



Maccabi in the hearts and minds of the greatest Jewish leaders of the 20th Century

Dear Friends,

The State of Israel is the Jewish People's greatest accomplishment in 2000 years. Our State, and the Zionist Movement that gave birth to it, represent the recovery of our *national* life, the *redemption* of the land that God gave as our *national* inheritance, and the *embrace* of our Jewish responsibility to be an "Or la Goyim" -- "A Light unto the Nations".

Maccabi, *our Maccabi*, has faced and played a part in this extraordinary, most sacred and permanent task as a people redeemed from the pain and devastation of the *Shoah*. Many important Jewish leaders expressed profound acknowledgement of Maccabi's contribution to the ethos of our people in deeply significant words. To celebrate 60 years of the Jewish State and the great achievement of Zionism, here is a brief selection of the most remarkable quotes about Maccabi by our most prominent leaders:

Dr. Max Nordau, Herzl's most prominent convert in the early days of modern Zionism, was first to define the philosophy of Maccabi activity. The crucial passages from his celebrated Address to the 2nd Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1898:

Sport is of great educational importance. It has to heal us not only in body, but in mind as well. It has to entrust us with confidence in our strength. Some of our foes hate us for our seeming self-confidence. But who but us knows how far from true this is: tranquil confidence in our self-vigor is what we actually lack.

We can see a new healthy Jewish lad growing. Indeed, he is still far away from those Jews who fought the heroes of Greece and the Barbarians of the North in circuses. But in spirit, this lad stands higher than the Jewish victor who renounces his Judaism. Long live Jewish Sport! May the branches of Jewish sport grow and flourish!"





Theodor Herzl - the Visionary of the Jewish State

"Friends and brothers - wake and arise! We are in need of your assistance, not only your enthusiasm, rising in gatherings and then vanishing into thin air. Get organized! Establish local groups, branches of societies of all kinds, men's associations alongside those of women, gymnastics associations, singing groups, all with the mark of Zion."

"We are joined together, friends. We need you. Train not your spirit alone, but your muscles as well. Stand strong and upright and study diligently and enthusiastically. We will have need of your strength and your knowledge..."

"Young Jews" was till now a derogatory nickname. Make it an honorable name."

Albert Einstein - the Great Mind of the Modern Age

"Blessed is Maccabi's work, intending to bring about a counter-effect to the one-sided over-spirituality of the Jewish people. It is especially praiseworthy, for we are still so very far away from that other side".

Sigmund Freud - the Founder of Psychoanalysis

"If you want my name for your [Maccabi World Union] Patronage Council, you may have it. It is the least I can do for you and I am sorry I can do no more in my actual condition. Yours with high regards" (this from a letter of February 16, 1939; Freud passed away on September 23, 1939).

Chaim Nachman Bialik - greatest of the Hebrew Poets

"Of all the meetings I had with intellectuals in Lodz, I was most happy and impressed by the gymnastics exercises I saw in the Maccabi auditorium".

David Ben-Gurion - First Prime Minister of the State of Israel

"Maccabi is, no doubt, a most important branch of the Zionist movement. Its importance is in infusing life into the physical stature of the Jewish people, weakened over the many years of exile. Jews returning to their homeland and those born here, must achieve spiritual and intellectual strength. However, our existence in the land of our forefathers equally requires physical strength".

Chaim Weizmann - First President of the State of Israel

"50 years of arduous work in the fields of sports and Zionism are praiseworthy on this day of your gathering. You, Maccabeans, have brought a new spirit to the people, defending its honor and existence. Your branches throughout the Diaspora





have turned to meeting places for culture seekers".

Chief Rabbi Meir Hai Uziel – Sephardi Chief Rabbi of the British Mandate of Palestine (1939 to 1948), and of Israel (1948 to 1954).

"One of the most comforting sights is the pilgrimage of our sons and daughters, heroes of the nation, the Hashmonaim and Maccabim, in jubilant masses to their homeland".

Meir Dizengoff – First Mayor of Tel Aviv (the Man on the White Horse at the 1st Maccabiah, 1932)

"It is a worthy phenomenon that the young generation of the people of Israel gathers from all ends of the world, for physical training and sports, which mark the unity of all branches of our people, all aspiring to one aim".

Israel Rokach – Mayor of Tel Aviv

"The 1st Maccabiah saw hundreds; the 2nd Maccabiah saw thousands. Let us hope that tens of thousands will join us at the 3rd Maccabiah. The road is still long to our full redemption, the dream of our revival is but in its beginning. But if this is our youth, full of life, might and strength, we shall not despair or lament. We shall live to see our full redemption!"

Henrietta Szold – creator of the Hadassah Organisation

"Your expressions, your goals and your achievements all declare one thing: you have discovered, among the riches of the spirit of Israel, one forsaken tenet: a mind which wishes to be brave, healthy and noble, had better be in a sound, fit and upright body".

Major Aaron, Commander of the "Maccabi Company" in the British Army during World War II

"The dream has turned into reality, into a new symbol of redemption. To a man, Jewish youth has risen, to revive its people and start anew".

Ezra Ichilov, Knesset Member, a notable Maccabi – Eretz Israel leader

"Maccabi will live to be the sole national movement of the Jewish people. If in its early days it seemed a historic privilege, the future will render it a historic dictate."

Yes: many praises for Maccabi from great figures to whom our People owe such infinite gratitude for what they did. These are messages from





history that boost yet further reasons to continue our work of fortifying the Jewish People in accordance with our ideals of Zionism and Jewish Continuity.

