



## 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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Roundtable Conference on Near East, Harris Institute, University  
of Chicago, 1942.



*from Mr. Weinman  
to Dr. Silver*

C O P Y

Chicago, Ill.  
June 30, 1942

Dear Emanuel:

This morning while in the lobby of the hotel, speaking with Saul Spiro about ZOA matters, Professor Webster spied me and joined us. He was very pleasant, and he asked me whether I was free in the afternoon to attend the Round Table Conference of the Harris Institute. I told him I understood that it was a closed Conference limited to invited guests. He thought that Prof. Ireland would be delighted to have me attend if I called him. Professor Gibb then joined Prof. Webster who introduced us. Gibb was noticeably cold.

Spiro called Ireland on the 'phone. When he heard the mention of Zionist Organization, he became quite vehement. He said that he would be delighted to have me present as an observer, but that the Zionists of this country had antagonized all liberal specialists on the Near East by their aggressive and unwarranted attack on the Institute.

I met Ireland shortly before the Round Table opened. He was very cordial. He complained bitterly, however, that the telegram of Dr. Wise and Judge Mack to President Hutchins had misrepresented the situation. I told him that naturally the Zionists of America were distressed to learn that Malcolm MacDonald had been invited to speak and that Dr. Weizmann had not. He had no chance to reply, for the time for the Round Table to open had arrived.

I sat next to Professor Webster during the discussion. No one was openly hostile, but it was obvious that we had no non-Jewish friends except Webster. A Professor Lybyer took it for granted that the White Paper would be fully carried out by the British Government. Prof. Feigin, of the Oriental Institute here, protested rather vehemently and a little incoherently. I am afraid, that the White Paper was unjust and could never be enforced in a just world.

Professor Quincy Wright, who led the discussion, was very general in his observations. The Arab, George M. Barakat, Pres. of the so-called "Syrian-Lebanese-American Federation", participated often in the discussion, but said very little, though very pleasantly. He seems to have ingratiated himself with the men who were there.

Professor Wright's address you probably know all about. I am sending you a clipping from the "Chicago Sun".

Prof. Fischel called this morning to see me. He is returning to New York today. I would suggest that you get in touch with him. He has some interesting observations to make about the whole matter. Perhaps it would be possible and advisable to have him meet with the Emergency Committee and give his impressions of the group who met here for five days.

I am enclosing the circular that relates to the formation of the Council for Near East Studies, the publication of a scholarly periodical, etc. I personally believe that we Zionists can achieve more by adroit and discreet cooperation with the group than by an antagonistic and truculent attitude. But the matter requires much more thorough study than we have thus far given it.

Cordially yours,

(Signed) Lou Levinthal



HARRIS INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE ON NEAR EAST,  
June 1942.

Proposals for the formation of a  
COUNCIL FOR NEAR EAST STUDIES (or, AFFAIRS)

Objectives:

1. Collection, dissemination, and consideration of information about the contemporary Near East in a scholarly manner, aimed at providing the soundest bases for full understanding and practical action.
2. Awareness of and acquaintance with all others having practical interests in, intimate connections with, and a direct knowledge of this field.
3. Sharing of information and contacts to the end of a more comprehensive and more nearly adequate knowledge.
4. Assistance in the training of personnel for
  - a) service in the Near East
  - b) teaching and lecturing about the Near East.

Methods:

1. A periodic news letter.
2. Publication of papers (articles).
3. Publication of a "who's who", listing ourselves and other specialists on the Near East, together with an annual census of research projects in process, to facilitate mutual activity, or at least sharing.
4. A bibliographical service.
5. Eventually an American substitute for Oriente Moderno.
6. Annual or biennial meetings, possibly in connection with some "going concern", such as those indicated below (7).
7. Collaboration with other special interest groups such as
  - American Historical Society
  - American Oriental Society
  - Foreign Policy Association.
8. Collaboration with foreign nationalities from Near East in Americas.

Possible cooperating agencies, groups, persons:

1. 1942 Harris Institute members.
2. Oil Companies.
3. Archaeologists and historians in/of Near East.
4. Tobacco companies buying in Near East.
5. Other importers and exporters.
6. Teachers in American schools in Near East.
7. Former teachers in Near East.
8. Some missionaries, and former missionaries.
9. Consular and diplomatic representatives - active, transferred, retired.

Chicago . . . . . 1942

Herewith is my initial contribution of \$...toward the fund to finance the exploratory work regarding the founding of a

COUNCIL OF NEAR EAST STUDIES  
(name tentative)

Suggestions as to:

Objectives:

Methods:

Cooperating agencies, groups, persons:

Etc.

Name. . . . .  
Address. . . . .