

## 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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## League for Labor Palestine, 1933-1934.

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Cleveland, Ohio

September 1,1933

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, The Temple, Cleveveland, Ohio.

#### Dear Rabbi Silver,

Enclosed you find a clipping from the Palestinian daily "Haareyz" which contains an article on American Zionism from their American correspondent.Knowing of yoour interest in the Zionist movement in this country and believing that this article mills might be of some interest to you, I take the privilege of sending it.

Yours respectfully

Herman Charge.

Herman Charyn,

1078 E. 99 street, Cleveland, Ohie September 7, 1933.

Mr. Herman Charyn, 1078 E. 99th St., Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Charyn:

Please pardon the long delay in answering your kind letter of August 27. I have been out of the city most of the time and my correspondence has lagged. It will be quite impossible for me to attend your meeting on September 12 as I shall be in New York over the coming week-end to attend the Boycott Conference.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very sincerely yours.

AHS: BK P.S. I want to thank you for sending me a copy of the "Haaretz!" I read with great interest the article on American Zionism. SUGGS GARBER ATTORNEY-AT-LAW 806-7 HIPPODROME BUILDING CLEVELAND, O.

November 27th 1933.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, The Temple, East 105th St., & Ansel Rd., Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Enclosed is a stenographic report of your speech given on November 21st before the Cleveland Professional Group of The League for Labor Palestine.

Dr. David Magid, a physician, but who in his student days engaged in shorthand reporting to work his way through school, has reported your speech.

Will you please check over the manuscript for corrections, and return it, corrected, to me, for forwarding to the New York office of The League for Labor Palestine.

As I have heretofore advised you, Mr. Hamlin, Secretary of the League, has asked for a copy of your speech.

Cordially yours,

SG:EH

Enc.

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DINNER MEETING OF LEAGUE FOR LABOR PALESTINE AT PARK LANE VILLA, CLEVELAND, NOV. 21, 1933. Address by Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

I want to speak to you quite informally this evening about some of the things which I saw in Palestine, and particularly about the labor movement in Palestine. During my Sabbatical year I spent a good deal of time in and about Palestine. This was my third visit to the country. My first visit was in 1919, shortly after the World War. Palestine then was still under military occupation. It was then a very empty and desolate country. Here and there you cound see a Jewish settlement or colony, but it was no more than some of those flowers which you see growing up among the debris of ruins. The country showed very little promise of great things.

My second visit to Palestine was in 1927. The country had developed a great deal during those eight years. New settlements and colonies had been established. Tel Aviv had become a city of respectable size and importance. Industries were springing up and expanding. Nevertheless I felt then that all about Palestine there was still the air of something experimental and tentative. One did not have the feeling of permanence about the whole project. To be sure there was something definitely in the making, but one did not know whether the process would not sooner or later break down.

This year that feeling of uncertainty left me the minute I got into the country. The country had made such marvelous strides in these five or six years. Its development was both intensive and extensive. One had the feeling that the plant had finally sent its roots deep down into the soil and that it had become a sturdy plant which would be able to withstand almost any storm which might sweep over it. Jewish settlements had multiplied to a remarkable degree. Trade, industry and commerce had expanded. Home building had increased. All the community and social agencies which go to make up a permanent and stable community had developed to a remarkable degree. Between 1919 and 1933 close on to 125,000 Jews had come and settled in the country.

What particularly impressed me was the spirit of confidence that one encountered everywhere. This confidence was traceable to many causes. First of all, and most evident, of course, was the fact that the country was prosperous. This fact has already been dwelt upon so often that I need not elaborate on it now. The rest of the world was passing through terrific economic tribulations. The most powerful and prosperous countries had gone down into a disastrous economic decline. Little Falestine was holding its own. There were no bankruptcies, bank failures or unemployment. Government finances were sound. It was fortunate for Falestine that it had never been over-capitalized or over-industrialized.

Palestine was beginning to enjoy the consequences of five major developments which had taken place in the country in the last ten years. The first of these was the completion of the Ruthenberg Project for the hydroelectrification of the Jordan. That project, which seemed to be more or less of a fable for nearly a decade in Zionist and Jewish circles had finally become a reality of steel and concrete. It was finished, actually **hereaxe** built, and it is now giving electric power at low rates to practically twothirds of Palestine.

The second development which contributed to this spirit of confidence in the country was the highly successful development of the citrus industry, particularly the orange industry. in the country. Palestine was becoming an

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exporter of no mean proportions of oranges. This was bringing capital into the country. Heretofore the capital which had come into the country was *Largely* either by way of contributions or by way of investments of private individuals. Here was capital coming into the country on the basis of what the country was producing. The citrus industry is developing so rapidly that it is expected that in 1936 Palestine will be able to export some eight or tem million crates of oranges to the various markets in Europe and in elocubere.

The third major development was the development of the **sincest** recommendation chemical resources of the Dead Sea. A small town has grown up around the Dead Sea. Hundreds of workingmen are now employed in extracting some of the almost limitless rich potash from the Dead Sea. That potash is now being sold in the markets of the world. It is possible that this may prove to be one of the richest sources of income for Palestine in the future.

The fourth project, which was being completed while I was there, and is now completed, was the Haifa harbor. The Haifa harbor is now one of the two or three finest harbors on the Mediterranean. It is fast becoming the point of export and import not merely for Palestine and for parts of Syria, but for the entire hinterland, for Mesopotamia, for the Iraq. Haifa prômises to become the great industrial center of Palestine.

The last of the five major developments which contributed to this upbuilding of the morale of the people and is stimulating this hopefulness that one senses everywhere in the country, is the completion of the

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pipe-line which is to carry oil from Mosul to the shores of the Mediterranean. 1200 miles of pipes have been laid right across the desert, and one of the two terminal points of that pipe-line is Haifa. Already one sees huge tanks on the outskirts of Haifa where this oil is to be stored for ultimate exportation.

For a small country like Palestine five of such major enterprises, completed within the space of less than a decade, are enough to send a current of hope, and with it renewed intitiative and enterprise through the whole economic life of the country.

Another reason for this spirit of confidence to my mind is this -and this brings me to the subject upon which I want to dwell this evening -a realization that the economic foundations which have been laid in Falestine are true and sound foundations, that the economic superstructure of the country is grounded in real things built mit afree side with the fact.

The labor group in Falestine to my mind is largely responsible for this fact. I had occasion to observe quite closely the numerous factions and groupings in Falestinian Jewry, the old settlers and the new, the young and the old. I was persuaded from my close observation of men and movements in Falestine that the labor group represents today the most sound, the most thoughtful, the most constructive, and if I dare say it, the most conservative element in the Falestinian population. They have real leaders among them both in the political and in the economic fields. They know what they are about. They are facing their problems pragmatically, intelligently and courageously.

Let me illustrate what I mean. You are all acquainted with the Arab problem in Palestine. Recently we had some very serious riots in Palestine.

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They were not the first riots. They are probably not the last. Now, the Arab problem as you well know is a very serious one in the country. It cannot be lightly brushed aside. There is a large Arab population, at present the dominant majority in the country, which for one reason or another has been agitated, instigated and aroused, and which is being manipulated by a small group of very clever, politically-minded Arab leaders who are trained in all the tricks of European propaganda methods and who also know what they are about.

The Jewish labor group in Palestine is facing the Arab problem forthrightly and squarely. It is not blinking the issue. It is not ignoring it. It refuses to meet the situation by any theatrical grandstand attitudes, by any bellicose gestures, by any effort to shout down the opposition or to outplay them in the game of propaganda, knowing full well that these tactics cannot succeed. They have adopted a lon -range program of rapprochment, a program of cooperation with the Arabs, fully aware that for the time being that program is verj difficult of realization. They are determined to work with the Arab, and not against him. They are reconciled to the fact that the Arab is going to remain in Palestine and will in for years and generations to come be an important element in the Palestinian population.

As a means of closely approaching the Arab and establishing a basis of cooperation with him on the plane of common labor interests, they are endeavoring to raise the standard of the Arab workingman. They are encouraging the unionization of the Arabs, because they believe that as the Arab rises in the economic scale, as he becomes more literate and more intelligent in an economic sense, he will realize that the interest of demich

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Jewish labor and the interest of Arab labor are not antithetical, but that both national labor groups can cooperate in the common task for mutual benefit and for the upbuilding of the country.

Now, if there is any other solution for the Arab problem, I for one, frankly do not know of it. There is no way of driving them into the desert. There is certainly no way today of reducing that population to the level of feudal serfs to serve the interest of a dominant Jewish group. Not only can we not ourselves permit any such immoral exploitation of people but it simply cannot be done.

There is another subject on which the labor group in Palestine has been sound and level-headed, and that is the subject of the Jewish State in Falestine. The working group in Palestine, like all classic Zionists, are maximum nationalists. They have not surrendered the ideal of a Jewish State in Palestine. But they realize as all people who are engaged in the business of practical State-craft realize, that no state is built in a day. They are not blatant about their ultimate objectives, they are not irritant about them, they do not fling them in the face of the Arabs. At present they are not so much concerned with ultimate objectives as they are with their pres-nt detailed rights in the country under the terms of the mandate. They first want to sink the roots of Jewish life deeper and deeper in the country. They know that they must have a preponderantly large Jewish majority in the country before the question of the Jewish State can be satisfactorily settled.

They have been criticized for it. The extreme Revisionist group has taunted them with the charge that they are time-servers and opportunists. It is so comfortable, and it gives one such a warm glow of inner exaltation when one

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feels that he is more "patriotic" than the other fellow, that his program is more extreme and "courageous" than that of the other fellow. But the labor leaders of Palestine who are responsible for the upbuilding work of the country cannot thus afford that self-indulgence. They are confronted with the day-by-day perplexing and difficult problems of construction and upbuilding, and they are determined not to be deviated from their task of upbuilding by any dramatic maneuvers which are fruitless and which may prove dangerous.

These two facts alone, their attitude towards the Arabs and their attitude towards the problem of the National State in Palestine have given to the whole upbuilding work in Palestine a certain practical certitude which it would not have if the politics of the country were in the hands of irresponsible and belligerent politicians.

Another factor which the Labor Party has stressed in Palestine, and which particularly at this hour is of utmost importance has been the idea of selfwork. Palestine must be built up by Jewish labor, not merely by Jewish capital. Classical Zionism aimed at this. If you recall the history of the Zionist movement, you will remember that it was as much aimed at reconstructing the economic life of the Jew as it was at establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Classic Zionism was an effort to restore an economic balance in Jewish life, to rectify the frightful maladjustment which the Galuth had forced upon the economic life of the Jewish people -- the overcrowding in the middle class, in business and in the professions, the sad conditions which are responsible for so much of the present tragedy of German Jewry.

You will recall that one of the most damaging and infuriating arguments which the Nazis used in the last fourteen years of their propaganda against the Jew was just this: that the Jew is an exploiter, the Jew lives off the labor of

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other people. How many Jewish farmers have we in Germany, how many Jewish artisans, how many skilled and unskilled Jewish laborers have we in Germany? But see how many Jewish bankers, merchants, and professional people! Of course we know that there are historical reasons for it. But a historical reason is an explanation not a solution.

The classic thinkers of the Zionist Movement conceived as one of the great objectives of Zionism the normalizing of the economic life of the Jew once he is settled in his own homeland. Many Jews that go into Palestine forget this. They bring a little capital with them and start a business, and they are not particularly careful whether they employ Jews or Arabs. Many would prefer to employ the Arab because he represents cheaper labor. There is thus the danger that in the course of time we would have in Palestine an immigrant Jewish group, largely belonging to the bourgeois class, living off and exploiting a working peasant and proletarian Arab group. That would besmirch our whole Pulleduce noble enterprize in Palestine. Thet would make us an object of just criticism and contempt through the world. That would become the classic example in the sight of the whole world of the fatal exploiting proclivities of the Jewish people.

The labor group in Palestine has been keenly aware of this danger and therefore fundamental to its philosophy is that Palestine, Jewish Palestine, shall be built up by Jewish labor from the ground up.

Please remember that if there is any lesson which has come out of the last ten or fifteen years of economic unrest in the world, it is that the ultimate and final verdict in the life of a nation lies with the people who live on the soil and who work with their hands. The future belongs to them. If in

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Palestine we are not strongly represented as tillers of the soil and as workers in industry, we will share the fate of all exploiting capitalistic groups in the world.

Self-work, then is a great principle of the Jewish labor group in Palestine. I have seen the Jewish workers in Palestine and there is something very fine and uplifting about him. I do not mean to wax romantic. All work is noble and all workers are ennobled by it. But there is a distinctiveness about the Jewish workingman in Palestine. His social level is high. His cultural level is high. He is literate, he is well read, many of them are well-educated. Some of them have had university training. Their minds are open to everything that is going on in the world. You sit around with them in some circle after the day's work and talk with them. I have been in very few curcles in Cleveland that were as interesting and as stimulating. They have read the finest in the world's literature. They are at home in economics and sociology. Many of them have thought out for themselves a clear philosophy of life. It is challenging to come up with a group like that. In a way, it is humbling.

Out of this principle of self-work which Jewish labor is stressing in Palestine has come the other - I ought not to call it a principle, I should rather call it a necessity - namely, the insistence on the employment of Jewish labor by Jews. The Jewish employer is asked to employ Jewish labor and not any Arab labor, not because of hostility to the Arabs. In Palestine and around Palestine there is a very great reservoir of cheap Arab labor. Their standard of living is very low. The Jewish workingman cannot compete an with them on that level. He and his family cannot live on three or four piasters a day. The

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Jewish employer -- and the Jewish employer is no different from all other employers -- will buy his labor in the cheapest market. If he is permitted to choose as between Arab and Jewish labor, he will, with a few outstanding exceptions, employ as a matter of course Arab labor. Jewish labor will progressively be starved out. There will be no self-work in the upbuilding of the country.

Lastly, Jewish labor has tried to emphasize the importance of cooperative enterprise in the country, of social enterprise. That ought not to be regarded today as very startling and radical. The whole world is moving in that direction. The day of unrestricted competitive individualism is drawing fast to all close. Even in such a staid and conservative land like ours we are beginning to experiment with the idea of controlled industry, which inevitably leads to some form of socialized industry.

In Palestine Jewish labor has maintained that rather than first build up a capitalist society with all its inherent weaknesses and evils, and then be compelled in suffering and struggle to revempor destroy it and to build upon its ruins a socialized state, it is wiser to start now, in a new country where one does not have to destroy before one can build, from the foundations and build up some kind of satisfying cooperative social and economic life.

On a small scale, they have already done it. They have done it, not as it was done in Russia through the expropriation of the properties of other people and through blood and terror. They have done it through their own efforts and with capital which they themselves or friends and sympathizers the world over have privided. There are now some very fine model Jewish colonies in Palestine where the old prophetic ideal of a human society has been

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corporealized. Cooperative groups of one type or another exist where labor and resources and enthusians have been pooled without sacrificing individuality or personal freedom.

I don't know where else in the world today this type of bloodless and voluntary experiment in socialized community life is going on. In this sense Palestine is becoming a sort of proving ground for mankind, a laboratory for the peaceful cooperative commonwealth of tomorrow.

For these reasons, I believe the labor group in Palestine represents the soundest, the most constructive, the most conservative and the most promising element in Palestine.

I met some of their leaders, the unforgettable and much lamented Arlosoroff. Truly a remarkable man. I was with him the night before he left for Berlin. The next I heard of him was that he had been assassinated. Arlosoroff represented the high type of Western European Jew, -- he had been educated in Western European ways of thought -- and at the same time he represented the finest traditions and the highest ideals of Israel. He was a man of keen mentality, he understood not only movements and abstract ideas, but what is infinitely more important, he understood people. That is why he was chosen to be the head of the Political Department of the Zionist Executive in Falestine. He made friends for the movement among the British officials. He made friends among the important sections of the Falestinian population. He was struck down in the midst of his youth and his career. It is a tragic loss to the movement, to Falestine and to Israel.

I met many other of the leaders of the labor group, and they increased still more my confidence in this group, in whose hands, the fortunes of **Palestine today rest**.

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Let me close with another side of the picture. For one reason or another the labor group has not been able to capture the imagination of large sections of the youth of Palestine. The youth of Palestine, at least the most vocal section of it tends very decidedly to the extreme right, just as the youth of many of the countries of Europe. These young people like their Zionism in uniforms. They like the martial ways of party strife. They are captivated by demands for an immediate maximum program even if it can achieve less than the minimum.

I suppose the reason for this fact is that the Socialism of today is no longer a movement of daring and danger than it was a generation ago. A generation ago Socialism represented the ultimate extreme to the imagination of young people. The danger which is involved in being identified with an extreme movement enkindled their ardor and facinated them.

There are today extremes beyond Socialism. One the one hand, Communism and on the other hand Fascism. Socialism has become more or less a conservative movement like democracy and liberalism. Unfortunately today democracy and liberalism cannot capture the imagination of young people. That is one reason for the defeat of democracy and liberalism in many parts of the world.

How to get around this in Palestine, I don't know, any more than I know how we can get the youth in this country aroused to a high pitch of devotion and enthusiasm for those democratic and liberal ideals, which a generation or two ago were able to set fire to a antion and raise it to a high pitch of sacrifice. That is one of the great problems in Palestine. The excessive ardor of sections of Palestine youth has led to serious riots. I suppose directly and indirectly it was reponsible for the assassination of Arlosoroff.

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Perhaps as the mood of the age changes, as life becomes a little more quiet and settled these extreme movements will disappear of themselves, and the solid constructive tendencies will again gain ascendency in human  $-\frac{1}{100}$ life and Palestine's youth will again rally to them.





### January 12, 1934.

Mr. Suggs Garber, Hippodrome Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Garber:

I was finally able to get to the job of revising the address which I delivered for the professional group. I am enclosing it herewith and I hope that you will find it satisfactory.

With all good wishes. I remain

Very cordially yours,

AHS:BK Enc.

SUGGS GARBER ATTORNEY-AT-LAW 806-7 HIPPODROME BUILDING CLEVELAND, O.

January 16th 1934.

Rabbi A. H. Silver, The Temple, E. 105th St., & Ansel Road, Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Rabbi Silver:

Have just received word from the New York office of The League for Labor Palestine, acknowledging the receipt of the copy of your Address, given before the Cleveland Professional Group on November 21st 1933.

I am further advised that it is scheduled to be printed in the next issue of the magazine.

Singerely yours,

hun Shere

SG:EHR



## WHAT DOES THE LEAGUE FOR JEWISH NATIONAL LABOR STAND FOR?

X

- 1. The solution of the Jewish Question is the creation of a Jewish State in ERETZ-ISRAEL through the cooperation of Jewish Capital and Jewish Labor supported by the goodwill of the nations.
- 2. We recognize the rights of Jewish Capital and Jewish Labor. Capital usefully employed in the promotion of Jewish National interests in ERETZ-ISRAEL should be afforded equal opportunities for growth and development.
- 3. We recognize the right of Jewish labor to organize trade unions for the betterment of its economic condition, not to promote any particular politico-economic philosophy.
- 4. Jewish National interests in ERETZ-ISRAEL should be the supreme motive for all Social and Economic activities in the land. Class struggle should be regarded as inimical to the attainment of a Jewish State.
- 5. We recognize the indispensability of "Avodah Ivrith" (Jewish Labor) for the realization of our ultimate aim.
- 6. National arbitration in all labor disputes should be made obligatory on all parties.

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7. Neutral Employment Bureaus should be established to serve Jewish employers and Jewish employees regardless of party affiliations.

# NECESSITY FOR A JEWISH NATIONAL POLICY

Eretz-Israel (Palestine) is a new Pioneer country.

Fifteen years ago Eretz-Israel numbered 60,000 Jews. Today, they count close to a quarter of a million.

About 60,000 of them are wage earners, working on farms, in industries and in the building trade.

Jewish capital invested up to date exceeds Two Hundred and Fifty Million (\$250,000,000.00) Dollars and there is need for more capital.

Every settler with money serves as creator of opportunities for more labor.

Every Jew, whether he be a capitalist or a laborer, should be made to feel that he may settle in Eretz-Israel "as of right and not on sufferance" and he should be made welcome to the Jewish national home.

Social economic theories and the overemphasis of class struggle

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should not be permitted to hinder the entry of any Jew into the land or to scare away capital from the land.

Strikes aiming at the creation of a new social order or the ruin of an individual employer should be declared as inimical to the best interests of the Jewish National Home.

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13.

Trade Unionism should strive only to better the economic condition of labor, not to promote any particular politico-economic philosophy.

National arbitration in all labor disputes should be compulsory. The country cannot afford to permit either strikes or lockouts arbitrarily declared.

# THE JEWISH NATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION

Several thousand Jewish workers, who believe in the foregoing principles, have united and organized a national labor union. Now they ask us, American Jews, for our moral and financial support.

### MORAL SUPPORT

They want us to tell the American Jews:

I. That such an organization is in existence.

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2. That the members of the organization recognize the right of Jewish capital usefully employed and are pledged to protect it the same as Jewish labor.

3. That they are opposed to the introduction of class struggle. They believe that it is possible for Jewish labor and capital to live side by side in perfect peace and harmony.

4. That they believe that it is to the best interest of the Jewish National Homeland that as long as foreign capital is essential to the development of its resources that the country be not converted into an experimental station for Socialism or Communism.

5. That to strengthen this Union will make Eretz-Israel safe for Capital and Labor.

### FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The members of this Union, because they refuse to subscribe to doctrines and theories which they regard as detrimental to the interests of the Jewish National Home, are barred from the benefits ensuing to the members of the predominating Labor Union.

They cannot get employment.

Physical violence is used against them and against anyone who dares to employ them.

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They cannot get the benefits of the "Kupath Milveh" (Loan Fund).

X

They cannot get the benefits of the "Kupath Holim" (Sick Benefit Fund).

Due to the unprecedented shortage of housing facilities, rents have advanced beyond the ordinary workman's ability to pay; many thousands of them are exposed to the inclement weather in tents and huts without pillows and without blankets.

## WE WANT TO HELP THEM

In asking for support of our Campaign, we are not concerned with the other campaign known as the "Gewerkschaften Campaign," nor do we want to be mistaken for the other campaign.

Those who believe in its economic philosophy should support that Campaign.

Those who believe in the principles hereinabove set forth should support our Campaign.

Ours is the Jewish National Labor Campaign which aims at the realization of a National Home in Eretz-Israel for ALL Jews irrespective of class.

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We appeal only to those who, like us, believe that AT PRESENT there is no room in Eretz-Israel for class struggle among Jews.

We appeal only to those who, like us, believe that it is possible for capital and labor to work harmoniously side by side in the building of our National home.

We ask for \$25,000.00. This will enable the Jewish National Labor Union to:

I. Establish Employment Bureaus for furnishing employment to workers and workers to employers.

2. Establish a "Kupath Milveh" (a Loan Fund) to help those who need money for tools or to furnish a little home.

3. Establish a "Kupath Holim" (a Fund to render Medical treatment in case of sickness). They also need blankets, underwear and linen, as well as tools, machinery, etc.

Let our National Halutzim in Eretz-Israel know that they have friends in America !

Their cause is the cause of the Jewish people.

Kindly mail your contribution with the detachable coupon appearing on the last page.

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General Office 32 UNION SQUARE Tel. STuyvesant 9-0492 NEW YORK CITY ROOM 1114

OFFICERS

Chairman ISAAC ALLEN Co-Chairman MRS, ADELE BRODY Vice-Presidents ELIAS GINSBURG JACOB DE HAAS Dr. SAMUEL WURZEL

Associate Treasurer JACOB LACKOW

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General Secretary JOSEPH BEDER

 $\gg$ 

League for Jewish National Labor in Eretz-Israel 32 Union Square New York City (Room 1114) Gentlemen: Enclosed is check (money order) in the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_\_as my contribution toward the campaign for Jewish National Labor in Palestine. Kindly acknowledge receipt. Yours for a Jewish State, Name City and State Date \_\_\_\_\_\_1934.