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**AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES**

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

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

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“Thanksgiving at Unity Church,” 1905 November 30.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the  
American Jewish Archives website.

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Rabbi Gries  
At Unity Church

Thanksgiving Day,  
Nov. 30, 1905.

Thanksgiving, the Puritan celebration, the New England festival, after more than two hundred years has been transformed into a national holiday. It has lost its original religious significance. It has assumed a national holiday character. It is the one day on which the Nation can unite in a religious thanksgiving. The Jews of America planned to make this Thanksgiving a special season of rejoicing, to commemorate the landing of their Pilgrims two hundred and fifty years ago. Once again, as so many times, the joy of Israel is made solemn, consecrated by the tragedy of Jewish history. Russia, not the Russian mob, but Russian hirelings, Russian police and Russian soldiers - and not the Revolutionaries, laid a bloody hand upon Russia's Jews.

There can be no true friendship between Russia of the Romanoffs and free America. Everywhere throughout the land, Jews are emphasizing their Americanism. They are historically associated with the discovery of America. They participated in the development and rebuilding of the original colonies, and especially in the establishment of the Government of the United States. Jews were Revolutionary patriots. They belonged to the founders of the Republic. They fought for the cause of Independence, with their arms and with their fortunes. As soldiers of the Revolution they helped to establish the Government of the Free - the Government of the people. They helped to preserve the Union. They helped to destroy Spanish inhumanity in the Western World.

Little did the Pilgrims and the Puritans, who sought in the New World refuge from persecution and bigotry and a home where they might worship God as they chose - little did the Jews, who, two hundred and fifty years ago, sought in the New World a refuge from persecution, and the right to live, and the right to worship God - dream that America would be the refuge for the persecuted and oppressed of all lands and nations - dream that America would teach the world the blessings of civil and religious liberty.

Let us give thanks that America is the land of freedom. Let us give thanks that we, Jews and Christians, descendants of the Puritans and the Jew, and of all the

Pilgrim Fathers, live in America. Let us give thanks that we are privileged to enjoy the blessings which have come to us through American liberty, and that we are privileged to help in the development and enlightenment of mankind through America, the World's teacher of freedom and justice.

What America has been for 250 years, all the world may be. There is no greater lesson to all the nations than this American people. Children of every clime, of every nationality and race, of all beliefs and of no belief, are united as Americans, with one country and one flag.

