

The Nation

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A Jewish Manifesto to the Arabs

THE Jewish National Council of Palestine has issued a second manifesto to the Arabs, the text of which follows in its original translated form.

To subjects of the dear and holy motherland, Palestine, and to all the Arabic nations in their respective countries. We, all the members of the Jewish nationality dwelling with you in our country, come to you, our Arabic brethren, with a message of peace and love, of unity and joint labors, to lay before you the sincerity of our aims and the purity of our hopes. You must know that our Bible and the writings of the Prophets admonish us never to transgress the laws of justice and fairness. Ere yet our feet had trod this holy land, we had engraved deep in our hearts that we were coming to re-inhabit the sandy shores and the deserts of this land; to fructify the mountains and the valleys; to bring to light the treasures embedded deep in the strata; to elevate the waters falling at present to waste and creating the swamps which bring sickness on the dwellers of low-lying parts; to conquer by toil and sweat, by money and science that which the inhabitants of the land were unable previously to exploit through lack of means; to bring a sheaf of blessing on all the toilers in this land; and above everything, not to encroach on anybody's rights and privileges.

We come not to dominate you, as our traducers allege against us, nor yet to encroach on your own perfect and sacred rights. Our prophets, with heavenly inspiration, did exhort us to give rights of possession in our midst even to strangers sojourning with us; how then shall we debase our thoughts by having intention to exploit a whole nation, our very kindred, with whom we are dwelling in the one country?

Enlightened Palestine subjects, open your eyes and behold what exists; let our deeds bear witness for us; we have been dwelling in the land from early times and it is now quite forty years that we have been building villages here; have we then molested any person during all this time? or did it even enter the minds of any of us to injure any one? We have brought in from abroad millions of francs and expended them in the country for the benefit and welfare of all the inhabitants. Wastes and deserted places which no one ever dreamed of settling on were transformed by us into habitable towns; the places where now flourish our colonies have created fresh sources of livelihood for thousands of the inhabitants, have raised the values of landed property and produce, and have revitalized the life and movement of the neighborhoods. Consider the town of Tel-Aviv; scarce thirteen years ago there was nought but sandy waste there and for a few pence it was even possible to obtain vast stretches of land, while now hundreds of houses and thousands of settlers have been added and the price of land for a considerable extent around has reached almost fabulous figures. . . . In order to engender misunder-

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standings between us and to anathematize us some people have arrogantly dared in the name of holy religion to invent libelous falsehoods, declaring that we have come here to obtain possession of your holy places so as to desecrate them.

You, the nation, can be the truest witness for the refutation of so baseless an accusation. For one small moment place your hand on your heart, and, with reverent feeling ask your very soul if ever indeed a Jew had desecrated what you hold sacred. They terrify you with an alleged peril from the Halutzim (pioneers). Go and investigate whom these workmen harm. Do they not buy all their needs from the local inhabitants and pay with choice Jewish money, flooding the country from abroad? Who are the buyers of the toil of the fellah and fisherman at the principal markets of Jaffa, Jerusalem, and other cities? Is this then the way we exploit the natives? Or is it then that a Jew buys and does not pay, or that a Jew borrows and does not settle?

Pray, in what way have we encroached on your rights? Let the gentlest child relate or the most unfortunate native woman declare; or let whosoever has had dealings with Jews either in trade or at work tell whether Jews molest them or whether it is not with justice and fairness, with respect and consideration that we behave to them while working for us in house or field. The development of the country calls for a stupendous effort which only all of us together can accomplish; secure in our justice and confident in our fairness we come to call for joint labors. We are brethren in this land; let us then work together to make it bloom, and each nation will gather strength and develop its nationalistic powers, its language, and its literature; for you must surely know that in work and science competition is a blessing to the competitors and to the whole world.

By virtue of that truth which transcends and overcomes all falsehoods and libels, we are confident that all the Arabic nations will soon come to recognize that, in their aspirations for freedom and progress, they will assuredly find in the Jewish nation a brother faithful in thought and deed, a staunch and unswerving ally, and a loyal and willing comrade.

Semitic nations, our regeneration is your regeneration and our freedom is your freedom.