willingness to extend shelter to all Jews who escaped the Nazi hell."

Refugees could be quickly absorbed into the economic life of Palestine, where the absence of 30,000 Jews serving with the British Armed Forces, and of a further 35,000 working for the Army, had caused an acute shortage of labour.

I FOUND this all very disturbing even when I made allowance for the fact that Dr. Traub is a politician engaged on a political mission and naturally using political methods. I felt that I should have liked to question him for another hour—to ask whether there was nothing at all to be said for the Arabs, whether the Jews have a good historical argument after all these centuries of absence from

Palestine, and if the Arabs could not as logically ask for Spain or Morocco; why Zionists had refused Uganda when it was offered to them; and if they would make no more territorial demands after Palestine. But his time was limited, and it was, in any case, impossible to use academic arguments to justify turning a deaf ear to the tortured cries of 4½ million people. It was, in fact, impossible to talk to Dr. Traub without feeling that he was weighed down by the unspeakable misery through which his own people have passed during the last four years, and are still passing.

He is undoubtedly a shrewd man, but he is just as certainly sincere, and it is no longer possible to feel that past demands and refusals matter much. What matters is action for the future.

### "Let My People Go"

Instead of asking him about the Arabs I asked what the position of the European Jews would be if Palestine remained open. His answer was something like this:

"We do not know how many will survive the Axis murderers, but we do know that those who will be alive when the day of victory comes will be economically ruined and physically broken. Most of them will have been brutally expelled from their former homes to other areas of invaded Europe.

"We hope that some of them will find haven and refuge in the great democracies of the new world, but for the homeless majority Palestine only is able to offer asylum and a home. Palestine is still a half-empty country with undeveloped agricultural and industrial resources, and the last 25 years of Jewish colonisation have proved that its absorptive capacity can be considerably enlarged. The present population is 1,500,000, Jews and Arabs; three or four millions more Jews could be settled, provided they were granted the right to apply their will, and their pioneering abilities, in colonising the country on a sound and modern basis. Establishment of this centre would not only solve the problem of Jewish homelessness, but would also be a vital constructive factor in the cultural and economic revival of the Near East.

"Meanwhile, can the people of New Zealand realise what it is to be homeless—to have no country, no flag, no right of residence or indeed of entry? No, of course you can't. It lies outside your experience, beyond the reach of your most sympathetic imaginations. But we Jews have known nothing else for two thousand years. The Nazi assault on us is by no means the first in our experience, or even the worst in the history of our race. It will not be the last unless the civilised Powers finally rescue us, and give us one small corner of the world in which we control our own destiny. That is all we ask—one country, however insignificant, in which we are no longer a minority; and we ask it for the world's sake as well as for our own.

"To be a minority without rights, sooner or later, to be the object of tyranny and of terror. The history of mankind proves it. We ask that this state of affairs should cease for ever—that our people should be permitted to return to Zion to build what you have already built in New Zealand: a branch of the British Commonwealth of Nations."