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Jewish Agency, "C", 1948-1949.

Catholic Near East Welfare Association



President
FRANCIS CARDINAL SPELLMAN
National Secretary
Msgr. THOMAS J. McMAHON

Established by the Holy See
480 LEXINGTON AVENUE
NEW YORK 17, N. Y.
PLAZA 8-2710

Assistants
REV. HARRY M. O'CONNOR
REV. ANDREW ROGOSH

August 20, 1948

The Honorable Trygve Lie
Secretary General
United Nations
Lake Success, New York

Honorable Sir:

On June 5, 1947, this Association presented to the Special Committee on Palestine a memorandum indicating its rightful concern with reference to the fate of Catholics and the Catholic Holy Places in the Holy Land. During the intervening time, since partition was voted by the General Assembly, there has been much bloodshed and damage all over Palestine, with great human and material losses for both Jews and Arabs.

However, during this period, there have constantly come to us disturbing rumors of maltreatment of Catholic persons and violations and desecrations of Catholic Holy Places. While these have been denied or ascribed to irresponsible groups, the Associated Press report of August 19, dateline Jerusalem, reports specific charges made by Monsignor Anthony Vergani, Vicar of the Latin Patriarchate for Galilee, and tragically confirmed from other authoritative sources, against the Jewish forces as perpetrating "criminal acts against twelve Roman Catholic institutions in Northern Palestine". The report continues: "It alleged that seven churches, convents and hospices have been looted by Jews and others seized by force. It expressed concern that the Jews might 'start a continued expropriation of ecclesiastical properties which may have no small repercussions in the Christian world.'"

In view of this documented accusation, the Catholic Near East Welfare Association now respectfully requests you, Honorable Sir, to institute an inquiry, through the medium of the United Nations, not only regarding the outrages reported

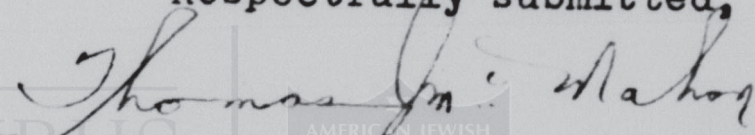
Catholic Near East Welfare Association

The Honorable Trygve Lie
August 20, 1948
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by the Associated Press above, but also regarding all others of a similar nature in Palestine, and particularly in the Jerusalem area. It is our considered opinion that if these overt acts continue or are explained by ascribing them constantly to irresponsible forces, then the entire Christian world is justified in its apprehension over the disregard of Christian spiritual and material interests in the new born State of Israel.

We are certain, Honorable Sir, that you will readily recognise the validity of this plea and that it will be accorded the consideration which it so richly merits.

Respectfully submitted,


(Very Rev. Msgr.) Thomas J. McMahon
National Secretary
Catholic Near East Welfare Association
of which
Francis Cardinal Spellman
is
President.

הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל
THE JEWISH AGENCY FOR PALESTINE
16 EAST 66TH STREET, NEW YORK 21, N. Y.

RHINELANDER 4-4200

Cable Address JEVAGENCY

September 29, 1948

Rabbi Jesse Schwartz
Executive Director
Zionist Organization of Canada
2025 University Street
Montreal, Canada

Dear Rabbi Schwartz:

Your communication addressed to me was read to the members of the American Section of the Executive of the Jewish Agency at its meeting yesterday.

You must realize, of course, that neither the American Section of the Executive, nor the whole of the Executive, has the authority to appoint additional members to the Executive. This authority rests with the Actions Committee and with the Congress. You must also realize, I am sure, that the American Section is not made up exclusively of representatives of the United States.

W20 You realize, however, that the work of the American Section would be largely benefited by having the advice and counsel of the Zionist leadership representing the Zionist forces in Canada. We are aware of the great services and contributions which Canadian Jewry has made and is making to our common cause. Accordingly, the American Section cordially invites the United Zionist Council of Canada to designate a representative who would attend the meetings of the American Section. This representative, while of course not having any vote, would have full freedom to participate in the discussions and the deliberations of the American Section. Inasmuch as the Executive of the Jewish Agency today is a coalition Executive representing all Zionist parties, the representative of Canada should likewise have the approval of all the Zionist groups in Canada.

With all good wishes, I remain,

Most cordially yours,

Abba Hillel Silver, Chairman
American Section of the Executive

AHS:mk

Washington
2210 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington 8, D. C.

London
77, Great Russell Street
London, W.C. 1

Paris
143, Avenue de Wagram
Paris (17e), France

Jerusalem
Post Office Box 92
Jerusalem, Palestine

March 8, 1949

Mr. Frank Cohen
88 Central Park West
New York, New York

My dear Friend:

Thank you so much for your kind letter and for the enclosure - a copy of your letter to the Editor of "The Reconstructionist". I, too, was outraged at the editorial and also one which preceded it in an earlier issue. For the Editor to have followed so slavishly the Mapai line in the controversy which was directed not to insure the success of the UJA Drive but to settle political scores with the present administration of the ZOA and to have thrown sand in people's eyes with loose talk about national discipline is stooping pretty low, even for editors whose Mapai affiliations are quite well known.

I trust that you and Mrs. Cohen are well, and I hope that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you in the near future.

Very cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

March 8, 1949

Rabbi Armand E. Cohen
Park Synagogue
3325 Euclid Hts. Blvd.
Cleveland 18, Ohio

My dear Armand:

Knowing of your interest in the "Reconstructionist" recent editorial, I thought you would enjoy reading the enclosed letter of Frank Cohen written to the Editor.

With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er
Enc.

March 4, 1949.

The Editor,
Reconstructionist,
15 West 86th St.,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir;

I have read with amazement your editorial "A Tragic Breach of Zionist Discipline". Such sheer nonsense and confused reasoning I did not expect in an editorial of the Reconstructionist.

Jewish Agency, as you correctly state, was created thru the same legislation which created the Mandate. It was to advise and act with the Mandatory power. It was created just because the legislators did not and could not recognize the World Zionist Organization as representing the Jews of the world. How then was it ever meant to be the "highest authority" of the World Zionist Organization?

As you state the Jewish Agency was to consist of Zionists and non Zionists. As time went on this intent was breached and non-Zionists were ignored. When this happened Jewish Agency legally was a nonentity. But it still pretended to be a Jewish Agency representing all Jews and the world was still misled by the misnomer. (Whether the Reconstructionist previously brought this to light, I do not know).

Today the Mandate is no more. The Mandatory power has abdicated. Jewish Agency actually has no function nor any legal life. As you correctly state, "It is a misnomer", yet for reasons best known to official Zionism, the term is still used to befuddle the Jewish and non-Jewish world.

To keep Jewish Agency alive to care for some unfinished paper work, the Actions Committee of the World Zionist Congress appointed the members of the present Jewish Agency. Then by some obscure process the "Jewish Agency" became an "Agency Executive" and thru some unexplained transformation Jewish Agency became "in fact the executive of the World Zionist Organization" and this misnomer, Jewish Agency, is now "responsible to carry out the purposes of the World Zionist Organization"!! And so this misnomer and legally non-existing body comes to U. S. Jews, some of whom admittedly are non-Zionists and who also contribute to U.P.A., (in fact a great, great many non-Zionists as even Mr. Montor points out), to tell us who should represent us in U.P.A. and what shall be done with our contributions! And if anyone dare "to flout the authority" of this shibboleth "it is an act of disloyalty and rebellion".

I wonder, disloyal to whom? A rebellion against what? Disloyal because for once they have dared to stand up to the bugaboo that you must

March 4, 1949

condone any wrong for fear it might hurt a campaign ! (In itself a mistaken notion for the harm is done actually by those who perpetuate the wrong.) Was the schlussel system of immigration in the past a scandalous practice against Jews ? You were not to mention it publicly, lest it might have hurt the political campaign to establish Israel. Is the schlussel system of dividing funds collected from ALL Jews in the U.S. unfair ? You must not breathe it publicly, for fear it might hurt a money campaign. Is the schlussel system of dispensing economic favors, and destroying independent business people wrong ? You must not object, for fear U.S. citizens might withhold their support. And so it goes. Keep quiet ! Let the wrongs go on and multiply. Do not rebel !

Every institution in the U.S., charitable, religious or educational, is sacrificing for the U.J.A. All refrain from raising money and willingly subordinate their badly needed budget requirements. But an Israeli organization comes here, flouts the U.J.A., U.P.A. and every agreement made in the U.S.A. and blithely launches a \$10,000,000 campaign on its own. Disloyal !

Shall U.S. Jews be dictated to from Israel ? The first attempt was made by the World Union for Education. They attempted to tell us here how we should educate our children. I believe we have put a stop to this.

Now the attempt is made to tell us how we should raise our contributions and who should spend them.

Next will follow that since "the Jewish people are one people" and "the World Zionist Organisation, its instrument", we in the U.S. will be told from Israel on what condition we can remain Jews. This dangerous practice has already started. We begin to hear from these "prophets", "Jews in Diaspora do not count"; (except to raise money for them); "Jews in U.S. will face pogroms"; "Jews of U.S. must prepare to flee to live in Israel"; "Jews have no future in U.S.", (meanwhile help these fear mongers economically) etc., etc. And I suppose when we Jews in U.S. say to them, as we surely will and very soon, "register as foreign lobbyists so that you may be recognized for what you are, and be treated accordingly", we will then be disowned as Jews, as "Rebels" ! Maybe they will even hire a hall and burn the U.S. Jew in effigy !

Since when does the Reconstructionist label one disloyal to Jews because he rebels against an abuse of Jews ?

I do not know who is the author of this editorial, but I venture to say that Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver has given of himself to the Jews, and will continue to give as much as the author. And the same holds true for Emanuel Newman.

The Editor, Reconstructionist.

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March 4, 1949.

Your editorial only emphasizes the need for Jews in the U.S. to take stock of their position.

More and more is it becoming apparent that we in the U.S. must cease talking about America's responsibility to Israel, and begin to insist that there exists a responsibility of Israel to America.

Why shouldn't the Reconstructionist face the issue and expose the problem? Isn't this the nub of the whole controversy? Are we in the U.S. to permit Israel, or any group in Israel, to dictate to the Jews of the U.S.? Are we to permit Israel, or any group in Israel, to affect us because of their interpretation of what is a proper way of life, even tho it may be objectionable and distasteful to a majority of U.S. Jews?

I readily agree that the Jewish people is ONE people. But since when is that synonymous with any ONE economic group, or any ONE political party, even tho that group or party rules Israel?

Isn't it time to recognize that ALL Jews helped create Israel; that ALL Jews have a stake in Israel; that ALL Jews will be held responsible for what goes on in Israel; and that we in the U.S., because we are the largest and most influential Jewish body in the world, will in the long run be most affected by what goes on in Israel?

Should not we applaud and back up those "Rebels" who stand up and say we want a voice in Israel, we want to know what is done with our contributions to Israel, be it money or effort and energy. Why must we swallow anything and everything that comes forth from some political party in Israel, even tho, because of the use in the past of the despicable schlüssel system, it now has the largest single party membership?

Perhaps it is the Reconstructionist that is "disloyal" to its friends and false to its principles, and because of its power of opinion, is misleading U.S. Jews when it does not "rebel" against such destructive abuses.

A Reconstructionist editorial calling a "Rebel" disloyal! What but a Rebel is every Reconstructionist? Berate Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver and Emanuel Newman! You should send them a membership application and give them a place of honor in the Reconstructionist Foundation.

Frank Cohen

[1949]

FRANK COHEN
88 CENTRAL PARK WEST
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Dear Dr. Selver

I hope you do not
mind the enclosed. This
outrageous situation just
makes me see red.

Must you are
well. Don't let this dirt
get you down
with regards

Frank Cohen