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

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Outreach [Detroit/Northeast Lakes], 1979-1981.

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

REDI-NOTE

TO Dear Rabbi Schindler:

DATE *Ignore.* Lima, ohio 19 11-4-84

This is a very short reply to your column in the "Reform Judaism" of Fall 1984.

We live in a community of less than 50,000. Still retain a Temple and full time Rabbi. For how long? Who knows. Our roster is about 105, consisting mostly of congregants well over the age of 60. As I have written you 3 times previously, I think it is a great, gross mistake to insist the non-Jewish spouse convert. We have lost too many possible members because of this and they do not convert and will not set step in the Temple. In Detroit and other cities, this is not true and the couples are told what to expect. No doubt, your experiences are from larger cities. Believe me, it is not working here, I know. The Gentiles simply can't understand us. Please change this outmoded rule!

1609 Shawnee Rd. 401
Lima, Ohio 45805

11-4-84

SIGNED

Jerome Blotner

REDIFORM 45462



NO REPLY NECESSARY



REPLY REQUESTED - USE REVERSE SIDE

Old real

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

November 18, 1981

Rabbi David S. Hachen

Overhead

It was wonderful seeing you and Pearl in Detroit - as it always is.

I read a copy of your letter of November 5 to Bill Blank in the reading file and I'm very much intrigued by the suggestion which is contained in paragraph two. It is intriguing and indicates that you and I appear to be once again on the same wave length.

I'm firmly convinced that something ought to be done by the rabbinate to show those youngsters at whose weddings we do not officiate, that we do nonetheless not "reject them" - we are accused of doing. Some steps ought to be delineated which we can take in all good conscience and which will demonstrate our care for them.

I've been talking to Joe Glaser along that line urging him to take these steps as well as to Max Shapiro.

Why don't you pick a pen and drop a line to Joe telling him some of the things which you might have in mind.

Again, all the very best to you

*Outreach
Northwest Lakes*

August 17, 1981

Mr. Jerome Blattner
1609 Shawnee Road #401
Lima, Ohio 45805

Dear Mr. Blattner:

Many thanks for your letter of August 8. I am grateful to you for having shared with me your concerns regarding the question of rabbis officiating at mixed marriages. It is something which is being discussed on an on-going basis by the Central Conference of American Rabbis and your comments are of great interest.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

1609 Shawnee Rd. Apt=401
 Lima, Ohio 45805
 August 8, 1981

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

My wife Zerline and I feel strongly about the following subject. We would like you to give grave conderation to it.

Intermarriage between Jew and Non Jew is a fact of life! Especially in a small community like Lima, Ohio. There have been many in the past few years. And, of course, adhering to the custom, these couples cannot be married by a Rabbi ^{THOSE} or even by a Rabbi and a Christian Minister. The Rabbi here and ^A nearby refuse to do so unless the Non Jew converts.

The result? A civil marriage and a complete loss to Judiasm of the couple, including the Jewish member in many cases. Too, resentment is in the minds of the couple for life. Consider what the children of these couples will think of religion!

Would it not be better if the Rabbi would try conversion and, failing that, would marry the couple and hope the Non Jew would see the beauty and joy of Judiasm and eventually convert? As it is, the non Jew is either not responsive to any religion or might even begin to hate Judiasm because of this refusal.

I sometimes think the Rabbis who promulgated this rule or statute are living in another world! They seemingly don't know what goes on in the "Non Temple" world! Living in a small community, we have many Non Jewish friends whose son or daughter have married a Jew. The parents are simply stunned at the refusal of Rabbis and, at times, have had to resort to a civil ceremony, or bring in an unknown Rabbi from a distant city. They would have preferred Rabbis or Ministers they knew.

We have just returned from Detroit where, we are told several of the Reform Rabbis will marry a mixed couple after a dialogue. This is the brightest light we have heard on this subject. Here, at last, could be the saving of a Jewish person. the strong possibility of conversion by the spouse and most importantly for their offspring.

You are embarking on a program of proselytizing of the non Jew. At the same time, you are assuring the refused non Jew that he or she is not wanted as the mate of a Jew without converting.

My cardiologist is new here. He is a Christian married to a Jewish woman. A Rabbi refused to marry them unless he converted! As a result he refuses to enter the Temple because he feels he is not wanted! It seems we have lost her (and future children) to Judiasm.

Lets change this and do it now!

Sincerely,

Jerome Blattner

Outreach

October 28, 1980

Mrs. A. Ehrlich
66 Fessenden Street
Newtonville, MA. 02160

Dear Mrs. Ehrlich:

Your letter of October 24 has been directed to my attention. I hasten to respond.

While there are rabbis on the American scene who perform mixed marriages, such is not the case in England. To the best of my knowledge none of the Liberal/Progressive rabbis in England will officiate at the marriage of a Jew to a non-Jew. I have also checked with the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the rabbinic arm of Reform Judaism, and am told this is indeed the case. Thus, I regret I cannot provide the name of a rabbi for a religious ceremony for your daughter.

Should your daughter and her husband-to-be wish to meet with a rabbi to discuss their situation I will be happy to give you some names. However, please know that such a meeting would be for counselling purposes only, none of the rabbis would agree to doing a religious marriage ceremony. As you can appreciate, the Liberal/Reform/Progressive communities of Europe differ in many ways from the American Reform movement and they tend to be much more traditionally inclined in many ways, certainly this is so in regard to mixed marriage.

I regret that I cannot provide a more positive response to your query.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Edith J. Miller
Assistant to the President

66 Fessenden St.
Newtonville Ma
02160
Oct. 24, 1980

The Union of American Hebrew Cong.
838 Fifth Ave.
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir,

My daughter is presently to be married to a non-Jew in a Civil ceremony in London. My husband and I will be in London at the end of the year and wondered whether it might be possible to arrange for a religious ceremony at that time.

Could you tell me how to go about finding a Rabbi in London who would perform such a ceremony. I know the young couple would be happy to have this done.

I should be very grateful for any information you might be able to give me.

Many thanks,

Sincerely,

Anne Ehrlich

September 24, 1979

Mr. Lawrence Covitz
915 E. Court Street
Flint, MI. 48503

Dear Larry:

It was wonderful hearing from you. I am so pleased that you saw me on the Donahue Show and I am grateful for your warm words of commendation. It's obviously a very popular program and I am amazed by the number of people who watch it, many do so faithfully!

As I write this letter, it may well be that you are in New York. I am delighted that you'll be here for the simcha of your Aunt's 83rd Birthday. I'm certain it will be a wonderful reunion for the family and I do hope you will extend my warm good wishes to her.

Rhea and I speak of you and Helen often and with great fondness. We pray you will be blessed with a healthy, happy and fulfilling New Year.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Flint Home

Serving the Flint Area Since 1916

FLINT, MICHIGAN



September 18, 1979

Rabbi Alex Schindler
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

Dear Alex:

This morning, I turned on the television set and who do I see but your smiling face. You had a very interesting talk with Donohue, and I want you to know that you conducted yourself beautifully. Some of the questions were very difficult, but you answered them in a very astute way.

It was wonderful seeing you on the tube and it brought back memories of old times when I sat on the Board with you and attended meetings in far-away places with my wife. I must say that I can't remember any more pleasant experience in my life than the times we spent with you and Rhea at that resort in Connecticut - the name of which escapes me now.

My wife is very busy preparing our Sabbath dinner.

I am coming to New York next week for a very joyful affair. My dear Aunt Evelyn Greenfeld, whom I know you remember, is having an 83rd birthday celebration, and has invited all the available family to come to dinner at the Harmony Club. I am bringing our daughter Sally and her two children to visit their aunt whom they have never seen.

Wishing you and yours a very Happy and Prosperous New Year, I am

Yours truly,

Lawrence Covitz.

LC/nk

Lawrence Covitz

September 19, 1979

Ms. Sandra Joiner
4661 Cooper Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45242

Dear Ms. Joiner:

Your note of September 12 has been brought to my attention. It was good of you to write to share your concerns in regard to a query posed during the recent Phil Donahue Show on which I appeared.

Let me clarify that the word goyim is not slanderous. It is the Hebrew word for gentiles and the Biblical meaning was nations. As with all words, the manner of usage sometimes tinges the meaning. I could use the word Jew as an example, while it is not in and of itself a derogatory word it is sometimes used in a way which gives it a bigoted slant.

Alas, in this imperfect world in which we live there are people of all colors and creeds and beliefs who demean others, sometimes by word, sometimes by deed, and sometimes by innuendo. But I do want to assure you that when the word goyim is used it is in actuality the Hebrew term for gentiles.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Sept. 12, 1979

Today I watched the Phil Donahue Show. I should say portions of the show so I have missed the Rabbi's name. But to get on with what I am really wanting to say...

A devout Jew called on the phone and used the term "Goyan Gentile" the Rabbi put his head down & frowned.

But Phil Donahue completely over-looked this term (evidently knowing or being familiar with the term) naturally the Rabbi ignored this also. If I understand the term correctly it is very slanderous.

Just as much as the derivative terms the Jews hate for whites to use against blacks etc. I've heard Jewish comedians do the same on TV. (use "goyas" referring to gentiles) It seems the Jewish people



AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

are the only ones to get by with terms
meant to put a race down. This is very
one-sided & makes me believe what I've heard
before, that gentiles are not really wanted... as
far as being converted into the Jewish religion.
Please explain the term "goyan gentile" for
me. I'd very much appreciate it.

Thank you,

FRISKY 'N' FROSTY

Sandra Joiner

P.S. After reading this last portion over, may I just
add I don't believe ^{Current, Inc.} anyone should be allowed to
slander others on TV. -Not that everyone should.

Sandra Jinner
4661 Cooper Rd.
Cincinnati, Oh. 45242



SERIES
AIR



UNITED STATES POSTAGE



Union of American
Hebrew Congregations

838 Fifth Ave.

New York, New York

10021



September 19, 1979

Ms. Terri Garfield
612 Kings Cross Court
W. Carrollton, Ohio 45449

Dear Ms. Garfield:

Your inquiry in regard to "Introduction to Judaism" has come to my attention. Please be advised that this is not a publication of the UAHC but rather courses which we offer in various sections of the country for people who wish to learn more about Judaism, either for the purpose of conversion or out of a desire to know more about the Jewish people and Judaism.

I am sharing your note with the director of our UAHC Northwest Lakes Council, Rabbi David Hachen, and asking him to send you pertinent informational materials on the study of Judaism.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Edith J. Miller
Assistant to the President

cc: Rabbi David S. Hachen

EAGLE-A
QUALITY
MANIFOLD

September 19, 1979

Mrs. Louis I. Egelson
Belvedere Apartment 805A
3851 Reading Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45229

Dear Gussie:

It was good hearing from you. I'm delighted that you caught me on the Phil Donahue Show. I had never heard of the program and am amazed at the number of people who view the show. I thought the program went very well and I was delighted by the articulate and moving statements made by some of the audience.

We will be facing more and more mixed and inter marriage and I feel strongly that we must welcome the non-Jewish partners and the new -Jews and bring them closer to us. Bob and Paula sound like a delightful couple and apparently her parents are fine people. You must be grateful that they have found happiness and I am sure they will ever be a source of nachas to you and the family.

Rhea joins me in sending fondest regards and our warm good wishes for a healthy, happy and sweet New Year.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Mrs. Louis I. Egelson
Belvedere Apartment 805 A
3851 Reading Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45229

Sept. 12th

Dear Alex, - I seldom tune in on the Danahere show, as he usually dwells on sex and I get disgusted with the "nit-shits" who participate.

To-day was my lucky day to strike a most interesting program - and you handled it so well, as you always do! I've just returned from Asheville, N.C. where I attended the wedding of my eldest grand-son, Robert Louis, He married a lovely, well-educated girl (Paula Ericson) but not Jewish.

Her parents are charming - live out-side of Chicago. Her father is a buyer for Montgomery Ward. They are so happy

I have a fine Jewish boy
for a son-in-law, and I
be part of a Jewish family. I
hope the future augurs well.
But was engaged to a Jew-
ish girl who "gilted" him and
married someone else. He
was "in the depths" for so long-
so we rejoice at his new found
happiness. He has his M.A. in
psychology and is teaching re-
tarded children. Paula also
teaches. I haven't been to New
York in some time. When I
get there, I hope to see you. I
had to move. I was lucky to
find an apt. I could afford.
The Vernon Manor raised my
rent \$250 a month. I had
plenty of worry and aggra-
vation. You looked so well
and rested on T.V. I pray

2.

Mrs. Louis I. Egelson
Belvedere Apartment 805 A
3851 Reading Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45229

your dear ones are well
and happy. My most heart-
felt wishes to you all for
health, happiness, and con-
tentment in the "New Year."

As ever fondly,
Fannie E.



Temple Beth El

7400 Telegraph at 14 Mile Road · Birmingham, Michigan 48010

Telephone (313) 851-1100

DR. RICHARD C. HERTZ, Rabbi
RABBI DANNEL I. SCHWARTZ, Associate Rabbi
RABBI JEFFREY B. LAZAR, Educational Director
IRVING I. KATZ, Executive Secretary
JASON H. TICKTON, Music Director

March 7, 1979

Rabbi Alexander Schindler
838 Fifth Ave.
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Alex:

Thank you very much for your letter of March 2. I was familiar, of course, with the sources you mention in your letter. The Talmudic exception "mipney darchey Sholom" as well as the precedents of 1514 and 1515 would have no validity in Reform congregations in twentieth century America. As a Reform Jew, I would be inclined to be guided by the views of Kaufmann Kohler, who, as you know, started his American ministry in Detroit, and Gotthard Deutsch. I hope I am not in violation of "moreh halachah bifne rabbo" when I suggest that since Kohler and Deutsch, two great Reform theologians, leave it to each Reform congregation to make the decision, it would have been better, in my opinion, if your statement in The Annual Report would have stated that "Rabbi Kaufmann Kohler, the great theologian and past President of the Hebrew Union College, says that there is no law prohibiting the burial of non-Jews in Jewish cemeteries and that congregations may therefore make their own decisions on the matter".

Best regards,


Irving I. Katz, F.T.A.
Executive Secretary

Ans

742

when Gershon
was student

Outreach

Gershon

March 16, 1979

Mr. T. Gershon Blackmore
615 Lowell 14
Cincinnati, Ohio 45220

Dear Gershon:

It was good to receive your letter and to have you share with me your very interesting background and life story. I was, of course, happy to learn that my recommendations are meaningful to you and that you deem them relevant.

It also pleased me to learn of your interest in serving a small congregation. I think there is too much emphasis in the rabbinate on attaining a large pulpit when equally great satisfaction and even creature comforts can be found in working with members of smaller congregations who invariably are more appreciative, more community minded and more committed to Judaism than are our co-religionists of larger communities.

This is certainly true for the Regina congregation and their members who I have met. There are some wonderful people there. The only difficulty which I can foresee is the fact that in Regina itself you have a community which is only used to Orthodox rabbis. Since I don't know how responsive you will be able to be to the needs of this more traditional group I cannot tell you whether this is a promising venture for you. I would suggest that you get in touch with the UAHC's Regional Director for Canada, Arthur Grant, to discuss the situation with him. He can be reached at 534 Lawrence Avenue, West, Suite 213, Toronto, Ontario M6A 1A3, Canada - telephone (416) 787-9838.

I hope you don't mind if I share your letter with Rabbi Sanford Seltzer. He is directing the UAHC's Task Force on Outreach and your experience may be helpful to him.

With every good wish and warmest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

T. Gershon Blackmore
615 Lowell 14
Cincinnati, Ohio 45220

March 9, 1979

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

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

I am a member of the HUC graduating class of 1979. Recently I met with Rabbi Malcolm Stern as part of rabbinical placement process, and, during our interview, the conversation turned toward the subject of my religious upbringing. When I revealed to Rabbi Stern that I am a convert to Judaism, he suggested that I write to you and share with you some of my background.

I consider myself a convert even though I am descended, on my mother's side, from a large, Latvian Jewish family. My mother chose to abandon Judaism before I was born, and married my father, who is not Jewish. Essentially, I was raised in a non-Jewish home: no mention was made of my Jewish descent, or of the fact that, according to the halacha, I was born Jewish. Our family observed the Christian holidays, complete with Christmas tree. Judaism was never mentioned. In this context, I was a Jew only according to the ancient racial traditions of descent through the mother; according to Prof. Mihaly's responsum on personal status, a person of my background should be considered a non-Jew.

When I was about fifteen years of age, I became interested, independently, in Judaism. To the initial consternation of my family, I began to take steps toward conversion. During this process, I discovered that, because my mother was Jewish, I did not need to undergo formal conversion. Nevertheless, I experienced, in embracing Judaism, all that a "normal" convert would experience.

My interest in Judaism persisted until, today, I am on the verge of being ordained a rabbi. Naturally, the problems and joys faced by converts to Judaism is one of my major interests in the rabbinate. My experience in the field has shown that your recent statement on the need to make converts feel more at home has great relevance today. American Jewry has relied upon successive waves of immigration to rejuvenate Jewish life--the next wave, in an age of unparalleled freedom, will consist of those who have chosen Judaism.

In addition, I am also interested in Judaism as lived in the small town environment. Small towns are where the problems of conversion (and especially intermarriage) are most acutely felt. Other issues, such as the difficulty of forming educational programs in the small-town environment, make the small-town rabbinate a challenge. At present, I am working on a "Jewish one-room schoolhouse" kit with Betsy Katz at the Cincinnati Jewish Teacher's Center, which is designed for use in extremely small congregations. My interest in small towns stems from my conviction that smaller communities are desirable places in which to live and raise children, and from my belief that, in spite of the problems inherent in small town Judaism, a vibrant Jewish identity can

be maintained. Of the pulpits offered at present, Regina, Saskatchewan seems the most attractive.

I hope the information that Rabbi Stern suggested that I supply to you will be of use to you. Thank you for your attention.

שלום וברכה
ג'רשון בלאקמור

T. Gershon Blackmore

