



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

82

Box

29

Folder

1806

Zionist Organization of America, Anglo-American Committee,
1946.

Z I O N I S T O R G A N I Z A T I O N O F A M E R I C A

1 7 2 0 - 1 6 t h S t r e e t , N . W . , W a s h i n g t o n , D . C .

From: Dr. Sidney Marks, Executive Director

To: Regional and District Presidents

JANUARY 4, 1946

F L A S H !

The following telegram has just been sent by Senator Robert F. Wagner to President Truman and Mr. Byrnes, Secretary of State:

OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE BRITISH ADMINISTRATION OF PALESTINE THAT IT IS HALTING IMMEDIATELY ALL FURTHER JEWISH IMMIGRATION INTO PALESTINE CONSTITUTES CONTEMPTUOUS DISREGARD OF THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN PRIOR TO THE APPOINTMENT OF THE JOINT ANGLO-AMERICAN COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY. AT THAT TIME, AFTER THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAD STRONGLY URGED THAT 100,000 HELPLESS REFUGEES BE ADMITTED IMMEDIATELY, BRITISH GOVERNMENT SPECIFICALLY PROMISED TO MAINTAIN THE PITIFULLY INADEQUATE 1500 A MONTH RATE OF IMMIGRATION, PENDING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INQUIRY COMMITTEE. BECAUSE IT IS APPARENT THAT NO MINOR GOVERNMENT AGENCY WOULD SO FLAGRANTLY DISREGARD A DEFINITE PROMISE MADE TO OUR GOVERNMENT, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THIS PEREMPTORY DECREE WAS ISSUED WITH THE FULL KNOWLEDGE AND CONSENT OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. THIS CALLOUS DISREGARD OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE WISHES OF THE CONGRESS WHICH WERE SO CLEARLY EXPRESSED TWO WEEKS AGO THROUGH THE PASSAGE BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION URGING FREE ENTRY OF JEWS INTO PALESTINE TO THE MAXIMUM OF ITS AGRICULTURAL AND ECONOMIC POTENTIALITIES, IS IN LINE WITH THE WORLD WIDE PROPAGANDA NOW BEING SO INSIDIOUSLY EMPLOYED BY THE BRITISH TO PREJUDICE THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT OF THE JEWISH HOMELAND IN PALESTINE, EVEN BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE BEGINS ITS INQUIRY. THE RECENT RIDICULOUS OUTBURST OF AN BRITISH UNRRA OFFICIAL IN BERLIN AGAINST THE HELPLESS REFUGEES TRYING TO ESCAPE FROM POLAND IS A CASE IN POINT. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IF THE BRITISH ARE TO FORECLOSE THE ISSUE EVEN BEFORE THE INVESTIGATION IS BEGUN, THE JOINT COMMITTEE CAN SERVE NO PURPOSE EXCEPT TO LOWER AMERICAN PRESTIGE IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD AND TO FURTHER INCREASE THE SUFFERING OF THE UNFORTUNATE JEWS OF EUROPE WHO ASK ONLY THAT THIS GOVERNMENT AND GREAT BRITAIN SHALL KEEP SOLEMN PLEDGES WHICH DATE BACK TO THE BALFOUR DECLARATION, ISSUED IN 1917.

ההסתדרות הציונית של ארצות הברית

ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA

1720-16TH STREET, N. W.
WASHINGTON 9, D. C.

New Address:

41 EAST 42nd STREET

NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

April 18, 1946

CONFIDENTIAL

All Regional and District
Presidents and Secretaries

Dear Friend:

All of us are awaiting with great impatience the recommendations that will be made by the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine, which is now writing its report in Lausanne, Switzerland. Our future program of activities will depend largely on the nature of that report, and you and your District will undoubtedly be called upon to give expression to American Zionism's reaction, once the Joint Committee's recommendations have been made.

You will surely understand that what will be required above all is a united reaction and unity of purpose in our ranks. It would be most unfortunate if the American public were to be presented with differing Zionist reactions to the Committee's report. The American Zionist Emergency Council has, therefore, communicated with us requesting us not to issue any public statements on the report until the Emergency Council has had an opportunity to study the Committee's recommendations and to establish a line of policy in harmony with that of the Jewish Agency for Palestine. The Council will, of course, meet promptly upon the publication of the report.

We feel it essential that the same request be addressed to you, so that you may advise your members to refrain from commenting publicly on the Committee of Inquiry's recommendations until you have heard from us. Zionists must be particularly careful of recommendations which, though they may gratify us by providing for the emigration to Palestine of a given number of our unfortunate brethren in Europe, will disregard or perhaps injure our Zionist objective - the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth. We do not know what the Committee's report is likely to be, but we do know what the classic Zionist goal is - and it is to achieve that goal of the Jewish State that we are working today.

May we, therefore, expect that in this matter you will be careful to observe Zionist discipline, and that you will await the recommendations of the American Zionist Emergency Council before giving public expression to your attitude on the Committee's report. We have sent this communication to all Presidents and Secretaries of all Regions and Districts.

With Passover greetings,

Sincerely yours,

Sidney Marks
Dr. Sidney Marks
Executive Director

SM:dh

DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER, Cleveland, Ohio
President

DR. HARRY FRIEDENWALD, Baltimore, Md.
Hon. Vice President

DR. LEON FEUER, Toledo, Ohio
JACOB FISHMAN, New York, N. Y.
DR. SOLOMON GOLDMAN, Chicago, Ill.
DR. ISRAEL GOLDSTEIN, New York, N. Y.
DR. JAMES G. HELLER, Cincinnati, Ohio
EDMUND I. KAUFMANN, Washington, D. C.
JUDGE LOUIS E. LEVINTHAL, Philadelphia, Pa.
LOUIS LIPSKY, New York, N. Y.

RABBI IRVING MILLER, Far Rockaway, N. Y.
DR. EMANUEL NEUMANN, New York, N. Y.
JUDGE BERNARD A. ROSENBLATT, New York, N. Y.
CHARLES J. ROSENBLOOM, Pittsburgh, Pa.
JUDGE MORRIS ROTHENBERG, New York, N. Y.
ELIHU D. STONE, Boston, Mass.
ROBERT SZOLD, New York, N. Y.
DR. STEPHEN S. WISE, New York, N. Y.

Vice Presidents

ABRAHAM GOODMAN, Miami Beach, Florida
Treasurer

MARK SUGARMAN, Coatesville, Pa.
Associate Treasurer

DANIEL FRISCH, New York, N. Y.
Chairman, Nat'l Adm. Council

MILTON POLLACK, New York, N. Y.
Chairman, Finance Committee

DR. SIDNEY MARKS, Washington, D. C.
Secretary

CHARLES S. BROWN, Los Angeles, Calif.
SOL COHEN, Richmond Hill, N. Y.
A. K. EPSTEIN, Chicago, Ill.
HON. M. MALDWIN FERTIG, Bronx, N. Y.
JUDGE HARRY FISHER, Chicago, Ill.
RABBI LEON FRAM, Detroit, Mich.
ERNEST S. FREUDENHEIM, Buffalo, N. Y.
HAROLD GOLDENBERG, St. Paul, Minn.
ABRAHAM GOLDSTEIN, Hartford, Conn.
HON. NATHANIEL GOLDSTEIN, Brooklyn, N. Y.
SAMUEL GOLDSTOCK, Pittsburgh, Pa.
ISRAEL R. GOODMAN, St. Louis, Mo.
RABBI SIMON GREENBERG, Philadelphia, Pa.
JOSEPH L. GREENLEAF, Mount Vernon, N. Y.
JOSEPH HALBERT, Atlantic City, N. J.
RABBI HARRY HALPERN, Brooklyn, N. Y.
JULIUS LIVINGSTON, Tulsa, Okla.

ABRAHAM M. LUNTZ, Cleveland, Ohio
MORTIMER MAY, Nashville, Tenn.
ISAAC POTTS, Baltimore, Md.
ABRAHAM A. REDELHEIM, Brooklyn, N. Y.
JUDGE HYMAN J. REIT, New York, N. Y.
HON. ALBERT D. SCHANZER, Brooklyn, N. Y.
ALBERT SCHIFF, Columbus, Ohio
JUDGE JACOB SCHWOLSKY, Hartford, Conn.
EZRA Z. SHAPIRO, Cleveland, Ohio
RUDOLF G. SONNEBORN, New York, N. Y.
DAVID SPIEGEL, Brooklyn, N. Y.
DEWEY D. STONE, Brockton, Mass.
WILLIAM B. SYLK, Philadelphia, Pa.
JACQUES TORCZYNER, New York, N. Y.
ELKAN C. VOORSANGER, Milwaukee, Wis.
MORRIS WEINBERG, Brooklyn, N. Y.
HERMAN L. WEISMAN, Scarsdale, N. Y.

Executive Committee
(In addition to National Officers)

MEMORANDUM

7 copies

Submitted to the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry by Walter Ettinghausen on behalf of a number of organizations concerned with the settlement in Palestine of Jews from Great Britain.

I have the honour to submit my evidence not only in my own name and on my own responsibility but on behalf of the following organizations in this country, all of whose members are anxious to settle in Palestine:

(a) Hechalutz ("The Pioneer"), the branch in Great Britain of a world-wide movement of Jewish pioneers. This organization concentrates chiefly on agriculture and maintains five farm training centres (at Harrietsham, Latton, Malmesbury, Newport Pagnell and Redhill), as well as a group working in the mines at Stalybridge. The farm centres work in close co-operation with their local War Agricultural Committees. The total number of members of Hechalutz in Great Britain is 1350. Closely associated with Hechalutz is a youth movement called Habonim ("The Builders"), now some 4000 strong.

(b) Bachad, an organization of religious pioneers, with a membership in this country of over 900. This body also devotes itself mainly to agricultural work, training young people for settlement in religious communal villages in Palestine. It maintains five agricultural training centres (at Thaxted, St. Asaph, Kempsey, Millisle and Buckingham). These, like the centres of Hechalutz, work in close co-operation with their local War Agricultural Committees. Closely associated with Bachad is a youth movement called Bnei Akivah, which numbers over 2000 members.

(c) Professional and Technical Workers' Aliyah, of which I am chairman, and Haoved ("The Worker"), two groups which have recently joined forces with a total membership approaching 500. These organizations cater primarily for professional men and specialists, as well as for craftsmen and others with a technical training. Their members include doctors, dentists, nurses and midwives, chemists and physicists, engineers, teachers, social workers, accountants, economists and statisticians, and indeed representatives of almost every useful

occupation.

2. These organizations have one feature in common: all their members aspire to live and work in Palestine, there to play their part in the general effort of reconstruction. They are now preparing to make their most effective contribution to the welfare of Palestine, many in agriculture, some in the professions, others as technicians and artisans.

It will be noted that the names of some of these organizations ("The Pioneer", "The Builders", "The Worker") are symbolical of the ideals that inspire their work. If members of the Committee can spare the time, they would be very welcome to visit any of the training farms of Hechalutz or Bichad. A fair number of young people trained at these farms have already gone to Palestine, where they are now working in communal villages up and down the country. One compact group has settled at Naame in Upper Galilee; a similar group of American Jews has built up the settlement of Ein Hashofet in the hill country of Ephraim.

3. The task of strengthening the Jewish National Home, and of laying sound foundations for the Jewish State of the future, calls for hard work and pioneering zeal. In the early days of Jewish re-settlement in Palestine, men and women came from Europe to break stones and build roads, to drain the swamps and put up houses, to sink wells and to plant trees. They were the first architects of the National Home, and many gave their lives in the effort. Today much of this physical labour remains still to be done, but the pioneer finds scope in other directions as well. Town planning, agriculture, stock-breeding, large-scale irrigation, social development, education, seafaring, engineering works and electrification, medical services and hygiene, scientific and industrial research, transport and communications - all these and many other fields of human endeavour are calling out for men of vision, skill and enthusiasm.

4. It is in answer to this call that we in England, like many of our friends in the other countries of the English-speaking world, are preparing ourselves for settlement in Palestine. We cannot stand by and live our Zionist faith vicariously, looking on while others do all the hard work. We feel we must take a hand ourselves,

each of us according to his abilities, whether it means handling a spade and tending crops, minding a machine, healing the sick or teaching in school.

5. We hope it will not be thought presumptuous for us to feel that as Jews from the English-speaking world we may be able to make some contribution to mutual understanding between the Jewish and the Anglo-Saxon peoples. Those of us who have grown to manhood in Great Britain, in the United States and in the Dominions know how large a part of our individual selves is bound up with the spirit and traditions of Anglo-Saxon civilisation. While it cannot be our duty or our purpose to "anglicize" or "americanize" the Jewish community in Palestine, or to force upon it ways of thought or forms of organization that are necessarily alien to it, we know that each group of immigrants contributes to the common pool something of the ways and values of its country of origin. It is clear that we shall bring with us something of the English-speaking world, and we hope that this "something" may prove of help to Palestine and to the future relations between the Jews and the western world.

6. Inevitably the situation of the Jews in Europe has focussed attention on the needs of "displaced persons" and refugees. Their need is so compelling and has so largely overshadowed other considerations that in the public mind Palestine has come to be looked upon mainly as a place to which the victims of oppression could go. But essentially the idea of the Jewish National Home has little or nothing to do with refugees as such. Every Jew, whether he is technically a refugee or not, has the same right to his National Home. The Balfour Declaration was given to the Jewish people, and not to Jewish refugees. When we look upon the position of the refugees and the displaced Jews in Europe today, we must admit that their need is greater than ours; but we should like to stress that our right to a place in Palestine is no less well-founded than theirs.

7. The situation of the Jews in Europe since the end of the first world war has been so bad that almost all available Palestine immigration permits have had to be allocated to people suffering actual physical distress. Unfortunately there has never been a time during the past twenty years when immigration into Palestine was unrestricted and free. The Jewish Agency, in distributing the permits authorised

by the Government, has had to take into account the bodily peril of Jews in various countries, and has had to give them preference over those of us who are fortunate enough to live in security. Under these circumstances, the number of permits allocated to Jews in Great Britain, the United States and the other English-speaking countries has been small, and morally we have had little right to grumble. But the result is that today there are thousands of us in these countries waiting for permission to enter Palestine, and those for whom I speak are among this number.

8. The Committee will appreciate that Palestine is something more than a country to which people will go only if they cannot stay where they are. The ideal of building a free and healthy society in Palestine appeals strongly to Jews all over the world. In such a society our children would thrive, and we should be spared the disabilities and the psychological difficulties which are inseparable from Jewish life elsewhere. We are anxious to solve the problem of Jewish existence as such, not merely the problem of the Jewish refugee. It would be fairly easy to solve the problem of the refugee and still leave untouched the basic problem that makes refugees possible.

Many of us here are giving up our secure employment and our careers in order to do all we can towards the solution of this basic problem. We propose to work for the greater strength of the National Home, and for the establishment of a Jewish State, because we are convinced that this is the most solid contribution that we, as Jews, can make towards human happiness. We look upon the creative work that awaits us in Palestine as a challenge to give of our best; it is an adventure on which we embark with hope. In a world in which most people are anxious to do something for the good of humanity without quite knowing how to set about it, we feel privileged to have this opportunity of playing an active part in a truly constructive endeavour which we believe will bear fruit for the future peace of the world. We know that many of our friends who are not Jews wish they had the same chance; they envy us for knowing what we want, and they agree that what we want is good.

MEMORANDUM

Submitted to the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry
by Walter Ettinghausen on behalf of a number of
organizations concerned with the settlement in Palestine of Jews from Great Britain.

I have the honour to submit my evidence not only in my own name and on my own responsibility but on behalf of the following organizations in this country, all of whose members are anxious to settle in Palestine:

(a) Hechalutz ("The Pioneer"), the branch in Great Britain of a world-wide movement of Jewish pioneers. This organization concentrates chiefly on agriculture and maintains five farm training centres (at Harrietsham, Latton, Malmesbury, Newport Pagnell and Redhill), as well as a group working in the mines at Stalybridge. The farm centres work in close co-operation with their local War Agricultural Committees. The total number of members of Hechalutz in Great Britain is 1350. Closely associated with Hechalutz is a youth movement called Habonim ("The Builders"), now some 4000 strong.

(b) Bachad, an organization of religious pioneers, with a membership in this country of over 900. This body also devotes itself mainly to agricultural work, training young people for settlement in religious communal villages in Palestine. It maintains five agricultural training centres (at Thaxted, St. Asaph, Kempsey, Millisle and Buckingham). These, like the centres of Hechalutz, work in close co-operation with their local War Agricultural Committees. Closely associated with Bachad is a youth movement called Bnei Akivah, which numbers over 2000 members.

(c) Professional and Technical Workers' Aliyah, of which I am chairman, and Haoved ("The Worker"), two groups which have recently joined forces with a total membership approaching 500. These organizations cater primarily for professional men and specialists, as well as for craftsmen and others with a technical training. Their members include doctors, dentists, nurses and midwives, chemists and physicists, engineers, teachers, social workers, accountants, economists and statisticians, and indeed representatives of almost every useful

occupation.

2. These organizations have one feature in common: all their members aspire to live and work in Palestine, there to play their part in the general effort of reconstruction. They are now preparing to make their most effective contribution to the welfare of Palestine, many in agriculture, some in the professions, others as technicians and artisans.

It will be noted that the names of some of these organizations ("The Pioneer", "The Builders", "The Worker") are symbolical of the ideals that inspire their work. If members of the Committee can spare the time, they would be very welcome to visit any of the training farms of Hechalutz or Bachad. A fair number of young people trained at these farms have already gone to Palestine, where they are now working in communal villages up and down the country. One compact group has settled at Naame in Upper Galilee; a similar group of American Jews has built up the settlement of Ein Hashofet in the hill country of Ephraim.

3. The task of strengthening the Jewish National Home, and of laying sound foundations for the Jewish State of the future, calls for hard work and pioneering zeal. In the early days of Jewish re-settlement in Palestine, men and women came from Europe to break stones and build roads, to drain the swamps and put up houses, to sink wells and to plant trees. They were the first architects of the National Home, and many gave their lives in the effort. Today much of this physical labour remains still to be done, but the pioneer finds scope in other directions as well. Town planning, agriculture, stock-breeding, large-scale irrigation, social development, education, seafaring, engineering works and electrification, medical services and hygiene, scientific and industrial research, transport and communications - all these and many other fields of human endeavour are calling out for men of vision, skill and enthusiasm.

4. It is in answer to this call that we in England, like many of our friends in the other countries of the English-speaking world, are preparing ourselves for

settlement in Palestine. We cannot stand by and live our Zionist faith vicariously, looking on while others do all the hard work. We feel we must take a hand ourselves, each of us according to his abilities, whether it means handling a spade and tending crops, minding a machine, healing the sick or teaching in school.

5. We hope it will not be thought presumptuous for us to feel that as Jews from the English-speaking world we may be able to make some contribution to mutual understanding between the Jewish and the Anglo-Saxon peoples. Those of us who have grown to manhood in Great Britain, in the United States and in the Dominions know how large a part of our individual selves is bound up with the spirit and traditions of Anglo-Saxon civilisation. While it cannot be our duty or our purpose to "anglicize" or "americanize" the Jewish community in Palestine, or to force upon it ways of thought or forms of organization that are necessarily alien to it, we know that each group of immigrants contributes to the common pool something of the ways and values of its country of origin. It is clear that we shall bring with us something of the English-speaking world, and we hope that this "something" may prove of help to Palestine and to the future relations between the Jews and the western world.

6. Inevitably the situation of the Jews in Europe has focussed attention on the needs of "displaced persons" and refugees. Their need is so compelling and has so largely overshadowed other considerations that in the public mind Palestine has come to be looked upon mainly as a place to which the victims of oppression could go. But essentially the idea of the Jewish National Home has little or nothing to do with refugees as such. Every Jew, whether he is technically a refugee or not, has the same right to his National Home. The Balfour Declaration was given to the Jewish people, and not to Jewish refugees. When we look upon the position of the refugees and the displaced Jews in Europe today, we must admit that their need is greater than ours; but we should like to stress that our right to a place in Palestine is no less well-founded than theirs.

7. The situation of the Jews in Europe since the end of the first World War has been so bad that almost all available Palestine immigration permits have had to be allocated to people suffering actual physical distress. Unfortunately there has never been a time during the past twenty years when immigration into Palestine was unrestricted and free. The Jewish Agency, in distributing the permits authorised by the Government, has had to take into account the bodily peril of Jews in various countries, and has had to give them preference over those of us who are fortunate enough to live in security. Under these circumstances, the number of permits allocated to Jews in Great Britain, the United States and the other English-speaking countries has been small, and morally we have had little right to grumble. But the result is that today there are thousands of us in these countries waiting for permission to enter Palestine, and those for whom I speak are among this number.

8. The Committee will appreciate that Palestine is something more than a country to which people will go only if they cannot stay where they are. The ideal of building a free and healthy society in Palestine appeals strongly to Jews all over the world. In such a society our children would thrive, and we should be spared the disabilities and the psychological difficulties which are inseparable from Jewish life elsewhere. We are anxious to solve the problem of Jewish existence as such, not merely the problem of the Jewish refugee. It would be fairly easy to solve the problem of the refugee and still leave untouched the basic problem that makes refugees possible.

Many of us here are giving up our secure employment and our careers in order to do all we can towards the solution of this basic problem. We propose to work for the greater strength of the National Home, and for the establishment of a Jewish State, because we are convinced that this is the most solid contribution that we, as Jews, can make towards human happiness. We look upon the creative work that awaits us in Palestine as a challenge to give of our best; it is an adventure on which we embark with hope. In a world in which most people are

anxious to do something for the good of humanity without quite knowing how to set about it, we feel privileged to have this opportunity of playing an active part in a truly constructive endeavour which we believe will bear fruit for the future peace of the world. We know that many of our friends who are not Jews wish they had the same chance; they envy us for knowing what we want, and they agree that what we want is good.

- - -

