



## 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.

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American Jewish Congress, 1934-1936.



July 26, 1935.

Honorable William Phillips,  
Undersecretary of State,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

As representative of the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, the B'nai B'rith and the Jewish Labor Committee, with whom are associated practically all Jewish national organizations in the United States and hundreds of organized Jewish communities, the members of which are American citizens, we respectfully draw your attention to events that have caused us and millions of our fellow-citizens, both Jewish and non-Jewish, grave alarm and distress.

The reports that have recently come from Germany have shocked and horrified us. They indicate a continued policy and system of oppression and persecution which grows in intensity from month to month. The physical attacks upon innocent men and women have only been part of a series of onslaughts upon our fellow-Jews. They are accompanied by other forms of attack, involving farther and greater humiliation and injury to a defenseless minority, whose members are being thus persecuted solely for reason of birth or religion. These attacks, in various forms, are the outcome of a continuous campaign of calumny and slander approved, encouraged and directed by high governmental authorities. The government controlled press and radio have been incited to develop this campaign. The reign of terror has taken form of physical assaults upon Jews, of an economic boycott; of the deprivation of fundamental civic and political rights; of their forcible expulsion from the economic, professional and cultural life of the country; and of continuous vilification on grounds of religion and race of its Jewish citizens. This persecution has already led to the emigration of 90,000 refugees whose destitution and homelessness constitute a grave international problem, and whose utter helplessness in foreign lands is deeply distressful to their brethren in the United States, who are unable to rescue them from their terrible plight, which humanity and brotherhood would require. While affecting Jews most severely, this reign of terror is also beginning to affect the lives of numberless Catholics and Protestants and liberals of every description to whom the German Government is denying the elementary rights of religion and of conscience; nor can any enlightened people fail to deplore the depths to which Labor has been reduced by this deprivation of their fundamental right to organize and maintain their own self-protective institutions.

It is inconceivable that the American Government should stand passively by and neglect to lift its voice against these assaults upon humanity, or to utter its condemnation of the violation of the fundamental principles of human rights. Our country has traditionally recognized its moral and legal right, as well as its duty, to speak in behalf of those persecuted for their religious beliefs and for minority groups or races deprived of their just rights.



There is ample American precedent for such a policy "in the interest of humanity and that guardianship of humanity which belongs to the great republic", as Charles Sumner declared in the United States Senate as far back as 1870. The history of our diplomatic relations with other powers is replete with examples of far-sighted and nobly inspired attempts to intercede for the oppressed of all nations and creeds. These attempts have sprung from high altruistic motives. But the maintenance of world peace, which is a vital concern of the American republic, now more essential than ever before, is endangered by the growth of a spirit of persecution and prejudice and race hatred, which may spread into other civilized nations if allowed to develop unchecked. As a matter of the defense of our own free institutions and democratic ideals, it behooves the American Government to endeavor, through representations and protests and other such international procedure as may be feasible, to remind the government practicing such methods that they cannot be viewed on our part without demur. Only recently our President, his recognition of this fact, declared that "he is in entire sympathy with all people who make it clear that the American people and the Government believe in freedom of religious worship not only in the United States, but also in other nations."

In the light of the lofty humanitarian traditions by which our Government's foreign policy has been guided throughout its history; in the light of the danger to world peace and to democratic institutions of government in this unleashing of barbarism and race hatred, and of the threat to American citizens who are Jews, that is explicit in the policy of the German Government of organizing attacks upon, and denying the rights of all Jews in Germany,

We respectfully call upon the Government of the United States to protest against the racial and religious persecutions that now prevail in Germany, and to take every step consistent with international practice to inform the German Government of the outraged sentiments of the American people.

The official protest of the American Government may yet be effective to rescue our Jewish brethren in Germany, and to make impossible an extension of the persecutions against the millions of Catholics and Protestants who are suffering for their religious convictions.

We are confident that in expressing these views, our Government will speak not only for the millions of our brethren in this country, but for all Americans, of all races and creeds, who have throughout history given, repeatedly, evidence of their horror of oppression and of their concern for the preservation of the fundamental rights of civilized humanity.

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For the American Jewish Committee

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For the American Jewish Congress

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For the B'nai B'rith

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For the Jewish Labor Committee



(From the New York Times of July 31, 1935

LETTER OF ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE WILLIAM H. PHILLIPS

July 29, 1935

Mr. Carl J. Austrian and Mr. Sidney Wallach, for the American Jewish Committee;  
Mr. Louis Lipsky and Mr. Samuel Margoshes, for the American Jewish Congress;  
Mr. Louis Fabricant and Mr. M.D. Rosenberg, for the B'nai B'rith;  
Mr. Joseph Schlossberg and Mr. Nathan Chanin, for the Jewish Labor Committee.

New York, N.Y.

Sirs:

I have given careful study to the views embodied in the letter of July 26 last, which you presented on behalf of the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, the B'nai B'rith and the Jewish Labor Committee, with respect to recent occurrences in Germany affecting various religious and racial groups there.

I fully understand your solicitude regarding the experiences which these groups are reported to be suffering in Germany. The concepts of religious freedom and liberty of conscience for all constitute the most fundamental principles of our own civilization and political faith. This being so, the American people are always sympathetic to the maintenance of these concepts in the United States as well as in other nations.

Very truly yours,

WILLIAM PHILLIPS,

Acting Secretary.



July 30, 1935

Hon. Alfred M. Cohen  
40 Electric Bldg.  
Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear Brother President:

After Dr. Rubinow arranged with me to proceed to Washington with the delegation to the State Department, I attempted to get either Mr. Medalie or Mr. Ottinger to go along, but neither one was available, and I, therefore, requested Mr. Maurice D. Rosenberg of Washington to arrange to meet the delegation last Friday, July 26th, at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington.

The delegation met and then prepared the form of the statement to be presented to Undersecretary of State, Phillips, at the State Department in Washington. A draft of the proposed statement had been prepared by Mr. Wallach, representing the American Jewish Committee, but the final statement had many changes and modifications in it. These resulted from a two-hour conference prior to the trip to the State Department.

For your information I enclose a copy of the statement as finally submitted. I also enclose a copy of the report of the delegation's visit to the State Department appearing in the New York Times, July 27, 1935.

You have had experience with these matters before and know what an excellent reception Mr. Phillips gives the delegations representing the Jewish organizations. He did so in this instance, assuring the delegation not only of the Department's general interest in the subject, but about his willingness to give the statement more than merely general consideration.

When the question of publicity to the statement was broached, Mr. Phillips suggested that it would be wiser merely to have the delegation issue a statement in which extracts of the document submitted would appear, rather than to have the press carry the entire statement. He said that if the Department merely intended to give no serious consideration to the document, he would authorize its complete publication. However, as he intended to give it serious consideration, he suggested that the delegation wait till the Department took action on the matter and then publicity could be given to the whole statement as well as to the action by the Department.

After the interview the delegation returned to the hotel and there had lunch with all the available Jewish Congressmen, to wit, Bloom, Sabbath, Kahn, and Cooperman. Unfortunately, several other Congressmen were absent. The prime object of the meeting was to counsel the Congressmen to refrain from speeches dealing with the general subject. At the same time, the whole situation was discussed and some valuable views developed.



#2 Hon. Alfred M. Cohen

There is to be a meeting of the Joint Council shortly, possibly on Thursday. My impression is that we are there to discuss the development of plans to approach organized Christian bodies, representing various denominations, for the purpose of developing some sort of joint expression of the sentiment of most of the people in this country, so that the Government will know of this sentiment in some formal way, and perhaps convey it to the German Government.

I think that the foregoing brings you up to date in this matter. Of course, if there is anything further which you desire to know, which I have not touched on, I will be glad to answer any inquiry you may make.

I have dictated this letter to one of the secretaries of the B'nai B'rith District office here, and it will go to you without first being read by me. This I am doing in the interest of a more speedy communication, and I hope that you will excuse my failure to append my own signature to this letter.

With very best wishes, I beg to remain

Sincerely yours,

LOUIS FABRICANT

Executive Member

LF/LB

ENCS.

Dictated, but not read.



COPY

Washington, D. C.

July 26, 1935.

Hon. Alfred M. Cohen  
President, B'nai B'rith,  
Electric Building,  
Cincinnati, Ohio.

Dear Brother President:

Responsive to a long distance telephone call from Brother White, Secretary of the Order in New York, I attended a meeting this morning at the Mayflower Hotel of the group in which B'nai B'rith was represented by Brother Louis Fabricant and myself, together with Louis Lipsky, Sidney Wallach, Dr. Samuel Margoshes, Joseph Schlossky and Nathan Chanin. The foregoing represented respectively the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress and the New York Jewish Labor Organization.

An appeal was carefully prepared in the formation of which all present participated, and thereupon, a previous appointment having been made, we met the Assistant Secretary of State Phillips. The latter received us very cordially, with the result of his promise that he, together with Secretary Hull, then absent from the city, would decide what action, if any, could be taken consistent with diplomatic relations.

The group reassembled for luncheon at 2:00 o'clock, at which there was also present Representatives Florence Kahn, Sabbath, Bloom and Koppelman.

After a conference lasting about one and one-half hours, the consensus of opinion prevailed that the New York delegation would assemble in their city and invite representatives from the Catholic Church, the Protestants, and Free Masons, and determine upon some appropriate action to meet the emergency now confronted by the German siege of persecution.

It was thought that better results would be achieved by the association of all prominent American organizations rather than by proceeding solely under Jewish auspices.

As the matter will no doubt progress you will have further word on the subject from Brother Louis Fabricant.

Yours truly and fraternally,

M. D. Rosenberg.



# AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

122 EAST FORTY-SECOND STREET

NEW YORK

DR. STEPHEN S. WISE, President  
LOUIS LIPSKY, Vice-President  
NATHAN D. PERLMAN  
Chairman Executive Committee  
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National Secretary  
Cable Address: "CONGRESS"  
Telephone:  
LExington 2-5850

December 15, 1935.

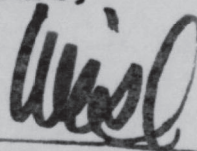
Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
East 105 Street and Ansel Rd  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Silver:

This letter comes from Brodetsky in answer to my own.  
I am afraid that situation is likely to grow very  
serious and I think both of us understand why the  
reaction is as it is in regard to Ha-avarah.

With heartiest greeting,

Yours,



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SSW:s

PRESIDENT



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## *To the Jews of America:*

THE Jewish people have often been called upon to face periods of depression, persecution and organized race and religious hatred. Throughout the long history of their suffering they have maintained themselves with courage and fortitude, at times have overcome hostility and prejudice, and often seemed to have entered into a new era of peace, equality and mutual understanding with the peoples among whom they lived.

But at no time have so many heavy clouds lowered upon the House of Israel as in the past decade when it was thought the spirit of democracy and intellectual freedom would destroy the walls of race prejudice and religious bigotry. Once more it becomes necessary for the ancient race to rally in defense of their hard-won rights; to rebuild their ruined positions; through united effort to endeavor to recover the ground that has been lost in a large part of the civilized world; to take vigorous steps to make appeal for justice and fair play; and through their own consolidated strength to give organized support to those Jewries that face appalling political and economic difficulties which they are unable, through self-help, to overcome.

At the end of the last World War, seemingly fought to make the world safe for democracy and to assure freedom for the smaller nationalities, in which Jews gave in full measure of their lives and property in defense of the lands of their birth, it was fondly anticipated that the Jewish people, too, would reap the benefits of victory, and that their equal status as citizens in all lands would be recognized and assured.

Today, eighteen years after the signing of the Versailles Treaty, a wave of unprecedented anti-Semitism floods the larger part of Europe, and its rever-



berations are echoed throughout the world. Tyrannies and dictatorships of Governments and peoples control the destinies of many nations, and under these tyrannies the lot of the Jews is lower than the lowest. Their rights are trampled under foot with ruthless disregard of justice and humanity. They are hurled back to the fringe of the economic life which they have helped to create in the lands of their birth. A doctrine of hate and extermination is being preached by what was formerly one of the leading civilized countries in the world. Three million Jews have become the helpless victims of an uncontrolled anti-Semitism among the Polish people, whose Government pursues a policy of economic discrimination which renders the position of the Jews, both economically and politically, utterly untenable.

Jewish achievements in Palestine, under the Mandate, have transformed that land of desolation into a land that promises to become not only the haven for the victims of persecution, but also the National Homeland of the Jewish people. But even that Land of Promise encounters difficulties arising out of a recession of a generous promise on the part of the Mandatory Government, which has gradually washed away in large part the great pledge of the Balfour Declaration and the wartime covenants of the British Government.

*It therefore becomes imperatively necessary for the Jewish people with dignity, vigor and determination to present their demands for the recognition of their inalienable rights, their claim for justice and equality, to the enlightened public opinion of the world; to unite in defense of their rights and to endeavor, through cooperative efforts, to readjust and reconstruct Jewish life within the economic structures of the nations of which they are a part.*

When the Great War came to its destined end, and the air was full of expectancy, and the feeling was keen that a new day was dawning, the various organized Jewries of the world sent their delegations to Versailles to present the cause of the Jewish people to the assembled nations. Under the influence of the democratic masses of American Jewry, the American Jewish Congress was convened, a program of demands was agreed to by all elements, and a distinguished delegation represented American Jewry at Versailles, headed by Judge Julian W. Mack and the late Louis Marshall. Delegations were present representing British Jewry, the Jews of France, the Jews of Poland, etc., and, as a result of their efforts, the rights of the Jewish people as a minority group, in those lands in which minority groups were recognized, were assured, and agreements were entered into and pledges were made by the reconstituted nationalities. The Balfour Declaration was incorporated in the Treaty of Peace,



the Mandate for Palestine was issued to Great Britain, and the historic right of the Jewish people to build their Homeland there was recognized.

With the adjournment of the Peace Conference there remained in existence over a period of years and until this day, a remnant of the Committee of Jewish Delegations representing to a large extent those Jewries sorely afflicted by persecution, to whom some of the Jewries of Western lands gave their full cooperation in defense of those rights achieved at Versailles.

But the Committee of Jewish Delegations has been unable to win the united support and cooperation of important Jewish communities, who continued their efforts independently and to the detriment of the unity and interests of the Jewish position, and sought in devious ways to achieve their purposes, but not in the way of unity of effort and program. An effective defense of the Jewish position becomes impossible without the creation and maintenance of a united Jewish front.

*It is therefore of the greatest importance to renew and strengthen the international representation of the whole Jewish people for the defense of their rights. In order that such a representation may be once more established with authority and with the backing of the whole Jewish people, various important Jewries and organizations, including the American Jewish Congress, have decided that the time has come for the summoning of the World Jewish Congress. A great deal of time has been lost in the preparations for such an all-inclusive Congress, and in paving the way to unity of action. But the grave situation that has developed in Jewish life, especially since the passing of the Nuremberg laws in Germany, the intensification of the policy of economic discrimination against the Jews of Poland, and the spread of the spirit of anti-Semitism throughout Europe, make the calling of an emergency World Jewish Congress an imperative necessity of the moment.*

The American Jewish Congress, acting as the organizing agency in the United States for the proposed World Jewish Congress, addresses itself to the organized Jews of America and to all Jewish national organizations, and invites their cooperation in the election of a delegation to represent American Jewry at a session of the World Jewish Congress to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, in August, 1936.

The scope of the Congress is indicated by the tentative program promulgated.

First: *It is proposed to have submitted at the World Jewish Congress a comprehensive review of the political status of the Jews the world over,*



*and the proposal is to be made that an executive body be set up, representative of the organized Jewries of the world, for the defense of the civil, political and economic rights of the Jews.*

*Second: It is proposed to have submitted to the World Jewish Congress a review of the economic conditions under which the Jews throughout the world live and subsist, and the proposal is to be made for the setting up of an economic institute to gather the facts with regard to the economic life of the Jewish people, and to cooperate in the reconstruction of the economic life of Jews in any country in which their existence is threatened through discrimination and inequality.*

*Third: It is proposed to consider the problem of Jewish emigration in all its phases, through a review to be submitted of all Jewish activities in connection with Jewish wanderings, and it is proposed to set up an institute for the regulation and coordination of all Jewish immigration agencies.*

The American Jewish Congress submits this appeal to the Jewish community of America. It suggests that the defense and reconstruction of Jewish life cannot be undertaken from the local point of view of each Jewish community. Disregard of the interrelated interests leads to ineffectiveness and the reduction of the Jewish problem to the aspect of elementary charity or philanthropy. It is not possible for such Jewish communities as may be living under more favored conditions to avoid or evade the consequences of denial of Jewish right in any land. The deprivation of right, the depression of any Jews to a position of inferiority, the spread of poverty and social disintegration, are matters that affect the conditions and interests of Jews the world over.

We call upon the Jews of America to rally to the support of the World Jewish Congress, and urge their participation in the National Electoral Conference to be convened in Washington, D. C. on June 13th, 14th, 1936, at which the delegates to the World Jewish Congress will be elected. Through organized self-help and a vigorous defense of our rights we shall vindicate the traditions and ideals of our ancestors, and achieve our rightful position among the peoples of the world.

AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

*Stephen S. Wise*

President

*Isis Lipson*

Vice-President

April 6, 1936



# AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

122 EAST FORTY-SECOND STREET

NEW YORK

DR. STEPHEN S. WISE, President

LOUIS LIPSKY, Vice-President

NATHAN D. PERLMAN

Chairman Executive Committee

JACOB LEICHTMAN, Treasurer

Cable Address: "CONGRESS"

Telephone:

LExington 2-5850

May 2, 1936

My dear Rabbi Silver:

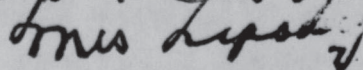
I regard the participation of the American Jewish community in the organization of the World Jewish Congress, as of the utmost importance not only for the position of the Jews in the Diaspora, but also for the maintenance of our rights in Palestine.

This seems to have been the view accepted at the Administrative Committee of the Zionist Organization which was held recently, at which a resolution was adopted calling upon all Zionists to cooperate with the American Jewish Congress in the organization of the World Jewish Congress.

The American Delegation to the World Jewish Congress is to be elected at a National Conference to be held in Washington on June 13th and 14th. Delegates to the Washington Conference are to be elected by community conventions. At these community conventions, representatives of all local organizations are to participate.

I am sure that the Zionists of your city will be faithful to the resolution adopted by the Zionist Administrative Committee, and I am hopeful that they will take the initiative in arranging for the election of a representative delegation to attend the Washington Conference. I should be grateful to you if you would write me, telling me what is being done in your city.

Very cordially yours,



LOUIS LIPSKY

Chairman

Committee on World Jewish Congress

LL/JS



Free Synagogue  
NEW YORK

Synagogue House  
40 WEST 68 STREET  
NEAR CENTRAL PARK

May 4, 1936

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver,  
The Temple,  
East 105th St.,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Silver:

I am very anxious to hear from you about the results of your recent trip. I imagine you must have had great meetings everywhere and that you will have cheering news to report.

I wrote to you some time ago about the World Jewish Congress. I am of the hope that you are still thinking seriously about the problem which I submitted to you. I do not wish to press you unduly. I look forward hopefully to your reply.

I write particularly, dear Silver, to ask you about this. You will have seen that editorial in the Chicago Tribune of April 18th, which is addressed to Justices Brandeis and Cardozo (I do not quote literally) asking them to have in mind that they belong to minority groups and that if property rights are to be violated, the next thing that may come to pass will be the violation of racial and religious minorities.

I need not point out to you how grave and disturbing that editorial is, and that it is of ill omen if it represents the mind of the Conservatives of America.

I have two questions to ask of you. (1) Would you be ready to write a special article for the June OPINION on these two alarming editorials, to use Louis Mann's phrase, and (2) if you could not write a full article yourself, would you be ready to contribute 500 or 1000 words to a symposium on either or both of these editorials. It would mean much to us, and I should be most grateful if you could do either one thing or the other.

With cordial greetings,

Faithfully yours,

SSW:T

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*Abba Hillel Silver*



May 6, 1936

Dr. Stephen S. Wise,  
40 West 68th St.,  
New York, N.Y.

My dear Dr. Wise:

I have been knocking about so much and upon returning from my numerous trips have been so absorbed with my work here in connection with the Welfare Fund Campaigns which opens in Cleveland next Sunday, that my correspondence has greatly lagged.

I had very pleasant meetings in connection with the Welfare Campaigns both in Indianapolis and Kansas City. The giving, this year, is on a more generous scale everywhere, reflecting, I imagine, the improved economic conditions. Our Campaign in Cleveland, judging by the preliminary gifts received, ought to be successful. Thank you so much for helping us get Senator King for our opening meeting. We close on the 19 with McDonald.

I wish I could see eye to eye with you on the subject of the World Jewish Congress. I can not in the limited space of a letter tell you why I do not believe in the project. My reasons, I presume, are not particularly original or unknown to you. When I see you at some future meeting in the East, I will tell you why I regard the project as unwise and doomed to futility.

I should like to accommodate you and write an article for the June "Opinion" on the editorials which appeared in the Christian Century and the Chicago Tribune. Unfortunately, I am so completely immersed in the Campaign as well as in preparation for my Confirmation Service that I am afraid that I will not have the time to do it. On top of all that, I have to prepare a Baccalaureate Address for the Graduation Exercises of the Hebrew Union College.



Dr. Wise

May 6, 1936

The issue raised in the Christian Century is not new in that magazine and I had occasion to write a lengthy letter to the Christian Century two years ago on that subject which was published. I am enclosing a copy of it herewith. You will agree with me that the Christian Century should not be antagonized. Its editors should be answered but not attacked.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

AHS:BK





C O P Y

February 6, 1934

Editor,  
The Christian Century,  
440 So. Dearborn St.,  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir:

Will you permit me to comment on the article of Joseph Ernest McAfee which recently appeared in the Christian Century under the title "Jewish Solidarity in America."

The space of a letter does not permit a seriatim refutation of the doctrines propounded by Mr. McAfee. They are very reminiscent of the opinions of another Christian friend of the Jews, Mr. Alfred William Anthony which was also expressed in the Christian Century a few months ago.

Suffice it to indicate at the outset that Mr. McAfee's contact with Jewish life and thought must be very circumscribed if he could not find any Jews to agree that the Jew himself bears a share of the responsibility for the unfortunate social clashes which have existed and do now exist. He need not peruse our voluminous literature of the past for abundant evidence of national self-reproach and castigation. He need only scan present-day Jewish literature and periodicals to discover how mercilessly and almost morbidly the Jew analyzes himself and shoulders responsibility for private and national delinquencies, even when these do not actually exist. Our share of the guilt, however, is not where Mr. McAfee locates it - in our strong group consciousness. Rather it is to be found in our frequent apostasy from the high ethical ideals of our faith, and from acts of disloyalty to the soul and destiny of our people.

Mr. McAfee is clearly opposed to the existence of varied social groups in American society. He takes it for granted that the American society (which he never defines)



has suffered "social woes" because of it. But how? He makes no attempt to explain or to specify, nor does he indicate on what basis of history or theory of American democracy he posits his dogma that there must be only one social group in America nor does he enlighten us on what he understands by "one social group."

Nor does Mr. McAfee take the trouble to prove his contention that the self-consciousness of the Jewish community in this country has been "socially baneful". Wherein? Have the Jews failed in their political or civic duties? Have they refused to participate in the political life of this nation as citizens? Have they refused to send their children to the public schools of the country and its institutions of higher learning, preferring to isolate themselves in parochial schools or in denominational colleges? Are they not represented largely in all the cultural activities of American life, in literature, the arts, the sciences and the professions? Are not Jewish business men eager to join all the "characteristic" American business groups, the lodges and fraternal organizations wherever they are admitted? Have Jews ever refused to join non-Jewish social clubs, or professional associations, when invited? Have Jewish workingmen not joined in the labor movement in this country? Have not Jewish communities pooled their philanthropic efforts in many of our large cities in common community chests? Have Jews not shared in all the national movements making "for the enrichment of our common life?"

Wherein has the group consciousness of the Jews in American been "socially baneful"? What socially desirable activities in American life have Jews refused to share in? Wherein is the Jew holding back?

In what way does the desire of the Jew to care for his own dependents because he understands them best, or to organize in defense of his persecuted brethren throughout the world, or to teach his children the language, history, and literature of his race along with those of the country, or to assist in the upbuilding in Palestine of a homeland for his people where the homeless of his race and the culture of his race may find a haven, or to preserve the beautiful customs of his people which are at one and the same time both religious and social in character (for no distinction between the ~~ex~~ purely religious and the social ever existed in Judaism) - in what way are these "focal centers of rebellion against common and wholesome social tendencies", and in what way do they interfere in "the common life of the community"? Why has not the Jew or any other individual or group of individuals in a free democracy the right to live his own life in his own



way, so long as, to quote John Stuart Mill, "he does not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it."

Mr. McAfee thinks of the Jews only as a religious community, and allows them only the right of religious freedom. If the Jew would surrender everything except his "personal religious views" - all would be well with him. The anti-Semitic disease would then disappear. The German Jew for decades practised the very theory of assimilation which Mr. McAfee now prescribes for the American Jew. They tried in all ways not to be different. Their group consciousness had dwindled to a vanishing point. Inter-marriage was widespread among them. There was very easy egress from the group and no ingress to speak of...Many joined the Christian church or became "konfessionslos". And yet - such is the patent bankruptcy of the whole thesis of Mr. McAfee - the most virulent anti-Semitism developed in Germany, and in place of a self-willed "difference" - a legal, prescriptive and discriminating "difference" was forced upon them as a mark of shame. Even non-Aryan Christian clergymen who certainly never suffered from excessive Jewish group-consciousness have been "differentiated" and stigmatized in the land of classic Jewish assimilation.

One wonders whether Mr. McAfee is not unconsciously hankering after an American social and cultural gleichschaltung after the model of Nazi Deutschtum, an American species of "national concentration" of the variety which is devastating the free life of Europe today?

"Social unity" or "cultural unity" is just as dangerous a slogan to raise in modern society as "racial unity". In fact the one ~~x~~ inevitably leads to the other. In Nazi Germany they have quite naturally, been "coordinated" into one German-Nordic-Aryan dogma of infallibility.

To many noble ideals of mankind are being broken on the wheel of totalitarian obsessions in the world today for liberal churchmen who value individualism and exalt personality to permit themselves to become champions of "unification" crusades in American life. Some do it in the name of theology. Others in the name of anthropology. Still others, like Mr. McAfee, in the name of sociology. Their inspiration and their objectives are, however, the same. "Juda Verrecke!"



HIRAM S. RIVITZ  
WEST 98TH ST. & WALFORD AVE.  
CLEVELAND, OHIO

June 1, 1936

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,  
The Temple,  
E. 105th at Ansel Road,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Hillel:-

I am enclosing letter just received from E. I. Kaufmann, a good friend of mine, and one who has taken a great interest in Jewish problems. The letter is self-explanatory.

I look to you for advice on matters of this kind, realizing that your daily intimate contact enables you to form a more comprehensive grasp of the situation as it affects not only American Jewry, but Jewry over the whole world.

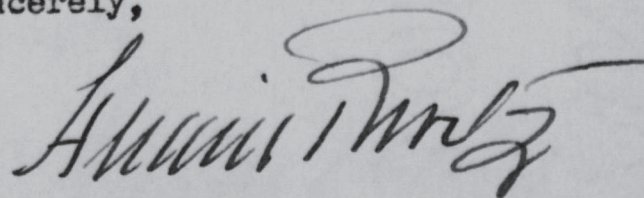
I am inclined to agree with my friend Ed Kaufmann on the point that he raises, but don't want to subscribe to a program of procedure just because he happens to be a friend of mine - even though I have confidence in his judgment - especially when I know that there are so many cross-currents and viewpoints on this controversial subject.

I am just wondering if you would not be good enough to drop me a line and let me know how you feel about it. I will appreciate it very much.

Please return Mr. Kaufmann's letter for my files.

With best regards, remain,

Sincerely,



HSR:RAN



June 3, 1936

Mr. Hiram Rivitz,  
Industrial Rayon Corporation,  
W. 98th at Walford,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Hiram:

I am returning herewith Mr. Kaufmann's  
letter. Thank you for letting me see it.

With best wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

AHS:BK  
Enc.



C O P Y

EDMUND I. KAUFMANN

Homer Building  
Washington, D.C.

May 29, 1936.

Dear Friend:

Enclosed herewith you will please find a statement, which I took part in preparing, and which is being sent to responsible leaders throughout the country. Many more out of town signatures could have been secured, but the element of time played an important factor. I am sending this letter to all my friends and because of the number, I must necessarily eliminate the usual personal note.

Under the leadership and direction of Dr. Stephen S. Wise and Mr. Louis Lipsky, the American Jewish Congress has chosen representatives to meet in Washington on June 13th to carry forward plans necessary to hold a World Jewish Congress in Geneva during the month of August, and to select seventy American delegates to attend this Congress. The seventy delegates selected will undoubtedly be looked upon, both at home and abroad, as representing American Jewry and the voice of World Jewry.

I have no reason to doubt the sincerity of either Dr. Wise or Mr. Lipsky, but I am of the firm opinion that they are doing something that will work an immeasurable amount of harm for the sixteen million Jews in the world, without an opportunity of doing any good, and will furnish propaganda for the anti-Semitic forces here and abroad.

If the World Jewish Congress is held and delegates are sent, regardless of how chosen, I presume they will have the right of free discussion and each delegate may voice his opinion on any subject he chooses. Everything said at this Congress will be fully reported by the world's leading newspapers, and regardless of whether we approve or disapprove, we will have to share any liabilities created, as no distinction of Jews will be made by Christians.

I have before me a pamphlet issued by the American Jewish Congress as of April 1936, entitled "Some Questions and Answers regarding World Jewish Congress", and from this pamphlet it appears that the World Jewish Congress at their meeting in Geneva intends to regulate Jewish organizations here in America and speak for World Jewry.

As an American I oppose a World Jewish Congress being held in Geneva, or elsewhere. In my opinion there should never be a union of World Jewry, and as an American Jew I prefer that we be permitted to choose our own leaders and establish our own overseas relief organizations without foreign interference.

What assurances have we that the World Jewish Congress will not be turned into a political Jewish Congress, and what assurances



C O P Y

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have we that some of the delegates may not advocate Communism as a solution of the world's problems?

During the last two months, thousands of earnest men and women, all over the country, interested in the rebuilding of Palestine and furnishing relief to their stricken fellow Jews abroad, have set aside their duties and devoted their time for the purpose of raising funds. Do you think it is fair that their wishes in the matter should not be considered, and do you think it fair that the American Jewish Congress, who do not represent more than 1% of American Jews, shall decide what is best for the other 99%?

The American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League spend thousands of dollars a year combating anti-Semitism in this country, and while there is a question of the need of these three organizations, nevertheless, we have them and contribute toward their support. Now, is it fair for one of these organizations to select seventy uninstructed delegates to speak for four million American Jews and run the risk of destroying the effectiveness of their work here at home?

It has been reported to me that the Zionist Organization of America has approved the World Jewish Congress. I would imagine that this organization would have its hands full in its work toward rebuilding Palestine and getting converts to the cause. I am of the further opinion that it is bad judgment on their part to commit themselves to something that may do Palestine considerable harm without the hope of doing it any good. There is the further danger that as fast as able men lead non-Zionists into the organization that there is an effort on the part of others to lead them out.

A meeting will be held in Washington directly for the purpose of approving or disapproving the holding of a World Jewish Congress.

Whatever your feelings may be in the matter, I would appreciate if you would immediately write or telegraph your views to

Dr. Stephen S. Wise,  
American Jewish Congress  
221 West 57th St.  
New York City

and send a copy of your letter or telegram to me.

From the length of this letter you can see how terribly apprehensive I am of the great amount of harm that might be done by holding this Congress, and I would appreciate very much if you can see your way clear, besides writing or telegraphing, to see and



C O P Y

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explain this situation to your friends and ask them to do the same thing, requesting them to send me copies of their communication to Dr. Wise.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Yours sincerely,

EIK/H

(Signed) E. I. Kaufmann





NATIONAL ELECTORAL CONFERENCE  
*for the*  
WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

June 13 and 14, 1936

HOTEL WILLARD, WASHINGTON, D. C.

CREDENTIAL ISSUED TO

~~M~~ *Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver (Cleveland)*

Representing *Zionist Organization of America - N.Y.*

Please present this Credential to the Registration Clerk at the Session Headquarters, Hotel Willard, immediately upon your arrival in Washington.

DR. STEPHEN S. WISE

*President*

American Jewish Congress

National Electoral Conferen<sup>e</sup>

*for the*

World Jewish Congress

June 13 and 14, 1936

HOTEL WILLARD, WASHINGTON, D. C.

CREDENTIAL ISSUED TO

*M. Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver (Cleveland)*

Representing

*Zionist Org. of America - N.Y.*



Congress

SALMON P. HALLE  
924 HANNA BUILDING  
CLEVELAND

Rabbi A H Silver  
The Temple  
Ansel Rd & E 105th St  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Letters and telegrams have come to the undersigned within the past several days, calling our attention to plans for a Session of the American Jewish Congress, to take place in Washington on June 13th, for the selection of seventy American delegates to the World Jewish Congress in Geneva in August.

A considerable sentiment prevails against the holding of a World Jewish Congress, because of the grave implications to world Jewry, which may possibly emanate from the Councils and decisions of such a Congress.

We are asked to invite for conference a group of our friends and local community leaders, to discuss the Congress plans and to formulate an expression of our views to be transmitted to Dr Stephen S Wise, the Chairman of the Congress.

May we therefore invite you to meet with us and others at Luncheon on Monday, June 8th, at 12:15 o'clock, in a private dining room of the Mid-Day Club.

This meeting has nothing to do with the raising of any funds, but is solely for the purpose here stated, of developing an expression of our personal sentiments to be conveyed to the Congress leadership.

We are,

Sincerely yours,

Hiram S Rivitz  
Salmon P Halle

June 2, 1936.



June 3, 1936

Mr. S. P. Halle,  
924 Hanna Bldg.,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

My d-ar Mr. Halle:

I should like to attend the meeting  
which you are calling for June 8 at the Mid-day  
Club but I am scheduled to be at Harvard University  
on the 7 and will not be back in time for the  
meeting.

With best wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

AHS:BK



THIS SIDE OF CARD IS FOR ADDRESS

Mr S. P. Halle,

924 Hanna Bldg.,

Cleveland, Ohio.



AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES





I shall be glad to attend the Conference  
which you have called for Monday Noon,  
June 8th at the Mid-Day Club.

---

Rabbi A H Silver



## CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

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RABBI ABBA H SILVER=

*The Temple*

EAST 105 ST AND ANSEL RD/CLEVE=

CONVINCED AFTER MUCH THOUGHT AND IMPRESSIONS GATHERED  
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MEETING AND GENEVA CONGRESS GRAVE MISTAKE BELIEVE HARM  
WILL RESULT HERE AND ABROAD UNCONSCIONABLE SMALL  
PERSONALLY GROUP ARROGATE SELVES SPEAK AMERICAN ISRAEL  
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# AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

221 WEST 57TH STREET

NEW YORK CITY

DR. STEPHEN S. WISE, PRESIDENT

LOUIS LIPSKY, VICE-PRES.

JACOB LEICHTMAN, TREASURER

NATHAN D. PERLMAN  
CHAIRMAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CABLE ADDRESS 'CONGRESS'

TELEPHONE CIRCLE 6-3840

June 8, 1936

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,  
The Temple,  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

A dinner will be given to Dr. Stephen S. Wise, President of the American Jewish Congress, on Sunday evening, June 14th, at the Willard Hotel, after the adjournment of the National Conference.

The dinner will be in the nature of a Farewell to Dr. Wise who leaves on June 16th for London to cooperate with Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in negotiations of high importance that have a bearing upon the present situation in Palestine and also to visit Poland in the interests of the World Jewish Congress, preliminary to the opening of the Congress at Geneva on August 8th.

A large attendance of delegates and friends, appreciative of the extraordinary and varied Jewish services rendered by Dr. Wise, especially during the past year, is expected at the dinner.

You are cordially invited to participate in this tribute to Dr. Wise and to indicate on the enclosed card whether we may look forward to your presence.

Very cordially yours,

*Louis Lipsky*

Louis Lipsky

LL-rn  
ENC.