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Cleveland Jewish Welfare Fund, 1952.

ABSTRACT OF ADDRESS OF DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER
AT OPENING DINNER OF JEWISH WELFARE FUND,
TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 1952, HOTEL CARTER

We must stand by the State of Israel because many of its present crushing burdens are those which we ourselves placed upon its shoulders. It is we and Diaspora Jewry generally who sent 675,000, mostly penniless immigrants, many of them aged and many more dependent, in four short years, to the shores of Israel, and asked the government of Israel to receive them, care for them, rehabilitate them and give them permanent homes and opportunities for livelihood. The State of Israel eagerly welcomed them, but at what staggering cost to itself in terms of lowering the standard of living for its people, in terms of austerities, of shortages of food and the necessities of life, of rationing, of inflation, of overcrowding, of tensions and strains and the ever-present menace of economic disaster. Economically, they now find themselves in a grim Valley Forge. Are we really free to disengage ourselves of responsibility for the burden which we placed upon the State? Would our sense of Jewish solidarity and the high ethical mandates of our history permit it?

Our own beloved country, the United States of America, has industriously sought out allies in every part of the world and has poured out vast substance to strengthen them in order to cement a firm union with them for a common defense. As taxpayers, we American Jews have contributed out of our resources not insignificantly to the billions which our government has paid out in aid, grants and subsidies to buttress the economies of many nations, large and small. If, in addition, the Jews of America contribute out of their substance and generosity additionally to the economic strengthening of the State of Israel, the most progressive and dependable democratic state in the most strategic area in the world today, - if they reenforce a State whose survival is vital to the cause of the free world, are we not performing a patriotic duty and serving the best interests of our country?

It should not be overlooked that in its present financial straits, Israel is no different from other nations, some of them much greater, older and richer - Great Britain, for example, and France and Italy. They all find themselves in grave economic

distress, and they have turned for help not once but many times in recent years, and again this year, to the United States. In the five-year period between 1945-1950, our government extended to foreign countries nearly 19 billion dollars in grants and 10½ billions more in credits.

Nor is the economic history of Israel different from the history of our own country at the time of its founding. Our country had to pass through many years of the most serious economic difficulties and dangers.

Such is the history of all countries who had to pass through the rugged stages of pioneering days or the upheavals of wars and revolutions. Why some of us expected that the new State of Israel would be spared these inevitable experiences has always been a mystery to me.

As rapidly, however, as the country, through its expanding industry, trade, commerce and agriculture, reaches a point of economic safety and balance, just so rapidly will the need of outside aid in the form of campaigns subside. The citizens of Israel and their government are straining their every nerve, working with heart and brain under a high intolerable strain and stress to set their house in order, and to make their country self-sustaining as quickly as possible.



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Announcing the . . .

Official Opening of the

1952

Cleveland Jewish Welfare Fund Appeal

Tuesday Evening, April 29th, 6:30 p.m.

Carter Hotel - Rainbow Room


Guest Speaker
DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

Program will include
Observance of Fourth Anniversary
Establishment of State of Israel

Dinner \$3.00 per person
Kindly make check payable to Jewish Welfare
Fund and mail in enclosed reply envelope