



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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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.

Reel

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Amalgamated Clothing Workers controversy with Joseph and
Feiss Company, 1933.

Western Reserve Historical Society

10825 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106
(216) 721-5722
wrhs.org

American Jewish Archives

3101 Clifton Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45220
(513) 487-3000
AmericanJewishArchives.org

Mrs. Barbara Raffay,
2191 W. 61st St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Aug. 19-1931

Have been employed at the Joseph & Feiss Co. for about 9 years,
as sleeve feller. My work was very good as I worked on samples
most of the time, and that requires quality work.

The reason for my discharge as told me was that they did not have
enough work for me, but after I was discharged about the middle of
July 1933 they employed some one else on my job. I was always
complaining about my low rate of pay and also talking to the girls
that we should all join the union in order to secure better wages
and working conditions.

Barbara Raffay

* 10.00 a week.
Paid 7. before
Code was introduced
- Freeman. Rudy Bushtak
"always thinking"
Art. sent - May 1930.
found union "unworkable"
before laid off?

WRHS



X

Miss Helen De Phillis,
3249 W. 31st St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

I have been employed at the Joseph & Feiss Co. for seven months as trimmer on trousers.

My work was very satisfactory. Never had any trouble with any one else. I have earned \$19.00 for two weeks and because of my low earnings I have voluntarily joined the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America seeking a better wage to enable me to earn more money.

I have asked other girls who were in the same predicament as I was to join the union, and on July 15th, 1933 I was called to the Service Dept. and Mr. Alex Beninger, the foreman in charge told me that my earnings were rather low and I must go out into the world and endeavor to seek employment elsewhere. I feel that the real reason that I was fired was because I asked the other girls to join the union.

Could not have
earned minimum.
low mentality.

4 earned more

14-

WRHS

Helen De Phillis

Mr. Michael Ruman,
3590 Fulton Rd.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Have been employed at the Joseph & Feiss Co. for a period of over two months as collar maker, and my work was found satisfactory.

Excuse of discharge on my job was that there were too many men on the job. The firm are employing new people on my job.

The main object for discharging me was that I joined the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and was discharged ~~one~~ ^{several} days after attending the union meeting.

I was discharged on Tuesday, Sept. 5, 1933.

Michael Ruman

\$15 a week.

WRHS



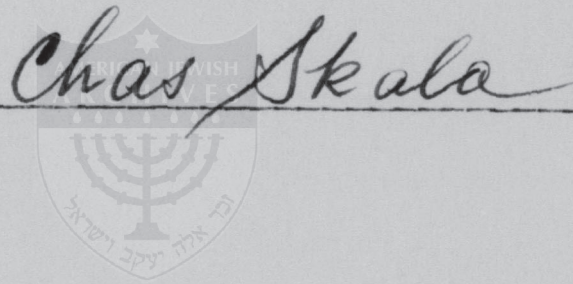
Spoke at
union meeting -
- work satis factory -
- "helped 10 new little
lun. Join Caspari
Thursday meeting
Tuesday period

Mr. Charles Skala,
12713 Angelus Ave.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Have been employed at the Joseph & Feiss Co. for 5 weeks as collar maker. My work was found very satisfactory as I have always been a journeyman tailor.

I found that the rate of pay for the operation was low and I have constantly complained to my fellow workers on the same operation that we should join the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in order to obtain a better working rate and better working conditions, and on Aug. 31, 1933 I attended a meeting called by the Union and several days later I was called to the service Dept. and was told that there was no more work for me. I feel that the reason I was fired is because I advocated unionism in the shop and attended union meetings.

not at hearing



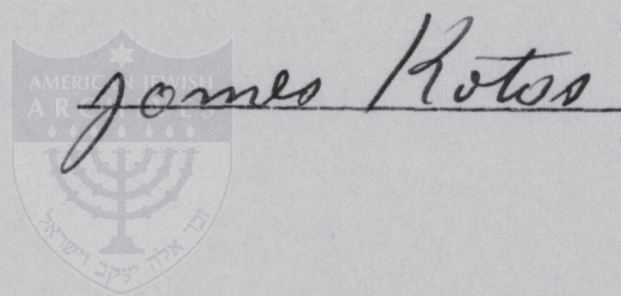
Mr. James Kotas,
12714 Gay Ave.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

I have been an employee at the Joseph & Feiss Co. for a period of 4 weeks as collar maker. My work was found above reproach and never had any trouble during my period of work.

I found that the rate of pay on my operation was too low, and I constantly complained to my fellow workers who were on the same operation with me that we should join the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, in order to obtain real working conditions and real wages.

On August 31st, 1933 I attended a union meeting and several days later I was called to the service department and was told that there was no work for me. The real reason for my discharge, is because I openly talked unionism in the shop and attended union meetings.

at hearing



Mr. Joe Nayman,
13821 Melzer Ave.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Have been employed at the Joseph & Feiss Co. for 9 weeks as collar maker. My work was found very satisfactory, as I have always been a journeyman tailor.

I found that the rate of pay for the operation was low and I have constantly complained to my fellow workers on the same operation that we should ~~the~~ join the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America to obtain a better working rate and better working conditions, and on Aug. 31st, I attended a meeting called by the Union and several days later I was called to the service dept. and was told that there was no more work for me. I feel that the reason I was fired is because I advocated unionism in the shop and attended union meetings.

not at home



Joe Nayman

Mr. John Cerveny,
5567 Pearl Rd.
Parma, Ohio.

March 11 - 1931

Worked at the Joseph & Feiss Co. two and one half years, and work was satisfactory, and always made the best grade of work.

Excuse of discharge on my job was that there were too many men on the job. The firm are employing new people on my job.

The main object for discharging me was that I joined the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and was discharged one day after attending the union meeting.

I was discharged on Tuesday, Sept. 5th, 1933.

John Cerveny

\$27⁰⁰ a week.

As many employed
now as when laid
off.

- 6 laid off -
winter, summer
taken back

(Bokhar)
H. Bokhar



~~Hand Varnsey - top piece pants~~

Miss Rose Torer,
4225 Memphis Ave.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

may. 22 1929

I have worked at the Joseph & Feiss Co. for a period of four years,
~~XX~~

Have worked as Waist Band Button operator and my work has always been very satisfactory. Have earned \$12.50 per week, and was compelled to exert all my energy to make those earnings.

I have been the sole support of my family and because of my low earnings I have joined the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America to obtain a better wage to enable me to buy the necessary things that I need.

Mr. Ray Bunday a representative of the company union at the plant, has approached me and asked if I have joined the Amalgamated, I admitted that I have joined the union, also told other girls in the shop that I have joined the union, and as a result of my activities I was called to the service department on August 1st, 1933. and I was informed that there was insufficient work for me and they must discharge me from my job. Several days after the firm has employed another girl on my job.

Rose Torer

- Jan. 7 1934 - Mr. L. H. Brown

Mrs. Bessie Novak,
2069 W. 47th St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

June 10 - 1931

I have been employed at the Joseph & Feiss Co. for a period of five years. Have worked there as a Waist Band Button Operator, and have never had any trouble what-so-ever with the quality of work.

My earnings about \$12.00 per week and because of my low earnings, I have joined the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and have asked other girls to do likewise to enable us to obtain a better standard of living.

Mr. Ray Bunday the Company Union representative has approached me and asked me if I have joined the Amalgamated, and I did not deny. on Aug. 1st, 1933 I was called to the Service Dept. and was discharged from my job stating that there were too many girls on the job, and the following day New girls were employed.

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

Bessie Novak

Paul Feiss
Anti-Communist Meeting June - July -
Camp Union
ag. about time -
were join Union -
- Ch. Schwartz kept
my sent ag.
of Camp Union.

Mr. Joe Florian,
3491 W. 45th St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

june. 12- 1933

Have been an employee of the Joseph & Feiss Co. for about 3 years, —
as a presser on collars, and my work was very good.

I found that the rate of pay on my operation was very small \$14.00
per week. I talked unionism openly and advocated it amongst my
fellow workers. When called into the Service Dept. they told me
they were discharging me because they have no work, however, they
put a new man on my job. My believe is they discharged me because
I signed up with the union and also attended the union meetings.

discharged Sept. 5-

Joe Florian



Miss Jennie DePhillis,
5106 Pershing Ave.,
Parma, Ohio.

I have been an employee of the Joseph & Feiss Co. for two years and have worked there sewing around trouser pockets. My work was always satisfactory and never had any troubles nor difficulties with any one.

I have earned \$11.50 per week and in the dull season earned between \$4.00 and \$5.00 per week. I found that an insufficient wage to support myself and have joined ~~the~~ Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America seeking a living wage and better working conditions.

I spoke to a girl friend by name of Frieda Cisko regarding the union and was overheard by the forelady Martha Frank, and two days later I was called to the Service Dept. and was told that there were too many girls on the job and there was no room for me and that they will have to fire me, and the following day my job was taken by a new inexperienced girl. = Rose =

Laid off July 13.
Joined on Sunday
hired H Wednesday.

WRHS

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES
Jennie DePhillis.

Mrs. Helen Zbin,
3694 W. Boulevard Ave.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

aug. 15-1930

I have been an employee of the Joseph & Feiss Co. for a period of 11 years and have worked there as a collar maker for the last 7 years, and my work was exceptionally good, as I was highly commended on my quality of work which I turned out, by the foreman and superintendent.

Although I have received a fair earning I have joined the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in order that I may be able to help the other unfortunate workers who earn so little in the shop. I was the sole support for my family of four.

One day I was approached by Mr. John Kalla the company union representative regarding the Amalgamated and he told me not to sign with the union, however, I never denied to any one that I was for the Amalgamated and on Aug. 24th, 1933 I was called to the Service Dept. and was fired without giving me any reason whatsoever.



Helen Zbin.

#25'

X

Mr. Michael Hopkins,
3393 W. 52nd St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

I have worked at the Joseph & Feiss Co. plant about two and one half years, and have worked there as collar maker, never having any trouble with my work or any one else in the plant.

I have made several complaints regarding the rate paid for my operation as I could not make a living and support my family on the low earnings.

I have joined the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, to obtain a decent wage and better working conditions, and I openly advocated among my fellow workers unionism, and because of my activities I was called to the Service Dept. of the company and was fired from my job on Sept. 9th, 1933. The reason given me was insufficient work for the collar makers.

The Joseph & Feiss Co. has since employed new workers on that operation.

Miss Helen Meyers an office employee of the Joseph & Feiss Co. stated in my presence that when the shop will be better organized into the union I will get my job back.

Michael Hopkins

425

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED	
DOMESTIC	CABLE
TELEGRAM	FULL RATE
DAY LETTER	DEFERRED
NIGHT MESSAGE	NIGHT LETTER
NIGHT LETTER	WEEK END LETTER

Patrons should check class of service desired; otherwise message will be transmitted as a full-rate communication.

WESTERN UNION

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT

J. C. WILLEVER, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

CHECK
ACCT'G INFMN.
TIME FILED

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

September 11, 1933.

Mr. C. J. Hicks,
National Labor Board,
Washington, D. C.

The following employees of Joseph & Feiss shop were discharged last Friday for joining Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and attending a union meeting: Michael Hopkins, Vincent Dudonis, Charles Skala, Joe Najman, Frank Kolar, James Kotas, Fred Boedecker. We ask for prompt investigation of their cases as well as those other cases brought to your attention.

Skala

Chg. to Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. Room 202. Commercial Bldg.

10/1933

STATE OF OHIO
COUNTY OF CUYAHOGA

} SS.

AFFIDAVIT

WE, the undersigned, being first duly sworn, depose and say that we were employees of The Joseph & Feiss Company, 2149 West 53rd Street, Cleveland, Ohio, who are manufacturers of men's clothing; that as such employees, we were employed for sometime; that on the ____ day of _____ 1933, we were summarily discharged because we affiliated ourselves and joined The Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union of America; that under The National Industrial Recovery Act all workers may join one labor union of their own choice; that we solicit the cooperation and help of the Advisory Board of The National Industrial Recovery Act to restore our rights to us.

- Marie Sneble

- Bessie Yovak

- Paul Torer

- Mildred Bucka

- Helen Zlin

- Barbara Rappaport

- Freda Cisko



- Jennie de Phillips

- Helen de Phillips

- Sophia Olson

- John Lerman

- Michael Ruman

- Michael Hopkins

- Vincent Dudarics

- Charles Skala

- Joe Wajman

- Frank Taler

- James Hotos

- Joe Florian

- X Fred Boedeker

FOUNDED 1846

The Joseph & Feiss Co.
CLOTHCRAFT CLOTHES
Cleveland

October 10, 1933.

Rabbi A. H. Silver,
The Temple,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Rabbi Silver:

Reporting on the matter we have had under discussion in regard to the 19 workers who have been laid off, wish to report that none of them were dismissed because of their affiliation with a labor union, as explained to you when you were here.

As advised you at that time, two had already been re-employed before our conference occurred; one has been re-employed since. She was offered another position which she refused to take at the time she left. She is now at work on her new job.

I find since you were here, on further investigation of the names that were not among those you presented, but were listed in the communications received from the National Labor Board, that one other on the list, by name of Vincent Dudonis, quit of his own accord to leave the city, as he informed us, and that Frieda Hays was offered another job at the time she left, but did not like it and also left voluntarily.

Barbara Raffay who claimed to have been employed by us for nine years, has worked here intermittently since 1915, it is true, but she left of her own accord to be married on June 4, 1920; was rehired on March 1, 1921, after which she was taken ill and again left of her own will on June 6, 1921, so that there was no continuous service. Her last employment dates from August 19, 1931. We have need for an additional worker in the department she was recently employed in and she has already been notified to report for work.

As you will note from the above, all of this is a perfectly normal procedure without any reference to the affiliation of any of these people with a labor union. The above facts would seem to be clear evidence that we are acting without prejudice in the matter and are selecting our workers only on the basis of our numerical requirements and the fitness of the individual operative for the task for which he is employed.

Please be assured of our sincere appreciation for the courtesy with which you have conducted this matter.

Very truly yours,

THE JOSEPH & FEISS CO.

Paul L. Feiss
Paul L. Feiss

IN REPLYING PLEASE REFER TO DEPARTMENT _____

P.S. We are returning the signed statements herewith.

RECEIVED AT

4900 Euclid Ave.
Main 6890, Sta. 30

STANDARD TIME
INDICATED ON THIS MESSAGE

Postal Telegraph

THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Commercial
Cables



All America
Cables

Mackay

Radio

This is a full rate Telegram, Cablegram or Radiogram unless otherwise indicated by signal in the check or in the address.

DL	DAY LETTER
NL	NIGHT LETTER
NM	NIGHT MESSAGE
LCO	DEFERRED CABLE
NLT	NIGHT CABLE LETTER
WLT	WEEK END CABLE LETTER
	RADIOGRAM

Form
16

A42 16 GOVT 1 EXTRA=NR WASHINGTON DC 11 1020A

1933 OCT 11 AM 10 59

RABBI A H SILVER=
THE TEMPLE=

CAN YOU SEND US ANY WORD ABOUT YOUR EFFORTS AT THE JOSEPH
AND FEISS COMPANY=

W M LEISERSON SECRETARY NATIONAL LABOR BOARD

Telephone Your Telegrams to **Postal Telegraph**





NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.

October 17, 1933

IN REPLY REFER TO _____

Rabbi A. H. Silver
The Temple
East 105th St. at Ansel Road
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Rabbi Silver:

Dr. Leiserson has noted your letter of October 11th and has asked me to answer it because he left town immediately upon its receipt.

Dr. Leiserson was very much pleased with your report and said that it bore the marks of the work of a very expert mediator. It would seem that for the present there is nothing more to be done about the complaint. If you believe that there was no real ground for it, Mr. Hillman is perfectly satisfied with your analysis and conclusion in the matter.

If the case re-opens and the complaint is renewed, may we take the liberty of communicating again with you?

Sincerely yours,

B. M. Stern
B. M. Stern

October 18, 1933.

Mr. Paul Feiss,
Joseph & Feiss Co.,
2149 W. 53rd St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Feiss:

I had a final conference with Mr. Peppercorn of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. He called my especial attention to the following four people for whose re-employment he appealed: Michael Hopkins, Bessie Nowak, John Cervený and Rose Stone. I would appreciate it if you would do your utmost to find a place in your organization for them. I believe that with that action the whole matter would be liquidated.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very sincerely yours,

AHS:BK



FOUNDED 1946

The Joseph & Feiss Co.
CLOTHCRAFT CLOTHES
Cleveland

October 24th, 1933.

Rabbi A. H. Silver,
The Temple,
East 105th Street,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver:-

I am frankly surprised at your letter of the 18th suggesting re-employment of more people from the list which we have been discussing, after four have been re-employed.

It seems to me we have already shown our desire to strain a point to re-employ as many of these people appearing on this list as we could. We are now carrying a large number on the pay roll, whose production does not warrant their employment, merely because of their length of service and because of our desire not to throw any more people out of employment if it can possibly be avoided. The burden is already so large that it has become a serious and difficult problem for us; we cannot, therefore, afford to employ any more people who are not actually needed, and we have no place open for any of those referred to, either because the divisions are already overmanned or because they have not proven satisfactory operators. We regret, therefore, that we are unable to acquiesce to your request.

Very truly yours,

THE JOSEPH & FEISS CO.

Paul L. Feiss.

PLF:ERS

October 26, 1933.

Mr. Paul L. Feiss,
The Joseph & Feiss Co.,
2149 W. 53rd St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Feiss:

I am enclosing herewith a copy of the letter which I addressed to the National Labor Board on October 11th.

If at any future time you will find it possible to re-employ some of the people about whom I wrote to you, it would be greatly appreciated.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very sincerely yours,

AHS:BK
Enc.

October 26, 1933.

Mr. Benjamin Peppercorn,
Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America,
Commercial Bldg.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Mr. Peppercorn:

I am enclosing herewith a copy of the letter which I sent to the National Labor Board on October 11th.

With reference to the four people in whose behalf you asked me to speak to the Joseph & Feiss Company, I have received a letter this morning from which I quote the following:

"We are now carrying a large number on the pay roll, whose production does not warrant their employment, merely because of their length of service and because of our desire not to throw any more people out of employment if it can possible be avoided. The burden is already so large that it has become a serious and difficult problem for us; we cannot, therefore, afford to employ any more people who are not actually needed, and we have no place open for any of those referred to, either because the divisions are already overmanned or because they have not proven satisfactory operators. We regret, therefore, that we are unable to acquiesce to your request."

It seems as though nothing further can be done in this matter. However, I shall try again.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very sincerely yours,

AHS:BK
Enc.

Cleveland Joint Board,
Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America,
2056 East 4th St.,
Commercial Bldg., Room 202,

Cleveland November 10, 1933.

Joseph & Feiss Co.,
2149 West 53rd St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Gentlemen:-

The writer, as manager of the Cleveland Joint Board, Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, is the duly authorized and accredited representative of a substantial number of employees who have been recently discharged by you.

It is claimed by these employees that the reason for their discharge was the fact that they had become members of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

I should like to take this matter up with a representative designated by you for the purpose of amicable discussion and adjustment.

If you are interested in such discussion, will you be kind enough to designate the time and place where a meeting may be held for this purpose.

Yours respectfully,

(Signed) P. Peppercorn,
Mgr. Cleveland Joint Board,
Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

BP.PK



FOUNDED 1846
The Joseph & Feiss Co.
CLOTHCRAFT CLOTHES
Cleveland

November 16th, 1933.

Rabbi A. H. Silver,
The Temple,
Ansel Road & 105th St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Rabbi Silver:-

Enclosed please find copy of letter from Mr.
Peppercorn, together with our reply thereto
for your files.

Very truly yours

Paul L. Feiss.

PLF:ERS

November 16th, 1933.

Mr. B. Peppercorn,
Mgr. Cleveland Joint Board,
Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America,
2056 East 4th St.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Sir:-

We have your esteemed favor of the 10th.

We can see no reason for any direct negotiation on this matter, which has already been referred to the Labor Board in Washington, who in turn have referred it to Rabbi Silver for investigation. Rabbi Silver has advised us that after hearing you and the people you represent, as well as our own statement, he has submitted his opinion to the Labor Board. Under the circumstances we consider the matter as concluded.

Very truly yours,

THE JOSEPH & FEISS CO.

Paul L. Feiss.

PLF:ERS

Miss Frucha Ciska
3155 W. 70 St.

Out of town.

Mrs. Marie Sneli
3248 W. 52 St.

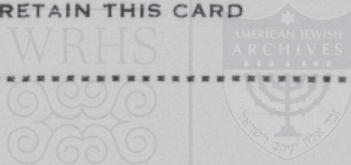
Out of town.



Local..... Fee \$..... No.....

APPLICANT'S RECORD		Date	Payments Amount
Running No.....	Date.....		
Ledger No.....	Sex..... Year of Birth.....		
Name.....			
Address			
c/o.....			
Branch of Trade.....	Operation.....		
Citizen.....	Year of arrival in U. S.....		
Nation.....	Country of Birth.....		
Signature of Applicant.....			

LOCAL OFFICE RETAIN THIS CARD



No.....

AMALGAMATED CLOTHING WORKERS OF AMERICA

Local.....

Running No..... Ledger No.....

Name.....

Fee Charged \$..... Sex..... Nationality.....

This Card Expires.....

Secretary

THIS CARD IS TO BE SENT TO THE GENERAL OFFICE
AFTER PAYMENTS OF INITIATION FEE ARE COMPLETED

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This is not a Membership Due Book or Card.

When payment of initiation fee is completed a membership book will be issued upon the return of this card to the local Union.



REMARKS

DECISION OF MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

DATE _____

SIGNATURE OF RECORDING SEC'Y _____