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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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Non-partisan Conference to Consider Palestinian Problems,  
1924-1925.



NON-PARTISAN CONFERENCE  
TO CONSIDER PALESTINIAN PROBLEMS  
120 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK

February 8, 1924.

Dear Mr. Silver:

The time has arrived when we firmly believe that the duty rests upon the Jews of this country who are not members of or affiliated with the Zionist Organization, to consider seriously their relations to the economic problems of Palestine and to its cultural and industrial upbuilding. Great Britain, as the Mandatory of the Holy Land, has established a government for Palestine which is now functioning. Under the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne provision was made for a Jewish Agency which was to act in an advisory capacity to the government. Until now the Zionist Organization has constituted such Agency. That body, however, recognizes the desirability of making such changes in the composition of the Agency as to make of it a real Jewish Agency by totally depriving it of the element of partisanship, and, to that end, of arranging a plan whereby non-Zionists shall be represented to a substantial degree in the Agency.

It has also become apparent, in order to promote the development of Palestine so as to make it possible for a considerable number of Jews to establish a home there, that the Jews of the United States and of the various European countries shall join in the formation of a Finance or Investment Corporation, organized on a strictly business basis, which will make it possible to provide for the various industrial, agricultural and commercial enterprises that have been or that are likely to be established in Palestine, the capital necessary for their successful operation on reasonable terms. In this connection it is important, in order to avoid harmful duplication of effort and to bring about united action, not only that such undertakings as have been initiated looking to this end shall be consolidated into one corporation but that additional capital as and when needed shall be provided by those who have or should have a genuine interest in the rehabilitation of the land of our fathers on a firm and safe business foundation.

Believing that a discussion of the subjects to which we have referred, by those who will approach them free from partisanship and with the sole desire of dealing with them on their merits, and without in any way committing themselves to any theory by reason of entering upon such discussion, is greatly to be desired, the undersigned take the liberty of inviting you to attend a Conference to be held at the Hotel Astor in the City of New York on Sunday, February 17, 1924, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon, in order to interchange ideas relative to such matters. You are earnestly requested to honor us with your presence on that occasion, so that it may in its impressiveness be worthy of the momentous character of the problems which are to be considered.

Will you kindly, therefore, signify on the enclosed card your readiness to attend?

Very cordially yours,

Louis Marshall  
Cyrus Adler  
Horace Stern  
Herbert H. Lehman  
Committee.

Mr. Abba Hillel Silver  
c/o The Temple  
E. 55th Street  
Cleveland, Ohio

CONFERENCE, HOTEL ASTOR, NEW YORK, FEB. 17, 1924



Palestine

New York, November 13, 1924.

Rabbi Abba H. Silver,  
1529 Guardian Bldg.,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver:

*Heard*  
You will recall the Non-Partisan Conference held in New York in February last to consider, among other things, the organization of an investment or finance corporation, to be conducted on a business basis, intended to secure the cooperation of Jews in general in the economic upbuilding of Palestine. Pursuant to a resolution adopted a committee was appointed, which has ever since given to the subject intensive study, wholly dissociated from considerations of a controversial character. It has now completed the preliminary phases of its work insofar as the form of organization is concerned. It is highly desirable that a Board of Directors and a Cooperating Council be chosen at an early date to launch the enterprise and assure it both moral and financial support.

It is believed that with a strong Board of Directors and a sympathetic Council in which the Jews of this country would have absolute confidence, such an organization would prove to be a potent factor in the development of Palestine. It would be not only well adapted for taking over some of the reconstructive activities hitherto carried on in Palestine by the Joint Distribution Committee, but also such undertakings as have already been initiated by several groups in this country with purposes and aims similar to those of the proposed Corporation. To this end, consolidation with the Palestine Development Council and the American Palestine Company is contemplated.

If proper support for such a Corporation can be secured, which we confidently expect, Mr. Felix M. Warburg is willing to serve on the Board. Messrs. Louis Marshall and Herbert H. Lehman have agreed, if desired, to act as Vice-Presidents, and Mr. Bernard Flexner has consented, if desired, to take the Presidency of the Corporation. Thus far Messrs. A. G. Becker, of Chicago, David A. Brown, of Detroit, Jacob Epstein, of Baltimore, Felix Fuld, of Newark, Louis E. Kirstein, of Boston, Ben Selling, of Portland, Oregon, and Louis J. Horowitz, Samuel Untermyer and Maurice Wertheim, of New York, have signified their readiness to serve on the Board of Directors, which is to consist of a membership of about thirty.

The draft of a prospectus which it is intended to issue, is enclosed. It indicates in some detail the plan of operations of the Corporation. It is to concern itself solely with the economic upbuilding and productive develop-



ment of Palestine. It is to be entirely devoid of any political connotation or affiliation. We are convinced that its objects should commend themselves to you and receive your approval.

The Committee invites you to assist in this constructive effort by consenting to serve as a member of the Council which is to be thoroughly representative. As soon as an adequate number of favorable responses have been received, the Council will be formed and from its membership the Board of Directors will be elected. Will you kindly communicate to Mr. Bernard Flexner, 1 Wall Street, New York, as soon as possible, your readiness to associate yourself in this meritorious enterprise?

Cordially yours,

*Bernard Flexner*  
*Herbert H. Gold*



*Samuel H. Hays*  
*Arthur M. Hays*



# Non-Partisan Conference to Consider Palestinian Problems

SUITE 2320, 120 BROADWAY

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 8, 1925.

DEAR FRIEND:

A year ago this Conference was organized by those who were neither members of nor affiliated with the Zionist Organization, to give serious consideration to the economic problems of Palestine and to its cultural and industrial upbuilding. There was a gratifying attendance from all parts of the country and a sympathetic discussion of the duty resting upon Jews who had not theretofore taken any part in dealing with Palestinian affairs. With significant unanimity it was concluded that the Chairman appoint two committees: (1) for the purpose of organizing an investment corporation, with adequate capital, to assist in the development of the resources of Palestine on an economic basis, and to enlist, if possible, the cooperation of all existing corporations and groups having the same end in view, and (2) to study the subject of the Jewish Agency, and, if practicable, to formulate an appropriate plan whereby American Jews who are not Zionists might associate themselves in such Agency, and to confer with the Zionist Organization and other bodies to work out a plan for the effectuation of the object in view.

These committees were appointed in due course and they have diligently performed their duties, and are now prepared to render a report to the Conference at a reconvened session, to which Dr. Chaim Weizmann has been invited and which he will attend.

The necessary steps have been taken for the formation of what is to be called the Palestine Economic Corporation, into which are to be merged a number of existing corporations formed for a like purpose. The details of the plan will be laid before the Conference.

The committee designated to consider the creation of a Jewish Agency, in which those who are not associated with the Zionist Organization may have an equal voice with that organization, will likewise render a report; and information will also be presented indicative of the readiness of Jews of other parts of the world to cooperate on this strictly non-partisan basis.

These reports, and other business pertinent to the purposes of the Conference, will be considered and acted upon at a meeting to be held at the Hotel Astor, in the City of New York, on Sunday, March 1, 1925, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. You are earnestly requested to attend and to participate in what promises to be a momentous occasion in Jewish history, and which it is hoped will lead to the unification of the efforts of those whose minds and hearts are directed toward the perpetuation of our past and to the restoration of the economic prosperity and to the spiritual development of Judaism and Jewish culture in the Holy Land.

Will you please do us the kindness to give the assurance on the enclosed card of your intention to be present?

Very cordially yours,

LOUIS MARSHALL, *Chairman.*  
CYRUS ADLER,  
HORACE STERN,  
HERBERT H. LEHMAN,  
FELIX M. WARBURG,

*Committee.*