



## Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and  
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

### **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.

---

Reel  
102

Box  
35

Folder  
127

American Zionist Emergency Council vs. Jewish Agency Bureau,  
1944.



August 25, 1944

Mr. David Wertheim  
45 East 17th Street  
New York, N.Y.

My dear Mr. Wertheim:

I have just received the minutes of the program committee held on August 22 and I read the statement which you made at the meeting. I should like to congratulate you on the frankness and forthrightness of your position as well as the logic of your arguments. A branch of the Jewish Agency in the United States which duplicates the work of the Emergency Council is wasteful and stupid, and in an emergency situation such as we find ourselves today, a dangerous hindrance and obstacle to efficient political action. It has certainly seriously embarrassed the work of the Emergency Council and my own work as Chairman of its Executive.

I do not know what final action the Executive of the Emergency Council will take next Monday. The resolution adopted at the meeting of the program committee yesterday is utterly unacceptable, for it completely dodges the issue and leaves things substantially in the chaotic condition where they were. If this resolution of the program committee is accepted by the Executive, I will be forced to insist upon the acceptance of my resignation. But, whatever action is taken, I wish you to know that I appreciate your helpfulness not only in this matter but throughout the year in which I have sought to guide the activities of our Council.

As you know, I have always insisted on the authority of the Jewish Agency in all matters of basic Zionist policy. As chairman of the United Palestine Appeal, I have jealously safeguarded the authority of the Jewish Agency over these funds. I would not dream of having the Zionist Emergency Council adopt a basic Zionist position without thorough consultation with the Jewish Agency in London and in Jerusalem. But Dr. Goldmann is not the Jewish Agency and nobody has authorized him to speak on these basic Zionist policies for the Jewish Agency. His actions and opinions are subject to no quick review by the parent body as are the actions and opinions of the chairmen of the Emergency Council which must give an accounting every two weeks, and more often if called ~~for~~ upon.

Goldmann's position is especially equivocal inasmuch as he makes representation in Washington also in the name of the World



August 25, 1944

Jewish Congress and other bodies. You will recall that when the Agency was established in Washington, Goldmann announced that he would dissociate himself from all other activities. This has not been done. As a result, Zionist representation made by Goldmann and World Jewish Congress representation become intermingled, and the Zionist approach to government authorities is accordingly a confused and confusing approach. Furthermore, when Goldmann cannot summon up authority for a Zionist mission to a government official, he invokes his position with the World Jewish Congress, and in the course of a conversation, so to speak, and by "accidental design", Zionist matters are discussed.

This is what happened with Judge Rosenman some months ago. Judge Rosenman was given the definite impression by Goldmann that he represented officially the Emergency Council, and Goldmann agreed to a joint delegation. This is what Judge Rosenman told me, Goldmann's statement at the program committee notwithstanding. The matter of a delegation to the President was a purely American concern in which Goldmann should not have injected himself. But the gentleman cannot keep out of any interesting situation where there is something doing. This happened again when he volunteered to make an appointment for me to see Col. Hoskins. Instead of which he had the interview himself. When we were discussing the advisability of one of the co-chairmen going over to London to exchange views with Dr. Weizmann, Goldmann chased off to London before we came upon a decision. Upon his return he rushed to the War Department to discuss the Jewish Army, without even giving the Emergency Council the courtesy of discussing the matter first. Finally there was the Stettinius affair. The pretext that he had to go to see Stettinius because Weizmann had cabled him about the rescue of Hungarian Jews is about as shallow and transparent an excuse as it is possible to imagine. If representations are to be made to our government in behalf of the Hungarian Jews, clearly the qualified people to do that are the representatives of American Zionism and of American Jewry. Why was not the matter brought to the Executive Committee first? The answer is very simple. Goldmann wanted to get to Stettinius first because everybody was expecting some important announcement to be made by the latter around August 15.

This situation has been growing steadily worse until it has reached a point where I find it impossible ~~for me~~ to carry on, out of deference to my own position, the dignity of my office and the effectiveness of the program of the Emergency Council.

No conceivable formula is possible which at the same time would satisfy the position which I am taking with the position taken by Dr. Goldmann, and reported in the minutes, namely: "Political contacts in Washington (apart from contact with Congress) had to be regarded as a joint area." Any Emergency Council which would agree ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> with such a formula should, for the sake of the Movement, go out of business.

With all good wishes, I remain  
Most cordially yours,