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American Zionist Emergency Council, Community Contacts
Committee, 1945.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS AT DINNER MEETING OF
COMMUNITY CONTACTS COMMITTEE
October 4, 1945, at Hotel 2400, Washington, D. C.

Dr. Leon I. Feuer, Chairman: This Committee is our Community Contacts Committee.

It is an Executive Committee, for the work of our local Emergency Councils, of which there are several hundred, throughout the country. The Emergency Council, insofar as it is possible, to avoid doing it, does not organize paper committees -- we expect this to be a real working committee. We have neither the time nor the facilities with which to fool around with honorary paper committees. We expect this Committee to do a job.

Two purposes of this Committee:

1. To advise with us in the formulation of our program. We want your aid and your suggestions. We expect you to exercise your own initiative and imagination in carrying out the programs and directives formulated by our Executive.

2. We have a limited staff. Therefore, we must have outside assistance.

The members of this Committee will be voluntary members of the staff of the Emergency Council representing us throughout the United States. -- carrying out the assignments that our own professional staff would carry out if we had a staff large enough to do it.

As soon as our program is outlined in detail and we have sent to our 320 Councils throughout the country the specific directives with regard to the projects which they will undertake during the next month, we shall communicate with each member of this Committee and assign to him or her the areas he or shee will be responsible for. We shall expect you to take time and energy to make personal contacts with these communities, visit them where necessary, if possible, and keep in touch with their work. Also, report to us what they are doing and how you evaluate their work so

that we, in turn, can take necessary steps to strengthen communities that are weak, etc. You will be given assignments and you will be held responsible for them.

Rabbi Cooper, Charleston, W. Va.: Is this a replacement of the original Community Contacts Committee?

Dr. Feuer: This Committee will be the Executive Committee of the Emergency Councils. It is not to take the place of the local chairmen. If you happen to be the Chairman of your local committee you will be responsible for your local committee, plus the larger area. This covers a larger area than the local chairman.

Mr. Neuman, Chicago, Ill, raised a question about the Council in Chicago.

Mr. Shapiro: Chicago has to change its picture. We would suggest to Chicago that they break up into five or six zones so that there will be five or six working Councils.

Dr. Feuer: Now that we have seen our representatives, what are we going to do about a general program? How can we in our local communities bolster the national program and the total structure? The Executive Committee of the Emergency Council has been wrestling with this problem for a long time. We are dealing with the practical question of program. What project is there attractive enough, dramatic enough, appealing enough, around which we can build a community program which would enlist the interest and the activities of the masses of the Jewish people in our local communities?

Two years ago we had the Congressional Resolution and it elicited a magnificent, tremendous effort on the part of the communities around the country. It produced results. It did not get us a homeland, but it took us definite steps forward.

First, we sold our program in a very large measure to the Congress of the United States. There are now a substantial number of Senators

and Representatives who know our business, who are interested and sympathetic.

There may be another Congressional Resolution, and if so, we will immediately have a peg upon which to hang our program. If we do find it advisable to reintroduce our Resolution we may abandon our present plan. That will depend on how things work out within the next few weeks.

The project which the Executive of the Emergency Council has decided upon and is now engaged in blueprinting for our communities throughout the country, the project upon which we shall hang our program is this: we are going to launch, in the very near future, a national petition. When I say "petition" I do not want it to be taken too literally. We are not going to plead or beg for something. We are not going to use that term, but rather a much more dignified and dramatic term: an American declaration on Palestine, or a manifesto.

We shall attempt to get 12 to 15 million Jewish and non-Jewish signatures to this manifesto, and we are hoping for more non-Jewish than Jewish signatures.

All of the things that must be done within the next few weeks can be constructed around the idea of a petition, which is dramatic. Mass meetings; newspaper editorials; radio programs; programs dealing with Palestine in schools and colleges, in local luncheon clubs, in churches, ministers' associations, etc. It can be launched with a great community mass meeting, with some important public official as chairman or as keynote speaker. You can have the mayor declare a Palestine Week or Month during which this petition will be collected. Make your community conscious of this effort which is going on in the community and throughout the country. Continuous contact with leaders of your political parties, resolutions -- all of the paraphernalia of activity which was centered around the National Resolution should be centered around this project if we do a good job. And it can be done even more dramatically.

Every bit of material which you will need in connection with this petition will be furnished to you by the National Office -- radio programs, editorials for newspapers, ideas on how to build your meetings, how to contact Christian groups.

Your job will not be that of creation although we hope there will be enough imagination used in each community to vary the program in relation to the environment of the local community.

This kind of a job, which may sound like a staggering job, you should think of as a money-raising campaign. Organize teams, mass meetings, assign areas for various workers, parlor meetings, etc., all of the same techniques can be used.

The smaller the community, the higher will be the percentage of the quota. There are two reasons for this: 1) it is much easier to get a higher percentage of the quota because the coverage is easier; and 2) the small community represents the backbone of the country. Congressmen will be much more impressed with 2,000 or 3,000 signatures in a village than with 50,000 in a large city.

Mr. Nathan Brodsky, Newark, N. J. expressed dissatisfaction over the fact that decisions are made by the Executive without consulting local chairmen who are familiar with conditions in the various localities. "There is much common sense in the rank and file. Should we not be consulted as to what the manifesto will contain? Should we not work from the bottom up rather than from the top down?" "We are always told that discussion will follow a session but in the last ten minutes a resolution is pushed through without giving us an opportunity to discuss it."

"We do the leg work. Let us give you a picture of what is going on in the community. The Zionist Council of a community does the day-by-day work.

Then the Emergency Council is created. The same people under a different name do the same job. Then American Christian Palestine Committee is created. Who does it? The very same people. If they are not the same people then the work invariably lags. That is the situation in New Jersey. You can't keep on creating separate committees.

Mr. Cohen, Philadelphia, Pa.: "I got one impression from the reports made today.

The reports indicated that our Congressmen are confused on the matter of Palestine. How long more will they go on without further education? The important thing to do is not to get the Jewish people behind it. My point is this: we have to do something, and rather than spend time and money in getting a petition we must educate the masses. We must develop some means to get good will. If we have a mass meeting Jews will go but not Christians. We must work out a technique to get to the non-Jew. And we can get to them by advertising. Instead of getting 12 to 15 names, get public opinion properly educated, and you won't need names.

Dr. Feuer: But how will that public opinion be transmitted to the Government?

Mr. Shapiro will outline the program of newspaper advertising.

Mr. Shapiro: This petition is an educational effort. You never educate by passive education -- sending out pamphlets or ads in newspapers. You must have a device on which attention can be focussed. The petition is a great instrument for education. Newspaper advertising -- you can run three full-page ads in 40 newspapers and it will be the cost of the petition.

Our own Zionists need education. This is also a device to educate our own people, Zionists and non-Zionists. This is a forceful aggressive means.

_____ : One mistake that we have been making is that in our public relations we are always immediately asking for "tachlis". We give them a little education and immediately we ask them to do something for us.

Most Americans rebel at putting their name on a dotted line or petition. They must be slowly prepared for it, not antagonized by rushing them. I feel that if we undertake this manifesto it must be done on a long-range plan. We must be prepared to tie this in with the Congressional Resolution. We have no control over the time element in a Congressional Resolution.

Dr. Feuer: We can't wait for a year or two, that is obvious. We don't have the time.

I don't think it is difficult to make clear to our non-Jewish neighbors that we are facing an emergency. As for the untimeliness of this petition, I said before that our policy would change with the need. But as of the moment we think we need a real program of registration of public opinion.

_____ : Will this petition revolve around unrestricted immigration to Palestine or around the full Zionist aims?

Dr. Feuer: Always around the full Zionist aims. Never will our activity be anything else.

St. Louis representative: Congressmen know what an organized effort is. They know what a petition is. I think that as far as Congress is concerned, instead of sending Jewish delegations send this type of non-Jewish delegation. Line up committees in the different wards to work upon the ward chairmen. I think that would do more than a petition.

Mr. Eugene Solow, Dallas, Texas: We don't like the program you have outlined. In our part of the country it would be completely wasted. It would not have any influence on a Congressman from the southwest. In every community there are certain people who have the confidence of these Congressmen. Some are Jews, most are non-Jews. We have a big job to do with Congress. We must organize ourselves so that the best people available can work with these Congressmen. The petition idea would be a marked failure for a movement as old as ours.

Dr. Abraham Fleischman, Des Moines, Iowa: Public relations work is done by knowing the right people who get to the right places, not by petitions. The right

people are through the avenues of the A. C. P. C.

Long Island delegate: We have already had a petition. We in Long Island want a new technique.

Mr. Alkow: This petition idea did not come from above. It came from the people themselves. I have had continuous demand from various communities. "Give us a task, a job in which not only the leaders of the community will be engaged but in which the rank and file will be engaged."

We can't limit ourselves to any one undertaking at this point. We must strike at as many places as is humanly possible.

Long Island wanted a petition five or six months ago, but we told them that it had to be nation-wide in scope, not local. So they took it upon themselves without permission from the Executive Committee to have a petition. They printed their own. We saw it and it was perfect, but we did not sanction it. They have gotten close to 20,000 signatures in a small area and 90% were non-Jewish. We asked: Did you do an educational job? What did you tell them? They said: Yes. We explained it to them and we educated them.

You must always have a project in order to teach. Teaching by the project method is the best method in the world. In other words, we have a chance to hold better mass meetings, better radio programs, etc. with a project to work on.

We must hit on all cylinders, not just one. But if this petition will engage all of our people in work, if it will activate lazy Zionists as well, then how can we quarrel with it? In some places sailing will be difficult. But remember, we are a national committee thinking in terms of every part of the country, so don't be hasty to condemn.

As far as Christian activity is concerned, in New England, for example, of \$36,000 raised, \$25,000 is being used on A. C. P. C.

The value of the petition is not what you get after it is signed, it is what you get in the process of having it signed.

Rabbi Lelyveld, Omaha, Neb.: The petition idea has a twofold value. It is a splendid educational device. It won't inhibit our work in contacting the right people or in stimulating the A. C. P. C.

In addition to being a device, it is a demonstration. We have talked time and time again about a mass registration of the American people. The American people are more than ever behind our program. This petition can be accomplished, and it is the answer to the American Council for Judaism which only last week tried to convey the notion that American Jewry is split on this subject. Let us attempt this tremendous job. This petition is a mass project which has democratic value and is worth the attention of our group.

Mr. Bass, Boston, Mass.: If we fail to get 12 million signatures, what will be the reaction of Congressmen? We have been telling them that the overwhelming majority of Jews are in favor of Palestine. Furthermore, the American Council for Judaism will still continue their propaganda that there is a very large segment against Zionism.

Then the question of ZO A membership comes up. If people sign this petition they will say that they are enrolled Zionists and you won't get their \$6.00 membership dues from them.

I believe that A. C. P. C. is our answer. The type of people in A. C. P. C. can be more effective than getting millions of signatures. Those are the people who will make the impression on Congressmen.

LIST OF GUESTS WHO ATTENDED DINNER MEETING OF COMMUNITY CONTACTS COMMITTEE
October 4, 1945, at Hotel 2400, Washington, D.C.

Washington, D C.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Siller

Mr. Louis Spiegler

Mr. Isidore S. Turover

Mrs. John M. Safer

Mrs. Denise Tourover

New York, N. Y.

Mr. Harry Torczyner

Mr. Jacques Torczyner

Mr. M. Starkman (the Day)

Merrick, New York

Rabbi Lipman

Richmond Hill, New York

Mr. Sol Cohen

Newark, New Jersey

Mr. Nathan Brodsky

Boston, Massachusetts

Mr. Ralph Bass

Mr. Isidore Passow

Philadelphia, Pa.

Mr. Henry Kaplan

Capt. Joseph Kohn (guest)

So. Philadelphia, Pa.

Mr. J. S. Richmond

Cleveland, Ohio

Mr. Saul Danaceau

Mr. Ezra Shapiro

Providence, Rhode Island

Mr. Archibald Silverman

Woonsocket, Rhode Island

Mr. Arthur I Darman

Rochester, New York

Dr. Joseph Dimond

Gastonia, North Carolina

Rabbi William Silverman

Lexington, Kentucky

Rabbi Julian Flag

Des Moines, Iowa

Dr. Abraham Fleischman

Charleston, West Virginia

Rabbi Samuel Cooper

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Mrs. Robert Agulnick

Mr. Arthur Shutkin

Madison, Wisconsin

Rabbi Theodore H. Gordon

Detroit, Michigan

Philip Slomovitz

Moskegon, Michigan

Rabbi Satlow

Davenport, Iowa

Mr. Sam Rivkin

Chicago, Illinois

Mr. George Neuman

Guest List, cont.

Rock Island, Illinois

Mr. David Halpern

Omaha, Nebraska

Rabbi Lelyveld

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Judge Saul Yager

San Antonio, Texas

Mr. Ed Goldberg

Rabbi Tamarkin

Houston, Texas

Mr. Joseph Weingart

Dallas, Texas

Mr. Eugene Solow

San Francisco, California

Mr. Morriw Lowenthal

Mr. Jack Verdi

Mr. George Edelstein

Seattle, Washington

Mr. Joseph Gluck

Dr. Leon I. Feuer

Mr. Harry Shapiro

Mr. J. M. Alkow

Mr. Harold Manson

Mr. Abe Tuvim

Mr. Leo R. Sack

Mr. A. K. Isreeli

Mrs. Marion Perlov

Miss Harriett Pierce

Mrs. Sylvia Ruskin

