



## 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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Buxton, Frank W., 1947.



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Personal

29 Sutherland Road, Brookline, 46, Mass.  
April 22, 1947.

Dear Mr. Ben-Horin.--It is easy for me to understand why it is difficult to get magazines to publish articles on Palestine. Every community has a Zionist and a non-Zionist or even anti-Zionist group. The latter is not especially numerous but has more influence, man for man, than the Zionists. To print one article means the necessity of allowing the other fellows to reply, as in the case of your good bit in the Atlantic. This is certainly no justification for a practice of negativism, but is an explanation of it. As an Editor, I used to edge away from the subject, feeling that I could not please either side and fearing that I'd antagonize both.

But I think that there are some topics which magazines would welcome. Take, for example, the comparative positions of Jewish and Arab children, Jewish and Arab women, Jewish and Arab farmers, Jewish and Arab culture in Palestine. Wouldn't the women's magazines give sympathetic attention to unslanted articles on these themes? The facts would, of course, speak for themselves, and most of them could be found in official British publications. In writing a paper on Palestine for a small club where a member speaks more or less formally for half an hour or so and then bares his breast to the shafts of inquisitive fellow-members, I found myself pretty close to the tentative conclusion that the Jews of Palestine are not only the defenders but the apostles of western civilization in the Holy Land and the Near East. If Christians instead of Jews were yearning for a homeland in Palestine, I suppose that the Arab antagonism would be just as sharp, and presumably the British Cabinets would be just as eager to assuage the Arabs. I wonder at times whether the Woman's Home Companion or the Ladies Home Journal would not take a substantial article on the subordination of women and children in the Arab countries and Palestine as contrasted with the position of the child, the wife and the mother of the Palestinian Jew. The lot of the Jews if Palestine should become an Arab state and the lot of the Arabs if a Jewish state should be constituted might be worth while.

Bart Crum made an excellent speech at a Zionist meeting in Boston a few nights ago. He talks very well indeed, and he had close attention. I am going probably to speak to the members of the Century Club of Boston, an organization of Jewish professional men, on Palestine, and I wish that I could be as certain as Bart is that there is a simple solution for the troubles in Palestine.

You have read the Grossman book, of course. I found it interesting as a study in the supposed evolution of one man's views, but I was impressed again by the tendency of the philosophers to play with words, to argue about abstractions and to play around a problem. Probably it is not quite fair to say that Dick regarded his assignment as an opportunity to write a book, not to make a contribution to the settlement of a grievous controversy, but I found the chapters Hockingish, and his foundation ~~could~~ could have held an Arab mosque as fittingly as a Jewish synagogue. He advocated partition, but his exposition was pretty superficial and I had the feeling that he was indulging in a declamation and that only by chance was he a partitionist rather than an anti-partitionist.

Distrusting the Greeks even when they bring gifts, I eye Bevin with suspicion when he presents a problem to the U.N. I have no confidence in his integrity. The selection of Harold Beeley as one of the British spokesmen is equivalent to giving the Arabs a spokesman.

Thank you, Sir, for your inquiry about my vacation. I came North from Florida in a quest for sunshine, found it, and, last weekend, became snow-bound in western Massachusetts. There is no more accounting for the New England weather than for British Colonial policy in Palestine...And my best regards to you.

Sincerely,

/s/ F. M. Buxton



April 28, 1947

(EBH letterhead)

Mr. Frank W. Buxton  
29 Sutherland Road  
Brookline 46, Mass.

Dear Mr. Buxton:

To say that I read your letter of April 22nd with interest would be a gross under-statement. This especially applies to the few lines you devote to Crossman's book. When I read his book, I was in a state of ever-increasing anger, but I doubt whether I could have summed up my criticism of the book as fittingly and so concisely as you did it in your letter. You know, of course, the man behind the book much better than I do. I met him only once in London for a talk of half an hour.

Crossman's book recalled to me a remark I heard a few years ago from an editor of an American magazine. He complained that the more that is written about Palestine, the less people know what it is all about. Crossman's casuistry will make a distinct contribution to the spread of bewilderment on Palestine.

I intend to discuss your excellent suggestions, with regard to magazine articles, with a couple of writers who could do such pieces. Let's see how the editors will react to it.

On the general Palestine situation, I am afraid that we are far beyond "distrusting the Greeks even when they bring gifts". The British intentions are clearer than clear: to scuttle Zionism. Their orientation on Pan-Arabia seems at this moment to be irrevocable. What is much worse, the U. S. Administration does not differ much from Britain in this respect, not in the essence of things. Never before--in the long chain of difficulties and crises--did we need so much the help of every friend of conscience and courage. Will they be forthcoming?...

With my very best regards,

Cordially,

Eliahu Ben-Horin

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Frank W. Buxton  
29 Sutherland Road  
Brookline 46, Mass.

July 10, 1947

Dear Mr. Ben-Horin,--I am not so dilatory a replier as the period between your note of July 3 and this one might indicate. I am living in East Gloucester, Mass., at the Harbor View Hotel for the summer and your letter did not reach me until the day before yesterday; and I had to defer a reply until today because of the absence of a typewriter.

I am sorry that I shall not be in New York for a month or two and thus save you the trouble and expense of a hot trip to Boston or Gloucester. I can run up to town at any time to see and have lunch with you. I'm going to be here in Boston all day Friday July 18, but there is a morning engagement at ten and a session at the dentist's at 12:30. We could have lunch at one o'clock if that is satisfactory to you; or we could count the sad sea waves at East Gloucester some other day if that is preferable. But Gloucester is about an hour's run from Boston, and you leave from the North Station, not the South, where you find yourself when you come by train from New York. But please write your own ticket, and don't ask me but tell me where and when to meet you. I am greatly interested in your project, whatever it may be, as long as it relates to Palestine.

I don't know what to make out of the news from Jerusalem, and, having been a newspaperman, I don't take all the dispatches as gospel. I take it that the delegate from India is in the British bag and is playing the part which Singleton attempted with the A.A. Committee of Inq. I am struck by the many references to partition. If I thought that there could be a partition on the lines desired by the Jews, I'd be all for it, I guess, but I'd also want to know the part the Mandatory would reserve for enclaves and the exact relations of the Mandatory to both the Jewish and the Arab sectors. Rereading the Peel report, to which Dr. Weizmann has given oral semi-assent, I am impressed again by the superficiality of the plan, the reservations in favor of the Mandatory, the financial subvention to the Arab portion, the easy discussions of the willingness of England to make large appropriations, the assignment of Arabs to the Negev, the limitations around Jerusalem and Haifa and half a dozen other features. I thought that the Woodhead Commission showed rather neatly that the Peel plan is not feasible; and I have grave doubts that any partitioning in a country where two supposedly hostile elements are so distributed as in Palestine could be arranged territorially or politically with an even chance of success. I hope that you can convince me that I am wrong again. My regards to you, Sir, and to Jim McDonald.

Sincerely,

/s/ F. W. Buxton



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CHARLES DENBY  
747 Union Trust Building  
Pittsburgh

July 18, 1947

Mr. Eliahu Ben-Horin  
80-09 35th Street  
Jackson Heights  
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Ben-Horin:

You probably are under the impression that I have quite overlooked your very kind letters of two or three months ago, and that I have not read the reprints which you so kindly sent me of your two very interesting articles "The Cockpit of the Middle East" and "Palestine: Realities and Illusions." I must admit that I have been very remiss in not writing you sooner and I apologize for this delay. The fact is that I have been carrying the articles around with me and did not get around to reading them until quite recently.

I want to say that both articles are extremely interesting and informative. More than that, your article on Palestine is the clearest statement of the problem and the most intelligent proposal for the direction which the solution must take which I have read. This includes the report of the Anglo-American Commission which, while it contained a lot of information, did not seem to me to contain proposals for a solution which are as sensible as your own.

In fact, if you ever despair of the value of making speeches to dull audiences, you may take whatever comfort you may derive from the fact that you at least further stimulated my interest; and your Atlantic article has enabled me to come to a conclusion on a subject on which I have long been wavering. Since manifestly the Palestine problem is insoluble in a manner which will satisfy both of the immediate contending parties, it would be wise statesmanship to attack the problem drastically and to impose, by force if necessary, a solution which in the long run would benefit the great mass of the people of the Middle East.

The only difficulty with the proposed solution is that it requires statesmanship of so high an order and the exertion of control to so great a degree that it will prove difficult to bring about acceptance of such a plan. But since no other solution makes sense, one can only hope that one such as you propose will in fact be adopted.

In so far as concerns your review of the problems of the Middle East generally, there could hardly be much quarrel with your conclusion that a solution lies in the theoretically perfectly feasible reconciliation of the major parties concerned. But it is hard to see how, in the light of present conditions, any sort of amicable arrangement can be made with Russia. I suspect that this is a problem that we will have to muddle along with for quite a bit longer.



Mr. Eliahu Ben-Horin

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July 18, 1947

So I want to express to you again my thanks for your talk in Pittsburgh and for sending me the articles. If you have any more coming along, I shall be glad to read them also.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Charles Denby

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MEMORANDUM

To Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

Date July 21, 1947

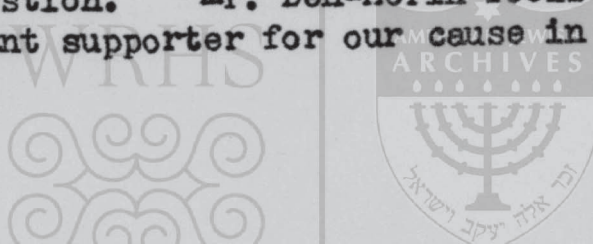
From Lillian Brooker, Secretary to  
Mr. Ben-Horin

Mr. Ben-Horin, who is still on his vacation, asked me to forward to you the two enclosed copies of letters which he received. Mr. Buxton's letter is in reply to a letter from Mr. Ben-Horin to him. Mr. Ben-Horin wants to draw your attention to the second half of Mr. Buxton's letter containing observations on the developments in the U.N. Palestine Committee.

Mr. Charles Denby, the writer of the second letter, is a very prominent lawyer in Pittsburgh and the son of the former Secretary of the Navy. Several months ago, Mr. Denby presided over a meeting of the Foreign Policy Association at the Duquesne Club in Pittsburgh, which Mr. Ben-Horin addressed on the Palestine question. Mr. Ben-Horin feels that in Denby we gained an important supporter for our cause in America.

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MEMORANDUM

To Abba Hillel Silver

Date December 8, 1947

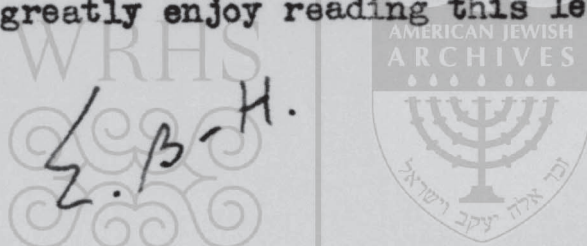
From Eliahu Ben-Horin

In the course of the last year or so, I received many nice letters from Frank W. Buxton. However, in the letter I received the other day, a copy of which I enclose, Buxton surpasses himself. What is more, from my knowledge of the man I can say without the least hesitation that he is sincere in every word he says. I do think that among all our Christian friends in America Buxton belongs to a special category. I know that you will greatly enjoy reading this letter.

Best regards.

EBH/lb

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SERIES II

MANSON FILE

Subseries A: Main Manson File

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Folder Title:

Manson File code/number: IV-19 [folder and contents lacking at  
time of filming]