



# THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

## The Push for Support of UNSCOP Proposal

### Background:

Following the report from the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, founding member and then president of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), appealed to the WJC membership to support the majority opinion whereby Palestine would be divided into independent Jewish and Arab states. Many countries responded by writing directly to the UN or by sending a special letter of appeal to US President Harry Truman.

### General Guiding Questions:

- What type of document is this?
- Who created this document? What do I know about his/her background and position?
- When was this document created?
- What was happening during the time the text was created?
- Who is the intended audience?
- What is the author's point in writing this text?
- What ideas are expressed? What does the text suggest?
- What or whose perspective does this text represent?
- What feelings does this text raise? What emotions does it stir up?
- How does the perspective of this text compare with others around the same time and topic?
- What questions does this text raise? What don't we know about this source?
- How does this text impact your understanding or perspective on the historical context or event? How does this text fit into or alter your existing interpretation of the past?

### Specific Guiding Questions:

- What are the reasons given for supporting the establishment of a Jewish state? If no reason is given, what possible reasons can you determine?

- Who is the cable addressed to and who signed the cable? Why would the cables be directed to these people? What influence might they have?
- What is the purpose of sending the cable?
- How might the establishment of a Jewish state “solve” the issues raised in the documents?
- Why do you think Jewish communities that were not affected directly by the Shoah would be in support of the establishment of a Jewish state?

**Possible Activities:**

1. Divide into groups and give each group a different cable. Have each group read the cable, define unknown terms, locate the country where the cable is from on a map and answer the guiding questions or create your own. Then share with the whole group.
2. Based on a reading of the cables, divide into groups and write your own cable supporting the establishment of a Jewish state. Use some of the reasons given in the cables or create your own.
3. Divide the group into pairs. Assign each pair a cable and have them research information on the Jewish community in the country the cable is from. If possible have them compare the Jewish community now to what it was pre/immediately post WWII.
4. Create a list of reasons that a Jewish state should be established based on the cables as well as world events of the time. Discuss the pros/cons of each and of the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.
5. Create an ad campaign for the establishment of a Jewish state based on information gleaned from the cables.