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### **MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.**

Series I: General Correspondence, 1914-1969, undated.

Sub-series A: Alphabetical, 1914-1965, undated.

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Alliance Israelite Universelle, 1959-1962.



# AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE ALLIANCE ISRAELITE UNIVERSELLE

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61 BROADWAY, ROOM 1712, NEW YORK 6, N. Y.

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## PERSONAL

October 16, 1959

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

You have certainly read some of the advance press announcements about the world-wide celebrations soon to be held, marking the one-hundredth anniversary of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, the oldest organization dedicated to the relief of Jewish suffering and to the education of Jewish youth throughout the world.

Distinguished leaders will take part in these ceremonies. In France the Honorary Chairman will be the President of the Republic, General Charles de Gaulle.

The climax of all these events will be a Centennial Congress of delegations from all over the world, assembling in Paris on June 21, 1960.

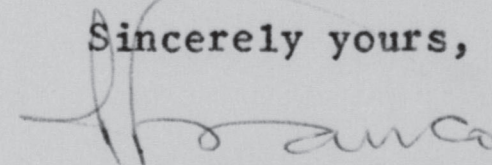
The most eminent members of the Jewish community are expected to serve on the United States delegation.

Accordingly, our Board of Directors takes pleasure in extending to you this invitation to join with us in the Congress at Paris.

May we set your name down as a member of our delegation?

We should appreciate the favor of an early reply. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,



Marcel Franco  
President



92  
October 21, 1959

Mr. Marcel Franco  
President  
American Friends of the  
Alliance Israelite Universelle  
61 Broadway, Room 1712  
New York 6, New York

My dear Mr. Franco:

Permit me to thank you for your letter of October 16th and for your invitation to attend as a delegate the Centennial Congress in honor of the anniversary of the of the Alliance Israelite Universelle on June 21, 1960. I appreciate very much your courtesy in inviting me and I would be very happy to join your delegation. I trust that nothing will prevent my attending the Congress at Paris.

With all good wishes I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:bfm



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October 26, 1959

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
East 105th Street & Silver Park  
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

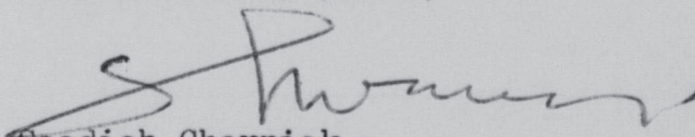
In absence of Mr. Marcel Franco, who left for Europe, I have the honor of acknowledging receipt of your letter of October 21.

We were very happy to learn that you accept our invitation to join the U. S. delegation to the Centennial Congress of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris.

We will let you have all the details on the Congress as soon as possible.

We are most grateful to you for your good wishes.

Very sincerely yours,

  
Saadiah Cherniak  
Executive Director

SC/aw



# AMERICAN FRIENDS

OF THE

## ALLIANCE ISRAELITE UNIVERSELLE

61 BROADWAY, ROOM 1712, NEW YORK 6, N. Y.

New Telephone:  
Whitehall-4-4653

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May 11, 1960.

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver,  
The Temple,  
East 105th Street & Silver Park,  
Cleveland 6, Ohio.

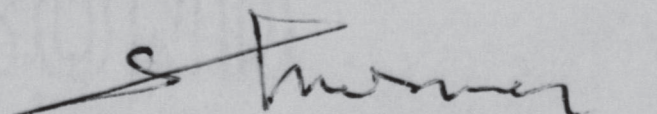
Dear Dr. Silver:

During the telephone conversation I had the pleasure of having with you some time ago, it was understood that I would contact you towards the middle of the month and that you would then be able to give me your definite decision about attending the Centennial Congress of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris on June 21-24. I hope that your decision is positive and that your tentative agreement to make the invocation at the banquet of the American Friends can be considered also as definite.

Although the banquet will, in all probability, be chaired by Mr. Couve de Murville, Minister of Foreign Affairs of France, most of the speeches will be in English. As to the invocation, it is, of course, up to you to decide whether you will make it in English, in French, or perhaps, in English with a few words in French "lichvod haachsania".

Hoping to hear from you, I am, with many thanks,

Sincerely yours,



Saadiah Cherniak,  
Executive Director.

SC:el



May 13, 1960

Mr. Saadiah Cherniak  
Executive Director  
American Friends of the  
Alliance Israelite Universelle  
61 Broadway, Room 1712  
New York 6, New York

My dear Mr. Cherniak:

I have waited until the last moment to see whether I could clear my schedule and could go abroad to attend the Centennial Congress of the Alliance Israelite Universelle in Paris. Unfortunately, congregational duties which I must perform have accumulated to a degree where I find it absolutely impossible to leave the country during the week of June 21st. I regret it more than I can tell you because I had looked forward to the prospect of attending the celebration. I know that it will be very successful and in keeping with the fine traditions of the great humanitarian organization.

With warmest regards and all good wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:bfm



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March 1, 1962.

Secretary to  
Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,  
"The Temple",  
East 105th & Silver Park,  
Cleveland 6, Ohio.

Dear Madame:

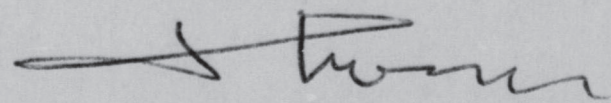
We were informed by the headquarters of the Alliance Israélite Universelle that Dr. Silver visited some of our schools during his recent stay in Morocco.

I would very much like to have an opportunity to see Dr. Silver when he will be in New York in order to find out what his impressions were of these schools.

Could you kindly let me know when Dr. Silver is expected to be in New York and how I could arrange for a brief talk with him.

Hoping to hear from you, I am, with many thanks,

Sincerely yours,



Saadiah Cherniak  
Executive Director.

SC:el

Handwritten notes at the bottom of the page, including "2-11-62" and "ny-4-26".



March 14, 1962

Dear Mr. Cherniak:

This will acknowledge the receipt of your letter of March first.

Dr. Silver does not expect to be in New York within the next few weeks. However, he may be there early in April; in that case, I will inform you.

With all good wishes.

Cordially,

Beatrice F. May (Mrs.)  
Secretary to Dr. Silver

Mr. Seadiah Cherniak  
Executive Director  
American Friends of the  
Alliance Israelite Universelle  
61 Broadway, Room 1712  
New York 6, New York



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EZRA K. ZILKHA

March 29, 1962.

Mrs. Beatrice F. May,  
Secretary to Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,  
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East 105th St. & Silver Park,  
Cleveland 6, Ohio.

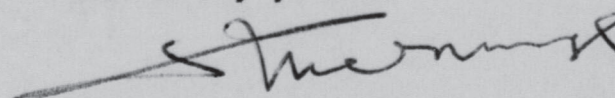
Dear Mrs. May:

You were good enough to write me on March 14th that  
Dr. Silver may be in New York early in April.

If you already know the date of his arrival in New York  
and the length of his stay here, I would greatly appreciate your  
letting me know.

With many thanks, I am,

Sincerely yours,



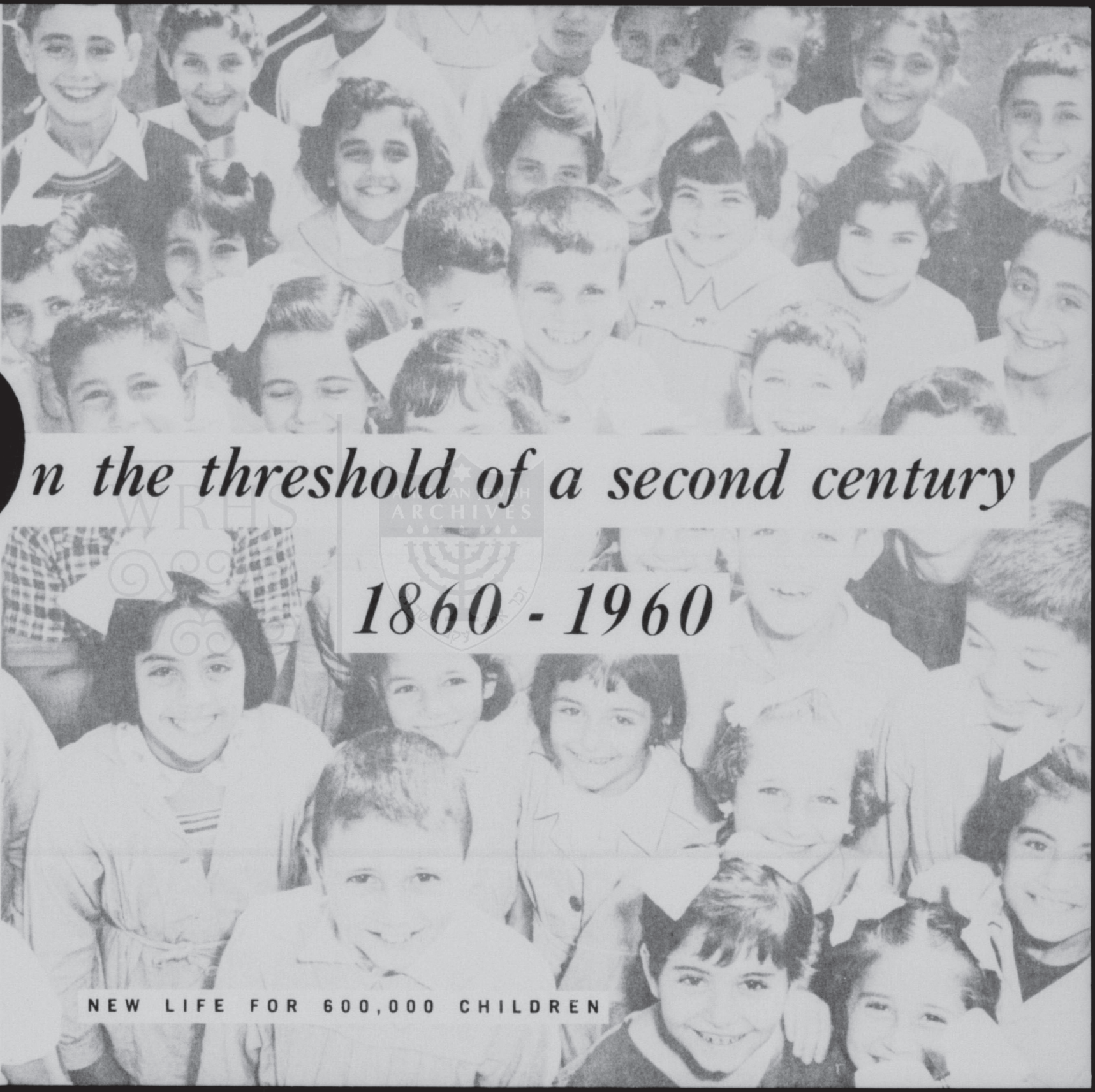
Saadiah Cherniak  
Executive Director.

SC:el



כל ישראל ערבים זה לזה

~~Givath Ram~~  
Givath Ram



# O *n the threshold of a second century*

1860 - 1960

... Jews of the world: Hear our appeal.  
Join us. Cooperate with us.

Our task is imposing, and, we hope,  
blessed.

We are founding the ALLIANCE  
ISRAELITE UNIVERSELLE.

*(From the appeal issued in June 1860  
by sixteen young French Jews, the  
founders of the Alliance Israelite Uni-  
verselle)*

NEW LIFE FOR 600,000 CHILDREN



# One hundred years of service to Jewry



During its first century, the Alliance has helped protect the rights of the Jews of Russia, the Balkan countries, Turkey, Iran, Morocco and other lands — in all, 22 countries of Europe, Asia and Africa. It has established and operated schools in 14 countries.

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From Istanbul to New York	back cover



# Blazing new trails . . . . .

A century ago, a handful of French Jews founded the Alliance Israelite Universelle — the first organization dedicated to the relief of suffering Jews throughout the world.

There has been hardly one major problem in Jewish life during the last hundred years to whose solution the Alliance has not contributed.

**EMIGRATION** — The Alliance helped in the first organized efforts to assist the emigration of Jews fleeing the Russian pogroms during the 1880's. This was the beginning of the great migratory movement which eventually transformed American Jewry into the greatest Jewish community in the world.

**HUMAN RIGHTS** — The representatives of the Alliance to the Berlin Congress of 1867 were the first delegation ever sent to an international conference by a leading organization in order to protect Jewish rights.

**EDUCATION** — The Alliance was the first to embark, in 1862, on a program to create a network of schools for the Jewish communities of the Near and Middle East and North Africa. These schools have completely revolutionized the lives of millions of Jews.

**LAND SETTLEMENT** — The Alliance, in 1870, took the first step in Jewish land settlement in Palestine by founding the Agricultural School of Mikveh Israel.

**CULTURE - REVIVAL OF HEBREW** — It was in the schools of the Alliance that Eliezer ben Yehudah, "the Father of Modern Hebrew," had the first opportunity to teach Hebrew as a living language.

*In the early 1880's, Ahad Ha'am, the noted Jewish thinker, saw in Brody, Austria the Alliance representative, Charles Netter, help refugees from Russia to continue their journey. He made these notes on the spot:*

. . . The city was full of refugees from Russia. Charles Netter and his aides stayed there, directing group after group to America . . . I saw Netter, that worthy man, standing in the station and distributing money to the refugees. His face expressed the kindness and compassion he felt for them . . .

As the train started to move, they called out: "Long live Netter! Long live the Alliance!"

*Reshumoth, Tel Aviv, Vol. V*



# 600,000 children saved

A hundred years ago, the Jewish communities of the Moslem world — Sephardim and Orientals — were living under sub-human conditions. The life of the children was particularly pathetic.

Poorly fed, afflicted with disease, left to themselves on the dirty streets of the ghettos, they had — many still have — a childhood without joy, and a future without hope.

As there were practically no public schools in the Moslem world and as the local Jewish communities were economically too weak to create adequate schools of their own, Jewish children were doomed to almost complete ignorance. They had no possibility of rising above the abysmal poverty of their surroundings.

In Jewish subjects, too, the ignorance was appalling. Most of the children learned only to recite a few prayers—without understanding a single word.

*"A childhood  
without joy"*



J.D.C.



J.D.C.

*"The abysmal poverty  
of their surroundings"*





*Gym class in a school of the Alliance*

**Ninety-two per cent of those among the Jews in the city who have a trade or profession to provide them with a decent living, are graduates of Alliance schools.**

*(From a recent survey in a North African city)*

The Alliance has created a network of all-day schools for Jewish children from the Caspian Sea to the western coast of Morocco.

**These schools have a threefold task:**

**1 – THEY PROVIDE JEWISH CHILDREN WITH A DECENT CHILDHOOD**

For the first time in their lives, the children find themselves in sunny, airy rooms under the care of dedicated teachers.

The children have to be taught everything — even how to play. They are under constant medical supervision. They receive a hot meal daily, often their only such meal on a weekday. They receive decent clothing. It is at the Alliance school that most of them are given their first toys.

**2 – THEY ENABLE JEWISH BOYS AND GIRLS TO BECOME PRODUCTIVE MEMBERS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES**

Either in their native lands, or, if they emigrate, in those countries where they make their homes — in the Near and Middle East, North



Africa, Israel, Western Europe and the Americas — hundreds of thousands of Sephardic and Oriental Jews now live under social and economic conditions of which they could not have even dreamed had they or their parents not attended Alliance schools.

### 3 — THE SCHOOLS OF THE ALLIANCE STRENGTHEN THE TIES OF YOUTH WITH JUDAISM.

Study of the Bible, Hebrew, Jewish history, and folklore forms an integral part of the curriculum for both boys and girls.

Modern, efficient teaching methods are used. Teachers are trained at a special seminary.

In the schools of the Alliance the Sabbath and Jewish holidays, as well as laws regarding kashrut and prayers, are carefully observed.

In some countries only the Alliance school stood in the way of the conversion of many Jewish children to other faiths.



*Lighting Hanukkah candles in a school of the Alliance*



*Hebrew Class*



# Present enrollment—over 47,000

**THE ALLIANCE NOW OPERATES 135 SCHOOLS  
IN THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES:**

## SCHOOLS OF THE ALLIANCE ISRAELITE UNIVERSELLE

Country	Schools	Teachers	Students
Morocco	75	814	29,345
Tunisia	5	104	3,607
Libya	1	5	98
Israel	12	260	4,737
Syria	1	15	422
Lebanon	6	55	1,510
Iran	34	316	7,955
France (Normal School )	1	15	62
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>1,584</b>	<b>47,736</b>

These figures do not include those schools which were created by the Alliance and later taken over by local communities, or otherwise separated from its control.

The Normal School in France has for 92 years been training teachers of secular subjects for all the Alliance schools. It has graduated over 2,000 students (about 1,400 young men and 600 young women).

Another Normal School, this one devoted to Jewish subjects, was recently founded by the Alliance in Morocco. It has already graduated 94 young men, of whom 81 are now Hebrew teachers in the Alliance schools of North Africa. Having received extensive training, both religious and secular, these young men have been able to raise the level of instruction of Jewish subjects in the schools of the Alliance. Leading American and European educators consider this school one of the best of its kind in the Old World, outside Israel.

A Normal School to train teachers of Arabic is also operated by the Alliance.

— The Alliance now provides more than 7,000 boys and girls with secondary academic education, vocational training or both. Vocational instruction is often conducted in cooperation with ORT.



THE ALLIANCE MAINTAINS THE WORLD'S GREATEST NETWORK  
OF ALL-DAY JEWISH SCHOOLS OUTSIDE ISRAEL.

Thanks mainly to the schools of the Alliance, *almost all* the Jewish children in many Mediterranean countries are educated in *all-day* Jewish schools (in the United States, by contrast, only *six per cent* attend such schools).

Forty-nine per cent of the students are girls — perhaps the best measure of the profound changes wrought by the Alliance in the life of the Near Eastern and North African Jewish communities. Never before have girls in these areas been admitted to school in significant numbers.

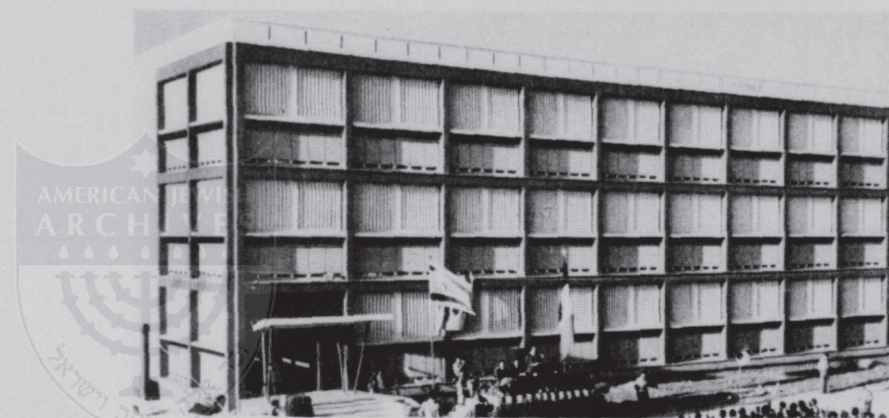
Over the years, the schools of the Alliance have received financial support from local governments, from the French Government, and, in increasing measure, from American Jewry acting through the American Joint Distribution Committee and the American Friends of the Alliance, as well as from Jewish communities of Canada, Latin America, Europe and South Africa.



*Trachoma therapy in the classroom*

THE  
OLDEST SCHOOL  
OF THE  
ALLIANCE

*School in Tetouan,  
northern Morocco,  
as it looked in 1862*



THE NEWEST SCHOOL OF THE ALLIANCE

*The Lycee in Tel Aviv, opened in 1958.*

Alliance schools must often adapt themselves to specific problems confronting local Jewish populations. In Morocco, for example, where trachoma has been prevalent for generations, the Alliance has opened special schools to which its other schools have transferred children who suffer from this dangerous and contagious eye disease.

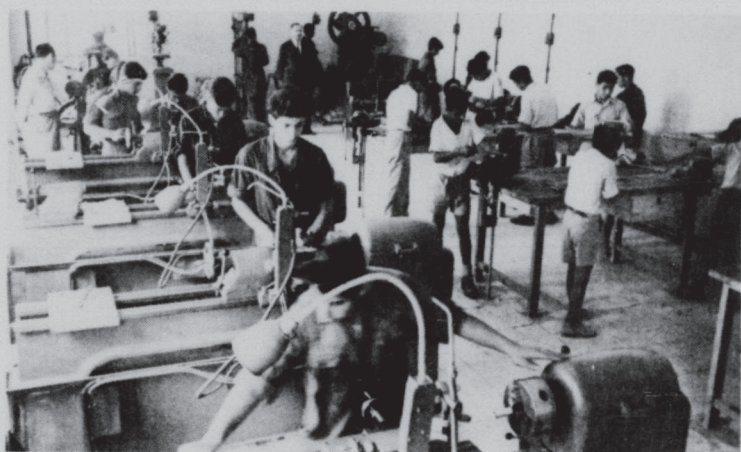
In the "trachoma schools" the children receive both medical treatment and academic instruction.

The eyesight of more than 3,000 Jewish children has been saved by these schools. Many more thousands have been enabled to escape infection.





*Bee culture in Mikveh Israel*



*Machine Shop Practice*



*Deaf mute children learn to speak*

## The Alliance in Eretz Israel

The work of the Alliance in Palestine began ninety years ago with the founding of the Agricultural School of Mikveh Israel. This was *the first step* in the Jewish land settlement of the country. Thousands of graduates of Mikveh Israel — which David Ben-Gurion has called “the living nursery of agriculture in Israel” — have become the mainstays of agricultural settlements throughout the country.

At the same time the Alliance founded the Vocational School of Jerusalem — the first such school in the entire Near East.

Both Mikveh Israel (present enrollment: 640) and the Vocational School (240 students) continue to play their important part in the Alliance network in Israel. This system comprises, in addition, three lycées (combination of high school and junior college) and six elementary schools. There is also a special school where deaf-mute children are taught to speak and are given both a general education, from kindergarten through junior high school, and valuable vocational training.

The latest addition to the Alliance network in Israel is the Tel Aviv Lycée, which will eventually have an enrollment of 1,200. It has already won a reputation as one of the finest schools in Israel.

Israel's leaders expect the Lycée not only to contribute to the alleviation of the serious shortage in secondary education facilities in Israel, but also to help strengthen cultural ties between Israel and West European Jewry.

At all Alliance schools in Israel, Hebrew is the official language, and French is the principal foreign language.



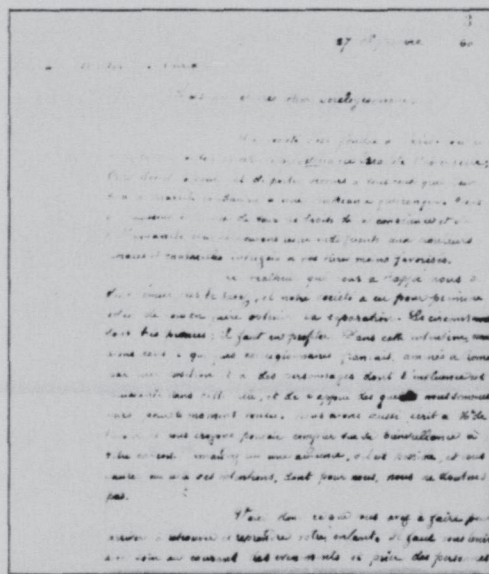
# In behalf of the dignity of man

Faithful to the tradition which has grown strong in the course of its first century, the Alliance continues its fight for human rights. Together with the American Jewish Committee and the Anglo-Jewish Association, it has formed the Consultative Council of Jewish Organizations which enjoys consultative status with the United Nations.

It is certainly no coincidence that Professor René Cassin, former chairman of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, who is known as "the Father of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights," is President of the Alliance.



Prof. René Cassin, Head of the French Council of State, President of the Alliance Israélite Universelle.



In 1856 an Italian Jewish boy, Edgar Mortara, was forcibly baptized by the Papal authorities and torn from his parents. The indignation created by the Mortara case was in a certain measure responsible for the founding of the Alliance.

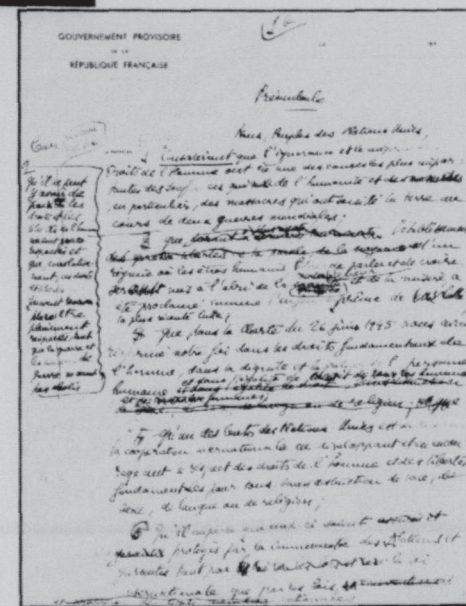
At left is the first page of a letter, dated September 27, 1860, from the Alliance Israélite Universelle to Edgar Mortara's father. In translation, this portion reads:

Dear sir and coreligionist:

An association has been created in Paris. You will find the name on the letterhead: the Alliance Israélite Universelle. It is the purpose of this organization to help anyone who suffers because he is a Jew. We who enjoy full freedom of conscience and human rights cannot remain indifferent to moral and physical pain inflicted upon our less fortunate brethren.

Know that the misfortune that has stricken you has moved us deeply, and that our organization has considered ways of helping you to right this wrong. Conditions are now favorable; it is necessary to take advantage of them. With this in view, we have written to several of our French coreligionists who travel to Rome in the course of their duties, as well as to other people of influence in that city. We are certain to have their support when needed. We have also written to Monsieur de Cavour [Count de Cavour, one of the architects of Italian unity, was then a member of the Italian government.—Editor]. We believe that we can count on his friendly attitude toward you. You should ask him for an appointment, if possible, so that you may judge his intentions.

This is what you should do in order to locate and recover your child. You must keep in close touch with the situation and ask people . . .

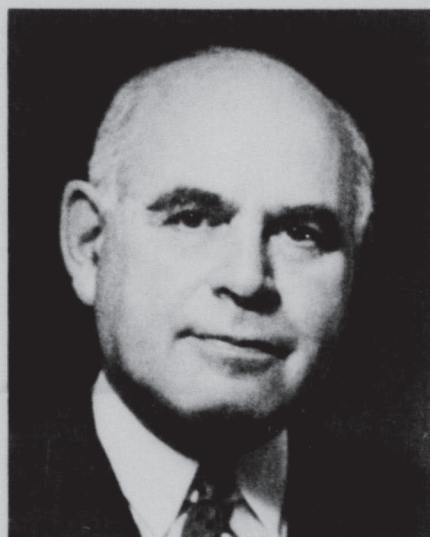


This early draft of the Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, finally proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948, was handwritten by Professor Cassin.



The organization of the American Friends of the Alliance Israelite Universelle was created as a link between American Jewry and the efforts of the Alliance to insure a better life for hundreds of thousands of Jewish children.

**Senator Herbert H. Lehman**, Honorary President of the American Friends of the Alliance, urges American Jews to join the American Friends.



**Senator Lehman**

The Alliance is on the threshold of a second century of its work. Over 600,000 Jewish children have already been saved by its schools from ignorance and from the indescribable poverty still prevailing in some Mediterranean areas. It is through the Alliance that a ray of joy and a measure of hope have entered into the lives of these children.

Many more Jewish children wait for their turn to have a chance for a decent life. The fate of hundreds of thousands of them may depend on the ability of the Alliance to maintain and expand the network of its schools.

I urge my fellow Jews in America to join the American Friends of the Alliance and thus help to make the second century of its work as fruitful as was the first one.

*Excerpts from a recent letter by Senator Herbert H. Lehman*

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## From Istanbul, Teheran, Casablanca to Jerusalem, Paris, New York

The direct beneficiaries of the work of the Alliance in the educational field have generally been Sephardim and Orientals. This work, however, has profoundly influenced Jewish life **everywhere**:

- The destruction of the great European communities has placed the responsibility for Jewish survival in the Old World on its remaining Jews, especially those who live outside the Soviet sphere. **Almost half of these are Sephardim.**
- During recent decades, hundreds of thousands of Sephardim from the Balkan countries, the Middle East and North Africa — most of them graduates of the schools of the Alliance — have migrated to Western Europe, Israel, North and Latin America. Thus they are no longer on the periphery of Jewish life; they have become a part of the *most important* Jewish communities of our time. Through these Sephardim the school of the Alliance in *Istanbul, Tetouan, Salonika or Teheran* affects—in-directly but inescapably—the shaping of Jewish life in *Paris, New York or Buenos Aires*. To a large extent it also affects the future of *Israel*.

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