



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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United Jewish Appeal, United Palestine Appeal, Palestine exhibit
at World's Fair, 1938-1939.

GEORGE BACKER

February 7, 1933.

Mr. Meyer W. Weisgal,
The Palestine Exhibit,
350 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Weisgal:

Perhaps you already know that Dr. Silver is to be in New York today. I would suggest that you get in touch with him so that between you a chairman for Cleveland can be named without further delay.

In my talk with Dr. Silver in Cincinnati, he felt that a quota of \$5,000. could be easily raised for the Exhibit. Will you get in touch with him as soon as possible?

Sincerely yours,

George Backer

GB:R

The Palestine Exhibit
at the
New York World's Fair—1939

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING
NEW YORK CITY

MEYER W. WEISGAL
Executive Director

PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE

George Backer
Harold Jacobi
Chairmen

Samuel Blitz
Secretary

Samuel J. Bloomingdale
Israel Brodie
Bernard Flexner
Elisha M. Friedman
William Goldman
Israel Goldstein
David M. Heyman
Arthur M. Lampport
Louis Lipsky
G. A. Lowenstein
Julian W. Mack
Edward A. Norman
James N. Rosenberg
Morris Rothenberg
Alexander Sachs
Michael Schaap
Julius Simon
Robert Szold
Stephen S. Wise

[Incomplete]

February 7, 1938

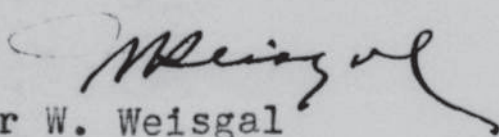
Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
Commodore Hotel
42nd Street & Lexington Avenue
New York City

My dear Dr. Silver:

I received the enclosed note from Mr. Backer
this afternoon.

I should very much like to get together with
you. Will call you tomorrow (Tuesday morn-
ing) for an appointment.

Sincerely yours,


Meyer W. Weisgal

MWW:RL
ENC

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New York World's Fair—1939

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NEW YORK CITY

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Alexander Sachs
Michael Schaap
Julius Simon
Robert Szold
Stephen S. Wise

[Incomplete]

February 23rd, 1938

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Rabbi Silver:

I am sending you herewith a copy of a letter George Backer has sent to various communities throughout the country.

I would greatly appreciate if you will assign the task to someone in Cleveland who you think might be the proper person to do this job.

With kindest regards.

Sincerely yours,

Meyer W. Weisgal
Meyer W. Weisgal

MWW:RL
ENC

P.S. Incidentally, may we add your name as an officer of the National Committee when it is finally formed?

The Palestine Exhibit
at the
New York World's Fair—1939

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING
NEW YORK CITY

April 15, 1938.

MEYER W. WEISGAL
Director

PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE

Stephen S. Wise
Honorary Chairman

George Backer
Harold Jacobi
Chairmen

Samuel Blitz
Secretary

Samuel J. Bloomingdale
Israel B. Brodie

Bernard Flexner
Elisha M. Friedman

William Goldman

Israel Goldstein

David M. Heyman

Arthur M. Lamport

Louis Lipsky

G. A. Lowenstein

Julian W. Mack

Edward A. Norman

James N. Rosenberg

Morris Rothenberg

Alexander Sachs

Michael Schaap

Julius Simon

Robert Szold

[Incomplete]

Rabbi A. H. Silver,
The Temple,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Rabbi Silver,

The enclosed correspondence
between Mr. Klein and myself will, I believe, be
of some interest to you.

Very sincerely yours,

George Backer
George Backer,
Chairman.

GB:FSC

THE PALESTINE EXHIBIT

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING
NEW YORK CITY

March 30th, 1938

Mr. George J. Klein
2480 East 22nd Street
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Mr. Klein:

I have refrained from writing to you about the Cleveland quota of \$5,000 toward the \$250,000 budget of the Palestine Exhibit at the World's Fair for the reason that some time ago, Rabbi Silver made a tentative promise that he would take care of the matter in Cleveland and would call together the members of our National Committee and assign the task to an individual capable of raising the quota.

What with the U.P.A. and his other activities, Rabbi Silver, however, is so preoccupied now that he has written us begging to be relieved of the responsibility. I am, therefore, turning to you in the hope that you will be able to take the initiative in calling together all the members of our National Committee, and such other persons as you may deem it advisable to ask for assistance, to secure the Cleveland underwriting of the \$5,000 assigned your city.

As I indicated in my correspondence to Rabbi Silver and other communities, it is not necessary that the entire amount be raised immediately so long as the obligation is assumed. If Cleveland will give us \$2,500 during the year of 1938 and the balance early in 1939, it will be in keeping with our budgetary plans and will enable us to proceed in an orderly manner in the building of the Palestine Exhibit.

I hardly think it is necessary for me to urge upon you the importance of the Palestine Exhibit at the World's Fair. It is too early for me to give you a complete portrayal of what the Palestine Exhibit will consist of, other than to indicate that it will be a notable achievement and a great contribution toward our efforts to make the American public conscious of what Jewry has accomplished in Palestine and what it means to the Jewish people as a whole.

For your information, I am sending you here a list of the members of our National Committee in Cleveland. Among them are men of high standing in the community, and of great responsibility, whose interest in Palestine is well known. I am also sending you a list of people who have been asked to serve on our Committee but who have so far not replied. It is quite possible that we may have left out certain people who will be valuable to you; if so, please advise us and we shall write to them.

I shall be very grateful to you if you will let me hear from you at the earliest possible moment.

With many thanks for your cooperation, I am

Sincerely yours,
George Backer
Chairman

GB:RL

THE PALESTINE EXHIBIT

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING
NEW YORK CITY

GEORGE J. KLEIN

April 1, 1938

George Backer, Chairman,
The Palestine Exhibit at the
New York World's Fair-1939
Empire State Building
New York City, New York

Dear Sir:-

Replying to your letter of March 30th, we beg
to advise that I am accepting no new jobs.

I might make two observations, however, in
connection with your letter: one is, that some
arch optimist established a \$5,000.00 quota for
Cleveland and the second is that the purse strings
of our city are apparently held by Rabbi Silver
and it is probably unfortunate for your endeavor
that he has stepped aside in fulfilling his promise
and I know of no other individual in this town
who can raise even a fraction of this amount and
I am inclined to believe that on more mature thought
Rabbi Silver also felt it strategically wise to
side step this impossible undertaking.

In closing, however, I wish to say that I am
definitely out. I can neither accept any leadership
nor part of any committee to raise this money.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed)

G. J. Klein

GJK:JL

THE PALESTINE EXHIBIT

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING
NEW YORK CITY

April 15, 1938.

Mr. George J. Klein,
2480 East 22nd Street,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Klein,

I hope you will forgive me for not answering sooner your letter of April 1st. To say that your letter shocked me is putting it very mildly. I was as amazed as I was chagrined, both by the tone and the content of your communication. I might have expected such a response from one of my "own" so-called non-Zionist group. Coming from a Zionist and, as I understand, one who has been identified with the Zionist Movement in a leading capacity for many years, it is a bit hard to swallow.

I accepted the chairmanship of the National Committee and the presidency of the Palestine Exhibit at the request of Dr. Wise, and because of the assurance that I would receive the whole-hearted support of Zionists throughout the country. Although I am not a Zionist, and have never been identified officially or otherwise with the Zionist Movement, I accepted this responsibility because of my deep conviction that a dignified, impressive Exhibit of positive Jewish achievements in Palestine today, is of a significance to American and world Jewry transcending that of a mere physical exhibit. The Zionists, I thought, would be the first to understand this. It is, therefore, very discouraging to me, personally, to find that that understanding is lacking.

I am perfectly aware of all the problems facing the Jewish communities, and demands being made upon them. I know also that the building of the Palestine Exhibit represents an additional burden which it is not easy to assume. Yet there is no other way in which this thing can be done. It, therefore, devolves upon those who have an understanding of its significance to give their aid in its execution.

THE PALESTINE EXHIBIT

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

NEW YORK CITY

If any support is to come from Cleveland, I am quite sure it will have to come from that section of the community which has sympathy and understanding for the project. I must confess that, as a non-Zionist, I am genuinely disappointed at the lukewarm and almost indifferent attitude of some community leaders from whom a different response was to be expected.

I hope you will not take amiss what I am saying here. I strongly feel the responsibility for the task undertaken, and I am hopeful that leading Zionists will help me carry this responsibility.

I am sending a copy of this correspondence to Rabbi Silver.

Very sincerely yours,

George Backer
Chairman.

GB:FSC

April 20, 1938

Mr. George Backer, Chairman
The Palestine Exhibit,
Empire State Building,
New York, N.Y.

My dear Mr. Backer:

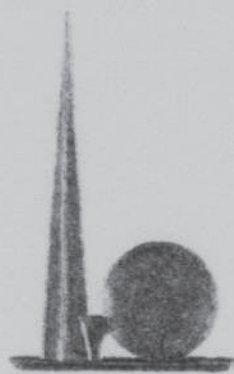
Thank you so much for your letter of April 15 enclosing your correspondence with Mr. George Klein of Cleveland. Mr. Klein's letter amused me greatly. I am his pet aversion and mentioning my name to him was waving a red flag. The gentleman is a dyspeptic individual who has had it in for the world, I understand, ever since he lost his money.

"A correction, please!" as Charlie Chan would say. I do not recall having made a promise to you that I would take care of raising \$5,000 in Cleveland and that I would call together the members of your National Committee and assign the task to an individual capable of raising the quota. Nor do I recall writing to you begging to be relieved of the responsibility.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

AHS:BK



*The President and Board of Directors
of the
New York World's Fair 1939
request the honor of your presence
at the
Official Opening
by the
President of the United States
of the
New York World's Fair 1939
on Sunday afternoon, the thirtieth of April
Nineteen hundred and thirty-nine
at two o'clock*

*Please send reply to
The Chief of Ceremonials
World's Fair
New York*

The Palestine Exhibit
at the
New York World's Fair—1939

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING
NEW YORK CITY

MEYER W. WEISGAL
Director

May 5, 1938

PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE

Stephen S. Wise
Honorary Chairman

George Backer
Harold Jacobi
Chairmen

Samuel Blitz
Secretary

Samuel J. Bloomingdale
Israel B. Brodie

Bernard Flexner
Elisha M. Friedman

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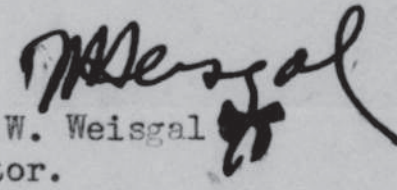
Rabb A. H. Silver,
The Temple,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver,

Knowing how preoccupied you are with tremendous tasks, what with the UPA, and your own rabbinical and local duties, I am deeply appreciative of your suggestion that you may give me some time when I come to Cleveland on behalf of the Palestine Pavilion at the New York World's Fair. I can come on May 11th, 12th, or 13th, whichever day suits your convenience.

Please let me know when I can come.

Sincerely yours,


Meyer W. Weisgal
Director.

MWW:FSC



*The American Committee
for
Jewish Palestine Participation
at the New York World's Fair 1939*

requests the honor of your presence at the

Dedication
of the
Jewish Palestine Pavilion
by
Albert Einstein

*on Sunday afternoon, the twenty-eighth of May
Nineteen hundred and thirty-nine
in the Court of Peace-World's Fair
at two-thirty o'clock*

*Please present this invitation
at Court of Peace*

On the Occasion of the Dedication
of the Jewish Palestine Pavilion

The President of the
New York World's Fair 1939

WRH requests the pleasure of
Rabbi Abba Heller Silver's
company at luncheon

on Sunday, the twenty eighth of May
at one o'clock

at Pexylon Hall

R.S.V.P

Please send reply to
The Chief of Ceremonials
World's Fair
New York