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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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New York Post, articles by Edgar Ansel Mowrer, 1944.

Article  
NEW YORK POST  
April 27, 1944

## PALESTINIAN IMPRESSION

By Edgar Ansel Mowrer

Jerusalem (By Wireless) -- Zionism in Palestine is so explosive a force that it must be seen to be realized. Reading isn't enough. The import of hundreds of thousands of highly trained, highly competent European colonists, bursting with enthusiasm upon a still medieval Islamic society is literally terrific.

Outbursts and stresses seem all but inevitable. They can, in the long run, be allayed only by the triumph of one pattern of life or the other. This doesn't mean that either the Jews or the Arabs must disappear. It does mean that either the Jews be permitted to make Palestine into an entirely modern country -- a sort of outpost in the Middle East of all the finest of the Occident -- or that the Arabs manage to limit, "ghettoize," the Jews.

There is an Arab renaissance undoubtedly. The Arab is moving toward modernization. But gradually in his dignified Oriental manner. It would seem impossible to establish traffic laws satisfactory to both Cadillac and camel-donkey societies.

You become aware of the glaring contrast the moment your plane crosses the frontier from Sinai into Palestine, and far ahead the buildings of Beersheba begin to dance in the sunlight. Behind -- an ocean of sand dunes; ahead, growing patches of green orchards and fields literally wrung, foot by foot, from the shifting desert which has been forced back to a narrow, tawny stria along the blue Mediterranean.

Not all these model farms are Jewish, but most are Jews, and all are Jewish in inspiration, and show where the Arab has swallowed his prejudice and learned from the Jew how, by liberal application of capital, brain-oil and elbow grease, the desert can be made to blossom.

Here is one of the chief Jewish quarrels with the White Paper. According to the Jews, the White Paper prevents them from colonizing vast rocky hillsides, which, according to them, the Arab never could and never will cultivate, but which Zionist brains and Zionist passion can, if allowed, transform into gardens.

Jewish performance to date seems to justify this contention for it almost seems that the rockier, the more barren, the hotter, the sandier the plot of settlement ground chosen, the more passionately do the Jewish colonists throw themselves into the task of reclaiming it.

According to British administrators and foreign diplomats, no job is too tough to be tackled by these people. They not only raise good citrus fruits. No, they must raise the best oranges, lemons, grapefruits to grow anywhere. They not only have hospitals, a scientific institute and a university, but these must be a model for the world -- and are. In the wild joy of creating a new society against all obstacles, Palestinian Jews remind the traveler irresistibly of the Communist enthusiasts who, in a series of five-year plans, did so much to transform backward Russia.

In a ten minutes' walk from the Mosque of Omar on Mount Moriah in the old city of Jerusalem to the new Jewish quarter on the cool hills outside, you traverse a full thousand years.

Here, in this writer's view, is the British headache. Despite bitter charges made by certain Jews, this writer doesn't have the impression that British colonial administration is specifically anti-Zionist or anti-Jew. It is true that the British have covered hill tops with a series of semi-fortified police stations as forbidding as medieval castles. It is true that they seem more tender of Arab susceptibilities than of Jewish ones.

But the British here -- it seems to this writer -- are concentrated primarily upon an imperial task -- namely, making this region safe for the British, and, incidentally, for civilized interests.

Arabs form not only the bulk of the population in the Middle Eastern area but, despite occasional violent uprisings and continual protests, they are fundamentally indolent and easy to handle. The Jews aren't -- decidedly. Peace-loving they certainly are. Despite insignificant extremists who occasionally murder British policemen and bomb buildings, they observe the laws.

But their dynamic colonizing makes for tensions, problems and attitudes with which the officials of the British Colonial Office aren't particularly prepared to cope. Hence, their attitude. Hence, the anxiety which they make no attempt to hide. For, like every one else in this land, they realize that once the war is over, perhaps even before, the Jewish-Arab Palestinian problem, which the White Paper sought to solve and which it has not solved, will burst forth with renewed intensity.

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Article  
NEW YORK POST  
April 29, 1944

## ZIONIST TASKS

By Edgar Ansel Mowrer

Ain Geb, Lake of Galilee (By Wireless) — "Everything in the Middle East comes back to the Zionist problem," said my diplomat friend, back in Cairo. Now, finally, here in this collective settlement on the shores of blue Galilee, I understand him. For Zionist Palestine is the most provocative society in the world.

On a tiny scale, the Zionists are out to prove the possibility of everything most people thought impossible. Foreigners in this area divide, dispute and quarrel as fiercely about Zionism as they did about Soviet Russia. For, in this writer's judgment, as Palestine goes, so in time will go the Middle East.

Consider a few of the tasks the Zionists coolly faced and are in the process of accomplishing. They had first to make a Jewish people. How to bring semi-barbarian Jews from Yemen or Turkestan into the same society with the medieval Talmudists from Lithuania, scientists from Vienna, modernists of New York and Berlin?

Well, with a few exceptions among the older people, this has been done.

Common people must have a common language. This language in Jewish eyes could only be Hebrew -- the language of the prophets. Jews from 34 countries had mostly only a smattering of Hebrew which they knew from prayers. Today Hebrew is the only common language, with English the secondary tongue.

The second task was the fight against the elements. A new town like Tel Aviv, with 170,000 Jews, and scores of individual and collective settlement farms throughout the country, are testimony to the successful war against rocks and sandy desert.

There are no failures to date. Having seen it, this writer is now convinced that with such agricultural methods and thorough industrialization, 3,000,000 such people could thrive on this tiny territory. Furthermore, except for funds needed to finance further immigration, Palestine is now a permanently self-supporting society.

To make this their homeland, the Jews must struggle against a partially hostile Arab population. Arab resistance took the form of first selling land to Jews at exorbitant prices, then doing everything from grumbling to killing in order to prevent the Jews from prospering and spreading.

The Arab plight is the plight of every backward people faced by a peaceful invasion of another people superior in their ability both to work and fight. To repel the Arab attacks, Jews have taken to arms and have a defense organization equal to anything the Palestinian Arabs can possibly bring against it.

Not to speak of towns, every outlying settlement is now a stockade of struggle against the British to secure the right of unrestricted immigration and land purchase. Little can -- under censorship -- be related from here.

Suffice it to say that one way or another, the Jews are beating the White Paper, that some immigrants are steadily reaching the Land of Israel. Only recently two shiploads came from Romania to Istanbul, thus demonstrating that others could have been rescued before if the American and British governments had co-operated then as they are co-operating now.

Another fight was for a largely socialist society. The strongest force in this country is the Jewish Labor Party. Some agricultural settlements go far beyond Russia and have established complete collectivism, share and share alike, regardless of natural gifts.

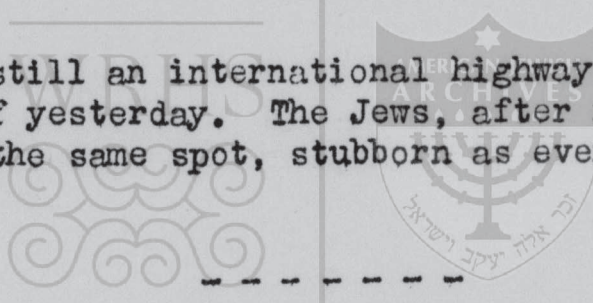
Behind this lies the transformation of Jewish man from a hard-working but primarily urbanized intellectual being into a person who prizes hard physical work in the open air above everything.

Rabbis' sons toil in fields, load on their backs 200-pound sacks of sugar with a smile and a song on their lips. The result is the happiest, healthiest generation of little children this writer has seen anywhere. Adults still show physical signs of their ghetto origins, but children under fifteen are a new breed of cats.

The greatest struggle -- one still to come -- is the battle to make Palestine into Eretz Israel -- Jewish state. This means abolition of the White Paper, it means unrestricted immigration, it means overcoming Arab and British resistance.

The Jewish will is fixed on this and nothing less. In his "Outline of History," H. G. Wells spoke of the ancient Jews as being "peculiarly stubborn little people who persisted in living on an international highway and were continually getting run over."

Palestine is still an international highway, a matter of anxiety to the big powers of today as of yesterday. The Jews, after nearly 2,000 years, are again pitching their tents in the same spot, stubborn as ever.



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## BRITISH CAIRO POLICIES AND THE WAR EFFORT

By Edgar Ansel Mowrer

Cairo (By Wireless) -- Certain Americans living in the Middle East and studying the situation here are convinced that certain political policies now being applied by the British in Cairo are harmful to the common war effort but, because of strict political censorship, they are being prevented from saying so.

Censorship aside, this is a difficult topic to discuss for three reasons. The first is that the American administration is being fully informed of these British policies and, since it tolerated where it doesn't actually approve them, who are private citizens to criticize? The second is, that any discussion may become acrimonious and tend to disrupt the close, confident British-American partnership on which the future of the world so clearly depends. The third is the usual military claim to know best, and first to deprive the public of salient facts, then to deny validity to the public's judgment because of ignorance of said facts. Nonetheless, the situation has become such in the last few weeks that this writer intends to stick his neck out and set down one newspaperman's opinion.

Still another introduction is necessary. British post-war plans for the region between Naples and India may or may not be satisfactory to the American people. If and when the question of post-war cooperation with Britain arises, they will have the right and the opportunity to examine these plans carefully and decide which are acceptable to them and which are not. But they can claim to interfere only if they are willing to accept, with the British, and with the Russians if possible, co-responsibility for the entire region, pending assumption of authority by the coming international organization. Otherwise, they cannot properly blame the British for planning to run the area according to their own lights and along their own lines. The war effort is another matter for the Americans have accepted full co-responsibility and with this obviously goes an unfettered right to criticism. The following is being written under that right.

The charge is, as I said, that certain British political policies being administered and possibly formulated in Cairo are harmful to the war effort and are being hidden from the Americans behind an incredibly autocratic censorship. This goes particularly (120 words censored). The excuse here is "military necessity" because of the alleged military potential of Said Arabs. Yet, the same Britishers will tell you privately that the military potential of the entire Arab world outside of French North Africa is negligible, that, furthermore, the Arabs are hopelessly divided among themselves, that most of them are anti-British, many were pro-Axis, that, finally, the Arabs, at most could become merely a "serious nuisance".

Yet, for such reasons, General Marshall was persuaded by his British colleagues to interfere with the American congressional move in favor of the Palestine Zionists. These Zionists are heart and soul with the United Nations. Their contribution to the common war effort is many times greater than that of the Arabs. They wish to do more and have submitted recently a scheme which might well save many British and American lives. Yet their offer is ignored, they are being given little public credit for what they have done.

British here don't like public discussion of these matters. They insist that they alone are able to judge the situation. They defend hiding facts behind alleged military necessity. Unfortunately for them, their political record doesn't warrant the full trust which they demand. The British obviously failed to avoid the present war. The British have blundered politically in Italy like the Americans in North Africa. The American popular belief in their omniscience has gone. If they wish to avoid future dissension, it might be well either to raise the censorship and permit public discussion now or modify these questionable policies.

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