



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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

Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

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United Jewish Appeal, 1944.

Many small nations and minority groups, besides the Jews, are today met by the same water-course, and are drinking of the same bitter waters of persecution. The Jews of America are no longer the only ones who are faced with the necessity of providing relief for their brothers abroad. For some time now, both Catholics and Protestants in the United States have had to do the same thing for the members of their faiths who suffer in Nazi Germany. More recently, invaded and war-ravaged Poland and Finland have been compelled to appeal to the generous heart of America for public loans and private relief aid. Thus a common foe who has brought measureless tragedy to countless human beings, regardless of their race or creed, has finally united men of good will, of all races and creeds, in the common task of human rescue and succor. We have become allies in a ministry of love, to the denied and the dispossessed of the earth, who can survive only because of our active compassion for them, and who will cling to hope only as long as their faith in our humanity is justified.

Through the material help which we dispatch to our fellow human beings who have been beaten in body and harrowed in spirit, who have lost their homes, possessions and careers, or who are hungry, hounded and exiled, we are saying to them: "Be strong and of good courage! You have not been forgotten! Millions of loyal hearts the world over beat with love and solicitude for you! Your day of vindication and restitution is sure to come!"

We who are raising or contributing to relief funds at this time in order to assist the victims of aggression, tyranny and intolerance abroad, are doing much more than extending help to men, women and children in their dark hour of need, and, in so doing, are assuming our elementary and inescapable human responsibilities. In a profounder sense, we are building dykes against the flood of spiritual anarchy which is engulfing our world. We are throwing up a Maginot Line of human compassion across the path of an invasion which has been threatening the very character of our civilization and the whole spiritual life

of man. Increasingly, callousness to human wrong and suffering, and unconcern with the breakdown of standards of human decency have spread among the peoples of the earth. A selfish and comfortable attitude of detachment and non-involvement in the sufferings of a riven and menaced world has steadily manifested itself in our midst. Spiritual isolationism has grown into a far graver threat to civilization than economic isolationism. The common bond of humanity is in danger of being snapped - that mysterious spiritual cord of human sympathy, the quick and loyal response of one man's pity to another man's suffering, the sense of moral outrage at the sight of wanton human cruelty. This moral aloofness and indifference of our times are far more serious than the spread of dictatorship, for they spell the doom of any hope or any effort ever to free mankind from the curse of dictatorship. Such hopes and efforts are nourished only by the spiritual nature of man, by his strong sense of human solidarity, and by the compelling mandates of brotherhood and reciprocity. "It is through fraternity that liberty is saved", declared Victor Hugo. Even political and economic isolationism have proved vain and dangerous doctrines in our day. Spiritual isolationism would completely fragmentize our world, and reduce it to hopeless anarchy.

The great national relief appeals which are being made in our country today, such as the United Jewish Appeal, in behalf of suffering humanity, are encouraging evidences of a strong opposite tendency, of a firm resolve on the part of men and women who are still free, to strengthen the common bond of humanity, to fortify the spirit of universal sympathy and interdependence, and to reintegrate the shattered spiritual life of the world. Whereas other voices - hard and cruel voices - are shouting into the confusion of our day, words of division, of hate, threat and abuse, words freighted with the mischievous conceits of superior and inferior peoples, of master and slave races, or with the dark doctrines of

class struggle, purges and liquidations, the voice of our humanitarian relief appeals, such as the United Jewish Appeal, is the still small voice - but withal, the eternal and undeniable voice - of unity, of love and healing, of brotherhood, freedom and human equality. And as long as that voice remains unsilenced amidst the sound and fury of our world, so long will there be hope for a redeemed humanity.

Life has been particularly hard in the last few years on small nations and minority groups. They are the first victims, wherever and whenever the law of force banishes the law of justice. The Jewish people in Europe was the first to feel the blows of lawless, state violence. All kinds of specious and deceitful reasons were invented to justify the mortal wrongs which were being perpetrated upon this helpless minority. Actually there was but one reason - as other small nations and minority groups were soon to learn - the total breakdown of the reign of law in the heart of Europe, and the enthronement of the reign of lawless men. In quick succession, the peoples of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Albania, Poland, and now Finland, have been made to feel the flail and ships of this cynical and outrageous lawlessness.

Our national relief funds, in themselves, can not, of course, stop these inextinguishable crimes against men and nations, but they are prophetic of a passionate resolve on the part of men who have refused to surrender their spiritual heritage of dignity and freedom, that some day these shall be stopped, that some day aggression and tyranny shall cease, that some day racial and religious minorities shall be protected from despoilation, and that some day, every historic people shall be confirmed in its national and political inheritance.

Three great causes are served by our United Jewish Appeal. First, through the Joint Distribution Committee, food, raiment, shelter and medical care are, as far as possible, provided for men, women and children in the war-ridden and hate-riven areas of Central and Eastern Europe, and wherever possible, assistance is given to

refugees to emigrate and to find new homes. Secondly, through the National Refugee Service, help is extended to those who come to our own shores to adjust themselves as quickly as possible to the American way of life, and to enable them to put at the service of our country whatever ability, gifts and talents they may possess - and many of them are richly endowed and will make valuable contributions to the life of America. Finally, through the United Palestine Appeal, assistance is given to the rebuilding of the land of Israel, as a new homeland for an ancient people, long denied a national home. Palestine, in the last few years, has been the largest haven of refuge for Jews who have been driven out upon the dark and broken roads of exile. For decades, now, and more especially in the last few years, Jews have been building in their ancestral home, a new and noble center of life and culture - they who have been building there upon the ruins of ages, planting flourishing colonies amidst the rack and desolation of the centuries, and founding towns and cities where the waste and dreary wilderness once stretched. Five hundred thousand Jews have already found a new home there, and a new life and hope.

In the nigh universal black-out for mankind generally, and for our people particularly, the noble causes which are served by the United Jewish Appeal are bright lamps in the dark, which tell that life is still going on in the heart of the darkness, and that the creative mind and heart of Israel are still bent upon their eternal tasks, unbroken and undefeated. They are grateful reminders that we have not resigned ourselves to the triumph of the new barbarism. Neither mankind in its quest for freedom, and a kindly way of life, nor Israel, in its quest for freedom and the right to live, has reconciled itself to defeat. The darkness is here, of course, gross and almost impenetrable, but within that darkness still burn the inextinguishable fires of God.....

J.G.C. - still functioning in Warsaw - 300.000 to 500.000
80% in need -

Asked by Com. & Polish Relief - \$200.000 - 150.000 donated

Inakers -

P. Refugees in other lands - Lithuania -

Prev. est. \$100.000 for remainder, Jan - Adol. \$175.000

Hungary - Rumania

Refugees in Belgium, Holland, etc. - 10 months

Belgium - \$489.000

France - 351.000

Holland - 257.000

Switzerland 358.000

Shanghai \$62.000

Total. \$2.365.000

Require another \$1000.000 to complete year

In Germany - & Ger. domin. countries \$1.076.000

No dollars sent into Ger. as to Prohibitions

Spent outside these countries the student and
emigration charges arrangements

Refugees
Central & S. America \$300.000

Cuba alone \$127.000

S.S. St. Louis - 500.000 / Coordinating Fund. \$1.000.000