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Series I: General Correspondence, 1914-1969, undated.

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American Zionist Emergency Council, Wise, Stephen S., undated.

Stephen Wise
statement by AHS

I read with interest the statement of Dr. Stephen S. Wise, evidently part of an address which he delivered in response to the statement which I issued on January 5. I do not wish to continue a public discussion with Dr. Wise, but his address contains two serious mis-statements of facts which should be corrected.

Dr. Wise states that he, "fifteen months ago, brought about the election of Dr. Silver as Co-Chairman of the Council and as Chairman of its Executive Committee." Nothing can be further from the truth. Dr. Weizmann, Dr. Nahum Goldmann, Mr. Louis Lipsky, along with Dr. Stephen Wise, on two occasions early in 1943, urged me to assume leadership of the Emergency Committee because of the low state into which the political work of the movement had fallen. Dr. Wise was at that time Chairman of the Emergency Committee. I twice declined knowing of the nucleus of opposition to me which existed within the Emergency Committee: made up of ZOA representatives.

Friends finally persuaded me to defy this small group of representatives for the sake of the cause, and they launched a "Draft Silver" movement to elect me President of the Zionist Organization of America in order to rid the Council of the ZOA representatives who were resolved to keep me out. The movement gained such momentum that the ZOA Administration forces who were backing the candidacy of Dr. Israel Goldstein offered a compromise whereby I would withdraw from the race for the ZOA presidency and leave the field to Dr. Goldstein, and in turn all would agree on my assuming active direction of the political work of the Emergency Committee. An agreement was signed on August 9, 1943, by Dr. Wise as Chairman of the Emergency Committee, by Dr. Goldstein and myself.

To suggest that "he (Wise) and no other insisted that Dr. Silver become Co-Chairman of the Council" is the product either of a fertile imagination or of a very short memory.

Again, Dr. Wise states: "One strange mistake was made by Dr. Silver, namely, that he (Wise) was to serve as the nominal head of the Emergency Council -- as an 'elder statesman' -- and that he (Silver) was to be its only leader." There was no

The following motion was adopted by the affirmative vote of all the members present at the meeting, with the exception of Mr. Neumann, who wished to be recorded as not voting:

✓ "The Executive Committee finds it impossible to accept the resignation tendered by Dr. Silver as its chairman and earnestly requests him to withdraw such resignation, which should not be made a matter of record.

"In view of the situation which has arisen, the Executive Committee expresses its approval of the principle embodied in Paragraph 1 of the Resolution drafted by the Program Committee, which reads as follows:

1 All approaches to the American Government or its officials on matters relating to the program of political activities of the American Zionist Emergency Council shall be undertaken by representatives of the movement only with the prior approval of the Executive Committee of the Council."

It urges Dr. Silver to confer with a sub-committee of the Executive Committee to discuss how this principle can best be put into effect in order to ensure the maximum amount of coordination in the political work. —

"It is agreed that another meeting of the Executive Committee be held Thursday afternoon, August 31st, and a notice to this effect be sent out by the secretary."

and that between meetings, the Executive Dr. Silver, [Neumann, [?]] and I would call held regarding emergency matters presently under-
mined

The statement of Dr. Stephen S. Wise which appeared in the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Bulletin on Wednesday the 27th explaining his phoney resignation amused me greatly. No officer of the American Zionist Emergency Council has so frequently and so brazenly contravened its decisions as Dr. Wise. The minutes of the Council will show that Dr. Wise was time and again criticised for his unauthorized conduct and ~~high handed~~ actions. The most notorious was the fatal telegram which he ~~sent~~ ^{despatched} to the Secretary of State on the very eve when Senator Wagner and I were ^{scheduled} to see him in order to persuade the State Department and the President to withdraw their objections to the passage of the Palestine Resolution. In this telegram which Dr. Wise sent on his own, without consulting the Council, he stated that while he would ~~of course~~ be happy if approval were given to the Resolution he and many of his associates do not wish to have action taken contrary to the recommendations of the State Department and the President. This of course completely nullified the whole purpose of our visit and more than any other factor was responsible for the shelving of the Palestine Resolution.

Dr. Wise has persistently treated the Zionist movement of the United States as a piece of personal property and has bitterly resented any new leadership which threatened his monopoly.

His "Shtadlanut" in Washington has been an egregious failure for many years and not only as far as Zionism is concerned.

It is common knowledge that
Washington has done next to nothing for our people during these tragic years of slaughter and annihilation, but our Court Jew ^{Dr. Wise} has always shielded, defended and apologized for an Administration with which he is politically entangled, and has violently denounced all those who dared to question its unfailing goodness and justice.

RP I hope that American Zionists will not now enter upon a collaborationist era where ^{consent to} it will ^{to} mark time and wait for ^{the} "green light" from the higher-ups. ^{It is now clear that the} ~~such a~~ "green light" is ~~evidently~~ not given except at election time....