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American Zionist Emergency Council, letter requesting views of  
leaders; responses, 1943.

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PROPOSALS TO THE AMERICAN EMERGENCY COMMITTEE FOR ZIONIST  
AFFAIRS

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by

LOUIS SEGAL

Evaluating the political situation in the United States, and realizing that America will play an important part in the final determination of the political status in Palestine, one must come to the conclusion that the opportunity which this country affords the Zionist Movement in influencing public opinion in behalf of a Jewish Palestine, still remains by far unutilized.

I, therefore, wish to make the following proposals to be included among others which the Emergency Committee is to carry out within the next twelve months.

I. Arrangements should be made for conferences to be held with the leaders of the Republican and Democratic Parties. At these conferences, the leaders of both Parties should be enlightened upon:

1. The present Jewish situation in Europe.
2. Jewish achievements thus far in Palestine.
3. The possibilities that Palestine absorb millions of Jews.
4. The necessity that Palestine become a Jewish Commonwealth.

At these conferences, it should be made certain that in the Convention platforms that both Parties will adopt for the forthcoming Presidential elections, there should be included



a clear-cut plank on the solution of the Jewish problems and the upbuilding of Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth.

II. The Convention of the American Federation of Labor has, at its session on Friday, October 8th, 1943, adopted a very warm resolution supporting the upbuilding of Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth. (This was primarily achieved by the Labor Zionist Movement, through its connections with the leaders of the American Federation of Labor). Since this resolution is already of public record, arrangements should be made that a delegation representing the American Federation of Labor should be received by the State Department, to present the adopted resolution to the Department and make clear the position of the American Federation of Labor in support of the Jewish demands for Palestine.

III. The same procedure should be followed with regard to the forthcoming Convention of the C. I. O. We have reasons to believe that the C. I. O., dealing with the Jewish question, will adopt the same policy as the American Federation of Labor adopted.

IV. Arrangements should be made to hold conferences with the leaders of the Trade and Labor Councils in the larger cities of the United States, to persuade them to use their influence that the State Legislatures and City Councils adopt resolutions similar to the resolution adopted by the recent Convention of the American Federation of Labor endorsing the Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine.

All such resolutions should be dispatched to the State Department and to the President. This procedure will



have special significance for the fact that these resolutions are presented upon the initiative of the Labor Movement in the respective cities.

Previous to the presentation of the resolutions, Committees of Labor leaders should be set up in the larger cities, charged with the responsibility of conferring with the editors of local newspapers, radio commentators, etc., in order to create favorable public opinion for the resolutions.

V. It is highly important that Church leaders be mobilized in behalf of the Jewish demands with regard to Palestine. I, therefore, recommend that two conferences should be arranged as soon as possible. One, with the representatives of the Catholic Church, and the other, with the spokesmen of the Protestant Church. As a result of these conferences, the leaders of the respective Churches should issue statements dealing with the present Jewish situation in the world and supporting the demands for a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine. An effort should, also, be made that a joint delegation, representing all Churches, should be received by the State Department and by the President in connection with their position taken toward the upbuilding of Palestine.

It would, also, be highly advisable that all Churches should designate a special Sunday during which the Congregants should be enlightened on the conditions of the Jewish people and the achievements in Palestine.

VI. After the ground work is properly laid by the Labor Movement, the Churches, etc., it is important that a proper resolution should be introduced in the House and in the Senate, call-



ing for the endorsement of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine. Said resolution, when adopted, will have great political significance in all future developments in connection with Palestine.

For the purpose of such House and Senate resolutions, the American Palestine Committee should be properly mobilized.

In connection with the above proposals, it is necessary to maintain constant contact with American journalists, newspaper editors, radio commentators, and all others who help to create public opinion in America. They should be informed of all important problems concerning the Jewish people and the accomplishments in Palestine, and the political developments there.

I, also, deem it necessary to emphasize that in order that the abovementioned proposals, along with the others recommended by the other members of the Emergency Committee, be successfully carried out, it is important that the Emergency Committee become a normally working body, its meetings to be held regularly and its machinery to function properly.

Each Party represented on the Emergency Committee should be made to feel that it is an active participant in the work of the Emergency Committee. The branches of the various Parties throughout the country should be constantly keep informed about the Emergency Committee's work. In the larger cities, a branch of the Emergency Committee should be created comprising the local Zionist organizations. Such committees may, receiving proper instructions, prove to be a great help to the Emergency Committee in carrying out its plans and activities.



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Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,  
American Zionist Emergency Council,  
41 East 42nd Street,  
New York, N.Y.

18/- 143.

BRITISH EMBASSY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.



Dear Abba:

What do you think of this draft?  
see you early Monday E.N.  
Gold wants to see you early Monday morning: so I'll change the appointment with Goldmann for a later hour. E.N.

September , 1943

Dear Mr.

As I enter upon my official duties in the Emergency Committee, I feel the need for a full exchange of views with you and other leading members and officers of the Committee who have devoted much time and thought to our political affairs.

It is my hope that it may be practicable in the near future to arrange an informal and private meeting for the purpose of threshing out some of the immediate and long range problems which press for solution and arriving at the largest possible measure of agreement among us.

As a preliminary to such a meeting and as an aid to me in preparing for it, I would greatly appreciate a written expression of your considered views regarding our political problems, along two lines:

- a). An appraisal of our political situation (more particularly in the United States) and of the future prospects insofar as one may venture to gauge them today.
- b). The policies and methods to be pursued in order to overcome present difficulties and achieve the purposes of the Biltmore Program.

I realize, of course, that volumes may be written on these subjects; and, busy as we all are, I do not expect an exhaustive treatment from anyone. I do hope, however, you will give me the benefit of your mature thought in summary form but as clearly, definitely and concretely as possible, bearing in mind that such a statement will not be for public consumption but solely for facilitating the crystallization of policy in our inner circles.

Such a statement would be doubly appreciated if you could manage to let me have it in the course of the next week or ten days.

Very ~~sincerely~~ <sup>cordially</sup> yours,

Abba Hillel Silver



The Land of Israel, for the People of Israel,  
according to the Torah of Israel.

ארץ ישראל, לעם ישראל,  
על פי תורת ישראל

הסתדרות המזרחי באמריקה

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CABLE ADDRESS  
"MIZORIENT"

September 20, 1943

Rabbi Dr. Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Yours of September 17, inviting even the humblest and most inarticulate in matters of Zionist policies to give written expression to his considered views regarding our political problems, is the best indication of the type of truly democratic and yet thoroughly effective leadership that we may expect under your supervision and guidance, as chairman of the Emergency Committee Executive and co-chairman, with Dr. Stephen S. Wise, of the larger Emergency Committee.

Before creating man, God, too, consulted with all his ministering angels, as inherent in the phrase "let us make man." Yet, when all opinion was expressed the Lord did not wait for all to execute with him the resolutions adopted but proceeded to do the job himself, as stated: "And He made man."

And now, after having unburdened myself of this bit of "droosh", which you will hopefully forgive, may I supply my answer to your two very important questions, as follows:

A)- That our political situation in the United States is not too bright, goes without saying. In my opinion, it is due in very large measure to the superficial understanding which government circles and public officials in Washington hold for our movement. They have all been sold up to now everything except real Zionism, just as our fellow Jews have not been given the true ideological merchandise that is ours. The prepared speeches which congressmen and senators have been delivering in our behalf have, unfortunately, been in the nature of pleasant fellowship and accommodation rather than the expression of a deeper understanding of our people's national aspirations. There must be a reason why we have utterly failed in developing any semblance of a Wedgewood-like attitude to Zionism on the part of our non-Jewish friends. It is not without cause, I believe, that all our above-mentioned influential friends manifest their endorsement of Zionism when they are in our company, but hardly champion our cause in the legislative bodies to which they belong.



Rabbi Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

September 20, 1943

I wonder whether our Emergency Committee has ever taken notice of the fact that every vigorous statement made in Congress in behalf of Palestine was inspired, as officially recorded in the Congressional Record, by the Jewish Army Committee, which consists of comparatively unknown individuals but who understood the psychology of our non-Jewish friends, who appreciate the type of Zionism which is based on the ancient history of our people and its tradition, rather than being merely a movement that sees in Palestine a major haven of refuge for devastated Jewry, which purpose may in the opinion of some, be achieved more easily in other parts of the world.

(2) B) As to the policies and methods to be pursued in the future, I should suggest that we stop centering our attention on the easily accessible small fry and give our fullest concern to contacts with those who hold the power to decide and to act. These individuals must, of course, be seen by those who stand at the helm of our movement and not be relegated to men who are professionally engaged in our work, as important as these may be for other essential work of a different nature. The important officials of our government must then be impressed with true Zionism as Dr. Herzl proclaimed it before kings and rulers, without hiding it under comfortable presentations, and which reflect Israel's need for a homeland for the preservation of his spiritual heritage, which is obviously bound up with Eretz Israel. (This would largely refute the pseudo-religious approach of the Council for Judaism and brand them as forgers of historical Judaism, as they surely are traitors to our national aspirations).

(3) The Emergency Committee must also come to the realization that every ideologic group in Zionism can and must be utilized for political contacts in Washington in connection with circles that are closest to their particular approach to Zionism. Mizrachi leaders can, for instance, do much in seeing clergymen, the labor people can act likewise in contacts with labor leaders, etc. The policy and thought that only General Zionists are political-minded and able to carry out the missions of the Emergency Committee is certainly fallacious as it is unwise. One or <sup>a</sup> few individuals cannot possibly carry the entire burden of our political work.

With very best wishes for success in the vigorous and real leadership that you have undertaken and are well able to give us in the most important branches of Zionist activity, I am

As ever yours,

*Max Kirshblum*

Rabbi Max Kirshblum  
Executive Secretary

MK:hd



# THE BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER

667-691 EASTERN PARKWAY

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

ISRAEL H. LEVINthal, D. D., D. H. L.  
RABBI

September 23, 1943

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

I have your letter of the 17th inst. and hasten to reply. First of all I want you to please accept my sincere congratulations on your election as Co-Chairman of the Emergency Committee and as Chairman of its Executive Committee. I feel confident that under your leadership the Emergency Committee will take on new life to accomplish the great tasks which face us today. I must also take this opportunity to extend to you my belated congratulations on the masterly address which you delivered at the American Jewish Conference. It was one of those addresses that make history and I can assure you that it will be remembered by all who were privileged to hear it for many years to come.

As to your specific request for an expression of my views regarding our political problems, I would say this:

As a whole, I think that our political status is much more favorable today than it was even a few months ago. Our non-Jewish friends and neighbors have heard much more about the Jewish claim for Palestine in the last few weeks than ever before, and I feel that it must have made an impression upon them. The publicity which the Conference received and even the publicity of that Emergency Conference called by the Jewish Army group, has done much to arouse public interest in the whole question of Palestine and Zionism. This does not mean of course, that we have won the support of our non-Jewish friends. There is still much to do along these lines. Your recent conference with Secretary Hull was a fine achievement and I agree with you in what you said at the last meeting of the Emergency Committee - that we ought to try to arrange conferences with many more of the leaders of our Government.

The main point that seems to serve as an obstacle in winning our non-Jewish friends is, of course, the Arab problem. If we could only succeed in enlightening them more on this problem, we would certainly gain many more friends. Much has been accomplished along this line, but much more can be accomplished. One of the mistakes that we made I think, is in concentrating our efforts in getting favorable opinions from political leaders. I feel that it is much more important to win the intellectual groups such as clergymen, professors, teachers and writers. A politician's approval can not be depended upon. His opinions will change with the wind. They are not based on conviction but rather on the ideas and principles of someone whom he needs. Tomorrow he may think he needs someone else and will adopt that someone's opin-



ions. The American Palestine Committee will have to concentrate on winning over the support of the intellectual group in the American non-Jewish scene. This is a colossal task and will require a large staff of workers and much literature. Perhaps a special group of clergymen could be organized whose sole task would be to do propaganda work among clergymen; another special group of educators to work among educators, and another group of writers and artists to work among their groups.

I am somewhat troubled also by the increased activity of the so-called American Council for Judaism. I am afraid that we are taking this group not seriously enough. To be very frank with you, I am not afraid of what they may do among Jews. I do not think that they will win much support except among the extreme assimilationists, but I am afraid of their influence among non-Jews. After all, they will be able to display names of men who enjoy favorable positions in the non-Jewish world. Something will have to be done to discredit <sup>them</sup> this. Something will have to be done, perhaps, to draw away some <sup>from</sup> of their support. In Brooklyn we have thus far succeeded in getting a few of the rabbis who originally participated in that Council, to withdraw - or at least to keep their names off the printed list. This was accomplished through pressure of men inside their congregations. I think such pressure should be used by Zionist leaders in some of the communities where Zionists are active in the Temples of the men who have given their names to the Council.

I realize that these expressions are the result of hurried thinking along the problems that you posed. I shall, however, give the subject much more thought after the Holidays and hope to be able to be of service to you at the forthcoming meetings of the Emergency Committee.

With my very best wishes to you and yours for a Happy New Year and for the realization of all our hopes and prayers, I am

Cordially yours,

*Israel H. Levinthal*  
ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL

IHL:ER



LOUIS E. LEVINthal  
606 CITY HALL  
PHILADELPHIA

September 24, 1943.

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver,  
The Temple,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Dr. Silver:

I have given some thought to the contents of your letter of September 17th. It is, of course, not easy to give a clear and definite appraisal of our political situation and of our future prospects. There are some favorable and some unfavorable factors to be considered. Which of these factors will ultimately prove controlling, no one can predict with any degree of assurance.

The following may be regarded among the helpful elements:

1. The many public endorsements of the establishment of the Jewish National Home in Palestine by all of our Presidents since Woodrow Wilson; the Joint Resolution of Congress in 1922; the American Palestine Committee with its bi-partisan membership; the recently organized Christian Council; the resolutions adopted by about a dozen State legislatures within the last year, etc., etc.

2. The sympathetic support of men like Secretary Ickes and Secretary Morgenthau, Vice President Wallace and Wendell Willkie, Justices Frankfurter and Jackson, and many other truly progressive personalities in American public life.

3. The support of THE NATION and THE NEW REPUBLIC and liberal opinion generally.

4. Above all, the essential validity of our case - the achievements of Palestine during the past quarter of a century; the contributions to the war effort; the fact that there is no feasible alternative to Jewish Palestine as the solution to the problem of the homelessness of our people, etc., etc.

Among the unfavorable elements in the situation are the following:

1. The rising tide of anti-liberalism, including anti-Semitism.

2. The unfortunately prevalent suspicion on the part of not a few non-Jews that Zionist propaganda is untruthful and unreliable.



September 24, 1943.

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver,  
#2.

3. The notion that Zionism is unfair to the Arabs in Palestine, violating the principles of democracy in ignoring the rights of the majority of the present inhabitants of the land, etc., etc.

4. The anti-Zionist attitude of the British Embassy and of those in our State Department who are under British influence.

5. The notion that Zionists have succeeded in obtaining endorsements from politicians by resorting to "political blackmail".

6. The American Council for Judaism, THE NEW YORK TIMES, etc.

I am firmly convinced that despite the many serious difficulties we can succeed in obtaining the support of our government and of enlightened American public opinion. To do this we need to systematize our public relations work. We should publish an authoritative statement, well illustrated, of what has actually been achieved in Palestine since the issuance of the Mandate. The accusation made by our enemies that our colonists have never become self-supporting must be met and answered by facts and figures. We must also publish authoritative pamphlets on the future absorptive capacity of Palestine and on the Arab problem.

The publication of such material is of little value unless its distribution is carefully planned. Every important American listed in Who's Who should receive our literature, but it should not be sent out by any organization or committee. Individuals should be asked to assume responsibility for distributing our literature among persons known to them. (When, for instance, Dr. Weizmann's article in Foreign Affairs was sent out by the Emergency Committee or the American Palestine Committee, most of the recipients probably paid very little attention to it. But, on the other hand, when Jacob Billikopf, at my request, sent out a hundred or more copies to a select list of his acquaintances, with a well prepared covering letter, we were sure that nearly all of the recipients would read the article. As a matter of fact, most of them replied to Billikopf and expressed their approval. There are hundreds of men like Billikopf who could serve us similarly.)



September 24, 1943.

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver,  
#3.

The men whom we should utilize to make frequent contacts for us with leaders in American public life should, above all, inspire confidence. It does not serve our purpose to have merely "brilliant" or "clever" spokesmen. It is much more important to have straight-forward, sincere, truth-speaking and trust-inspiring representatives. Of course, the ideal combination is to have brilliant men who have also the faculty of commanding belief and confidence, but such men are rare, indeed.

We must persist in our efforts to win over the support of non-Zionist Jews. I do not consider any non-Zionist altogether hopeless. My own experience with Judge Horace Stern convinces me that deep-rooted prejudices can be dispelled if we be patient and persevering.

I am looking forward to attending the meeting which you plan to hold to discuss our general problems. I should like to clarify and elaborate upon some of these random and rather desultory suggestions.

With kind personal regards, I am

Cordially yours,

*R. P. Silver*



THE WOMEN'S

ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA, INC.

# HADASSAH

1819 BROADWAY • NEW YORK, N. Y.

TELEPHONE: COLUMBUS 5-6585

September 26, 1943

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
East 105th Street and Ansel Road  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Your letter of September 17 is a challenge to thought. I hope you will make it the subject of a full joint discussion, for an individual letter can touch only on disjointed points. I am glad, however, to summarize my own immediate suggestions on the program of the American Emergency Zionist Council.

I shall not address myself to the mechanics of organization. I grappled with that problem for a whole winter about two years ago, when I was chairman of the Organization Committee. At that time the Emergency Committee was in great danger of disintegration, and we did the best we could under the circumstances. The reports and the various plans projected are in the files. The arrangements finally arrived at represented many compromises. In general, I should say the formal aspects of our organization never satisfied the constituent parties outside the ZOA, whose representation was enlarged through the original nucleus of the Committee. At some proper time this matter might come up for discussion.

We are far more deeply concerned, however, with content and program. While the political work has been pursued under the stimulation of Dr. Weizmann and Dr. Nahum Goldmann and the groundwork for public relations has been laid - first, by Mr. Neumann, and then under Mr. Shulman's chairmanship - the very much needed research work has been almost completely neglected. The Hadassah Committee on Arab-Jewish Relations Study, which the Emergency Committee voted to sponsor jointly with Hadassah, did begin its work. We are sending you a set of its Bulletins and such material as has been mimeographed. A number of the conferences with special authorities have not been mimeographed, but the transcripts are on file. The work of this Committee will be greatly furthered if you as chairman and the Executive Committee as a whole would take a real interest in it and discuss its reports. I know that you will want to talk this matter over with our chairman, Mrs. Jacobs, at some early date. A group of us might then meet with you and others whom you may designate from the Executive Committee to plan the work under the new setup for the coming year.

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OBJECT IN AMERICA: Fostering Zionist ideals through Jewish education.. Participation in American Defense program.

ACTIVITIES IN PALESTINE: 1. War Emergency Program; 2. Promotion of public health through development of preventive and curative medical institutions and services in cities and rural districts, culminating in the Rothschild-Hadassah-University Hospital and Medical School; 3. Land redemption and afforestation through the Jewish National Fund; 4. Immigration and colonization through Youth Aliyah.

JUNIOR HADASSAH ACTIVITIES IN PALESTINE: Maintenance of Meier Shfeyah Children's Village and Pardess Anna Training Farm.

JOINT ACTIVITY WITH SENIOR HADASSAH: Maintenance of Henrietta Szold School of Nursing; Junior Agency Youth Aliyah.



9/26/43

I agree with you that Arab-Jewish Relations Studies are part of a larger framework which may well constitute an Institute of Zionist Research, the basis for which is at hand in present scattered efforts. A survey, I believe, should be made forthwith of all available material, personnel, etc.

There is no need for reiterating the need for continued and intensified public relations work. The number of committees and the integration of activities can be discussed at our next meeting. The crux of the matter, it seems to me, is to get the right personnel for each activity. There's the rub. But I am far from discouraged. I believe the Zionist movement is stronger today than it was in many a year, and I see new and able forces rising and reaching toward us. I know you will be able to count on their cooperation, as on those of us who have grown up with the movement.

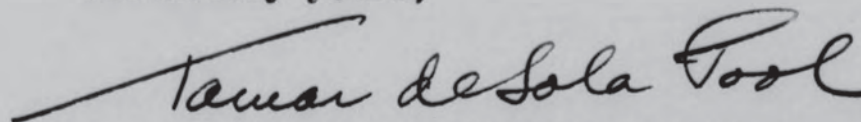
Perhaps I may use this opportunity to indicate the committee on which I should like to serve. I have been steadfastly interested since 1939 in the various groups devoted to post-war studies and world organization. It seems to me that there would be real value in selecting a suitable list from the hundred and more groups so engaged for us to work with. A start has been made with a very few of these groups, but the work should be fully activated now. In view of my special interest, this is the field in which I should like to work this coming year. I expect to have a great deal of time to devote to it.

I refrain from touching upon numerous other matters, as they will be fully covered, I am sure, in the current discussions of the Executive Committee.

I need hardly repeat that you can count on Hadassah's fullest cooperation and goodwill, both collectively and individually. I look forward to my own active service under your leadership.

With best wishes for achievement and success in your great responsibilities,

Faithfully yours,



Mrs. David de Sola Pool



201 West 77th Street  
New York, N.Y.

September 27th, 1943.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver:

The procedure you are initiating according to yours of Sept. 17th is to be commended. It should help utilize and energize all potential forces that can be made available for our cause. I hope the meeting to which you allude will succeed in dealing with both the long and short range necessary programs. It happens that while I recognize the importance of the immediate "short range" program, I am interested in the long range program because of its enduring importance and its long neglect, from which we now suffer.

It is a big order yours of Sept. 17th. But then you seem to realize that as is stated by you. So here is my feeble effort as a succinct answer restricted to "a" and "b".

Regarding the fulfilment of Zionist objectives in the ultimate, I have an abiding faith and am optimistic in the belief that we shall make some strides forward toward whatever it shall be called - a "Jewish State", "Commonwealth", "National Homeland", or any new designation that will make Jewish Palestine an entity comparable to the formula for other small peoples. I am not convinced that we use wisdom as to where we put emphasis at a given time and as to the choice of time for making maximum progress.

X Our political situation, if gauged from the possibility of obtaining our objective in toto at this juncture in world affairs, I do not consider favorable. The set of prevailing circumstances are against us. Arab interests and United Nations interests that lead to favor Arabs at this time stand in our way. In my humble judgment, our compatriots in the U.S.A. will cede to Great Britain the right to decision for the Middle East and will obtain some quid pro quo for U.S. special interests elsewhere.

Any move that would entail bloodshed and civil strife in Palestine or between Jews and the Arab countries, I would consider no gain for our cause because it would not endure and we would lose even that little which we have.

X Public opinion has not been built up in our favor because we have neglected education and were willing to resort merely to propaganda, and in my opinion not even good propaganda at that.



Time is an essential element for us - time to build up an informed public that would sway opinion, do what is necessary to win over Arab cooperation and work for rapprochement, and time even to develop "statesmen" in the real sense, to be the leaders of our Jewish Palestine.

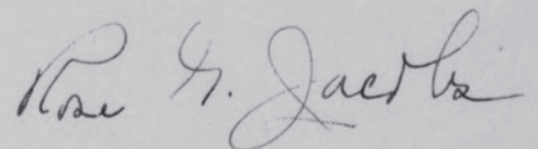
I believe any move we make forward, whether in obtaining the right for sizable immigration or for fostering industry or acquiring land, should be considered a victory for our Zionist aspirations. The rest will follow at a propitious time and will have substance and permanence.

I am not unmindful of the tie between successful immigration and the eventual "Commonwealth" in the mind of the Arabs, but arguments for immigration in connection with refugee settlement of Jews in Palestine can readily be advanced even now.

The above expression of opinion is not to be taken to mean that I have any objection to public expression for the Commonwealth idea. However, I believe that the leaders of the Movement ought to face realities in order to be prepared for any eventuality with which they may be faced.

.With very best wishes for the New Year to you and yours, and for satisfaction in your service on behalf of Zionism, I am,

Sincerely yours,



Rose G. Jacobs.

RGJ/JE