



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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

Series II: Harold P. Manson File (Zionism Files), 1940-1949, undated.

Sub-series A: Main Manson File, 1940-1949.

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British Policy on Palestine, 1941.

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June 14, 1941.

His Excellency
The British Ambassador
Washington, D. C.

Dear Lord Halifax:

I write to thank you for your verbal message communicated to me through the British Press Service. We are naturally glad to know that there has been some modification in that the attitude of the Palestine authorities in regard to the recruiting of a Home Guard from among the Jewish population. This does not, I assume, imply any change in the matter of the establishment of a Jewish military force for active operations in the Near East.

I take this opportunity also of acknowledging your personal letter to me of April 29. I had wished to comment on certain matters contained therein, but had deferred doing so in view of the new and threatening situation which had developed in the Eastern Mediterranean since your meeting with our Delegation on March 14th. The situation continues critical, and I feel it would be inopportune to pursue these matters further, save that I must emphasize that the allegations contained in our Statement and Supplementary Memorandum with regard to the lamentable circumstances attending the deportation of the refugees from the "Atlantique", were based on evidence from several sources, including the statements of eye-witnesses, in the trustworthiness of which we had and still have good reason to believe. I understand that with a view to ascertaining the truth of these circumstances, the Executive of the Jewish Agency in London had urged the desirability of an impartial inquiry. We realize of course, that in the light of the existing situation, that request can hardly be pressed, especially as evidence of persons at present in Mauritius would be very material. Possibly at some future time the opportunity may offer itself for a full investigation.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen S. Wise

BRITISH EMBASSY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

July 3rd, 1941

Ref: 555/46/41

Dear Rabbi Wise,

Thank you for your letter of June 14th.

I was away in New England last week or I should have
acknowledged it sooner.

As regards the first paragraph of your
letter I have no reason to think that your assumption is
incorrect.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) Halifax

Rabbi Wise
Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs
41 East 42nd Street
New York City