



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES
A DIVISION OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE – JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

MS-630: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler Digital Collection, 1953-1996.
Series A: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1961-1996.

Box
10

Folder
6

Outreach [Commission], 1980-1992.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
American Jewish Archives website.



COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100

Encl.

August 26, 1992
27 Av 5752

David W. Belin, Esq.
Belin Harris Lamson McCormick
2000 Financial Center
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear David:

I have a copy of your letter of August 18th to Mel Merians. How generous of you to give us an additional \$5000 for the second printing. Thank you even more for providing us with so effective a booklet to advance our work. You are wonderful, what more can I say.

Rhea joins me in sending you and Barbara our warm good wishes.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

**BELIN HARRIS
LAMSON McCORMICK**

A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION • ATTORNEYS AT LAW

2000 Financial Center • Des Moines, Iowa 50309
Telephone (515) 243-7100 • Telecopier (515) 282-7615

David W. Belin
Charles E. Harris
Jeffrey E. Lamson
Mark McCormick
Steven E. Zumbach
Thomas L. Flynn
Jon L. Staudt
Jeffrey A. Krausman
Jeremy C. Sharpe

Roger T. Stetson
Charles D. Hunter
John T. Seitz
Gerard D. Neugent
Robert A. Mullen
Quentin R. Boyken
Charles F. Becker
Dennis P. Ogden
Margaret C. Callahan

Robert D. Sharp
William P. Hoyer
Mark E. Weinhardt
John M. Bouslog
Timothy P. Willcockson

Of Counsel
Sue Luettjohann Seitz
Lawrence E. Pope

August 18, 1992

Mr. Melvin Merians, Chairman
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York NY 10021-7064

Re: "What Judaism Offers For You: A Reform Perspective" - Outreach Commission

Dear Mel:

What a marvelous persuader you are. When I write books, I receive royalties. Even when I write for publications like The New York Times, I receive payment. This is the first situation in which I have ever been involved where I not only have not been paid for writing, but now I am called upon to pay for the publication. Please do not let my clients know. They might think that with the passage of time, I am losing my skills at negotiation.

Be that as it may, it is obviously good news that my booklet, "What Judaism Offers for You: A Reform Perspective," has been so well received that the initial 20,000 printing is now gone. The bad news is that there are no funds in the current budget of the Outreach Commission for printing an additional 20,000 copies, which would require approximately \$5,000.

I told Dru Greenwood that I would call you and suggest that I would be happy to contribute \$2,500, if the UAHC in its contingency funds would match that with another \$2,500. As you know, when I called you about this, you said the \$2,500 was not there and suggested that I just come forward with the entire \$5,000. The main problem I had with this is that there are endowment funds specifically designed to cover publications of this kind, including the Rapoport fund as well as the Schusterman fund. I feel we are not being fair to our endowment fund contributors if we merely use the income from these funds to offset the basic operational costs, rather than enhancing the programs as the donors of these funds intended.

When you asked that I commit the entire \$5,000 for a second printing of 20,000 copies, I asked for your assurance that if I agreed to do this and if the second printing, too, should be so favorably received that additional printings in the future might be required, you would undertake every effort to be supportive to have the Outreach budget include necessary funds for additional printings that might be required, and that this process would continue for any future printings. You gave me your assurance, and in reliance on this I am prepared to commit the \$5,000.

COPY

Mr. Melvin Merians, Chairman
August 18, 1992
Page 2

Accordingly, I will contact Dru Greenwood to advise me when the printing has been completed and the bill has been received, and I will then promptly remit my check.

Best regards.

Sincerely,



David W. Belin

c.c. Rabbi Alexander Schindler
Dru Greenwood
Rabbi Daniel Syme
Harris Gilbert
Rabbi Leslie Gutterman

DWB:cs

d:\jewish\merians.doc

COPY

Outreach

June 2, 1992
1 Sivan 5752

Paul S. Friedman, M.D.
Suite 715
1422 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Dr. Friedman:

I have just returned from lengthy travels and have finally had an opportunity to read your letter of May 12. You undoubtedly read my comments incorrectly, for I have never stated that the Outreach program was not succeeding. What I have said, following some comments on intermarriage and statistics was the following:

"Does this mean that our Outreach program is flawed in its conception? Obviously not! We are not to be scapegoated for the high rate of intermarriage. Outreach was not designed to reverse the tide of intermarriage. It was designed, rather, to retain the intermarried for Judaism, to gather and keep them within the fold. We should be credited, therefore, with doing our share to staunch the bleeding and to infuse new blood into the Jewish body. Note, if you will, that we are the only stream of Judaism on the American Jewish scene that is swelling in numbers."

I trust this information will clarify your misunderstanding.

With kindest greetings, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler



COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

May 14, 1992
11 Iyar 5752

Paul S. Friedman, M.D.
Radiology Associates
Suite 715
1422 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Dr. Friedman:

Your correspondence to Rabbi Schindler arrived after he left the city for engagements that will keep him away from his desk for an extended period of time.

I will, of course, hold your letter for his return in June, and I write to inform you of the reason for the delay in his response to you.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Sincerely,

Marian Brewer
Rabbi Schindler's office

Outreach

MEMORANDUM

May 19, 1992

FROM: Edith J. Miller
TO: Dru Greenwood
COPY: Melvin Merians, Rabbi Daniel Syme, Harris Gilbert

As you undoubtedly know, the William and Lottie Daniel Foundation has made a magnificent pledge to the Endowment and Trust of the UAHC which will establish an Endowment Fund to be named: The William and Lottie Daniel Outreach Program, the proceeds of which will maintain the William and Lottie Daniel Department of Outreach within the UAHC.

The pledge was signed, sealed and delivered at the Board meeting this weekend and was, of course, accepted by the Board of Trustees. Dru, you will now have to change your letterhead to include the Daniel's name, a la our Department of Synagogue Manangement which bears the names of Ida and Howard Wilkoff. I am not certain if your letterhead and all materials published by Outreach should include the designation of the Outreach Program or the Department of Outreach. That should be determined and then proceed to make the necessary changes.

Alex also felt that we should create some kind of an artistic citation to be placed in the Outreach Department. This could be in the form of a metal plaque or a very artistic and elegant certificate which can be properly framed and hung.

The Outreach division is exceedingly fortunate to have two such beautiful people as William and Lottie Daniel underwrite your critical work. You should try to keep them informed of the Department's work and certainly see that they are invited to all of your programs.



April 2, 1992
28 Adar II 5752

Mr. Richard England
Hechinger
1616 McCormick Drive
Landover, MD 20785-5372

Dear Dick:

Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts on the UAHC moving into missionary work among non-affiliated non-Jews. As you might surmise, I agree with you fully. After all, if we have no mission, people will suspect that we have no message.

I have no doubt that we will eventually move into such activity. And you may be certain when we do it will be in a "soft-sell" manner. We rarely, if ever, use high pressure tactics!

With warm regards to you and Lois, from Rhea, too, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Hechinger
1616 McCormick Drive
Landover, Maryland 20785-5372
301-925-3131
Fax 301-925-3904

Richard England
Chairman Emeritus

March 30, 1992

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021-7064

Dear Alex:

I heard you speak at the Biennial Convention in Baltimore. The enclosed column has reminded me to write you.

Not only do I agree with your point of view, but I recommend going further than you have suggested. If Reform Judaism is such a good product, why don't we try to sell it? First to the Jews of the world, and then to everyone else. Why is it a sin to sell a good idea? The Mormons do it in a big way. Many Christian sects are very active in their missionary work. Muslims never stop trying to sell their beliefs worldwide. I do not understand why we need to be so shy, reticent, and timid about telling the world of the beauties of our faith.

My only caution would be that we refrain from high pressure tactics in any respect. However, I can see nothing wrong with a worldwide effort to "soft sell" our faith. My best wishes to you.

Warmly,

Dica

Tell him "as you
might realize I agree with
you fully. If we have no
mission, people will suspect
that we have no
message"

MEMORANDUM

January 28, 1992

COPY

Outreach

FROM: Edith J. Miller

TO: Dru Greenwood

COPY: Melvin Merians, Rabbi Alexander Schindler,
Rabbi Daniel Syme, Harris Gilbert, Arthur Grant,
Ellyn Geller, Joseph Bernstein and Rabbi Allen Kaplan

I am glad that Allen took the time to give you a report on what transpired at the New York Federation Outreach Seminar last Sunday. It really was a wonderful program.

Since I was at the table where the discussion of non-Jewish membership arose, I want to tell you that while I was distressed that a congregation permits membership for a non-Jew - - and in this instance it was not a case of a non-Jewish spouse - - I was even more upset by the attitude of others around the table. They really seemed not to think anything wrong to have synagogues be open to anyone who wishes to join.

I also had two people speak to me about the "Union's mixed message" on rabbinical officiation at interfaith marriages. My response to the people who spoke with me was that this is a rabbinical decision, that I certainly did not view the Union's openness as sending a mixed message, but it was a matter for determination by the individual rabbi according to his/her conscience.

Be that as it may, I really write this memo only to underscore the importance of the response to the matter of synagogue membership.

MEMORANDUM

From RABBI ALLEN S. KAPLAN

Date JAN. 27, 1992

To DRU GREENWOOD

Copies Melvin Merians, Rabbi Alexander Schindler, Rabbi Daniel Syme, Harris Gilbert, Arthur Grant, Ellyn Geller, Joseph Bernstein and Edith Miller✓

On Sunday, January 26th, the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues, had a most successful Outreach Conference. In spite of the snowfall there was a record attendance.

While everyone who attended was almost unanimous in their appreciation of our work, there was a workshop on membership that produced a discordant note. The problem is that of membership in the synagogue. Temple Beth Am of upper Manhattan, under the leadership of Rabbi Margaret Wenig, gives membership to everyone who requests to join. One of their members, a single young man who is not Jewish, nor does he intend to become Jewish, made the statement that one does not have to be Jewish to be a full member of a synagogue.

After a long discussion about membership for non-Jewish spouses who intend to raise their children as Jewish and the question of affiliate membership for potential Jews by choice, the Union was accused of giving mixed signals and messages.

Several years ago Rabbi Schindler mandated the Commission on Synagogue Management to study this issue. I believe that we cannot wait much longer without responding to the particular issue dealing with synagogue membership. I would hope that you would make this an agenda item for the Commission on Outreach.

Thank you.



RAK/hh





RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

VIA FAX/ 7 pages

October 14, 1991
ב' Heshvan 5752

From: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
To: Allan B. Goldman, Esq.

I'm enclosing David Belin's response to your letter since you hadn't received it when we spoke. My copy arrived some days ago and a reading will indicate to you, as it did to me, it is obviously a lot of hog-wash.

Compare if you will, the money which is given to Social Action as against that which is spent for our more substantive programs of outreach, the unaffiliated, education, youth, camps, etc. At our Biennials, too, Al Vorspan may make a Social Action keynote but what about Dan Syme's speech which invariably focusses on non-Social Action issues. Further, my president's messages are devoted almost exclusively to the non-Social Action areas of our work. Perhaps one out of every ten recommendations is in that realm.

It seems that David is so blinded by his disdain for social action that he does not see the truth. He sees what he wants to see. Thus, there is no sense in getting into a lengthy and bitter exchange with him.

**BELIN HARRIS
LAMSON McCORMICK**

A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION • ATTORNEYS AT LAW

2000 Financial Center • Des Moines, Iowa 50309
Telephone (515) 243-7100 • Telecopier (515) 282-7615

David W. Belin
Charles E. Harris
Jeffrey E. Lamson
Mark McCormick
Steven E. Zumbach
Thomas L. Flynn
Jon L. Staudt
Jeffrey A. Krausman
Jeremy C. Sharpe

Roger T. Stetson
Charles D. Hunter
John T. Seitz
Gerard D. Neugent
Robert A. Mullen
Quentin R. Boyken
Charles F. Becker
Dennis P. Ogden
Margaret C. Callahan

Robert D. Sharp
William P. Hoye
Mark E. Weinhardt
John M. Bouslog
Timothy P. Willcockson

Of Counsel
Sue Luettjohann Seitz
Lawrence E. Pope

September 30, 1991

COPY

Allan B. Goldman, Esq.
Katten Muchin Zavis & Weitzman
2029 Century Park East, 2nd Floor
Los Angeles CA 90067

Dear Allan:

Your September 17 letter arrived at the same time I received a letter from Dan Schechter, which began with the sentence: "Your paper on survival issues should be 'must reading' for all of the Executive Committee...." Other Trustees have also written me and said they shared my fundamental concerns about the political actions priorities of the UAHC. Obviously, different people have differing views.

Allan, I very much appreciate your taking the time to write to me in such detail. Accordingly, I will take some time to respond. However, instead of commenting on all of the points you raised, I will highlight three areas where I believe political action issues are given top priority. Within the next week or so, I hope to write a second letter pinpointing the issue of rabbinic officiation because not only is your September 17 letter inaccurate in its references to me, but I think it evidences a lack of understanding of my overall perspective, which goes far beyond the issue of whether rabbis should or should not officiate at intermarriages. I think that is the wrong question to ask, and I think that all questions in this area have to be put in the context of what I call the demographic revolution in the American Jewish community where half, or more, of our community is unaffiliated and half of all born Jews who have married since 1985 have married people not born Jewish, with the highest percentage being among people raised in the Reform Movement (62%). I will save any further comments in this area for my next letter.

In looking at the overall issue of UAHC priorities, the starting point is to recognize that one of our top three officers, our wonderful Al Vorspan, puts the great majority of his time (at one time he has said approximately 90%) in the realm of social action. It seems to me that if Jewish continuity and survival were a top priority, we would also have one of our top UAHC officers putting the great majority of his time on issues relating to unaffiliated Jews and reaching out to intermarried Jews and their families.

However, as you know, there is no other top officer of the Union who spends the great majority of his time on such areas as outreach to intermarried families and outreach to

unaffiliated Jews. (I do not say "his or her time" because notwithstanding our "social action" resolutions for equal rights for women, there are no outstanding women who are full-time officers of the UAHC, but this is another area which I will reserve for future discussion.)

I think it is very indicative of UAHC priorities that when it was announced that Al Vorspan was to retire and a new officer would be elected, the first person with whom informal discussions were undertaken was David Saperstein, who decided he did not want to move to New York. David Saperstein, of course, spends almost all of his time in the social action arena, and if he had taken Al Vorspan's place, no doubt he would have continued to spend the great majority of his time in this area.

The officer's position was then offered to Eric Yoffie, who will have Social Action as a principal area of responsibility. Eric, of course, is a most talented individual, but I question the whole concept of having one of the top three officers at the UAHC spend far greater amounts of time on social action than on reaching out to the unaffiliated and reaching out to interdating couples, intermarried couples, and their children.

Related to this is the priority of political action issues at Biennial conventions. Certainly, at the 1991 Biennial, when Al Vorspan is going to be honored for his many years of outstanding service to the UAHC, I do not want to raise the issues of political action priority. But I think it is very indicative that at every Biennial in recent years, there has been a "social action keynote"--not an education keynote, not a spirituality keynote, not an outreach keynote, not a camping keynote--but a social action keynote. And the time at which the keynote occurs is not on the first day of the Biennial, when many delegates have not yet arrived, nor the last day of Biennial, when many delegates have already left, but rather the heart of the Biennial on Sunday morning. These are all examples of the great priority of the work of the Social Action Commission and the Religious Action Center.

Another example of priority for political action issues relates to the time spent at plenary sessions in debating resolutions. The great majority of that time--perhaps as much as two-thirds or three-fourths--involves political action issues. You know, Allan, as I know, that the practical effect of resolutions passed at UAHC Biennial conventions is minimal in the real world of Washington. When I have questioned this priority of time in the past, I have been told that the intensity of debate on these issues draws delegates to the Biennial. My response is two-fold:

1. I would rather have 1,000 delegates substantively debating issues concerning reaching out to unaffiliated Jews, officiation at interfaith marriages, making major financial commitments to expand the number of our summer camps, and having programs of outreach to the millions of Americans of no religious preference, as opposed to 2,000 delegates debating whether or not we should have a Panama Canal treaty (as we did at one Biennial), what the issues are in El Salvador (as we did at another Biennial), etc. Not only are Jewish survival and continuity issues more relevant to the fundamental purposes of the UAHC, but I believe that there is a lot of wisdom in the collective minds of our delegates that could be of constructive help to our Movement.

2. In our American Jewish community, there is much overlap and duplication and, I believe, much waste of energy and effort. There are many other avenues where American Jews can debate political issues and urge the passage of resolutions. The American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress are but two. There are also secular organizations ranging from our major political parties to Common Cause, People for the American Way, the American Civil Liberties Union, and a number of conservative organizations. Why should the UAHC expend its precious time in debating political issues where there are so many other forums where these issues can be debated?

Similarly, at Trustees meetings where there are major issues of debate presented for consideration by the Trustees, they do not address such areas as the relevancy of the prayer book in a society where large numbers of constituency do not believe in God, or the question of how do we bring unaffiliated Jews into the synagogue, or the question of bringing intermarried couples into Judaism, but rather deal in a disproportionately large percentage with political issues, such as the Clarence Thomas nomination discussion at the September Executive Committee meeting or the Gulf War discussion at last December's meeting.

I have no objection to your sending 50 pages of written materials in connection with the Clarence Thomas nomination. Indeed, you are to be applauded for wanting to educate our Executive Committee with background material on this subject (albeit that I do not think the material was particularly balanced). What I object to is that there was not included any background material on any Jewish survival or Jewish continuity issues, and the reason that there was no background material included was that there was no plan for any debate on some of these fundamental issues.

This leads into another very critical area: The questions of how to get the most out of a Board and have the Board function with the greatest effectiveness. From my experience in the corporate world, as well as my experience in the non-profit charitable organization world, the boards that work the best, that give the most satisfaction to their members, and that contribute the most to the growth and development of the organization, are the boards where the members themselves have an opportunity to do much more than just listen. They have an opportunity to enhance the growth and development of the organization through participation in thoughtful discussion on fundamental issues.

If you break down the time spent at Trustee meetings and at Executive Committee meetings between the time spent listening and time spent debating and discussing fundamental issues, the great majority of time is listening time. I would also suggest that where resolutions are debated, political action resolutions are far and away the area where the greatest amount of time is spent. That is the way it has generally been from my experience since the days of the 1970s. Perhaps that is the way that the majority of the members of the Board feel, although I know that there are some that concur with my observations because of oral comments as well as written letters that I have received.

In order to enhance the time available for major policy debate and discussion, I would consider that we do an overall analysis of how much time Board members spend listening

to reports that could be submitted in written form and then use the extra time available to address some of the fundamental Jewish continuity and Jewish survival issues that face our Movement.

Now let me turn to the question of budget. You wrote about a \$16 million budget, but I believe that figure has to be examined in some detail to understand what our real budget is. The actual 1990-1991 budget showed total expenditures of approximately \$18,500,000, but \$7,200,000 of this involved in-and-out expenses for summer camps. In other words, \$7,200,000 comes in from camping fees, and \$7,200,000 goes out in camp operating expenses. What this means is that the real operating budget of the UAHC should be viewed, excluding camps. The net figure, excluding camps, for the 1990-1991 year was approximately \$11,300,000.

The 1990-1991 budget for Social Action was approximately \$211,000, and the 1990-1991 budget for the Religious Action Center was \$464,000 (excluding approximately \$393,000 for building operating expenses, which supposedly are paid by rent contributions from tenants. I do not know if the tenants pay for all of the rent contributions, and I would be interested in getting a detailed breakdown on this). The combined budget for 1990-1991 was approximately \$675,000, and the 1991-1992 budget projects an increase.

The total budget of the Education Department, excluding Reform Judaism magazine, is approximately \$700,000. The total budget for Outreach for 1990-1991 is approximately \$438,000 plus \$155,000 for regional Outreach Coordinators (almost all of whom are part-time). The total budget figure for the Task Force on the Unaffiliated for 1990-1991 was only \$119,000. You are correct that Outreach has had the greatest percentage of increase in the decade of the 1980s, but this is because the Outreach Commission was not established until after the 1983 Biennial. You may also want to take a look at the proposed budget for 1991-92, and I think you will find that the budget for Outreach may have had a decrease.

As one examines our overall budget and views priorities, it is clear that we spend approximately as much money on social action (which includes the Religious Action Center) as we do on Jewish education, and we spend approximately as much money on social action as we do on the combination of Outreach to the Intermarried and Outreach to the Unaffiliated. And when it comes to time at Trustees meetings where we debate issues and times at General Assemblies where we debate issues, we spend more time on political action issues than we do on the combination of Outreach to the Intermarried, Outreach to the Unaffiliated, and Jewish education.

I happen to believe that social action and the Religious Action Center are a very important part of our Movement and certainly should be part of the programs of the UAHC. But my fundamental position is that it is Judaism, itself, that is the fountainhead of the passionate concern for Jews such as yourself on issues of social justice, and that therefore our first and primary objectives must be to insure the survival and continuity of that Jewish tradition. Moreover, since there are so many other forums in which to debate political action issues and since Jewish continuity and survival is one of the fundamental purposes of the UAHC

and an area where the UAHC is unique, we should primarily focus on Jewish survival and continuity issues such as Jewish education, camping, outreach to the unaffiliated, outreach to the intermarried, spirituality, etc.

Allan, I wholeheartedly agree with you that there is nothing that is more important than Jewish camps, and the development of programs such as the summer Kallah at Brandeis University, is most important. Dan Schechter, who was intimately involved in the development of those programs, also feels the summer Kallah is very important, and that is one of the reasons he wrote me a letter strongly supporting my September 16 statement. The camping and Kallah programs fall within the category of Jewish survival and continuity--the very kinds of areas where I seek to have the UAHC give top priority.

I believe, Allan, you really are unfair when you imply that I seek to "denigrate all the good work that has been done" by the Union. I applaud our good work, including the work of the Social Action Commission, although I often disagree with the resolutions they propose and I also believe that the composition of the Social Action Commission does not necessarily represent the overall constituency of our Movement. You believe that Clarence Thomas is "clearly unqualified to assume a position on the highest court in our land." All I urge is that the issue be debated in one of any number of other forums, and that we should not be giving political action issues such a high priority at the precious few minutes we have for debate at our Executive Committee meetings or at meetings of the full Board of the Trustees.

Allan, you are a person of great discernment and wisdom--a man of commitment--a man of brilliance. I would look forward to hearing what you and other discerning Trustees of the Union have to say about what we can do to bring unaffiliated Jews into the fold, to bring intermarried families into the fold and to debate various issues relating to these problems.

And as we discuss the Jewish survival and Jewish continuity issues, let's not be afraid to ask questions, including how many converts to Reform Judaism have occurred? How can we encourage more converts? How many children that would otherwise have been lost to us are raised as Reform Jews? Why, in light of our many programs, does the recent population study indicate a great loss of members to the Jewish community? Is the UAHC getting their "money's worth" in allocating \$450,000 of funds to Outreach? Should we have a program of Outreach specifically directed toward the millions of people with no religious preference, as Alex Schindler suggested in 1978? How can we reach out to bring unaffiliated Jews into the synagogue? What can we do to make our synagogue services more relevant to people, particularly younger people who are showing a tendency to drift away from their Jewish heritage?

There is another ironic aspect of this whole issue, and that is when Eric Yoffie becomes an officer of the UAHC, all three of our top officers will be rabbis. Yet, it is a lay person--David Belin--whom you refer to as a "gadfly"--and not a rabbi who is making the plea for greater priority to Jewish education, spirituality, and outreach to the unaffiliated and the intermarried. It is a lay person--not a rabbi--that raises the question of why, at a meeting

Allan B. Goldman, Esq.
September 30, 1991
Page 6

between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we get 50 pages of material on political issues and no pages about anything to do with religious or spirituality issues.

Your "gadfly" reference was, to me, very revealing because I think there are others in top positions of the UAHC who have that same perspective. According to my dictionary, a gadfly is "a person who repeatedly and persistently annoys others with schemes, requests, etc." If that is how people choose to look upon my call for greater emphasis on Jewish continuity and Jewish survival issues, so be it. However, I would respectfully suggest that the priorities that I urge are not of recent origin. Rather, they go to the heart of our Torah and to the essence of the call of our Jewish Prophets who sought greater Jewish commitment.

There are many other parts of your letter which I would like to discuss with you, not the least of which involves the policies of the leadership of the State of Israel and its impact on the American Jewish community, particularly our youth, but I will save this for when we next get together--after the Biennial. However, I do have one request in light of your reference to me as a "gadfly." In the event you or any other official of the UAHC have already distributed copies of your September 17 letter to other members of the Board, or plan to do so in the future, I would also appreciate your sending a copy of this letter, as well as a copy of my original September 16 statement on the need for Jewish survival and continuity priorities. You might also suggest that I will be following this up with another letter which will specifically include a discussion of the issue of rabbinic officiation at intermarriages and send a copy of that letter after you receive it.

I close with appreciation for all of the time and effort you have spent these past four years as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and I extend to you and your loved ones my warm wishes for a very happy, healthy, fulfilling and sweet New Year.

Best regards.

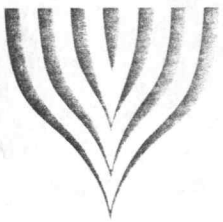
Sincerely,



David W. Belin

DWB:cs

c.c. Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Albert Vorspan
Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
Melvin Merians



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

Chabad

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC FAX (212) 570-0895

September 17, 1991

David W. Belin, Esq.
2000 Financial Center
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-3909

Dear David:

At yesterday's Executive Committee meeting I complied with your request and distributed your paper, "Giving Jewish Survival Issues Top Priority" to the members of the Committee prior to the presentation of the Resolution on the Clarence Thomas nomination by the Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism.

I want you to know that it was at my insistence that the 50 pages of material on the Thomas nomination were mailed to the members of the Committee. I did not want a discussion on this topic to occur in a vacuum. I wanted material that presented both sides of the issue, just as I have striven to do during the past four years (one time that I really failed to achieve even-handedness was last December, when we had Rep. Solarz present the hawkish view of the Iraq matter and we did not have any contrary point of view presentation).

The distribution of some materials on the one resolution that was scheduled to come before the meeting of the Executive Committee obviously does not connote the priorities of the UAHC. You know better than that!

The UAHC Budget exceeds \$16 million. Only a small portion of that budget is devoted to social action, and only a small portion of that allocation is devoted to what you would call "secular political action issues." It is ludicrous to say, based on the allocation of dollars, that top priority is being given to this area; in fact, based upon monetary allocations the area of social action, which arises from our deepest roots in prophetic Judaism, diminishes year after year in unfortunate consonance with the disgraceful and shameful policies of the Executive branch of our government toward the poor, the homeless, the disabled and the disadvantaged.

Chairman
Allan B. Goldman
President
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Honorary Chairpersons
Matthew H. Ross
Donald S. Day
Immediate Past Chairman
Charles J. Rothschild, Jr.
Vice Chairpersons
Judge David. S. Davidson
Harris Gilbert
Harry Helft
Bernard L. Isaacs
Stanley R. Loeb
Marvin Novick
Joyce Ottenheimer
Paul Uhlmann, Jr.
Iris Franco Vanek
Geraldine Voit
Honorary Vice Chairpersons
Hyman J. Bylan
Norma Levitt
E. M. Rosenthal
Gilbert Tilles
Vice Presidents
Albert Vorspan
Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
Honorary Treasurer
Howard M. Wilkoff
Treasurer
Melvin Merians
Associate Treasurer
Jerome H. Somers
Secretary
Lawrence Sherman
Counsel
Hon. Solomon H. Friend

David W. Belin, Esq.
September 17, 1991
Page 2

I invite you to look at UAHC expenditures during the past decade. The most significant increase has been in the area nearest and dearest to your heart: Outreach to the Intermarried and the Mixed Married. You were not present during the afternoon session when two members of the Committee, including the Immediate Past Chairman of the Board, strongly and seriously questioned whether the UAHC and its congregations had gotten their money's worth by allocating so substantial an amount of funds to Outreach. Exactly how many converts to Reform Judaism have occurred; how many children that would have otherwise been lost to us are raised as Reform Jews; how many born Jews have been retained that would otherwise have left us; why, in light of our many programs, does the recent population study indicate a great loss of members?

In your paper you neglect to mention the work of the Task Force on the Unaffiliated, currently a subgroup of the Outreach Commission, which is building on the tools and programs developed in Outreach to reach (hopefully) those unaffiliated North American and immigrant Russian Jews of whom you speak. In your paper, when mentioning our camps (perhaps a more important program of the UAHC than social action, Outreach or anything else, and the priority is shown by the fact that almost one-half of our budget is camp-oriented), you neglect to state that virtually all of them were full this summer. In your paper you neglect to mention that 235 adults attended our Summer Kallah at Brandeis University and next year there shall be two Kallot -- one on each coast; this is a direct response to the yearning of our adults for sustenance in prayer, spirituality and Jewish learning. In your paper you also neglect to mention the pioneering Rabbinic Aide Program, now on double session, from which we have already had 65 graduates.

You are "dissenting" from your own straw man. I think that there are very few leaders of our movement who disagree with the proposition that our emphasis should be on youth, camping, education, religion, and retention. It so happens, as recent studies indicate, that our youth and many of our adults are still imbued with the prophetic fires of social action -- thank goodness -- and that unfortunately the policies of the leadership of the State of Israel have led to disenchantment in that

David W. Belin, Esq.
September 17, 1991
Page 3

direction. I don't think that we have buried our heads in the sand on that issue.

During the years you have raised again and again the subject of rabbinic officiation at mixed marriages. Six years ago the Commission on Research polled the delegates to the Los Angeles Biennial on that subject, and this year the UAHC Committee on Research has submitted the same poll to the Biennial delegates. The poll did not come out as you or I would have liked it to six years ago; let's see what happens this time.

Look again at the Agenda of the Executive Committee meeting. Three items dealt with UAHC finances (MUM, Treasurer, FRJ), three items dealt with "political" issues (Thomas, Loan Guarantees, WZO Election/ARZA), and no less than sixteen items dealt with the very subjects that you said we should be considering and discussing: my remarks to the Board, Rabbinic Recruitment, Biennial Program, CCAR, Congregational Heritage Preservation, Summer Youth Programs, Camp Harlam Report, Task Force on Professional Needs, HUC-JIR, Report on the World Union, Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach, Religious Living Kallah at Brandeis, Commission on Synagogue Music, NFTS, NFTB, and ACC (an agenda matter added after you left).

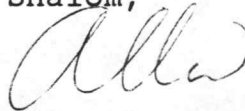
David, you are as wise as you are brilliant. But you have often called yourself a gadfly. I hope that you are not permitting your gadflyness to cloud your sight and blind you to what the UAHC is trying to accomplish and to where the UAHC has set its priorities. That certainly appears to me to be what you have done, because of the red herring on which you have focused attention in your paper. We are not going to be successful in everything that we do. As I said in the Long Range Planning Report four years ago, one of our greatest challenges is to recognize where we have failed or where we have finished our job, sunset those efforts, and move forward elsewhere. But please don't denigrate all the good work that has been done and all of the accomplishments that have occurred because of pique over a Commission on Social Action proposal (which is in itself an exercise in futility, but which at least

David W. Belin, Esq.
September 17, 1991
Page 4

addresses the qualifications of a person clearly unqualified to assume a position on the highest court in our land).

May you and your loved ones have a good year.

Shalom,



Allan B. Goldman, Chairman
Union of American Hebrew Congregations

ABG:beh

cc: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Mr. Albert Vorspan
Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
Mr. Melvin Merians

c:\1521\00000\00000-0\ltdwb917

Outreach

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 17, 1990
FROM: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
TO: Mel Merians
COPY: Lydia Kukoff

When I was in England recently, I learned to my pleasant surprise, that the widow of Pastor Niemoller converted to Judaism. He is the pastor of anti-Nazi acclaim and a famous saying is attributed to him, although no one knows whether he actually said it or not ("When they came for the Jews, I kept quiet because I was not a Jew; when they came for the homosexuals, I kept quiet because I was not a homosexual; when they came for the Communists, I kept quiet because I was not a Communist; etc. etc. Then they came for me and there was no one left to stand by my side and help me.")

The converting Rabbi was Albert Friedlander. He has some wonderful correspondence from her. I thought you might be intrigued to hear this and it may give you heart to pursue Article V of my original Outreach Proposal.

With warm good wishes.

P.S.: I am glad that you had a successful committee meeting.

*Outreach
new file Stepping Stone*

To: Rabbi Schindler
From: Edie Miller

*great - not further
I take it response needed.
fronts for laundry
too call.*

When I telephoned the outreach office for Stepping stones material, they indicated that if Shelly could plan to be present, it would be best for him to attend the Denver Stepping Stone orientation program earlier next week. Thus, I telephoned Shelly and told him about the Denver program. Unfortunately, he is unable to attend.

Therefore, I told him to talk to his Regional Director, Paul Menitoff to discuss his plans for the Temple Society of Concord Stepping Stone Program. Since I have to speak with Lydia today, I will also tell Lydia of Shelly's letter and put her in touch with him. Shelly was grateful for my call and ask me to send you his warmest regards.

Sheldon Ezring, D. Min.

Senior Rabbi

February 20, 1990

TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CONCORD
910 Madison Street
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK 13210

315-475.9952

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 5th Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler,

Along with a number of the members of my congregation I returned to Syracuse both excited and motivated by the New Orleans Biennial. Now, a few months later, some of that thrill has come to fruition with my congregation's accepting one of the programs you suggested in your Biennial charge. Beginning next year, for a trial period of two years, my congregation will be offering free membership to all previously unaffiliated families in our community. We hope that the program will be as successful here as you suggested in your talk. As you said, "it costs us nothing to try."

I would appreciate any programming material you are able to send me on the "Denver Stepping Stone" Program. Although we will not be able to adopt it totally, a similar opportunity will be offered to my Religious School children's parents.

My last evening in New Orleans I enjoyed the opportunity to get to know Edie Miller. Please give her my fondest regards.

May the Union continue to go from strength to strength under your guidance.

Most cordially,



Rabbi Sheldon Ezring. D.Min.

cc: Rabbi Paul Menitoff

COMPARISONS OF SELECTED JEWISH PRACTICES: 1981 AND 1991



<u>Percentage Answering "Yes"</u>	<u>1981</u> <u>Households</u> <u>(700,000)</u>	<u>1991</u> <u>Households</u> <u>(638,000)</u>
Ritual Practice		
Attends a Seder	89 %	91 %
Lights Hanukkah Candles	76	81
Fasts on Yom Kippur	67	66
Lights Shabbat Candles	37	43
Uses Two Sets of Dishes	30	25
Handles No Money on Shabbat	12	17
Organizational Affiliation		
Synagogue Membership	40	39
YMHA/JCC Membership	13	15
Contributed to Secular Charities	60	68
Contributed to Jewish Charities	--	65
Contributed to UJA—Federation	26	36

**Comparisons of Jewish Denomination of Adult Jews
— by Year**

	New York	
	1981	1991
Orthodox	13	14.2
Conservative	35	33.1
Reform	29	34.2
Other:	23	18.9
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

9

UJA-FEDERATION ~ 1991 POPULATION STUDY
Table 4.3

**RELIGION OF FIRST SPOUSE:
 BY YEAR OF FIRST MARRIAGE***

<u>Religion of Spouse</u>	<u>Year of First Marriage</u>			
	<u>Pre-1965</u> (406,000)	<u>1965-1974</u> (156,000)	<u>1975-1984</u> (138,000)	<u>Since 1985</u> (95,000)
	New York Area			
Born Jewish	94.5 %	84.6 %	73.9 %	73.6 %
Convert to Judaism	1.0	2.0	2.0	1.2
Gentile	4.5	13.4	24.1	25.1
	<u>100 %</u>	<u>100 %</u>	<u>100 %</u>	<u>100 %</u>

National

Gentile Spouse				
Overall	4.4	19.7	39.5	46.6
Excluding New York	5.0	21.0	40.7	46.9

* Based on "perfect cases", in which people consider their religion of birth, religion c
 upbringing and current religion to be Jewish. The data are based on the response
 of a reference person within each household, and these percentages are then app
 to the total number of "perfect cases" estimated in the population.

UJA-FEDERATION 1991 POPULATION STUDY
Table 2.1

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES BY AGE, GENERATION, LIFECYCLE AND GENDER

Percentage Answering "Yes"	TOTAL (1,116,000)	AGE			GENERATION			CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD		GENDER	
		18-34 (328,000)	35-49 (332,000)	50+ (456,000)	First	Second	Third/ Fourth	Yes	No	Male	Female
Attends Passover Seder (1)	92 %	94 %	93 %	89 %	92 %	91 %	92 %	95 %	90 %	91 %	93 %
Lights Hanukkah candles	84	86	86	81	89	84	83	94	80	81	87
Never has a Christmas tree	83	81	77	90	91	90	76	78	85	82	84
Personally fasts on Yom Kippur (3)	68	72	67	65	78	69	64	72	63	66	70
Attends Synagogue on high holidays (3)	61	63	58	61	73	65	54	68	57	58	63
Lights Shabbat candles (1)	47	44	46	50	69	62	57	57	42	45	48
Attended Purim celebration (2)	34	35	40	29	52	35	28	55	22	33	35
Uses separate dishes for milk and meat	27	29	24	27	44	33	18	33	24	20	26
Attended Holocaust commemoration (2)	22	18	21	27	37	26	15	22	22	21	23
Handles no money on Shabbat (3)	19	24	18	16	39	21	11	28	15	19	19
Celebrated Israeli Independence Day (2)	18	16	22	19	35	20	13	24	17	18	20
Attends Synagogue weekly (3)	16	18	15	15	30	17	10	23	13	18	13
Fasts on Fast of Esther (3)	10	17	10	6	19	13	6	19	7	12	9

(1) "Sometimes, usually or always"

(2) During the past year.

(3) Asked of respondent only. All other practices were asked about household as a whole.

UJA-FEDERATION 1991 POPULATION STUDY
Table 2.2

JEWISH SOCIAL TIES AND ISRAEL TIES
BY AGE, GENERATION, LIFECYCLE AND GENDER

Percentage Answering "Yes"	TOTAL (1,116,000)	AGE			GENERATION			CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD		GENDER	
		18-34 (328,000)	35-49 (332,000)	50+ (456,000)	First	Second	Third/ Fourth	Yes	No	Male	Female
Jewish Social Ties											
Most of My Close Friends are Jewish	63 %	57 %	61 %	70 %	75 %	71 %	54 %	68 %	61 %	61 %	66 %
Regularly Reads Any Jewish Periodicals	39	34	36	48	57	47	29	43	38	36	41
Adult Jewish Education in Past Year	27	26	26	28	34	32	21	34	24	24	29
Speaks Hebrew	28	36	28	17	41	24	23	33	23	30	23
Speaks Yiddish	37	20	28	60	51	56	19	29	40	37	37
Israel Ties											
Has Close Friends or Family in Israel	45	47	42	44	77	47	33	51	42	45	44
Has Ever Been to Israel	42	40	37	48	60	48	31	42	42	41	43
Someone Plans to Visit Israel in 3 Years	39	44	35	36	65	38	31	40	38	44	37
Speaks Hebrew	26	36	28	17	41	24	23	33	23	30	23
Has Seriously Considered Living in Israel	19	20	21	16	36	18	15	23	17	19	19

UJA-FEDERATION 1991 POPULATION STUDY
Table 2.3

**JEWISH ORGANIZATIONAL AND PHILANTHROPIC AFFILIATION
BY AGE, GENERATION, LIFECYCLE AND GENDER**

Percentage Answering "Yes"	TOTAL (1,116,000)	AGE			GENERATION			CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD		GENDER	
		18-34 (328,000)	35-49 (332,000)	50+ (456,000)	First	Second	Third/ Fourth	Yes	No	Male	Female
Organizations:											
* Household has synagogue member	43 %	43 %	44 %	43 %	53 %	46 %	38 %	54 %	39 %	42 %	44 %
* Household has a dues-paying J.C.C. or YMHA member	18	15	17	16	18	18	14	22	14	15	17
Household has a J.C.C. participant	29	27	31	28	31	30	27	36	26	28	29
* Belongs to at least 1 other Jewish organization	28	20	25	34	28	34	20	29	25	24	29
* Volunteered for Jewish organization in past year	27	26	29	26	27	31	29	35	23	25	28
Total Organizational Affiliation (1)	60	50	57	62	67	66	53	68	56	55	58
Philanthropies:											
Household contributed to Jewish Charity in 1990	84	53	62	77	72	74	55	67	63	64	65
Household contributed to UJA- Federation in 1990	33	21	30	48	30	42	28	28	36	34	33
Organizational and Philanthropic Affiliation (2)	77	63	72	84	83	84	70	80	76	72	75

(1) Organizational affiliation is based on a "yes" to any of the starred item

(2) Organizational and Philanthropic affiliation is based on organizational affiliation plus giving to Jewish charities (which includes UJA-Federation giving).

UJA-FEDERATION 1991 POPULATION STUDY
Table 2.8

**JEWISH BACKGROUND EXPERIENCES OF ADULTS
 BY AGE, GENERATION AND GENDER**

Percentage Answering "Yes"	TOTAL (1,116,000)	AGE			GENERATION			GENDER	
		18-34 (328,000)	35-49 (332,000)	50+ (456,000)	First	Second	Third/ Fourth	Male	Female
Received Formal Jewish Education as a Child	75 %	79 %	74 %	73 %	68 %	78 %	76 %	87 %	64 %
Had a Bar/Bat - Mitzvah or Confirmation	54	62	54	45	44	51	59	85	24
Participated in Activities Supporting Israel or Soviet Jewry	49	48	47	51	55	52	44	50	47
Attended or Worked at a Jewish Summer Camp	31	45	31	17	24	28	34	31	31
Belonged to a Jewish or Zionist Youth Group	29	38	30	20	26	25	33	27	30
Attended a College-level or Adult Jewish Studies Course	27	31	28	23	23	30	27	24	31
Participated in Jewish College Activities like Hillel	23	30	22	16	14	21	27	23	23
Participated in an Organized Educational Trip to Israel	13	18	11	13	12	15	13	11	15

Table 2.9

BACKGROUND EXPERIENCES AND CURRENT RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Current Practices	TOTAL	Background Experiences							Organized Educational Trip to Israel (13%)
		Received Jewish Education (75%)	Bar/Bat Mitzvah (54%)	Supported (Israel/Soviet Jewry) (49%)	Jewish Summer Camp (31%)	Jewish Youth Group (29%)	College Jewish Studies (27%)	Hillel College Activities (23%)	
Percentage Answering "Yes"									
Attends Passover Seder (1)	92 %	2	3	5	5	5	7	6	6
Lights Hannukkah candles	84	7	2	7	7	11	10	9	6
Never has a Christmas tree	83	2	1	7	4	6	9	7	11
Personally fasts on Yom Kippur (3)	68	7	6	14	14	18	17	16	20
Attends Synagogue on high holidays (3)	61	6	5	16	11	19	22	16	20
Lights Shabbat Candles (1)	47	2	1	14	11	14	23	15	21
Attended Purim celebration (2)	34	3	2	12	15	17	24	13	17
Uses separate dishes for milk and meat	27	3	1	9	11	12	19	10	18
Attended Holocaust commemoration (2)	22	2	1	13	7	13	18	14	20
Handles No Money on Shabbat (3)	19	2	1	6	11	9	17	7	14
Celebrated Israeli Independence Day (2)	19	2	2	11	8	12	16	11	20
Attends Synagogue weekly (3)	16	2	3	7	10	11	18	9	17
Fasts on Fast of Esther (3)	10	2	2	6	11	11	14	6	9
Average Added Value		3	2	10	10	12	17	11	15

(1) "Sometimes, usually or always"

(2) During the past year

(3) Asked of respondent only. All other practices were asked about household as a whole.

HOW TO READ THIS CHART:

(1) The current religious practices are listed in order of frequency from most to least often practiced (column entitled "Total").

The Jewish background experiences are listed across the top of each table, along with the percentages of the adult population that has had each background experience. The figures in the body of the table represent the number percentage points that each particular background experience adds to each behavior. For instance, Table 8 shows that 82% of the adult population come from households which attend a Passover Seder, and that for people who received a formal Jewish education as children, the current Passover observance increases by two percentage points to 84%.

BACKGROUND EXPERIENCES AND CURRENT SOCIAL AND ISRAEL TIES

Current Ties Percentage Answering "Yes"	TOTAL	Background Experiences							Organized Educational Trip to to Israel (13%)
		Received Jewish Education (75%)	Bar/Bat Mitzvah (54%)	Supported Israel/ Soviet Jewry (49%)	Jewish Summer Camp (31%)	Jewish Youth Group (29%)	College Jewish Studies (27%)	Hillel College Activities (23%)	
Jewish Social Ties									
Most of My Close Friends are Jewish	63	8	7	14	10	19	18	14	18
Regularly Reads Any Jewish Periodicals	39	3	1	16	11	13	28	17	26
Adult Jewish Education in Past Year	27	1	0	13	12	12	31	15	25
Speaks Hebrew	26	6	8	12	21	18	12	16	26
Speaks Yiddish	37	2	-3	4	-1	-3	5	-7	0
Israel Ties									
Has Close Friends or Family in Israel	45	2	1	13	12	10	16	9	22
Has Ever Been to Israel	42	5	3	14	11	13	22	34	NA
Someone Plans to Visit Israel in 3 Years	39	6	6	16	17	17	24	21	27
Has Seriously Considered Living in Israel	19	1	1	9	11	11	15	10	26
Average Added Value		4	3	13	12	12	19	14	19

HOW TO READ THIS CHART

The current Jewish social and Israel ties are listed in order of frequency from most to least often practiced (column entitled "Total"). The Jewish background experiences are listed across the top of each table, along with the percentages of the adult population that has had each background experience. The figures in the body of the table represent the number of percentage points that each particular background experience adds to each behavior. For instance, Table 9 shows that 63% of the adult population indicates that currently "most of my close friends are Jewish", and that for people who received a formal Jewish education as children, the percentage of people who say that most of their close friends are Jewish increases by eight percentage points to 71%.

Table 2.11

BACKGROUND EXPERIENCES AND CURRENT AFFILIATIONS

Current Affiliations Percentage Answering "Yes"	TOTAL	Background Experiences							Organized Educational Trip to Israel (13%)
		Received Jewish Education (75%)	Bar/Bat Mitzvah (54%)	Supported Israel/ Soviet Jewry (49%)	Jewish Summer Camp (31%)	Jewish Youth Group (29%)	College Jewish Studies (27%)	Hillel College Activities (23%)	
Organizations:									
* Household has synagogue member	43 %	5	5	13	12	15	21	14	21
* Household has a dues-paying J.C.C. member	16	1	1	5	5	5	7	6	7
Household has a J.C.C. participant	29	1	1	6	8	7	12	11	12
* Belongs to at least 1 Jewish organization	26	2	0	19	9	12	20	15	22
* Volunteered for Jewish organization in past year	27	1	1	12	12	11	21	12	16
Total Organizational Affiliation (1)	60	3	2	15	12	13	20	16	20
Philanthropies:									
Household contributed to Jewish Charity in 1990	66	3	0	15	9	9	18	12	18
Household contributed to UJA-Federation in 1990	33	3	-3	12	4	7	15	12	20
Organizational and Philanthropic Affiliation (2)	77	3	1	12	7	6	14	11	14

(1) Organizational affiliation is based on a "yes" to any of the starred item

(2) Organizational and Philanthropic affiliation is based on organizational affiliation plus giving to Jewish charities (which includes UJA-Federation giving).

HOW TO READ THIS CHART

The current affiliations are listed in order of frequency from most to least often practiced (column entitled "Total").

The Jewish background experiences are listed across the top of each table, along with the percentages of the adult population that has had each background experience. The figures in the body of the table represent the number of percentage points that each particular background experience adds to each behavior. For instance, Table 10 shows that 43% of the adult population comes from households which contain a synagogue member, and that for people who received a formal Jewish education as children, the frequency of synagogue membership increases by five percentage points to 48%.

UJA-FEDERATION 1991 POPULATION STUDY
RITUAL OBSERVANCE BY BACKGROUND EXPERIENCES

Percentage Answering "Yes"	TOTAL (1,116,000)	NUMBER OF BACKGROUND EXPERIENCES (4)			
		None (181,000)	1 (379,000)	2 (285,000)	3 - 5 (271,000)
Attends Passover Seder (1)	92 %	79 %	90 %	96 %	98 %
Lights Hannukah candles	84	70	81	88	94
Never has a Christmas tree	83	73	80	84	92
Personally fasts on Yom Kippur (3)	68	47	61	74	86
Attends Synagogue on high holidays (3)	61	45	51	66	84
Lights Shabbat candles (1)	47	35	38	47	67
Attended Purim celebration (2)	34	22	26	34	55
Uses separate dishes for milk and meat	27	16	20	26	45
Attended Holocaust commemoration (2)	22	12	17	20	39
Handles no money on Shabbat (3)	19	11	14	18	33
Celebrated Israeli Independence Day (2)	19	10	14	16	36
Attends Synagogue weekly (3)	16	7	9	16	32
Fasts on Fast of Esther (3)	10	3	5	10	23

(1) "Sometimes, usually or always"

(2) During the past year.

(3) Asked of respondent only. All other practices were asked about household as a group.

(4) Experiences include: (1) received formal Jewish education as a child; (2) attended or worked at Jewish summer camp; (3) belonged to Jewish or Zionist youth group; (4) participated in Jewish college activities like Hillel; (5) participated in an organized educational trip to Israel.

UJA—FEDERATION 1991 POPULATION STUDY

JEWISH SOCIAL TIES AND ISRAEL TIES
BY BACKGROUND EXPERIENCES

Percentage Answering "Yes"	TOTAL (1,116,000)	NUMBER OF BACKGROUND EXPERIENCES (1)			
		None (181,000)	1 (379,000)	2 (285,000)	3 - 5 (271,000)
Jewish Social Ties					
Most of My Close Friends are Jewish	63 %	53 %	58 %	67 %	74 %
Regularly Reads Any Jewish Periodicals	39	25	32	40	59
Adult Jewish Education in Past Year	27	15	18	26	47
Speaks Hebrew	26	8	16	26	53
Speaks Yiddish	37	31	40	39	34
Israel Ties					
Has Close Friends or Family in Israel	45	35	36	46	61
Has Ever Been to Israel	42	22	32	44	67
Someone Plans to Visit Israel in 3 Years	39	31	33	44	64
Speaks Hebrew	26	8	16	26	53
Has Seriously Considered Living in Israel	19	12	12	16	37

(1) Experiences include (1) received formal Jewish education as a child; (2) attended or worked at Jewish summer camp; (3) belonged to Jewish or Zionist youth group; (4) participated in Jewish college activities like Hillel; (5) participated in an organized educational trip to Israel.

UJA—FEDERATION 1991 POPULATION STUDY
AFFILIATION BY BACKGROUND EXPERIENCES

		NUMBER OF JEWISH BACKGROUND EXPERIENCES (3)			
	TOTAL (1,116,000)	None (181,000)	1 (379,000)	2 (285,000)	3 - 5 (271,000)
Organizations:					
* Household has synagogue member	43 %	23 %	35 %	48 %	63 %
* Household has a dues-paying J.C.C. or a YMHA member	16	11	12	18	24
Household has a J.C.C. participant	29	21	23	30	42
* Belongs to at least 1 other Jewish organization	26	16	19	27	42
* Volunteered for Jewish organization in past year	27	15	19	28	43
Total Organization Affiliation (1)	60	33	31	45	51
Philanthropies:					
Household contributed to Jewish Charity in '1990	66	49	62	68	81
Household contributed to UJA-Federation in 1990	34	28	38	39	51
Organizational and Philanthropic Affiliation (2)	77	64	72	80	89

- (1) Organizational affiliation is based on a "yes" to any of the starred item.
(2) Organizational and Philanthropic affiliation is based on organizational affiliation plus giving to Jewish charities (which includes UJA—Federation giving).
(3) Experiences include (1) received formal Jewish education as a child; (2) attended or worked at Jewish summer camp; (3) belonged to Jewish or Zionist youth group; (4) participated in Jewish college activities like Hillel; (5) participated in an organized trip to Israel.

MEMORANDUM

COPY

June 11, 1993

Edith J. Miller

FROM: Edith J. Miller
TO: Dru Greenwood
COPY: Richard Cohen

You will recall an article which quoted Rabbi Irving Greenberg as saying that "Reform Judaism is more radically pro-intermarriage and the Orthodox is more actively anti-intermarriage." Alex wrote to Greenberg in April and again followed up in May when there was no response forthcoming. The enclosed letter from Greenberg was received just a few days ago and I share his response with you.



Union of American Hebrew Congregations
SERVING REFORM JUDAISM IN NORTH AMERICA
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212) 249-0100



COPY

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

June 8, 1993
19 Sivan 5753

Rabbi Irving Greenberg
President
CLAL
99 Park Avenue, Suite C-300
New York, NY 10016

Dear Rabbi Greenberg:

Your letter of May 24th addressed to Rabbi Schindler arrived at his office at a time when he is travelling extensively in behalf of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. I do not expect him to return to his desk until July.

Your correspondence will, of course, be held for his return. I write to explain why there will be a delay in his response to you and to thank you for your patience with that delay.

Sincerely,

Marian Brewer
Rabbi Schindler's office



CLAL

The National Jewish
Center for Learning
And Leadership

4 Sivan 5753
May 24, 1993

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021-7064

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Shoshana S. Cardin
Chairman

Rabbi Irving Greenberg
President

Donald M. Landis
Klara Silverstein
Radine Abramson Spier
Associate Chairs

Frances Brandt
Secretary

Sanford L. Hollander
Treasurer

Karen R. Adler
Irving L. Bernstein
Paul Borman
James N. Fingerioth
Barbara Friedman
Lynn Korda Kroll
Norman H. Lipoff
Norton Melaver
Sanford Solender
Jack Weprin
Members At Large

Alan Bayer
Exec. Vice President

PAST CHAIRMEN
Ben Zion Leuchter
Lee H. Javitch
Neil Norry
Irvin Frank
Herschel W. Blumberg
Robert E. Loup
Martin F. Stein
Morton A. Kornreich

HONORARY ASSOCIATE CHAIR
Aaron Ziegelman

FOUNDERS
Rabbi Irving Greenberg
Elie Wiesel
Rabbi Steven J. Shaw

Dear Alex,

As Boaz said to Ruth: 'Your latest deed of kindness is greater than the first'. You not only gave me the benefit of the doubt by checking the San Francisco Press citation with me in the first place but gave me a second opportunity to respond and clarify, i.e. you truly practiced the principle of 'judging every person on the side of merit'.

As you might have guessed, despite the quotation marks, the quotation is far from accurate or correct -- a sober thought about the reliability of a free press. Since I spoke from notes, I cannot quote back the exact words but I can give you the thrust of what I said. I reviewed the fact that both sides, i.e. Reform and Orthodox, have some broad policy guidelines on intermarriage. I specifically mentioned your principle of 'rejecting intermarriage but accepting the intermarried'. But, I pointed out, as the polarization has grown, wings in each of the movements have taken steadily more radical positions on this question. For example, I cited the humanist Judaism position which comes perilously close to celebrating intermarriage as well as the growth in people within the mainstream Reform movement who insist that any rejection of intermarriage constitutes a violation of the principle of acceptance of the intermarried. The corresponding polarization on the other side is the ultra Orthodox suggestion of cutting off all contact with Jews who are intermarried or even subject to intermarriage. Unfortunately, nuances, distinctions within groups, etc. seem to get lost when the report -- in fifteen words or less -- summarizes the argument of a paragraph or a page.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alan Ades, *New Bedford, MA*
Ruth Ades, *New Bedford, MA*
*Karen R. Adler, *New York, NY*
Harvey Z. Arfa, *New York, NY*
Morris Baker, *Bloomfield Hills, MI*
Jayne Beker, *Riverdale, NY*
*Irving L. Bernstein, *Manhasset, NY*
*Herschel W. Blumberg, *Chevy Chase, MD*
Robert P. Bojarsky, *New York, NY*
Gilbert Borman, *Birmingham, MI*
*Paul Borman, *Bloomfield Hills, MI*
*Frances Brandt, *New York, NY*
*Shoshana S. Cardin, *Baltimore, MD*
Joan Cohen, *Tarrytown, NY*
Edwin M. Ellman, *Columbus, OH*
Stuart A. Epstein, *Easthampton, NY*
Henry J. Everett, *New York, NY*
David Farber, *Washington, D.C.*
*James N. Fingerioth, *New York, NY*
*Irvin Frank, *Tulsa, OK*
*Barbara Friedman, *New York, NY*
Margot Garon, *New Orleans, LA*
*Rabbi Irving Greenberg, *Riverdale, NY*
Doreen Hermelin, *Birmingham, MI*
Marvin S. Holland, *Providence, RI*

*Sanford L. Hollander, *Newton, NJ*
Gerald D. Horowitz, *Atlanta, GA*
Fern Hurst, *New York, NY*
Debby Israel, *Orlando, FL*
*Lee H. Javitch, *Harrison, NY*
Bradley Kastan, *Columbus, OH*
Thomas O. Katz, *Boca Raton, FL*
Earle W. Kazis, *Rye, NY*
Judy Kazis, *Rye, NY*
Evelyn Kenvin, *New York, NY*
Rita Kimerling, *Birmingham, AL*
Solomon Kimerling, *Birmingham, AL*
*Morton A. Kornreich, *Harrison, NY*
*Lynn Korda Kroll, *Rye, NY*
*Donald M. Landis, *White Plains, NY*
*Ben Zion Leuchter, *Vineland, NJ*
Magda Shenberg Leuchter, *Vineland, NJ*
Judith Levy, *West Newton, MA*
William Lewit, *Scarsdale, NY*
Barney Louis Liberman, *New York, NY*
*Norman H. Lipoff, *Coconut Grove, FL*
*Robert E. Loup, *Denver, CO*
Robyn Loup, *Denver, CO*
Judy May, *Lebanon, NJ*

Betty Melaver, *Savannah, GA*
*Norton Melaver, *Savannah, GA*
Alan Molod, *Elkins Park, PA*
*Neil Norry, *Rochester, NY*
Sharon Norry, *Rochester, NY*
Joseph Oppenheimer, *Del Mar, CA*
Elaine Stein Roberts, *Larchmont, NY*
Naomi Sacks, *Larchmont, NY*
Joan Sarnoff, *New York, NY*
Irving Schneider, *New York, NY*
Alan Shulman, *Palm Beach, FL*
*Klara Silverstein, *New York, NY*
Larry Silverstein, *New York, NY*
*Sanford Solender, *Longboat Key, FL*
*Radine Abramson Spier, *New York, NY*
*Martin F. Stein, *Milwaukee, WI*
Joel Tauber, *Bloomfield, MI*
Peggy Tishman, *New York, NY*
Gary P. Wallin, *Manchester, NH*
Sandra Weiner, *Houston, TX*
*Jack Weprin, *New York, NY*
Moshe Werthan, *Jerusalem, Israel*
Ronald Wornick, *Hillsborough, CA*
*Aaron Ziegelman, *New York, NY*
Arlene Zimmerman, *Nashville, TN*

* Executive Committee

FACULTY AND STAFF

Alan Bayer, *Executive Vice President*
Ruth Bregman, *National Program Administrator*
Dale Brown, *Executive Assistant/Office Manager*
Emily Caban, *Bookkeeper*
Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin, *Editor-Sh'ma*
Rabbi Lavey Derby, *CLAL Associate*
David Elcott, Ph.D., *Director of Programs*
Rabbi Leonid Feldman, *CLAL Associate*
Yvonne Grant, *Program Secretary*
Rabbi Irving Greenberg, Ph.D., *President*
Rabbi Steven Greenberg, *Senior Teaching Fellow-Learning Leaders*
Vicki Greenwald, *Program Coordinator*
Rabbi Reuven Kimelman, Ph.D., *Senior CLAL Associate*
David Kraemer, Ph.D., *CLAL Associate*
Rabbi Irwin Kula, *Senior Teaching Fellow-Leadership Development*

Betsy Landis, *Director of Special Projects*
Yu-Bor Lau Chau, *Program Secretary*
Marilyn Lo Presto, *Administrative Assistant*
Bambi Marcus, *Secretary*
Rabbi Shira Milgrom, *CLAL Associate*
Cheryl Mitchell, *Development Assistant*
Rabbi Alan Nadler, Ph.D., *CLAL Associate*
Rabbi David W. Nelson, Ph.D., *Senior Teaching Fellow*
Charles Raffel, Ph.D., *CLAL Associate*
Rabbi John Schechter, *CLAL Associate*
Regina Stein, *CLAL Associate*
Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, *CLAL Associate*
Ellen Umansky, Ph.D., *CLAL Associate*
Dvora Weisberg, *CLAL Associate*

Best wishes to you. I am particularly appreciative of your being 'dan l'chaf zchut'. I have gotten considerably shoddier treatment from people who purport to be closer to me spiritually or in friendship.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'IG' or 'I.G.' with a stylized flourish.

Irving Greenberg
President

IG/cr



COPY



RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

May 6, 1993
15 Iyar 5753

Rabbi Irving Greenberg
CLAL
47 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001

Dear Yitz:

Since I have not heard from you in regard to the enclosed, I am sharing a copy in the event my letter of April 13th went astray.

With warm regards, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

April 13, 1993
22 Nisan 5753

Rabbi Irving Greenberg
CLAL
47 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001

Dear Yitz:

Since the comment attributed to you is in quotes, I write to ask how could it be that you made such a statement? Please tell me it isn't so!

Warm regards.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Encl.

April 9, 1993

From: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

To: Dru Greenwood

CC: Dick Cohen

Please note the enclosed and my response to Yitz Greenberg. Dick is right, however, there should be a response to the newspaper(s) and it should come from you.

You might wish to discuss with Dick so please do so.

MARIN/NORTH BAY

Rabbi predicts Jewish split but still seeks 'perfection'

GARTH WOLKOFF
Bulletin Staff

A prominent American rabbi who predicted the country's Jewish community would be hopelessly fractured by the year 2000 now forewarns that such a schism is happening even faster than he originally thought.

Noted author, philosopher and modern Orthodox Rabbi Irving "Yitz" Greenberg prophesied eight years ago that American Jews are polarizing themselves into denominations and that "within decades, the Jewish people will split apart into two mutually divided, hostile groups who are unable or unwilling to marry each other."

While Greenberg later expressed optimism that the organized Jewish community had at least become aware of a growing rift between the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox communities, he now feels that "liberal" Jews are vilifying the Orthodox and that philosophical differences are pushing the movements further apart. That is hastening a division, he said, between Jews who observe *halachah* (Jewish law) and those who don't.

"No one wants to hear about it [the split]. I feel disturbed by that," said Greenberg, who was the scholar-in-residence last weekend at Tiburon's Conservative Congregation Kol Shofar, where he spoke optimistically about "fulfilling the Jewish dream" of perfecting the world.

During an interview Sunday morning, however, Greenberg was disheartened about what he sees as a "continuing disintegration, which is a reaction to assimilation."

American Jews may love each other but they "disrespect each other spiritually," he said. One example is the way "Reform Judaism is more radically pro-intermarriage, and the Orthodox is more actively anti-intermarriage." Taking diametrically opposite positions in the intermarriage debate has pushed Jews not just into different camps, but has rendered them two fundamentally different groups of people, said Greenberg.

Another representation of that division, he said, is the slow and apathetic response of the organized American Jewish community to the anti-Semitic riots in Crown Heights during the summer of 1991.

The riots pitted the Chassidic Lubavitch Orthodox community against crowds of Brooklyn African and Caribbean Americans who screamed anti-Semitic obscenities and threatened the Chassidim and others with physical harm.

Mainstream Jewish groups condemned the riots — some even called them pogroms — but many of those same groups also said the Lubavitchers had contributed to the week of violence and harassment by sequestering themselves from the black community there.

According to Greenberg, mainstream Jews felt it important to "show a distance from the Orthodox" and worse, a "spiritual contempt" for them during the riots that saw the murder of a Chassidic man after a Lubavitcher-driven car killed a black child.

Not showing full and uncompromising support at the time of the Chassidim is an example of how different groups of Jews call each other "sects" when philosophical differences arise, relegating them to the status of extremists and pushing them to the margins of the community.

"Instead of protecting the Chassidim," the mainstream community "looked away," he said. "Liberal Jews who claim not to be bigoted and claim to be pluralists showed an emotional hostility to Orthodox Jews," he said, especially by "not protecting them when they are in trouble."

That seems especially troubling to Greenberg in light of his wish for Jews to lead the way toward the elimination of pain and suffering and the perfection of the world — something he calls "The Covenant of the Triumph of Life," the theme of his weekend lectures.

If Jews are divided among themselves, how will they lead the way into the Messianic age?

According to Greenberg, Judaism brings about "the perfection of the world, which



Rabbi Irving "Yitz" Greenberg speaks about the Messianic covenant between God and the Jews at Tiburon's Congregation Kol Shofar.

really means overcoming poverty and war and sickness" in small steps rather than in giant revolutionary leaps that cause humanity great pain and misery, as in Mao Tse-tung's China or Joseph Stalin's Russia.

He said that Judaism, in trying to fulfill its ultimate "dream" of *tikkun olam*, is in its third age, the first two being the biblical age and the rabbinical age.

While the first Jewish epoch was brought

about by the Exodus and the second by the destruction of the Temple, the current age has been ushered in by the Holocaust. And in this period — a period of "power and affluence and freedom," according to Greenberg — humanity is once again a small step closer to the perfection of the world.

That is the subject of Greenberg's forthcoming book, which, he says, like the new Jewish age "is still unnamed."

Photo — Faith Barakoff

Shank

*Send a
copy of
Mihaly's
letter
to Larry Burk*

March 3, 1989
26 Adar, 1 5749

Dr. Eugene Mihaly
HUC-JIR
3101 Clifton Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45220

Dear Gene:

I always know I can count on you! Many thanks for the Maimonides responsum to Obadyah. It is just what I was looking for and I am grateful to you.

If I didn't thank you for your helpful comments for my use in preparing my address to the CCAR Centennial Conference, please forgive me! I appreciate your taking the time and trouble to put together your thoughts and sharing them with me. As always, you provide splendid insights.

With fondest regards from house to house, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler



HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

Cincinnati • New York • Los Angeles • Jerusalem

OFFICE OF DR. EUGENE MIHALY
VICE-PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
PROFESSOR OF RABBINIC LITERATURE AND HOMILETICS

3101 CLIFTON AVE. • CINCINNATI, OHIO 45220-2488
(513) 221-1875

February 28, 1989

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Dear Alex:

The responsum of Maimonides to Obadyah, the "righteous proselyte," has been published in the volume Teshuvot Harambam, edited by Alfred Freimann, Jerusalem, Mekize Nirdamim, 1934, pp. 40-42, Siman 42. I am enclosing a copy of the responsum.

As you will note, Obadyah, the "righteous proselyte, etc., etc.", asked Maimonides regarding the private and public recitation of blessings and prayers, whether he is permitted to say "our God and God of our fathers" "Who has sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us;" and "Who has separated us;" and "Who has chosen us;" and "Who has caused our forefathers to inherit;" and "Who has brought us forth from the land of Egypt;" and "Who has performed miracles for our fathers;" and matters similar to these.

Maimonides replies, "You are obliged to say everything as it was ordained without changing anything, but just as every homeborn among the Israelites pray, so is it fitting for you to bless and to pray, whether you pray privately or whether you are the messenger of the congregation. The essential matter is that Abraham our father taught all the people...therefore whoever converts until the end of all generations and whoever unifies the name of God as it is written in the Torah is the disciple of Abraham our father, may he rest in peace, and that all are members of his family...with the result that Abraham our father, may he rest in peace, is the father of all his kosher descendants who follow in his path, a father to his disciples and of every proselyte who converts. Therefore you are obliged to say "Our God and God of our fathers," for Abraham is your father, etc., etc." He quotes a number of biblical verses to justify his position. He also deals with the Mishnah in Bikkurim I.4 (see footnotes 2 and 5 on page 42).

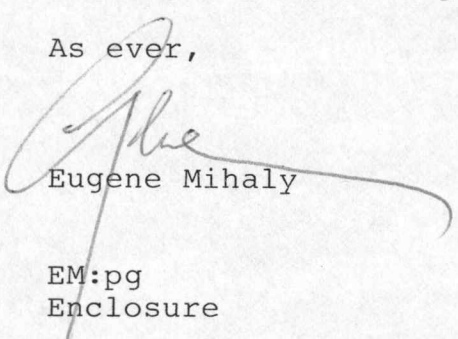
Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Page 2
February 28, 1989

I have just returned from the meeting of our Board of Governors in Los Angeles. We very much missed your presence. Allan Goldman, however, did extremely well in representing you and the Union. His report was excellent.

Did you ever receive my letter re your Conference sermon?

With warmest greetings and best wishes, I am

As ever,



Eugene Mihaly

EM:pg
Enclosure

אחריה קדיש ואם יתפלל בה בעמידה או בישיבה ואם יש הבדל בזה בין הצבור והיחיד או אם יאמר בצבור איזה מזמורים יאמר אחריהם קדיש או לא. תשובה לא יאמר קדיש אלא במקומות הידועות מהתפלות הקבועות או אחר קריאת איזה דבר מדברי תורה או פ' ואפי' דרש פסוק אחד יאמר אחריו קדיש דרבנן. ואמנם אלו התפלות אשר חברים הגאון זצ"ל וכן אותם הפזמונים הקרואים רחמים הנאמרים בימי התשובה אין ידוע שום פנים לומר אחריהם קדיש. ואלו התחנונות כולם והבקשות והתפלות המפורסמות מחבורי הגאונים והפייטנים אין ראוי ליחיד ולא לצבור לאומרם בשום פנים בשבתות ובמועדים לפי שחז"ל הקפידו על דבר היותר קמן מאלו הענינים ואמ' שבת היא מלועוק ורפואה קרובה לבא וזה על צד ההודעה לא צד הבקשה ובשכיל זה סלקו ברכות אמצעיות של יח להיוחס כולם בקשה וכמו שהתפלה עבודה עצומה מאד כן קיום מצותיו ית' בכבוד השבתות והמועדים לשיהיו שבתות למנוחה ומועדים לשמחה לא להיות ימי צום ובכי וצעקה. וכתב משה ב"ר מימון זצ"ל.

15 ס' מ"ב. שאלות ששאל ר' עובדיה גר צדק מרבינו משה זצ"ל ותשובותיו. אמר משה ב"ר מימון מכני גלות ירושלם אשר בספרד זצ"ל. הגיע אלינו שאלות מרנא ורנא עובדיה המשכיל המבין גר הצדק ישלם יי פעלו ותהי משכרתו שלימה מעם יי אלהי ישראל אשר בא לחסות תחת כנפיו. שאלת על עסקי הברכות והתפלות בין לבין עצמן או אם תתפלל בצבור היש לך לומר אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואשר קדשנו במצותיו

ס' מ"ב. כ"א דף ר"ז א'. ת ס' ט' = ק ס' קנ"ח. נדפסה בקצרה בשו"ת הרשב"א ד' רמא קודם ר"מ = ת"ז ס' י'.

הרכבי בהערותיו לתה"ג שלו ע' 392. 5 קדיש דרבנן נוסח הקדיש בסדר תפלות בסוף ס' אהבה. 6 רחמים: כך נקראה קבוצת התחנונות שבסוף סדור ר' סעדיה. ע' מאמרו של באנזי על סדר רס"ג פפד"מ 1904 ע' 6 וע' צונץ ד"פ הוצ' פריימן עמ' 77. 6 אין ידוע שום פנים: אוצ"ל איני יודע. ע' מש"כ רמ"ש במזכיר שנת ג' ע' 107. 9 לפי שחז"ל הקפידו: ברכות ל"א ב'. ה' שבת פ"ל ה"ב וע' פ"ב הכ"ד ופ"ה המסניח לתעני פ"ג. 10 שבת היא מלועוק: שבת י"א ב'. וע' מש"כ ואלף עתרת שלום ואמת (על הפייטנים) ע' 11 על תשובה זו. והרחיד"א רמזה לדינא בברכ"י אר"ח ס' ג"ה סק"ב.

1 בין הצבור והיחיד: ואם לא יאמר בשבתות ובימים טובים כי אם בחול מפני התחינות והבקשות אשר בה (פ.) 3 מהתפלות הקבועות: מהתפלות שבהם חובה (מ.) 4 דבר מדברי תורה: כלומר דיני תורה או ביאורה ואפילו דרש פסוק אחד (מ.) 6 אין ידוע שום פנים: איני יודע בהם אם צריכין קדיש ולא נהירא בעיני לומר קדיש (פ.) לא אדע טעם לאמירת קדיש אחריהם (ג.) וע"כ (שם.) 12 וכמו שהתפלה עבודה עצומה: והטעם כי התפלה עבודה נכונה לכבוד האל יתברך וצריך להזכיר בכל יום ענינא דיומא ובבא יום שבת ויום טוב צריך להיות שמח ונעלו ולהודות לאל אשר נתן מנוחה לעמו ישראל שבתות ומועדים לשמחה לא שיהיה יום תענית וצעקה ויגון ואל יאמר בהם אלא הדברים הנאותים והמשמחים ולהזכיר נפלאותיו אשר עשה עם אבותינו ולנו וזה הנראה בעיני ואתה תבחר ולא אני (פ.)

15 שאלות ששאל וכו' תשובת שאלה מארץ ישראל מן גר צדק שהשיב הגאון רבינו משה זצ"ל (ת.)

וצונו ואשר הכדילנו ואשר בחר בנו ושהנחלת את אבותינו ושהוצאתנו מארץ
 מצרים ושעשה נסים לאבותינו וכל כיוצא באלה הענינים. יש לך לומר הכל
 כתקנם ואל תשנה דבר אלא כמו שיתפלל ויברך כל אורח מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל כִּי
 ראוי לך לברך ולהתפלל בין שהתפלל יחידי בין שהיית שליח צבור.
 ועיקר הדבר שאברהם אבינו הוא שלמד כל העם והשכילם והודיעם דת ⁵
 האמת ויחודו של הקב"ה ובעט בע"ז והפר עבודתה והכנים רבים תחת כנפי
 השכינה ולמדם והורם וצוה בניו ובני ביתו אחריו לשמור דרך יי' כמו שכתוב
 בתורה כי ידעתיו למען אשר יצוה את בניו ואת ביתו אחריו ושמרו דרך יי'
 וגו'. לפיכך כל מי שיתגיייר עד סוף כל הדורות וכל המיחד שמו של הקב"ה
 כמו שהוא כתוב בתורה תלמידו של אברהם אבינו ע"ה ובניו ביתו הם כולם ¹⁰
 והוא החזיר אותם למוטב כשם שהחזיר את אנשי דורו בפיו וכלמורו כן
 החזיר כל העתידים להתגיייר בצואתו שצוה את בניו ואת בני ביתו אחריו.
 נמצא אברהם אבינו ע"ה הוא אב לזרעו הכשרים ההולכים בדרכיו ואב
 לתלמידיו וכל גר שיתגיייר. לפיכך יש לך לומר אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו
 שאברהם ע"ה הוא אביך ויש לך לומר שהנחלת את אבותינו שלאברהם ¹⁵
 נתנה הארץ שני קום התהלך בארץ לארכה ולרחבה כי לך אתננה. אבל
 שהוצאתנו ממצרים או שעשית נסים לאבותינו אם רצית לשנות ולומר
 שהוצאת את ישראל ממצרים ושעשית נסים עם ישראל אמור. ואם לא
 שנית אין בכך הפסד כלום מאחר שנכנסת תחת כנפי השכינה ונלוית אליו
 אין כאן הפרש בינינו ובינך. וכל הנסים שנעשו כאלו לנו ולך נעשו. הרי הוא ²⁰
 אומר בישעיה ואל יאמר בן הנכר הנלוה אל יי' לאמר הבדל הבדילני יי'
 מעל עמו וגו'. אין שום הפרש כלל בינינו ובינך לכל דבר. ודאי יש לך
 לברך אשר בחר בנו ואשר נתן לנו ואשר הנחילנו ואשר הבדילנו. שכבר
 בחר כך הבורא יתעלה והבדילך מן האומות ונתן לך התורה שהתורה לנו
 ולגרים נתנה שני הקהל חוקה אחת לכם ולגר הגר חוקת עולם לדורותיכם ²⁵
 ולגרים נתנה שני הקהל חוקה אחת ומשפט אחד יהיה לכם ולגר הגר אתכם.
 ככם כגר יהיה לפני יי'. תורה אחת ומשפט אחד יהיה לכם ולגר הגר אתכם.
 ודע כי אבותינו שיצאו ממצרים רובם עובדי ע"ז היו במצרים נתערכו כגוים
 ולמדו מעשיהם עד ששלח הקב"ה משה רבינו ע"ה רבן של כל הנביאים
 והבדילנו מן העמים והכניסנו תחת כנפי השכינה לנו ולכל הגרים ושם לכולנו ³⁰
 חוקה אחת. ואל יהא יחוסך קל בעיניך אם אנו מתיחסים לאברהם יצחק
 ויעקב אתה מתיחס למי שאמר והיה העולם. וכך מפורש בישעיה

8 כי ידעתיה בראשית י"ח י"ט. | 21 ואל יאמר בן
 הנכר: ישע' ג' י"ז. | 25 חקה אחת לכם: במד' ס"ז ט"ז.

4 בין שהתפלל: בין שהיית
 ש"ץ. | 6 והכנים: בנים רבים.

זה יאמר ליי אני וזה יקרא בשם יעקב וגו'. וכל מה שאמרנו לך בענין הברכות
שלא תשנה כבר ראינו לזה ממסכת בכורים תמן תנינן הגר מביא ואינו קורא
שאינו יכול לומר אשר נשבע יי לאבותינו לתת לנו. וכשהוא מתפלל בינו
לבין עצמו אומר אלהינו ואלהי אבות ישראל. וכשהוא מתפלל בבית הכנסת
5 אומר אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו זהו סתם משנה. והיא לר' מאיר ואינה הלכה
אלא כמו שנתפרש בירושלמי תמן אמרינן תני בשם ר' יהודה גר עצמו
מביא ומורא מאי טעמיה כי אב המון גוים נתתיך לשעבר היית אב לאברהם
מיכאן ואילך אב רכל הבריות. ר' יהושע בן לוי אמר הלכה כר' יהודה. אתא
עובדא קמיה דר' אבהו והורי כר' יהודה. הגה נתברר לך שיש לך לומר
10 אשר נשבע יי לאבותינו לתת לנו. ושאברהם אב לך ולנו ולכל הצדיקים
ללכת בדרכיו והוא הדין לשאר הברכות והתפלות שלא תשנה כלום. וכתב
משה ביר מימון זצ"ל.

סי' מזג.

שאלה ועל דבר קריאת התורה בכל יום אם אין להם ס"ת מהו שיקראו
בחומשים ויברכו לפנייה ולאחריה או ימנעו להקריאה כל עיקר.
15 וכן ב[ס"ת] שאינו עשוי כהלכתו או ספרי תורה של קלף שאינן מעובדין לשמן
שהן ודאי פסולין אם מותר לברך הקורא בהם אם אסור לברך. יורנו רבינו.
תשובה מותר לברך ואין הברכה על הקריאה בספר כמו שהברכה על

סי' מזג. כ"א דף ר"ב ב'. כ"ט דף 212ב. כ"ט סי' מזג. ת סי' ד'. פ סי' ט' (ד' ע"ג) =
ק סי' ט"ו. שו"ת המיוחסות להרמב"ן סי' רל"ט. ארחות חיים ה' קה"ת סי' ה' = כל בו ה' קה"ת סי' ק'
(דף י"ג ב'). אבודרהם סדר שחרית של חול (ד"פ דף מ' א')—הובא בשו"ת הרשב"א ח"א סי' תפ"ז ותת"ה.
שו"ת מהרי"ק שורש ס"ט. שו"ת רשב"ש סי' י"א. כ"מ ה' ס"ת פ"י ה"א. ב"י אור"ח סי' קמ"ג. ועי'
כ"ב סי' ט'.

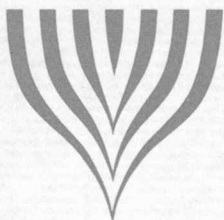
1 זה יאמר לה' ישעי' מ"ד ה'. 2 ממסכת בכורים:
פ"א מ"ד. עיי"ש בפ"י המשניות: ומפני זה יכול גר
לומר וכו' לפי שאברהם היה אב לכל העולם לפי שהוא
למדם אמונה. 5 ואינה הלכה: ה' בכורים פ"ד ה"ג
הגר מביא וקורא שנא' לאברהם אב המון גוים נתתיך
הרי הוא אב כל העולם כולו שנכנסין תחת כנפי שכינה
ולאברהם היתה השבועה תחלה שירשו בניו את הארץ.
6 בירושלמי: ביכורים שם הובא ברדב"ז לה' בכורים
ובכ"מ שם. ועי' בספר המצות מ"ע סי' ר"ז. ע"ד
התשובה עי' ווערטהיימר גנוי ירושלים ח"ב עמ' ז'
עפ"ש ט"ן ע' 44.

17 מור' ל"ב: ע' ה' ס"ת פ"י ה"א דס"ת פסול
הרי הוא כחומש ואין קורין בו ברבים. ועי' תשובת
חכמי גרבונוה שהשיבו על תשובה זו, נדפסה בת' סי' ה"=

3 לאבותינו לתת לנו: וכשהוא מתפלל בבית
הכנסת אומר אלהי אבותיכם. ואם היתה אמו
מישראל אומר אלהי אבותינו. וכשהוא מתפלל
בינו לבין עצמו: 7 לשעבר היית אב: לשעבר
היה אב לאדם מכאן ואילך. 10 ולכל הצדיקים:
[שהורנו] ללכת (ק).

13 שאלה: מא יקול סידנא פי ספר תורה
שאינו עשוי כהלכה (כ"ש). 13 על דבר... וכן
בס"ת: ליתא בכ"א והוספתיו מא"ח. 13 בכל
יום: של ספר (ת). 13 שיקראו בחומשים:
בציבור (ת). 15 או ספרי תורה: או בספרים (א"ח).
15 של קלף שאינן מעובדין וכו': בכ"ס בא"ח
ובת' כחוב: של קלף שהם ודאי פסולין. 16 אם
מותר: הקורא (א"ח). 16 אם אסור לברך: או
אסור (ע"כ השאלה בא"ח). 17 מותר לברך:
בספר תורה פסול (כ"ס וא"ב). 17 כמו שהברכה:
כמו הברכה (כ"ס א"ח ת').

ק' סי' ט"ז ובא"ח ה' קה"ת סי' ה'. ועי' בפוסקים הנ"ל. ובשו"ת רשב"א כתב דבילדותו כתב רבינו תשובה



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS - CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS
6300 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD, SUITE 1475, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90048 (213) 653-9962

December 20, 1985
8 Tevet 5745

no further

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
UAHC
838 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10021

Dear Alex,

Thank you for your memo of December 2nd and the article on children of interfaith marriage. I have indeed seen the article and agree that we need to address ourselves to this issue. In fact, the Commission has determined that children of interfaith marriage are our next target population. We have determined to conduct some exploratory, fact-finding programming later this year. We all agree that this is a very important area for Outreach.

Egon Mayer spoke with me this summer about Robin Margolis and the group which she intended to begin. Ms. Margolis had been in touch with him, seeking his endorsement for her endeavor. He told me all about the group and he also expressed his grave reservations about her personally and about her own "agenda". She impressed him as being very angry and unwilling to work with anyone. Although he is very concerned with reaching out to offspring of interfaith marriage, Egon did not want to be seen as endorsing Ms. Margolis' endeavor, since he is quite uncomfortable with her personally and with her feelings of antagonism toward the organized Jewish community. I will be happy to contact her. I will be careful to do it in such a way that she will not construe it as expressing support for Parevah.

I received calls from several Rabbis who had been contacted by Ms. Margolis. They were extremely concerned about what she was trying to do and very reluctant to support her. They were relieved to learn that the Commission would next be embarking on programming for offspring of interfaith marriage.

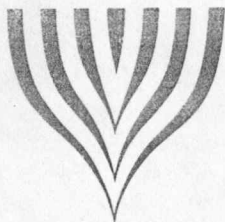
I will keep you posted as to any developments. Ben and I both send you, Rhea and the children our love and best wishes for happy and healthy 1986.

Fondly,

Lydia

Lydia Kukoff
Director

Chairman
David W. Belin
Co-Chairman
Rabbi Steven Foster
Director
Lydia Kukoff
Los Angeles



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS—CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS
6300 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD, SUITE 1475, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90048 (213) 653-9962
1330 BEACON STREET, SUITE 355, BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS 02146 (617) 277-1655

October 3, 1984
7 Tishrei 5745

TO: RABBI PAUL MENITOFF, RABBI SANFORD SELTZER

FROM: LYDIA KUKOFF

CC: RABBI ALEXANDER SCHINDLER, RABBI LEONARD SCHOOLMAN

I received the memo concerning your projected group for Jewish parents whose children are married to non-Jews or to partners who have converted. While I agree that there is a great need for such groups, nevertheless I must express my deep concern on several counts.

As you know we have been piloting a program in Los Angeles under the auspices of the Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach, for Jewish parents whose children have married a non-Jew. This program was very carefully planned last year and ran extremely successfully in the spring. We are currently in the process of evaluating it and continuing the pilot, prior to replicating it next year, as was mentioned both at the Executive Committee and the Commission meetings. We see this as a model for the movement.

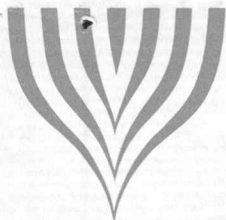
From our evaluation process, we have learned a number of things. Among them are:

1. This is the most difficult population with which we have ever dealt. This finding has also been corroborated by Judy Landau who led such a group in Larchmont.
2. Extensive training of the facilitator is absolutely essential, no matter how much experience and awareness one has. The facilitator must be a trained therapist.
3. The program must be carefully planned in advance, with specific goals for each session and specific means for reaching those goals.
4. Rabbis should not be present at the sessions.
5. Parents of those who have married non-Jews and parents of those who have married converts should never be in the same group.

While you are certainly free to conduct any kind of programming you choose under regional auspices, I hope that you will reconsider and conduct this one later in the year when we have the pilot model ready to be replicated.

Chairman
David W. Belin
Co-Chairman
Rabbi Steven Foster
Director
Lydia Kukoff
Los Angeles
Co-Director
Rabbi Sanford Seltzer
Brookline

*Have you
depressed.*



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS—CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS
6300 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD, SUITE 1475, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90048 (213) 653-9962
1330 BEACON STREET, SUITE 355, BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS 02146 (617) 277-1655

3 October

Dear Alex,

I thought you'd be interested in reading these articles. I have submitted them to Aron for Reform Judaism and am awaiting his response.

Nancy Kleiman is an unusual and wonderful person and she is one of the people I would like to use on the interfaith marriage videotape.

Love to you, Rhea and the children.
An easy fast and a sweet year.

Lydia

Chairman
David W. Belin
Co-Chairman
Rabbi Steven Foster
Director
Lydia Kukoff
Los Angeles
Co-Director
Rabbi Sanford Seltzer
Brookline

OUTREACH IN ACTION

A wedding! With excitement and joyous anticipation, the couple attends to every detail of the ceremony - an age-old scenerio. But when love crosses bounds and that couple consists of a Jew and non-Jew, the anticipation becomes trepidation, and excitement turns to disappointment when the details of the wedding are discussed.

Inevitably the planning of a mixed marriage ceremony initiates the question of religious identity. Can one individual convert? If not, which religious direction will the family pursue? Who will marry them? What about the children? How shall they deal with holidays, life events, parents and family?

These and similar issues are being addressed by the Jewish Family Connection, the Reform Jewish Outreach Committee of Temple Israel in Boston through support/discussion groups, educational programs, lectures and its network, a system of contacts to welcome and assist those who call the Temple for information regarding interfaith marriage.

As an extension of the UAHC's Reform Jewish Outreach Program begun in 1978 by Rabbi Alexander Schindler, The Jewish Family Connection was established as a means of reaching out to those who had chosen Judaism, to the non-Jewish partner in a mixed marriage, and to the parents and children of the mixed married. Although none of the rabbis at Temple Israel can officiate at a mixed marriage, they, with the committee, desire the congregation to be a warm, supportive place such couples can turn to for understanding, information and participation in Temple life.

To illustrate Outreach-In-Action, the following story explains what happens to a couple who calls the Temple for assistance:

Sarah had just passed the Bar exam and seized this celebrated event to announce her engagement to Michael. An only child of Conservative parents, she was pulled between her love of this Irish intern and the guilt she had fearing she would be breaking the link with her Jewish heritage. Although she had the support of her family and agreement of her fiance that their children would be reared as Jews, Sarah was tormented by the thoughts of betrayal and anxieties about the wedding ceremony, having Jewish offspring bearing the name, O'Brien, and how she would fit into his large, Catholic family.

Shortly after her announcement, Sarah's parents attended a lecture about interfaith marriage where Temple Israel's program was mentioned. They urged her to call the Temple where, to her great relief, she was warmly welcomed by the rabbi, and given the name of a Committee member who had been in a mixed marriage for ten years. After a long phone conversation and a subsequent meeting which turned into a three hour exchange of resources, suggestions and encouragement, Sarah obtained not only the information she sought, but a supportive friend as well!

Equipped with these resources, Sarah returned home to share and communicate with her fiance and families about their future plans and arranged another meeting for her parents to chat with the Committee contact about their concerns and questions. What resulted was an exercise in greater understanding and acceptance by both families who came together before the wedding in an attempt to bridge their differences.

Strengthened by this experience, the couple's marriage has begun on a positive note and the assurance that after the honeymoon they will return to a continued acceptance and helping hand from the Temple Israel Community.

This story is but one of many examples The Jewish Family Connection has been called upon to deal with since its inception last fall. Its first event, a taped interview of Phil Donahue with Rabbi Schindler concerning interfaith marriage drew a crowd of over one hundred interested participants reflecting the wide interest in such topics. Following this event, a series of support groups began; one composed of recent Jews by Choice and the other composed of mixed marrieds and couples considering mixed marriage. By spring, programs developed for both couples concerned with the effects of interfaith marriage on children and parents of mixed marrieds. The success of these efforts speaks of the need for the Jewish community to provide on-going assistance to those involved in these unions.

Without such programs, many intermarried couples feel isolation and rejection that can alienate them from religious roots which might otherwise flourish in more supportive environments. One couple, for example, who lacked such acceptance, strayed from religious ties and discussions until five years into their marriage when their desire for children blossomed. Then, the issues they had avoided concerning children surfaced and it was discovered they had strong disagreement regarding the religious upbringing of their children-to-be. Parental pressures added to their dilemma leading them to seek rabbinic counsel. Again, with the resource of a support group offered by the Jewish Outreach Committee, this couple was able to meet with others who were discussing the direction they were exploring for their children's religious education, and found strength and encouragement to work through their differences. The enthusiasm of these groups was such that over the summer several couples met for an informal dinner to continue their network and developing friendships.

It is the hope of Temple Israel and The Jewish Family Connection that by reaching out to interfaith couples and welcoming their children and families many such individuals will be brought into the mainstream of Jewish life based on the understanding and support they experience through such vehicles. Indeed when this occurs, Judaism is enriched and strengthened.

Nancy J. Kleiman, Chairperson of the Mixed Married Committee of The Jewish Family Connection of Temple Israel, Boston, MA

September 27, 1984

My husband, Ed, and I have been in a mixed marriage for ten years into which I've brought my Christian upbringing and several years' training as a Roman Catholic nun, and he, a lifetime of religious training in Reform Judaism including being both president of his youth group and a teacher in the religious school. Prior to our marriage, Ed had contemplated becoming a rabbi.

We have two sons, Danny, age five, and Sammy, age three, who were taken to the Mikvah at birth and converted to traditional Judaism making them the fourth generation of our family to be members of our Reform congregation.

We chose Judaism as our family's religious expression before we were married and five years before having children because it was important for us to have a common source of spiritual nourishment and, to do so, I was able to reach into my Judeo-Christian roots to find this commonality.

After Danny was born, I searched for a way to explain in the journal I keep for him how we arrived at the choices we made regarding religion and what effect these decisions might have on our daily lives. An analogy came to me while reflecting on this meditation from Gates of Prayer, the prayerbook used during Shabbat services:

I can no more be religious without belonging to a particular religion anymore than I can talk without using a particular language.

I explain to Danny that, for me, religion is like a language. Each of us was born of parents who spoke a particular language and passed this on to us as an accident of birth. So, too, many of us learned a religious language used to communicate about God and matters of the spirit.

I like this analogy because there is no judgment in the concept of language as a tool for communication. Those who have acquired several languages can, without diminishing the richness of their Mother tongue, read the same book in different languages with comprehension and, likewise, converse with those who do not share their native speech.

Also, there is a development in language just as in one's religious beliefs. For example, a preschooler has more language limitations than a college student, yet, they speak and understand the same language. So, too, do we grow in religious development through education and experience.

It is in this framework that I explain to our sons that I retain my Catholic identity in the sense that I am fluent in the religious language of Catholicism because that is the vehicle my parents had to teach me about God and matters of the spirit. To relinquish this identity would be to deny an integral part of who I am. As I have grown, I've been exposed to many dialects of both Christianity and non-Christian beliefs all of which challenge me to remain open and accepting of differences without losing the uniqueness of my own identity.

Our children also have unique identities: they have a Jewish father, grandparents and family with their history, as well as a Christian mother, grandparents and family with their history. They will become fluent in the religious language of Judaism and the heritage of its People because that is the vehicle we chose to communicate with them about God and matters of the spirit. As they grow, they will be exposed to many other religious dialects, and it is our hope that they will accept the challenge to remain open and tolerant of differences without losing the uniqueness of their identities.

Finding a way to talk to our children about religious identity was an outgrowth of our initial attempt to communicate with each other and our parents about entering into a mixed marriage and the effect it might have on our future. We were aware that although a marriage union is between two individuals, it has consequences for both extended and nuclear families; therefore, it was essential to consider the feelings of others and examine the possible scenerios that might surface. Afterall, we felt it would be hypocritical to have religion become a devisive force instead of the positive attraction that it was for us.

Very early on in our relationship, Ed impressed upon me the possible difficulties we might face beginning with parental disapproval, non-participation of clergy in a wedding ceremony, and rejection by a religious community, not to mention the further complications if we chose to have children.

After many painful and tear-filled sessions of confronting such issues, we concluded that although we had no idea what specific problems we may or may not encounter, we did have the skills for good communication anchored by our love for one another to face each difficulty one by one.

The first and major issue was that of religious expression and from a purely practical and mental health point of view, we felt it would be better for us to choose one primary vehicle of communication to give strength and unity to our marriage rather than to go our separate ways. Because it was impossible for Ed to even consider Christianity as an option, and since I had studied Biblical theology in my monastic training, I was more comfortable in choosing Judaism as our common source of spiritual nourishment.

Often I am asked why, if I can commit myself to Judaism so fully, haven't I converted - an underlying assumption being that it is just a matter of time that I do. In response, I point out that while conversion may appear to be a simple resolution to the problem of intermarriage, it does not address the integrity of one whose very identity reflects one's religious ties and upbringing. Part of the conversion ceremony requires that a Jew by Choice acknowledge that all prior religious ties and commitments have been relinquished - for me, an impossibility. However, in response to the reality of my unique situation (having fallen in love with and married a Jew) I can fully and positively make a commitment to Judaism within the context of my marriage.

Another major decision that followed from our choice of religious identity was formal affiliation with the Jewish community. Would we and could we become part of a Jewish institution? At the time of our marriage, Ed knew he could not compromise his rabbis' position not to officiate at our wedding by seeking out

one who would, nor did we choose a ceremony to accomodate everyone. (From our vantage point now we know that it has taken years of communication to reach the kind of mutual understanding and acceptance that would allow an "ideal" mixed marriage ceremony.) What we chose was to write our own ceremony and be married privately by a Justice of the Peace followed by celebrations with each family in their respective homes. Although we were determined to create a Jewish home regardless of affiliation, we knew how difficult that would be isolated from the support of a temple family. Fortunately, the door on which we knocked was wide open and we were not only welcomed, but encouraged to participate fully in temple life. Because this Reform congregation was the one in which Ed was educated, it added the security of family tradition which cemented our sense of belonging.

Having established religious identity and affiliation, we were left with the task of translating these choices into our daily lives. For me this meant beginning my Jewish education both formally with the study of Hebrew, reading of Jewish texts, and participating in temple life, and at home, by learning how to bake hallah, how not to blow out Shabbat candles, and how to prepare for holiday celebrations. One in particular turned out to have a profound effect on the way we chose to educate our children Jewishly.

While unfortunately, we live miles away from my family and seldom have the opportunity to share in their Christian holidays, we do live only minutes away from Ed's parents and relatives with whom we gather for most Jewish celebrations - thus, I'll never forget my first Jewish Christmas! From our decision to choose Judaism, Ed and I agreed that the celebration of Christian holidays had no justification in our home; hence, no wreaths, trees or tinsel. I am content with this decision since my religious training allows me to focus on the true meaning of Christian celebrations and beliefs, all of which I enjoy and express privately and feel respected and supported in doing so. Imagine, then, my shock and confusion at being invited to Ed's cousin's home on Christmas

to see his uncle dressed as Santa Claus trudging up the driveway weighted down by his sack of presents! At first I wondered if this was staged in my honor only to find out later that many Jewish homes consider Christmas to be a purely secular holiday or one of which they do not want their children to feel deprived.

Needless to say, this incident acted as a catalyst for Ed and me to communicate about how we planned to deal with holidays and their celebrations with our families. Over the years we have tried to live Jewishly 365 days a year with weekly Shabbat being the queen of all holidays so that other celebrations find their rightful place in the Jewish calendar. This, for example, prevents the minor holiday of Hanukah from competing with Christmas and allows us to help our Christian friends and family celebrate their holidays without denigrating both religions by trying to merge them or lessen their importance. Naturally this approach presents a challenge to us as parents to work at developing strong identities for our children in a world where being Jewish is a minority position and being children of a mixed marriage even more so. However, we feel the effort to help them be comfortable with who they are will provide them with positive feelings of pride and belonging that will eventually free them to be accepting of others who are different. By acknowledging these differences instead of blurring them or rationalizing them away, we hope to further the cause of respect and appreciation of the plurality among which we live.

One way we've been greatly helped in forming our children's Jewish identity has been by books and programs aimed at very young children before they begin their formal education through religious school. One program in particular supplies holiday packets throughout the year addressed to the child and filled with background material, songs, art and food projects and stories all of which involve the entire family in preparation for each celebration. As parents in the secular world, we are constantly reminded of the importance in child development of those early years and how children learn from what is going on around them.

Therefore, we feel the same responsibility to initiate religious training in the home early on in their lives. An indication of our success came recently when we were reading a book about people all over the world. One page contained illustrations of various holiday celebrations. After easily identifying Hanukah, Christmas, Easter, and Halloween, the boys were asked to identify the picture of a mother carrying in a platter of turkey to a festive table surrounded by a well-dressed family to which they both immediately shrieked, "Shabbat!"

Along with weights and growth charts, our sons' baby books are filled with memories of their Bris, first Hanukah gelt and Purim costume, recitation of the four questions and pictures of their first day of Sunday school. At the same time are accounts of sharing Christmas with their Grandma and Granddad, helping neighbors trim their trees and find Easter eggs, and preparing for our annual Christmas day "open house" where all our friends and neighbors gather.

Because our sons are still young, we cannot predict what the effects of our decision to chose a primary religious language will be, however, we do know the effect it has had on our family for the past several years. We know it in the excitement with which they spread the linen for Shabbat, place the china, cover the hallah, recite the blessings and sing the songs. We know when the letter arrives from religious school relating how thrilled a son is to hear a song he's always sung, a family tradition shared or to bake a holiday treat he already prepared at home. We see the pride in their faces when the rabbis call them to the Bimah to open the Ark. By the way these moments have enhanced and enriched our family life already, they alone justify our choice.

It has been said that there are only two things **we** as parents can give **our** children, roots and wings. In developing this religious dimension, we hope it will form the basis of a strong identity and foundation for the kind of inner strength that will prepare our sons to make their own choices in life. And indeed, if this occurs, we hope to afford them the same respect we ourselves asked for and received.

A final note must be made concerning this respect which we received from our parents, for without it, we would have had an uphill battle. My mother-in-law often tells me it was luck and circumstance that allowed our story to be successful, and in many ways the odds were in our favor. From some observers we hear, "That's very nice, BUT my son..." Few success stories become so without hard work and pain. I'm convinced that because our parents could tell us their concerns and voice their fears without rejecting us as people we have grown and continue to grow together.

This love has manifested itself on both sides. When my parents understood how important it was for us that they be present when our second son was born, they came an entire month before his due date only to have to leave the day before he finally did arrive - two weeks behind schedule. After travelling to Pennsylvania for a previously-planned event, and before leaving for their home in Florida, they drove back ten hours through the night to stand beside my in-laws at the Bris in our home. Likewise, my Jewish parents demonstrated their loyalty when they went to the local Jewish cemetery to buy burial plots for us all, and were told I could not be buried with them. After a family meeting, they returned to purchase all the plots in the non-sectarian section so that even in death I would not be alone. This kind of love-in-action is the essence of both religions. It is our hope to pass on to our children, through the vehicle we have chosen, the heritage of love we have both received.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
COMMISSION ON REFORM JEWISH OUTREACH
April 30, 1984

*Edie
Note meeting
date p. 2*

The meeting of the Executive Committee of the Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach was held April 30, 1984, at 838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York. The following members of the Commission attended:

David Belin, Rabbi Steven Foster, Dr. Robert Hess,
Lydia Kukoff, Mel Merians, Rabbi Alexander Schindler,
Rabbi Sanford Seltzer, Rabbi Jack Stern, Jr., Rabbi
Daniel Syme

FUNDRAISING AND BUDGET

Chairman David Belin reported on a meeting held earlier that morning with Steve Foster, Lydia Kukoff and Danny Syme in which overall fund raising and budget matters were discussed for presentation to the Executive Committee of the Commission. The UAHC has increased its overall budget for Outreach by approximately \$200,000. This is in recognition of the fact that the Outreach Commission is now a full department and also that Outreach has received enthusiastic support from the Reform Jewish community.

The total level of funding of Outreach under the UAHC budget is approximately \$300,000. Most of the additional funds are projected to be used to engage regional coordinators on a quarter-time or half-time basis to have direct delivery of programs in the regions.

The salary for a full-time regional coordinator runs in the vicinity of \$25,000, plus health insurance and other fringe benefits totaling approximately \$5,000, plus travel, share of office expenses, telephone, etc., plus the need of a full-time secretary to help in the coordination and implementation of programs.

One of the major problems is that in order to obtain first-rate people, it is necessary to find individuals willing to make a career commitment to this work. This, in turn, requires the assurance of an on-going stream of funds. Various possible means of raising funds were discussed, including the possibility of endowment funds for a regional coordinator or a regional institute and also endowment funds for Introduction to Judaism programs in particular cities or regions.

There will be a further report on this whole area when the full Commission meets in the fall.

MEETING DATES

The next Executive Committee meeting of the Commission will be on Tuesday, July 31, 1984, from 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., at the House of Living Judaism in New York City.

The full Commission will meet on September 9 from 1 p.m. - 9 p.m. and September 10 from 9 a.m. - 3:30, at the House of Living Judaism in New York City.

In order to minimize expense for the rabbinic members of the Commission, it was suggested that the next meeting take place in the spring of 1985 immediately following the CCAR convention and in the same place as that convention and that there be another meeting of the Commission in Los Angeles in the fall of 1985 at around the time of the 1985 UAHC Biennial.

There was a strong preference for having at least two Commission meetings each year. However, because of stringent budgetary limits, the CCAR has said that it can only provide transportation expenses for its representatives for one meeting a year, and accordingly efforts will be made to coordinate Outreach Commission meetings with other meetings where CCAR members will generally be present. This will be reviewed with the full Commission in September.

RABBINIC INVOLVEMENT IN OUTREACH

It was agreed that Outreach is one of the top priorities for the Reform movement, and in order to achieve our mutual goals, it is necessary to have the enthusiastic involvement and participation of the membership of the CCAR.

It was urged that the CCAR members of the Commission be strong advocates for Outreach and meet with other colleagues on a "one-to-one" basis or in small groups to inform them of new developments in Outreach and to encourage them to be more active in the Outreach effort.

In addition, CCAR members of the Commission should do everything possible to see that Outreach gets on the program at CCAR regional Kallot.

Ideally, regional CCAR Kallot should feature Outreach. In those regions where there are UAHC regional Outreach coordinators, the coordinators should work closely with rabbis in the region. Steve Foster will follow up on these recommendations, working with the other rabbinic members of the Commission. Lydia Kukoff will see if there can be any UAHC budgetary funds to provide travel expenses for Commission members to be presenters at CCAR regional Kallot.

There was also discussion concerning the need for having students at HUC/JIR become more familiar with Outreach, its crucial importance for the survival of the American Jewish community, and the particular need for sensitivity to various aspects of Reform Jewish Outreach. Steve Foster will seek to begin to pursue a more formal commitment for Outreach with all three branches of the College. The Committee recognized that the final determination on matters of curriculum rests with the College, but the Committee feels it would be appropriate to communicate to the College on behalf of the Commission the great need for understanding, training and sensitivity of rabbinic students to the Outreach program.

Sandy Seltzer will also discuss this with the leadership of the New York School. The more time and training that can be spent with rabbinic students, the greater acceleration there will be in the overall implementation of the Outreach program.

This in essence forms a part of the "delivery system" of Outreach--the means of delivery to rabbinic students, primarily through the College; the delivery system through members of the CCAR--primarily with individual and small group meetings and with working on Kallot-retreats; and the delivery system with congregations, primarily working through the regional Outreach coordinators.

We will try to help tie things together during each Biennial.

It was suggested that David Belin immediately contact the Biennial Planning Committee to make certain that there will be a major place for Outreach at the Los Angeles Biennial.

REPORT ON CURRENT PROGRAMMING

Lydia Kukoff reported on the development of specific programs related to interfaith marriage. In particular, she talked about programs for unaffiliated interfaith couples and programs for affiliated interfaith couples. A grant from the Wolfson Foundation is making possible the replication of a program for unaffiliated interfaith couples (The Times and The Seasons: A Jewish Perspective).

Rabbi Joel Oseran, Judy Aronson and Lydia Kukoff are designing the format of a two and one-half day training session in July for facilitators and those who will supervise them on-site. Selected members of the Commission will be invited to participate in the training program as observers.

Lydia Kukoff will be making the final decision on possible sites. Presently, these possible sites include Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York City, northern New Jersey, Denver, and Boca Raton.

Lydia will also work to develop a program for affiliated interfaith couples based on "The Times and The Seasons. . ." model, including the development of a handbook based on the July facilitators' training session. Hopefully, the handbook will encourage and enable congregations to undertake the development of their own programs for interfaith couples.

It was suggested that there might be a simulated "training session" for Commission members.

There was also discussion on the need to create a videotape on interfaith marriage which will have the same impact as the videotape, "Choosing Judaism". Among other things, it could be used as a starting point to lead to synagogue involvement in issues relating to interfaith marriage and to conversion.

PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS WHO HAVE CHILDREN WHO HAVE MARRIED NON-JEWS

There is a great need to develop and implement programs for Jewish parents who may have a child who has married a non-Jew. Currently, a pilot program is being tested in Los Angeles. We should be working to develop a manual to enable congregations to offer their own programs for these parents. Ideally, we would like to have this done by the first part of 1985.

The question was raised whether or not we should create a videotape for issues relating to these parents. This will be brought before the Commission. Obviously, a videotape would require the necessary extra funding.

REGIONAL OUTREACH COORDINATORS

A sizable portion of our budget will go toward engaging regional Outreach coordinators on a half- or quarter-time basis. The task of the coordinators will be to take national programs which have been successful and establish a direct delivery system to local congregations. This is the crucial step which will transform Outreach into a programmatic reality throughout the UAHC.

Lydia Kukof is now in the process of interviewing candidates for the position of regional coordinator. Candidates must live in the city in which the regional office is located. There must be a UAHC-sponsored Introduction to Judaism program established in that city, the proceeds of which will go toward the salary of the regional coordinator and out-of pocket costs, such as books.

The regional coordinator will report directly to Lydia and be supervised by the UAHC regional director. As soon as the regional coordinators have been formally engaged, Lydia will bring them together for a national training session. Once trained, they will become extensions of the Commission on Reform Jewish Outreach.

Whether a region is assigned a coordinator and whether the coordinator is engaged on a half-time or quarter-time basis will be determined by a number of factors including the quality of the candidate, the extent of the Outreach program in the region to date, the number of Jews living in the region, the extent of the UAHC regional director's commitment to further the Outreach program, and budgetary considerations (including the possibility of having funds such as endowment funds come specifically from the region which can be committed toward the funding of an Outreach coordinator).

The duties of regional coordinators will including:

1. Administration of the Introduction to Judaism program.
2. Serving as resource person to all the congregations of the region and encouraging congregations to have Outreach Committees.
3. Communicating to the congregations what is occurring in Outreach on a national level and communicating to the Director of Outreach and the regional director what is happening on a congregational level in Outreach programming.
4. Producing a regional Newsletter for Outreach.
5. Initiating new programming in the region.

We are looking for areas of the greatest chances of success--where the Jews are and where the support is.

One practical problem relates to the physical limitations on Lydia as Director of the Commission. The problem of administration of regional coordinators can be analogized to business where you would have separate sales managers in each region. You have to make these people effective. Supervision is a must. This is an overall problem which will be discussed in future meetings of the Executive Committee and in future meetings of the Commission.

PRIORITIZATION OF OUTREACH IMPLEMENTATION

The Executive Committee next discussed the areas of priority. It was agreed that thus far, the major work of implementation of the Outreach resolutions passed by the Biennial were in the areas of overall improvement and development of Introduction to Judaism courses and in follow-through programs for people who have recently chosen Judaism.

Looking forward during the next two years, it was agreed that the order of priority would be as follows:

- I. Programming for Interfaith Couples.
 - A. Affiliated.
 - B. Unaffiliated.
- II. Programming for Children of Interfaith Couples.
 - A. Affiliated--preschool through confirmation and high school age.
 - B. Children of "blended" families (where there are several parents involved, including stepparents).
 - C. Young adults of college and post-college age.

It was also suggested that there is need for special programming for parents who have a child romantically involved with a non-Jew or who have a child who has married a non-Jew. This is also an area of high priority, either I-C or before II-C.

In addition, there was discussion of the overall problem of what you do in situations where, by and large, congregations get membership through the religious school in the congregation. If we urge the congregations to consider enrolling any religious school children from unaffiliated interfaith couples, will that lead to concerns about whether or not the congregations will be losing members because they do not have to belong to have their children attend the religious school?

With specific reference to Outreach on the college level, there are already seven full-time people on campuses. The National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods also has programming related to college campuses. As a matter of fact, there are rabbis on 130 college campuses today. There was discussion of the need to better utilize the Jewish Chautauqua program. This will be discussed at future meetings of the Executive Committee and at the full Commission meeting when the whole area of prioritization will also be brought before the Commission.

There was discussion of the possibility of having synagogue affiliation increased through bringing in the children of unaffiliated interfaith married couples.

STRUCTURE AND WORK OF THE FULL COMMISSION

There was discussion of various alternatives involving the full membership of the Commission. These included activities ranging from lay involvement in helping encourage the enthusiastic support of members of the CCAR to lay involvement in development and expansion of programs on the college campuses. Geographic problems were discussed. Other areas included having members of the Commission participate in "lay reader" roles in the development of pamphlets and books and participate in particular areas of expertise which could be of help to the work in the development of the program of the Commission. In addition, there has to be lay involvement in ideas and development of fundraising for Outreach programming. Ideally, we want to continue the tradition of the path that was set by the Task Force of having both laypeople and the CCAR members work together. The possibility of geographical proximity and working together "as a team" with some specific functions, such as publications, education, fundraising, and other special projects, was discussed.

In the September meeting of the Commission, one of the agenda items will be to talk about the overall structure and work of the Commission.

Of course, the Commission will participate directly in the development and discussion of major issues, such as priorities and goals and the means to implement those priorities and goals.

It was suggested that at the next meeting of the Executive Committee and at the September meeting of the Commission, Lydia and Sandy would have a list of possible particular subjects for activities for members of the Commission.

In addition, at the September Commission meeting, we should discuss possible resolutions that the Commission may want to have considered at the Los Angeles Biennial.

In addition, there was some discussion about the possibility of having a series of workshops at the Los Angeles Biennial. The preliminary thought was of a series of workshops on interfaith marriage. This will be discussed at the September Commission meeting.

Julian

July 23, 1985

Mr. Melvin Merians
10 Bonnie Briar Lane
Larchmont, NY 10583

Dear Mel:

During my few days between trips I had a Cabinet Meeting and we discussed the "listening posts" problem.

Our recommendation is that a separate pamphlet be prepared by the Union which sets forth both sides of the issue. We have in mind a program brochure of a kind which we have been publishing for adult education purposes and congregational use on the whole variety of subjects. It will have not only the basic articles but also questions for discussion and appropriate bibliography.

Since the "Committee of 100" does not allow us to distribute their brochure, this seems the best avenue that we can pursue.

We have also resolved to have such a "listening post" based on this brochure in at least two regions of the Union during the coming year.

This entire program will be under the supervision of Lenny Schoolman and I am confident that he will carry it forward with his customary elan.

I hope that you find these ideas acceptable.

We look forward to seeing you and Elaine on your return. Warmest good wishes.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

cc: Rabbi Leonard A. Schoolman
Rabbi Daniel B. Syme

for topel

July 5, 1985

Mr. Melvin Merians
10 Bonnie Briar Lane
Larchmont, NY 10583

Dear Mel:

Just a quick note before I leave town. I tried to ¹do this by phone but you were out.

I just wanted to be sure to let you know that we have hit a snag concerning the distribution of the packet on officiating at interfaith marriages as we had discussed. Rabbi Maslin is adamant in his refusal to allow the mass distribution of his pamphlet.

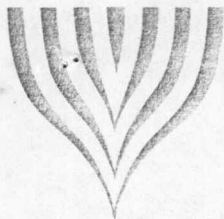
I'll rediscuss all this with my staff cabinet next week and will simply have to find another way of pursuing the listening post idea.

Warm regards.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

cc
D B 8



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE — JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC

July 3, 1985

Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin
Congregation Keneseth Israel
York Road and Township Line
Elkins Park, Pa. 19117

Dear Shim,

Thank you for your letter of July 1st.

Needless to say, the request I conveyed was not a unilateral action. The UAHC was mandated by the Commission on Outreach to establish "listening posts", structured congregational discussions on the subject of rabbinic officiation at mixed marriages.

This decision, endorsed unanimously by the Commission, including its CCAR representatives, affirmed that it was important to discuss the subject, it being clearly understood that no such sharing would compromise rabbinic conscience.

It was felt that a package containing the "Committee of 100" statement, the Mihaly responsum and the task force report might be one way in which to honor the decision without creating entirely new materials. Your letter, however, renders that possibility moot. We will simply have to find another mechanism.

I hope that your trip to Israel was an enjoyable one. Many thanks again for your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
Vice-President.

DBS/e

cc: Rabbis Alexander M. Schindler, Joseph B. Glaser, Walter Jacob,
Jack Stern, Sanford Seltzer

Simone J. Martin, D. Min., D. D.

SENIOR RABBI

Reform Congregation
KENESETH ISRAEL
York Road and Township Line
ELKINS PARK, PENNSYLVANIA 19117

July 1, 1985

Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
U.A.H.C.
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Dear Dan:

I received your letter of June 27 just two hours before leaving for Israel and am taking the time to answer it because of its shocking request.

Are you serious about circulating Mihaly's responsum to all UAHC congregations?? Have you read it? Three HUC-JIR professors, Wacholder, Spicehandler and Hoffman, spoke to me about it at the convention. Check with them about its contents. Each considers it to be utter nonsense. The College is embarrassed by the latest absurdity from Mihaly's pen as it was by his responsum a couple of years ago "proving" that not only are Shabbat weddings permitted but they are desirable.

The Mihaly pamphlet is a beautifully printed intellectual fraud. Unfortunately, because of his institutional position, this fraud is now an embarrassment to our movement as a whole.

Have you discussed this idea of circulating it with Alex Schindler? Please do.

I do not want the statement of "The Committee of 100" circulated to the congregations, and I am sure that, after a careful reading of Mihaly's "Responso," you will not want it circulated either. You mentioned circulating the statement of the Commission on Outreach affirming the principle of rabbinic conscience. Fine idea. I suggest that, if you want to circulate something in addition to the Commission's statement, you might include Walter Jacob's responsum (this is an officially endorsed CCAR responsum) in American Reform Responso, pp. 467-470.

I will not be back at my desk until August 1. In the meantime,

I suggest that you discuss which documents deserve to be circulated to our congregations as responsible statements of Reform Judaism with: Gunther Plaut, Jack Stern, Walter Jacob, Leonard Kravitz, Joe Glaser, and, of course, Alex.

My best wishes for a pleasant summer.

Sincerely,

Simeon J. Maslin
Simeon J. Maslin *MS*

SJM:ack

cc: Rabbi Joseph Glaser
Rabbi Walter Jacob
Rabbi Jack Stern
Rabbi Sandy Seltzer

MEMORANDUM

Cab...

From Rabbi Leonard A. Schoolman
To Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Copies Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
Subject Mihaly Responsa

Date July 2, 1985

I have finally gotten to read the Mihaly Responsa volume. Since several people had told me of its "brilliance," I was eager to read it. I was profoundly disappointed. While the first half is scholarly (at least it has extensive footnotes), the second half is so insubstantial and rhetorical as to be an embarrassment.

If the purpose of this booklet was to respond cogently to the "Committee of 100," it fails miserably. That response still needs to be written, using the theme "Why Some Rabbis Officiate at Mixed Marriages."

In addition, there are sections that are snide and tasteless (c.f. p.57).

* * *

I am bothered at the necessity to respond to the Committee of 100." If anything, the entire booklet laid an egg. In my vast travels over the last six months not once have I been asked a single question, although I've been prepared to respond. These travels included Los Angeles and San Francisco, Dallas, Corpus Christi, Atlanta, Tulsa, Calgary and Edmonton. These involved two regional biennials and one regional board meeting.

* * *

One thing surprised me about the signatories to the "Committee of 100." document and that was the number of rabbis of large congregations who signed.

* * *

For all these reasons and more, I think it ill behooves us to send out the packet that Mel Merians so generously is willing to underwrite. You - we - have steered the middle course in this difficult debate. What is to be gained by distributing a packet such as Mel proposes?



Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100

January 28, 1980

Ms. Ethel C. Fenig
6214 N. Washtenau
Chicago, Ill. 60659

Dear Ms. Fenig:

I think you are guilty of arguing from the particular to the general. One swallow does not make a summer. One superficial conversion does not negate the thousands which are sincere.

Your approach flies in the face of everything that Judaism teaches us, even in its Orthodox interpretation, concerning the attitude toward those who choose to be Jewish. It might be instructive for you to reread Maimonides famous "Letter to a Convert."

With kindest greetings, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

8214 N. Washtenaw
Chicago, Ill. 60659
January 21, 1980

Dear Alexander Schindler:

Since you've been so enthusiastically advocating conversion as a solution to intermarriage you should be interested in the enclosed article. A bit exaggerated to be sure but basically a true statement as to the efficacy of conversion - it isn't.

Most conversions are a farce - they are a tissue paper cover up masking Jewish indifference. People don't intermarry and convert because they care, they do so because they don't care. It is just another bureaucratic procedure to be dealt with. Conversion is not part of the solution, it is part of the problem - the feeling that anything goes in Judaism.

Also, that's not true. Behavior for Jews is clearly regulated. There is a high correlation between the degree of Jewish observance and the depth of positive Jewish attitudes and the ability to successfully transmit them to the next generation.

If people who were at best raised as 'indifferent passive Jews will intermarry, why should we expect an intermarried couple - even though ~~there~~^{one} has been a convenient conversion to Judaism but still retains potent memories, relations and ties to the non-Jewish world - just why should this couple be expected to raise its children as caring Jews? No, for despite the few outstanding exceptions you may cite, they can't - it is impossible.

But for the sake of argument let us say that the conversion process is a resounding success, producing many caring Jews not only of the convert but the born Jew and their children as well. If that theoretically could happen, shouldn't a priority of the Jewish community be converting Jews to Judaism? With care, with devotion, with time - it is possible to attract a significant minority, you know. Just ask the people in Lubavitch (of which I am not a member.).

If a Jew wants Jewish children let him/her marry another Jew and raise his/her children as such. If Jews are sincerely worried about defections from Judaism then we should analyze the basic causes for it and plan a course of action to remedy it.

Gimmicks and weak band aids won't do. Superficial conversions (and be honest by admitting that's what they are) are gimmicks. gimmicks that are clearly a case of bad money driving good money from the marketplace.

⑦
Your basic attitude is wrong. Judaism is not
castor oil, repellent and evil tasting, but basically good
for you. It is a powerful force, a meaningful
way of life. Those who drop out, who intermarry should
realize the consequences of their action - that they are
being harmed more than the whole of the Jewish people.
They should be crawling to us for forgiveness rather
than the reverse. And when some do leave, as
inevitably they will, well harsh as it sounds - let
them go. Otherwise, they are merely a weak
link in an already fragile framework with unknown
future capacity for further damage.

As a Jew with no formal denominational affiliation
I must commend Rabbi Maurice Hamun of Los Angeles
for his courageous denunciation of conversion and his
insistence on proof of Jewishness before he will
perform a marriage. His position is one of strength
and of faith in the future of Jews and Judaism. Your
position, for all its fancy rationalizations, is one of
weakness - of passivity, as external trends are used to
define Judaism.

Before you further promote conversion, think of
the damage you're doing to Judaism.

Sincerely,

Ethel C. Fenig

January 23, 1980

Ms. Virginia M. Paulsen
5319 24th N. E. #203
Seattle
Washington 98105

Dear Ms. Paulson:

Your letter of the 30th of December touches on a number of points.

I will try to answer in the Rabbinic tradition in the order of your complaints, observations and some of your conclusions.

To begin with, let me assure you that your observations about conversion via a vis Israel are correct. The Israeli rabbinate does not accept a conversion without the specified requirements. Namely, for females study and immersion (Mikvah) for males study, circumcision and immersion. This does not mean that if any person subscribes to the above and the ceremony is conducted by a Reform rabbi that they will not accept it. Only the requirements must be fulfilled and if so the conversion is valid, even in Israel. While they do not accept Reform conversions in general, if it is concluded in the framework of the (Halacha) traditional law it is valid.

Regarding submitting a document, that complaint is clouded. The conversion certificate is not a passport into the Jewish Community. Tradition does not require such a certificate. A document is issued by the Mohel after circumcision, and at the Mikvah after immersion. This is only a current practice by traditionalists to assure compliance with law, and possibly to forestall Reform conversions.

The Code of Jewish law does not demand a written document. I feel that a person who would demand such proof is ignorant of the Law. I would also subscribe to the thought that you would not want to befriend such people. In olden times a Registry was used by the Jewish Court (Beth Din) to inscribe all matters they concluded and that was all that was done. There are no obstacles to conversion if one cares to become a Jew. The history of the past in such matters cannot be translated into the society of today. We don't have inquisitions and ecclesiastical courts to impose death penalties today. One is free to choose their religion out of conviction. Judaism stands ready to instruct and accept all who seek admittance into the Jewish fold.

On the item of your so called "Jewish Connection?" let me respond as follows. There is a Rabbinic dictum that states "All Israelites are responsible one for the other." If that be a "Jewish Connection" then we have one. On this score we are no different than any of the other faith communities. Sociologically people tend to gravitate toward their own. If there are vestiges today of our past fears

Ms. Virginia M. Paulsen

January 23, 1980

I would rather not respond to your statement on the future of the so-called ecumenical spirit and the civil rights issues. I don't believe they are pertinent to the basic body of your letter.

In closing, let me assure you that I welcome you to the "club" -- you are a true Jew, for the final ingredient "quandry" is very much a part of Jewish life. You and I and millions of our co-religionists have this symptom of Judaism "quandry."

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely yours,

Alexander M. Schindler

December 30, 1979

Rabbi Alexander Schindler
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

I have received your kind and thoughtful response to my previous letter to you concerning conversion to Judaism, and would speak to you of another issue. This concerns the "proof" of one's Judaism.

As you probably know, there are only specific ways in which one can convert to Judaism. If Orthodox, after a period of scholarly preparation into the history, ethics and religion of Judaism, one must, according to Orthodox ritual, take an oral examination. In addition, if one is a woman, immersion in the mikva is required, witnessed by three concealed rabbis. If one is male, circumcision is necessary. If Reform, immersion is not required, although I believe a male's circumcision is. A document is prepared attesting to one's status as a Jew, signed by the officiating rabbi(s) and witnessed by reputable members, preferably male, who also affirm within the Jewish community that one is now a Jew.

Thereafter, on request, one must submit this document that affirms that one is a Jew, and that the conversion was affirmed by Jews in good standing within the community. Reform conversions are not accepted by Orthodox rabbis, in the event one wishes to settle in Israel, or marry a Jew while in Israel. Only Orthodox conversion, again witnessed, permits that.

Recently, it became clear that this submission of a document is required if one wishes to meet Jewish males, especially if there is a possibility as well as an intent to marry someone who is Jewish. Refusal to conform or comply with the request to provide proof results in a refusal to be accepted as a bona fide Jew. When I refused to comply, stating that I was a member in good standing at a Reform Temple, I was echedk on, and the Rabbi at this Temple complied with the request to furnish information about my conversion. In addition, he agreed to provide them with copies of my conversion certificate, if I would approve. I have not, nor do I intend to do so.

I regard the demand for "proof" of my conversion to Judaism as evidence of the second and even third class status of converts within

the Jewish community. Further, the requirement that one must have written documentation to show on request is of the order of a visa or passport that is stamped by the government, "Jew". There is no difference. I would argue that as those whose mothers and fathers are Jewish do not have to "prove" their Judaism, neither should converts have to "prove" theirs by such written documentation.

I think, perhaps, such a written document comes to us out of a time and place where membership in the Jewish community might have been jeopardized by converts who came as spies. I believe history records this to be the case during the Medieval periods, when conversion by Jews was prohibited by the Roman Catholic Church. Such persons would then expose the community to further destruction. In the effort to preserve the community, documentation was required.

This was no doubt of importance at those times because of the advantages that belonging to the Jewish community bestowed upon a member. That is, ties between members were very strong within and between Jewish communities, guaranteeing safe passage, and a responsibility towards persons and property belonging to fellow Jews. I do not feel that such is the case today, except in one respect.

As a member of the community, I have learned that yes, indeed, despite protestations to the contrary, there is a Jewish Connection. If one is a bona fide member of the Jewish community, there are social and economic advantages. One is in contact with Jews who pass along information, assist one in getting financial support of various kinds, introduce one to the "right" persons. Indeed, I would submit that the purpose of conversion of someone to Judaism has less to do with the spiritual needs of the individual than with strengthening the people Israel. I suspect, now, that it is for this reason, that conversion is blocked. One does not want any person to become a Jew because it is the Jewish community that is to be benefitted rather than the individual. Or perhaps, more to the point, the benefits must be at least potentially reciprocal, so that any aid extended to the convert must be assured of some commitment to the Jewish community. For this reason, only the best, the brightest, the most beautiful are really suitable. The weak, the woeful, the witless are most certainly not fit to become Jews, from my observation of how non-Jews are treated at my Temple.

Such seems to me a perversion of what the purpose of Judaism is about. It is not an attitude shared by those of our Fathers whom today we revere and whose writings and wisdom is recorded in the Pirke Arbot. If ever an attitude could be summed, it was done so by Hillel, as well as by Joshua ben Chaniniah. Far better to make Judaism acceptable and accessible to all, in order that the world be set right and the individuals within it clear about the way to walk. Their views are a relevant today as 2000 years ago.

The obstacles to conversion within Judaism, the submission of proof that one is truly a Jew, the preservation of biological status, all seem terribly contrary to the commands inherent within

Judaism: "Assemble ye the people, the men, the women, the children, and the strangers in your midst, to teach them the words of the Lord Our God".

At a time when the ecumenical spirit is crumbling, it is a tragedy that Jews are becoming more particularistic. Not that the ecumenical spirit was soundly based. Its narrow concentration on the black civil rights movement perhaps made its dissolution predictable. More unfortunate, however, is that it encouraged accommodation rather than insight. It is only with enlightenment encouraged by open dialog that change can occur.

I find myself as a Jew in a quandry. Neither second or third class citizenship is very appealing. Compliance with the demand to submit "proof" is odious, personally and philosophically. Leaving the community results in alienation from Judaism, since who else is knowledgeable but those who belong to a Temple or a Synagogue. This issue, probably more than any one, requires a change of attitude by official members of the Jewish community, notably the Rabbis, both Reform and Orthodox. I fear that if such change does not occur that Jews may, again, lock themselves within a ghetto which no one will have the strength, the inclination or the intelligence to penetrate.

Sincerely,

Virginia M Paulsen
Virginia M. Paulsen

5219 24th N.E. #203
Seattle, Washington 98105