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MS-53: Moses J. Gries Papers, 1850-1934 (bulk 1890-1930).

Series D: Sermons and Addresses, 1893-1917, undated.

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“New Year's Day,” 1911 September 22.

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Rabbi Moses J. Gries
The Temple

New Year's Day,
September 22, 1911.

ALL Israel are brothers on the great Holy Days. All Israel is gathered in synagogues and temples around the world. We in America worship in peace and happiness, under the blessing of freedom. Our brethern in many lands worship in fear and misery, under oppression. These are indeed "fearful days" of danger for more than half of the Jews of the world, now abiding in darkest Russia. All other questions in Jewish life today sink into nothingness in the presence of this daily tragedy which threatens the lives of six millions of Jews.

The world is horrified by the assassination of Russia's Premier Stolypin. Bogroff, it is telegraphed for American consumption, is an orthodox Jew. He is pictured as revolutionist, terrorist and anarchist. The American public have not forgotten Azeff, head of the fighting organization of social revolutionists, who plotted crimes, conspiracies and assassinations, but who proved to be

the "agent provocateur," paid by the Russian government to entrap and betray his fellows. Bogroff may prove to be another of the same type.

The Premier Stolypin was the enemy of light in darkest Russia. He knew no mercy. He justified the court martials, the shootings and the hangings by administrative order, the lawlessness which has overridden all constitutional rights. He helped to nullify and to make a mockery of the "freedom manifesto," proclaimed in the hearing of all nations.

Stolypin, as much as any one man, was responsible for the policy of the peaceable extermination of Russian Jews - the perpetual pogrom, which Max Nordau has characterized as a "slow, persistent, deliberate, cold-blooded strangulation," a crime against millions, for which there is no precedent in history.

Jews in Russia are now accused of "ritual murder." The ancient "blood accusation" is being used to inflame the ignorant populace. This baseless charge has been endorsed by members of the cabinet and of the royal family, and has been published uncensored

in the leading Russian papers of the reactionary press. No language is strong enough justly to describe the leaders of the "black hundreds," who hesitate at no crime, not even assassination. Dubrovin, the head of the "black hundreds," was protected and specially honored by the Czar himself.

The inspirer of the revolution in Russia is not some wretched peasant, some student radical, nor some noble intellect. He lives in the Palace. The Arch terrorist wears a royal crown. The Czar Nicholas is Russia's most lawless anarchist and is responsible for Russia's violence and crimes.

The world has grown callous. It has become hardened to the horrors of Russia. The voice of protest is silenced by greed for gold - lest we lose trade with Russia.

How long will the United States let Russia dishonor the American passport? How long may American citizens be insulted with impunity? How long may Russia's treaty with America be violated? How long ere Russia will be judged and condemned in the Court of the World, for all her crimes against civi-

lization and humanity? As an Englishman has well said
"Is the civilized world to allow a continuance of
acts and conditions which ought to bring a blush of
shame to every statesman of righteousness throughout
the length and breadth of Europe?"

Rev. Campbell of the City Temple, London, dared
to speak these brave words to England, just before
England welcomed the Czar as a royal visitor:

"Let the whole nation speak and speak
now, Let there be neither temporizing nor
delay. A great sister nation lies groaning
in chains and blood. Perish diplomacy, if
diplomacy must close its ears to such evils
and go on as if they did not exist. Perish
empire, if empire has to be sustained by such
hellish means. Perish government, if govern-
ment be but another name for administrative
license. And perish civilization itself, if
its security requires a price so terrible
and a woe so sad."

The unfortunate Jews of Russia are teaching the
Jews of America a lesson in loyalty, and the whole
world a lesson in Jewish idealism. The Jew of Russia
might secure safety and peace and life, if he were
willing to foreswear the faith of his fathers and to
cease to be Jew.

Do not marvel if he is unwilling and unable to accept a Christianity which teaches him not love but hate. We witness today in Russia a living illustration of the century continued martyrdom of the Jew. Every honest man, every lover of liberty, Christian and Jew, must applaud the resolution, the courage, the idealism and the unflinching martyrdom, in our matter-of-fact, materialistic twentieth century.

But what of the future? Who dare predict, when the heavens are black as night, with not a ray of sunshine? But who believes Russia will destroy the Jew? Who believes the Jew will surrender?

Israel will not be destroyed, though thousands are murdered and hundreds of thousands terrorized and the miserable millions compelled to eat the bread of affliction. There is no more remarkable tribute to the undying power of the Jew, than the sublime faith that Russia will not triumph, that the Jew will outlast Russia's tyranny.

I believe with Tolstoi, Russia must meet the fate of Egypt and Babylon and Rome. Tyranny raises up forces to destroy it. Justice and freedom will yet be enthroned.