

The Jewish State in Abba Hillel Silver's Overall World View

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Introduction

Abba Hillel Silver's rise as a leader of American Judaism between 1938 and 1948, the decade that saw both the Holocaust and the struggle to establish the state of Israel, constituted an outstandingly significant change in American Zionism and in the world Zionist movement. Careful examination shows clearly that Abba Hillel Silver and his political associates were intensively involved in the historic events taking place at the time in the Zionist movement, in the land of Israel, in the United States, and in world affairs.

This article focuses on the overall political and ideological outlook of Silver, and the connection between his Zionist activity and his overall world view. Such an examination is especially important in light of the scale of Silver's involvement in the processes that led to the establishment of the state of Israel, as well as his outstanding contribution to shaping the political and organizational structure of American Judaism in general and the American Zionist movement in particular.

The centrality of Abba Hillel Silver in those processes has inclined American and Israeli researchers alike to stress this special aspect of Silver's biography and has focused most research on Silver within a relatively brief time, from 1943 until 1948, when Israel became a state. This period is the core of the pioneering biography written by Marc L. Raphael on Silver. A similar picture emerges from a doctorate in Hebrew on Silver's political role during the 1940s.¹ Because of Silver's central status, books and papers on the Zionist political system during the 1940s gave him a central place. But these publications dealt with Silver mostly in connection with the struggle in the United States on behalf of the formation of the state, and his role in the Zionist movement during the 1940s. Similarly, contemporary memoirs in the main presented Silver's contribution to the creation of the Jewish state.²

Since the 1980s, however, the horizon of research on the history of Zionism has expanded beyond the formative event of the establishment of the state.³ Research on Silver has expanded accordingly into other aspects concerning his lifework. In 1994, a microfilm edition of the Abba Hillel Silver Archives in Cleveland appeared, rendering his papers more accessible to researchers and making broader research possible.⁴ The new studies began to focus on Silver as an American liberal, presenting his struggles in relation to issues like the rights of the individual, social justice, freedom of speech, prevention of unemployment, and workers' rights in the United States. They also discussed Silver as a Reform rabbi and concerned themselves with his special path regarding Zionism.⁵

This paper attempts to widen the opening made by previous researchers, forging the necessary link between Silver's view regarding the United States and the world following World War II and his Zionist activities. This study assumes that Silver's activities within the Zionist arena can be fully comprehended only after examining what he accomplished in the American social, economic, and political milieu. We can better understand Silver's ideas and activities toward the establishment of a Jewish state against the background of his view of the desirable world order after World War II. The expanded discussion on Silver, moreover, continues into the 1950s.

Although this paper will focus on Abba Hillel Silver, part of it will be devoted to Emmanuel Neumann, Silver's right-hand man from 1939 on, who filled senior positions in the Zionist movement in America as well as in Palestine. *Inter alia*, Neumann served as the head of the economic department of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem during the first half of the 1930s and was chairman of the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) in the years 1947-1949 and 1956-1958. In his memoirs, Neumann recalls his first political meeting with Silver at the Zionist Congress in 1939, noting the encouragement he derived from Silver's readiness to devote himself to the political problems of the Zionist movement. Neumann told Silver that he would like to be at his side and assist him, and he called the conversation an unwritten covenant that both considered binding.⁶

Abba Hillel Silver's View of Britain

The links between Silver's Zionist activities and his general world view and activities in the American political sphere come into full focus in his attitude toward Britain. Silver's anti-British stance was a foundation of his Zionist platform in the latter half of the 1940s. He regarded their differing views of Britain as the reason for his break with Weizmann, which he explained made it impossible for them to cooperate politically in that period.⁷ Silver called for a complete separation of the Zionist movement from Britain. He demanded that the question of Palestine should pass into the hands of the United Nations and that Britain be kept out of any involvement there. Newspapers noted Silver's anti-British stance as a characteristic of his public image in the second half of 1946. The triumph of the anti-British line in the 22nd Zionist Congress of 1946 was seen as Silver's most important victory, and his anti-British policy was described as a central factor in making him a leader of the Zionist movement.⁸ Silver acted against Britain not only within Zionism. He was against a large American loan to Britain after World War II and cooperated closely with elements in the Senate and the House that attempted to prevent ratification of the loan, or at least to reduce it and make the conditions less favorable.⁹

Stephen Wise, Silver's rival in the American Zionist arena, was a committed Anglophile, and argued that while many American Zionists, such as Silver were against the loan to Britain, he supported it. Wise claimed to have worked for ratification of the loan, although it weakened his public standing and was politically dangerous. Since he had already been ousted from the leadership of American Zionism, Wise was willing to absorb the additional hardship that came with his support of Britain.¹⁰ Silver, by contrast, led a public campaign against a money transfer from the United States to Britain.

The importance of the loan issue is evident in that both the British government and pro-British elements in the United States worried about it, concerned lest Zionist activity delay or even prevent Congressional ratification. According to them, the Palestine question replaced the Irish question as the major shadow over American-British relations and could hinder political cooperation between the two states.¹¹

Silver's opposition to the loan to Britain in 1946 was not a one-time event. Even in the early 1940s Silver wrote to Neumann about his opposition to Wise's pro-British policy. Silver claimed that total support for Britain during World War II caused the Zionist movement severe political harm. In his opinion, Wise tried to minimize Zionist anti-British propaganda in the United States in order to avoid embarrassing Roosevelt's government or hindering cooperation between the two countries, and he tried to foster understanding of the British position on the Palestine question among American Jews. That policy tied the hands of American Zionists, prevented them from applying political pressure to their government and Britain, and gave the British government freedom of action in its Palestine policy. Silver's criticism of British policy extended to Churchill: he refused to recognize Churchill as a friend of the Zionist movement and claimed that some of his political actions harmed Zionism. These included the White Paper of 1922, as well as his failure to reverse the White Paper of 1939 when he became prime minister in 1940.¹²

Throughout the 1940s Silver maintained extensive connections with anti-British elements in the United States, from Republican senator Robert Alphonso Taft, to whom he was a close political and personal associate, to Americans who supported independence for India.¹³ Silver's activities against Britain were important enough for Pierre Van Paassen, a well-known American author close to Jabotinsky, to claim that Silver's anti-British views were the reason for their close association. Van Paassen saw himself as more anti-British than pro-Zionist and said that the basis of his collaboration with Silver was the fact that both were anti-British.¹⁴

Silver's anti-British position shows also his resistance to an automatic collaboration between the United States and Britain against the Soviet Union. He claimed that the British Empire indeed had many points of contention with the Soviet Union, but that the United States did not. In his opinion, Britain was dragging the United States into a conflict in which it was not involved and need take no part. He opposed the idea of a united Anglo-Saxon world, which was supposed to move the United States to support British interests worldwide, although the only interests actually served, in his view,

were those of the British.¹⁵ Silver was also strongly against American economic support to Britain: the transfer of money through lend-lease settlements, the British loan after the war, and the money it was to receive via the Marshall plan. In his opinion there was no need to transfer such large sums that would be used by the British to harm American economic interests.¹⁶

Silver's anti-British policy was a central element of his political and public activity in the Zionist arena in the United States, in the world Zionist movement, and in the American political arena. But, as we shall see later and contrary to first impressions, Silver's anti-British views stemmed not just from Zionist considerations. His activity against British interests in the American political arena combined resistance to British policy in Palestine with a more general opposition to British colonialism and insistence on the need to break up the British Empire as a part of the international realignment after World War II.

The Jewish State and the Middle East

The policy of Silver and his associates toward Britain displays the interrelationship between his overall political view and his Zionist activities. Silver and Neumann's anti-British policy went hand in hand with their opinions about the desirable international arrangements after World War II and the role of the future Jewish state in that world. They wished the state to come into being as a part of a series of international arrangements founded on the United Nations policies, minimizing East-West conflict, and advanced economic development in former colonies.¹⁷

Neumann, Silver's political ally and personal friend, described in the *Free World* the guidelines that should, in his opinion, shape the political and social order in the Middle East after the war.¹⁸ His premise was the impending and necessary demise of Western imperialism in general and British imperialism in particular as a political and social system. He claimed that the Western powers should involve themselves in the Middle East not only on the political level, but on economic, social, and intellectual levels to develop the region rather than exploit it. Neumann explained that exploitation of the Middle East by elements from without and within must stop and

instead its natural resources should be preserved and developed for the benefit of all the inhabitants. In his opinion, such plans necessitated international cooperation, since no single state, even a democratic and well-meaning one, could do the task, and only an international force with both authority and executive ability could rise to the Middle East challenge. To ensure that such a power would not become an instrument of exploitation by states with interests in the region, Neumann suggested that the international supervision committee be made up of progressive nations, like Norway and Switzerland, with no history of imperialism and without direct interests in the Middle East. To prevent European/American control over the committee, Neumann suggested including Asian states like China and independent India as full members. Neumann stressed that the aims of the international committee should be not to impede the development of independent states of the Middle East but to help them become independent, knowing that they were too weak to stand alone against an international reality that could threaten their existence. He warned that the committee's objectives were not simple and could take a long time to reach, since they required not only superficial political changes in the various states, such as switching to democratic elections, but also a change in the regional, social, and economic structure. For such an in-depth change, one would have to change the way of life of as many people as possible, change the economic structures that caused exploitation and poverty, and raise the economic and educational levels of the general public. Neumann stressed that this would be an especially difficult task, as it would involve struggling with ruling groups that tended to reject change.¹⁹

In a lecture on the Middle East's economy, Neumann developed further the idea of international responsibility for it.²⁰ He suggested establishing two institutions that would work together for that purpose: the first, under the United Nations, would direct all economic development initiatives for the Middle East; the second would be a council of representatives of all inhabitants of the region.²¹ Neumann went on to describe the tasks facing the various councils that were supposed to cooperate: establishing a central repository of data on natural and human resources of the Middle East, encouraging proper

use of natural resources, improving health and education systems, constructing large-scale engineering projects that by their very nature require international cooperation, and encouraging advanced industrial production. Neumann stressed that any developing should be done by transfer of knowledge and support from advanced nations without expectation of immediate economic gain, and not on the earlier basis of imperialistic exploitation.²²

Neumann's understanding of Zionism went hand in hand with his overall view of the political and economic future of the Middle East. Carrying out these plans would have created a new and positive political and social environment in the region and solved the difficult political problems it was facing, providing a solution to natural increase in population and to massive Jewish immigration to Palestine. Neumann portrayed an idyllic, multicultural Middle Eastern society made up of Moslems, Christians, and Jews, all acting together for mutual benefit. He stressed that stability and economic well-being would help prevent enmity and hatred, which thrive on poverty and deprivation.²³

Neumann's labors to involve the international community were coordinated with Silver and carried out with his collaboration. In a letter to Silver, Neumann surveyed a list of publications and lectures on the subject and added details about international activity to carry out the ideas that he put forth.²⁴ He also presented the main guidelines and objectives of the political activity he was suggesting for the Middle East: that colonial powers such as Britain, France, and Italy, which had ruled over large segments of the territory involved and whose role was to preserve order and stability there, should be replaced by United Nations forces. Neumann expected that the United Nations forces would protect the interests of a Jewish national homeland, as well as support the whole population of the region and oversee the use of oil, all subject to United Nations decisions and in a manner that would increase the well-being of the region.²⁵

The central position of the United Nations in the postwar world order was the topic of a sermon Silver preached in his synagogue in Cleveland.²⁶ He said that founding a strong organization was the key to establishing security, stability, and world peace after the war;

the United Nations would succeed only if the organization had an international military force at its disposal and an international judicial system under its administration. Silver did not overlook the difficulties that might prevent the smooth functioning of the United Nations. He was particularly opposed to giving the superpowers the right of veto in the Security Council, stating that it would place them above international law, giving them too much strength and endangering the very goals for which the United Nations was established.²⁷

Silver's views of the central role of the United Nations in the post-World War II era came up again when he dealt with the Truman Doctrine and the involvement of the United States in Greece and Turkey.²⁸ Silver strongly opposed American and British involvement in those countries. He claimed that if there was a real danger to the independence of the two countries, the United States and Britain should turn to the United Nations rather than act alone. When the United Nations was established its goal was to solve precisely that kind of international problem. He stressed that one of the main objectives for which the organization was founded was that no one nation should take upon itself the role of guaranteeing peace and justice in the world: that role should devolve only on the international community. In his opinion the policy of the United States in Greece and Turkey endangered the existence of the United Nations from its very start as a meaningful organization in world affairs.²⁹ The way the United Nations intervened in Greece and Turkey would affect the form of the Middle East and its international position. The Middle East could become a cause for World War III or, conversely, become a starting point for strengthening the United Nations and international cooperation. If the United Nations, rather than the superpowers, was to be responsible for dealing with international crises in the Middle East, it would symbolize an international political turning point that would prevent war and lead to many years of international stability.³⁰

Silver's View of the East-West Conflict after World War II and Reactions to It

Silver and Neumann viewed the United Nations as a central factor in stabilizing world affairs as part of their overall rejection of the East-West conflict and their call to improve relations between the

Soviet Union and the United States. This position emerged clearly in Silver's opposition to the Marshall Plan.³¹ He claimed that the plan would only intensify the political struggles in Europe and finalize the division between Eastern and Western Europe. In Silver's opinion the main danger to world peace and security was not the Soviet Union but Germany. For that reason he opposed sending American money to restore Germany and claimed that the Marshall Plan created unnecessary tension between the United States and the U.S.S.R. The solution, he said, was not to intensify that conflict by following the Marshall Plan, but to increase communication between Soviet and American leaders and have an immediate summit meeting between Stalin and President Truman.³² He also claimed that declarations by government officials about sending billions of dollars to Europe to fight communism were not sufficient reason to approve the plan.³³ One could not bring about a true economic and social recovery in a divided Europe. The Marshall Plan could cause a rift between an industrial West and an agricultural East and an internal social struggle in European society. Silver stressed the need to view Europe as one economic unit; in order to create a stable and healthy economic system, one would need to have free trade not only among the Western states, but among all the states of Europe. Cutting off the states of Eastern Europe from the West and taking them out of the sphere of economically developing countries would impede the rise in quality of life there and cause political unrest that might lead to a war triggered by nations with nothing to lose.³⁴ He claimed that one must start an intensive diplomatic effort for communications between the Soviet Union and the United States and suggested that the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union should meet before the Marshall Plan was carried out. Silver believed it was possible to foster understanding between the superpowers and that the American government was not sufficiently active diplomatically in pursuit of such an understanding.³⁵

Silver was not against American participation in rebuilding Europe, he was against the manner in which the Marshall Plan did so. His aim in criticizing the plan, he said, was not to cancel it but to broaden it to include Eastern Europe. Silver was aware of the Soviet

Union's refusal to take part in it, but claimed that the Soviet rejection was a reaction to the Truman Doctrine. He felt that changing the attitude of the United States could effect collaboration with the states of Eastern Europe. He explained that one could restore Europe's economy only by joining its Eastern and Western parts in one pan-European effort. A plan for economic recovery aimed only at Western Europe, excluding half the European states, would reduce the chance of rebuilding the continent.³⁶

Silver's rejection of the Marshall Plan was a part of his overall world view, which called for communicating and reaching agreements that would make international collaboration possible. In his opinion the United States and the West should have found a way to coexist with the Soviet Union. True, the Communist world chose a way of life and a world view different from what he would have chosen for himself or the United States, but they had every right to conduct their lives as they wished.³⁷

Silver also claimed that the United States must not oppose the choice of some European states to become Communist. American policy in Europe could deepen the East-West conflict, and he feared that American money streaming into Western Europe would be used not only for economic goals, but also to develop military forces against the Communists. Silver was strongly opposed to such policy. He even feared that by adopting anti-Communist policies, the United States could drift into the anti-Communist patterns of action and world view that characterized Nazi Germany. He added that he did not underestimate the difficulties involved with changing the American anti-Communist policy, and building a collaboration with the Soviet Union, but said it was essential to do so. He defined those who supported war against the Soviet Union, cold or hot, as murderers who would not let the world recover from the previous war.³⁸ One could bridge the difference between the United States and the Soviet Union through the United Nations; he said that he and many economists and politicians too thought that even countries with different economic and social policies could collaborate.³⁹

Silver's support during the 1940s and 1950s for augmenting United Nations power and for reducing the interbloc struggle can be

understood as part of his broad view on other key issues on the public agenda in America and the world, which he addressed in speeches and sermons during his many years of public activity. Especially prominent was his historical opposition to American separatism and his support for the United States entering World War I on the side of the Allies, in recognition of America's international responsibility. In Silver's opinion it was preferable to end the war without victory and to work toward the creation of an international force with enough power to ensure world peace based on international cooperation and recognition of the independence of all nations — great and small alike — while ensuring freedom for all humanity and the democratization of European society. Such a structure was supposed to be based on common interests, not on a military presence motivated by fear and suspicion of one nation toward another.⁴⁰

In light of this world view, Silver spoke out particularly against the Paris agreements that were meant to ensure peace, the end of imperialism, and the democratization of the entire world, but in Silver's opinion only strengthened opposite trends that were likely to give rise to additional wars, similar to what happened in the wake of the Congress of Vienna. Silver stressed that just like that of the Labour Party in Britain and the Socialist parties in Italy and France, his own opposition to the agreement did not stem from support for Germany, but from a desire to prevent harm to the masses in Germany and from the assumption that peace agreements based on degradation of an opponent would only lead to another war. In his opinion, the system of compensation imposed on Germany, together with decreasing its European territory, would seriously impede Germany's rehabilitation and perpetuate tension in Europe. Silver's objection to the Paris agreements did not stem from the German issue only. He severely criticized the treatment of China and the recognition of Japan's rights there. In addition, Silver claimed that the League of Nations, in contrast to the great goals for which it had been established, had become a tool in the hands of England, France, Italy, and Japan to maintain their own interests in the international system.⁴¹

Silver's statements on the peace agreements following World War I, and his opposition to the Marshall Plan, are part of a complete set

of sermons and speeches he delivered as a rabbi in Cleveland. They deal with basic issues concerning American foreign policy and the American political system. In all speeches, from his views on the Paris agreements, through his sermon at the San Francisco convention in 1945, up to the sermon on his impressions on visiting the Soviet Union in 1961, one finds the same general guidelines. Consistently, Silver supports American involvement in international settlements following World War II, an involvement based on recognition of the need for the Soviet Union and America to compromise and a struggle against McCarthyism in America.⁴²

A clear example of Silver's public activity connected to international issues was his opposition to the Korean War. Since Silver considered this issue most important, he not only expressed his opinion only in his Sunday sermons but also by means of an open "Letter to President Truman," published in Jewish as well as general newspapers and sent to rabbis and Jewish community leaders throughout America.⁴³ Silver explained that his opposition to the war stemmed from a combination of legal and relevant factual material. Legally, he objected to going to war without the ratification of Congress and without the agreement of the United Nations, which ratified the war against Korea only after the fact. This, he felt, weakened the United Nations. With regard to relevant facts, Silver maintained that there were no strategic reasons to go to war, and that Truman's decision to fight in Korea should be understood against the background of his desire to prove that the Democratic Party government was acting against Communism, and as a reaction to Republican propaganda.⁴⁴

Silver maintained that the Korean War symbolized the failure of the Truman Doctrine. America could not carry out a policy of opposing Communism everywhere, and in trying to do so the United States was bonding with fascist regimes and dictatorships. Such a policy



*Silver as a young rabbi
in Cleveland.*
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

endangered world peace more than the Communist threat did. Silver stressed that America had to recognize the Communist regime in China and refrain from supporting Chiang Kai-shek. Silver called supporters of an uncompromising policy toward the Soviet Union and Communism dogmatic, conceited warmongers who were pushing America into a war not out of a love for country, but for personal interests and a desire to undermine any possibility for compromise. By contrast, Silver maintained that there was room for the Soviet Union and the United States to exist side by side, though such a view had become almost taboo in America, adding that agreement with the Soviets following negotiations based on compromise was the only way to ensure world peace.

The extensive publicity given his letter to President Truman precipitated a wave of supportive as well as critical responses from Zionist and Jewish activists, well beyond the usual reactions to Silver's sermons. The critics opposed Silver's expression of an opinion on military and political issues outside his expertise, and maintained that the publicity embarrassed their community.⁴⁵ His supporters encouraged and agreed with him, declaring that the right to criticize was fundamental to American democracy.⁴⁶

One would have expected Silver's opposition to the Korean War, and views in favor of recognizing Communist China and compromising with the Soviets, to have resonated more widely and merited broader media coverage and sharper criticism than in fact they did. Remarkably, Silver's addresses on political issues evoked minor responses; even his letter to Truman did not receive the expected coverage. Why indeed was such scant attention paid to his political pronouncements? Reports on them appeared primarily in local Cleveland newspapers, and even there only on inside pages, without comments and in a desultory fashion. This was how the public was informed of Silver's support for increasing Soviet involvement in the Middle East and the Palestine issue and of his opposition to the Truman Doctrine and America's support for Greece and Turkey. Silver was quoted in the Cleveland papers as one calling for a change in the anti-Communist policy of America, which was positioning America alongside Franco's regime in Spain and Peron's in Argentina. In the

same way, information was transmitted about Silver's support for a settlement between the Soviet Union and the United States and about his opposition to anti-Soviet elements in the Marshall Plan.⁴⁷

At the end of the 1940s Silver acted intensively towards the establishment of a Jewish state and minimized discussions of international issues in his sermons.⁴⁸ He began speaking out on international issues once again in 1950, and Jewish newspapers in Cleveland and North America continued to publish what he said in the same limited manner as before. The reports reflect the wide variety of international and internal political topics that Silver dealt with in his addresses. Thus, for example, they write about his blaming the West for the political crisis, for exacerbating the Cold War, and for the danger to world peace in consequence of intensifying the interbloc struggle. Although he supported American aid to underdeveloped countries, he declared that Washington's international policy could lead America and the entire world to tragedy. From the articles, Silver's opposition to what he called anti-Communist hysteria in the United States becomes clear, and his call for world leaders to cooperate actively to promote world peace based on recognizing the right for common existence of the United States and Communism is explicit. Other articles report on Silver's strong opposition to McCarthyism. It was also reported that he favored a summit meeting between Eisenhower and Stalin. The newspaper articles lead one to understand that Silver did not disregard the anti-Zionist and anti-Israel aspects of the Soviet regime, but nevertheless wished to maintain the communication channels between Jewish organizations and the Soviet Union. He explained the Soviet antisemitic policy as political, based on Israel's decision to identify with the West and the United States. In additional articles we learn of Silver's support for ending nuclear experiments and his view that Communist China was not a threat to America.⁴⁹

Reports of Silver's political views appeared in newspapers of the American Left as well. Great attention was paid to those statements that made headlines, which emphasized Silver's support for interbloc compromise and for bringing America and the Soviet Union closer together. Especially conspicuous was the *Daily Worker's* front-page headline in the winter of 1950, indicating that Silver blamed President

Truman for dragging America into the war. The body of the article stressed Silver's past support of Senator Robert Taft, known for his opposition to the Soviet Union. Thus Silver's new opinions seem to be a sort of "repentance" that renders them more significant.⁵⁰ Another report claimed that the relatively scant media coverage of Silver's views was directed at and sprang from a desire to conceal them so they would not influence the Jewish public.⁵¹

Indeed, the low-key reaction to Silver's words arouses wonder, but it does not stem from any conspiracy theory. It is complex and based on Silver's public political activity. The years 1943 to 1948 were central in Silver's political activity, during which he struggled for the creation of the state of Israel. This struggle was the focus of his activities. His other concerns remained on the edges of public interest, and therefore, his view on international political concerns received slight attention. Newspapers and the Jewish public interested themselves primarily in his struggle for the formation of a Jewish state. Even when Silver expressed pro-Soviet views, they were thought to arise from his desire to harness the Soviet Union to that end. Moreover, possibly much of the Jewish public did not consider Silver's views worthy of opposition, in view of the tremendous Soviet contribution to the struggle against the Nazis.⁵²

Silver remained at the center of Zionist activity only during the second half of the 1940s. Following his retirement from all official Zionist positions in 1948, his involvement in public activities was primarily behind the scenes and within his position as a Reform rabbi in Cleveland. After Silver withdrew from the spotlight, his controversial statements that precipitated a certain public reaction before 1948 produced an even milder one. Despite his status, Silver did not fill any official Zionist or Jewish position and thus naturally received relatively little public attention from the media or the Jewish public.

Furthermore, despite his liberal views, Silver's public image derived primarily from his close ties with Republican Senator Robert Taft, who was identified with separatism and anti-Communism. The personal and political ties between Silver and Taft reflected on Silver's political image; he was deemed not only close to Taft, but also close to Taft's

political views. Silver's political declarations could not obliterate this reflection, which continued to dominate his public image during his lifetime and after his death. The eulogy published in a Cleveland paper surveyed Silver's public activity and stressed his readiness to adopt views unpopular in his community. These included support for workers organizations in Cleveland during the 1920s and his ties with Senator Taft. His views on the international issues presented in this paper were not mentioned at all.⁵³ A similar skewed picture emerges in the eulogy by his aide and friend Emmanuel Neumann, who dealt only with Silver as a Zionist and completely disregarded his opposition to the Cold and Korean Wars and his support of interbloc compromise.⁵⁴

Unlike the low-key public and communal response to his views and activities, the Passport Office of the State Department responded to them sharply. A letter from the Passport Office informed Silver of the decision not to renew his passport immediately and to examine his request for renewal in view of information regarding Silver's membership in and support for organizations defined as pro-Communist or Communist. The letter gives one to understand that Silver's passport was frozen and the director of the Passport Office wished Silver to respond, suggesting that he appeal if he considered the decision mistaken.⁵⁵

Clearly the attempt to freeze Silver's passport can be understood against the background of anti-Communist hysteria and McCarthyism. Nevertheless, the letter from the Passport Office adds significance in that it indicates the gap between Silver's image as a loyal follower of Senator Taft and a Republican and his views on America's international status following World War II, which barely reached general public awareness and received only minor expression in the Jewish and general press.

Silver responded in a letter stating that he met personally with officials in the Office of the Secretary of State and that his passport was returned, possibly with the assistance of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, with whom Silver maintained a close personal relationship.⁵⁶ Despite the return of the passport, Silver objected in the letter to the attempt to delay renewing it, explaining his political principles and his place on the American ideological and political map of the

1950s. He described the Passport Office director's letter as unforeseen and troublesome, and maintained vehemently that he had never belonged to any organization identified with Communism in any way. Like many other Americans holding key positions in education, politics, or religion, he had joined organizations fighting on behalf of American democracy against any form of dictatorship: Nazi, Fascist, or Communist. Silver explained that sometimes being a member of an organization meant nothing more than agreeing to have one's name published as such, and he had no way of knowing if subversive forces had exploited some organizations for a time. Silver stressed that his public activity over the previous forty years was open, and he had never expressed a view that could harm American interests.⁵⁷ These statements do in fact accord with views Silver expressed in his sermons, which included severe criticism of Stalin's management of the Communist regime in the Soviet Union. At the same time he recognized the need for the United States and the Soviet Union to coexist and the right of other states to choose a Communist lifestyle without American intervention, emphasizing too the vital need for international cooperation in the sciences and other facets of humanity's common good.⁵⁸

Silver's response opens a window through which we see his status within the American public discourse at the conclusion of World War II and at the beginning of the Cold War. Silver did not consider himself a Communist or pro-Communist. He viewed his struggle against the Truman Doctrine, his support for interbloc compromise, and for augmenting United Nations power as support for a world order that would best serve American interests. Moreover, his desire to prevent anti-Communist hysteria and McCarthyism sprang from loyalty that made him speak and act to strengthen the United States internally as well as externally.⁵⁹

In consequence of his views, Silver maintained a close political and personal tie with Henry Wallace, vice president during Franklin D. Roosevelt's third presidential term and secretary of commerce from 1944 to 1946. Wallace was fired following his speech and public letter to President Truman in September 1946, in which he attacked America's hard-line policy toward the Soviet Union. Silver opposed

some issues Wallace raised, particularly his position that America had no right to involve itself in events in Eastern Europe, but he agreed with most of the speech, especially with Wallace's demand that agreement be reached with the Soviet Union while conducting an American policy independent of Britain's.⁶⁰

Despite his support for a compromise in relations with the U.S.S.R., and his opposition to removing Wallace from office, Silver did not agree with the pro-Soviet components of the views of Wallace and his associates. Unlike them, Silver did not support disarmament, although he objected to increasing the American defense budget.⁶¹ His merely partial support for Wallace indicates that Silver's position and political status within the American public discussion right after World War II and during the 1950s cannot be understood by labeling him a pro-Communist.

Silver's views on international issues reveal his alignment to the liberal section of the Democratic Party. It is evident as well from his backing of Roosevelt's appeasement policy toward the Soviet Union, which he considered very different from Truman's, and from his support for persons with like views in the American government, such as the under-secretary of state from 1937 to 1943, Sumner Welles, with whom he had maintained close ties and shared similar views, not only on Zionist issues.⁶²

Silver's closeness to liberals in the Democratic Party constitutes only part of his political activities following World War II. Silver maintained a system of political and personal ties with Senator Taft who, unlike Silver, represented a political view that included separatism, opposition to compromise with the Soviet Union, and support for prosecuting Communists or anyone in the United States suspected of being one.⁶³ Taft's opposition to the Marshall Plan and to American support for Britain created a primary political base for cooperation between him and Taft in specific areas, though they opposed the plan for different reasons. Silver objected to it because it harmed the Soviet Union and because he wanted to transfer American support to Europe through the United Nations, to strengthen that organization. Taft, on the other hand, objected to the plan because of his separatist philosophy.⁶⁴ In light of Silver's positions, his readiness

to maintain this collaboration calls for some explanation, which lies in Silver's status as a Zionist activist and Jewish leader in America. Throughout his years of public activity, Silver took care to emphasize that he was not a declared supporter of either the Democratic or Republican Party. In his opinion only non-identification ensured the status of Jews in American society and enabled them to function as a political force working to establish the state of Israel and assure its security during its early years.⁶⁵ One assumes that Republican control of Congress after 1946, and Eisenhower's victory in the 1952 presidential election, only strengthened Silver's view on the need to maintain Republican ties. The combination of liberal views and Republican Party ties enabled Silver to escape political harm as a Jewish leader and Reform rabbi and to continue to act on behalf of Israel. He did not have to refrain from expressing controversial political views, because his Republican ties dulled their significance, limited negative responses to them, and at times, as in the passport incident, prevented personal harm to Silver in the hostile milieu of anti-Communist hysteria and McCarthyism.

The Place of the Jewish State in World Affairs after World War II

Silver's and Neumann's views as to the desirable postwar world order guided their suggested solutions for the Palestine question, the anticipated state, and its place in world affairs. Neumann's support of the United Nations was an integral part of his view of the political solutions to the Palestine question. The United Nations, and the other international institutions whose establishment he suggested, were to play a central part in building the Jewish state, against a background of Middle East cooperation and peace, and as a part of an international effort to empower the United Nations.⁶⁶ The demands of Neumann and Silver to transfer most of the authority over Palestine to the United Nations was not merely tactical, but came in part from their strenuous rejection of the East-West struggle and of political methods they characterized as imperialistic.

During his visit to Israel in 1948, Silver gave a news conference on the state of Israel and world affairs.⁶⁷ He claimed that Israel's orientation should be the United Nations, neither East nor West. He

remarked: "More than two years ago, when the Anglo-American Committee was established, I already criticized it for excluding Russia."⁶⁸ Silver emphasized that Israel must maintain full neutrality in the East-West conflict. This policy made possible the establishment of the state and won the Zionist movement significant political gains. The Zionist issue brought about East-West collaboration and helped break the Iron Curtain, a fact of political importance beyond the Zionist context.⁶⁹

Silver repeated his position about transferring responsibility for Palestine to the United Nation rather than to an individual superpower in the draft of his memoirs.⁷⁰ On another occasion he claimed that the United Nations made it possible to redress historical wrongs and that resolving the issue of Palestine was a part of a world process of justice and peace that was supposed to be guided by the United Nations.⁷¹

Silver's view of the Jewish state in world affairs ran counter to that of David Ben-Gurion's, who supported American intervention in the Land of Israel and stationing American soldiers in the region. Ben-Gurion stressed that "there will be an army in every country, there will be an American army in every country, I saw it start in Africa, I hope they will come to the Land (of Israel) too, I pray that they come to the Land (of Israel), they will have the strength. America can send 100,000 soldiers, and that would be enough to keep the peace."⁷² An American army in the Land of Israel, according to Ben-Gurion, would involve the Jewish state in the East-West conflict as a member of the anti-Soviet block. This opposed Silver's position, who wished to dissociate the Jewish state from the East-West conflict and to ensure its survival by integrating it into the region.

This difference of opinion between the two men corresponds with the differences between them on other political questions. Silver's anti-British stance may be compared with Ben-Gurion's position on the desirable relations with Britain after establishing a state. To Ernest



*David Ben-Gurion,
first Prime Minister of Israel*
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

Bevin, the British foreign minister, Ben-Gurion said that the future state would be willing to become a partner of Britain and to give it army bases in the Land of Israel.⁷³ For Ben-Gurion a British presence in the Jewish state would be accepted willingly. He said: “The few million future Jews in the Land of Israel would still be a small people, but a European one, the only European people on the continent. Just as we are concerned about our national identity, so we must preserve our connection with Europe; but Europe is split between two blocks: one led by Russia, and the other led, more or less, by England.”⁷⁴ Ben-Gurion went on to say that it was very important for Britain to stay strong, and that it might be of vital interest to the Jewish state to provide for the legitimate strategic needs of Britain.⁷⁵

Silver’s position on the Palestine question went hand in hand with positions on key issues on the world agenda, as seen in an exchange of letters between him and his assistant Harold Manson shortly after Israel was established. Manson wrote Silver after some American general Zionists published a statement calling on the state of Israel to conduct a pro-Western policy and to the United States to initiate a plan similar to the Marshall Plan in the Middle East, providing massive aid to Israel.⁷⁶ Manson called the statement irresponsible and unwise and said it was published without coordination with Silver, who would have prevented such a step. Manson claimed that the United States wished to involve Israel in the Cold War and use its economic aid to that end.⁷⁷ He and Silver were fully aware that Israel must not sell its freedom, despite Israel’s economic and defense needs. Manson remarked further on Silver’s opposition to the East-West struggle and to embroiling the Zionist movement and the state of Israel in it. Silver was the only Zionist leader to oppose the Marshall Plan and stress his consistent position that Israel must stay neutral in the East-West struggle.⁷⁸

Silver’s and Manson’s positions were exceptional in the American social and political climate in the late forties and early fifties. Opinions against the Cold War and for collaboration with the Soviet Union were so rare that Manson added in the margin of one letter an underlined remark to the secret agents who would read it, clarifying that neither sender nor receiver were Communists or supporters of Communism.⁷⁹

The need for secrecy makes it difficult to reconstruct fully Silver's positions about involving the Zionist movement and Israel in the East-West struggle. Even so, his opposition to pulling Israel into the East-West struggle was clearly inseparable from his criticism of the Marshall Plan and from the opinion that favored collaboration and communication between the United States and the Soviet Union. Silver also tried to ensure that the establishment of Israel would be monitored by the United Nations, not by a single superpower, and thus ensuring the neutrality of the future state. The questions of Palestine and the Middle East were among the most important problems facing the international community at the end of World War II, and the solutions could influence the entire international system. Removing the solution to the Palestine question from the East-West struggle and putting it in the hands of the United Nation would, in their view, have contributed not only to an adequate solution to that specific problem, but also to strengthening the organization, thus helping to stabilize the entire Middle East and making it a building block in the new world order.

Silver's political and Zionist views and his notion of Judaism's place in modern Western society are closely linked. He claimed that Judaism advocates constant human progress, a view not held by other religions. Human progress, he claimed, involves not only science and technology, but social issues and especially increased political freedom and the end of imperialism and colonialism. The essence of Judaism, he maintained, even from a religious point of view, was not the coming of the Messiah but the direction of human society, whose goals are eradicating ignorance and racism, promoting peace and international collaboration, preventing and reducing poverty, and ending ethnic rivalries and war. Silver claimed that those were the fundamental goals of the twentieth century, and that in this respect there was no difference between East and West, Communists and non-Communists. For Silver, any human progress was at risk from reaction and retreat, and Judaism and Jews had an important role to play in the struggle against reaction.⁸⁰

Conclusion

The importance of American Zionists in the Zionist struggles of the 1940s and their decisive contribution to the founding of Israel has overshadowed the study of other central aspects of American Zionist history in the decade before that historic era. A clear example is the research discussion around Abba Hillel Silver, which focuses on his contribution to the Zionist effort and his activities in 1947 leading to confirmation of the United Nations partition resolution. Of course, these topics are not to be overlooked. Nonetheless, the Zionist policy of Silver and his group must be understood in connection with the place of American Zionists in the American political and social framework and Silver's Zionist policy must be seen within his overall world view.

The United States, American Jewry, and the Zionist movement in the United States became increasingly important factors in Zionist policy in the 1940s. From the late 1930s on, American Jews became steadily more prominent in the international Jewish community and in the Zionist movement, as a consequence of the ever-increasing role of the United States in world affairs, the growing American involvement in the Middle East, and the disastrous condition of the Jews in Europe, which climaxed tragically with the Holocaust. Reviewing their political activities on the Zionist issue, the Palestine question, and world affairs, one sees American Zionists intensively involved in historical events that started in the late 1930s and continued until the declaration of the state of Israel. American Jews and Zionist movement members acted then under the shadow of the disaster of European Jews and in light of the clear prospect of fulfilling the Zionist vision and establishing a Jewish state in Palestine. As a result, there was an unusual surge of support for Zionist activity among American Jews, and the leaders of American Zionism had an extraordinary window of opportunity through which they could influence Zionist activity and the nature of the state could be established.⁸¹

The American Zionist attempt to guide the process of establishing the future Jewish state in the Middle East marks a fundamental change in the methods of America's Zionists, now eager to have a hands-on role in shaping the Jewish state and the Zionist movement, going beyond their former role of providing economic and political support

to the Yishuv in Palestine. The wish to influence the structure of the Zionist movement arose in the late 1930s as a reaction to patterns of the 1920s (when America's Zionists gave up trying to influence the Zionist movement), as their movement itself grew and expanded.

The question of the Jewish state and its influence on the Middle East and world affairs were key issues facing world leaders at the end of World War II. The involvement of the American Zionist leaders in establishing and shaping the future state gave them influence in most important political issues, whose significance went beyond the borders of the Jewish state and, in their opinion, affected the Middle East, the United Nations, and the mode of operations between East and West.

Silver's anti-British activities and the world view he and his group shared regarding the role of the Jewish state in the Middle East indicate the way the leaders of America's Zionists merged their Zionism with their world view as a whole. They tried to fit the nascent Jewish state into their plans to increase the power of the United Nations, mitigate the East-West conflict, and allow for the progressive economic development of former colonies. Silver and Neumann's support of the United Nations was inseparable from their view of the right political approach to the Palestine question. The United Nations, and other international institutions they suggested creating for the Middle East, were supposed to produce a regional climate of cooperation and be part of the international effort to strengthen the United Nations as a world player.

Solving the question of Palestine the way Silver, Neumann, and their collaborators in the Zionist leadership of the United States suggested would serve two complementary goals: building a Jewish state that would fit their political and ideological world view, and strengthening world trends they supported in the international arrangements of the post-World War II era. Founding a Jewish state and solving its basic problems were each goals in their own right and, in addition, the means for building political, economic, and social arrangements that fit into their world view.

Once Israel became independent, efforts by the leaders of American Zionism to mold it came almost to a complete stop. Their activities, opposed earlier by the Zionist establishment in the Land of Israel, were



Silver in May 1947
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)

prevented almost totally after 1948 and were seen by the heads of the new state as crude meddling in Israel's internal affairs.⁸² When in 1948, Ben-Gurion ousted Abba Hillel Silver, the most important American Zionist leader of the 1940s, it marked the end of a unique decade during which the Zionists of the United States, led by Silver, tried to take part in the shaping of the Jewish state. Silver's sudden exit from the center of Zionist activities is especially noteworthy, as it followed intensive activity in the United States and in the World Zionist

movement in the 1940s, exemplified by the pro-Zionist motions in the United States Congress in 1944, the 22nd Zionist Congress, and the struggle in the United Nations for the partition plan.⁸³

The inability of the Zionists of America to realize their ideas about the place of the Jewish state in the Middle East indicates their fundamental problem: they wished to direct the development of the Jewish state while they remained in the United States. This was impossible, since the relations between Jews and Arabs in Palestine and the position of the Jewish state in the Middle East were determined and carried out by leaders of the Zionist establishment there, according to their own world view and the political and social reality of Israel — quite different from the ideas expressed by American Zionists.

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Appendix – Selected Sermons on International Affairs

1. 22.4.45 “Crossroads at San Francisco” Silver Archive 4/730.
2. 14.10.45 “Enter the Atomic Age” Silver Archive 4/732.
3. 5.5.46 “The Fear of Russia” Silver Archive 4/747.
4. 20.10.46 “The Role of America in the World Today” Silver Archive 4/749.
5. 13.4.47 “The New American Foreign Policy — Is there Danger in it or Promise?” Silver Archive 4/762.

6. 19.10.47 "Russia and the United States — Is there a Bridge Between Them?" Silver Archive 4/767.
7. 16.11.47 "The Marshall Plan" Silver Archive 4/769.
8. 30.1.49 "The Vision of the One World" Silver Archive 4/789.
9. 30.4.50 "The Cold War" Silver Archive 4/821.
10. 8.10.50 "The Lessons of Korea" Silver Archive 4/824.
11. 22.10.50 "The Cold War" Silver Archive 4/826 .
12. 29.10.50 "Freedom in the United States" Silver Archive 4/827.
13. 4.3.51 "Shall We Re-Arm Germany" Silver Archive 4/843.
14. 22.4.51 "The Recall of MacArthur — and What Next?" Silver Archive 4/849.
15. 26.10.52 "Some Reflections on the Present Political Campaign" Silver Archive 4/879.
16. 2.11.52 "Some More Observations on the Coming Elections" Silver Archive 4/880.
17. 15.3.53 "Stalin and After" Silver Archive 4/895.
18. 28.2.54 "The Berlin Conference — its Success and Failure" Silver Archive 4/922.
19. 4.4.54 "Just What is Loyalty to America?" Silver Archive 4/926.
20. 7.11.54 "Where is our Foreign Policy Taking Us?" Silver Archive 4/7932.
21. 20.2.55 "Changes on the International Scene" Silver Archive 4/944.
22. 16.10.55 "The Soviet Union and the West" Silver Archive 4/956.
23. 29.4.56 "Communist Salesmen in Democratic Lands" Silver Archive 4/976.
24. 14.10.56 "Communism in the Confessional: Soviet Dictatorship in Self-Appraisal" Silver Archive 4/979.
25. 20.10.57 "The Russian Space Satellite" Silver Archive 4/1000.
26. 27.10.57 "Segregation and American World Leadership" Silver Archive 4/1001.
27. 3.5.59 "A New Secretary of State, a New Foreign Policy" Silver Archive 4/1024.
28. 15.10.61 "My Visit to the Soviet Union, Part I" Silver Archive 4/1049.
29. 22.10.61 "My Visit to the Soviet Union, Part II" Silver Archive 4/1050.

Notes

¹ Marc Lee Raphael, *Abba Hillel Silver* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1989). Noach Ornan, “The Leadership of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver in the American Arena, 1939-1949” (Hebrew) (Ph.D. diss., University of Tel Aviv, 1982).

² See Tzvi Ganin, “Disagreement between activists and moderates in the leadership of American Zionists in the 1940s -- the case of Stephen Wise and Abba Hillel Silver” (Hebrew), *Ha-Tziyonut* vol. 9 (1984): 317–58. Meir Avizohar, *Towards the End of the Mandate, Memoirs* (Hebrew) (Ben-Gurion University, 1993), (hereafter: Avizohar, *End of the Mandate*), 424. Allon Gal, *David Ben-Gurion — Preparing for a Jewish State, Political Alignment in Response to the White Paper and the Outbreak of World War II, 1938-1941* (Hebrew) (Sde Boker, 1985), (hereafter: Gal, *Preparing for a Jewish State*). An English version appeared as *David Ben-Gurion and the American Alignment for a Jewish State*, (Jerusalem, 1991). Amitzur Ilan, *America, Britain, and Palestine: the Origin and Development of American Intervention in Britain's Palestine Policy 1938-1947* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1979). Eliyahu Eilat, *The Struggle for Statehood* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1979), 444. *The Struggle for the Statehood* is the memoirs of Eliyahu Eilat, then Epstein, the Jewish Agency representative in Washington in the 1940s and afterwards Israeli consul and ambassador in Washington and London. (hereafter: Eilat, *The Struggle*.) Memoirs, see Emanuel Neumann, *In the Arena, an Autobiographical Memoir*, (trans. into Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1977), hereafter: Neumann, *In the Arena*. (New York, 1976.) Benjamin Akzin, *From Riga to Jerusalem — Memories* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1989). The dominance of the establishment of the state as an issue in the literature on Silver is expressed as well in the title of his collected speeches and sermons, trans. into Hebrew: Abba Hillel Silver, *The Struggle for a Jewish State: Collection of Speeches and Articles* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1968). Emanuel Neumann, *Abba Hillel Silver - Militant Zionist* (New York, 1967).

³ See e.g. Yechiam Weitz, ed, *From Vision to Revision: A Hundred Years of Historiography of Zionism* (Hebrew) (Israel, 1997).

⁴ The Western Reserve Historical Society, “A Guide to the Microfilm Edition of the Papers of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,” Cleveland, 1994, which relates to the microfilm edition of Abba Hillel Silver Archive in Cleveland: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, The Temple, Cleveland (hereafter: Silver Archive).

⁵ Allon Gal and Ofer Shiff, “Abba Hillel Silver: Judaism and Zionism (sources)” (Hebrew), *Iyunim* vol. 8 (1998), 687–98; Allon Gal, “The United States in the World View of Abba Hillel Silver” (Hebrew), in *Michael, a Collection for the History of the Jews of the Diaspora* (Hebrew), vol. 15 (2000), 9–25; and papers in the special Silver issue: Abba Hillel Silver and American Zionism, *The Journal of Israel History*, vol. 17, no. 1 (1996).

⁶ Neumann, *In the Arena*, 162, 163.

⁷ Silver's draft for his autobiography, 1963, Silver Archive, 7/3. For a general discussion of the view of Britain and the Arab question in the Yishuv (Jewish community in the Land of Israel), see Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *The Origins of the Israeli Policy: The Political System of the Jewish Community in Palestine under the Mandate* (Hebrew), (Tel Aviv, 1977), 199–203.

⁸ See, e.g., an editorial about the 22nd Zionist Congress in the *New York Herald Tribune*, November 12, 1946.

⁹ Silver's autobiography, loc. cit.

¹⁰ Wise's letter to Lady Reading, July 10, 1946, Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem, A-234/12 (hereafter: Central Zionist Archive). About Silver's opposition to the loan see Richard P. Stevens, *American Zionism and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1942-1947* (New York, 1962), 117–18. Neumann and Silver's opposition to the loan was a leading cause of their difference of opinion with large segments in the State Department, which Neumann characterized as pro-British. Neumann noted especially his conflict with Acheson, under-secretary of state and later secretary of state, on this matter. See Neumann's note regarding Acheson, undated, Central Zionist Archive, A-123/97.

¹¹ See a memorandum by Benjamin Akzin, who headed the Washington office of the Emergency Council, to Harry Shapiro about his meeting with the *London Times* reporter in Washington, August 11, 1948, Silver Archive, 2/277. Also, a letter from Eliyahu Ben Horin to Silver about information he received from State Department sources, October 9, 1947, Silver Archive, 2/394 (Shapiro and Ben Horin, Silver's faithful followers, were both active on the Emergency Council). On the importance of the loan to Britain see Forbes Roy Harrod, *The Life of John Maynard Keynes* (London 1951), 586–623. About American political elements opposed to the loan, see John Lamberton Harper, *American Vision of Europe: Franklin D. Roosevelt, George F. Kennan and Dean G. Acheson* (Cambridge, 1994), 274–7.

¹² Silver's letter to Neumann, December 2, 1940, American Jewish Historical Society P-134/119. For criticism of Churchill, see Silver, "We Have Nothing To Lose But Our Illusions" (Hebrew), March 21, 1945, Central Zionist Archive, A-123/348.

¹³ As to support of Indian independence and the end of British rule, see Pearl S. Buck's letter to Silver about him joining the Emergency Council for India, November 11, 1943, Silver Archive, 1/731. See, also, thanks from the president of the American Council for India to Silver for adding his signature to, and helping fund, an advertisement in support of Indian independence in the *New York Times*, September 23, 1942, Silver Archive, 1/731. The close relationship between Silver and Taft goes beyond the subject of this article; see, e.g., Silver's letter to Taft July 1, 1945, Silver Archive, 3/244. About Taft's anti-British policy and its importance to his world view regarding American international relations see, Robert A. Taft, *A Foreign Policy for Americans* (New York 1951), 84–85.

¹⁴ Van Paassen's letter to Silver, June 1, 1945, Central Zionist Archive, A-103/123.

¹⁵ Silver's sermon in Cleveland on the United States' role in the world, October 20, 1946, Silver Archive, 6/749.

¹⁶ Silver's sermon on United States-Soviet relations, October 19, 1947, Silver Archive, 6/767. About the British Loan, see Judd Polk & Gardner Patterson, "The British Loan," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 24, no. 3 (1946): 429–40.

¹⁷ The issue of Palestine was intertwined with the East-West conflict due to the U.S. governments increasing concern that the Soviet Union might get involved in the Middle East. See Gaddis Smith, *The American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy*, vol. 16, *Dean Acheson*, (New York, 1972), 33–5.

¹⁸ *Free World*, published in New York, 1941–46. It dealt with constructing the new world order after the war and defined itself as supporting democracy and world peace. To increase its influence the magazine published special issues in Chinese and Spanish. Offprint of Neumann’s article in *Free World*, August 1942, Central Zionist Archive, A-123/256. See Emanuel Neumann, “Arab Alignments in the Near East,” *Free World* 3 (1942): 3–15.

¹⁹ Neumann, *Free World*, loc. cit.

²⁰ Text of a lecture by Neumann about the Middle East economy, January 30, 1943, Central Zionist Archives, A-123/256.

²¹ Neumann lecture, loc. cit.

²² Neumann lecture, loc. cit.

²³ Neumann lecture, loc. cit. Neumann presented similar opinions in a position paper on new policy for the Middle East. See “New Policy for the Middle East” (no date), Central Zionist Archives, A-123/256.

²⁴ Letter from Neumann to Silver, June 16, 1944, Silver Archive, 2/165.

²⁵ *Ibid.* See also Neumann on the critical need for strengthening the United Nations and peace in the world in *New Palestine*, December 16, 1947, Silver Archive, 1/886.

²⁶ Silver sermon in Cleveland on the turning point in San Francisco, April 22, 1945, Silver Archive, 6/730.

²⁷ Silver sermon, loc. cit.

²⁸ Silver sermon in Cleveland on the Truman Doctrine and American foreign policy, April 13, 1947, Silver Archive, 6/762.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ On the Marshall Plan, see Robert Ferrel, *George Marshall, Secretary of State* (New York, 1966), 99–134.

³² On the debate in the United States about restoring Germany, and about the Soviet Union and the Marshall Plan, see, e.g., Ronald W. Pruessen, *John Foster Dulles, The Road To Power* (New York, 1982), 348–49; M. Martin Walker, *The Cold War* (New York, 1993), 50–56; John Gimbel, *The Origins of the Marshall Plan* (Stanford 1976); Shlomo Shafir, *Ambiguous Relations, The American Jewish Community and Germany Since 1945* (Detroit, 1999), 37–52; George Bidault, “Agreement on Germany: Key to World Peace,” *Foreign Affairs*, 24, no. 4 (1946):571–78; Allen W. Dulles, “Alternatives for Germany,” *Foreign Affairs*, 26, no. 3 (1948):457–69. A similar controversy took place about Japan: see Hu Lin, “How to Deal with Japan,” *Foreign Affairs*, 24, no. 2 (1946):253–61. A detailed bibliography on these issues can be found in the relevant chapters of Gary B. Nash, eds., *The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society* (New York, 1994).

³³ Silver sermon about the Marshall Plan, November 16, 1947, Silver Archive 6/695.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Silver sermon in Cleveland, "Russia and the United States: Is there no bridge between them?" October 19, 1947, Silver Archive, 4/767.

³⁷ Silver's draft of his autobiography, 1963, Silver Archive, 7/5.

³⁸ Silver, October 19, 1947, loc. cit.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ See Silver's talk "The Inauguration of President Wilson," February 3, 1917, Silver Archive, 4/8 (place not mentioned) and a printed copy of Silver's Sunday sermon at The Temple in Cleveland: "Woodrow Wilson — an Appreciation" April 13, 1919, Silver Archive, 4/46.

⁴¹ Silver's Sunday sermon at The Temple in Cleveland about the Paris agreements, 1/6/19, Silver Archive 4/52.

⁴² A detailed list of Silver's sermons on political issues is given in the appendix.

⁴³ Silver's talk "A Letter to Mr. Truman," December 17, 1951, Silver Archive, 3/833.

⁴⁴ For general background on the Korean War, see Joseph C. Goulden, *Korea, The Untold Story of the War* (Toronto, 1982). For another of Silver's statements against the Korean War and in favor of recognizing Communist China, see "The Lessons of Korea," Silver Archive 4/824.

⁴⁵ See letters in this spirit: January 29, 1951, January 31, 1951, Silver Archive, 1/1405, and article in *Intermountain Jewish News*, March 1, 1951.

⁴⁶ Support letters February 1, 1951 (two letters), January 14, 1951, January 15, 1951, January 16, 1951, January 17, 1951 (two letters), January 18, 1951 (three letters); Silver Archive, 1/1405.

⁴⁷ *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, December 9, 1945, April 14, 1947, November 11, 1947, December 29, 1947.

⁴⁸ See the appendix.

⁴⁹ *Chicago Sentinel*, January 4, 1951, March 20, 1952; *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, May 28, 1951, October 29, 1952. February 18, 1959; *Jewish Life*, April, 1952; *The Daily Pennsylvanian*, November 13, 1952; *San Francisco News*, November 13, 1952, February 24, 1953; *South African Jewish Times*, February 13, 1953; *The Cleveland Press*, December 30, 1956, *Jewish Record*, December 4, 1960.

⁵⁰ *Daily Worker*, December 27, 1950.

⁵¹ *The Morning Freiheit*, January, 1951.

⁵² On the positive attitude toward the Soviet Union in wide sections of the American public shortly after the war, see Richard M. Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism, Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics and International Security, 1946-1948* (New York, 1985), 67–69, 179. (hereafter, Freeland, Truman). On American-Soviet relations before the Cold War, see John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace, Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (New York, 1987), 3–19.

⁵³ *Cleveland Press*, November 30, 1963.

⁵⁴ Neumann's eulogy, opening session of the Zionist Actions Committee, Jerusalem, March 16, 1964, Silver Archive, 8/81.

⁵⁵ Letter from the director of the U.S. Department of State Passport Office, May 23, 1955, Silver Archive, 3/270.

⁵⁶ Letter from Silver to the director of the Passport Office, June 3, 1955, Silver Archive, 3/270.

⁵⁷ Silver's letter June 3, 1955.

⁵⁸ Silver's sermons — "Stalin and After," March 15, 1953, Silver Archive, 4/895; "The Russian Space Satellite," October 20, 1957, Silver Archive, 4/1000.

⁵⁹ On Silver's view of anti-Communist hysteria and McCarthyism, see "Freedom in the United States," October 29, 1950, Silver Archive, 4/843; "What is Loyalty to America?" April 4, 1954, Silver Archive, 4/932. On the general subject, see David Cauter, *The Great Fear, The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* (New York, 1978).

⁶⁰ Silver's sermon, Cleveland, October 20, 1946, "The Role of America in the World Today. Are We Leading towards Peace? Are We Heading for War? The Implications of the Byrnes-Wallace-Baruch Controversy," Silver Archive, 4/749.

⁶¹ One finds no support from Silver for Wallace as an independent presidential candidate in November 1948, possibly indicating the partial nature of Silver's support for him and his views. On Silver's objection to increasing the defense budget, see "Letter to President Truman," December 17, 1951. That Silver did not consider himself pro-Communist is evident from his sermon in Cleveland, April 30, 1950, "The Cold War," Silver Archive, 4/821.

⁶² Silver's sermon, October 20, 1946. On the Democratic liberals' opposition to Truman's Soviet policy, see Walter Lafeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War 1945–1980* (New York, 1980), 46–47.

⁶³ This paper mentions the close ties between Silver and Dulles. In addition, Silver testified to close ties with President Eisenhower and his government in his 1963 autobiography, Silver Archive, 7/3. More on the ties between Silver and Taft in the Senate election in 1944, see Paul W. Walter's letter to Daniel Silver, January 27, 1989, Silver Archive, 7/154. On Sumner Welles' views, see Sumner Welles, *The Time for Decision* (Cambridge, Mass., 1944); *We Need Not Fail* (London, 1948). On the agreement between Silver and Welles on these issues, see letters of June 30 and July 8, 1948, Silver Archive, 1/1964.

⁶⁴ On Taft's activity against aid to Europe see Susan M. Hartmann, *Truman and the 80th Congress* (Columbia, 1971), 161–3. On Silver's view, see his sermon of April 13, 1947, "The New American Foreign Policy — Is there Danger in it or Promise?" Silver Archive, 4/749. On possible collaboration between opponents of the Marshall Plan on different grounds, see Freeland, *Truman*, 139–40. One such example was Taft's inclusion of Silver's open letter in the Congressional Record for February 5, 1951, Silver Archive, 1/1405. Silver's openly held views against an uncontrolled transfer of money to Europe in the name of fighting Communism, and the resulting harm to the American economy, fit in with Taft's views as well.

- ⁶⁵ See, e.g., the open letter by Silver, 1940, Central Zionist Archive, A/243-132; Silver's letter to Emmanuel Neumann, October 27, 1944, Silver Archive, 1/133
- ⁶⁶ Neumann's article in *New Palestine*, December 16, 1947, Silver Archive, 1/886.
- ⁶⁷ See *Hatzofeh* (a Hebrew daily) on Silver's news conference, December 18, 1948, "Silver: Our Orientation is Neither East Nor West, But United Nations."
- ⁶⁸ *Hatzofeh*, December 18, 1948, loc. cit.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁰ Silver's draft memoirs, July 3, 1963.
- ⁷¹ Silver's lecture in New York, April 29, 1945, Central Zionist Archives, S-3/271-a. In supporting the transfer of the Palestine question to the United Nations, Silver and Neumann differed from Nachum Goldman. He claimed that the Zionist movement would achieve even less in the United Nations than it had in the League of Nations and that Zionist interests would be harmed if the United Nations dealt with the Land of Israel. See the Goldman letter to Ben-Gurion, September 18, 1945, Central Zionist Archives, Z-6/2759.
- ⁷² Ben-Gurion at the Jewish Agency Executive, October 6, 1942, Central Zionist Archives S-100. Goldman, too, viewed the possibility of British army bases in the independent Jewish state favorably. Such bases would have an obvious function in the Cold War. Goldman at the Jewish Agency Executive, August 2, 1946, Central Zionist Archives, S-100.
- ⁷³ Avizohar, *Toward the End of the Mandate* (Hebrew), 50
- ⁷⁴ According to Avizohar, loc. cit., 50–51.
- ⁷⁵ Avizohar, loc. cit., 51.
- ⁷⁶ Letter from Manson to Silver, July 25, 1949, Silver Archive, 1/1147.
- ⁷⁷ About the Cold War, see letter from Manson to Silver, June 5, 1950, Silver Archive, 1/1148.
- ⁷⁸ Letter from Manson to Silver, July 25, 1949, loc. cit. There is a general discussion of Palestine and the superpowers in Michael J. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers 1945-1948* (Princeton, 1982); and Jehuda Reinharz, *Zionism and the Great Powers: A Century of Foreign Policy* (New York, 1994).
- ⁷⁹ Letter from Manson to Silver, July 25, 1949, loc. cit.
- ⁸⁰ On these subjects, see Silver, "Rabbis and Their Critics," in Silver, *Therefore Choose Life*, 391–92. Silver, "There is Yet Room for Vision," 428–30. On the mission of the Jewish religion and the vital role of religion in Jewish life for Silver, see Michael Meyer, *Between Tradition and Progress* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem, 1989), 550–51. (first published in English as *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* [Oxford, 1988]). See related detail in Michael A. Meyer, "Abba Hillel Silver: Zionist within the Camp of Reform Judaism," *The Journal of Israel History* 17, no. 1 (1996): 9–31.

⁸¹ About the increasing importance of American Zionism see, e.g., David H. Shapiro, “The Forming of the Zionist Emergency Council as the Public Political Action Branch of American Zionism, 1938-1944” (Hebrew), (Ph.D. diss., The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1979), 31–32. See also, on the same subject in English: Shapiro, *From Philanthropy to Activism: The Political Transformation of American Zionism in the Holocaust Years 1933-1945* (Oxford, 1994). On the political aspects of the rise of American Zionists and their subsequent contribution to the Zionist political struggle, see Gal, *Preparing for a Jewish State* (Hebrew), 1–14.

⁸² Typical examples of opposition to activities of American Zionists and of Silver and Neumann in Israel in the 1950s can be found in *Hador* (Hebrew), the mouthpiece of the Labor Zionist (Mapai) movement. See articles on May 30, 1951, November 26, 1950, and November 24, 1950.

⁸³ Many details of Silver’s contribution to Zionist political activity in America are found in Eliyahu Eilat’s memoirs (N. 2). See Eilat, *The Struggle*. On the conflict between Silver and Ben-Gurion and the ousting of Silver in 1948, see Neumann’s letter to several Zionist leaders in the United States, April 12, 1947, Central Zionist Archives, A-123/320; a letter from Silver to Neumann, Central Zionist Archive, January 23, 1948, loc. cit; a protocol of a Jewish Agency Executive meeting in Jerusalem, August 19, 1948. Central Zionist Archive, S-100.