



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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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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47

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Manson, Harold, 1949.

25 Tudor City Place
New York 17, N.Y.
July 25, 1949

Dr. and Mrs. Abba Hillel Silver
Hotel Splendide
Aix - les - Bains
France

Dear Dr. and Mrs. Silver -

French climate and cuisine having had an opportunity to fulfil their function, I assume that this letter is being addressed to two contented people. You may derive additional pleasure from the fact that you are where you are when I tell you that weather conditions prevailing both in New York and Cleveland are such as to warrant banner headlines in the newspapers. Josie speaks wistfully of the temperate Negev...

The fact that our basket reached you in time -- and beat the British assault on your gastronomical well-being (unquestionably on orders from the Foreign Office) -- has given us real pleasure. In your place I should quake at the thought of eating food served by British hands. There is probably a standing directive to slip Rabbi Silver a Mickey Finn at the first opportunity. And -- speaking of Mickies -- I hope that the enclosed statement does not indicate that a harmful concoction is about to be poured down the collective throat of the Zionist constituency...

I don't wish to add a disturbing note to your holiday, but this is darned important. According to this official ZOA release, the President of the organization has called for "a pro-Western policy by General Zionists" and "Marshall Plan aid for Israel." Such a statement is, in my judgement, politically stupid and irresponsible. (I hasten to add that Frisch may have felt encouraged to speak in this vein after his conversations with various personalities in Israel and that he merely wished to anticipate what he believes to be a coming trend).

There are many implications to such a statement, not the least of which is the widespread belief that Frisch would never dare to speak on the most explosive political issue of the day without first consulting Dr. Silver... Are disciplined Zionists now to accept Daniel Frisch as their political mentor?

I don't wish to enter into a discussion of the issue itself at this time. Suffice it to say that I can discover no valid reasons to justify the course of action which Frisch has proposed, but can list many arguments in favor of a strictly neutral Israeli policy. I am as conscious as anyone else that Israel ~~has~~ enormous financial needs. But her ~~political~~ soul and independence should not be put up for sale! (Note to whatever ~~secret~~ secret service agent may happen to read this: The writer is not and never has been a Communist or a Communist sympathizer).

I remember that you were the only American Jewish leader to oppose the Marshall Plan when it was first enunciated. I also know that you have steadfastly maintained that Israel must follow a policy of neutrality

as between East and West. Am I right in believing, therefore, that your reaction to the aforementioned statement is not unlike my own?

This is important to me for another reason. There has been some talk of my assuming certain obligations with regard to the ZOA. As you know, I am not the sort of person who can represent institutions or policies with which I am not in agreement. I could not become associated with a program such as the one proposed by Mr. Frisch.

So much for the serious talk. Harry just walked in and joins us in sending both of you our love.

Josie is working hard at a special course in costume design and illustration which she is taking during the summer months. The gal's really good.

I'm continuing to lecture and to write. The book is limping along at this stage. Parts of what I've written are good, other parts are lousy. I hope to discuss it with you upon your return.

Do have the best of all holidays — both of you deserve it.



Harold

Harold P. Manson