



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

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

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

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

Reel
20

Box
7

Folder
443

Central Conference of American Rabbis, high holiday messages,
1946.

Committee on **UNITY FOR PALESTINE**

41 EAST 42nd STREET
NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

DR. FELIX A. LEVY
Chairman

NATHAN STRAUS III
Vice-Chairman

RABBI ARTHUR J. LELYVELD
Executive Director

—
RABBI JEROME UNGER
Field Director

Dear Colleague:

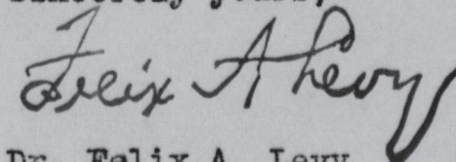
As we approach the High Holiday season which marks the beginning of the year 5707, the mood of our people is one of infinite sorrow. It is not easy to enter into the blessings of the New Year here in the good land of America while we watch the undiminished suffering of our brethren in other lands.

While we pray, our hearts and minds will be concerned with the many unsolved and urgent problems that beset our people. We, of the Committee on Unity, are gratified to be able to send to you the enclosed statements by the Presidents of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Rabbinical Council of America, and the Rabbinical Assembly of America. In these statements from leaders of the three branches of American Judaism, we see reflected the unity of concern of all Israel for our brethren abroad and the great need for unified positive action in their behalf. We send them to you in the hope that you will make such use of them as will commend itself to your best judgement.

To theirs we add the greetings of the Committee on Unity for Palestine, Mr. Nathan Straus III, Vice-chairman, Rabbi Arthur J. Lelyveld, Executive Director and Rabbi Jerome Unger, Field Director, join me in the prayer that the coming year will bring much to strengthen the hopes of those who yearn for the establishment of God's Kingdom; that it will bring redemption to our people, and true peace to mankind.

"L'Shonoh Tovah Tikosevu."

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Felix A. Levy
Chairman

The two Holy Days of the Jewish year -- Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur -- have from time immemorial been held in highest reverence and sanctity by our people. They are "Days of Awe," dedicated to man's inner life, to soul-searching and self-examination, to prayer and contemplation. They have been the symbol of the Jew's unswerving allegiance to his God, and to the noble faith of Israel.

On these High Holy Days, we are summoned to take stock not only of our personal inadequacies in relation to man's high spiritual destiny, but also the manner in which we have discharged our obligations to the community of Israel. These are grave and disturbed times for the whole world. For our people these are desperate times. Our people has just begun to emerge from the manifold tragedies which overtook it during the war. All about are the flotsam and jetsam of the most devastating flood of terror and death which ever swept over us in our long history.

Hundreds of thousands of our people are still homeless and uprooted. Myriads of them are still languishing in detention camps. Many Jewish refugees who had hoped to end their long and fearful wanderings and to find security at last and peace in the Land of Israel have been turned away from its shores by tear gas and fire hoses. The right of the Jewish people to rebuild its national home, which was guaranteed to it by all the nations of the world, has been trampled under foot in a virtual reign of terror in the Holy Land.

Are we fully discharging our responsibilities to our people in these desperate days? Are we exerting our efforts to the utmost to remind our government in Washington that the gestures of good will which were made by it to the Jewish people with reference to our refugees and to Palestine have as yet yielded no concrete results? Are we sufficiently concerned to call the attention of our government, again and again, to the fact that the plight of European Jewry and the defense of the Jewish national home are not of small moment and must not be overlooked or lightly treated, and that what the situation calls for, if human lives are to be saved and a great wrong averted, is action -- speedy and resolute? Let us take to heart the words of the great Isaiah: "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest until her triumph go forth as brightness and her salvation as a torch that burneth."

I pray that the coming year will see the darkness give way to light, and mourning to a new spirit of hope and confidence, and the great, good tidings may come to those who have so long walked in the Valley of the Shadow.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
President
Central Conference of American Rabbis

September 5, 1946

The Jewish New Year finds the Jewish tragedy unabated, with Jewish Refugees herded into concentration camps by an allied power and with Jewish Palestine the victim of a brutal terrorism. Coming as this does, more than a year after victory toward which the American People contributed so greatly and through which the American People looked forward to a world built on justice and compassion, this is of vital concern to the American People.

The American People have not lost the spirit of consecration and idealism with which they fought the war and have not resigned themselves to failure in the fulfillment of the high purposes for which so many sacrifices were made.,

We can, therefore, be confident that American public opinion will insist, in accordance with so many promises made by the American Government and its official leadership, and in harmony with American ideals of justice and fair play, that the pledge of the President of the United States that Palestine be open as a haven to one hundred thousand Jewish refugees be fulfilled immediately and the oft-repeated promises that Palestine shall become a Jewish National Home be implemented by the entire power and prestige of the American Government.

Our President and Government will thus be carrying out a basic aspect of the new world structure for which America fought.

Rabbi Uri Miller
President
Rabbinical Council of America

The tears of hundreds of thousands of American Jews will mingle with those of Mother Rachel these coming High Holydays in weeping for the tragic fate of those Jews who, torn from the gates of Palestine, are thrown again into the long and bitter exile. In the lament of the biblical matriarch, we shall hear the echo of the Jewish tragedy of our own time. We face the New Year with dread foreboding and with heavy hearts. We wonder what future there is for a Jewish Palestine.

In this ominous hour, we must find strength in the promise of restoration spoken by the Prophet Jeremiah and read in our Synagogues on the second day of Rosh Hashanah: "Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. And there is hope for thy future, saith the Lord, and thy children shall return to their own border".

These words must banish despair and hopelessness. They must fill us with renewed determination to effect a Zion redeemed. We must rededicate ourselves, through prayer and high resolve, to the sacred cause of bringing peace and health to the broken and harassed House of Israel. We must strive for the fulfillment of God's promise that "Zion shall be redeemed in justice". The hands of our valiant brethren in Palestine must be upheld, their courage strengthened, and labors rewarded. Side by side with them, must we stand firm and forthright before the councils of the nations, proclaiming our righteous cause, positing our just conviction that the world must come to recognize our historic claim to Palestine as the center of Israel's hope.

Rabbi Israel M. Goldman
President
Rabbinical Assembly of America