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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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Eisenhower, Dwight D., 1954-1955.

April 27, 1954

The Honorable Sherman Adams
Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Adams:

It was very gracious of you to receive me last Tuesday and to give me so much of your time. I felt, however, that the subject was of sufficient importance, and I believe that our conversation was productive of helpful ideas.

I should welcome an opportunity at your convenience to explore the subject further with you, and perhaps together with you discuss the matter with the President, as you suggested.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

WRHS



June 1, 1954

Honorable Dwight D. Eisenhower
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

What a heartening message you delivered last evening at the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of Columbia University, and how it uplifted our spirits! In a confused and troubled hour you gave vision, direction, and leadership to our people. It is in line with your great utterance before the Assembly of the United Nations in December last. More power to you!

With all good wishes,

Most sincerely yours,

AHS:rms



RABBI IRA EISENSTEIN

STUDY
THE ANSHE EMET SYNAGOGUE
PINE GROVE AT GRACE
Chicago 13, Illinois

HOME
3740 LAKE SHORE DRIVE
Chicago 13, Illinois

January 4, 1955
Tebet 10, 5715

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
19810 Shaker Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

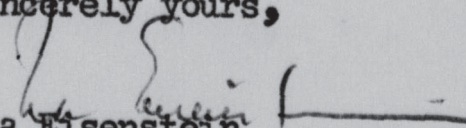
Some time ago, approximately around the end of September, I was told by one whose reliability I have no reason to question, that at a meeting between President Eisenhower and yourself, or immediately thereafter, the President expressed himself concerning your attitude toward Israel in words something like the following: "He sounds more like a representative of a foreign state than as an American citizen."

A report of this remark reached the ears of one of our leading Jewish citizens in Chicago who felt it incumbent upon himself to check upon the authenticity of this report. He contacted Maxwell Rabb and asked him whether you had actually been to Denver last summer to see the President, and he said that you had not. The fact that you had not been to see the President in Denver did not, however, seem to me to be sufficient proof that you hadn't seen him at all, or that he had not made such a remark.

I wonder whether it would be asking too much of you to let me know just what did happen so that, with your permission, I can set this gentleman straight. He seems to think that the report of the President's remark was "part of a deliberate campaign of vilification, misrepresentation, distortion and falsehood aimed at the administration and the President personally." I would not, under other circumstances, wish to trouble you, but it does seem to me as though a great deal is being made of this little incident, if it occurred, with a view to making it seem as though all those who don't happen to share the President's views are attempting to besmirch his reputation. If you can throw any light upon this matter I would very much appreciate it.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,


Ira Eisenstein

IE:mb

Eisenhower 54-55

January 27, 1955

Dr. Ira Eisenstein
The Anshe Emet Synagogue
Pine Grove at Grace
Chicago 13, Illinois

My dear Dr. Eisenstein:

Please pardon the delay in answering your letter. I have just returned from a two weeks' vacation in Florida.

The report which you have received concerning a statement which President Eisenhower made concerning my attitude toward Israel is to my best knowledge utterly groundless. My two personal contacts with the President at the White House since his inauguration were of the most amiable kind. Our exchange of views about Israel at our first meeting shortly after his inauguration was of a very friendly nature in which the president expressed his desire to work for peace in the Near East. My second visit was in connection with one of the President's Stag Dinners at which the subject of Palestine was not discussed at all. I did not go to Denver last summer.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:rms

May 12, 1955

Honorable Dwight D. Eisenhower
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

On two previous occasions, following your memorable addresses before the Assembly of the United Nations and the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of Columbia University, I took the liberty of writing to you to express my profound gratitude for the uplifting of our spirits and for the far-visioned leadership which you were giving during these desperate times to our people and to the people of the world.

May I again take the liberty of telling you what your consent to join in an at-the-summit conference of the Great Powers means to all men who, like yourself, have hoped and prayed for the lessening of world tensions, the lifting of the crushing burdens of armaments, and the exploration of all ways of negotiation for the settlement of the issues which endanger the peace of the world. By this action you have rekindled the hopes of a fear-ridden generation made distraught by a

propaganda of an inevitable and irreconcilable conflict between the East and the West.

In taking calculated risks for peace as you once did for war, and in taking counsel of faith and not of fear, you have followed the great liberal tradition of our country, and you have again demonstrated your sincerity to explore every avenue leading to international understanding and cooperation.

Very cordially yours,

AHS:rms



של ארצות הברית

ההסתדרות הציונית



ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA

145 EAST 32ND STREET • NEW YORK 16, N.Y. • MURRAY HILL 3-9201

May 23, 1955

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

I hope that the enclosed memorandum will be of some use to you. The style is deliberately impersonal, since I am not certain about your plans for the contemplated letter -- to whom it would be addressed, etc. You will no doubt wish to rephrase all or parts of it to suit both the purpose and individuals involved.

As for the case -- I hope it's convincing, despite the fact that I was inevitably compelled to incorporate aspects of a policy with which, as you know, I am not entirely in agreement.

If you do decide to send the letter, I assume that you will wish to pave the way for a reply.

I am most interested in obtaining your reaction and news of whatever action you may decide to take.

With warmest regards, I am

As ever,

Harold P. Manson

HPM/br
encl.

1) In the many months that have elapsed since our Government undertook to reconsider its policy in the Middle East, ^{Israeli-Arab relationships have greatly deteriorated.} the course of events has served to underline the urgent need of ~~clear-cut~~ ^{positive} and concrete actions to reassure the government and people of Israel that their security is of vital concern to American policy and interests and that our friendship for them is undiminished. Unfortunately, the manner in which our Government has thus far applied its announced policy of impartiality has inevitably fostered the opinion -- increasingly widespread not only in Israel but throughout the world -- that this Administration interprets impartiality as meaning that the balance should be redressed in favor of the Arab states. Any assumption that American policy under the Roosevelt and Truman Administrations favored the Jews over the Arabs is, of course, not borne out by the record -- unless one is prepared to ~~assume that~~ ^{assume that} ~~measure American friendship~~ ^{with an Arab yardstick} and thereby categorize our very recognition of Israel's ^{established} ~~existence as~~ ^{was an act} "favoring" Israel. ^{implied that declared by interest fostered by morality} Regrettably, our policy of the past few years has tended to encourage such false assumptions which, in turn, ~~have~~ ^{has} strengthened Arab intransigence towards a peace settlement or any kind of accommodation with Israel, ^{and has}

2) The strengthening of American influence throughout the Middle East is not only a legitimate objective of our foreign policy, but is highly desirable for the solution of the problems of the region. ^{The State, Israel and its people are inseparably in sympathy with it.} However, this objective can be achieved only if our strategic planning for the Middle East is related to the political realities that prevail in the states concerned. Their political stability, the character of their societies, ^{their} behavior in international relations are surely factors which must be accurately assessed in determining where our interests lie. In view of the sharp contrasts between Israel and the Arab states in these vital respects, there is understandable bewilderment over our Government's seeming preference for seeking military pacts with the latter, while excluding the stable, democratic and genuinely friendly State of Israel from our regional defense arrangements.

(more)

In pursuing this policy our Government has undoubtedly hoped that the Arab states would become more amenable to American influence in the direction of peace with Israel. However, the results have been very different. The Arabs show no inclination to alter their attitude of hostility towards Israel. They see no reason to do so when they are being so assiduously courted ~~despite~~ ^{notwithstanding} their behavior of the past seven years and while our Government has been offering them military pacts despite their refusal to come to an understanding with Israel. Indeed, they seem to believe that they are even in a position to exercise veto power over any security arrangement which the United States may be inclined to conclude with Israel.

3) Against this background Israel's sense of isolation is not surprising. The feeling that they are being abandoned by their American friends is producing a mood of desperation among Israelis, ^{the conviction is growing among them} ~~along with the conclusion~~ that they ~~can~~ ^{must} ~~only have recourse~~ to their own strength in dealing with the hostility which smoulders along their borders. Moreover, they are finding it increasingly difficult to understand why the American Government should frown on such an attitude when the United States has on the one hand been unable to induce the Arabs to alter their policy but has at the same time been sending arms to Iraq and offering military arrangements to other Arab states.

4) This unbalanced situation ^{should be speedily} ~~clearly must be rectified at once~~. If it is the policy of the United States to seek defense arrangements in the Middle East and if, as the State Department has said, a defense pact with Israel would be "highly logical," then there is no valid reason for delaying such an arrangement. The tensions and outbreaks along Israel's borders represent the most cogent argument for, and not against, speedy action to assure Israel's security.

(more)

5) If both the United States and Israel regard a mutual security pact as in their own best interests, such a pact should not be made conditional on Arab consent or on the willingness of the Arab states to conclude simultaneous defense arrangements with this country. Israel's consent was not considered necessary when the United States initiated the Iraq-Turkey Treaty, nor was it regarded as essential that Israel should conclude a parallel treaty before the Iraq-Turkey arrangement could be finalized.

6) A United States-Israel Mutual Security Pact should be viewed on its own merits as an instrumentality for strengthening American interests, and for restoring the military balance which recent Western policy in the region has tilted in favor of the Arabs. It should not be made dependent on prior concessions by Israel with respect to the unresolved issues of the Arab-Israel conflict. Israel has made clear her willingness to negotiate a settlement of these issues with the Arab states. She cannot be expected to offer concessions in advance of such negotiations. To try to influence her to do so in connection with a United States-Israel mutual defense arrangement would be to penalize her for being in a situation that is directly linked to the regional security policies which our Government has pursued in the Middle East.

Such an alliance, demonstrating that
7) Our Government should instead concentrate its influence on the achievement of Arab-Israel negotiations. To bring this about our Government must seek to *will help to* convince the Arabs that they have nothing further to gain by persisting in their present attitude, but that they could derive considerable benefits from negotiated agreements on regional water development, Arab refugees and other questions at *all outstanding issues. It would suggest to them the* *demands of seeking peace alliance with the United States.* ~~issue. The Arab states will realize that further intransigence on their part is~~ ~~pointless when our Government will demonstrate that the United States regards~~ ~~Israel's security as vital to its own interests and is determined to assure it.~~

May 24, 1955

The Honorable Sherman Adams
Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My dear Governor Adams:

It was very pleasant to have had lunch with you and Jack Martin last Tuesday and to talk over certain things with you. We both felt that it would be desirable to have some of my thoughts put on paper and that you might wish to bring them to the attention of the President. I have always wondered whether President Eisenhower has had an opportunity in his very crowded and busy life to look as closely into the subject as, I am sure, he would like to, and whether an informal, off-the-record exploration of the subject with him when he is under the pressure of no time schedule would not be very helpful.

(1) In the many months that have elapsed since our Government undertook to reconsider its policy in the Middle East, Israeli-Arab relationships have gravely deteriorated. The course of events has served to underline the urgent need of some concrete action to reassure the government and people of Israel that their security is of vital concern to American policy and interests and that our friendship for them is undiminished. Unfortunately, the manner in which our Government has thus far applied its announced policy of impartiality has inevitably fostered the opinion - increasingly widespread not only in Israel but throughout the world - that this Administration interprets impartiality as meaning that the balance should be redressed in favor of the Arab states. Any assumption that American policy under the Roosevelt and Truman

Administrations favored the Jews over the Arabs is, of course, not borne out by the record - unless one is prepared to assume that our very recognition of Israel's establishment was an act "favoring" Israel instead of being an act dictated by international justice and morality. Regrettably, our policy of the past few years has tended to encourage such a false assumption which, in turn, has strengthened Arab intransigence towards a peace settlement or any kind of accommodation with Israel.

(2) The strengthening of American influence throughout the Middle East is not only a legitimate objective of our foreign policy, but is highly desirable for the solution of the problems of the region. The State of Israel and its people are overwhelmingly in sympathy with it. However, this objective can be achieved only if our strategic planning for the Middle East is related to the political realities that prevail in the states concerned. Their political stability, the character of their societies, their behavior in international relations are surely factors which must be accurately assessed in determining where our interests lie. In view of the sharp contrasts between Israel and the Arab states in these vital respects, there is understandable bewilderment over our Government's seeming preference for seeking military pacts with the latter, while excluding the stable, democratic and genuinely friendly State of Israel from our regional defense arrangements.

In pursuing this policy our Government has undoubtedly hoped that the Arab states would become more amenable to American influence in the direction of peace with Israel. However, the results have been very different. The Arabs show no inclination to alter their attitude of hostility towards Israel. They see no reason to do so when they are being so assiduously courted notwithstanding their behavior of the past seven years and while our Government has been offering them military pacts despite their refusal to come to an understanding with Israel. Indeed, they seem to believe that they are even in a position to exercise veto power over any security arrangement which the United States may be inclined to conclude with Israel.

(3) Against this background Israel's sense of isolation is not surprising. The feeling that they are being abandoned by their American friends is producing a mood of desperation among the Israelis. The conviction is growing among them that they must

rely on their own strength in dealing with the hostility which smoulders along their borders. Moreover, they are finding it increasingly difficult to understand why the American Government should frown on such an attitude when the United States has on the one hand been unable to induce the Arabs to alter their policy but has at the same time been sending arms to Iraq and offering military arrangements to other Arab states.

(4) This unbalanced situation should be speedily rectified. If it is the policy of the United States to seek defense arrangements in the Middle East and if, as the State Department has said, a defense pact with Israel would be "highly logical," then there is no valid reason for delaying such an arrangement. The tensions and outbreaks along Israel's borders represent the most cogent argument for, and not against, speedy action to assure Israel's security.

(5) If both the United States and Israel regard a mutual security pact as in their own best interests, such a pact should not be made conditional on Arab consent or on the willingness of the Arab states to conclude simultaneous defense arrangements with this country. Israel's consent was not considered necessary when the United States initiated the Iraq-Turkey Treaty, nor was it regarded as essential that Israel should conclude a parallel treaty before the Iraq-Turkey arrangement could be finalized.

(6) A United States-Israel Mutual Security Pact should be viewed on its own merits as an instrumentality for strengthening American interests, and for restoring the military balance which recent Western policy in the region has tilted in favor of the Arabs. It should not be made dependent on prior concessions by Israel with respect to the unresolved issues of the Arab-Israel conflict. Israel has made clear her willingness to negotiate a settlement of these issues with the Arab states. She cannot be expected to offer concessions in advance of such negotiations. To try to influence her to do so in connection with a United States-Israel mutual defense arrangement would be to penalize her for being in a situation that is directly linked to the regional security policies which our Government has pursued in the Middle East.

(7) Such an alliance, demonstrating that the United States regards Israel's security as vital to its own interests and is determined to assure it, will help to convince the Arabs that they have nothing

to gain by persisting in their present attitude and that it would be more desirable to derive those benefits which would flow from negotiated agreements on all outstanding issues. It would further suggest to them the desirability of seeking similar alliances for themselves with the United States.

(8) I am persuaded that a decisive amelioration of the situation is now possible and that it can only come about as a result of positive direction at the top and not from a reliance upon the lower echelons of our Government, from whose ranks over a period of years there has emanated, I am afraid, considerable hindrance and delay and very few constructive proposals. Many precious opportunities in the past which could have been capitalized to lessen tensions and to clear the air were unfortunately argued and frittered away.

I am writing all this, as I am sure you realize, in no official capacity - only as a friend of the Administration and as a great admirer of the President, for whose decisive leadership in critical times I have expressed my admiration time and again. More especially do I write this out of devotion to the best interests of America. I need not add that I am also prompted by my great love for Israel.

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:mas

cc: Solicitor General Simon Sobeloff
Mr. Jack Martin
Mr. Harold Manson

Dear President Eisenhower

As an American Christian whose interest in Israel is a matter of public record, I congratulate and thank you for your authoritative statement explaining our Middle East policy in your address at the American-Jewish Tercentenary Dinner. The group of which I have the honor to be Chairman is proud of the part it played in helping to establish the State of Israel and in urging continuing American support to the young democracy.

We firmly believe that all American citizens whether Christian or Jew, Republican or Democrat, take pride in your statement that America seeks only peace in the Middle East as elsewhere and, by friendship both to Israel and the Arab states, seeks to contribute to peaceful relations among these peoples. Reassuring was your statement that arms made available to these countries may be used only to protect themselves against communist attack and must not be used for intimidation or aggression against any neighboring nation.

You stated: "I assure you that in helping to strengthen the security of the entire Near East, we shall make sure that any arms we provide are devoted to that purpose, not to creating local imbalances which could be used for intimidation or aggression against any neighboring nations. In every arrangement we make with any nation, there is simple assurance that this distortion of our purposes cannot occur."

We are proud of the fact that since you took office so many acts helpful to Israel have been initiated by your Administration:

1. Your Administration used its good offices to bring about German reparation payments of \$714,000,000 to Israel.
2. Your Administration has reaffirmed the Tripartite Agreement of 1950 by which the United States, Great Britain, and France guaranteed to maintain the military balance of power in the Middle East and the boundaries of all Middle Eastern states, including Israel.
3. Your Administration, through its emissary, Eric Johnston, has sought a peaceful solution of the water resources problem which has been a source of irritation between Israel and the Arab states.
4. Your Administration supported Israel in the Security Council debates on Egyptian restrictions of Israeli shipping through the Suez Canal. The resolution was vetoed by the Soviet Union.
5. Your Administration supported Israel's recommendation that the Security Council seek a peaceful solution of the problem between Israel and the Arab states.

Believing that Israel is a great source of strength for the defense of the Middle East, we are grateful for your contributions to her development as a bastion against communist aggression. We know that your Administration will now press for the conclusion of peace negotiations between Israel and the Arab states in order that we might move more rapidly toward a strong Middle East mutual defense arrangement that will include Israel.

DEAN ALFANGE, *Chairman*
American Christian Palestine Committee of Greater New York