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Zionism & Jewish Religion

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In thanking you for the opportunity of addressing the Philadelphia Section of the Council of Jewish Women, I would at the same time congratulate you upon the progress indicated by your desire to give a hearing to the Zionist heresy. It was not so long ago that Sections of the Council of Jewish Women extended invitations to speakers known to be Zionists, asking them to speak on any subject other than Zionism. In view of your own liberal-mindedness, I shall endeavor to keep my remarks as free from partisan rancor as is possible in the discussion of a subject that, very properly, continues to stir up sharp conflicts among latter-day Jews.

I shall not deal with the question of Zionism from its practical aspect, although it might, perhaps, be interesting and startling news to you to learn of the actual achievements of the modern Zionist movement. The hopeful signs of the development of Palestine are in no small measure due to the propaganda and the initiative of the Zionist organization. Chibas Zion—Love of Zion—and this is the fundamental element of Zionism—is so deeply rooted in the Jewish soul that it is not surprising that Palestine today should be in the beginnings of a remarkable development at the hands of Jews. The practical achievements of Zionism extend also to all the countries where Jews dwell. It would be a very interesting task to show what Zionism has done for Judaism in America, for instance; what ideas it has contributed, what forms of organization it has developed, what newspapers and other publications it has inspired, what schools and synagogues it has brought into existence, what individuals it has given spirit and power to what chords of idealism it has struck in the common people, how it has helped in bringing about unity between Jews of various lands, and the democratic principle into Jewish organizations, how it has strengthened a love for Jewish things and increased the number of our spiritual possessions, what its influence, direct and indirect, has been upon Judaism in America; and, in addition, upon Judaism the world over. It would also be of interest to give you information as to the Zionist organization, its funds and

its institutions, its methods of propaganda, its leaders and its plans. But I shall leave all this, and I shall ask you to bear with me if I attempt to discuss one phase of Zionist theory which, I trust, I shall be able to place before you in not all too abstract a way. And in this place and in this presence, it is fitting, I think, that the discussion concern itself with the relation of Zionism to Jewish religion, particularly to that aspect of Jewish religion known as Reformed Judaism.

When I use the expression Reformed Judaism, I would ask you to notice that the term "Reform" is for me a very plastic one. I distinguish between an Official and an Unofficial Reformed Judaism. Official Reformed Judaism has by this time assumed a definite shape and has almost acquired the rigidity of an established Sect. It is expressed in the Union Prayer Book, and it is opposed to Zionism. Naturally, I am not an adherent of this canonized Reform. I am a Reformed Jew—if we must use the word Reform at all—because I believe in the principle of development, of change in Judaism; but not because I believe in this or that definite change as fixed by Official Reform. Indeed, it would seem to me, that the great majority of the Jews of the country are of the unofficial Reformed type. They are by no means orthodox, and yet they are ever so much more Jewish in the traditional sense than are the Officially Reformed sectarians. Unofficial Reform is not as yet organized, but there cannot be much doubt that it will eventually exercise considerable power in the Judaism of this country. Nor will you misunderstand me if perchance I speak critically of certain phases of Official Reform. I recognize the historical necessity that has brought it into existence, and I believe it is sheer blindness to contend that it owes its existence to any partisan or individual caprice. It is in the hope that Official Reform is not altogether closed to new influences, to the refreshing force of national, of living Judaism, that I consider it at all in relation to Zionism.

Let me try to prove my point right at the beginning, in rather quizzical fashion, by quoting Zionist words from an anti-Zionist work. I shall tell you the name of the learned au-

thor only when I shall have finished the quotation. For the present, assume that I, a Zionist, had been privileged to express myself in words such as the following: (I am translating from the German on page six).

"In Judaism, race (Stammesgenossenschaft), constitutes the basis of the religious community, (Glaubensgenossenschaft), to such an extent that even the unbelieving Jew continues to be a member of the Jewish people. (Judenschaft)." On page seven:

"It is no easy matter to define the term Judaism, since it is composed of two entirely distinct, yet inextricably interwoven elements. Now the one element, however, now the other, is so unduly emphasized as to hide Judaism itself from us in its completeness and distinctiveness. Religion and peoplehood (Volksthum) are in Judaism an indissoluble unity. Jewry (Judenheit) and Judaism are to each other as body and soul. The people (Volksthum), which is the remnant of the tribe of Judah.... constitutes the national body, wherein Judaism abides and endures."

But these good Zionist propositions are not mine. They are from the recently published book on Jewish Theology by the President of the Hebrew Union College at Cincinnati, Dr. Kohler merely expresses what the Zionist's first proposition is, namely, that Judaism consists of two main elements, of the Jews and the Jewish religion. It may be that some Zionists resolve the Jewish religion into its component parts, of which they accept only the national or cultural elements. But no Zionist has ever committed the absurdity of attempting to deny the existence of Jewish religion. Official Reformed Judaism, however, has not always agreed with Dr. Kohler's statements, for it has upon numerous occasions seen fit to deny the existence of a Jewish race or people or nation. You will understand that I recognize the difference between the terms, race, people, nation, although in every people or nation there is a racial substratum. But for all practical purposes, I follow Dr. Kohler's illustrious example in using these words interchangeably. Should you attempt to underline the passages in which the learned author speaks of the Jewish race, the Jewish people, the Jewish nation, your task would perhaps be quite wearisome. To give a Zionist paraphrase of Dr. Kohler's propositions, let us say, that there can be no Jews without Judaism, and there can be no Judaism without the Jews.

Permit me to quote another distinguished anti-Zionist, the Reverend

Doctor Emil G. Hirsch, of Chicago, who cites with approval the following words of his father: "Wir sind eine religiöse Nationalität." "We are a religious nationality." I can quote you passages also from the Union Prayer Book, the official expression of Official Reformed Judaism, in which the word "people" is used, as for example in the blessing before the Torah, "Who hast chosen us from among all the peoples;" although you may be interested to know that in the Kiddush, as it occurs in the Union Prayer Book, the editors, instead of putting in the words "Who hast chosen us from among all the peoples," merely state "Who hast chosen us." From among what?

Indeed, can any unsophisticated observer doubt that there are the Jews of flesh and blood, call them race, people, nation; and that there is Judaism, call it the spirit, culture, religion of the Jews, as you will. They are as inseparable as fire and flame.

So far, so good. We find Zionists and anti-Zionists beautifully agreed upon a thing that every man can see with his own eyes, although to whisper a secret, not all anti-Zionists agree with the gentlemen I have quoted, and even they are human and are very apt to disagree with themselves between page seven and page two hundred and ninety-four of the same book, and from one speech to another.

Wherein, however, lies the difference? It is of a twofold nature. First, in the varying emphasis given the one element of Judaism or the other, and second, in the varying use made of each element by Zionist and anti-Zionist.

The Zionists have up to the present time placed most emphasis upon the element of the race, the nation, the people, whereas the religious opponents of Zionism, (and I am speaking now only of the "religious" opposition), have laid most stress upon the element of religion. When you are mightily interested in something, you are apt to emphasize it to the exclusion of everything else, although this everything-else may also be dear to you. This is particularly true of the discoveries you make. Hit upon a new idea and that obsesses you for the time. When the people of Israel and Judah lived in their own land in the midst of animal sacrifices and luxury, the Prophets threatened them with chastisement and destruction. Yet when the people were in exile, the Prophets of Consolation promised them the return of their captivity and of the Shekinah's glory to Mount Zion. If, then, we find Zionism and anti-Zionism over-emphasizing the one

element or the other in Judaism, we may, perhaps, conclude that they have been somewhat unfair to themselves; and we may be sure that the explanation is to be found less in unworthy motives, than in the force of surrounding conditions.

It would lead me too far afield to analyze the emphasis Zionism has placed upon the people, or anti-Zionism upon the religion. It must be understood, however, that both for Official Reformed Judaism and for Zionism it was a discovery to realize that it was at all possible to resolve Judaism into its component parts. In traditional Judaism, the particular and the universal, the national and the religious, the people and the spirit, were absolutely interwoven. Early Reformed Judaism, however, made the amazing discovery that the one could be separated from the other; and, in accordance with the Aufklärung spirit and the political exigencies of the times, the religious element was abstracted from the national element. Instead of the Jews being the standard-bearers, the Traeger, of Judaism, we find them substituting Humanity in their place. Instead of Judaism being a specific, detailed system of religious living, its central theological doctrine—that of ethical monotheism alone—was emphasized. In accordance with this view, any man is a Jew who lives a righteous life, and that Jew is no Jew who does not live a righteous life. In other words, the exclusive emphasis of the idea of religion was intended to picture the Jewish Community as the "Universal Church," and it tended to make of the Jewish religion a creedless ethic, of which, indeed, the Society for Ethical Culture, or at the most Jewish Unitarianism, is the unvarnished, logical outcome. To be sure, the gentlemen I quoted before do not take this logical step from some of their own premises. So much the worse for their logic and so much the better for their Judaism. In fact, the bark of Official Reformed Judaism is often worse than its bite. When the over-emphasis of Official Reformed Judaism is avoided, we have the pleasure of agreeing again with Dr. Kohler, who says on page six:

"He who denies the doctrines of the Christian Church ceases to be a Christian. . . . Birth, not belief, obligates the Jew to champion the eternal truths, for whose banner-bearer Israel has been chosen."

The Zionist, on the other hand, made another kind of discovery which he in his turn proceeded to emphasize. The Zionist found the Jewish people. To his honor, let it be said, he made the discovery at a time when,

within the ranks, the very existence of a Jewish people was being denied by many Jews who called themselves religious; at a time, also, when the Jews of Russia and of Germany were being mocked at or murdered by enemies without, as children of an inferior race. I am inclined at times to think that many Jews have not even today found the Jewish people. And yet, the discovery of this people breaks in upon you with wondrous freshness and surprise. To turn aside from the quibbles as to whether or not there is a Jewish people, and to come nearer to the beating heart of this people, to know the meaning of the old phrase "Yisroel rachamim b'nai rachamim hem," what wondrous pity Israel has, to partake of its joys, its sorrows, its hopes, to delight in its keen mind and sharp wit, to fight its fights, to love its traditions and aspirations, to feel yourself a child drawing sustenance for your spirit from your people's mother-breasts, to join in prayer to the God of your fathers—that means to live Judaism. Is it any wonder then, that when you discover the Jewish people, you emphasize your love for it? Add to this the uncertainties which modernity has fastened upon religious belief in general, and the radicalism of the Jewish mind, particularly of the Russian Jewish mind, and you will understand another reason why Zionism has laid particular stress upon the element of race, of people and of nation in Judaism.

But at this juncture we are met by one of those paradoxes in which Jewish life is so rich. Although Zionism has not emphasized the idea of religion, it has been for thousands the means of their return to Judaism and to religion. What was it that Harzi said: "Zionism is the return to Judaism before the return to the land of the Jews." Whereas Zionism has emphasized the idea of race, people, nation, and whereas it accounts everyone a Jew who is born a Jew, you will find, I think—take your Philadelphia Zionists as a random test—that, as a whole, the Zionists are religious men and women. In fact, most of them are what is commonly and oftentimes erroneously called "orthodox" in their religious beliefs and practices. There are other Zionists, also, whose nature is religious, but whose intellectual honesty will not allow them to say they are religious in view of the dogmatic difficulties they are struggling with. Yet their enthusiasm for, their devotion to Judaism, their self-sacrifice in the Jewish cause, which is for them the most sacred thing in life, are, in an extended sense of the term,

distinctly religious. In the Official Reformed Jewish Temples, however—institutions which insist constantly upon the religious test alone—we find large numbers who are not religious in whatever sense the term be used. You find, to be sure, many who are religious, yet among these, religion manifests itself by calling the Rabbi only in case of a death, (and I am not one who would underestimate the religious value of such a crisis). In the Reformed Temples you find comparatively few spiritual struggles. All problems appear to be solved, and everything is rich and complacent. Zionism, in its emphasis upon the race, the people, the nation, has made positive contributions, to the sum of our spiritual treasures. It has inspired authors, artists, singers, teachers, scholars, preachers, farmers, artisans, statesmen. All of this may be simpler and less valuable than distinctly religious contributions to Judaism. But the fact remains that Reformed Judaism, despite its unceasing reiteration of the word religion, has no such thing as a distinctive religious literature, aside possibly from some of the *Wissenschaft* of the last century. And of this, the greater part was history, to which the Zionist historian, Graetz, contributed perhaps the most religious of all the Jewish scholarly works in German. It would be reasonable to expect that after much talk about and much emphasis upon religion, we could turn to Reformed Jewish sermons, hymns, confessions, meditations, filled with the power and piety of the religious spirit. Reformed Jewish life, however—and I say this with endless regret—is almost bare of the things that make for power and for piety.

In short, whatever the individual Zionist may feel about religion, you will never find by a single word in all of Zionist literature that any Zionist has ever denied the existence of the Jewish religion, and the right of the Jewish religion to exist for the Jewish people as a whole or for such individual Jews as may themselves be religious. This is an attitude somewhat different from that of Official Reformed Judaism which every now and then, whether it be before Congressional Immigration Commissions or upon other occasions, sees fit to deny the existence of a Jewish race, of the Jewish people, of the Jewish nation.

But let us now leave aside all of the excrescences due to over-emphasis, and let us agree that most Zionists and anti-Zionists are in accord with the statement, that Judaism does contain two elements, the Jew and the

Jewish religion. The question now presents itself, what use does the Zionist make of these two elements, and what does the Official Reformed Jew do with these two elements?

At this point, the Official Reformer takes the offensive. To be sure, he says, we are a nation, but we are a religious nation. This means, that the reason for the Jew's existence is his Judaism, the reason for the Jewish nation's existence is its religion. Or, to use the current phraseology, the mission of the Jewish nation is to teach other nations the Jewish religion. In the words of the Bible, we are a kingdom of Priests, a Holy nation.

I personally have no quarrel with the idea of a mission. On the contrary, I am a firm believer in the essentially religious character of the Jew as revealed in his history and in his present-day uninterrupted search, his constant search after God. If the world's redemption is ever to come, it will come, so I believe, through the agency primarily of the Jewish people. What a splendid task for a people, to bring the light of joy to those who sit in the darkness of life's prison-house.

But as a Zionist, I can find room within the Jewish people for those also who do not agree with my interpretation of Jewish history. There is the Zionist who maintains that the Jew exists for his own sake, for the sheer joy of living, just as any other nation exists. There is the Zionist who puts the question: Do I ask why the sun shines, why my mother gave me birth? Why then inquire into the reason for the Jews' existence? According to this Zionist, all such inquiries are but an indication of the lack of robust health on the part of the Jews. Then there is the Zionist who has faith in the mystic quality of race, of the Jewish blood, in some such way as Benjamin Disraeli had faith in it, when he said: Race is everything. Then there is the Zionist who is not a believer, yet who seeks to abstract from that complex called the Jewish religion all such elements as language, history, literature, the beauty and power of many customs and observances, the Jewish land, and upon the basis of these, he is joyous in his Judaism, which he denominates national or cultural. Many such Zionists are eager for the creation of a newer and finer Jewish culture than any which the Jews have as yet possessed. Shall such Jews, because, forsooth, they do not believe in the religious mission of the Jewish nation, be excluded from participation in the Jewish brotherhood? Zionism

answers, No. There is, however, a type of Official Reformed Judaism which answers, they must be excluded. If, however, as we have agreed, there is a Jewish nation, a race, a people, it is not to be expected, my friends, that in the present development of human nature, all Jews can be as pure or as holy as priests. Indeed, the difference between the Zionist and the Official Reformer is here striking. The Official Reformer says arrogantly, "We are a kingdom of Priests, a Holy nation." The Zionist with more humility says, "We are not a kingdom of Priests, a Holy nation," but to be a kingdom of Priests, to become a Holy nation, that is our ideal, our ideal since the day it was spoken by the priestly writer of the Bible. We are a kingdom of Priests, a Holy Nation, potentially, not actually. Meanwhile, there are varying degrees and kinds of Jews, up to the priestly Jews. There are the good Jews and the bad Jews, the observant and the lax, the tall and the short, the blonde and the black. Some have the consciousness of race, some of peoplehood, some of nationality, some of religion, some of all together. But all of them, like the lulab, which is compared with Israel, are necessary to make up the Group, the Jewish Community. Together they form the human, frail, sinful, struggling, hopeful Jewish nation. Would that all the people were prophets, was said of old. Would that all the people were priestly, holy. But this wish is a high theological ideal, rather than the standard in accordance with which fellowship in Judaism can be determined. We find, therefore, that among the Zionists there may be Jews who differ radically in their beliefs and practices, yet who are united upon the basis of brotherhood in the Jewish people. Among the Official Reformed Jews, however, it is not unusual that an inquiry into a Jew's religious beliefs is suggested in order to determine whether or not he is a "Jew."

But let us now argue from the point of view of those who contend that we are in fact today a kingdom of Priests, a Holy nation, with the mission to communicate our Holiness to the peoples of the world. How is this to be done? Certainly, the very first condition is, that the existence of the Jewish People, this nation of Holiness be assured. Without the people, the mission cannot be fulfilled. Can the people be preserved, however, if it be held that there is no people? On the contrary, those who believe in the mission of the Jews as a Chosen People, should be the first among the

Zionists. For it is Zionism that is seeking to preserve the Jewish people, and those who believe in the lofty mission of the Jewish people must welcome every attempt looking to the preservation of the people. It may be a question for many as to whether or not a Jewish centre in Palestine is absolutely essential to the preservation of the Jewish people. There can be no question that such a centre would afford at least an additional assurance for the continued existence of the Jews. Nor can there be any question that Zionism is doing more than anything else to strengthen the Jewish national consciousness or feeling of peoplehood wherever Jews live throughout the world. Whatever be our interpretation of Jewish history, the basic element of every theory of Jewish life is the continued existence of the Jews, and it is Zionism alone of all Jewish movements which can give a guarantee of the uninterrupted continuance of the Eternal People.

But, say our opponents, Zionism uses political means for the accomplishment of its purpose, and its very purpose to create a Jewish centre in Palestine has a political element. It is true that the Zionists have never denied the political aspects of Zionism. But in this they have been the only frank Jews. Are the Jews of any country free from political activity in their own behalf? Why, as free citizens of any country, should they not make use of all the means at their disposal to obtain and secure their rights and privileges? Is the activity of American Jews in questions of immigration not Jewish political activity? Is the attempt to enable Sabbath-keeping Jews to earn a livelihood on a Sunday not Jewish political activity? It is only a shallow trick to have opposed the term spiritual to the term political. For political ideas may be as noble and as lofty as any other spiritual forces. To condemn Zionism for its political aspects is to condemn all political activity of whatever kind.

The disingenuous elimination by Official Reformed Judaism of political activity from the realm of the "spirit" is, however, due to a deeper cause. I think that here we come, perhaps, to the crux of the situation. There is, so it would seem to me, a fundamental difference between the Zionist way of looking at religion and the anti-Zionist way. This difference is due to two distinct conceptions of religion itself. The one may be called the Oriental or Zionist way, the other the Occidental or the Official Reformed way. In Christianity, the Oriental conception is that of Catholicism; the

Occidental, that of Protestantism. Reformed Judaism having had its rise and best development in Protestant surroundings has naturally taken over Protestant conceptions of religion, whereas Catholicism, the forerunner and rival of Protestantism, is sprung from conceptions of the function of religion similar to those at the basis of traditional Judaism. The Oriental conception makes religion coincident with all of life. The Occidental conception of religion makes it but one of the phases of life. The Oriental conception views everything—mind, will, conduct, the physical world—through religious eyes. The Occidental conception relegates religion to theological discussions or divine services. In the Occidental conception, life is like a great department store, in which religion is one of the various departments. I can best illustrate the Oriental conception to you from a fascinating work on Cardinal Newman by Charles Sarolea. His words are applicable as well to the Zionist conception of the Jewish religion: "Religion is the synthesis, the harmony of all the activities of man: it includes a metaphysical element in its dogma, in its interpretation of the problems of existence; it includes an ethical element in its sanctions and commands; it includes an aesthetic element (we Jews might say historical) in its rites and symbols and ceremonies; it includes a political element (we might say national) in the organization of the Church. It brings into play every faculty to transform the religious ideal into reality—education of the intellect, education of the imagination, of the will, of the moral sense, of the social sense. And all those elements, metaphysical, ethical, aesthetic, political; all those faculties—intellectual, imaginative, emotional—are combined in infinitely varied proportions according to race or even according to the individual believer. With some individuals, religion is purely contemplative and mystical; with others it is mainly practical. The thinker attaches greater importance to dogma, the statesmen to the ecclesiastical organization, the artist to forms and rites, the poet to feelings and ideals." You will recognize the applicability of the principle at the bottom of this to traditional Judaism, in which even the minor concerns of a man—his getting up and lying down, his dress, his appearance, his food, are regulated in accordance with religious injunctions. It would be interesting to trace the points of similarity between the Catholic Church and the Community of Israel. Their main point of divergence, aside from dogma, is, that a

Church, that is, an Ecclesiastical Organization with Pope and Hierarchy, is the interpreter of the Law of the Church; whereas with the Jews and with Judaism, it is the very race, the very people, the very nation that takes the place of the Church and Pope and Priests as the interpreters of the Torah, the Law of the people. This will show you, also, what an essential element the nation is in the Jewish religious system, and it is but another indication of the all-pervasiveness of religion in Jewish life. The contrast between the Oriental and the Occidental, the traditional and the reformed conception cannot better be summed up than in a thought which, I believe, the same author uses. The Occidental conception is based upon religiosity, whatever that may mean; whereas the Oriental conception is based not upon religiosity, but upon religion. In the traditional conception, you are a Jew from your birth to your death, in the house and on the street, in the synagogue and in your daily affairs, in your intellectual, imaginative and emotional activities. The traditional conception has no patience with that fractional Judaism which says, as many an Official Reformed Jewish preacher has said: In the synagogue I am a Jew, on the street I am an American. The traditional view sees no conflict between Judaism and Americanism. It is only the Official Reformed Jew who seems to have discovered that there was a conflict between Judaism and Americanism; and if the Reformed Jew continues to feel this conflict between his Judaism and his Americanism, so much the worse for his Judaism and for his Americanism.

Now, the Zionist idea of Judaism is just this, that it prevades and colors all of a Jew's activities from the smallest to the greatest. The religious Zionist will call his Judaism religion; the non-religious Zionist will call his Judaism a spirit or culture. But be it religion or culture, Judaism is for the Zionist that which characterizes or ought to characterize all of his life. The ideal of Zionism is the complete, harmonious Jew. It is for this reason that the Zionists are active on behalf of a Jewish literature, a Jewish art, Jewish music, Jewish philosophy, Jewish political and social ideals.

To each individual Zionist, the question, therefore, presents itself as to how completely Judaism has taken hold of his life. The answer will be different in accordance with differences of training and of temperament. He recognizes that the completely Orthodox Jew, whether Zionist or not,

is a Jew through and through in every phase of his being. In fact, every Jew who was educated in a traditional Jewish school, be he in later life an observant Jew or not, looks at the world through Jewish eyes. The Zionist recognizes also that the Jew to whom Judaism means obedience to the moral law of the Ten Commandments and nothing more, has no difficulty in adjusting himself to Christian surroundings. But for the average Zionist who is not completely Orthodox, or nurtured at the sources of traditional Judaism, or completely un-Jewish, it is usually not an easy matter to make Judaism the all-pervading influence of life. If he become acquainted with the sources of Judaism, and he labor persistently, he may succeed in so saturating himself with traditional Judaism that his outlook upon life is that of a Jew. But the average Zionist sometimes looks in vain to his Judaism for a Jewish answer to some of the problems of life. For, in Golus, that is, in non-Jewish surroundings, especially where the Ghettos have passed away, a Jew usually starts out in life with non-Jewish conceptions, which, later on, he may, perhaps, try to bring into harmony with his Judaism. The Zionist proposal is the reverse: that a Jew start out in life from a Jewish atmosphere and with Jewish conceptions of everything in life, and that, if necessary, he bring these into harmony with the wisdom of the outer world. Today the Western Jew gets his philosophy from non-Judaism or anti-Judaism. If his Jewish feeling, perchance, be awakened, he may seek to interpret Judaism in the light of his already acquired philosophy. The Zionist contention, however, is, that a Jew should seek to interpret the philosophies of men in the light of an originally acquired Judaism, which is the product of a complete, manifold, all-pervasive national Jewish life.

The Zionist problem then becomes, how best to assure the preservation and the development of a complete, manifold, all-pervasive national Jewish life. The Zionists contend that with the breaking down of the old Ghettos—those reservoirs of Judaism that are pouring forth their living waters and are fructifying Judaism the world over—it becomes the national duty of the Jewish people to establish, insofar as this is dependent upon the will and energy of the Jews, new reservoirs of national Jewish life. And the Zionists maintain that the chief reservoir, that to which all Jewry must look for fresh inspiration and hope and authority, is inevitably and

by the force of historic circumstance Palestine, the Land of Israel.

There are those who believe that such storehouses of Jewish energy can be secured without the need of the national centre in Palestine. I shall not go into all the reasons that speak for the necessity of having a Jewish central territory in Palestine. More than this, I would express my gratification at the fact that Zionists and non-Zionists are laboring together throughout the world for the preservation and development of a complete, manifold, all-pervasive national Jewish life. In fact, all the things that make for an intense Judaism have the sympathy of Zionism. But it is questionable, to say the least, whether or not such live, powerful Jewish centres can be maintained throughout the world. Take but one instance, that of the Hebrew language. Zionists are among the most devoted advocates of the preservation and development of Hebrew wherever Jews may be. But they are also not blind to the enormous difficulties in the way of preserving the Hebrew in Golus. In Palestine, however, during the past twenty-five years, Hebrew has taken on new life, and we are witnesses today of the marvel of the ancient tongue spoken by Jewish children in the Jewish land. As with Hebrew, so with the other elements of Judaism, let us hope that they will be preserved and developed throughout the Diaspora. The assurance of their preservation, however, and above all things their untrammelled development, is for the Zionist to be had only in the creation in the land of Israel of a home for the people and the spirit of Israel.

But whatever be our religious views, my friends, and whether we be Zionists or not, I trust it is clear that the Jewish religion, whether it be your kind or mine, is altogether dependent upon the Jewish people for its existence. The Jewish religion has, to be sure, universal religious ideas at its centre. These ideas, however, do not demand the destruction of the Jewish people. On the contrary, these ideas continue to be Jewish only in so far as the Jewish people continue to cherish and develop them. Our common problem; therefore, is, how preserve the Jewish people for Judaism. If you think weekly sermons and charitable endeavor and the social club sufficient, do that much of it well. We Zionists, for our part, shall endeavor to secure for ourselves and for the Jewish people such a fullness of Jewish life that Judaism shall be, if not for us, then for our children, as much a part of them, as is the breath they breathe.