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Zionist Organization of America Convention Address, 1960.



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The Officers and Membership
of the
ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA
assembled at the 63rd Annual Convention
request the pleasure of your company

for Dinner

in honor of

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

who will receive The Annual Herzl Award
and Gold Medallion in recognition of his
great historic service to Israel and to Jewry

Grand Ballroom
The Statler-Hilton Hotel
32nd Street and Seventh Avenue
New York City

Saturday Evening, August Twenty-Seventh
at 8 o'clock

Dress Optional - R.S.V.P.

Dietary Laws Observed

Couvert \$12.50

No Solicitation of Funds

Greetings By Dr. Joseph J. Schwartz
 Vice President, Israel Bond Organization, at
 Zionist Organization of America Convention
 Saturday, August 27, 1960.

I am happy to have this opportunity to greet the Zionist Organization of America and to express to this convention the appreciation of the Israel Bond Organization for the very significant role the membership of the ZOA has played in the success of the Israel Bond campaign.

May I also take this occasion to join in paying tribute to Dr. Silver, the Chairman of our Board of Governors. I should like to testify to that phase of his illustrious career which relates to his remarkable attainments as a practical idealist.

The philosophers and the theorists may relegate fund-raising to a minor place in the Zionist movement. But Dr. Silver, following the historic example of Theodor Herzl and Chaim Weizmann, has for many years given the mobilization of financial resources for the building of Israel a place of honor and priority in his concept of dynamic Zionism.

In the United Palestine Appeal, then in the United Jewish Appeal and now in the Israel Bond Organization, Dr. Silver has vigorously espoused a policy of maximum financial participation on the part of American Jewry in the development of Israel. In this he has been as militant and as uncompromising as in the pursuit of other Zionist objectives.

In the Hitler decade, in the crucial years of Bevin, in the heart-rending period of trial and tragedy for the Jewish people, no one expressed with more feeling, more fire, or more power, than did Dr. Silver, the plight of a people denied access to its own homeland. And on the eve of the Messianic moment of statehood, no one pleaded the Jewish case with greater eloquence or dignity.

Through the years Dr. Silver has become a symbol of the fighting spirit of the Jew, unyielding in the battle for Jewish rights, unswerving in his intense devotion to Israel. He is without question a twentieth-century prophet in Israel.

In his work for Israel Bonds we have not only another important chapter in a life of dedication to Israel. We also have the recognition of a new and decisive phase in the development of Israel, which in effect represents one of the cardinal principles of Zionism. The existence of the State of Israel on a level of dignity and creativeness depends on her ability to stand on her own feet economically. Israel's political independence will be governed in great measure by the extent of her economic independence. It is this basic concept of the inseparable link between economic stability and national freedom and sovereignty that has impelled Dr. Silver to occupy a pre-eminent place of leadership in the Israel Bond drive. It is this concept which has influenced so many Zionists throughout the United States to identify themselves with the Israel Bond campaign and help Israel Bonds make a contribution of paramount importance to the development of Israel.

I am happy to report that as of today more than \$450,000,000 in cash has been realized from the sale of State of Israel Bonds in the United States, Canada, Latin America and Western Europe. This gratifying result could not have been achieved without the membership of the ZOA and without the active participation of its leadership so splendidly exemplified by Dr. Silver.

The substantial resources provided by Israel Bonds have translated the Zionist ideal into concrete and steel, into new settlements and towns, into new hotels and roads, into new jobs and homes for many thousands of Jews in Israel. These resources have helped to create

a solid economic foundation for the attainment of the social, cultural and spiritual goals of the Zionist movement. Above all, they have helped to erase from our minds and the minds of the rest of the world all doubts and questions about the survival of the State of Israel.

Whatever may eventually be established as the true and all-embracing definition of Zionism in America, the program of economic development financed by Israel Bonds will unquestionably represent one of its most meaningful and fruitful enterprises.



Saturday evening, August 27, 1960

at the

CONVENTION OF THE ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA
NEW YORK CITY

I am grateful and I am humbled by your tribute. During the heated days of our struggle, I was frequently subjected to unfavorable criticism, and I felt that while I deserved some of it, I did not deserve all that I was getting. Today I feel that I do not deserve all the praise I am getting, although I must say that as a weak and peccant human being, I harbor the more or less pardonable illusion that I deserve some of it.

The most beautiful day in our Jewish calendar is the Sabbath. It is called the Hemdat Yamim --the most beloved and desirable of days. Theodor Herzl called Zionism the Sabbath of his life. Personally, as I look back upon the years since my first identification with the Zionist Movement more than half a century ago, I feel in very truth, that the Zionist Movement has also been the Sabbath of my life too, as it has undoubtedly been for many of you who are here this evening. It has given us a Neshamah Yeterah, an additional gracious and precious Presence which has accompanied us all along our way through life.

The noted French philosopher, Emile Boutroux, whom I had the privilege of knowing, was once asked what in his opinion was involved in the good life. He replied "A good thought conceived in early life and developed in maturity."

I might add to this observation remark which an old fisherman once made to Dr. Theodor Herzl and which the latter never forgot: "The most remarkable of all things is when a man never gives up."

For the gift of a good thought which was conceived early in life, and for the inspiration of the immortal leader of our Movement who never gave up, I am not only very grateful, but I feel that they represent the complete reward that any man can wish for.

My dear friends, during the past few generations, our people experienced several distinctive ages or epochs of transition.

First was the Age of Drift. During the closing decades of the 19th century, our people could not make up its mind whether to stay in the ghetto indefinitely or to lose itself completely in the Western world. The sense of peoplehood had become sharply attenuated and our national morale had seriously slumped. Many of our people drifted away entirely, and many others remained or were brought back reluctantly to the fold by anti-Semitism which increased in virulence all through the closing years of the 19th century. It was anti-Semitism, confessed Herzl, which first made him and Nordau Jewish. Many brilliant Jews paid for their improved careers in the Western world by formal conversion. Many others felt no responsibility whatsoever for the future of their people or any loyalty towards it. It was a case of "he took away understanding from the chiefs of the people of the land, and made them wander in a pathless waste."

Then came the Age of Decision -- as so often happened before -- in Jewish history, like a recurrent pattern, when a dangerous drift was brought to a sudden halt. The life sense of the people, the life wish, the deep desire to survive, asserted itself:

It happened long ago during the Babylonian exile. A defeated and uprooted people, beset by despair and faced with an unpredictable future took hold of itself, and by the rivers of Babylon, it vowed: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand lose its cunning." It happened once again in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, when the returning exiles found themselves in a ruined Judaea, beset by many enemies: "Behold, we are slaves today and we find ourselves in great trouble."

Nevertheless, they assembled and made a firm covenant with their God to carry on despite everything, to rebuild the broken walls, and to reaffirm the faith and disciplines of their Jewish heritage.

This miracle of decision happened once again in the days of the Maccabees. When corruption from within and from without threatened to eat at the very vitals of the people's being, the cry finally went up: "He who is for the Lord, come with me!" A great revolt ensued, a bitter struggle of the few against the many. Then came victory and a glorious new era was ushered in for our people, and through our people for humanity.

Towards the close of the 19th century, a number of scattered and rudderless groups of faithful Jews began to make their voices heard, and to marshal their meagre resources for a national renaissance, for a new covenant with destiny -- the Bilu, the Hoveve Zion, -- others.

The spiritual catalyst for all these groups was Theodor Herzl. At Basle he finally rallied the people for the heroic hour of decision. Herzl was the most eloquent and consequential spokesman of those who had come to understand the utter emptiness and futility of combatting anti-Semitism. He was also the most clear-sighted among those who realized that the solution of the Jewish problem must be a national solution, one that would receive international sanction and approval.

The solution, he realized, could not be accomplished through infiltrations into other lands, or through small-scale philanthropic colonization efforts in Palestine. Herzl favored only a kind of colonization which we could protect, if need be, with our own army. The day of little essays and ventures, he maintained, the Yom Ketanot, had to end.

As a result of successive disheartening efforts and rebuffs, he had come to the further conclusion that the movement to establish a political home for the Jewish people and put an end to their national homelessness must be a mass movement. At first, Herzl did not want to stir up the masses. He hoped to appeal to the rich, the notables, hoping that they would finance his vast project of national transmigration. But when the Baron de Hirsh's and the Rothschild's failed him, he turned to the people--to those whose lives were dark with persecution, misery and pogroms in the countries of Eastern Europe, and to those who felt the slings and slurs and the poison pens of anti-Semitism in the countries of Western Europe -- an anti-Semitism which was being lifted high on the rising tides of nationalism, capitalism and racialism.

At Basle, the vanguard of the Jewish people met at the summons and under the inspiration of this mystic, statesman and man of action. There, in 1897, the Age of Decision was ushered in. "At Basle," wrote Herzl, "I founded the Jewish State." Not actually, of course, fifty years were to elapse before the Jewish State would be founded. But the decision was there made, and a world-wide Jewish organization was brought into existence to carry it out. Here for the first time was a clear purpose, a firm resolve, and a people pledged to a course of action. What was said at Sinai may very well have been restated at Basle: "this day you have become a people."

Moses knew, of course, that many years would have to elapse and much hard welding and fusion would have to take place before his motley hoard of emancipated slaves, many-tribed and rabble-infiltrated would become a people in the true sense of the word. But at Sinai the group had been infused with a new life and a new mission which had made them a single community of shared interests and of single purpose. They were now bound together. They had been given a collective soul and that soul had been ignited.

At Basle, the Jews who could not make up their minds in the Age of Drift had become a people again. Their physical resources for their enormous historic enterprise were limited indeed. But the indomitable will of the people had again asserted itself and it was finally on the march again. Herzl the mystic did not underestimate the power of physical resources. "Great things," he wrote in his Diary, "do not need to have a firm foundation. An apple must be put on the table so that it should not fall. The earth swings in space....the secret lies in movement."

The Age of Decision was soon followed by the Age of Struggle -- the hard years of fighting enemies within and without, years of diplomatic missions and excursions, of frustrations and setbacks; years of driving propaganda and organization. More than one generation of the best and bravest among our people engaged in this struggle, in the face of overwhelming odds, and many of them fell upon the high place of the battle. Herzl himself wrote in his Diary on May 2, 1901: "Today, I am 41 years old; nearly six years have passed since I began this movement, which has made me old, tired and poor." Two years later he was dead. At times, Herzl became very disillusioned. Where were the people whom he was struggling to liberate? Why did they not rally in great multitudes to the urgent cause and his earnest appeal? Why were they unloading upon his own tired heart all the bitterness and resentment of their unhappy lives? "Let it be inscribed upon my epitaph," he once wrote, "he had too high an opinion of the Jews." Other prophets of our people in the past, in the impatience of their love, cried out in a similar vein. But these prophets and seers came to understand, after their dark hours and disillusionments were passed, that their people was God's people, worthy of saving and deserving of

sacrifice. Compact of firmness and compassion their hearts were full of concern for this very people which so often failed them. "Forgive the people's sins, O God," cried Moses, "or blot me out of Thy book."

The Age of Struggle moved on through years of political evasions on the part of the Mandatory Government, through illegal immigration, violent resistance and through the **appalling** tragedies of two world wars which saw the House of Israel ravaged as it had never been ravaged before in all its long checkered history. For a time, it looked as if European Jewry would be completely destroyed and there would be no need for a national homeland, but for a national graveyard.

But **here** again, the oft repeated miracle of our history recurred and the Age of Struggle culminated in the Age of Victory. Five years after Buchenwald and Dachau, fifty years after Basle, the State of Israel was proclaimed. The Galut ended; its curse was lifted from the shoulders and hearts of our people. Those who sowed in tears could now reap in joy. A new day had dawned, a wonderful day of great new beginnings. The road which led our people through the long and terrible wilderness had brought them at long last, singing and triumphant, into the Promised Land.

Today the Age of Consolidation is with us -- the age of hammer, saw and plow, the age when architect, engineer, scientist and civil servant are proceeding with skill and eagerness to give body to the dream **come true**.

Fortunately for our people, we are now concerned more with tasks than with problems. Our people, in Israel and in the Diaspora, I am sure, will not fail in the new Age of Consolidation any more than they failed in the Age of Decision or Struggle. They will bend to their many tasks in high resolution and in great confidence. It has been most gratifying to note that the initial period in this Age of Consolidation has not been attended by the sort of crisis, strife and disorder bordering on chaos, which has been the unfortunate experience of some of the recently founded states in Africa and Asia. In this regard, Israel has demonstrated a political maturity of a very high order.

In this Age of Consolidation, the State of Israel will continue to face, for some time to come, one serious problem, the unresolved problem of its unreconciled Arab neighbors. This problem has been aggravated by the power struggle which has been going on between the Communist and the non-Communist blocs, in which struggle small, new states are often used as pawns or shuttlecocks. In this dangerous game, every form of political intrigue, adventure and intransigence has been encouraged. Some day the great powers, which once wrecked the League of Nations, will come to realize the very real and present danger, not alone to the effectiveness, but to the very survival of the United Nations, which lurks in the heightened tensions of their increasing rivalries. They may then turn away from their lethal game, and look

for ways of cooperation. Some day, too, Arab statesmen will arise who will realize the utter futility of continuing boycotts and blockades against Israel, or conspiracies to mount military attacks upon it, in the hope of destroying it. They will then proceed to work out together with a very willing Israel, programs of progress, rehabilitation and development which will benefit all the nations in the Near East. All this must some day come to pass. But until such time, Israel will have to carry on its work of consolidation under great handicaps and difficulties. But carry on, it will. And the Jews of the world will assist it.

Of the Zionist Movement, Dr. Herzl once wrote: "But one thing I regard as certain, and placed beyond the reach of all doubt. The movement will endure. I do not know when I shall die, but Zionism will never die."

It were well if we were to reaffirm his words today: Zionism must never die! Zionism which built the State of Israel, must now buttress it. Zionism was always far more than scaffolding for the erection of the State of Israel. It was and is the expression of the unbroken will of our people to live and to live creatively and in freedom, which time and again rebuilt the fallen tabernacle of David. Zionism was the architectural design, the material out of which the State of Israel was built, and the will that built it. And Zionism will remain its sure and main support in the days to come. It would be folly to break the cask, and still hope that the wine will be retained....Nor is there any other cask available into which the wine can be poured and conserved.

It would be a grave mistake for Israel to rely exclusively on the economic undergirding of the Diaspora, and to expect this to continue indefinitely without having the loyalty and interest of our people in the Diaspora continuously nourished and replenished by a movement which is specifically directed to this end. "You shall not be redeemed with money."

This is a good admonition to keep before us at all times. The very fact that our enemies here and abroad are trying so hard to make of Zionism a hissing and a byword should prove to us how much Zionism is needed. Were Zionism a spent and used-up movement, they would ignore it. But they know better. What confronts them in Zionism is the ultimate force which they must overcome if they are to win.

Zionism must continue to invigorate the life of our people everywhere, not for the sake of Zion only, but for the sake of universal Israel. The Diaspora cannot solve all the problems of the State of Israel, but neither can the State of Israel solve all the problems of the Diaspora. Each has a life of its own and will continue to have a life of its own. But Zionism can serve both as a two-way bridge, open at all times for spiritual and cultural traffic, to transmit the inspiration of the one to the other. It must be the dynamo of historic Jewish values everywhere,

in Israel and in the Diaspora. For we are and remain one people--not politically, of course--and the establishment of the State of Israel has certainly not divided us.

The State of Israel is a great and glorious fact in Jewish life which is destined to influence its every phase everywhere. But greater than the State of Israel is the people of Israel, and greater than the people of Israel is the immortal vision and hope which sustained our people through the long centuries, which made of it a covenanted people, pledged to the ideal of Malchut Shamayim, the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Zionism, as the pledge of positive Jewish living in the spirit of our deathless prophetic tradition, can help us all, both in Israel and in the Diaspora, to work together for the coming of the next great age, the distant, the ultimate Age, the Messianic Age, when justice and peace will be established on earth, when "each man will live under his vine and under his fig tree with none to make him afraid."

The establishment of the State of Israel is not the final act in the drama of Israel. Our people is moving on, the Ark of the Covenant is moving on, in greater freedom now and in greater confidence along the broad highways of the world, to Acharit Hayamim, to the End of days, prefigured by our seers, "when they shall not hurt, nor destroy in all My holy mountain, and the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the sea."

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*For Zion and Universal Israel***Zionism Can Help Us Work for Next Great Age**

by Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

DURING the past few generations, our people experienced several distinctive ages or epochs of transition.

First was the Age of Drift. During the closing decades of the 19th century, our people could not make up its mind whether to stay in the ghetto indefinitely or to lose itself completely in the Western world. The sense of peoplehood had become sharply attenuated and our national morale had seriously slumped. Many of our people drifted away entirely, and many others remained or were brought back reluctantly to the fold by anti-Semitism which increased in virulence all through the closing years of the 19th century. It was anti-Semitism, confessed Herzl, which first made him and Nordau Jewish. Many brilliant Jews paid for their improved careers in the Western world by formal conversion. Many others felt no responsibility whatsoever for the future of their people or any loyalty towards it. It was a case of "he took away understanding from the chiefs of the people of the land, and made them wander in a pathless waste."

Then came the Age of Decision—as so often happened before—in Jewish history, like a recurrent pattern, when a dangerous drift was brought to a sudden halt. The life sense of the people, the life wish, the deep desire to survive, asserted itself: It happened long ago during the Babylonian exile. A defeated and uprooted people, beset by despair and faced with an unpredictable future took hold of itself, and by the rivers of Babylon, it vowed: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand lose its cunning." It happened once again in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, when the returning exiles found themselves in a ruined Judaea, beset by many enemies: "Behold, we are slaves today and we find ourselves in great trouble."

NEVERTHELESS, they assembled and made a firm covenant with their God to carry on despite everything, to rebuild the broken walls, and to reaffirm the faith and disciplines of their Jewish heritage.

This miracle of decision happened once again in the days of the Maccabees. When corruption from within and from without threatened to eat at the very vitals of the people's being, the cry finally went up: "He who is for the Lord, come with me!" A great revolt ensued, a bitter struggle of the few against the many. Then came victory and a glorious new era was ushered in for our people, and through our people for humanity.

Towards the close of the 19th century, a number of scattered and rudderless groups of faithful Jews began to make their voices heard, and to marshal their meager resources for a national renaissance, for a new covenant with destiny—the Bilu, the Hoveve Zion, and others.

The spiritual catalyst for all these groups was Theodor Herzl. At Basle he finally rallied the people

for the heroic hour of decision. Herzl was the most eloquent and consequential spokesman of those who had come to understand the utter emptiness and futility of combatting anti-Semitism. He was also the most clear-sighted among those who realized that the solution of the Jewish problem must be a national solution, one that would receive international sanction and approval. The solution, he realized, could not be accomplished through infiltrations into other lands, or through small-scale philanthropic colonization efforts in Palestine. Herzl favored only a kind of colonization which we could protect, if need be, with our own army. The day of little essays and ventures, he maintained, the Yom Ketanot, had to end.

AS a result of successive disheartening efforts and rebuffs, he had come to the further conclusion that the movement to establish a political home for the Jewish people and put an end to their national homelessness must be a mass movement. At first, Herzl did not want to stir up the masses. He hoped to appeal to the rich, the notables, hoping that they would finance his vast project of national transmigration. But when the Baron de Hirsch's and the Rothschild's failed him, he turned to the people—to those whose lives were dark with persecution, misery and pogroms in the countries of Eastern Europe, and to those who felt the slings and slurs and the poison pens of anti-Semitism in the countries of Western Europe—an anti-Semitism which was being lifted high on the rising tides of nationalism, capitalism and racialism.

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In this dangerous game, every form of political intrigue, adventure and intransigence has been encouraged. Some day the great powers, which once wrecked the

League of Nations, will come to realize the very real and present danger, not alone to the effectiveness, but to the very survival of the United Nations, which lurks in the heightened tensions of their increasing rivalries. They may then turn away from their lethal game, and look for ways of cooperation. Some day, too, Arab statesmen will arise who will realize the utter futility of continuing boycotts and blockades against Israel, or conspiracies to mount military attacks upon it, in the hope of destroying it. They will then proceed to work out together with a very willing Israel, programs of progress, rehabilitation and development which will benefit all the nations in the Near East. All this must some day come to pass. But until such time, Israel will have to carry on its work of consolidation under great handicaps and difficulties. But carry on, it will. And the Jews of the world will assist it.

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(Continued on page 17)

SILVER

(Continued from Page 16)

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Historic Address

of *Day-Journal* 9-1-60

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

Zionism will never die, declared the great Zionist Leader in inspiring talk to the delegates and guests at the 63rd Zionist Convention in New York.

I am grateful and I am humbled by your tribute. During the heated day of our struggle, I was frequently subjected to unfavorable criticism, and I felt that while I deserved some of it, I did not deserve all I was getting. Today I feel that I do not deserve all the praise I am getting, although I must say that as a weak and peccant human being, I harbor the more or less pardonable illusion that I deserve some of it.

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NEVER GIVING UP

I might add to this observation a remark which an old fisherman once made to Dr. Theodor Herzl and which the latter never forgot: "The most remarkable of all things is when a man never gives up."

For the gift of a good thought which was conceived early in life, and for the inspiration of the immortal leader of our Movement who never gave up, I am not only very grateful, but I feel that they represent the complete reward that any man can wish for.

My dear friends, during the past few generations, our people experienced several distinctive ages or epochs of transition.

First was the Age of Drift. During the closing decades of the 19th century, our people could not make up its mind whether to stay in the ghetto indefinitely or to lose itself completely in the Western world. The sense of peoplehood had become sharply attenuated and our national moral had seriously slumped. Many of our people drifted away entirely, and many others remained or were brought back reluctantly to the fold by anti-Semitism which increased in virulence all the closing years of the 19th century. It was anti-Semitism, confessed Herzl, which first made him and Nordau Jewish. Many brilliant Jews paid for their improved careers in the Western world by formal conversion. Many others felt no responsibility whatsoever for the future of their people or any loyalty towards it. It was a case of "he took away understanding from the chiefs of the people of the land, and made them wander in pathless waste."

Then came the Age of Decision—as so often happened before—in Jewish history, like a recurrent pattern, when a dangerous drift was brought to a sudden halt. The life sense of the people, the life wish, the deep desire to survive, asserted itself: It happened long ago during the Babylonian exile. A defeated and uprooted people, beset by despair and faced with an unpredictable future took hold of itself, and by the rivers of Babylon, it vowed: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand lose its cunning." It happened once again in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, when the returning exiles found them-

selves in a ruined Judea, beset by many enemies: "Behold, we are slaves today and we find ourselves in great trouble."

Nevertheless, they assembled and made a firm covenant with their God to carry on despite everything, to rebuild the broken walls, and to reaffirm the faith and disciplines of their Jewish heritage.

MIRACLE OF DECISION

This miracle of decision happened once again in the days of the Maccabees. When corruption from within and from without threatened to eat at the very vitals of the people's being, the cry finally went up: "He who is for the Lord, come with me!" A great revolt ensued, a bitter struggle of the few against the many. Then came victory and a glorious new era was ushered in for our people, and through our people for humanity.

Towards the close of the 19th century, a number of scattered and rudderless groups of faithful Jews began to make their voices heard, and to marshal their meager resources for a national renaissance, for a new covenant with destiny—the Bilu, the Hoveve Zion, others.

The spiritual catalyst for all these groups was Theodor Herzl. At Basle he finally rallied the people for the heroic hour of decision. Herzl was the most eloquent and consequential spokesman of those who had come to understand the utter emptiness and futility of combatting anti-Semitism. He was also the most clear-sighted among those who realized that the solution of the Jewish problem must be a national solution, one that would receive international sanction and approval. The solution, he realized, could not be accomplished through infiltrations into other lands, or through small-scale philanthropic colonization efforts in Palestine. Herzl favored only a kind of colonization which we could protect, if need be, with our own army. The day of little essays and ventures, he maintained, the Yom Ketanot, had to end.

MASS MOVEMENT

As a result of successive disheartening efforts and rebuffs, he had come to the further conclusion that the movement to establish a political home for the Jewish people and to put an end to their national homelessness must be a mass movement. At first, Herzl did not want to stir up the masses. He hoped to appeal to the rich, the notables, hoping that they would finance his vast project of national transmigration. But when the Baron de Hirsch's and the Rothschild's failed him, he turned to the people—to those whose lives were dark with persecution, misery and pogroms in the countries of Eastern Europe, and to those who felt the slings and slurs and the poison pens of anti-Semitism in the countries of Western Europe—an anti-Semitism which was being lifted high on the rising tides of nationalism, capitalism and racialism.

THE GREAT DECISION

At Basle, the vanguard of the Jewish people met at the summons and under the inspiration of this mystic, statesman and man of action. There, in 1897, the Age of Decision was ushered in. "At Basle," wrote Herzl, "I founded the Jewish State." Not actually, of course; fifty years were to elapse before the Jewish State would be founded. But the decision was made there, and a world-wide Jewish organization was brought into existence to carry it out. Here for the first time was a clear purpose, a firm resolve, and a people pledged to a course of action. What was said at Sinai may very well have been restated at Basle: "This day you

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Historic Address
of Day-Journal
Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
9-1-60

Zionism will never die, declared the great Zionist Leader in inspiring talk to the delegates and guests at the 63rd Zionist Convention in New York.



Dr. ABBA HILEL SILVER

I am grateful and I am humbled by your tribute. During the heated day of our struggle, I was frequently subjected to unfavorable criticism, and I felt that while I deserved some of it, I did not deserve all I was getting. Today I feel that I do not deserve all the praise I am getting, although I must say that as a weak and peccant human being, I harbor the more or less pardonable illusion that I deserve some of it.

The most beautiful day in our Jewish calendar is the Sabbath. It is called the Hemdat Yamim—the most beloved and desirable of days. Theodor Herzl called Zionism the Sabbath of his life. Personally, as I look back upon the years since my first identification with the Zionist Movement more than a half century ago, I feel in very truth, that the Zionist Movement has also been the Sabbath of my life too, as it has undoubtedly been for many of you who are here this evening. It has given us a Neshamah Yeterah, an additional gracious and precious Presence which has accompanied us all along our way through life.

The noted French philosopher, Emile Boutroux, whom I had the privilege of knowing, was once asked what in his opinion was involved in the good life. He replied "A good thought conceived in early life and developed in maturity."

NEVER QIELDING

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Historic Address *of* *Dr. Abba Hillel Silver*

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have become a people." Moses knew, of course, that many years would have to elapse and much hard welding and fusion would have to take place before his motley hoard of emancipated slaves, many-tribed and rabble-infiltrated would become a people in the true sense of the word. But at Sinai the group had been infused with a new life and a new mission which had made them a single community of shared interests and of single purpose. They were now bound together. They had been given a collective soul and that soul had been ignited.

At Basle, the Jews who could not make up their minds in the Age of Drift had become a people again. Their physical resources for their enormous historic enterprise were limited indeed. But the indomitable will of the people had again asserted itself and it was finally on the march again. Herzl the mystic did not underestimate the power of physical resources. "Great things," he wrote in his Diary, "do not need to have a firm foundation. An apple must be put on the table so that it should not fall. The earth swings in space...the secret lies in movement."

The Age of Decision was soon followed by the Age of Struggle—the hard years of fighting enemies within and without, years of diplomatic missions and excursions, of frustrations and setbacks;

years of driving propaganda and organization. More than one generation of the best and bravest among our people engaged in this struggle, in the face of overwhelming odds, and many of them fell upon the high place of the battle. Herzl himself wrote in his Diary on May 2, 1901: "Today I am 41 years old; nearly six years have passed since I began this movement, which has made me old, tired and poor. Two years later he was dead. At times, Herzl became very disillusioned. Where were the people whom he was struggling to liberate? Why did they not rally in great multitudes to the urgent cause and his earnest appeal? Why were they unloading upon his own tired heart all the bitterness and resentment of their unhappy lives? "Let it be inscribed upon my epitaph," he once wrote, "he had too high an opinion of the Jews." Other prophets of our people in the past, in the impatience of their love, cried out in a similar vein. But these prophets and seers came to understand after their dark hours and disillusionments were passed that their people was God's people, worthy of saving and deserving of sacrifice. Compact of firmness and compassion their hearts were full of concern for this very people which so often failed them. "Forgive the people's sins, O God," cried Moses, "or blot me out of Thy book."

(To be continued tomorrow)