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MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.

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

Sub-series A: Alphabetical, 1914-1965, undated.

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Dulles, John F., principally concerning Deputy Under Secretary
Robert Murphy's address to ZOA convention, 1954.

5/31
May 24, 1954

The Honorable John Foster Dulles
Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

It was gracious of you to see me when your schedule was so crowded shortly after your return from Geneva. I was greatly helped by the conversation which we had and greatly reassured.

You may recall that I expressed the hope that an opportunity would be found for some statement which would set at rest the widespread apprehensions engendered by unfortunate speeches which were made and which, unintentionally perhaps, gave a peculiar and disturbing slant to the future policy of our government towards the State of Israel. You too felt that you would welcome such an opportunity at some convenient time.

May I suggest that it would be highly desirable for a leading member of the Department, such as Deputy Under Secretary Robert Murphy, to address the convention of the Zionist Organization of America, which will be held in New York City on Thursday evening,

June 24th. I am assuming that pressure of work may not permit you to attend the convention in person. Your personal attendance, of course, would be the most desired of all.

The message to be brought to the convention need not be controversial. It should accentuate the positive elements in the relationship between our government and the State of Israel and carry an unmistakable message of reassurance and good will.

No authoritative spokesman of this administration has as yet appeared before an important gathering of American Zionists with such a message. If you agree with me that this is now desirable, I should be very happy to contact Under Secretary Murphy and extend to him an invitation.

With warmest regards, I remain

Most cordially yours,



June 3, 1954

The Honorable John Foster Dulles
Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

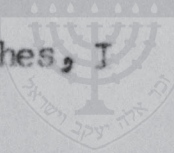
It was with great pleasure that I learned that Deputy Under Secretary Robert Murphy has accepted the invitation of the Zionist Organization of America to address its Convention toward the end of this month. I am confident that it will do a great deal of good, and I am extremely grateful to you.

I have taken the liberty of jotting down a few sentences of a positive, non-controversial nature which Mr. Murphy might wish to glance at when he comes to prepare his address.

With warmest regards and all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

AMERICAN JEWISH
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THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

June 4, 1954

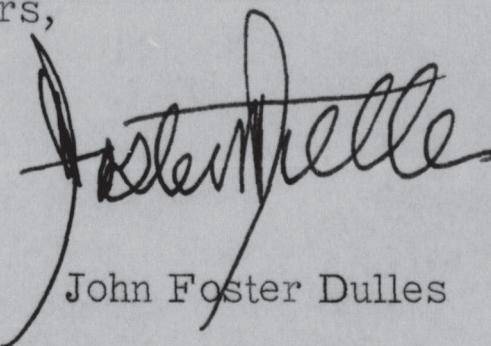
My dear Rabbi Silver:

I have given much thought to your note of May 24, suggesting that either Deputy Under Secretary Murphy or I should make an appearance at the convention of the Zionist Organization of America, to be held in New York on June 24. I have tried to think of just what could be said. You say that the message "need not be controversial". However, when I begin to think concretely of what might be said, I find myself in some difficulty. It seems to me that a purely platitudinous speech would of itself be controversial because what would be expected would be some restatement of United States policy designed to correct possible misinterpretations and distortions of prior speeches.

I am inclined to think, on reflection, that the present moment is one when the least said the better because emotion does run so high that almost anything is subject to controversy either because of commission or omission.

With very best regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



John Foster Dulles

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
The Temple,
East 105th Street and Ansel Rd.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

TO: DR. SILVER

DUPLICATE COPY

DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

June 8, 1954

Dear Rabbi Miller:

I have tried unsuccessfully to reach you on the telephone the last two days. The Secretary of State wrote Rabbi Silver on June 4 and referred to the invitation to Deputy Under Secretary Murphy to speak on June 24 and explained that he believed the present moment was one when the least said the better. I presume Rabbi Silver has informed you that Mr. Murphy will be unable to accept the invitation extended in your letter of June 3 but I wanted to pass this on to you directly to make certain.

Sincerely yours,

(signed)

David Linebaugh
Special Assistant

Rabbi Irving Miller,
President,
Zionist Organization of America
145 East 32nd Street
New York 16, N.Y.

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

June 9, 1954

Dear Rabbi Silver:

The Secretary is leaving this afternoon for the West Coast and asked me to acknowledge your letter of June 3. He believes that his letter to you of June 4 covers the matter and asked me to tell you that under the circumstances he does not feel that he can change his position.

Sincerely yours,

Roderic L. O'Connor

Roderic L. O'Connor

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
East 105th Street and Ansel Road
Cleveland, Ohio

June 11, 1954

The Honorable John Foster Dulles
Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I was greatly disturbed by your letter of June fourth. Mr. David Linebaugh, Special Assistant to Deputy Under Secretary Murphy, had informed Dr. Irving Miller, president of the Zionist Organization of America, that Mr. Murphy had accepted the invitation which he had extended to him to address the Zionist Convention. President Miller informed the executive board of this acceptance, which was received with great pleasure and was released to the press both in this country and in Israel. I am enclosing herewith an announcement which came to my attention this morning in one of the Jewish periodicals. It was on the strength of the information which I received from Dr. Miller that I wrote you on June third and also enclosed some tentative paragraphs.

The news which has now been transmitted to President Miller by Mr. Linebaugh that Under Secretary Murphy will not attend the Convention has caused deep consternation and will, I am afraid, cause even deeper

consternation when the news is made public. Violent criticism and bitterness may also erupt at the Convention. I shall personally be put in an impossible position at the Convention, where I am scheduled to speak, and where I had hoped to present, together with Mr. Murphy, a positive interpretation of the attitude of the Eisenhower administration toward Israel and the Arab world.

I strongly urge, my dear Mr. Secretary, that Under Secretary Murphy should by all means attend the Convention to avoid embarrassment to the Department and the Administration, as well as to the Zionist Organization of America, which in all good faith extended the invitation and made public the fact of its acceptance.

The record of the continued support which the Republican party has, over a period of many years, given to the establishment of the Jewish state and the positive and constructive interest which the present administration has taken in helping the State economically and in trying to find ways for bringing peace and prosperity to the entire Middle East will make a very effective and welcome story.

With warmest regards and all good wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

June 15, 1954

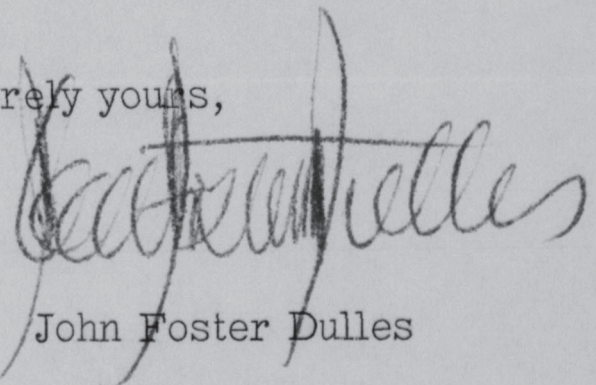
Dear Rabbi Silver:

I have your letter of June 11 and I understand that my assistant, Roderic O'Connor, has been in touch with you on the telephone. I greatly regret the misunderstanding which arose as to Bob Murphy's appearance, and I am sure that you understand the reasons which motivated my letter of June 4.

I understand that we are now agreed that Mr. Murphy will not make any statement of policy in relation to Israel. I am most hopeful that the Zionist Organization will not be led to believe that this will be a major policy speech, as the resultant disappointment might do more harm than if Mr. Murphy had not spoken at all. I am sure that the reasons behind the Department's attitude in this respect will be understood and I hope accepted.

I appreciate your frankness in writing me as you did, and I hope the situation has now been resolved in a manner satisfactory to us both.

Sincerely yours,



John Foster Dulles

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
The Temple,
East 105th Street and Ansel Road,
Cleveland, Ohio.

June 21, 1954

The Honorable John Foster Dulles
Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you for your kind letter of June fifteenth. I am very happy that Mr. Murphy will attend the Convention of the Zionist Organization of America. I fully understand that he will not make any statement of policy in relation to Israel. You will recall from my earlier correspondence that I suggested that his address be of a general non-controversial nature. I do hope, however, that you will have an opportunity to see his address before it is delivered.

May I suggest that the address should be warm, positive, constructive, perhaps embodying some of the suggestions which I sent along which are no more than a reflection of the basic attitude of our government which you and the President have on occasions stated with such clarity.

You will pardon me for expressing the hope that Mr. Murphy's address will not show the traces of Mr. Byroade's recent utterances in Dayton or before the American Council for Judaism, which aroused so much resentment and necessitated so much explanation and commentary afterwards.

With warmest regards and all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,



Dulles 53-54

June 25, 1954

The Honorable John Foster Dulles
Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I have just returned from the convention of the Zionist Organization of America in New York City, and I am very happy to tell you that Mr. Murphy delivered a very thoughtful and helpful address last evening which was most warmly received by the great throng at the Waldorf-Astoria who heard it. His pleasant manner and good humor as well as the friendly introduction in the first few paragraphs of his address did much to sweeten a situation which I am afraid had become quite unpleasant.

I am happy indeed that Mr. Murphy attended the Convention. President Eisenhower's good message to the Convention was also appreciated.

With warmest regards and all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

An open letter to the Secretary of State of the United States

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am deeply troubled. Because I believe that there are a great many other Americans who are troubled about the same problem, I am taking the liberty of addressing this letter to you. If I publish this letter, it is because the subject matter affects the public interest of all Americans and needs much greater discussion than it has had.

Like millions of Americans of the Jewish faith, I have been interested all my life in the condition of my co-religionists across the seas. I tried to help them all I could. I felt that just because I was lucky to live in this blessed land, I owed that much more to those who did not share the freedom and the security that I had.

During the period that Hitler dominated Europe, I was shocked to the very depths by what happened to the people of my religion. I knew that anything that made it unsafe for Jews in Europe made it unsafe for Jews in America—in the same way as we know today that wherever free people are threatened, all free people are menaced.

I was proud of the part that America played in helping the remnant of Jews that survived Hitler. I was proud of what my Government did in helping to establish the State of Israel, with its political recognition, with its financial assistance, with its moral support. I was proud that this little State of Israel could take in some 800,000 refugees from all corners of the earth. I was proud that Israel was quickly recognized by all fair people as one of the strongest bulwarks of our free, democratic world.

Now, Mr. Secretary, I am worried. Many, many others are worried.

We have been taught by you, as by all Americans who voice the noblest instincts of our country, that America must defend freedom wherever it is endangered; that the rightness of a cause and not the size of a population will determine the position of our country.

Here is the State of Israel preaching and practising democracy in a way that offers a showcase to the whole world, and most certainly to the Middle East. Here is the State of Israel which is the best living demonstration of what we mean when we preach to the world that the "American way of life" is the surest guarantee of peace and freedom for the world.

And yet, what is happening:

(1) Our Government offers arms to the Arab States of the Middle East, without insisting upon guarantees that they will not renew their attack upon Israel and will respect the borders of Israel.

(2) On the other hand, the State of Israel calls upon us to provide her with arms, thus linking her fate to that of the American people, but we shunt aside this plea for help from the one country whose very way of life is the sharpest rebuke to totalitarianism.

(3) At the very same time, we negotiate mutual security pacts with various States in the Middle East, but do not offer to enter into a pact with the State of Israel.

Located in the midst of Arab States, whose leaders reiterate daily that they refuse to enter into peace negotiations with Israel, the

State of Israel must intensify its armament. Like any people of pluck, they want to protect their borders, their homes, the refugees who came to them from the plague spots of the world. Seeing that the Arab States are to be furnished with arms; seeing that their own pleas for arms are rejected; seeing that every discussion of a mutual security pact for the Middle East by-passes them, what are the people of the State of Israel to believe about America?

I am worried about two things, Mr. Secretary. First, I am worried as an American who feels that America needs every genuine friend it can find in the free world. I know that under all circumstances, the people of Israel are on our side. Will they, therefore, be penalized because they are our natural and inevitable allies? Can we afford to rebuff these tried friends?

And, secondly and frankly, I am worried as a Jew. Hitler removed millions of my co-religionists from the world. Less than two million of the remnants have found a refuge in Israel. I would not be human if I did not feel a special responsibility for that little handful that has remained.

We Americans, Christians and Jews, Democrats and Republicans, white and black, helped make the State of Israel possible. There was no partisanship in this act of humanitarianism and statesmanship. There was only brotherly love.

In the name of that brotherly love, I ask you, Mr. Secretary, to re-examine the policies that the State Department has been following in the Middle East. It is possible—and indeed probable—that you have been so occupied with the other great issues that have required your attention, that you have not been able to give to the question of Israel that degree of action which it requires—not because Israel is a vast State, with huge population, but because Israel is the touchstone of the moral integrity and the human values of the post-war world.

The reason that I ask that you personally deal with this problem is because you have shown that no area of the world is alien to your interest. Concerned to save the peace, you have traveled to every corner of the earth to give the benefit of your first-hand examination to each of the trouble-spots. The record of your activities in the solution of the problems of Southeast Asia, of the Far East, and more recently, in Europe, underlines your tremendous desire for peace and justice. Your extraordinary energy, your ceaseless zeal and your great vision have earned the admiration of all Americans. It is my conviction that if you would bring to bear on the problem of Israel your warm compassion for human beings and your broad interest in all peoples, this problem would lend itself to honorable solution.

Mr. Secretary, before the enemies of Israel misunderstand the genuine intentions of our Government; before the people of Israel are weighed down with the great burdens of armament that our thoughtlessness may lay upon them; before this crucial area of the world bursts into flames, I ask you to exercise that breadth of vision and that generosity of spirit which all Americans know to be the mark of your career.

In deep anxiety and with great respect, I am, Sir

Sincerely yours,

Ernie Cantor