



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

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

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

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

Reel
47

Box
17

Folder
1148

Manson, Harold, 1949-1950.

25 Tudor City Place
New York 17, N.Y.
September 29, 1949

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

I hope that this will find you, Mrs. Silver and the boys well.

The New Year being a time for new plans, I have been exploring new fields, in association with "the boys." All three of us — Harry Shapiro, Abe Tuvim and I — wish to keep you informed of these developments; we are also anxious to receive any comment which you may care to make concerning our ideas.

We are planning to establish our own public relations organization and to engage in promotion, fund-raising, publicity, etc. for both individual clients and organizations. At the moment we are making a survey of the field in order to determine what our area of operation will be if we decide to go ahead. While we do not wish this to become an exclusively Jewish project, we realize that our best immediate source of clients is in Jewish circles. For example, each of us has received a number of offers in Jewish organizational work which, while unacceptable as full-time jobs, would be most welcome as accounts in our own public relations firm. I could not see myself as public relations director of B'nai Brith, the Jewish National Fund, the American Zionist Council (as now constituted), or other groups which have approached me. The same applies to Harry and Abe. However, some of these offers could most definitely be accepted by our firm.

Outside of Jewish fields, I have already been asked if we would be interested in representing the Chinese Government and (so help me!) the British Government in matters of public relations... It is already clear that, having consciences and convictions, we shall be compelled to turn down many offers which other firms would be only too happy to grab.

Among our more immediate prospects are the following:

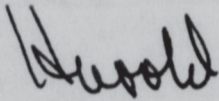
1. Fund-raising for the Jewish Theological Seminary (an offer which had been made to Harry).
2. A series of events for the American Federation of Labor in connection with the 100th anniversary of Samuel Gompers' birth. (Abe's project).
3. The Scrip for Israel project which I have already mentioned to you.
4. Promotion of the Encyclopedia Hebraica, the first volume of which has just been published by Masada in Israel.
5. The Israeli Manufacturers Association (if its much-heralded "mission" ever gets to this country).
6. The dinner in your honor which is being planned for November 29th by the Manhattan Zionist Region. Tuvim has made a tentative agreement with Torczyner, providing for our participation through the selling of tables outside the Manhattan Region — for which efforts we would receive a fair percentage. However, before finalizing the agreement we want to be sure that you would wish this affair to assume a national, rather than a regional, character. Please let us know. By the way, I understand that the American Zionist Council has just scheduled a mass meeting for the evening of November 29th.

So much for our business activities. You may be interested to learn that I have terminated my lecture arrangement with Club Program Service. Lipsky (the old fox) sought my agreement to the widening of my lecture activities -- to include organizational talks before the local Emergency Committees under the direct auspices of the American Zionist Council. This I refused to do and, consequently, my services as an independent lecturer for Club Program Service are now ended.

Incidentally, one should be wary with Isreeli these days. We have the impression that he is trying to play on both teams at the same time.

Josie joins me in wishing you and Mrs. Silver a chtima tova.

Cordially yours,



Harold P. Manson



Manson

October 2, 1949

Mr. Harold P. Manson
25 Tudor City Place
New York 17, New York

My dear Harold:

I was interested in receiving your letter and learning of the project which you, Shapiro and Tuvim are exploring. It sounds very good to me. I believe that with your talents, contacts and experience, you three ought to be able to set up a great public relations organization. Please keep me in touch with further developments.

I do hope that I shall be able to be in New York after the Holy Days at which time we shall undoubtedly get together and talk over many things. Mrs. Silver joins me in sending you and Josie our warmest wishes for the New Year.

Very cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

25 Tudor City Place
New York 17, N.Y.
March 19, 1950

Dear Dr. Silver -

I assume that you have seen the exchange of letters between Sachar and myself in today's Book Section of the "New York Times."

You will recall that I wrote my letter some months ago. The "Times"

later some months ago. Obviously delayed publication until a "suitable" reply from Sachar was obtained. Furthermore, they edited my letter in such a way as to weaken it.

Sachar's reply is vile. He not only fails to take up the challenge (contained even in my emasculated letter) that he back up his assertion concerning your "thoughts to influence" Israel's policies, but adds new lies - the worst of which is the statement that you "gave no help to the 1949 UN campaigns."

It is evidently too much to expect that, in these times, a historian should be an honest man. I don't suppose that anything else can be done vis-a-vis the "Times."

Yours joins me in sending love to Mrs. Silver and yourself. Harold

TUDOR TOWER
25 TUDOR CITY PLACE
NEW YORK (17)

April 20, 1950

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

Joe Greenleaf has told me of his conversation with you, during which he mentioned that I was revising the script of the pageant which the Z.O.A. will present in Madison Square Garden.

I had made a special point of asking Greenleaf not to associate my name with this piece. (If you had read the original manuscript by one Ben Aronin, you would understand my reasons for this request). At first I refused to have anything to do with it, but Greenleaf's pleas finally induced me to "doctor" the monstrosity. I couldn't scrap the whole thing and start from scratch because the script had already been accepted (by Frisch) and the casting director was already choosing actors to play the various roles created by Mr. Aronin. I therefore had to content myself with the rewriting of some scenes, the deletion of others and the substitution of new speeches for the more bombastic utterances of the narrator. I also created a good deal of "stage business" which I hope will be given effective visual expression by the director.

I completed this task today and both Greenleaf and Alpert are enthusiastic. However, it is not the sort of thing I would have written on my own. I have dealt with this at such length because, notwithstanding the words of praise I have received for my revisions, I still believe that one cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Consequently, my request to Greenleaf that my association with the project be kept secret still stands.

There have been no radical changes in my life. I am trying to get by with free-lancing until such time as I land something decent. It is now quite clear that my chances of getting a job in Jewish life that will not represent a great comedown are decidedly slim. I am regarded as trefe within the Zionist movement -- and it is best to acknowledge the facts as they are. My "past" is a factor even with regard to business propositions having to do with Israel. For example, my association with the Scrip for Israel project (if it ever materializes) will depend in part on whether the U.S. investors who finally come into the corporation will be C.P.Z. machers or "ordinary" Jews. If the former go in, I'm out. Another example: the delegation of the Israeli Manufacturers Association got in touch with me almost immediately upon their arrival in this country (at Emanuel Neumann's suggestion). They were to phone me again in order to arrange for a meeting at which we were to discuss the various ways in which I could be useful to their work. They never communicated with me again. Subsequently I heard a rumor that "someone in the Jewish Agency" had warned one or more of them that my participation in their projects might prove harmful,

TUDOR TOWER
25 TUDOR CITY PLACE
NEW YORK (17)

Because this situation exists I have been doing a good deal of scouting in fields that are far removed from American Jewish organizational life -- journalism, publishing, etc. Unfortunately, however, the good jobs are already filled (mostly by men who worked their way up by devoting the same intensity to their craft which I devoted to Zionism over the past years). Certain high-salaried positions have been offered to me. However, these have involved sacrifice of personal convictions -- as for example the suggestion that I do public relations work for Nationalist China.

Now I must decide whether to lower my standards and salary requirements and take a minor job in one of these fields in the hope of working myself up, or to try to re-connect my personal career with the work for Israel. If I am to do the latter, it is senseless to expect a good assignment under the existing circumstances. One must either work actively to bring about a change (which we are not doing) or come to an understanding with the leaders of the government of Israel -- strictly on a personal basis, since I am not part of any organized "movement" within Zionism at this time.

In other words, should I indicate to Sharett, for example, that I am prepared to place whatever talents I possess at the disposal of the Israeli government, provided that I am given a worthwhile assignment? Obviously I would be expected to be absolutely correct in such an assignment and divorce myself from internal Zionist affairs.

Needless to say, I would never take such a step without first consulting you. However, I really cannot afford to delay a decision to act -- in one direction or another -- much longer. Perhaps this over-long letter (which I had originally intended as a note about the script for the ZOA pageant -- but these thoughts kept popping into my head) will indicate that I am somewhat confused at this point. If so, it has at least the virtue of honesty.

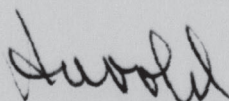
If you care to make any observations, you know how welcome they will be, for I don't think I have to tell you what value I place on your judgment.

Josie and I visited with your brother Maxwell a few weeks ago. I am doing what little I can to push his book, which certainly deserves wide reading.

Please remember us to Mrs. Silver and the boys.

Warmest regards.

Cordially,



Harold P. Manson

April 24, 1950

Mr. Harold P. Manson
25 Tudor City Place
New York 17, New York

My dear Harold;

I received your letter and read it with much interest. I spoke to Browdy when he was here to see me a few weeks ago and again on the phone about ten days ago. He said that he would get in touch with you either last Monday or Tuesday. Did he? If he has not as yet, you might give him a ring.

I am waiting to hear from Neumann from whom I have heard nothing as yet. When I do, I shall get in touch with you and we shall discuss the contents of your letter further and with better knowledge of all the factors involved. You will hear from me.

With all good wishes to you and Josie in which Virginia joins me most warmly, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

May 5, 1950

Mr. Harold Manson
25 Tudor City Place
New York, New York

My dear Harold:

Mr. Browdy called me this afternoon and said that he had had a meeting with you. He was very much impressed with you, your thinking, your level-headedness, and your grasp of the situation. He wanted a little time to find the proper place for you in the organization. I shall speak to him again when I see him in New York on Thursday. I am also looking forward with pleasure to seeing you and Josie at that time. We shall be stopping at the Plaza.

With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

TUDOR TOWER
25 TUDOR CITY PLACE
NEW YORK (17)

May 6, 1950

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

It has been almost two years since I last took the liberty of sending you a memorandum containing my thoughts on political issues concerning Israel. I am doing so today because I imagine that you will wish to use the occasion of your May 11th appearance in Madison Square Garden to speak out on the question of the re-arming of the Arabs. I hope you will not object to this unsolicited presentation of my views.

All of the Israeli and Zionist statements on this subject which I have seen seem to be deficient in one important respect: they fail to indicate the real motive for the Arab rearmament policy and, consequently, the general public remains with the notion that, however unfortunate this may be from Israel's point of view, the re-arming of the Arabs is a necessary feature of America's overall policy vis-a-vis the Soviet Union.

Now the British and the State Department surely know as well as we do how "effective" the Arabs would be against the Red Army. Assuming that the Arabs would ever dare to fight the Russians in the first place, their performance in the war against little Israel indicates how long they would last. Britain and the United States must, therefore, have other things in mind.

There is, of course, the obvious desire of the British to establish large military installations in Egypt on the firmest possible footing. In order to achieve this they are quite prepared to pay off in armaments to the Egyptians.

But I believe that there is another, far more important, scheme -- and here the chief culprit is our own government. America would evidently like to bring about the formation of a "Mediterranean Pact" -- a military alliance along the lines of the Atlantic Pact in which the U.S. will call the tune. She wants to force Israel into such an arrangement -- in plain English, she wants Israel to enter the cold war on the side of the West. (We can assume that the prospects of additional loans and other financial aid are being dangled in front of Israel as an additional inducement, and also that the threat of cutting off future financial support by Americans is being -- or will be -- implied).

The State Department, knowing that it would be difficult to argue the

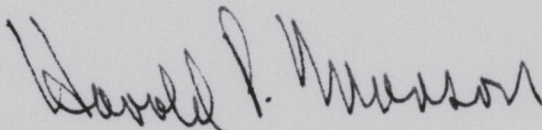
TUDOR TOWER
25 TUDOR CITY PLACE
NEW YORK (17)

Israeli people into entering the Western camp (no more than the Russians could convince Israel to go in with the East), seems to be using the British arms shipments to the Arabs as a "persuader".

That is how I see the picture. If I am right an all-out attack on the State Department is called for. I am interested in learning whether or not you agree.

Josie joins me in sending love to Mrs. Silver and yourself.

Cordially yours,



Harold P. Manson

P.S. Joe Greenleaf just called to ask whether I shall be in touch with you before Wednesday. He asked me to convey his request for the text -- or excerpts -- of your speech, which he will pass on to the Z.O.A. office. His address is: 225 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

WRHS

