



## 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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Yishuv, 1941-1942.



PROPOSALS FOR A PROGRAM OF ACTION  
BY A UNITED AMERICAN JEWRY

It is assumed that the paramount obligation of all American Jews is to give full support to our country and government in the prosecution of the war. In addition, the following is submitted as the basis for an agreed program of action for American Jewry for the war and post-war periods:

I.

1. To give moral and financial support to the Jewish communities devastated by Nazi aggression and to other Jewish communities in need, consistent with the war-time policies of our country in relation to the Axis powers.
2. To combat all manifestations of anti-Semitism.
3. -a) To support Palestine Jewry in its effort to participate in the war as a military ally of Great Britain through the formation of a Jewish Army similar in status to that of the Poles, Czechs and others; and to assist Palestine Jewry to make a maximum contribution, agriculturally and industrially to allied war needs.
- b) To defend Jewish rights in Palestine under the mandate and to oppose any whittling down of those rights and in particular the implementation of the MacDonald White Paper.
- c) To aid Jewish immigration and settlement in Palestine and to strengthen the Jewish economic position there.



## II.

1. To secure the restoration of the equality of rights and status of Jews everywhere; and to obtain group rights for Jewish communities where group rights are recognized, provided that the Jewish community concerned so desires
2. To provide for the economic rehabilitation of Jewish communities which have suffered from the war.
3. To establish Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth; and to further large-scale Jewish immigration and settlement there under Jewish control.

The establishment of such a Commonwealth shall in no way be deemed to affect the political allegiance, status or position of Jews living in other countries; only those actually domiciled in Palestine shall be considered nationals of the Jewish Commonwealth.

All the inhabitants of Palestine, without regard to race or religion shall enjoy full equality of rights.

4. To secure financial support from Jewish communities throughout the world for large-scale Jewish immigration into Palestine and to obtain inter-governmental aid for the same purpose.



TRANSLATION FROM THE HEBREW

JERUSALEM, 16.8.42

To the Executive of the Jewish Agency,  
The Executive of the Vaad Leumi  
Members of the Security Committee  
Presidium of the Recruiting Fund

From MR. M. SHERTOK

I beg to communicate herewith the text of the agreement signed with the revisionists concerning the subsidy they are to receive for their recruiting work, and with regard to their attitude to the Recruiting Fund.

In compliance with their request, the agreements contain no reference to any participation in certain training activities, for they desire to submit new proposals on this point, which will probably require separate negotiations.

It was agreed that the full text of the agreement should not be given to the press. At the Press Conference convened by the Political Department on the 12th instant I announced the main items of the agreement which are to be published.

1. In accordance with the Revisionists' statement on the subject of enlistment the Revisionists express their agreement to the principles underlying the recruiting campaign in the Yishuv.
2. The Revisionists' recruiting office is to receive its share out of the Recruiting Fund for as long as the Fund continues to exist providing they take their share in the recruiting campaign.
3. The subsidies are to be paid to the Revisionists monthly. The maximum monthly subsidy for the period August and September 1942 was fixed at £800, in accordance with a detailed budget to be submitted in advance to the Recruiting Centre for confirmation. Should it transpire that subsidies were also granted for July, the Revisionists are to receive their share accordingly.
4. The Revisionist Recruiting Office is to present a monthly report showing the expenditures incurred. The Revisionist Recruiting Office will allow the Recruiting Centre to check its expenditures and exercise control of the accounts by producing the books for inspection whenever required.
5. The subject of the Revisionists' share in the Fund will be reviewed at the end of September, when a survey will be made of the Revisionists' recruiting work and of the budget of the Recruiting Centre. The Revisionists' monthly subsidy which will be based on the results shown as well as on the proposed monthly budget of the Revisionists Recruiting Office will be valid for three months, after which period it will be re-examined.
6. The Recruiting Centre stipulates that as in the past so also in the future and without any relation to the present agreement, there should be full equality in respect of benefits to soldiers' families out of the Recruiting Fund. Care should be taken of the serving and discharged soldiers and no discrimination whatsoever be made between the beneficiaries of the Fund.
7. The Revisionists will be represented at the joint meetings of the relevant institutions, which will decide on the distribution of the money out of the Recruiting Fund (aid to soldiers' families, etc.) The Revisionists are also to have representation on the Central Committee to assist soldiers' wives, and will arrange meetings between the Discharged Soldiers Care Committee and the Revisionists are also to have representation on the Central Committee to assist soldiers' wives, and will arrange meetings between the Discharged Soldiers Care Committee and the Revisionist representatives, to discuss matters pertaining to discharged soldiers of the Revisionist Party. According to a pre-arrangement with the President of the Recruiting Fund, a Revisionist representative will be invited to the meetings of the Presidium.
8. On signing this agreement the Revisionists will proclaim their non-opposition to the Recruiting Fund. The Revisionists will instruct their members to resume their full share in the present recruiting campaign. The Revisionist press will also refrain from attacking the activities of the Recruiting Centre.
9. The Revisionist Recruiting Office is to come to an arrangement with the Recruiting Centre concerning the members eligible for enlistment and exemption certificates.

Tel Aviv,  
12.8.42

M. SHERTOK  
J. BUKSPAN  
A. SHOTNIK  
M. ARBER



REPORT BY DR. I.J. KLIGLER

to Office Committee Meeting  
Thursday, September 24, 1942.

Dr. Kligler, who had recently arrived from Palestine reported as follows to the members of the Office Committee:

ECONOMIC SITUATION

Dr. Kligler said that he was in the position of an onlooker, rather than an active participant in economic matters, except in so far as he was interested in economics as they affected the health of the community. At present there is a shortage of labor in defense work as well as in industrial and agricultural production for war purposes. In industrial production wages have kept pace with the cost of living; by an agreement between the workers and the manufacturers, ratified by government, there is a "wage review" every three months, so that adjustments may be made in accordance with the cost of living. This arrangement affects some 30,000 workers employed in war industries; however, unskilled, clerical and professional workers have no such agreement and there is no relation there between wages and the cost of living, which in comparison with the prices of August 1939, has risen to an index of 180 (food index 240). There is no rationing to speak of and no regulation of food prices, with the result that on the one hand there is prosperity and on the other a shortage of necessities and real want. Agricultural production has risen considerably; the country produces all the fruits and vegetables it needs, but only 10% of its meat requirements and some 60% of the milk and eggs normally required.

So long as routes were open additional food was brought from Australia and America. Since the entry of Japan into the war, which cut off importations of wheat, milk and butter from Australia, no other source of these supplies are available. Besides, food for the Army which is lost must be replaced locally, thus putting an additional strain on the production capacity of the country.

There is an arrangement for pooling the agricultural resources of the neighboring countries, but this is a political as well as an economic problem. Two and a half years ago Great Britain set up a Middle East Supply Center, which was to arrange for an exchange of goods among neighboring countries and was to include Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Transjordan, Lebanon and, to some extent, Turkey. However, political conditions in Egypt, Syria and Iraq, made it impossible to arrange for an interchange to any appreciable extent, despite the fact that Iraq, for example, has a surplus of eggs and barley. In addition to the political situation, land transportation presents grave difficulties. Recently special people have been sent by England and America to look into the supply situation, which requires a great deal of tact and understanding. They are to prepare a report which will indicate ways and means to relieve the strain of a shortage existing in some countries in the face of a surplus in another. Judging by the calibre of the men sent there is hope that the situation may improve.

In Palestine itself there is a better relationship between Jews and Arabs than has existed for some years. A larger proportion of Arabs in Palestine are favorable to the United Nations than anywhere else. The Egyptians are pro-Italian and the situation in Iraq and Syria is well-known. This pro-Nazi bias on the part of the neighboring Arab countries also has an effect on the economic situation. In Palestine, government has to a large extent aided agricultural production, giving loans to Jewish farmers for extending irrigation, and to Arabs to do deep plowing, etc.



## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Though there is a very strict censorship in Palestine, it is possible to know what is going on. Reuter and United Press cables service the papers. One can listen to the radio without any restrictions. On some matters, Palestine had more detailed news than did America, e.g. India and Egypt. It is, of course, difficult to interpret the news and much of it arrives late. Little news of what American Zionists are doing is published because of the strict censorship. Palestine was never so near and, at the same time, never so far from America as it is today. It is also true that America gets very little news from Palestine. There is also a distortion as to emphasis, e.g. the Ichud.

## ICHUD

The Ichud, according to Dr. Kligler, caused much more excitement here than it did in Palestine. It is really <sup>not</sup> an altogether new organization. It has a history behind it and in a way is a logical outgrowth of previous movements. The Brith Shalom had wanted union with the Arabs; the abandonment of the 100% Jewish labor policy, etc. Then the Brith Shalom dissolved. The disturbances of 1936 brought about an organization called Kadimah, which tried to find some modus vivendi with the Arabs and thus bring an end to the disturbances. Their program was more political in nature and they broached the idea of a bi-national state.

With the outbreak of the war, the League for Arab-Jewish rapprochement was organized. The members of the League believed that this was the eleventh hour for bringing about an understanding between moderates of both sides. It is a loosely knit organization. Some of its members are Sali Hirsh, Thon, Buber, Kalvarisky, Ernst Simon, as well as representatives of Hashomer Hatzair and the Poale Zion. They tried (a) to create Jewish public opinion in favor of better relations, and (b) to work among the Arabs. They were eager to prove that the animosity between Jews and Arabs during the disturbances had been artificially fomented and that, left to themselves, the moderate body of Jews and Arabs could get along peacefully.

Rapprochement fluctuated with the fortunes of war. The pro-British Arab press, the only one permitted to publish, was favorable. The Jews took the position that they were tied up with the British and must not only support the Allied cause without any reservations, but must also attempt to win the Arabs over to the cause of the Democratic nations.

However, the League found that the form of organization was unsatisfactory-- some of its members were individuals, some represented organizations, etc. It was decided therefore, to organize a body which would be representative of all elements in the country, including Labor, Mizrachi and General Zionists, on the one program of union or friendship with the Arabs. Various incidents had also made it seem important to form such an organization.

An attempt had been made to suppress expressions of opinion by the use of terrorist methods. This attempt had been made not by the Revisionists but by persons in the Haganah. This implied one of two things; either the Agency sanctioned the use of terror, or the Agency had lost control of the Haganah. In either event, truly democratic people could not tolerate the situation. It was at that time that Miss Szold issued her appeal through the press. Subsequently, about seven months ago, a meeting took place at the home of Julius Simon. Miss Szold, Mr. Smoira, Mr. Hafter, Dr. Landauer, Dr. Magnes,



Dr. Kligler and others were present. The discussion centered around the problem of free expression of opinion and the elimination of the use of terrorist methods in Palestine. The moderate press approved the purpose of the meeting: Ha'Aretz definitely approved; the Davar straddled the issue. The meeting decided to send a delegation to the Agency to ascertain the facts in the situation. Miss Szold, Mr. Smilansky and Mr. Buber went to see Shertok. He told them that the Haganah was, of course, under the control of the Agency. That the terrorist acts had been committed by irresponsible youngsters, who should, however, not be too severely condemned, because the provocation had been great. The delegation did not consider this a very satisfactory answer.

In any case, it was decided that some sort of permanent organization should be formed, which would foster freedom of thought on political and other issues so as to avoid the necessity of ad hoc meetings and personal appeals such as Miss Szold had had to make. A group of people took the initiative to invite others to join them, to form the Ichud. Dr. Magnes did not personally create the Ichud; his ideas no doubt stimulated the initiators; he was asked to become chairman and refused. He is a member of a praesidium of six.

The platform of Ichud is as follows:

1. Every member must be a Shekel payer and accept the Zionist platform.
2. A bi-national state in the whole of Palestine for Jews and Arabs. Both people are to have the same political rights and there is to be a policy of political non-domination of one group over the other. This implies political "parity," Dr. Kligler said, but he preferred to use the term "political non-domination."
3. Striving toward a federation of some sort with the neighboring states, Transjordan, Syria and Lebanon.
4. There is to be no restriction on the economic, social or cultural development of either Arabs or Jews. Jewish immigration is to be limited only by the economic absorptive capacity of the country.

It is the view of many members of the Ichud that the largest post-war Jewish problem will be peace with the Arabs and the salvaging of Jewish refugees from Europe, and that the only countries to which Jews can come are Palestine and America. Dr. Magnes is not opposed, as some think to a Jewish majority in Palestine. He just thinks that those people live in dreams who think they can obtain Arab consent to a Jewish majority at the present before a friendly basis has been established between Jews and Arabs.

The Ichud is a constituent member of the League for Arab-Jewish rapprochement, which accepted a very carefully worded program worked out by the Hashomer Hatzair.

At this point Mrs. Halprin asked why, if the program on immigration were as clear as Dr. Kligler had indicated, it was found necessary to couch it in such ambiguous and unclear terms. She also pointed out that the Ben-Tov memorandum explicitly stated that Jewish immigration was to be unrestricted only in certain regions.

Dr. Kligler said that it had been considered unwise to insert the plank on immigration in so many words as part of the program, because that might destroy any possibility of rapprochement. As a matter of fact, he said, official



Zionism, before the war, was ready to accept a bi-national state. Ben-Tov's report was a personal document; the formulation by the Hashomer Hatzair is explicit and binds the group.

The Ichud feels that if one honestly comes to others with a program, without mental reservations, one has a chance of securing an agreement. The members of the Ichud are out to secure the confidence of the Arabs and to secure as much Zionist support for its program as possible. He believed that if an unbiased free vote were taken in Palestine today, a majority of the people would support the program of the Ichud.

Mrs. Halprin remarked that she agreed entirely with Dr. Kligler on the question of freedom of expression. She did not, however, see how a bi-national state and unrestricted Jewish immigration would be reconciled.

Dr. Kligler said that the Ben-Tov memorandum was prepared on the initiative of the League and was accepted by it as a basis for discussion. When the actual formulation came up the Hashomer Hatzair representatives said that further discussion was necessary. After discussing the problem, they formulated a program which represents the official opinion of the Hashomer Hatzair.

In answer to a question concerning the omission of the Negev from the Ben-Tov memorandum, Dr. Kligler said that the Negev was never brought into the discussion.

Mr. Lourie asked whether there was any explicit statement on unrestricted immigration in the platform of the Ichud.

Dr. Kligler answered that that was automatically accepted when the Ichud joined the League and that neither he nor Miss Szold would be members if that were not so.

Mrs. Epstein said that if the case were as clear-cut as that, she could not understand why all the reports had used such ambiguous terminology.

Mr. Wertheim asked whether it were true that the Ichud demanded the deletion of the clause from the JNF charter to the effect that JNF land should be worked only by Jews.

Dr. Kligler replied that this was not a demand of the Ichud, but admitted that it was a natural part of its program. Arabs are now working on JNF land because there is a shortage of labor. The purpose of the clause was to increase the absorptive capacity for Jews; however, when one doesn't have to come to government for each certificate this will not be necessary. Besides, there are certain tactical things which must be taken into consideration when dealing with people.

Mrs. Epstein asked whether the platform of the Ichud had been designed to secure the consent of the Arabs, or to seem reasonable to the powers that will impose the peace after the war.

Dr. Kligler replied that the people made the proposal because they believed in it. However, it was his conviction that those who talk rationally, justly and sensibly are more likely to get a hearing. He said he worked professionally with Arabs and believed that a considerable body of Arabs would accept this program. The ZOA has adopted a platform which implies the establishment of a



Jewish state in Palestine. He was convinced that the Arabs would not even consider this, much less consent to it.

Our approach, he said, must be one which makes our position just and, at the same time, helps to salvage the Jewish refugees from Europe. He hoped to get cooperation from America on the program of the Ichud.

Dr. Goldmann asked whether the Ichud intended to remain an internal group within the Zionist movement, or whether, if it could not secure a majority, it planned to conduct separate negotiations.

Dr. Kligler answered that he could not say what the Ichud intended to do, but he could say what it does not intend to do. It is an organized group within Zionism that would try to obtain sufficient support to influence Zionist opinion and succeed in getting adequate representation of its views.

He denied that negotiations had been conducted by members of the Ichud with Arabs and said that in order to sound out the Arabs they had to be talked to, but these were not negotiations in the political sense.

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