

**ISTIQLAL PARTY OF MOROCCO**  
(INDEPENDENCE PARTY)

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**JEWISH MOROCCANS**

In an attempt to discredit the national movement of Morocco, French colonial circles have accused the Moslem population of anti-semitic sentiments towards the Jews. As a matter of fact, no specifically Jewish problem exists in Morocco, where Jewish and Moslem communities have existed side by side for centuries in mutual tolerance, respect and understanding. Both are victims of a colonial regime which has ruled their country since 1912; both are struggling and making sacrifices to bring about their common national aspirations.

There is no justification for the fear that in an independent Morocco the Jews would suffer from discrimination in any form. Jewish Moroccans will be citizens equal both in law and in fact with Moslems. They will enjoy the same rights and will be under the same obligations; their religious liberty will remain untouched.

The greatest service that can be rendered them is to help them do away with the colonial regime which has exploited and repressed them. Morocco is their country, its freedom is their freedom; who helps the Jewish Moroccans helps Moroccan independence.

Ahmed Balafrej  
Secretary General of the Istiqlal  
Party

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BACKGROUND ON THE SITUATION OF JEWISH MOROCCANS

The Jews, who found refuge in Morocco from Spanish persecution in the fifteenth century, have never lived in inequality. They have always had complete freedom of worship and independence within their communities regarding courts of justice, police, synagogues, parochial education and the administration of public benefit funds. Never have restrictions of any sort been placed upon them. The right to practice their professions and to engage in commerce, both at home and abroad, was always assured them; at a time when anti-semitism was widespread all over Europe, theirs was a privileged position. Moreover, they were under the special protection of the Sultan, which even today remains the highest distinction a Moroccan can attain. It is noteworthy that Europeans who have wanted to travel freely and with ease in Morocco have disguised themselves as Jews to pass protected and unobserved.

Of extreme significance is the Decree of February 5, 1864, issued by His Majesty Mohammed IV:

"It is our order that all Jews residing in our Empire, regardless of the situation in which the Almighty has placed them, should be treated by our governors, administrators and other subjects in conformity with strict justice; that before our courts of justice they should be on an equal basis with any other person; that not even the slightest injustice may be done them, nor any unmerited treatment accorded them. Neither the authorities nor any other person shall do any harm to Jews, either to their person or their property . . . Because such an injustice is an injustice in the Heavens and we cannot under any circumstances prejudice their rights or those of any other person; our dignity is opposed with all its might to such proceedings. In our eyes, all men have an equal right to ask for justice . . . ."

Under the Pétain regime in 1941 and 1942, Jewish Moroccans did not suffer from the discriminatory Nazi laws, the now exiled Sultan, Mohammed

V, being persistently opposed to such proceedings. In turn, the Jewish Moroccans have repeatedly expressed their gratitude for his forceful democratic stand. Jewish Moroccans live side by side with their Moslem countrymen in the same towns, in the same houses, in the same apartments. They are in constant social and commercial contact with each other, carrying on their affairs as true partners.

Colonial propaganda based on the "divide and rule" principle has failed completely to create the myth of Moslem-Jewish animosity in Morocco, just as it has failed to create that of Arab-Berber differences.

Discrimination in Morocco since 1912 is directed against both Jews and Moslems. Neither have civil or political rights, a voice in the government or justice before the law; the French schools and hospitals, although paid for by the Moroccans, are closed to both Moslems and Jews. The administration is impartial in its dislike of Moroccans, whatever their faith; in short, both Jews and Moslems are in the same boat, subject to racial discrimination and colonial repression.

An anti-Jewish campaign was initiated recently by the French colonists, who saw in Pierre Mendès-France and Gilbert Grandval, both of Jewish origin, two forceful and independent men slipping out of their grasp. As reported by the American press, Mr. Grandval was kicked and refused admission to a church by French colonists, who cried: "Dirty Jew, go to your Synagogue!" On the other hand, it is well known that Mr. Grandval was received by the Moroccan population with every mark of sympathy and enthusiasm. Scurrilous tracts against Mendès-France and Grandval have been published and widely distributed by the French colonists, the text of one of which was published by the French newspaper Le Monde (July 23, 1955):

"Europeans of Casablanca:

The renegade Jew, Hirsch-Allendorf, called Grandval, the friend of

Abromivich, called Mendès-France, has come to sell out Morocco as was Tunisia. You have shown them one aspect of your irresistible force ... We ask you to be ready to liberate our second country by force if necessary."

The Jews of Morocco share the same hopes and national aspirations as the Moslems. They stand firm in their advocacy of the return of their Sultan, Mohammed ben Youssef, who, during the darkest and most crucial hours in the history of the Jews and of the world, remained steadfast in their defense. In 1951, when General Juin threatened to depose him, Jewish Moroccans decreed a general prayer on behalf of the Sovereign. Representatives of the Jewish community are among the members of the delegations who have gone to Paris and Rabat to demand the return of the Sultan.

Jewish Moroccans are unswerving in their demands for an end to the colonial regime and the re-establishment of national sovereignty in Morocco. A prominent Jewish Moroccan, Mr. Meyer Toledano, expresses the sentiments of his co-religionists in these terms (Maroc Presse, July 22, 1955):

"The Moroccan Jews have anxiously followed the trend of Moroccan affairs since 1950. They love their country and are grieved to see it troubled. Quiet and apparently indifferent, they are nevertheless disturbed by the daily events between the French and the Moroccans.

"The Moroccan Jews know that their ancestors, exiled from Spain, found refuge in this country in the fifteenth century. They also know that their life in Morocco has been generally untroubled. In comparison with the fate of the Jews in Europe during the Middle Ages, the Moroccan Jews did not suffer because of their faith; in fact, it has been respected by the Moslems . . .

"They also know that in 1940-1942 the Moslems made no attempt to harm them or even to deprive them of their property, refusing to take advantage of the anti-semitic decrees of the Vichy government. The Moslems could have harmed them without fear of punishment . . .

"The banishment of the Sultan in August, 1953, marked, for them, a day of mourning . . .

"Some ill-advised Frenchmen have spread injustice and terror in Morocco these past few years . . .

"The Jews of Morocco are convinced of the necessity of ties between France and Morocco, but they are likewise convinced that the Moroccan people have now come of age and are ready to conduct their own affairs."