



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
**AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES**

**MS-763: Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman Collection, 1930-2004.**

Series H: United Jewish Appeal, 1945-1995.

Subseries 4: Administrative Files, 1945-1994.

---

Box  
54

Folder  
14

Telephone conference. February 1948.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the  
American Jewish Archives website.

---

HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.

GENERAL CHAIRMAN, UNITED JEWISH APPEAL, 165 WEST 46TH STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

February 10, 1948

Mr. Harry A. Zinn, President  
Mr. Israel Friedman, Executive Director  
Allied Jewish Council of Denver  
226 Empire Building  
Denver 2, Colo.

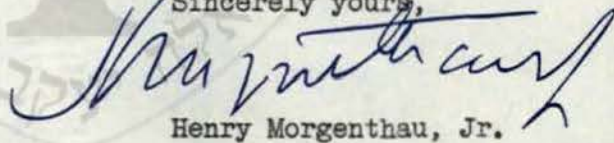
Dear Friends:

I am glad that you were able to join in the emergency telephone conference with Mrs. Goldie Myerson, Governor Herbert H. Lehman, Mr. Stanley C. Myers and myself.

In order that you may have a copy of our talks for easy reference for yourself or for any of your colleagues in the campaign organization, I am enclosing herewith the complete text of the special phone hookup.

May I say again that we appreciate everything that you will undertake to do to make possible the realization of our \$50,000,000 cash goal in the next two weeks. I am eager to hear from you.

Sincerely yours,



Henry Morgenthau, Jr.

HM:odd  
Enc.

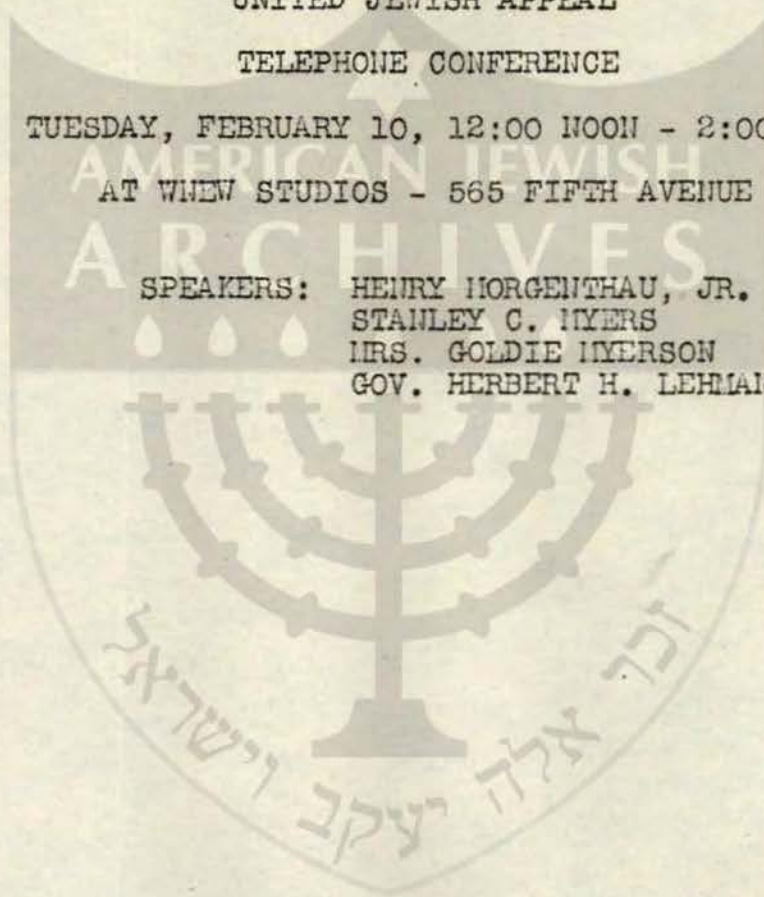
UNITED JEWISH APPEAL

TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 12:00 NOON - 2:00 P.M.

AT WNEW STUDIOS - 565 FIFTH AVENUE

SPEAKERS: HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.  
STANLEY C. MYERS  
MRS. GOLDIE MYERSON  
GOV. HERBERT H. LEHMAN



HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.: Mrs. Myerson, Governor Lehman, Stanley Myers and myself have gathered around a table to tell you our story. The three agencies we represent need 50 million dollars in the next two weeks. We must raise this money. From the reaction to our request so far, I am confident that the Jews of America will come through with the money.

Now why does this emergency exist? Why did we not foresee it? Why have we waited until the last minute? The four of us are here today to answer those questions for you.

When, on November 29th, the U.N. after long and careful consideration acted favorably on creating a Jewish State, we had every reason to believe that they would implement this action with whatever steps were necessary to carry out their own decision.

During the past ten weeks the Arabs and their friends have waged war against the decision of the U.N. I say that the Arabs in challenging the authority of the U.N. are challenging the Peace of the World.

I am sure that World Peace and security are uppermost in everyone's mind today, We want Peace in the World.

I ask you how can we have Peace if the United Nations fails. My friends, the action of the Arabs

HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.: backed up by Great Britain will bring about the failure of the United Nations.

I, for one, cannot and will not believe that President Truman and General Marshall having shown such courageous and wise leadership in regard to Palestine, will not insist that the U.N. implement their own action in whatever form necessary.

But while this hiatus exists, where can the Jews of Europe and Palestine go for financial aid except to the Jews in America.

Are we going to let anyone say that during this hour of decision we Jews failed to provide the necessary dollars? I repeat, I am confident that 50 million dollars are going to roll into our Treasury during the next two weeks. I am asking your community to do its share.

It is now my pleasure to introduce Mr. Stanley C. Myers, who is here to join in this crisis discussion today.

STANLEY C. MYERS: I am going to be very brief because all of us want to hear from Mrs. Myerson on what is actually

STANLEY C. MYERS: happening in Palestine today. About two weeks ago, only two days after she landed in the United States, Mrs. Myerson flew to Chicago to address the General Assembly of our Council. All of us were deeply stirred by the situation which she described. It was clear from her message that the Jews of America are faced not merely with another emergency, but with a grave and immediate crisis. Without waiting to be asked, many leaders of our communities who were present in Chicago came forward at once and volunteered action for their communities of the type that is the business of our meeting today. I am certain there will be a similar response today.

As much as we have done in work and in organization and in giving, we must do more - much more - this year. We are face to face with a crucial chapter in the history of the Jewish people, a chapter which we will write. I should say, a chapter we are writing at this very moment. I have great faith that our welfare funds will write that chapter gloriously, representing as they do the united strength of every section and group in Jewish life working together for common purposes.

As you know, our local welfare funds raise the overwhelming bulk of the funds of the UJA and our community representatives had a major part in establishing the \$250,000,000 quota for 1948. We did so with a full understanding of the magnitude of the task involved, and with full recognition of

STANLEY C. MYERS: our continuing over-all responsibilities for the welfare of our own communities, and for our obligations to other important national and overseas programs.

In joining in this urgent appeal today, I do so because I am aware of the quality of our local organizations and leadership, and their ability to understand the importance and all the implications of the problem to be presented. I know that our communities can and will respond and will find the answers in the present emergency, without in any serious way detracting from our day to day and year around obligations, which, of course, we must and shall continue to meet.

After Mrs. Myerson, Governor Lehman and Mr. Morgenthau detail the job before us, you will know as well as I do the importance of what must be done. Our welfare funds have established a magnificent record of service and leadership. We have grown enormously in the past decade, not only in the sums raised, but in the development of a true understanding of every aspect of Jewish life and any special pleading or urging on my part, or explanation of your responsibilities is entirely unnecessary, and would be presumptuous. I know that when the problem is presented to our communities, they will respond in a way that will be an everlasting credit to them and to our people.

HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.: Thank you, Mr. Myers. And now I think we ought to hear from Mrs. Goldie Myerson.

MRS. GOLDIE MYERSON:

We all know that murder and violence always make front page news. And I am sure that the whole Palestine picture has been placed in that category in the American press. Well, the truth is that the Jews in Palestine are at war. We wanted peace. We still seek peace. But it was not up to us to make the choice. We had no choice. The war that we are fighting now is a war of survival that was forced upon us by the Mufti and his henchmen.

And our sons and our daughters, mere boys and girls of seventeen and eighteen, go out by day and by night to defend our homes and our people. I wish that you could see the spirit of these young people -- youngsters who have come out of the university and off the farms. This thing that we call security is nothing particularly heroic or gallant to them. To these young people, the flower of our youth, it is just another job. They go out on patrols and see their comrades die at their side. But they keep right on. They are determined to fight until the end -- never to give up, never to retreat. Not one place of settlement has been evacuated -- and none will be because in Palestine there



MRS. GOLDIE MYERSON:

is no such thing as evacuating a position that has once been marked out as a place of Jewish development.

This war that has been declared on us by the Arabs is an unequal war. It is an unequal war because the Arabs have the wealth and the arms of seven states behind them, with easy access to all the things they need to attack us. But the Jewish community has no officially recognized militia and does not now possess the means of defense.

I said before that the young people had a fine spirit. Wars cannot be won with spirit alone. Just before I left Palestine there was a meeting on the question of providing supplies for the young people who were sent as reinforcements to the Negev. It's very cold at night there. In the north too, the nights are cold this time of the year. We had the problem of what to do about overcoats for our young people. Everybody agreed that they needed them. But there wasn't enough money. The young people made the decision for us. They knew what had to be done. They knew our financial difficulties. They said they would go out on watch without overcoats.

MRS. GOLDIE MYERSON:

At the present time we have 9,000 men mobilized for defense. We must increase that number at least to three times that in the coming days, not weeks. To maintain the 9,000 members of our security force, to feed them, to provide some form of support for their families, to supply them with tents or other living quarters, it costs \$44,000 a day -- every twenty-four hours we must spend \$44,000. And that daily cost will be trebled for the 27,000 men that we must have to protect the Yishuv. That means three times \$44,000 or \$132,000 a day.

Where is the money to come from? You might ask me what are the Jews of Palestine doing about it. The 700,000 Jews in Palestine have already raised \$2,480,000 in one emergency campaign and they are beginning another drive for \$8,000,000. This is in addition to our Kofer Hayishuv tax of \$400,000 a month. If this won't be enough we will do more. But you must not have any illusions. We cannot do it all ourselves.

You cannot decide whether we will fight or not. We will. No white flag in Palestine will be raised for the Hifti. That decision has been taken. You can only decide one

MRS. GOLDIE MYERSON: thing. Whether we will be victorious or whether the Mufti will. That decision American Jews can make.

We must ask Jews the world over to do for us what America so generously did for England in the World War. We ask only to be given the chance to go on with the struggle.

The big problem is time. Time is running short. It is later than you think. We need large funds now - today. Since coming here I have learned something about your campaign procedures. I know, for example, that substantial funds will be available in April or May. The millions we might get in four months from now mean very little. What we can get immediately counts - not next month, but now, so we can hold out. The time factor is vital.

A few weeks ago thirty-five Jewish boys started out to help in the defense of the settlement of Kfar Etzion, that was besieged by a large number of Arabs. They couldn't use the roads, so they had to go by night through the Arab villages. They knew the danger, but there was no other way. They set out by foot through the hills. You know what happened to them. Everyone of those boys was killed. We have a description from

MRS. GOLDIE MYERSON:

an Arab of how they fought for over seven hours. They were hopelessly outnumbered, but they fought back hundreds of Arabs to the very end. According to this Arab, the last one was killed with a stone in his hand. He had no ammunition left.

Is it possible that the youngsters who are in the front lines will have to fail because money that should have reached Palestine today will reach it in two months? Is it possible time will decide the fate of the Yishuv?

We will fight to the end. We will fight with our spirit alone, we will fight with stones, if we have nothing else to fight with. We will give our blood and die on the battlefield. We will not go down like our 6,000,000 brothers who perished in the gas chambers and crematoria of Hitler.

The Yishuv of 700,000 Jews, the thousands of men and women on guard and in battle in every point in Palestine are confident in their ability to fight this battle to a victorious end and they know that the American Jewish community will not fail them.

HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.:

Thank you, Mrs. Myerson, for those stirring

HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.: words. And now I'd like you to hear from a great American and a great Jew -- Governor Herbert H. Lehman.

GOV. HERBERT H. LEHMAN: Henry, I really don't know what to say. I feel all choked up. As Mrs. Myerson was speaking I felt a deep anxiety for our co-religionists in Palestine. But I must say that her speech made me feel proud of the brave men and women who are fighting for their lives and their freedom. It made me realize more clearly than ever the wonderful spirit of faith and courage that can be awakened in our people when they are faced with grave dangers. I am sure that all of us are now in a better position to understand how the 1,500,000 Jews in Europe mustered the fortitude of body and mind to withstand the persecutions of Hitler.

The facts that Mrs. Myerson has presented to us speak for themselves. It seems to me that the business of this meeting is action - action of the kind that has made the Jews of the United States a symbol of towering strength in the struggle for justice and human rights.

The events of the past few months have brought us the rare privilege of making

GOV. HERBERT H. LEHMAN: Jewish history. We are on the threshold of a new era in Jewish life -- an era that can bring the end of Jewish homelessness -- an era that may mark the beginning of the end of Jewish misery and sorrow. Whether that new history shall be written in terms of memorable achievements or tragic failure may depend, it seems to me, on the answer we make today.

The Jews of Palestine want peace. They have held out the hand of friendship and good will to the Arabs but, they have had conflict thrust upon them. The Arabs have declared war on the Jewish people of Palestine and on the United Nations.

We must do everything in our power to protect the lives of the 700,000 Jews in Palestine today. We must do everything in our power to give these defenseless men, women and children in the Jewish homeland the means to safeguard themselves against Arab states that have deliberately set out to destroy them and to flout and defy the will and decision of the United Nations. If they cannot defend themselves pending the creation of an adequate United Nations' force the inevitable result will be the utter destruction of a

GOV. HERBERT H. LEHLIAN: brave people and the nullification of a sacred decision of the United Nations.

Is it not apparent to all of us that the security of the Jewish homeland represents the very foundation on which the reconstruction of large masses of our fellow Jews rests? Without the means to defend the Jewish state in the process of formation, how can the program of mass migration outlined by the U.N. possibly go forward? It would be tragic indeed if the thousands of men, women and children, who are to be brought into Palestine after having escaped extermination at the hands of the Nazis, should again be exposed to destruction.

Where the security of Jewish Palestine is concerned, there too lies the future of large numbers of our people -- the homeless hundreds of thousands in the D.P. camps in Germany, Austria and Italy and the thousands of others on the Island of Cyprus. Well do we recall how they danced for joy when the United Nations' decision on Palestine was announced. They celebrated for three days and nights. Shall we see their great hopes through to realization, or shall they be cruelly transformed into a mockery --

GOV. HERBERT H. LEHMAN: another nightmare of exploded dreams and forgotten promises?

Therefore, Henry, I wholeheartedly endorse Mrs. Myerson's plea and add my own appeal for an extraordinary effort to meet the emergency in Palestine. In doing so, I speak not only for myself, but for the Joint Distribution Committee and its leaders. They are completely aware of the extreme emergency which faces the Jewish Agency at this time and they are anxious to help in every way.

If our hopes of raising 50 million dollars immediately are realized, it will provide the means of defense for the tragically endangered Jews of Palestine and will permit the J.D.C. to continue its program overseas. We must never forget that there remain in Europe a million and a half Jews who are almost entirely dependent on the J.D.C. and the U.J.A.; that there remain 250,000 Jews in displaced persons camps who must be sustained until they can be moved to Palestine or elsewhere; and that we face a real problem here in caring for and adjusting to American life a substantial number of refugees who are reaching these shores.

In the many years that I have been associated with programs of aiding those in need and in distress, I have never found the Jewish communities wanting. I am fully



GOV. HERBERT H. LEHMAN: confident that in this grave crisis they will unhesitatingly accomplish what is expected of them.

Henry, I believe that you might wish to outline the request that the United Jewish Appeal wishes to address to the community leaders who are participating in this conference.

HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.: Thank you Governor Lehman. This is what must be done in the next two weeks -- I repeat -- two weeks, if we are to hold the defense line in Palestine. The United Jewish Appeal must have \$50,000,000 from the communities of America in the next two weeks. We need \$50,000,000 in cash -- not in pledges. This is the minimum that is required to give the Jews of Palestine the funds they need to protect themselves, and to keep the programs in Europe and the United States going on a restricted basis.

The money that we ask you to obtain immediately must go for the maintenance and provisioning of the boys and girls who have volunteered to fight, and die if need be, for the protection of their people.

The money is going to be used to buy jeeps

HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.: for transport, armored trucks to carry food to isolated settlements, overcoats and other clothing, tents, medical supplies, transport airplanes to reach points besieged by the Arabs, cement for the building of protective walls and all forms of communication equipment.

How is the \$50,000,000 to be obtained? We turn to you, the major Jewish communities of America, to provide the answer -- each in your own way. I have just sent to each of you a telegram indicating the amount which we ask each community to provide toward the total. We ask that you borrow the sum required immediately. Some of you -- perhaps all of you -- will act at once to convert 1947 outstanding pledges into cash. You may also ask contributors to anticipate payment of gifts on 1948 pledges. You will also wish to explore borrowing from capital funds that may be locally available. I have no doubt that each community will have its own ideas for effective action. All of us -- acting together and quickly -- can provide the essential \$50,000,000 in two weeks.

HENRY MORGENTHAU, JR.: Jewish lives depend on immediate action. Use whatever methods best meet the conditions prevailing in your community. But speed is urgent. Wire me or phone if you have any questions. We are also eager to have any suggestions that will help us achieve our \$50,000,000 cash objectives in the next two weeks.

I am happy to report to you that Mr. Herman Gilman, the dynamic Chairman of Boston's 1947 campaign and Mr. Irving Usen, its Treasurer, are with us in the studio now. As always, Boston has very good news for us.

Mr. Gilman and Mr. Usen have just brought me a check for \$1,500,000 towards the \$3,000,000 Boston has undertaken to borrow for this purpose. I am sure that all of you listening will follow Boston's inspiring example.

In closing I want to thank all of you for responding to our call for this emergency phone meeting. Please remember that wherever you are -- whether in Los Angeles or Boston -- you are on the front line of Jewish survival. We must not -- we dare not lose this fight. With your help we and the Jews of Palestine will be victorious. As Mrs. Myerson has said, the heroic defenders of Palestine know that the American Jewish community will not fail them. I know you will not fail them. Goodbye and good luck to all of you.

-THE END-