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Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1951-1952.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE ON APPEALS
CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS
HELD AT HOTEL GRISWOLD
EASTERN POINT, CONN.
JUNE 20, 1951

The meeting of the Committee on Appeals was called to order by the Chairman, Dr. Abraham J. Feldman on June 20th, 1951, at the Hotel Griswold at Eastern Point, Conn. at 2:15 P.M. There were present in addition to the Chairman, Drs. Freehof, Heller and Marcus, and Rabbi Lieberman, chairman of the Chaplaincy Committee of the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

The Chairman submitted the following appeals which had been made by members of the Conference.

RABBI SEYMOUR BAUMRIND - This was a case that had been considered before and the appeal had been rejected. Rabbi Baumrind claimed that the Committee on Appeals had not clearly understood his situation and asked for a reconsideration, submitting an argument in writing which restated the grounds for his appeal.

The Committee carefully considered it and found to its regret that it could not, in fairness, grant him either an exemption or any prolonged deferment. It was voted that the utmost which the Committee on Appeals would recommend to the Chaplaincy Committee would be a deferment of three months from this date, after which time, Rabbi Baumrind would be obliged to report for duty.

RABBI NATHAN HERSHFELD - Dr. Heller reported that he had visited Kansas City recently and gave his impressions of the circumstances governing Rabbi Hershfield's leaving Kansas City, and in general impressions of his emotional state. Those who know the appellant believe that he is not likely to make good chaplaincy material. It was moved to vote that we grant Rabbi Hershfield a deferment for six months. If that stands in the way of his getting a replacement position, the Committee will be prepared to extend the period of deferment.

RABBI DAVID SCHWARTZ - He was granted deferment at the meeting held on January 15th, 1951. Because of the condition of his wife, he asked for a continued deferment and submitted a letter from her Doctor testifying to her condition. The Committee considered the matter and suggested that the Chairman write to Rabbi Schwartz, and if another Doctor will confirm the diagnosis in the letter submitted, the Committee will consent to grant another deferment of six months.

RABBI JAY ROBERT BRICKMAN - Rabbi Brickman was given a deferment until June at the Committee meeting held on January 15th, 1951. He finds at this time that his treatment is not completed and asks for a continuance of his deferment. The Committee regrets that the utmost that it can do in this instance is to grant a six months further deferment, at which time Rabbi Brickman should report for duty.

RABBI SIDNEY J. JACOBS - Rabbi Jacobs appeared personally and asked for deferment on several grounds. One, that he is under psychiatric treatment, and two, that his wife is pregnant. The Committee carefully considered the case and voted to grant a deferment on the ground of Mrs. Jacobs' pregnancy, to ~~January~~ December 1st. The Committee rejected the consideration of the other grounds on which Rabbi Jacobs asked for deferment or exemption.

RABBI MORRISON D. BIAL - Rabbi Max Maccoby, his senior colleague appeared for him and argued his case. The argument is that Rabbi Bial has been training for Opera, that he is even now in Europe, that he hopes that after the auditions in Europe he may be able to give up the Rabbinate and enter the Operatic field. In view of his years of training and his hope that he is nearing his goal, he asked for a deferment of two years. The Committee considered the matter carefully, found that the grounds on which he asked for deferment were not valid, and rejected the appeal.

RABBI RAYFIELD HELMAN - Rabbi Helman appeared in person and stated his case. He asked for deferment until the completion of the psychoanalytic treatment which he is undergoing. The Committee considered the matter and granted him a deferment for six months.

RABBI JOSEPH SPEVACK - There has been no appeal filed with this Committee. While a graduate of the Jewish Institute of Religion, he is not a member of the CCAR. He is however, subject to the Chaplaincy regulation of the CCAR and the matter came to this Committee by referral from the Committee on Chaplaincy. Rabbi Kligfeld, a member of the Chaplaincy Committee reported on an interview which he had with Rabbi Spevack in which he had refused either to appeal or to respond to the call of the Chaplaincy Committee, refusing to give grounds which he claimed to be "personal."

The Chairman, Dr. Feldman, reported that he had a long distance telephone call from a brother of Rabbi Spevack, who pleaded for him on the ground of emotional instability, etc. The Chairman asked Mr. Spevack to induce his brother to make the appeal to the Committee or to send one in his behalf. No appeal was received. In consequence, the Committee voted to report this back to the Chaplaincy Committee.

RABBI STEVEN S. SCHWARZSCHILD - This case was considered at a previous meeting on appeal by his congregation in Fargo, N.D. A deferment was granted then and the period of deferment had expired.

The matter comes up before this meeting on a renewal of request by the congregation for a further deferment and by the additional request from Rabbi Schwarzschild asking for deferment until after the birth of his child which is due in September, 1951.

Dr. Heller reported that he had recently been in Fargo and that the people in that community had discussed the matter with him at great length. The Committee voted that a deferment be given to Rabbi Schwarzschild until the birth of his child which is due to occur in September, 1951. He is then to report for Chaplaincy duty.

RABBI MORDECAI FODET - At the time when the appeal came, Rabbi Fodet was a senior student at the Hebrew Union College. However, in view of the fact that he has not been called into the Chaplaincy, the Committee decided to take no action. When and if Rabbi Fodet is called for duty by the Chaplaincy Committee, then, if he so chooses, it is his privilege to appeal to this Committee.

RABBI HENRY RABIN - The Chairman presented the appeal of Rabbi Rabin with supporting documentary statements from physicians, asking for deferment on medical grounds. Members of the Committee were familiar with Rabbi Rabin and his problems and the Committee voted to grant him deferment for one year with the assurance that we shall be willing to renew the discussion of this case at that time.

RABBI PAUL R. SIEGEL - Rabbi Siegel asked for deferment on the grounds of pregnancy of his wife. The Committee voted to grant deferment until February 1st.

RABBI ROBERT E. GOLDBURG - The Chairman presented Rabbi Goldberg's appeal on the grounds of his being in process of receiving psychiatric treatment. This request was supported by letters from his physician, and a statement by Dr. Seidenfeld recommended deferment for one year. The Committee voted to grant deferment for a year from the time of the appeal which would be to April 15, 1952.

RABBI JUDAH J. SEIDLER - The Chairman presented a communication from Rabbi Seidler which was received this date, although, he had a long distance telephone conversation with the appellant. He asked for deferment because he is nearly over-age since his next birthday is in November when he will be 38. He added the additional ground that he was about to be married and was without a pulpit. The Committee considered the matter carefully, found that there was no valid ground for deferment and recommended that Rabbi Seidler submit to an army physical examination.

RABBI BENJAMIN RUDAVSKY - Rabbi Lieberman presented this case since at the time of the meeting there was no appeal before us. (An appeal addressed to the Chairman reached him in New London on June 22nd, two days after the meeting of the Committee). Rabbi Rudavsky asked for a deferment for a year on the grounds that he is able to obtain a replacement position for one year after his return from Israel in May, 1951. He also offered as grounds for his request, the pregnancy of his wife. The child is expected to be born in September. The Committee authorized the Chairman to grant a deferment on grounds of pregnancy when a statement from the Obstetrician is available justifying such a request.

RABBI HERBERT HENDEL - The Chairman presented the appeal of Rabbi Hendel in writing asking for exemption on grounds of seniority and opportunities which are being lost by him now because of his indefinite status in the Chaplaincy matter. The Committee rejected the appeal. It was not persuaded by the argument made.

On motion by Dr. Heller, seconded by Dr. Marcus it was voted that the Chairman be authorized to grant deferment in the cases of pregnancy with reference to this Committee. He was also authorized to grant deferment on psychiatric and psychoanalytical cases on the advice of Dr. Seidenfeld.

The meeting then adjourned subject to the call of the chairman.

June 22, 1951 - Subsequent to the meeting held on June 20th, the Chairman consulted with members of the Committee with reference to the following two requests which came to him during the convention of the CCAR.

RABBI SIDNEY H. BROOKS of Springfield, Ohio and RABBI EARL GROLLMAN of Boston, Mass. - asked for a reclassification of their present status to Category A-3 on the ground at the time of the November convention when the Chaplaincy draft was instituted their respective wives were already with child and accordingly they should have been classified as being in A-3.

Both men have made their applications to the Chaplaincy since the birth of their children and are now being processed.

The members of the Committee considered this appeal as did members of the Chaplaincy Committee in attendance at the Convention. It was unanimously agreed to grant the requests of Rabbis Brooks and Grollman and to reclassify them to Category A-3.

Rabbi Albert S. Goldstein

TREMONT TEMPLE
2064 GRAND CONCOURSE

The Bronx 57, New York

Dear Dr. Silver:

My sister, Sarah Goldstein Baker,
thought you would be interested in
this.

Sincerely
ASG.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH RITE

(A paper presented at the CCAR sectional meeting
on New Ritual)

By
Albert S. Goldstein

As some of you may have observed (if you read them), each of the prospectuses for the 1951 session of the Conference exhibited a striking example of the sin of shinui shem.

According to one version it is "Goldenson" who is to lead a discussion on "Why I Oppose Ritual". In the other edition the name appears as "Goldman."

What happened, presumably, is that once again our Administrative Secretary was compelled to wrestle with an idea--- and lost. This time he blacked-out at the thought that anyone with a name like "Goldstein" could possibly be opposed to ritual.

For once, our AS was right. I am not opposed to ritual. No genuine Litvak is opposed to love, virtue, the law of gravity --or ritual. They are all here to stay. Ritual is one of the facts of life.

What I am opposed to is ritualism. I deplore the addiction to and obsession with ritual. I dissent emphatically from the prevalent tendency to talk and act as if the hope for Jewish survival and even for a renaissance of Judaism lay in a revival of ceremonialism.

While I dissent from this notion, I am not particularly happy about presenting on this program the views I share with some, perhaps many of you.

In the first place, there is not enough time here to do an adequate job.

In the second place, I do not relish playing the role of spider at Miss Muffet's tuffet, nor even the role of the echo of the ghost of Amos at a banquet prepared for Amaziahs.

In the third place, I have too long a list of my own priestly foibles to confess. I do not come to this Bayss Din with "clean hands." I admit introducing the rituals of candle-lighting and kiddush-chanting into the services of several synagogues.

In my pulpit I wear the academic gown taken from the universities who got it from the monks--what we call the "Rabbinical robe." This is embellished with the episcopalian talis (atoro) by the Joint Committee on Ceremonies out of Bentley & Simon. All this ecclesiastical finery is topped off with the Roman priest's biretta which is now standard headgear for high-church rabbis, instead of the unprepossessing yarmulkeh.

Five years ago, anticipating the time when the Zion flag would become the national emblem of a state comprising Moslem and Christian as well as Jewish citizens, I devised and submitted to the Union-Conference Committee on ceremonies a proposed synagogue flag.

I have even designed and still use a very bridal marriage canopy--all bridal lace, velvet and satin. This fancy Khupah was originally intended and offered as optional equipment to satisfy conservative sentiment among the unaffiliated who ask to be married in our Temple. Today its use is standard order of procedure even with long-time members of our congregation.

This list hardly exhausts my ritualistic innovations. It is enough, however, to indicate that I am no novice at the attempt to light the blaze of religious revival with the taper of ceremonialism.

In one sense my efforts have succeeded only too well. If I encountered resistance in instituting these observances; it would take more energy and ingenuity than I possess to get rid of them. What does this prove? Only that the pageantry of the priest is always more popular than the moral mandates of the prophet. There are rabbis who take the pageantry and let the prophetic preachment go. And there are people who can change their religious beliefs with the greatest of ease; but they cling to their ceremonial practices with a superstitious passion.

After almost two decades of conjuring with the priestly magic which some colleagues now offer as a prescription for Jewish survival, or for the revival of Judaism, or for rapprochement with our conservative brethren, or for luring the unaffiliated, I am persuaded that if we are at all interested in preserving the best in Judaism, and especially the best in Reform Judaism---Lo zu ha-derekh, ritualism is not the way.

The current preoccupation with ritual is not simply a leaning toward traditionalism, or a friendly gesture in the direction of the conservatives. It is not merely compromise or partial concession. It is utter surrender. It is orthodoxy itself. Essentially orthodoxy is just this: the emphasis on the value and importance of ritual, the acceptance of ceremonies as religion in action.

What we achieve by ritualism is not a friendly understanding, or brotherly rapprochement or a working relationship with traditionalism. What we accomplish is the spiritual demise of Reform.

Why is it that when we present our brief for tolerance and goodwill to our Christian neighbors, we stress the distinction between Unity (which is consistent with variety and self-determination) and Uniformity (which is basically totalitarian); we plead the reasonableness of cultural pluralism and a respect for differences; we point out the obvious fact that even brothers differ down to their fingerprints; that differences enrich our common culture and that gleichshaltung is a fascist straight-jacket.

Yet when we seek brotherhood among our own brethren, with whose interpretation of Judaism we frankly disagree, why do we so cavalierly sweep all this aside. When we talk "Unity" to goyim we stand for differences. When we cry "Achdus" to Jews we demand conformity. Why?

What do we envy in minhag-laden orthodoxy that we yearn so to retrace our steps? Its spirituality? Its esthetics? Its popular success with the masses? What, then?

Personally, I am no reluctant refugee from the orthodox shtetl. I walked away resolutely and gladly a generation ago. And I suffer no regrets nor nostalgic hankering to return. What I rejected in orthodoxy then, and still reject, is precisely its obsession with externals, with rights and forms. What appealed to me in Reform, and what I still feel to be its chief glory (as it is the glory of Judaism itself) is the vision and faith of the prophets.

Are we disturbed by the behavior of our jaded intellectuals who, weary of their flirtations with strange flames at alien altars, now seek "peace of soul" in the dark embrace of catholicism---Christian or Jewish? Shall we then attempt to attract such wayward spirits by offering them the same kind of escape from reason and the moral-social struggle, and call this Judaism?

Surely there is much that is cold and empty in contemporary Jewish life. But wherewith shall we fill the void? Why with ritualism of Isserles? Why not with the spiritual insights and the moral fervor of Isaiah?

"The Lord said: 'Because this people approach me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their heart is far from me, and their worship is merely empty forms devised by men and learned by rote; therefor will I do an astonishing thing to this people: the wisdom of their sages will vanish and the intelligence of their wise men will be confounded'."

This prophecy of Isaiah, fulfilled many times in history, has today, amazingly enough, befallen the sages and wise men of that branch of Jewish life---our own Reform---which pays the most pious lip service to the teachings of the prophets.

It is certainly true of our times that men wander from sea to sea thirsting for the word of God. They ask: Wherewith shall I approach the Lord and bow before God on high? Shall I approach him with silken skull-cap and prayershawl made of nylon? Doth God take delight in stream-lined yizkor service or in myriads of gaily colored Chanuko candles? Shall we offer him exquisite ritual pageantry as atonement for the emptiness of our souls, the fruit of our committees on ceremonies as substitute for religious inwardness and moral-spiritual sensitivity?

Go to Bethel and sin, and to Emanuel and sin more, in that you bring me one year your spectacular Confirmation cantata, and the next your theatrical Neila service, and march around your sanctuaries carrying my Torah whose contents your congregations cannot read.

For so you love to do, O Israelites, saith the Lord. I loathe, I despise your high church antics, I cannot abide your episcopalianisms. What is the multitude of your rituals to me? Who hath required this of you? It hath been told thee what is good and what the Lord doth require of thee....

When the old Roman empire was coming apart at the seams, soul-sick, its people dispirited, unhappy---the best its caesars could manage was bread and circuses. With what remedial effect? Do we expect better results from tayglakh latkes, homentaschen, blintzes and the dramatic processional circlings of hakofos?

Whatever else it is, Religion ought to be man's effort to rise to some appreciation of higher values than the enjoyment of the pleasure of the senses, to a holier interpretation of life than materialism. But is not the enjoyment of show, of ecclesiastical ritual and sacerdotal pageantry as sensual an experience as any other. Then why can we not see, what the prophets saw so clearly: that all this is no less an expression of materialism merely because it is performed at the altars of Temples rather than on the stages of theaters.

Finally, I am saddened because of what I feel to be two reasons for the special interest in shulkhan arukh Judaism just now. One factor, it seems to me, is the emergence of the state of Israel as a reality. While it was only a hope and a task (a task I am proud to say I shared), Zionism offered some men, who had never felt quite at home struggling with the abstract imponderables of Jewish philosophy, theology and mysticism, many comfortably concrete, practical things to do and talk about: dunams of land, statistics of immigration, fund-raising. Now these men have discovered an acceptable ersatz dealing with tangible ecclesiastical paraphernalia.

The other possible incentive (negative and disheartening) is the menace of war with the soviets and the loyalty probes and concomitant pressures which together have made even "left turn" and "red-letter day" suspect. In such an evil time, the prudent keep silent, and are disposed to fill in the silence with ceremonies. That way, at least, they have fewer anxieties about tenure.

September 6, 1951

Rabbi Albert S. Goldstein
Tremont Temple
2064 Grand Concourse
The Bronx 57, New York

Dear Rabbi Goldstein:

I have just returned from abroad and found on my desk your delightful paper, "What's Wrong with Rite", which you presented at a CCAR meeting. It was a joy to read it and I had as hearty a laugh as I have had in a long time. There is much wholesome meat beneath your spice, and I suggest that you keep up the good work.

With all good wishes for a Happy New Year, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE ON APPEALS
CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS
HELD AT ISAAC M. WISE CENTER
CINCINNATI, OHIO
NOVEMBER 13, 1951

The meeting of the Committee on Appeals was called to order by the Chairman, Dr. Abraham J. Feldman on November 13, 1951, at the Isaac M. Wise Center, Cincinnati, Ohio. There were present in addition to the Chairman, Drs. Heller and Marcus.

The Chairman submitted the following appeals which had been made by members of the Conference.

RABBI DAVID GREENBERG - Rabbi Greenberg is receiving psychotherapy. Dr. Morton A. Seidenfeld recommended to the Committee that he be given a six months deferment at which time the case would be reviewed. *Granted.*

RABBI ARTHUR GILBERT - Rabbi Gilbert is receiving psychotherapy. *Dr. Seidenfeld* The Committee recommended a six months deferment at which time the case will be reviewed. *Granted.*

RABBI HERBERT HENDEL - Rabbi Hendel is receiving psychotherapy. Dr. Seidenfeld recommended to the Committee that he be given a six months deferment at which time the case will be reviewed. *Granted.*

RABBI BERNARD MARTIN - Rabbi Martin's congregation wants deferment, not sought by Rabbi Martin. The Committee rejected the petition and recommended that he begin his processing immediately. This congregation will be offered HUC senior replacement. Seniors will be available after February.

RABBI RAV SOLOFF - Rabbi Soloff seeks deferment to receive psychotherapy. The Committee rejected the petition and recommended that he begin his processing immediately. Congregation will be offered HUC senior replacement available after February.

RABBI RANDALL FALK - Rabbi Falk asked for a further deferment because of illness of his mother. The Committee recommended a six months deferment.

RABBI SEYMOUR BAUMRIND - Rabbi Baumrind's wife is expecting a child in May. Pregnancy occurred after the refusal of deferment sought on other grounds. The Committee recommended that he begin his processing immediately.

RABBI BENJAMIN RUDAVSKY - Rabbi Rudavsky asked for deferment on the grounds of his newborn child and contractual arrangements with his congregation. The Committee recommended that he begin his processing immediately.

RABBI C. MELVYN HELFGOTT - Rabbi Helfgott is receiving psychotherapy. The Committee recommended that he be given a one year deferment.

RABBI MORDECAI PODET - Rabbi Podet asked for deferment on the grounds of a sick mother and a dependent brother. The Chairman was instructed by the Committee to write to Rabbi Podet asking him to send supporting evidence and the present address of his mother so that colleagues in that area would be able to supply the Committee with important information to enable the Committee to reach a fair decision.

RABBI STEVEN S. SCHWARZSCHILD - Rabbi Schwarzschild's congregation is seeking his deferment because they need his services. The Committee rejected the petition and recommended that he begin his processing immediately. Dr. Heller who is familiar with the congregation has offered his services to obtain a replacement.

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RABBI RAYFIELD HELMAN - Rabbi Helman requested ~~deferment and~~ change of status on the grounds that his wife was pregnant before the draft plan was adopted. The Chairman was instructed to write to Rabbi Helman asking him to supply a certified copy of the baby's birth certificate in order to determine change of status.

RABBI SHOLOM SINGER - Rabbi Singer requested deferment on the grounds that his wife is pregnant and he is receiving psychotherapy. The Chairman was instructed to write to Rabbi Singer asking him to have his doctor get in touch with Dr. Seidenfeld and upon receipt of Dr. Seidenfeld's judgment in the case, will make a fair decision.

RABBI JOSEPH SPIVACK - Rabbi Spivack never appealed for deferment to this Committee. Sincere there was nothing before the Committee, it could not consider the case.
(Appeals were made by the Rabbi's brother).



CENTRAL CONFERENCE
OF
AMERICAN RABBIS

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OFFICE OF PRESIDENT
117 GIBBS STREET
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November 23, 1951

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DAVID L. ZIELONK, Tampa, Fla.

Dear Colleague

Here are some items of interest:

1) The next Convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis will take place in Buffalo, New York, June 10 to 15.

2) The Institute on Israel under the direction of Herbert Friedman proved to be a success from every viewpoint. On the unanimous and enthusiastic recommendation of the participants, the Executive Board decided to make it an annual affair. Rabbi Samuel Silver, 8206 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland 20, Ohio, will be chairman of this year's Institute. He announces that the total cost including air transportation and all expenses of an extended stay in Israel will amount to approximately \$1500, possibly less. Address your inquiries to him, early. I will be prepared to write the presidents of congregation, as last year, suggesting that some assistance be given those who desire to join the Institute. But this will be done only on the request of the Rabbi which should be addressed to Samuel Silver.

3) Pursuant to recommendation of the 1951 Convention a temporary Placement Committee has been set up on a continuing basis in which the Conference has full functioning representation. Rabbi Jacob Rudin representing the Conference serves with Rabbi Louis Egelson representing the UAHC and Richard Bluestein representing the College Institute. A five-man Advisory Committee on Policy has been appointed to take council with Rabbi Rudin. This committee consists of Rabbis Morton Berman, Abram Granison, David Seligson, Jacob Shankman and Dudley Weinberg.

4) Implementing Conference decisions an equalization fund is being set up to assist Chaplains who do not receive a Congregational differential and who face special needs. Your current Conference bill will include this item based on half of one per cent of one year's salary. We trust that all Conference members out of recognition of the need, and a sense of Conference discipline will respond early and willingly to this levy. Rabbi Morris Lieberman, Chairman of our Chaplains Committee states that as of October 24 there were 67 Jewish chaplains on active duty as against the 111 who were requested by the military services. An additional 7 were under orders. These consisted of 28 Reform rabbis, 26 Conservative rabbis, 20 Orthodox rabbis. According to the basic understanding of one third for each group,

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the Conference must provide 9 more chaplains. However, information from the military establishment indicates that an additional number of Jewish chaplains will be requested beyond the 111 requested over a year ago.

The Committee on Appeals continues to deal with rabbis requesting deferment and the Committee on Military Services continues to deal with differential problems and other congregational relationships. Everything possible is being done to safeguard the interests of the rabbis entering the chaplaincy, and to deal with problems on the basis of both human consideration and justice.

5) The Conference marks with pride the dedication of the House of Living Judaism. Our colleague, Maurice Eisendrath is to be felicitated on an historic achievement. This is another indication that Reform Judaism has come of age in America.

6) We are informed that The Jewish Chaplain is available free of charge upon request, to all members of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. Request should be addressed to the Division of Religious Activities, National Jewish Welfare Board, 145 East 32nd St., New York 16, New York.

7) May I again call attention to the Union Home Prayer Book? Your Congregation will only buy it if you bring it to the attention of the members. As Rabbi Feldman says in his bulletin: "This is an attractive and inspiring book which ought to be in the home of every Reform Congregant."

With every good wish.

Sincerely

Philip S. Bernstein, President
Central Conference of American Rabbis

PSB:js

CENTRAL CONFERENCE
OF
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ALBERT M. SHULMAN, South Bend, Ind.
DAVID L. ZIELONKA, Tampa, Fla.

November 30, 1951

Dear Colleague:

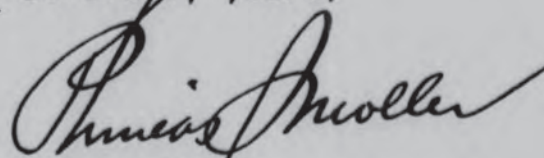
At the New London Convention of our Conference, an assessment of one-half of one percent of salary was voted for all members not on active military duty. Collections from this assessment will establish a Conference Equalization Fund. From this fund, upon individual application based on need, and after approval by an administering committee, supplementation of military salary in an amount not to exceed \$100. per month will be paid to those of our colleagues serving in the chaplaincy who do not receive a differential from their congregations.

Under the operation of the Chaplaincy Procurement Plan, adopted by the Conference in special session in Cleveland, rabbis are being drafted from civilian life to serve in the armed forces of the United States. Upon many this obligation to serve as chaplains imposes financial burdens of the most difficult character, in addition to the obvious dislocations and hazards of such service. It was the overwhelming majority view of the Conference that upon those of us not called to military duty there rests the moral responsibility of sharing with our drafted colleagues at least in the financial sacrifice which they are making at the mandate of the Conference.

The Equalization Fund must be set up at the earliest possible moment and your earnest cooperation, therefore, is solicited. You will find on the enclosed statement of your Conference dues a blank space to be filled in by you, indicating the amount of assessment for which you are liable and the mode of payment. (Incidentally, this will be "privileged information" and your Treasurer pledges to keep this confidential.) Remittance may be made in one, two, three or four installments between now and April 30, 1953. Contributions to the Chaplaincy Equalization Fund should be made out to the Central Conference of American Rabbis and as such are tax exempt.

With very best personal regards and with all good wishes, I am

Cordially yours,



RABBI PHINEAS SMOLLER,
Treasurer

PS:pen
Encl.

C O P Y

December 24, 1951

Dear Abe:

You will recall that the Committee on Appeals in December 1950 granted a year's deferment to Samuel Z. Jaffe. Upon the expiration of this deferment I wrote to Rabbi Jaffe asking him to begin his processing for the chaplaincy. I am enclosing a copy of a letter which he wrote. I know that you will be as gratified at its spirit as I was.



Rabbi Abraham J. Feldman
701 Farmington Avenue
Hartford 7, Connecticut

COPY

B'NAI B'RITH HILLEL FOUNDATION

at the University of Florida

16 N.W. 18th Street
Gainesville, Florida
Study Phone: 6271

19 December 1951

Rabbi Morris Lieberman, Chairman
Committee on Chaplaincy C.C.A.R.
7401 Park Heights Avenue
Baltimore 8, Maryland

Dear Morris:

I am most appreciative of the deferment granted to me in December 1950, and which has now expired, by the Committee on Appeals.

This extended period offered me the opportunity to meet a number of personal and family problems incumbent upon me at that time, and I am now ready to offer my services and take up my duties among my colleagues in the ranks of the armed forces of our country.

I am indeed grateful to you for your warm interest and would appreciate the conveying of my sincere thanks to the members of the Committee for their kind considerations in the past.

Sincerely yours,

SAMUEL Z. JAFFE

CENTRAL CONFERENCE
OF
AMERICAN RABBIS

ABRAHAM J. FELDMAN
CHAIRMAN
SOLOMON B. FREEHOF
JAMES G. HELLER
JACOB R. MARCUS
ABBA HILLEL SILVER

COMMITTEE ON APPEALS

OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN
701 FARMINGTON AVENUE
HARTFORD 7, CONN.

February 27, 1952

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPEALS:

Dear Friends:

As you know, it has been very difficult for us to find a convenient date on which we could meet to act on the very many appeals for deferment which have come in since the A-3 category has been called up. Most of these cases are difficult ones because they are problems of men with several children and numerous congregational involvements.

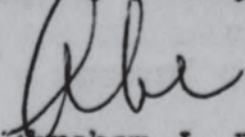
Until we act on these appeals, the whole chaplaincy procurement program is stalled so far as this category is concerned and in the meantime, these men are on the griddle, as it were, and both they and their congregations are understandably very anxious.

The last suggestion for a meeting date about which I wired you (April 2nd) is unacceptable since none of you can conveniently attend the meeting on that day. I am, therefore, suggesting the following three dates one of which I hope will make it possible for a majority of the members of the Committee to attend so that we can act on these cases. I now suggest the dates of April 7th, April 23rd, or April 24th.

In view of the urgency of the situation it would be fine if we could meet on April 7th. In order to expedite matters, would you be kind enough to wire me, upon receipt of this letter, which of the dates would be convenient to you.

With warm personal greetings, I am

Sincerely yours,


Dr. Abraham J. Feldman

AJF/sz

FEBRUARY 28, 1952

RABBI ABRAHAM J. FELDMAN
701 FARMINGTON AVE.
HARTFORD, CONN.

COULD COME TO APPEALS COMMITTEE ON APRIL SEVENTH. REGARDS

ABBAHILLEL SILVER



CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

OFFICERS: 1951-1952

PHILIP S. BERNSTEIN, President
Rochester, N.Y.

JOSEPH L. FINK, Vice-President
Buffalo, N.Y.

PHINEAS SMOLLER, Treasurer
Los Angeles, Calif.

ISAAC E. MARCUSON, Administrative Secretary
Macon, Ga.

SIDNEY L. REGNER, Financial Secretary
Reading, Pa.

OFFICE OF PRESIDENT

117 GIBBS STREET
ROCHESTER 5, N.Y.

April 3, 1952

EXECUTIVE BOARD

ALBERT G. BAUM, New York, N.Y.
SAMUEL A. BERMAN, Jersey City, N.J.
SAMUEL M. BLUMENFIELD, Chicago, Ill.
LOUIS J. CASHDAN, Charleston, W. Va.
ALBERT S. GOLDSTEIN, Bronx, N.Y.
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HAROLD I. SAPERSTEIN, Malverne, N.Y.
NATHANIEL S. SHARE, New Orleans, La.
ALBERT M. SHULMAN, South Bend, Ind.
DAVID L. ZIELONKA, Tampa, Fla.

Dear Colleague:

You will recall that after serious consideration, the Conference passed a resolution at its New London session last June, to set up a chaplaincy Equalization Fund. The purpose of that fund as stated at the time, and further defined by the Chaplaincy Equalization Fund Committee, may be summarized as follows:

- 1) To enable all the members of the Conference to share in some degree in the sacrifices being made by the rabbis entering the chaplaincy by Conference decision.
- 2) To develop a plan of graduated assessment which would make the largest provisions for those with most dependents and least provision for those with no dependents.
- 3) To spare the chaplains any and all embarrassment by avoiding the necessity for personal appeals on a hardship basis.
- 4) To gear the plan to reasonable expectation of income from the one half of one per cent assessment approved by the Conference.

After careful study of all the factors, the Chaplaincy Equalization Fund Committee, of which Rabbi David Seligson is chairman, has set up a plan which is now being implemented. This plan makes the following provisions:

- a) Chaplains without dependents are to receive an annual payment for two years of \$300. (This is designed primarily to enable them to enter the Conference-Union pension plan.)
- b) Chaplains with one dependent will receive \$600 for two years.
- c) Chaplains with two dependents will receive \$900.
- d) Chaplains with more than two will receive \$1200.

This plan is now in operation. First payments are now being made. Most members of the Conference responded without undue delay to the assessment. Some have not yet replied. The purpose of this communication is not only to inform you of the details of the plan, but to request the earliest possible payment of the assessment (one half of one per cent of your annual salary), so that we may fulfill our commitments to the chaplains. Our Conference fiscal year closes on April 30th; please send checks before that date.

May I take the liberty of pointing out that apart from the element of obligation, this plan is unique in its high moral purpose. Our Conference as a body volunteered to serve our youth in uniform. According to Conference decision some of our colleagues are entering the armed services. Others for good and sufficient reasons are prevented from doing so. This Equalization plan enables them to share the undertaking and sacrifices.

With cordial Passover greetings,

Sincerely yours,

Philip S. Bernstein

PSB:js

P. S. Sam Silver has developed a magnificent program for the CCAR summer Institute in Israel. You can still join it if you get in touch with him immediately. I am ready, on request, to write to Presidents of congregations.

CENTRAL CONFERENCE
OF
AMERICAN RABBIS

ABRAHAM J. FELDMAN
CHAIRMAN
SOLOMON B. FREEHOF
JAMES G. HELLER
JACOB R. MARCUS
ABBA HILLEL SILVER

COMMITTEE ON APPEALS

OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN
701 FARMINGTON AVENUE
HARTFORD 7, CONN.

April 15, 1952
Dict. 4/14/52

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE ON APPEALS:

Gentlemen:

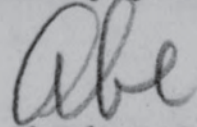
As you may see by the enclosed minutes of the meeting of the Committee on Appeals held on April 7th, there was quite a lot of business and many decisions had to be made. Dr. Silver and I were present. Dr. Heller had indicated that he would come but did not. Drs. Freehof and Marcus sent regrets.

Under the circumstances, Dr. Silver and I ask that we might receive the approval of these minutes from the other members of the Committee and after such approval is received, I would proceed to inform the various applicants of the action that had been taken.

We shall hold a meeting in Buffalo some time during the sessions of the Conference to which meeting we agreed that Dr. Seidenfeld should be invited in order that we might discuss with him the whole subject of deferments on psychiatric and psychoanalytic grounds.

With warm personal greetings, I am

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Abraham J. Feldman

AJF/sz

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE ON APPEALS
HELD AT THE JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
APRIL 7, 1952

PRESENT:

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, Dr. Abraham J. Feldman
Rabbi Morris J. Lieberman, Chairman of the Chaplaincy Committee
Rabbi Albert G. Baum, Secretary of the Chaplaincy Committee

Dr. James G. Heller wrote that he would attend this meeting but did not appear. Dr. Jacob R. Marcus and Dr. Solomon B. Freehof sent regrets.

REPORTS:

Rabbi Lieberman reported on the present status of the Chaplaincy Procurement Program.

Dr. Feldman reported that he has been granting deferments in cases where a physician's certificate has been presented stating that a pregnancy exists and giving termination date. Deferments have been granted until termination date.

Rabbi Lieberman reported on Rabbi Steven S. Schwarzschild, who was turned down by the military.

BERNARD BASKIN
Hamilton,
Ontario

A letter was received from Mr. Lawrence T. Simonsky, former president of Holy Blossom Congregation in Toronto and an officer of the UAHC, requesting a deferment for Rabbi Baskin ^{because of} congregational needs.

Dr. Feldman replied to above letter stating that Rabbi Baskin would have to make a direct appeal for deferment to the Committee on Appeals.

Rabbi Baskin wrote requesting deferment until June 1952 or exemption.

1. He feels that in all fairness to his congregation he should not be required to leave at this time. They have just completed a building which is not paid for.

2. In view of the fact that the Canadians are not as actively engaged in or in strong sympathy with the Korean situation, they see no reason why he should be called into the U.S. Army and have to leave their congregation inasmuch as he is living in Canada and doing important work there. He brought out the point that he has been instrumental in cementing and furthering increased support and interest in the UAHC and Liberal Judaism in that area. He feels that by calling him into service at this time may create ill-will for the UAHC.

After considerable discussion it was felt that to grant deferment on the basis of ^{the} community needing its Rabbi would be setting a bad precedent. The fact that Rabbi Baskin built a new Temple is no criterion in the matter of the chaplaincy. That he is in Canada and not in the U. S. is no ground for deferment or exemption because as a citizen he is subject to the impact of U. S. loyalties regardless of the mood in Canada.

The request was therefore, declined because the Committee felt that the reasons on which the request was based in view of the total picture of the Conference commitments in this matter did not warrant granting deferment. The Chairman was asked to communicate with both Rabbi Baskin and Mr. Simonsky suggesting that they communicate with Dr. Fink, Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee in charge of replacements regarding getting a replacement for Rabbi Baskin.

SEYMOUR BAUMRIND
New York City

Previously applied on grounds of family hardship. His father died and left a small business which he is managing for his mother. He felt that the business would disintegrate if he were called away. The Committee answered that it was not sufficient grounds for exemption. He has since written and asked the Committee to reopen the case. *His second request was denied in June.*

On February 12th, he wrote to the Appeals Board requesting deferment on the grounds that his wife was pregnant. A letter is on file from his physician stating that a pregnancy exists and the termination date will be sometime in May.

DECISION.

Grant deferment until June 1, 1952.

MAURICE GALPERT
Santa Ana,
Calif.

Rabbi Galpert is requesting deferment or exemption on grounds of past and present physical ailments. He enclosed letters from his private physician on his physical condition.

The Chairman was asked to write to Rabbi Galpert and suggest that for his own good and for the sake of his own record as well as part of our fixed procedure it would be better for him to appear before a military board, who would doubtless reject him on the ground of his ailments - rather than to have a deferment or exemption given to him by the Committee on Appeals.

ROBERT E.
GOLDBURG
New Haven,
Conn.

Requested an extension of his deferment on the ground of his continuing under psychoanalysis.

The Chairman reported that Dr. Seidenfeld recommends one year deferment.

It was decided to grant such deferment until April 15, 1953.

AMOS M.
GUNSBERG
New York City

In January 1952 Rabbi Gunsberg again applied for an extension of his deferment on the grounds that he is undergoing psychiatric treatment.

Dr. Seidenfeld recommends granting one year deferment.

DECISION.

Deferment granted until October 7, 1952.

JOSHUA O.
HABERMAN
Trenton, N.J.

Requested reclassification to Category A-4 because at the time of the institution of the draft by the GCAR in November 1950, his wife was pregnant with their second child. The Chairman presented a letter from a physician indicating that the child was born on May 28, 1951.

Reclassification was granted from A-3 to A-4.

RAYFIELD HELMAN
Cambridge, Mass.

Asked for further deferment. He indicated that he had completed his psychoanalysis, is no longer under treatment. Nevertheless, he asked that he be granted further deferment because he does not yet feel equal to the task.

The Chairman was requested to inform Rabbi Helman that since he has now completed his psychoanalysis he should begin his processing immediately and the request for deferment was declined.

HERBERT HENDEL
Bradford, Pa.

Previously deferred on grounds of psychiatric treatment.

Dr. Seidenfeld recommends granting an additional one year deferment.

DECISION.

Deferment granted for one year.

NATHAN
HERSHFIELD
Charlotte, N.C.

Request for deferment on grounds that he is undergoing psychiatric treatment.

Dr. Seidenfeld recommends granting one year deferment.

DECISION.

Deferment granted for one year.

BERNARD M.
HONAN
Concord, N.H.

Letters received from both Rabbi and congregation that deferment be granted until August of this year in order to permit them to find suitable replacement.

DECISION.

Request granted.

The Chairman was asked to write to both the congregation and the Rabbi suggesting to them that if he starts his processing now he would not be called until August. The Commission on Military Affairs under Dr. Fink's chairmanship could doubtless find a replacement for them.

SIDNEY J.
JACOBS
Chicago, Ill.

Requested deferment on grounds that he is still undergoing psychoanalysis.

Dr. Seidenfeld recommends granting one year deferment.

DECISION.

Grant one year deferment as of April 7, 1952.

IRVING A.
MANDEL
West Newton,
Mass.

Requesting deferment on the following grounds.

1. Congregation needs him (letter February, 1952.)
2. Second child born January 17, 1952.
3. Undergoing psychiatric training.

Dr. Seidenfeld recommends six months deferment.

DECISION.

Six months deferment granted from March 1, 1952 and case to be reviewed at that time.

MORDECAI PODET
Utica, N.Y.

Requesting deferment on grounds of family hardship. Wrote letter that since his father died after a long illness of cancer he is the sole support of his mother and 16 year old brother. He is contributing \$100.00 a month towards their support. By order of the Committee on Appeals at a previous meeting, the Chairman had written to a colleague in Chicago to visit Rabbi Podet's mother and to give us a report on the situation. This correspondence was presented by the Chairman.

The Committee declined to grant the request. There is no doubt that he is contributing to the maintenance of his mother and brother. While, of course, his mother is anxious the fact is that Rabbi Podet lives in Utica and not in Chicago and the only support he is actually supplying is the financial contribution which he makes. Inasmuch as a subsidy is available

PODET (Cont'd)

from the Chaplaincy Equalization Fund, the support of his mother will thus continue without impairment and there is no reason for granting either deferment or exemption.

HENRY RABIN
Los Angeles,
Calif.

Requests deferment on grounds both of physical illness and the expectancy of the birth of a child in October, 1952. The Committee granted deferment until October 1952 when the baby is to be born, and it was urged as to his other physical ailments, he should submit to an examination of a military board. This was done for the sake of his own record so that the deferment would come from the military rather than from this Committee.

(Since the meeting of the Committee, the Chairman has received a letter from Dr. Seidenfeld saying that he had heard from a reputable psychiatrist in Los Angeles who is treating Rabbi Rabin. Dr. Seidenfeld thinks, on the basis of the psychiatrist's comments "it would seem ill-advised to consider calling Rabbi Rabin to service at the present time", and, he recommends deferment for one year when the matter would be reopened.

It is the Chairman's judgment that in view of the deferment granted until October, and the advice given to Rabbi Rabin, the matter of Dr. Seidenfeld's communication can be taken up at a subsequent meeting of the Committee on Appeals).

SANFORD E.
ROSEN
San Mateo,
Calif.

Requesting deferment on,

1. grounds of his wife's pregnancy, expectant date of birth, June, 1952.
2. Congregational needs.

The Chairman was asked to communicate with Rabbi Rosen and to inform him that he will be granted a deferment until June 15, 1952 because of his wife's pregnancy. As to the congregational needs, Rabbi Rosen should contact the Commission on Military Affairs who will help him find a replacement.

SANFORD E.
SAPERSTEIN
Pontiac,
Michigan

Requesting deferment on grounds of past and present illness.

The Chairman was asked to communicate with Rabbi Saperstein suggesting that he submit to a military examination. In view of his medical history he will undoubtedly be rejected and his records will be clear by a rejection from the military rather than by an exemption from the Committee on Appeals.

DAVID SCHWARTZ
Niagara Falls,
New York

Requesting deferment on the following grounds:

1. His wife sustained a serious injury in a car accident and he would like to be available when the case comes to trial.
2. Just getting settled in a new congregation.
3. Medical history of hypertension.
4. His wife is expecting a child in August.

Deferment granted until September 1st, 1952. The Chairman was asked to write to Rabbi Schwartz informing him that there will be no deferment granted beyond the September 1st date. With regard to his physical background, it was suggested that he take the military examination and if they find him physically unacceptable, he will be automatically deferred.

ALBERT G.
SILVERMAN
Jamaica, N.Y.

Letter received, dated February 8th, stated the following:

1. They are expecting an addition to their family. (Certificate from physician not received.)
2. Volunteer chaplaincy service given to ASTP students from 1943-45.
3. Financial and communal responsibilities. Drive under way for new building.

SILVERMAN (cont'd) DECISION:

He is to begin processing immediately.

The Chairman was asked to communicate with Rabbi Silverman informing him that he is to begin his processing at once and to advise him that no certificate was received from his family physician confirming the pregnancy of his wife.

SHOLOM SINGER
Mount Kisco,
New York

Requested deferment on grounds that he is undergoing psychiatric treatment.

Dr. Seidenfeld recommends deferment until January, 1953.

DECISION.

Deferment granted until January, 1953.

JEROME S.
SPIVACK
New York
City

Requested deferment on grounds he is undergoing psychiatric treatment, (December 25, 1951.)

On January 10, 1952, Dr. Seidenfeld recommended a six months deferment.

DECISION.

Deferment granted until June 1, 1952.

The Chairman was asked to communicate with Rabbi Spivack, to be sure that his psychiatrist sends in a report on his condition to Dr. Seidenfeld before the Committee on Appeals meets in June.

JOSEPH J.
SPEVACK
Middletown,
Conn.

This case has been before us before and has been a troublesome case because the Rabbi himself has refused to make any statements or make any requests and has communicated largely through his brother who is an attorney in Brooklyn. There is quite a file on this case and the present reason for requesting a deferment is that the Rabbi was married last June.

The Chairman was requested to write to say that this does not constitute sufficient grounds for deferment or exemption and in our judgment should begin processing immediately. The Chairman was also to point out to him that even under the Deuteronomic law which his brother invoked in the case of a newly married, that law was only operative for the first year of marriage. Inasmuch as he will have been married a year in June, his invoking that law is not an evidence of sincerity. He should, therefore, begin processing immediately and inasmuch as it takes some time, he would be past his first year of marriage by the time he would be called to service, assuming that he would pass the necessary examinations given by the military.

DAVID J.
SUSSKIND
Euclid,
Ohio

Requesting deferment on congregational needs and financial expense involved in getting located in new congregation.

The Chairman was requested to communicate with Rabbi Susskind informing him that inasmuch as his request was made in January and it is now near the end of the congregational year, he could quite easily complete his year's work there, and the congregation could apply to the Committee on Military Affairs for a replacement. Rabbi Susskind is, therefore, to begin his processing immediately.

MEMORANDUM TO MEMBERS OF
COMMITTEE ON APPEALS:

In view of the fact that there were only two members of the Committee present who acted in accordance with their best judgment, it was agreed amongst us that these minutes would be sent immediately to the other members of the Committee and their approval requested. This would obviate the possibility of a challenge that the majority of the Committee did not give the matter consideration.

It was also agreed by Dr. Silver and Dr. Feldman, that we would invite Dr. Seidenfeld to attend the next meeting of the Committee on Appeals to discuss with him the matter of requests for deferments on psychoanalytic grounds.



May 8, 1952

Dr. Joseph L. Fink
599 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo 2, N.Y.

My dear Joe:

In pursuance of our telephone conversation of yesterday, I am writing to you to summarize for you my further thinking on the subject of an executive secretary for the CCAR and several other matters.

As I indicated at the time when we met in New York, I am somewhat uneasy about the idea of creating an executive secretaryship for the CCAR.

First. There is the matter of expense. I cannot see where the money will be coming from unless we made the dues prohibitive. Even now without the expenditure of 18 to 20 thousand dollars which is involved in setting up an office, our dues should be increased and probably will be at the forthcoming Convention. But, if we are to take care of this additional expense, which, after the manner of all offices of that kind, will increase in expense and admittedly, in services rendered, the dues would have to be very high, much higher than I think the men ought to be called upon to pay.

When you add to that, the Chaplaincy Equalization Fund which will require even more funds than are at present available, it becomes obvious that the expense of membership in the Conference will become a very burdensome thing.

Second. Even more than the expense, what worries me is that with a setting up of an administrative office and an executive secretary and staff, we shall be setting up something in the nature of a bureaucracy. As it is the Placement Bureau unavoidably does create a situation which is akin to it. I am very reluctant to add to this pattern of temptation and organization.

Third. When I was told recently that the Chaplaincy Committee intends to bring in a resolution to the Conference, urging compulsion and disciplinary action against those who did not contribute to the Equalization Fund, I was greatly alarmed. The Central Conference has existed for 63 years now as a comradeship of colleagues and friends. The freedom of action, the freedom of judgment of the individual member was sacredly preserved even as these were highly regarded. The Conference prospered. It was, indeed, a happy brotherhood. I am worried about the trend which is developing and I should hope that that trend can be stopped before it goes too far. The CCAR in my judgment ought not to become a trade organization or a professional organization closely resembling a trade union.

You will recall that some years ago there was a great pressure brought to bear on the Conference to create an executive secretary for the Social Justice Commission. At the time when the subject was agitated, there was considerable interest and even though authority was given for the engagement of such an official, some of us were able to delay action on it until the matter could be seen in its proper perspective. At that time also, the question of 10 to 12 thousand dollars was being glibly tossed about. The delay in taking action was beneficial and today even the staunchest proponents of that action have cooled off on that subject. I have a feeling that this matter of an executive secretary should take a somewhat similar course. I don't mean by that, that it should be killed, but I think we ought to take time, more time than has thus far been given to it, to weigh all the possibilities and to consider every angle more carefully than has been possible in the few hasty conferences that it was possible to have.

Please understand me, Joe, the over-weighing consideration to me in all of this is not really money which is an important factor, but rather the trend to change the character of the CCAR. I am really worried about it.

I hope it may be possible for us to discuss this matter at greater length and with more leisure, and with every good wish, I am

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Abraham J. Feldman

AJF/sz

cc/ Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
Dr. Solomon Freehof

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE ON APPEALS
CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS
HOTEL STATLER, BUFFALO, NEW YORK
JUNE 13, 1952

PRESENT WERE: Dr. Morton Seidenfeld, and, Rabbis Abba Hillel Silver, Morris Lieberman, James G. Heller, Jacob R. Marcus, and, Chairman Abraham J. Feldman.

- RANDALL M. FALK Who was present was called in. He spoke briefly and described the condition of his mother. He was granted deferment for one year. The deferment is to begin from the expiration of the last deferment, May, 1952.
- IRWIN M. SCHOR A graduate of this year's New York branch of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion is now being processed for admission into the armed forces. He petitioned for a leave of one year to go to Israel. Petition refused.
- JEROME S. SPIVACK Dr. Seidenfeld recommends a deferment for six months. Deferment granted.
- PAUL R. SIEGEL He has already been granted two deferments for miscarriage, pregnancy, etc. He seeks another deferment because his wife is not well and because his mother is ill. His petition has been rejected.
- DAVID GREENBERG Dr. Seidenfeld recommends a deferment of six months from the expiration of his last deferment. Deferment granted.
- ARTHUR GILBERT He is now under therapy. Dr. Seidenfeld recommends a one year deferment. Recommendation granted.
- JOSEPH J. SPEVACK His case has been turned over to the Executive Board of the CCAR for disciplinary action.

EMIL W. LEIPZIGER, CHAIRMAN
COMMITTEE ON ARBITRATION AND ETHICS
CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

4238 St. Charles Ave.
New Orleans, Louisiana.

June 23, 1952

To: Members,
Committee on Arbitration and Ethics.

Dear Colleague:

The enclosed letter, marked Exhibit A, is a report (with one or two slight additions for the sake of clearness) which I made to the President of the Conference, Philip S. Bernstein, and later, at Buffalo, to the Executive Board.

They agreed that I poll the full Committee to obtain their opinion of the action of the Waco Congregation, action which the Chairman of the Committee on Arbitration, the President, and the Executive Committee, regard as unjust, and so open to criticism.

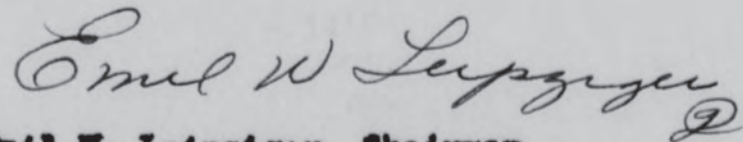
On the basis of the poll, I shall be able to report to the Congregation how the full Committee looks upon their action, anent Mrs. Wolfe Macht.

Since the pulpit is already occupied, the Provisional Placement Committee can impose no discipline upon the Congregation. The only pressure which can be used is that of our Conference.

When I receive replies from the members of the Arbitration Committee, I can compose a statement expressing the common judgment and urging a reopening of the case, so that Mrs. Macht may receive at least a modest pension for life.

Please express your views on the accompanying sheet, and any ideas you have as to any further steps to take.

Fraternally,



Emil W. Leipziger, Chairman

ewl:g

Emil W. Leipziger, Chairman,
Committee on Arbitration and Ethics
Central Conference of American Rabbis

(Exhibit A)

4238 St. Charles Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana

May 29, 1952

Rabbi Philip A. Bernstein, President,
Central Conference of American Rabbis,
117 Gibbs St.,
Rochester, N. Y.

Dear Phil:

I wish to report to you on the Waco matter. You will want to know the sequence of events which grew out of your request that I visit the Waco Congregational Board, to look into the matter of its action regarding the widow of our deceased colleague, Wolfe Macht, who served the Congregation for over 30 years.

I wrote to the President of the Congregation, asking for a conference with him and the Board and received a gracious reply, urging that I come soon, before the personnel of the present Board is changed.

Upon receipt of information, a few days later, that the Congregation had elected a successor to Rabbi Macht - namely, Rabbi Lesser, of Norman, Oklahoma - I telephoned Rabbi Lesser to confirm the information. I was interested in knowing whether the latter had gone through the channels of the Provisional Placement Committee, to obtain the position. In the telephone conversation, he said that he had.

If this were true, it seemed to me that there was a lack of coordination between the Conference and the Provisional Placement Committee. I, therefore, telephoned Rabbi Louis Egelson and learned that Rabbi Lesser had not gone through channels - that indeed the Provisional Committee had information, from another source than ours, which urged it to consider refusal to recommend any colleague for the post in Waco.

I made inquiry again of Rabbi Lesser, by letter, as to the meaning of his apparent misinformation. He replied in a way that made plain that he did not get the full implication of my question as to "going through channels" - and regarded his acceptance of the position as approved because "Rabbi Egelson had congratulated him on his election to Waco!"

Rabbi Egelson promised to send me a copy of the letter criticising the Congregation of Waco, but informed me later that the letter had been lost.

All this had only an indirect bearing on my mission to Waco, making it a little late for effective Conference intervention, but it constitutes an interesting side light.

I came to Waco with these alleged facts in my possession; that Rabbi Macht had served the Waco Congregation for 32½ years, had received rather meager compensation (\$4,800.00 per year), had asked for but did not receive Congregational participation in the Pension Plan. Upon his demise, his widow was granted \$2,400.00 (half pay for 6 months) and the use of the parsonage until the advent of the new elected Rabbi. I knew also that Rabbi Lesser was to receive much greater compensation than Macht ever received and that the Congregation would participate in the Pension Plan in his behalf.

At this point, I must report that before I left New Orleans I received a wire from Mrs. Macht that I should not come. She felt strongly (I learned this in an interview with her in Waco) that she was being blamed for Conference intervention and subjected to social resentment.

The Board Meeting, called to hear me, was held on Sunday morning, May 25. It was well attended. Regrets were presented by the President, Mr. Lester Levy, who, unfortunately, was hospitalized at the time and the meeting was Chaired by a distinguished attorney, Mr. Wilfred Naaman, a life long friend and admirer of Rabbi Macht.

On invitation, I made a statement as to the purpose of my visit, making plain that I had no pressures to impose, no threats to make, but was interested in the dignity of the Rabbinate which involved both the Rabbi and the Congregation. I stated, frankly, my belief that the Congregation had been less than generous both to Rabbi Macht and certainly so now to his widow.

It was brought out in the discussion that Mrs. Macht was visited by a Committee after

her husband's death, and this Committee reported to the Board that Mrs. Macht wanted no maintenance, wanted only free residence in the parsonage as long as she remained in the City. The latter request was placed before the Congregation and was refused by a very decisive vote. It was this decisive vote which influenced the Board to refuse my plea that they pass a resolution to re-open the whole matter, with a recommendation that Mrs. Macht be given a pension. I acquiesced in their point that the parsonage belongs to the incumbent Rabbi - but that did not preclude either an arrangement between the new incumbent and the Congregation, to reside outside of the parsonage at Congregational expense, or free rent to Mrs. Macht in another home.

(In behalf of the Board, it is proper to indicate at this point that they considered Mrs. Macht's request for residence in the parsonage as one based on sentimental grounds and that residence in another place would not satisfy her emotional need.)

One other project which was proposed and which, to my mind, might have satisfied Mrs. Macht's emotions, was to build a new Religious School building and name it in memory of Rabbi Macht. Two non-Jewish friends of Rabbi & Mrs. Macht pledged \$1,000.00 each for such a purpose and a Committee received other pledges up to \$11,000.00 on a \$25,000.00 project, but when the non-Jewish friends heard what the Congregation was willing to do for Mrs. Macht, they withdrew their pledge and the project was abandoned. Mrs. Macht avers that it was not she who gave the information which lead to the withdrawal of the non-Jewish gifts.

The upshot of the matter is that the Board did not propose a re-opening of the case, because they believed that in the light of past Congregational action, it would be futile; and Mrs. Macht desires us to leave the matter in status quo.

It was my hope, which I expressed before the Board when I was asked to state my personal view, that the case might be re-opened and that a grant of \$100.00 a month, for life, be given Mrs. Macht.

Now, I am referring to you the question whether we shall go further in the matter, by polling my whole Committee to obtain their judgment as to any further action.

As I view the case, the obduracy of the Board is based on a lack of understanding that the "bonds between a Rabbi and his Congregation are of a character somewhat different from, and on a level higher than those of the ordinary contractual relations of the business world". (see our Code, Section II).

This was clearly indicated to me by the words of one of the Board members who seemed to be the leader of the opposition to any change in the Congregational action.

By failing to act on such understanding, I feel the Congregation is blameworthy and subject to criticism.

I promised to send a copy of this report to the President of the Congregation and to Mrs. Macht.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) Emil W. Leipziger.

June 25, 1952
Dict. 6/24/52

Dr. Nelson Glueck
Hebrew Union College
Clifton Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio

My dear Nelson:

I am writing this letter to you by instruction of the Committee on Appeals, given at the meeting of the Committee which was held in Buffalo on June 13th, last.

This Committee has been working now for well over a year - nearly two years, receiving appeals from members of the CCAR for deferment or exemption. The overwhelming majority of the appeals were based on psychiatric and psychoanalytic grounds. Most of the appellants indicated that they were undergoing psychoanalysis. In each instance, we had the appellant have his psychoanalyst write to Dr. Morton A. Seidenfeld who has been the official psychologist for the CANRA and now for the Chaplaincy Commission (DRA). During the war he served in the psychological service of the military with the rank of Colonel, and he is now the Director of the Division of Psychological Services and Public Education of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. He is the immediate past president of Gittelsohn's congregation, he is on the staff of the Yeshiva University, etc., etc. When Dr. Seidenfeld receives the professional statements from the psychiatrists, he advises us on the merits of the application and the length of time for which deferments might be made.

The Committee on Appeals has been alarmed by the numbers of men in the Rabbinate who find it necessary to undergo psychoanalysis, and in the course of the deliberations at our last meeting, which was attended also by Dr. Seidenfeld as our guest, I was instructed to write to you formally to make the suggestion that it seems to be essential that the men who are at HUC-JIR should be screened psychiatrically some time during the junior and senior years. The Committee feels that a proper screening process should be set up not later than the junior year at which time individuals would be studied in terms of reported observations of behavior during their freshman and sophomore years. A careful psychological and psychiatric appraisal should then be made and a decision regarding the emotional stability of the individual would be set up so that the proper authorities could decide whether or not they wish to retain such candidates for graduation beyond that point. Using this appraisal, careful re-examination should be made at least once a year to make certain that

nothing during the intervening time has caused further threat to the security and stability of such people.

The Committee believes that following such a procedure, one could, with assurance, leave all other deferments of a psychiatric nature directly to the military service since we would know beyond the question of a doubt that the men graduated by our schools are competent to serve as Rabbis either in peace times or under war conditions, that they are prepared emotionally to assume the obligations of their office and that they did not develop a sudden psychiatric disturbance at the time they were called to military service.

The above is transmitted to you for your careful and sympathetic consideration, and, I need not tell you that the decision to write to you was reached in all good faith and out of a desire to strengthen both the Rabbinate and the quality of the service which our men are called upon to give.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Abraham J. Feldman

AJF/sz

cc/ Rabbis Freehof, Heller, Marcus, Silver, Lieberman

June 26, 1952

Rabbi Emil W. Leipziger
4238 St. Charles Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana

My dear Rabbi Leipziger:

I read your letter of May 29, 1952, which you addressed to the former president of the C.C.A.R. in connection with the Waco matter. I also read your covering letter of June 23, 1952. I am inclined to believe that the Conference should not further pursue the matter. The information which you convey in your letter seems to indicate that Mrs. Macht was satisfied with the original arrangements made by the congregation, that she did not want you to come on in the first place, and that she is now satisfied with the status quo; furthermore, that her request to occupy the parsonage indefinitely as long as she remained in the city was properly refused by the congregation since the parsonage belongs to the incumbent rabbi and a new rabbi had been elected; that her sole desire to live in the parsonage was based on sentimental grounds; and "that residence in another place would not satisfy her emotional need" and that even her emotional need could be resolved if the new religious school building could have been erected which would carry the name of her deceased husband.

Nowhere in the letter is there any indication that Mrs. Macht is in need. I do not see what purpose is to be served by the Conference continuing to intervene in the matter.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very sincerely yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er