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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, Truman, Harry S., 1946.

Western Reserve Historical Society

10825 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106
(216) 721-5722
wrhs.org

American Jewish Archives

3101 Clifton Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45220
(513) 487-3000
AmericanJewishArchives.org

Department of State

PL

OFFICE
DIVISION }

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted

ADDRESSED TO

Mr. M. B. Shaber.

Treasury Administration

Record on Palestine

see folder

Local Emergency Comm.

Sept. 12, 1946



T. Truman

MEMORANDUM

"I talked with Harry several times. He seems very well pleased. I think he will carry it out. I am not uneasy. Our problem is September. The only way we can do that is through the U. N.

"You and several others ought to be in South America getting their friendship. I will do from Mexico what I told you. I will get the delegate from Mexico and I will get permission to get an advisor and will arrange it so you can select the advisor with the right to go on the floor. Nothing else will do any good.

"Re Mufti, am going to ask what is being done about it. I will see if I can get done what is being asked. I believe the matter can't wait -- hence, action must be direct."

May 9, 1946 By long distance telephone

WRHS

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

In reply refer to
PL

November 2, 1946

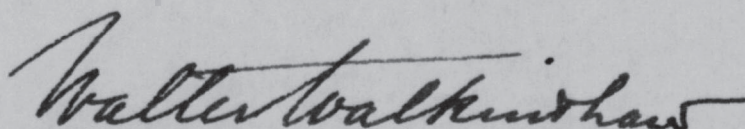
My dear Mr. Shaber:

I have received a copy of your letter of October 5, 1946 regarding Palestine, addressed to the President on behalf of Post 78 of the American Veterans of World War II.

Your courtesy in forwarding a copy of your letter to the Department of State is appreciated. I am enclosing a White House press release of October 28, 1946 which you and your associates may find of interest.

Sincerely yours,

For the Secretary of State:



Walter Walkinshaw
Chief, Public Views and
Inquiries Section
Division of Public Liaison

Enclosure:

White House release,
October 28, 1946.

Mr. M. B. Shaber, Commander,
Post 78,
American Veterans of World War II,
1493 Glynn Court,
Detroit 6, Michigan.

*To Dr. Abba Silverman;
you may keep these
for your files.
M. B. Shaber*

[undated]

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of our respective organizations and, we are certain, of all Jewish citizens of America, we should like to appeal to you to keep open the borders of the American occupation zone in Germany and Austria for Jewish refugees from persecution~~ix~~ in Eastern and Central Europe.

At a meeting to which representatives of our organizations were recently invited, the Secretary of War, the Under Secretary of State and General Hildring explained to us the gravity of the problems which the continued and accelerated influx of Jewish refugees causes to our military authorities in Europe and which have caused General McNarney to recommend the closing of the border at the time when the number of Jews in D. P. camps in the American zone in Germany will have reached 110,000.

We have the utmost appreciation for these difficulties and we would like, at this point, to express our profound gratitude for the kindness with which the Secretaries have called us into consultation on this matter.

Since we understand that the final decision in this matter will not be made without your authorization, we feel impelled to address this appeal to you.

Our appeal is based entirely on the humanitarian considerations involved. The Jews who are fleeing to the American zone come mainly from Poland where they are in daily danger of life. Closing the only avenue of escape open to them would be tantamount to condemning them

to death. However great the burdens which their continued influx poses on the American occupation army, it is our hope, Mr. President, that you will agree that these miserable survivors of the three and a half million Polish Jews should not be denied a chance to remain alive.

[illegible]

So great is the distress of the people concerned that probably not even a decree closing the border will stop these human beings from trying to reach it as the only alternative to death, as the only place where they can expect decent treatment. Any attempt to enforce such a decree would merely result in the American troops or German guards acting under American authority having to shoot these unfortunate refugees, who would therefore be hunted on both sides of the border. We know, Mr. President, that you would not like to sanction any policy that would lead to such consequences.

We understand that the influx of Jewish refugees is particularly burdensome to American authorities since there is a shortage of housing facilities and of manpower to supervise the refugee camps. We wonder whether the housing shortage could be partly remedied by enabling the Jewish refugees already in the American zone to work on the construction of housing for their brethren. We also offer our cooperation in making available American Jewish volunteers to take over supervisory and guard duties in the camps under American military authority, thus relieving American troops from this duty.

It is our sincere hope that these suggestions may somewhat reduce the burden on the American occupation authorities. It is also our hope that the Government of the United States may succeed in exercising

pressure on those elements in Poland who embarked on a course of persecuting and killing Jews to desist, ^{from this course} in speeding up the admission of growing numbers of Jewish refugees into Palestine and other countries, and in obtaining the agreement of the British, French, and Soviet Governments to give temporary refuge to Jewish refugees in their zones as well. We would be happy if either or all of these efforts would reduce the need for Jews to flee into the American zone or die. But as long as this need exists, we beg you in the name of the entire Jewish community of America and in the name of humanity not to close the border of the American zone to these refugees.



Truman

[undated]

= suggested letter

Dear Mr. :

I have given careful consideration to the latest proposals with reference to Palestine but regret that I find myself unable to give them my approval. The proposals are not only clearly inconsistent with the unanimous Report of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, but considered on their own merits are open to serious objection. They do not appear to me to offer an acceptable solution in consonance with the obligations towards the Jewish National Home as well as the population of Palestine as a whole to which both our countries are committed.

May I now earnestly reiterate the request which I made nearly a year ago for the early admission to Palestine of 100,000 of the displaced Jews of Europe - a step which has since been unanimously recommended by our Joint Committee of Inquiry. In the course of the past year the situation has seriously deteriorated. The plight of the unfortunate refugees has grown increasingly desperate and the tension in Palestine has mounted to an alarming degree.

The plans and preparations for the rapid transportation of the refugees to Palestine are so far advanced that the process can be initiated immediately. I believe that as their movement begins, further negotiations for the permanent solution of the difficult political problems would proceed under more promising circumstances. It will also serve as a clear indication that we are fully determined to go forward.

This procedure is entirely consistent with the terms under which our Joint Committee of Inquiry was constituted. These terms envisaged the submission of interim recommendations relating to matters of an urgent character as well as recommendations relating to the basic situation with a view to a permanent solution. This is a reasonable and necessary

distinction and I had hoped that implementation of the short-term constructive recommendations of that Report might be undertaken forthwith while we applied ourselves to the long-range questions involving complicated issues of constitutional structure and the political future of Palestine.

Such a constructive beginning would, I am sure, meet with the hearty approval of men of good-will in both our countries and throughout the world on humanitarian grounds. Your agreement will make it possible for our Government to continue to explore jointly with your Government all reasonable possibilities for a satisfactory solution of the entire problem with good prospects that such a joint solution will not only be arrived at in principle, but successfully implemented in fact.

It has already been demonstrated that detailed analysis of various proposals and consultations with all interested parties must inevitably take time. But the human problem confronting us cannot wait. It is unthinkable that the suffering of so many men and women who have already endured so much should be prolonged until all political negotiations are satisfactorily concluded. Failure to meet this immediate need has already led to many tragic consequences and may, I fear, lead to still graver consequences in the future.

I earnestly hope that your Government will now see its way to follow the course which I suggest.