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

Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

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American Zionist Emergency Council Controversy, 1945.



Statement Jan 1, 1945  
re AZEC controversy

45-27

The statement of Dr. Stephen S. Wise which appeared in the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Bulletin on Wednesday the 27th explaining his phoney resignation amused me greatly. No officer of the American Zionist Emergency Council has so frequently and ~~so~~ brazenly contravened its decisions as Dr. Wise. The minutes of the Council will show that Dr. Wise was time and again criticised for his unauthorized conduct and ~~high-handed~~ actions. The most notorious was the fatal telegram which he ~~sent~~ <sup>despatched</sup> to the Secretary of State on the very eve when Senator Wagner and I were <sup>to see</sup> him in order to persuade the State Department and the President to withdraw their objections to the passage of the Palestine Resolution. In this telegram which Dr. Wise sent on his own, without consulting the Council, he stated that while he would ~~of course~~ be happy if approval were given to the Resolution he and many of his associates do not wish to have action taken contrary to the recommendations of the State Department and the President. This of course completely nullified the whole purpose of our visit and more than any other factor was responsible for the shelving of the Palestine Resolution.

Dr. Wise has persistently treated the Zionist movement of the United States as a piece of personal property and has bitterly resented any new leadership which threatened his monopoly.

His "Shtadlanut" in Washington has been an egregious failure for many years and not only as far as Zionism is concerned.

<sup>It is common knowledge that</sup>  
Washington has done next to nothing for our people during these tragic years of slaughter and annihilation, but our Court Jew has always shielded, defended and apologized for an Administration with which he is politically entangled, and has violently denounced all those who dared to question its unfailing goodness and justice.

<sup>It is now clear that the</sup>  
I hope that American Zionists <sup>will</sup> not now enter upon an collaborationist era where it will <sup>mark</sup> time and wait for a "green light" from the higher-ups. <sup>A "green light" is evidently not given except at election time.</sup>



1c

STATEMENT BY DR. STEPHEN S. WISE

Note to the Editor:

The following excerpts from an address by Dr. Stephen S. Wise, chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council, are supplementary to the special section in our Jan. 5 release presenting the views of Dr. Abba Hillel Silver and Dr. Israel Goldstein on the issues that led to the re-organization of the Council.

One must needs speak tonight not in anger but in sorrow, more especially since I have made it a rule always to keep differences above the personal level. All my days I have fought for causes, for movements, for ideals, never against persons. The office of a minister of religion is, as far as it may be humanly possible, to deal objectively with issues rather than subjectively with persons.

This was wholly true with respect to the first great struggle of my ministry in 1905 for pulpit freedom as against the Trustees of Temple Emanu-El, who insisted that its pulpit "shall always be subject to and under the control of the Board of Trustees," -- an insufferable proposal which no self-respecting Rabbi could accept. It was so when I found it necessary to stand up and speak in my pulpit against the policies of the United Steel Corporation's heads. Twenty years later, under the enlightened guidance of such men as Edward Stettinius and Myron Taylor, since become notable figures in the political life of our country, the Corporation, without a struggle, assented to that for which I stood and fought -- namely, the unionization of its workers. Even when I had part in effecting the temporary retirement of Dr. Chaim Weizmann as President of the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the World Zionist Organization, I did this despite unchanging personal affection for him, because I felt that his policies were there calculated to do harm to the Zionist cause.

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1.8.45

...I have not quarreled with Dr. Silver who, up to some days ago, was co-Chairman with me of the American Zionist Emergency Council. Dr. Silver is one of the most gifted and brilliant men in American Jewish life. The question which has been raised and decided by the council is whether he has carried out or contravened its decisions unanimously reached, or whether he has substituted dangerous political improvisations in the place of such decisions; and whether, furthermore, lawless improvisation is to be accepted as the conduct of a wise counselor and leader in Zionist affairs.

I have not up to this hour seen fit to utter one word in condemnation of Dr. Silver. In a letter of resignation as Chairman of the Council, I merely stated: "I cannot longer remain Chairman of a body, one of the leading officers of which has in a matter of supreme importance deliberately and persistently contravened the decisions of the Plenary Council, with the resultant hurt which has thereby been inflicted upon our sacred cause."

...Whether the charges now framed against me are true or false, I have the right to insist that the introduction of the issue of minimal vs. maximal Zionism is clearly a belated improvisation. Such an issue has never arisen throughout the fifteen months in which he and I labored side by side. I would not know how to define "minimal Zionism," unless it have reference to non-Zionism, or to the non-Zionist viewpoint which not even Dr. Silver would accuse me of sharing. We are all maximal Zionists -- that is to say, we believe in the cancellation without delay of the lamentable White Paper. We believe in unlimited Jewish immigration, and Jewish resettlement under Jewish control, at the earliest possible moment in Palestine. We believe in the reconstituting of Palestine, the Jewish National Home, as a free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth....

There are two other charges which are now improvised against the speaker -- one, "Dr. Wise has persistently treated the Zionist Movement of the United States as a piece of personal property and he has bitterly resented any new leadership which threatened his monopoly." Is it irrelevant to ask the question whether it was not the speaker who, singly and alone, insisted that Dr. Silver succeed him as Chairman of the United Palestine Appeal six years ago, which position Dr. Silver filled with extraordinary ability and effectiveness? Was it the speaker or another, who insisted that Dr. Silver become co-Chairman of the Council?

More serious than this absurd charge is the characterization of my service to the Zionist cause as "shtadlanut, which has been an egregious failure for many years, and not only as far as Zionism is concerned, a policy in which timidity, appeasement, and backstair diplomacy will have no place." If that charge be true and valid, I am not fit to serve as the Chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council, to which chairmanship I have again been elected....

Finally, there is the most far-reaching accusation of all, namely, that the speaker is responsible for the failure of the Senate to adopt the Palestine Resolution. Now the facts may, and in truth must, be told. After a regrettable (Continued on Page 3c)



1.8.45

experience in the Spring of the year, when the Resolution was halted by the insistence of the War and State Departments, the officers and members of the Emergency Council reached the unanimous decision -- the co-Chairman, Dr. Silver, concurring -- that no attempt should be made to bring about the adoption of the Resolution unless the State Department previously gave its approval. That approval was withheld; and that disapproval was thrice repeated. Again and again the Emergency Council resolved not to press for the adoption of the Resolution in either House, in view of the circumstance that the State Department saw fit not to give its approval. In persistent and never-ceasing contravention of the unanimously-reached decisions of the Emergency Council, Dr. Silver moved forward and sought to bring about the passage of the Resolution, which he had every reason to know was for a time, and for reasons that had been made clear, disapproved by the State Department and in friendly terms even by the President. In the end, the Resolution was defeated. In any event, its passage was postponed for the session, and my resignation as Chairman necessarily followed.

It was not a matter of difference of opinion between us. The Council had spoken and acted. It was the business of both Dr. Silver and myself to abide by its decisions. I did so abide; Dr. Silver persistently violated the decisions by urging action upon both Houses of Congress, without the knowledge and approval of the Council. Nothing was left for the Council but to reorganize itself, and to reach the decision that its Chairman or Co-Chairmen were to execute its decisions, and not their own; that any other way would be followed by confusion, alienation, and disaster.

I might have added before this that if it became necessary for me to insist that we could not together remain as Co-Chairman, it was the speaker who fifteen months ago brought about the election of Dr. Silver as Co-Chairman of the Council and as Chairman of its Executive Committee. Certain things should have given me pause. But I felt that his great ability should be utilized in the interest of the Zionist Movement. One strange mistake was made by Dr. Silver, namely, that I was to serve as the nominal head of the Emergency Council -- as an "elder statesman" -- and that he was to be its only leader. I was not then prepared, nor does the American Zionist Emergency Council seem now to be prepared to accept the role of retirement. There are conspicuous men of my age who do not retire, not yet are shelved, -- outstanding among them Prime Minister Churchill and Dr. Chaim Weizmann... I felt, I confess, that I had something still to give to the cause -- the fruits of a full half-century experience in public and Jewish affairs, the respect of my fellow-Jews, and the good will of great numbers of Americans.

To revert for one moment to the charge that I have been "no more than a beggar at the doors of power," it remains for me, perhaps immodestly, to ask -- was it timidity or "shtadlanut" -- that hateful term! -- on my part which, over a period of twenty-five years, helped to win presidents, from Wilson to Roosevelt, and many of the political, religious, and ethical leaders of our nation, to the support of the Zionist cause?

I cannot close this brief summation without saying once again, that, despite the heat and passion (Continued on Page 4c)



1.8.45

of the moment, I feel free to remind Dr. Silver, who has ceased to be co-Chairman of the Emergency Council, that when Dr. Weizmann was defeated in his candidacy and retired from the Presidency of the World Zionist Movement, he continued to give himself to the Zionist cause, as devotedly and as loyally as he had done during the years of his leadership.... It behooves him to continue to place his rare gifts and talents at the disposal of the Zionist Movement.... In a great movement such as ours, there are times when a man, whatever his gifts, must withdraw from leadership for many reasons that I have chosen to state only in part. Such a time has come for Dr. Silver, quite apart from the decision of the Emergency Council.

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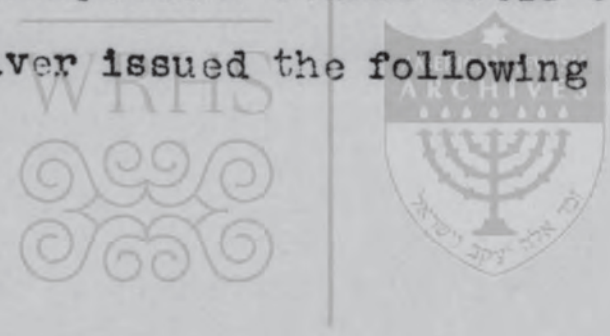


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DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER REPLIES TO DR. STEPHEN S. WISE

In reply to assertions made by Dr. Stephen S. Wise in a sermon on January 5 and reported at length by the Independent Jewish Press Service, Dr. Abba Hillel Silver issued the following statement:





1.12.45

I read with interest the statement of Dr. Stephen S. Wise, evidently part of an address which he delivered in response to the statement which I issued on January 5. I do not wish to continue a public discussion with Dr. Wise, but his address contains two serious mis-statements of facts which should be corrected.

Dr. Wise states that he, "fifteen months ago, brought about the election of Dr. Silver as Co-Chairman of the Council and as Chairman of its Executive Committee." Nothing can be further from the truth. Dr. Weizmann, Dr. Nahum Goldmann, Mr. Louis Lipsky, along with Dr. Stephen Wise, on two occasions early in 1943, urged me to assume leadership of the Emergency Committee because of the low state into which the political work of the movement had fallen. Dr. Wise was at that time Chairman of the Emergency Committee. I twice declined, knowing of the nucleus of opposition to me which existed within the Emergency Committee made up of ZOA representatives.

Friends finally persuaded me to defy this small group of representatives for the sake of the cause, and they launched a "Draft Silver" movement to elect me President of the Zionist Organization of America in order to rid the Council of the ZOA representatives who were resolved to keep me out. The movement gained such momentum that the ZOA Administration forces who were backing the candidacy of Dr. Israel Goldstein offered a compromise whereby I would withdraw from the race for the ZOA presidency and leave the field to Dr. Goldstein, and in turn all would agree on my assuming active direction of the political work of the Emergency Committee. An agreement was signed on August 9, 1943, by Dr. Wise as Chairman of the Emergency Committee, by Dr. Goldstein and myself.

To suggest that "he (Wise) and no other insisted that Dr. Silver become Co-Chairman of the Council" is the product either of a fertile imagination or of a very short memory.

Again, Dr. Wise states: "One strange mistake was made by Dr. Silver, namely, that (Wise) was to serve as the nominal head of the Emergency Council -- as an 'elder statesman' -- and that he (Silver) was to be its only leader." There was no mistake made by me on that score at all!

On July 29, 1943, prior to the agreement referred to above, I wrote to Dr. Wise a lengthy letter from which I quote the following:

"Both you and Dr. Weizmann approached me some months ago with the request to take over the direction of the political work of our Movement. You felt, as many of us have felt right along, that there has been an unfortunate confusion, inefficiency, over-lapping and cross-purposes in our political work and that the situation called for complete reorganization and above all for centralization of authority. Both you and Dr. Weizmann as well as Mr. Lipsky and others asked me to take over this work. I demurred knowing of the determined opposition of some of the men who today control the administration of the ZOA. I told you that while I was willing to fight for Zionism, I was not willing to start a fight with Zionists for the privilege of serving the cause. You appealed to me to take over the work on the ground that you yourself are heavily encumbered with many other responsibilities, and are tired. . . ."

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1.12.45

"When you told me yesterday over the telephone that you have been persuaded to retain the chairmanship of the Zionist Emergency Committee, I was somewhat bewildered. If it was your intention to remain in that important post, neither I nor anyone else would have considered supplanting you. The office is yours by right of service and achievement in the Movement. But I assumed all along that you earnestly wished to be relieved of it. It was on the basis of that understanding that I participated in the discussions in the last few months looking towards a reorganization. If now you feel that you wish to retain that office not in an honorary, but in an active capacity, I wish you would let me know definitely, and in making my reply to the draft letter addressed to me, I will say that Dr. Wise is head of the political emergency work of the Movement and there is no need for drafting me or anyone else, and that as far as the Presidency of the ZOA is concerned, I never sought that office, and I find opportunities for my Zionist services in other fields. . . . "

So that when on August 9, 1943, Dr. Wise, Dr. Goldstein and I signed an agreement in Dr. Wise's study stating "that with the concurrence of all parties, Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, Chairman of the United Palestine Appeal, for long one of the most distinguished figures in Zionism, will be summoned to leadership in the sphere of political affairs by becoming the Co-Chairman with me of the American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs, and assuming also the Chairmanship of its Executive Committee, the body responsible for the centralized direction of our political efforts," Dr. Wise knew fully what I meant by leadership and by centralized direction. He understood fully that I would not assume the role of a vice-President to him or that he would retain the same authority in the political field which was his before he and others invited me to assume the political direction of our work.

Unfortunately, as soon as the reorganization of our Council began to show results, and new life was infused into it, Dr. Wise evidently changed his mind and progressively during the year, began to re-assert his primary position, and towards the end, to act as though I was a secondary and almost negligible officer.

The other issues raised in Dr. Wise's address have been fully covered by me in previous statements and I need not revert to them again. I have been gratified by the reaction in the Jewish press which has so correctly understood and interpreted the controversy and has so overwhelmingly endorsed my position. The rank and file of American Zionists, too, have not been misled by the small cabal of ZOA office-holders who resented my coming into the leadership sixteen months ago and who have continuously since then endeavored to discredit my work and to bring about my resignation.

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STATEMENT RELATING TO  
DEFERMENT OF PALESTINE RESOLUTION

Reports concerning the American Zionist Emergency Council that have appeared currently in the press, and particularly the statements that have been made by its former co-chairman and chairman of its Executive Committee, Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, have made necessary the issuance of this statement.

We feel it to be our duty to make available to the Zionists of the country the essential facts which have led up to this controversy. Throughout this time, and under most difficult circumstances, the members representing the Zionist Organization of America in the Emergency Council have been guided solely by their reasoned judgment as to the best interests of our movement.

The Zionists of the country may be assured that there is no basis whatever to the contention that this is an issue of "maximal" as against "minimal" Zionism, or that this is a problem of an "aggressive" policy as against "timidity", "appeasement" and "backstairs diplomacy."

After the adoption by the Democratic and Republican parties of planks in their respective platforms concerning Palestine, and after the historic message sent to the convention of the Zionist Organization of America by Franklin D. Roosevelt on October 15th, 1944, the Emergency Council met on several occasions to consider what course it should adopt in regard to the Resolution then pending before the Committee of the House and Senate of the Congress of the United States.

At a meeting on October 30, 1944, after thorough discussion, the Emergency Council decided unanimously not to press for the reporting out of the Resolutions and for their passage, unless and until the preliminary approval of the

more



Executive branch of the Government shall have been secured. The events of last March had convinced the Emergency Council of the unwisdom of pressing for the passage of the Resolutions without the consent and approval of the Department of State.

Unanimous Decisions:

The Emergency Council held two later meetings, devoted to the same subject. At a meeting on November 9th, 1944 it discussed again whether or not the Resolution should be pressed, and again all those present, representing all parties, and including the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Dr. Silver, unanimously reaffirmed its previous decision. It was then decided to interview the Secretary of State for the purpose of obtaining the approval of the Executive Branch which could be transmitted to the Committees of the House and the Senate. A Committee including Dr. Wise and Dr. Silver was appointed to visit the Secretary of State. This was done shortly thereafter, and, after a few days had elapsed, they were informed that the Executive Branch of the Government made the request "to leave the matter pending a little while longer."

All this was reported to the Emergency Council on November 21, 1944, and again there was unanimous concurrence, including Dr. Silver, not to press for the passage of the Resolutions, but to continue to utilize every effort to secure Executive approval.

On November 27, six days after the above mentioned meeting of the Emergency Council, Dr. Silver as chairman of the Executive Committee of the American Zionist Emergency Council, without the knowledge or authorization from that body and contrary to its decision, wrote an official communication to Representative Sol Bloom, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in which he said: "As chairman of the Executive Committee of the American Zionist Emergency Council I urge prompt action on the Palestine Resolution..." (Mr. Bloom had demanded a written request from Dr. Silver in order to be sure that it was an official request.)



"Jewish" Omitted:

Following the receipt of this communication Mr. Bloom convened the House Foreign Affairs Committee and on November 30th a resolution was reported out favorably in which however the word "Jewish" was omitted before "Commonwealth" and the word "ultimately" was retained.

To many Zionists here and especially in Palestine this watered-down resolution which Mr. Lessing Rosenwald found it possible to approve, was highly unsatisfactory. It was certainly anything but "militant".

When the matter came subsequently before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the President of the ZCA, seeing that we had become involved in this situation against the decision of the Emergency Council and deeming it necessary that at least the Senate resolution should be a proper Zionist Resolution, sent a telegram to the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in which it was urged that the word "Jewish" be retained before the word "Commonwealth" and the word "ultimately" be removed.

On Thursday, December 7th, Dr. Stephen S. Wise convoked a meeting of the whole Emergency Council. Again at this session a decision was made that under these circumstances it would be a mistake to press the Resolution. A delegation, consisting of Mrs. Judith Epstein, President of Hadassah, Dr. Wolf Gold of the Mizrahi Organization of America, Dr. Chaim Greenberg of the Poale Zion and Dr. Israel Goldstein, President of the Zionist Organization of America were appointed to proceed to Washington and to attempt to persuade Dr. Silver to abide by the decisions of the Emergency Council. But to no avail.

The subsequent appearance of Secretary of State Stettinius before the Senate Committee and the statement which he issued brought about the deferment of the Palestine Resolution.



Wise Resignation:

It was as a result of all this that Dr. Wise felt compelled to offer his resignation as Chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council, as a protest against the arbitrary action of one of the officers of the Council contrary to the expressed will of the Council and to the hurt of "our sacred cause."

These are the salient facts of the situation which has caused considerable agitation, speculation and criticism.

An issue is now being raised of "bold political action" versus "timidity". This issue is a patent attempt to cover up the question of why an officer of the Emergency Council has acted contrary to its decisions in which he himself shared. Why was not the issue of "timidity" versus "boldness" presented at the meetings of the Emergency Council of October 30th and November 21st? Why were the voices which are now heard so tridently not raised at that time in favor of going forward in defiance of the State Department? Why did Dr. Silver say then that if the answer of the State Department were vague, we should not go forward?

The redeeming circumstance of this entire unfortunate situation is that Dr. Wise, chairman of the Emergency Council, by adhering to the decisions of that body remains a friendly contact with the President and the State Department. To maintain this friendly contact is essential to our cause.

Z.O.A. Executive Action:

On December 19th the ZOA Executive Committee by a vote of 18 to 4 adopted the following resolution:

"It is the sense of this meeting that on the basis of the facts as presented to us, Dr. Wise's resignation as a protest against Dr. Silver's action in contravention of the decisions of the Emergency Council is justified. We believe that Dr. Wise's resignation from the leadership of the Zionist movement in America would most seriously



injure the interests of the movement, and therefore conditions must be created to enable Dr. Wise to continue as Chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council. We leave it to our representatives on the Emergency Council to act in accordance with these views."

This resolution was re-affirmed at a subsequent meeting of the ZOA Executive held after Dr. Silver's report to the Emergency Council had been heard.

The statement issued by the Emergency Council after its meeting on December 28 is one in which the ZOA fully shares: It is as follows:

"The American Zionist Emergency Council desires to make it clear that the controversy referred to in the public press does not involve any difference with respect to fundamental Zionist policy or maximal or minimal Zionist program, but is rather one of procedure, methods of implementation and the authority of its officers. The American Zionist Emergency Council will go forward with continued vigor and determination for the realization of its objectives — unrestricted Jewish immigration into Palestine, full opportunity for Jewish colonization and the re-constitution of Palestine as a free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth. For this it will seek the active support of the Executive and legislative branches of the U.S. Government and the good will of the American people."

The entire set of circumstances is most regrettable. We do not underestimate Dr. Silver's important services to the Zionist movement during the past 14 months and before. He has splendid achievements to his credit during his incumbency of the office as chairman of the Executive Committee of the Emergency Council. This, however, does not obscure the regrettable events of recent weeks and his responsibility for them.

#### Z.O.A. Cooperation:

So far as ZOA cooperation with the Emergency Council is concerned the record is clear. The ZOA enabled the Emergency Council upon its reorganization to secure a budget of \$500,000 for the year which was no mean factor



in the success of the work. The ZOA turned over to the Emergency Council its leading people in the local communities for the public relations work. The ZOA leadership has rendered conspicuous service in the hearings of the House Foreign Affairs Committee last February and March and in securing the inclusion of the Palestine plank in the Democratic platform, and President Roosevelt's historic declaration to the Zionist Convention in Atlantic City. The leaders of the ZOA have fulfilled every assignment which has been given to them by the Emergency Council. The ZOA will continue to give the Emergency Council its fullest cooperation. The ZOA membership however would expect its leaders and representatives to retain the right to express honest and conscientious judgment on questions as they arise - always abiding, of course, by the will of the majority. And the ZOA representatives will continue to insist on discipline as the fundamental basis of any democratically organized constituency.

Where are we left now? There is hope that at the next session of Congress, as the war draws closer to its end, the objections of the State Department may be withdrawn and the Palestine Resolution in improved wording, may go through with virtual unanimity. There is also a possibility that President Roosevelt may himself find a way in consultation with the heads of other Governments to give a sign of the fulfillment of his pledge and that of the two parties in their platforms. In all this the good will of the President is essential.

#### Practical Government Help:

What needs to be borne in mind by all of us Zionists is that as important as are the Congress Resolutions, it is even more important to secure practical help from our Government and its allies in shaping the future of Palestine and in bringing immigrants into Palestine in the immediate future and preparing Palestine to absorb mass Jewish immigration after the war. Here too the President's good will and friendship could be of crucial helpfulness -- in addition to his potential aid in securing the proclamation of a Jewish Commonwealth.



Before us Zionists there is now a clear challenge. We shall not go very far by exhausting ourselves with internal dissensions. These will only give aid and comfort to our enemies. We must set our house in order and proceed with our work. It would be tragic if as a result of agitation our tempo of progress should be altered.

1. We must be on the alert, in our public relations responsibilities, continuing to educate American public opinion in favor of the Zionist program, and prepared to make the necessary impact upon Congress as soon as the time is opportune;

2. We must increase ZOA membership steadily and substantially because the strength of the Zionist movement is judged by its core, which is its core, which is its membership;

3. We must work harder than ever for the national funds which build the foundations for the Jewish Commonwealth;

4. We must, without delay, raise the ZOA Expansion Fund which is to enable our organization to grow in scope, content and influence.

No Zionist district worthy of its name will permit itself to be satisfied merely with its status quo. A movement must move forward, else it recedes.

All these signs of progress must be registered immediately. Let us prove by our renewed zeal that we are more than fair-weather Zionists, that we know how to meet a challenge. The months immediately ahead must be our most active in all directions.

Kadimah -- Forward!

Israel Goldstein, President  
Zionist Organization of America



STATEMENT BY DR. HAYIM GREENBERG AT  
ATLANTIC CITY CONFERENCE, FEBRUARY 4, 1945

DR. HAYIM GREENBERG: I would like, first of all, to apologize. I should have been here last night but was delayed because I had to be present at an all-day conference of the Central Committee of the organization to which I have the honor to belong, and where I had to be present to speak frankly, in order to clear my status with my own people. My organization decided by a vote of 21 against 6 that whatever its past attitude, it would stand whole-heartedly and loyally behind this reconstituted Emergency Council (applause) and I have been instructed to tell you that all sections of our Movement in the United States will do nothing in the coming months except cooperate sincerely and devotedly with the constructive work undertaken, and still to be undertaken by this Emergency Council.

I was asked yesterday at that conference, a legitimate question: what policy are you going to pursue now? Will it be - and I quote one of my comrades - "A policy of militancy, or a rather passive policy?" and I tell you what I told them yesterday, "Neither a policy of baseless, inflated militancy, or verbal aggressiveness, nor a policy of disgraceful timidity and submissiveness, but a carefully mapped-out and energetically carried-out policy of realism and effectiveness."

I will tell you now, what I mean by that, and what I meant yesterday when we adopted that formula.

During the last fifteen or sixteen months in American Zionism, a lot of very good and in my opinion effective work has been done. Public opinion in this country has been aroused; Zionism was on the order of the day in American political life, and I would be the last one to minimize the importance that work. But our policy and most of our activities in that period, were, if I may use that expression, fixated on a certain plan, or design. It was, I would say, a kind of fixation. A fixation may at times be a very very valuable instrument; it may also, if carried too far, become dangerous - dangerous in the sense that people sometimes confuse means and ends. By this I mean something very concrete. The passage for instance of a congressional resolution favorable to the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine is not and should not be considered as an end in itself. It is a means; maybe at a certain moment a very important means; but it is not if we think in long-range terms the whole of Zionist policy or Zionist strategy. There is, as Sigmund Freud has shown, such a thing as a compulsion to symbolize, a "symbolizierungszwang", and to get lost sometimes in a symbol, to forget how that symbol was created, to forget that man created that symbol, and that it did not come from above, from the sky. And we must beware of such a state of mind. I shall tell you in a moment what I mean by this.

I am the last one, my friends, to pass judgment on the merits or demerits of the American Constitution under which we live. But I do propose that certain elements of the American Constitution, of the constitutional structure of this Union, should be registered in our consciousness. Whether we like it or not a tremendous power, particularly where foreign affairs are concerned, is concentrated in the hands of the Administration of this country, and in particular of the Chief Executive of that Administration, the President of the United States. Whether we like it or not, Congress has no power of initiative in foreign matters the Executive alone has the power of initiative. And in addition as things stand today, whether, as a citizen of the world, I like it or I dislike it, a tremendous power is concentrated in the hands of three men in this world, three men who may settle the most essential affairs of our planet for a period to come.



What are the conclusions I am inclined to draw from this analysis, if it is as I believe, a correct analysis? It was very desirable, it is still very desirable to have a good congressional resolution on Palestine. But I never thought, and I do not think today, that the adoption of such a resolution in Congress, the best resolution in the world, would amount to the solution of our problem, and that after such a resolution Palestine would be offered to us on a silver platter. Such a resolution is not legislation in the concrete and binding sense of the word. A resolution of that kind, on a question of foreign affairs is - I won't say a pious wish - but it is an expression of crystallized public opinion in this country; there is fluid public opinion and there is crystallized, more rigid public opinion, more official public opinion. This is the essence of a congressional resolution. If we had to suppose that, for instance, the President of the United States is, as I was told by some of my Zionist friends, anti-Zionist - a thing which I do not for a single moment believe, but if it were true - no congressional resolution would force the President to take up our case and to fight for our cause. Nor would a single voice in this country come after the war and demand the impeachment of the President because he did not fight for our cause.

The resolution has not been adopted, unfortunately, and I am not going at this moment to dwell on the history of our efforts to have the resolution adopted. But it is clear at least to me, that within the nearest few months - I do not undertake to prophecy anything about the situation, or about decisions to be taken by us in May or in June or in August or next September, but within the next period of time that it would not be wise to have a new resolution introduced in either the House or the Senate. That does not mean that our program for the coming months should be a negative one. For one thing we will of course have to continue to cultivate the friendships we have already acquired in some quarters we will have to make new contacts, and to cultivate those contacts; but at the same time it would be a great mistake on our part to limit ourselves merely to official negotiations with governmental bodies or with men in responsible position in Washington, and do nothing as far as the country as a whole is concerned and as far as American public opinion is concerned. What we purpose to do at this moment is to launch a nation-wide campaign, over the length and breadth of the country, among various sections of the non-Jewish population in the United States, in order to impress, not once, not twice, but from time to time as the occasion or the opportunity emerges, and as needs, concrete practical needs, are clarified, in order to bring to the attention of the Administration, of the President, the sentiments of the people of America in regard to Palestine and the solution of the Jewish problem. To a certain extent it is a question of slogans to be employed; it is a question of the kind of propaganda we will now have to conduct in the country.

I personally think that the time has come to present our needs, and our ultimate goal in Palestine, to American public opinion, not merely in terms of the solution of a problem of let us say some hundreds of thousands or of a million Jewish individuals. It would be a mistake on our part to reduce Zionism to the non-Jewish world in America as merely a problem of resettling refugees or removing refugees from one part of the world to another. Of course we must not omit to keep American public opinion informed about the situation of hundreds of thousands of Jews in countries economically devastated, of hundreds of thousands of pauperized Jews, but it would be dangerous as I see it to have Zionism reduced merely to this topic. We know unfortunately how the population pressures, Jewish population pressures in Europe today have become much weaker than they were three and four and five and six years ago. Only a few years ago we were in a position to speak of millions of Jews clamoring for admission to Palestine. That was a great source of power. Those millions of poor Jews were in some countries un-integrated Jews without civil rights; but the very existence of those millions



of Jews was a great source of political power for the Zionist Movement. That source does not exist today to the extent it did exist only a few years ago. I don't know how many Jews have survived or will survive the deluge of blood on the European continent; we hope that substantial numbers will survive, but we have no illusions as to the fact that the majority of European Jews on the Continent have already been annihilated. I think it would be impossible today to convince the powers that be, that a Jewish Commonwealth should be established in Palestine only on the strength of those hundreds of thousands of Jews who are, or may be ready today to go to Palestine. In this respect we will have to return, in a sense, to classical Zionism, in the sense that it is not a matter of solving the problem of a definite number of individuals, but of solving the perennial problem of a homeless people as a whole. That means to think again in long-range terms and not only in terms of the coming decade. On the strength of this we must demand that Palestine should be designated as a zone for Jewish mass settlement, where all Jews who so choose may go - Jews from all kinds of countries including even the United States.

At the same time our propaganda - and in this connection I think not only or even mostly of the Jewish population, but of the non-Jewish population and public opinion generally - must pursue parallel methods: one method is as I said before, the presentation of Zionism as the solution of a historical, in a sense perennial problem in Jewish life and the life of the world. But at the same time we must reckon with the possibility that our final status may not be decided for months and even maybe for years. And something must be done prior to that settlement. Nobody knows at this moment when the final decisions with regard to Palestine will be taken. Not only the problem of Palestine, but the great problems of Europe itself - what to do ultimately with Germany, or what borders should be given to Poland - are not necessarily going to be finally decided within the next few months. Before the final solution, what are we going to do about the political status of Palestine and the status of the Jewish people in Palestine? That imposes a definite obligation upon the Zionist organizations of this country, and particularly upon the Emergency Council. We must not limit ourselves to propaganda regarding only the final settlement of Zionism, but at the same time be alert, vigilant every single day, in putting forward specific concrete demands relating to the life of the Jewish community already existing in Palestine and regarding the increase of Jewish population in that country, prior to the final solution of the political problem.

You heard today from Mr. Zaslani, and you heard last night, I assume, from other friends, about the situation in some of the European countries. I think the situation is much graver than some of us imagine, or are inclined to think; graver in an entirely different sense. Some of us heard a few weeks ago from one of our friends who came to America from France, Joseph Fischer, the representative of the Zionist Movement in France, a representative also of the Resistance Movement in that country, who told us terrifying things, not only about the economic or social situation of thousands of Jews in France today, but about their mental situation. Thousands of Jews, for instance, have in the years of the Hitler occupation, acquired Aryan passports; they have acquired certificates from the Catholic Church to the effect that they were Catholics by birth - if there is such a thing as a Catholic by birth. Now, when they have been liberated, many of them refuse to give up their official status as Catholics. Some of them have even embraced Christianity in recent months in France after the liberation of the country.

What does it mean? It means something very - well I was tempted to say simple, but it is anything but simple. It reminds me of the step taken in the Seventeenth Century by Sabatai Zvi. Sabatai Zvi thought of liberation, of redemption. He did something in his own fantastic terms in order to redeem his



people and redeem himself among his people, and after the crisis, when he saw that nothing had been achieved, that nothing could have been achieved, in a state of utter despair he proclaimed himself a Moslem. I am afraid that too many Jews, thousands of them now in France, in Belgium, perhaps in Hungary and some other countries, just because they don't see any ray of hope in their life, any hope of redemption, because the doors of Palestine are closed to them, because they don't see their way as Jews in their countries of birth or origin, to continue their life, are today in despair. And despair is sometimes the worst counsel in the world, it is a counsel of suicide, and many of them commit, or are ready to commit moral suicide in their life. That is why, parallel with our political activities, and nation-wide propaganda about the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine (and no one among us should think for a moment that we are in a position to renounce even for a single day those political demands) parallel with, and simultaneously with those political activities and propaganda, we ought to raise at this moment specific and concrete demands prior to the ultimate solution. This does not necessarily mean a fight against the White Paper, and I will tell you in a minute why I would not call it a fight against the White Paper: Because I can conceive of a situation when the White Paper has been officially annulled - I don't see it yet, but I can conceive of such a situation - and that not a single Jew should be admitted to Palestine. There were times, without a White Paper of that kind, when on the strength of purely administrative regulations, without any legal or pseudo-legal basis, Jews were not admitted to Palestine under British administration in past years. What we are concerned with is not the official annulment of the White Paper, not a de jure annulment, but a de facto abrogation, and the de facto abrogation means to open the doors of Palestine for tens of thousands and for hundreds of thousands, forthwith, and without waiting for the general political solution. The doors of Palestine must be opened to them and all unnecessary restrictions removed, including restrictions on the purchase of land.

There is another matter: Arab leaders in recent months have adopted a new method of anti-Zionist propaganda. Their line is that: we Arabs perhaps would be ready to reconcile ourselves somehow to a large-scale Jewish settlement in Palestine itself, or in Palestine alone, but we have ground to believe that the Jews regard Palestine merely as a base from which to expand and to penetrate the neighboring Arab countries and to seize economic and political control of them. I don't think that there is a single Arab who believes that, but there are too many of them who say it and who pretend that they believe and are afraid of it. I would seize the opportunity to indicate to the Government of the United States and to the Government of Great Britain, not only that Jews will not contemplate settling in any of the neighboring countries, but on the contrary that there are certain Jewish communities in Arab countries today, tens of thousands of them in Iraq, twenty or twenty-five thousand of them in Yemen, and so on, whom we want to assist in bringing to Palestine - to open the doors of Palestine for the Yemenites, to open the doors for those Iraqi Jews ready to settle in Palestine, for some of the Egyptian Jews ready to leave that country and settle today in Palestine; to open the doors for thousands and thousands of Jews in North Africa, in the French Colonial possessions, in Algeria, in Tunisia; open the door and let them settle in Palestine. I say this opportunity should be seized upon, and we should come out with concrete, practical suggestions, perhaps to create the proper machinery and the proper financial framework for the removal of the Jews from those countries.

These two parallel methods of propaganda, which is not propaganda alone, but amounts to practical political activity, should be expressed as I said before, in a nation-wide campaign in the country to arouse as far as possible and to mobilize and to crystallize public opinion. Our local Emergency Committees



everywhere in the country can and must become the instruments, assisting the American Palestine Committee and the Christian Council, in creating in every worthwhile community, and every community large and small is worthwhile, nuclei of Christian friends, and more than nuclei. Thousands and tens of thousands of non-Jews must be enlisted in these two non-Jewish organizations; they must arrange local conferences - we are not in a position, because of war restrictions, to arrange big regional or national conferences - and the State Department and the President should, by these conferences, be reminded not once, but every few weeks, and not only about the final goal, of Zionism, not only about the Commonwealth, but about the specific tasks to be performed within the next few months.

Perhaps further we will have to try to bring pressure to bear, or through our Government and otherwise upon certain countries which formally have nothing to do with Palestine. Take for instance the case of Bulgaria. From Bulgaria we heard two weeks ago, - that a new democratic Bulgarian Government is not opposed to Jewish immigration from Bulgaria to Palestine, but - and that but is very typical, very characteristic of the situation in that country, - those Jews who opt today for settlement in Palestine, must sign a document in terms of which they waive any claim they had in the past or that they may have tomorrow, to their property in Bulgaria or to the restoration of their property confiscated or Aryanized under the Hitler occupation. Here is a matter on which the American Government could be helpful. With the good offices of our Government, it could be impressed upon the Russians, who are factually in control of Bulgaria militarily and to a certain extent politically, that you cannot authorize people to leave the country yet on the eve of their departure rob them of whatever they possess.

I think that by mobilizing Christian friends now in the various communities, by appealing let us say, to Chambers of Commerce, American Federation of Labor and CIO units, church organizations, teachers associations, bar associations, the various post-war commissions in America dealing with problems of settlement of foreign affairs, fraternal organizations, colleges and universities, women's clubs, democratic clubs, republican clubs in the various communities, it would be possible within the next few months to bring to the attention of our Government not only our case in the sense of a great historical ideal, but our cases, our every-day worries, and every-day tasks to be performed in connection with Jewish immigration into Palestine.

Only one thing is required now for conducting this kind of ramified political and propaganda work in the country a sense of solidarity in the Zionist Movement, and wholehearted cooperation on the part of all the constituent bodies of the Zionist Movement.

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