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

Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

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Manhattan Zionist region, 1947.



EXCERPT OF ADDRESS BY DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER  
at  
MANHATTAN CENTER RALLY, JAN. 6, 1947

"The Congress has spoken for the Jews of the world. The Jews of the world will abide by its decisions. A new administration was elected to implement that new line and directives which the Congress defined. Loyal Zionists will give the new administration their fullest support and the fullest chance to work in a most difficult and delicate situation.

"I appeal to all patriotic Jews in Palestine, regardless of their affiliations, to refrain from those acts of desperation which are endangering our political position, both in Palestine and elsewhere. The Congress resolved to resist unceasingly and with utmost vigor the persistent violation of the rights of the Jewish people. However, it condemned murder and the shedding of innocent blood, and it called upon the members of dissident organizations to desist and to submit to national discipline.

"I appeal for a truce. An earnest and determined effort, perhaps the final one, must be made in the next few weeks or months, to discover whether a just and peaceful solution can be found, and every opportunity must be given to ensure the success of such an effort.

"We shall go to the London Conference when the existing circumstances, which at present make it impossible, will change. The next move is clearly up to Great Britain."



Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, Chairman of the American section of the Jewish Agency for Palestine and President of the Zionist Organization of America, yesterday appealed to the British government not to embark on its proposed military offensive in Palestine.

Warning that such action by British troops against the Jewish people of Palestine would serve only to "create new obstacles in the way of mutual understanding," the American Zionist leader who Monday night appealed to all Jews in Palestine<sup>"</sup> to refrain from those acts of desperation which are endangering our political position, both in Palestine and elsewhere<sup>"</sup> and appealed for a truce, declared:

"No just and sound solution of the Palestine problem can be achieved by taking the path of reprisal. American public opinion, Jewish and Christian alike, will not condone military oppression in the Holy Land and the subjection of the entire population to the tyranny of martial law."

Dr. Silver's statement reads:

"On my arrival Monday from Washington, where I conferred first with Lord Inverchapel, the British Ambassador, and later with Mr. Byrnes, the Secretary of State, on the Palestine question, I was met with newspaper headlines heralding a full-scale British military offensive in Palestine.

"This operation, which is now allegedly being discussed on a Cabinet level in London, is purportedly aimed at the suppression of anti-British terror in Palestine. Additional troops are reportedly being rushed from Egypt to Palestine to carry out this program.

"In the present circumstances such big-scale action by British military forces, though it be presumably aimed at extremists, is most likely to take the form of reprisals against the entire peaceful civilian population of Palestine. They will be the principal sufferers. This must inevitably produce further embitterment and further deterioration of British-Jewish relations in Palestine and the world over. Far from contributing to a just and sound solution of the



Palestine problem, it will create new obstacles in the way to mutual understanding.

"As a friend of Britain, I strongly appeal to the British Government not to take the path of reprisal. No just and sound solution of the Palestine problem can be achieved by these means. I urge the British Government in this grave hour to consider the Palestine problem outside the framework of reprisal and ~~vengeance~~ <sup>punitive</sup> measures.

"American public opinion, Jewish and Christian alike, will not condone military oppression in the Holy Land, and the subjection of the entire population to the tyranny of martial law."





# U. S. Stand—Uncommunicative

By DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

Our government has finally bestirred itself to "do something about Palestine. It has issued another statement. It called upon every citizen of the United States to refrain from engaging in any activity which tends further to inflame the passions of the inhabitants of Palestine or to promote violence in that country while the United Nations is considering the problem of Palestine.

President Truman's statement presumably came in response to the protests made by the British Government against certain newspaper advertisements which have appeared in the American press praising the "terrorists" in Palestine and appealing for their financial support. These advertisements were inserted by no authoritative Zionist body. It is not clear whether the President's statement also applies to that Jewish immigration into Palestine which the British choose to call "illegal," and against whom Great Britain is now endeavoring to rally all the members of the United Nations.

We have been waiting for many months now to hear an authoritative word from the White House on the subject of Palestine, a word of protest, perhaps against the failure of Great Britain to accede to the President's oft-repeated request for the admission of 100,000 refugees into Palestine—a request nearly two years old, or against the action of Great Britain in shelving the unanimous report of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, which called for the immediate admission of these 100,000 refugees and for the removal of other illegal restrictions of the British White Paper.

In recent weeks we waited eagerly to hear the United States delegation to the United Nations Special Assembly speak up in behalf of these refugees who have for so long been languishing in the camps of Europe. We expected our American delegation to appeal for an interim arrangement which would make possible their immediate admission, while the United Nations were casting about for a permanent solution of the Palestine problem. But to the amazement of everyone, the United States delegation was most uncommunicative on every issue except the one which would have denied the Jewish Agency the right to be heard at the United Nations—a position on which fortunately, at the last moment, it reversed itself.

We all expected that our government, in conformity with the oft-repeated declarations of policy made during recent years, would give some indications to the United Nations and to its Committee of Inquiry as to what it regards as a just solution of the Palestine problem and the extent to which it is prepared to assume a share in the implementation of such a solution. But no such indication was given. It remained for another power, which had heretofore indicated no particular interest in the problem, to make a clear enunciation of attitude which the President of the Assembly praised as a major contribution to the efforts of the Assembly to solve this problem.

It is very clear to every thoughtful observer that the Committee of Inquiry will work in a vacuum and can bring in no

practical solution unless it knows beforehand whether the great powers, and particularly the United States, which everyone realizes holds the key position, are prepared to accept it. It is clear that there will be no new facts unearthed by this Committee of Inquiry which were not already revealed to the former Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry and to the numerous committees of inquiry which preceded it, and no new formulas for the future government of the country not already discussed in one or another of these reports.

To save the Committee of Inquiry from the fate of spending itself in futile abstractions, and the Assembly, in September, from arguing its way into a humiliating impasse, it would have been most helpful if our government had given some direction and leadership to the course of the deliberations—not in order to exert pressure, or to bias the findings of the Committee, but to assist the Committee in handling the problem realistically.

On all of these matters, our government has been strangely silent. It is only on Jewish resistance to the iniquitous British regime in Palestine that our government has felt called upon to make a public declaration. We all wish for peace in Palestine. We deplore the acts of violence and the shedding of innocent blood. The Jewish movement has officially gone on record time and again deprecating all such activities. But it has been powerless to restrain the bitter reaction of a section of Palestine Jewry to the provocative acts of the prime disturber of the peace of Palestine—the Mandatory Government itself.

This government is now using an enormous, expensive military force to push through a policy which is in complete violation of its international obligations, and one which has been condemned by its own leading statesmen. The only legal warrant for the presence of Great Britain in Palestine is to assist in the upbuilding of the Jewish National Home by facilitating Jewish immigration and the close settlement of Jews on the soil of Palestine. Instead, it is driving Jews away from the shores of the Jewish National Home and shiploads of refugees who have been through all the hells of Europe are being brutally turned away to languish in new detention camps. These immigrants are not terrorists. Those who assist them to reach Palestine are not enemies of law and order but the friends of humanity.

The appeal of the United Nations to refrain from the threat or use of force in Palestine, or any other action which might create an atmosphere prejudicial to an early settlement of the case of Palestine, was directed to governments as well as to peoples, and directed as much to the Government of Palestine as to the Jews of Palestine. The Government of Palestine can have peace and tranquility in Palestine in a few hours, not as the High Commissioner intimated, by crushing the population, but by opening the doors of the country to the homeless refugees who have every right to go there and who will continue to receive the help and encouragement of all just and freedom-loving men throughout the world.