



## 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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Wilkie, Wendell L., 1942.

April 27, 1942

Mr. Wendell L. Willkie  
15 Broad Street  
New York, N.Y.

My dear Mr. Willkie:

The President of the World Zionist Organization, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, one of the world's foremost scientists, has recently arrived by Clipper from England. When I was with him in London, a few weeks ago, he expressed a great desire to meet you and to take counsel with you about certain matters of great moment to world Jewry and Palestine. It would give me great pleasure indeed if you could set aside an hour some day for such a meeting. I would be very happy to accompany Dr. Weizmann. I plan to be in New York on Monday and Tuesday, May 11 and 12. Would you be free on either of these days? If not, would you suggest a time convenient for you?

Though long an admirer of you and your work, I have as yet not had the pleasure and privilege of meeting you. With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

AHS:BK



WENDELL L. WILLKIE  
15 BROAD STREET  
NEW YORK

April 29, 1942

My dear Rabbi Silver:

Thank you very much for your letter of April twenty-seventh. I was delighted to hear from you and would certainly enjoy meeting Dr. Weizmann as you suggest.

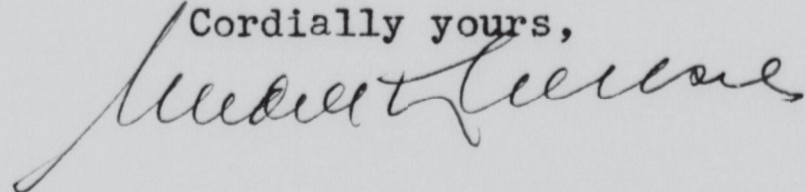
Unfortunately, however, I must be in Schenectady for a talk at Union College on the eleventh and on the twelfth my son will be graduated from the Naval Training School on the Prairie State. Immediately after the exercises, we are leaving for Rushville, Indiana, for ten days or two weeks.

Upon my return, I shall be more than happy to see Dr. Weizmann at any time, and of course, I hope that you will be able to come East again also.

I am so sorry that we will miss connections this time, and I sincerely hope that we will be able to arrange a later date.

Again, many thanks for your thoughtfulness and the best of luck to you.

Cordially yours,



Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
East 105th Street At Ansel Road  
Cleveland, Ohio



MEMORANDUM ON DEFENSE OF PALESTINE AND THE JEWS

The Nazis are nearing the gates of Palestine. The invasion of that country by Hitler, even temporarily, may result in the complete annihilation of the Jewish community there- men, women and children- and the total destruction of their work by the Nazis with the help of the Mufti. To the Jewish people throughout the world, this will mean more than the massacre of some 600,000 Jews; it will be the ruin of their Third Temple; the destruction of their Holy of Holies.

Repeated efforts and offers made since the beginning of the war by Jews of Palestine to mobilize all their resources along side Great Britain, were, with few exceptions, frustrated. With the Italian attack on Egypt in the summer of 1940, the British army required as many men as it could get. The Arab allies of Great Britain in the Middle East, Egypt and Iraq, chose to remain neutral. Only Jewish Palestine was eager to provide the necessary manpower. But the Palestine Administration, pursuing a policy of appeasement toward the Mufti and his friends, saw to it that the services of the Jews should be limited, and confined to non-combatant units. When the threat of invasion to Palestine came nearer and the Jews there insisted on their right to defend their country, the government could hardly resist this claim, and it was decided to form Jewish fighting units. But the appeasers qualified this decision by introducing the principle of "parity," which meant that only as many Jewish fighting units could be formed, as there may be Arab units. As the Palestine Arabs showed no greater eagerness to fight on the side of the United Nations than the Egyptians and the Iraqians, the decision to have Jewish fighting units conditioned by parity could not amount to very much.

The official reason for the refusal to mobilize the Jews of Palestine was lack of equipment. But the Jews never requested preferential treatment. All they asked was the same measure of equipment supplied to British troops throughout the world. Another reason sometimes given was that the mobilization of Jews might



upset the Arabs. What Arabs? Pro-Nazi Arabs ( either because they hate the British, or believe in Hitler's victory, or sympathize with fascist ideals) cannot be bought off by sacrificing the Jews. Those Arabs who want the democracies to win must welcome an additional force fighting ~~with~~ the United Nations. Jewish Units, which fought in Egypt and Lybia, and those stationed in Palestine, upset nobody

Jews of Palestine claim the elementary right, denied to no people in the world, to defend themselves and their country and fight the mortal enemy of their people and of humanity.

About 13,00 men are already enlisted in special Jewish units in various military services: infantry, artillery, air force, navy, technical. An additional 7,000 are serving in the police, which is now militarized. If properly organized, the present Jewish units, will constitute a single division. In addition, at least three more Jewish divisions can be immediately raised.

The war potential of Jewish Palestine may seem very little in the scale of this global war. But on the Palestine front it may play a not inconsiderable, and, under certain circumstances, perhaps a decisive role. A division or two may tip the scales in a crucial battle. Even if it does not assure victory; it may effect delay. And a delay of the invasion of Palestine may mean the difference between survival and destruction.

It may be that with all the Jews of Palestine fighting to the last, invasion and destruction cannot be avoided. But even then it will be a matter of supreme importance whether Jews of Palestine perish as soldiers and men fighting their enemies or are slaughtered like defenseless sheep. Should our people in Palestine be massacred, having been denied the right of self-defense by the Mandatory power, it will not only be a most tragic disaster for Jews. It will deal a fatal blow to the prestige of the British government and bring grave moral damage to the cause of the United Nations. Public opinion throughout the civilized world will



be aroused against this wanton sacrifice of a people needlessly deprived of the means of self-defense.

There is no time to be lost. Only the friendly intervention of the President of the United States with his British ally can avert the catastrophe threatening Palestine. A word from the President should make possible the immediate and full mobilization of all Jewish manpower in Palestine, without preference and without discrimination, on a basis of equality with all other people.

July 2, 1942  
Washington, D.C.

David Ben-Gurion  
Chairman, Executive of the Jewish Agency.





COPY FOR DR. SILVER

POSTAL TELEGRAPH

OCTOBER 15, 1942

DAY LETTER

MR. WENDELL L. WILLKIE  
15 Broad St.  
New York City

MAY I OFFER WARM WELCOME ON YOUR RETURN FROM YOUR IMPORTANT  
HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT MISSION <sup>Together with all Americans</sup> WHICH I FOLLOWED WITH DEEPEST INTEREST. YOUR  
IMPRESSIONS OF THE NEAR EAST INTEREST ME IN A SPECIAL SENSE AS LIFELONG  
ZIONIST AND NATIONAL CHAIRMAN OF UNITED PALESTINE APPEAL. VIEWS AND POLICIES  
ON NEAR EAST AND PALESTINE IN PARTICULAR ARE OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO THE WHOLE  
JEWISH PEOPLE AND DISPOSITIONS REGARDING PALESTINE A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH  
FOR MILLIONS OF OUR BRETHREN. AM THEREFORE MOST ANXIOUS TO HAVE YOUR IMPRESSIONS  
AND ~~VERY~~ CONFER WITH YOU AT THE ~~XX~~ EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY TOGETHER WITH ONE OR TWO  
OF MY COLLEAGUES IN LEADERSHIP OF THE MOVEMENT. (HOPE WE CAN MEET BEFORE YOU HAVE  
OCCASION TO MAKE ANY STATEMENT ON PALESTINE AND NEAR EAST.) WE ARE ALSO MOST  
ANXIOUS TO HAVE YOU ADDRESS A PUBLIC MEETING IN CARNEGIE HALL SUNDAY EVENING  
NOVEMBER FIRST IN OBSERVANCE OF TWENTYFIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BALFOUR DECLARATION  
WHICH WILL BE SPONSORED BY SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING PROBABLY LEAGUE OF NATIONS  
ASSOCIATION FREE WORLD ASSOCIATION CHURCH PEACE UNION ETCETERA. (HOPE YOU WILL IN  
ANY CASE RESERVE THAT EVENING OR PART OF IT DEPENDING ON FURTHER DISCUSSION.)  
REGRET THAT WE COULD NOT AVAIL OURSELVES OF YOUR READY CONSENT TO MEET WITH  
~~DRXXNLEX~~ DOCTOR WEIZMANN AND MYSELF LAST SUMMER BUT FEEL IT IS RATHER URGENT  
THAT WE MEET NOW. AM REQUESTING MY FRIEND DOCTOR EMANUEL NEUMANN TO TRY TO ARRANGE  
MATTERS FOLLOWING THIS TELEGRAM.

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER  
41 E. 42nd Street, Room 1120, New York



C O P Y

Hotel Winthrop  
Lexington Avenue & 47th Street  
New York, N.Y.  
August 25, 1942.

Mr. Wendell L. Willkie  
15 Broad Street  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Willkie:

Our people in Palestine, as well as myself, have learned with deep interest of your forthcoming visit to the Middle East on behalf of the United States. Coming as it does at a very grave hour, we believe it may be of the utmost importance for the whole of the Middle East, as well as to the United Nations in general. Your clear insight, extraordinary grasp of realities, great courage and constructive statesmanship will, I hope and pray, serve as a lever of victory in that vital front of the war.

I hope to return to Palestine shortly, but I may miss you and therefore take the liberty of sending you the memorandum which I submitted to President Roosevelt on July 3, on the military situation in Palestine.

May I add my earnest hope that you will meet the representatives of our people in Jerusalem: Mr. Moshe Shertok, the political head of the Jewish Agency for Palestine ( a body representing the Jewish people, as set forth in Article IV of the Palestine Mandate), and Mr. Isaac Ben-Zvi, the chairman of the National Council of Palestine Jews, who will be most eager to help you in every way, as will all our people in Palestine, in your all important mission. If, for some reason, you do not go to Palestine, I am sure that Mr. Shertok will be glad to meet you in Cairo, if you will send him a wire.

Wishing you a most successful and safe journey, I am

Sincerely yours,

David Ben-Gurion.



WENDELL L. WILLKIE

15 Broad Street

New York, N.Y.

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August 25, 1942.

My dear Mr. Ben-Gurion:

Many thanks for sending along the memorandum.

I am rushing right now to get away but I wanted you to know I appreciate your thoughtfulness in giving me this information.

Good luck to you.



Cordially yours,

(Signed) Wendell L. Willkie

Mr. David Ben-Gurion  
Lexington Ave. & 47th St.  
New York, N.Y.



Winthrop Hotel  
Lexington Avenue & 47 Street  
New York  
August 27, 1942


Dear Dr. Silver:

After you telephoned me on Tuesday, I learned that Willkie was to leave very soon and it would be impossible to arrange for a meeting. However, I sent him the attached letter and memorandum which he got just in the nick of time and this morning I received from him an acknowledgment, a copy of which I am also sending you.

I thought you might be interested in this exchange of letters.

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours,

  
*D. Ben-Gurion*  
David Ben-Gurion

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
Cleveland, Ohio



RECEIVED - 12:41 P.M.  
OCT. 19, 1942  
NEW YORK, N.Y.

TO: DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

RECEIVED FOLLOWING WIRE: "DEAR RABBI SILVER - RECEIVED YOUR WIRE  
BY TELEPHONE. WILL BE IN NEW YORK THE LATTER PART OF THIS WEEK.  
WILL BE DELIGHTED TO SEE YOU. CALL MY OFFICE AFTER MY ARRIVAL.  
CORDIALLY, WENDELL L. WILKIE" HAVE GIVEN COPY TO EMANUEL NEWMAN.

REGARDS,  
HENRY MONTOR

*Frederick  
Wanner*

*Mon. Oct 26 - R.G.*