



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.

Series I: General Correspondence, 1914-1969, undated.

Sub-series A: Alphabetical, 1914-1965, undated.

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American Zionist Emergency Council, Arab immigration in
Palestine, 1946.

ARAB IMMIGRATION IN PALESTINE

Though the fact has often been denied by British officials, official population statistics published by the Palestine government indicate that the Arab population of Palestine between 1918 and the present has increased by about 250,000 more than would have been possible on the basis of the annually published figures for the Arab birth and death rate. This figure of 250,000 represents the approximate figure of Arab immigration from neighboring countries into Palestine. This immigration is the result of the attraction of better wages and more modern conditions in Palestine for the populations of the surrounding countries. It is understood that the Arab immigrants into Palestine have come mainly from Syria and Transjordan, though there is some immigration from Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, and other parts of the Arab-speaking world.

This immigration has been facilitated by ~~various~~ ^{the} lax frontier controls maintained by the British in the case of Arabs crossing the border into Palestine. No "certificates" or other immigration permits are required of such Arabs in the majority of cases.

In addition to this process of immigration from abroad, there goes on in Palestine a process of internal migration: Arabs from those parts of the country where Jews did not or were not permitted to settle, and where economic conditions have, therefore, remained stationary and backward, are migrating toward those parts of the country which, because of Jewish activities, have been modernized. This will explain the fact that purely Arab cities, such as Nablus, Gaza, and Ramleh, have not grown, whereas Jaffa, Haifa, and the areas surrounding Jewish colonies show a large increase in Arab inhabitants.

1946-47