



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

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

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

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

Reel

2

Box

1

Folder

35

American Council for Judaism, 1951-1952.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ANNAPOLIS, MD.

C O P Y

August 1st, 1951.

To the President
Baltimore Chapter
The American Council for Judaism
Post Office Box 322
Baltimore 3 Maryland.

Dear Sir:

You have written me concerning my address at Saranac to the Commercial Law League Convention. You say:

"I noticed that you very arduously urged the purchasing of Israeli Bonds. It is difficult for our group (the American Council for Judaism) to understand why you should do this, in view of the fact that a number of Jewish people do not endorse the idea of allegiance to Israel which is part of the Zionist creed."

If my stand surprises you, your reaction excites in me nothing short of amazement. It is not my purpose to enter into a technical debate on Zionism. Suffice to say that Zionism as universally understood does not call for political allegiance from American citizens to the Government of Israel. Even more pertinently, the purchase of Israeli Bonds involves no act of allegiance to Israel. I have never heard it suggested that Americans who purchased British or Argentine or Peruvian or other foreign bonds created any problem of allegiance. They were simply Americans who had bought foreign bonds.

The implications of your letter have been answered so often that by now your society should have ceased to be disturbed over this trumped-up problem of allegiance. Except in the case of a few extremist anti-Jewish agitators, who are considered completely irresponsible in their utterances, I have found no problem of this nature in the minds of my non-Jewish friends. Very few indeed among your own people share your fear that their American loyalty is in any sense compromised if they show friendly solicitude for the advancement of the new State of Israel. The concern you express over the danger of a split allegiance is excessive and unwholesome, and in my opinion misconstrues the requirements of true allegiance to the United States and its ideals.

Are you intimating that when I speak for the Israeli Bond drive that I am guilty of something forbidden by my allegiance to America? I could not treat seriously any suggestion that my American allegiance was somehow impaired when I purchased an Israel Bond or when I urged others to do so. And if my American allegiance is not brought into question by such action, I do not see how the Americanism of any of my Jewish friends is impaired if they showed a natural warmth and sympathy for a young nation whose ideals are quite identical to those of our land. There is no rational basis for fearing a conflict of loyalty if Americans are willing to assist Israel in the great humanitarian task which it has undertaken. The overwhelming majority of Americans, regardless of creed or national origin, do not interpret American patriotism as imposing such an unreasonable restriction upon themselves or on their Jewish fellow Americans.

August 1st, 1951

It is cause for reproach to Christian and Mohammedan nations that some of them have been responsible for the oppression of their Jewish minorities, and that others have shared so slightly with Israel in the work of rescue. It is fantastic to say that Americans facilitating this great humane undertaking are remiss in their duty as American citizens. The words "national allegiance" and "loyalty" have no place in the discussion, and it would be better if your Council would deal with the bond campaign on its supposed merits or demerits without attempting to raise suspicions of disloyalty against worthy and generous fellow Americans.

Historically this bond drive has many precedents. The railroads of the United States, notably the B & O and the Pennsylvania, were to a considerable degree financed by foreign investors. Conversely, American capitalists have invested heavily in foreign lands. Many an American of Irish extraction bought Irish Government bonds to aid that nation in its infancy, and I have yet to hear it said that they were not loyal Americans. In fact, it would be not unreasonable to claim that by showing their sensitivity to the need of their Irish kinsmen in their struggle for freedom they proved themselves better men and nobler Americans. American citizenship does not exclude cultural, economic and other ties of a non-political nature with a friendly people.

Traditionally it has been considered no violation of national allegiance for Americans to invest abroad solely for monetary gain. Certainly the purchase of foreign bonds does not become discreditable on patriotic grounds if, coupled with the normal financial motivations, the object is to save refugees from persecution and to build a homeland for them and to restore a spiritual center for a people to whom we are all religiously indebted. I must reject insinuations made against those who have faith in the glorious fulfillment of the prophetic promise of the Bible and are willing to back that faith with deeds.

People are free to act as their emotions and moral insights dictate in relation to such a program as the building up of the Land of Israel. No interest of our Country can possibly suffer from it. Those who wish may ignore it. Both Christians and Jews, who feel impelled by historic identification, by a sense of justice, by religious impulse, or for whatever reason, to advocate and support this inspiring adventure are free to do so. They are not obliged to empty their hearts of normal human sentiments to prove the completeness of their American allegiance. Intimidating citizens into such crippling self-denial is not serviceable to America. To insist upon it debases a priceless quality in genuine Americanism.

As to the fear you entertain that "some of the unusual friendliness to Israel that this Government has adopted might possibly be a boomerang to us in view of the Arabian attitude toward us." I suggest ~~that~~ that the question of governmental policy be left to the government. In a time when America is giving assistance to many nations in an effort to strengthen ~~democracy~~ democracy, what has been done for Israel is neither excessive nor unusual. The United States has made even greater contributions to the Arab nations than to Israel. A significant factor in the attitude of the United States toward Israel may be the recollection that during World War II the Jews of Palestine (now Israel), then numbering only 600,000 souls, gave over 40,000 volunteers to El Alamein, and in other dangerous places. The far more numerous Arabs did nothing to support the Allies. This demonstration of Israel's trustworthiness

as an ally to the democratic nations of the world justifies the friendly attitude of the United States. Voluntary acts of friendship by American citizens, I respectfully submit, are entirely consistent.

On this question I take my position with such eminent Christian Americans as Dr. Henry A Atkinson of the American Christian Palestine Committee, Dr. Daniel A. Poling and Dr. Samuel Guy Inman, who recently declared:

"American aid to Israel is thoroughly consistent with the tenor of our entire foreign assistance program in recent years. Israel is a young and promising democracy: it needs and deserves our help and will richly recompense us. But our help is needed with special urgency, because of the vast, humanitarian task Israel has taken upon itself in absorbing hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees from Europe and the Middle East."

Your letter adds, "there is no more reason to urge the buying of Israel Bonds than the buying of Iranian or Arabian bonds". My only comment is that if you should prefer to urge the purchase of Iranian or Arabian bonds I might not see fit to follow your advice, but I should cheerfully acknowledge your right to speak as you did without impugning your loyalty as an American. Moreover, when Iran or any other nation undertakes a work comparable in character to that for which Israel seeks support, I should, as an American, consider it an honor to help.

I spoke as I did at Saranac - and have spoken similarly elsewhere and will continue to do so - because I am one of those Christians who believe completely and literally in God's promise to restore Israel to its ancient home. I rejoice that this is happening in my day. I am filled with admiration for the valor and sacrifice of the small population of Israel which has successfully withstood the attacks of its more numerous enemies in the very hour of its birth. I am proud that the United States through the United Nations had a part in establishing this new sister nation, and I feel privileged as an American to assist in a small way in this work.

Under the circumstances I cannot understand the indifference of a group of Jews to this great enterprise. Opposition from such a source is to me quite incomprehensible.

Sincerely,

(signed) THEODORE R. McKELDIN

Governor

TRMcK/jmt.

FROM THE STUDY OF
RABBI ALVIN I. FINE

The attached letter, we are sure,
is self-explanatory. It is for your
information.

Best regards.

Al

Mike H.



CONGREGATION EMANU-EL
SAN FRANCISCO



Rabbi Alvin I. Fine
The Congregation Emanu-El
Arguello Boulevard and Lake Street
San Francisco

C O P Y

C O P Y

January 4, 1952

Rabbi Elmer Berger
c/o American Council for Judaism
201 East 57th Street
New York City

Dear Rabbi Berger:

Recently, we received a letter from a friend at the Hebrew Union College, advising us of certain statements made at a meeting of the American Council for Judaism, at the Alms Hotel, in Cincinnati, on December 4th last. Since receiving that first letter, we have received similar information from several other people who were present at the meeting.

From these reports, it appears that, in stating the objectives and describing the techniques of the American Council for Judaism in its campaign to delete allegedly "objectionable" passages from religious school textbooks, or to coerce rabbis to change those textbooks, you said that at Congregation Emanu-El in San Francisco "a Zionist rabbi was brought to the point where he had to be responsible to his Board of Trustees in respect to textbooks," and that he was "forced" to exclude certain textbooks and coerced into deleting certain "offensive" or "objectionable" passages.

The only fragment of truth in these statements is that the rabbi referred to is a Zionist.

We are writing this letter to brand everything else in your statements, as reported above, to be complete fabrication and utter falsehood. You would do well to refrain from repeating them. You would do better to exercise a measure of responsibility and show a concern for truthfulness in your statements. Either you are responsible for these false statements or you have been sadly misinformed. In either case, knowingly or in ignorance, you are responsible for repeating false statements publicly. In doing so, you have misled your audience and abused the truth.

In our Religious School, we use the textbooks and publications of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and we are guided by their recommended curriculum. In the several years that we have been with this Congregation, we have excluded no textbooks and we have deleted no passages labeled as "offensive" or "objectionable" by the American Council for Judaism.

As rabbis, our policies are determined and our affairs are conducted in the best interests of Judaism and the congregation we serve. In our rabbinical service, we have not been and we shall not be influenced or coerced by pressure from the American Council for Judaism.

We are sending copies of this letter to many of our colleagues in the Central Conference of American Rabbis, so that if they have already heard your statements, as they were reported to us, our friends will know that these statements are false; and if you should be irresponsible enough to repeat these statements in the future, our colleagues will be forewarned by the truth.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Alvin I. Fine

Rabbi Leyer Heller

the American council for judaism

George L. Levison
San Francisco

Henry S. Moyer
Youngstown

Vice Presidents
D. Hays Solis-Cohen
Philadelphia

David B. Stern
Chicago

L. Edward Tonkon
Dallas

Regional Vice Presidents

Clarence L. Coleman Jr.
Chicago

Harry F. Camp
San Francisco

Walter S. Galeski
Richmond

Alex J. Geisenberger
Dallas

Irwin M. Grinsfelder
Baltimore

Honorary Vice Presidents

Rabbi Henry Cohen
Galveston

Rabbi Abraham Cronbach
Cincinnati

Rabbi William H. Fineshriber
Philadelphia

Rabbi Samuel H. Goldenson
New York

Rabbi Morris S. Lazaron
New York

Rabbi David Lefkowitz
Dallas

Rabbi David Marx
Atlanta

Rabbi Irving F. Reichert
San Francisco

Mrs. M. C. Sloss
San Francisco

May 13, 1952

- 201 E. 57th ST.
- NEW YORK 22,
- PLAZA 9-6600

Executive Director
Elmer Berger

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
East 105th Street and Ansel Road
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

As you may have read in the February Council News, we are sponsoring or otherwise encouraging the publication and/or use of a number of new Religious School Books. In various stages of completion now are A Partisan History of Judaism, by Elmer Berger, for college-age and adult study groups (published last fall); The Growth of Judaism, by Allan Tarshish, for high school and Confirmation classes (available in a mimeographed experimental edition); Tell Me Why -- A Primer for Judaism, by Dorothy E. Bobrow, for primary grades (ready in mimeographed experimental edition); and Jewish Thoughts for Jewish Youth, by Abraham Cronbach, for high school and youth groups (in manuscript). Others are being planned.

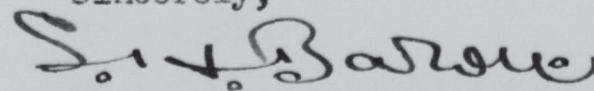
This creative aspect of our program of Religious and Synagogue Activities is accompanied by what we believe to be the equally constructive and positive critical function of examining, classifying, and evaluating existing Religious School material in current use. The criterion we follow is its suitability and propriety for the furtherance of a universal and non-nationalistic, a spiritual and non-secular, prophetic Judaism for Americans.

We have recently completed the second revised and enlarged edition of Religious School Textbook Analyses, a mimeographed volume of 183 pages, containing reviews and supplementary listings of 113 textbooks, pupil's workbooks, teacher's manuals, and other teaching aids. The reviews abound in informative detail and documentation, quoting by chapter and verse for illustration. Included are an explanatory Introduction and Prefatory Note, as well as an Analytical Table of Contents for ready reference. This work is continuing; and future supplements will be issued from time to time.

If you so desire, please return the enclosed postpaid reply card; and I shall be glad to send you the new edition of Textbook Analyses with our compliments, in time for any curriculum planning you may be doing for the new year. Your subsequent comments will be most welcome.

SHB:db

Sincerely,



Rabbi Samuel Halevi Baron,
Religious Director

What is the Council?

A national organization maintaining an educational program dedicated to the universal tradition of Judaism and the increasing national, civic, cultural and social integration of Americans of Jewish faith. The Council affirms that: "nationality and religion are separate and distinct; our nationality is American; our religion is Judaism; our homeland is the U. S. A." Rejects the concept that the State of Israel is "The National Homeland of the Jewish people"; maintains that no Jew or group of Jews, including the spokesmen of Israel, can represent all Jews in America; and that the nationalism of Israel must be confined to its own boundaries.

NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA
MRS. JULIAN E. ADLER

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA
ADOLPH WEIL

PHOENIX, ARIZONA
BARNEY SCHREIBER

TUCSON, ARIZONA
NORMAN J. DeROY
JAMES H. FREUDENTHAL

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS
*NOLAND BLASS
SIDNEY M. BROOKS
ALFRED G. KAHN
*ARTHUR PHILLIPS
LOUIS ROSEN
SAM STRAUSS

ATHERTON, CALIFORNIA
DR. MAJOR G. SEELIG

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
HERMAN FELS
JOSEPH P. LOEB
*WILLIAM S. LOUCHHEIM
RAYMOND J. SELWYN
JACK H. SKIRBALL

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
*HARRY F. CAMP
MRS. M. L. GOLDMAN
TEVIS JACOBS
*MOSES LASKY
*GEORGE L. LEVISON
WALTER S. NEWMAN
RABBI IRVING F. REICHERT
AUGUST B. ROTHSCHILD
ESMOND SCHAPIRO
*MRS. M. C. SLOSS
J. D. ZELLERBACH

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA
DR. MONROE E. DEUTSCH

DENVER, COLORADO
*CHARLES M. SCHLOSS
STANLEY C. SHUBART
JACK A. WEIL

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT
ISIDORE WISE

NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT
MRS. MAX B. LEICHTER
DR. BERNHARD A. ROGOWSKI

WASHINGTON, D. C.
MARCUS S. GOLDNAMER
**WILLIAM G. ILLCH
*HENRY J. KAUFMAN
JOSEPH D. KAUFMAN

MIAMI, FLORIDA
HERBERT U. FEIBELMAN
DR. EUGENE FRIEDMAN

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA
SIDNEY P. LEVY

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
SINCLAIR JACOBS
RABBI DAVID MARX
ARMAND MAY

SAVANNAH, GA.
RAYMOND M. KUHR
MRS. S. E. WOLFF

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
*CLARENCE L. COLEMAN JR.
JACK M. DREYFUS

PAUL H. LEFFMANN
RICHARD M. LOEWENSTEIN
MRS. S. ALLEN MACKLER
CHARLES SIMON
*DAVID B. STERN
GARDNER H. STERN, JR.
LESTER L. STERN
*FRANK L. SULZBERGER
PHILIP R. TOOMIN

GLENCOE, ILLINOIS
MELVILLE N. ROTHSCHILD, Jr.
*M. J. SPIEGEL, Jr.

HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS
HERBERT T. SCHAFFNER
RICHARD F. UHLMANN

EVANSVILLE, INDIANA
HUBERT DE JONG

DES MOINES, IOWA
JULIAN BRODY

SIOUX CITY, IOWA
LOUIS S. GOLDBERG
ARTHUR SANFORD

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY
MORTIMER GOLDSMITH
JOSEPH LAZARUS
STUART G. LEVY, Sr.
MRS. LEWIS STRENG

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
R. K. GOLDBERGER
MRS. MARION B. KAHN
BYRON R. KANTROW
LAWRENCE MANN
DR. PAUL MARKS

LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA
*ELIAS R. KAUFMAN

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
EDWARD B. BENJAMIN
LEON HEYMANN
CHARLES A. LEVY
SIMON SHLENKER, Jr.

SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA
RABBI DAVID LEFKOWITZ, Jr.

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
*IRWIN M. GRINSFELDER
MRS. PHILIP HELLER SACHS
AARON STRAUS
*ALAN WURTZBURGER

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
IRVING ZIEMAN

PONTIAC, MICHIGAN
NORMAN BUCKNER

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
SAMUEL G. SMILOW

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA
ROBERT ADLER
*JACK K. HEIMANN

VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI
DAVID B. FRIED

CLAYTON, MISSOURI
ELLIS LITTMAN

ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI
MRS. SIMON ROSITZKY

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
*ARTHUR J. FREUND
JOSEPH GLASER, Jr.
EDWIN GROSSMAN
*JOHN JOSEPH HAGEDORN
MRS. ROBERT H. MAYER
JOSEPH H. SCHWEICH, Jr.

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA
BERNARD S. GRADWOHL

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY
*IRVING J. FEIST
MAX H. KRICH

ALBANY, NEW YORK
GATES B. AUFESESSER

BUFFALO, NEW YORK
MRS. MICHAEL M. COHN
WALTER W. COHN
MRS. HAROLD M. HECHT

GREAT NECK, NEW YORK
RICHARD L. SIMON

NEW YORK, NEW YORK
JACK ALTMAN
ARCHIE L. COHN
VICTOR EMANUEL
RABBI SAMUEL H. GOLDENSON
*ARTHUR J. GOLDSMITH
**LEO GOTTLIEB
ARTHUR GARFIELD HAYS
*RABBI MORRIS S. LAZARON
**HENRY A. LOEB
STEPHEN A. OGDEN
MRS. DAVID A. SCHULTE
*MAXWELL STEINHARDT
*ISAAC WITKIN
MRS. ISAAC WITKIN

SCARSDALE, NEW YORK
ALFRED H. WASSERSTROM

WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK
*HAROLD M. MILLER
*HENRY S. MOYER
HOWARD E. STERNAU

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA
*CEASAR CONE
HERMAN CONE

CINCINNATI, OHIO
RALPH BLOOM
RABBI ABRAHAM CRONBACH
*HARRY M. HOFFHEIMER
RABBI VICTOR E. REICHERT
STANLEY A. SILVERSTEEN
RANDOLPH TRAGER

CLEVELAND, OHIO
*LEWIS J. AFFELDER
HERBERT BUCKMAN, Jr.
*ROBERT HAYS GRIES
*JOHN TUTEUR

YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO
JEROME H. FRANKLE
MRS. LOUIS C. WILKOFF

ARDMORE, OKLAHOMA
WALTER NEUSTADT

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA
ARNOLD T. FLEIG
S. N. GOLDMAN
MRS. MILTON LEWINSOHN
AARON M. WEITZENHOFFER

PORTLAND, OREGON
*MAX S. HIRSCH
*MILTON E. KAHN
MRS. LOUIS LANG
HAROLD WENDEL

HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
*EDWARD W. SCHLEISNER

IVYLAND, PENNSYLVANIA
*HARRY SNELLENBURG, Jr.

JENKINTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
RABBI SOLOMON FOSTER
**LESSING J. ROSENWALD

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
*MRS. KURT BLUM
*RABBI WILLIAM H. FINESHRIER
DR. JULIUS GRODINSKY
**D. HAYS SOLIS-COHEN
*MORRIS WOLF

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
*MRS. S. IRWIN KAMIN
KARL J. KAUFMANN

SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA
SAM SPEIER

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE
MRS. MILTON S. BINSWANGER

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
MRS. M. F. SCHWARTZ
ALBERT WERTHAN

DALLAS, TEXAS
JAMES ALEXANDER
HARRY COHEN
JEROME K. CROSSMAN
FRED F. FLORENCE
MRS. JEROME J. FRANK
*ALEX J. GEISENBERGER
RABBI DAVID LEFKOWITZ
MRS. MILTON J. LOEB
*STANLEY MARCUS
LOUIS TOBIAN
*I. EDWARD TONKON
MRS. I. EDWARD TONKON

FORT WORTH, TEXAS
R. C. ARCHENHOLD

GALVESTON, TEXAS
RABBI HENRY COHEN
MRS. LOUIS JACOBSON
I. H. KEMPNER
*H. H. LEVY, Jr.

HOUSTON, TEXAS
ALBERT A. BATH
*JAMES M. BAUMOHL
*GEORGE S. COHEN
MRS. HENRY DESENBERG
MRS. I. FRIEDLANDER
HERBERT E. LEVY, SR.
*DR. MOISE D. LEVY
*IRVIN M. SHLENKER

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA
HENRY CLAY HOFHEIMER II

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
MILLARD I. BINSWANGER
*WALTER S. GALESKI
MRS. ALVIN B. HUTZLER
MAURICE L. STRAUSS, Jr.

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
*SOL G. LEVY
BERNARD REITER
ROY G. ROSENTHAL
BERMAN SCHOENFELD
*HERBERT A. SCHOENFELD
MORTON L. SCHWABACHER

CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA
ALVIN J. LINDENBERG

WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA
RALPH L. MILLER

MADISON, WISCONSIN
JOSEPH ROTHSCHILD

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
RABBI SAMUEL HIRSHBERG
*JACK KAHN
DONALD MICHELSTETTER

*Member of Executive Committee

**Director