

# Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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Series I: General Correspondence, 1914-1969, undated. Sub-series A: Alphabetical, 1914-1965, undated.

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Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1952-1953.

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November 1st, 1952.

## Dear Colleague:

1. The enclosed bill for dues is PAYABLE NOW. Spare me from reporting your name to the Executive Board at the close of the year, April 30th, 1953, as delinquent in dues payments. Please remit promptly.

2. The assessment for the Chaplaincy Equalization Fund, as you know, is mandatory) All dues paying colleagues, not in the military service, are expected by vote of the Conference to pay into this fund. This includes Rabbis Emeriti, Professors, Colleagues associated with non-congregational organizations, as well as Rabbis with congregations - in short, all members of the Conference - EVERYBODY. Dr. Joseph Fink, our president, will write you about this in greater detail. In the meantime, I know that you will respond wholeheartedly and promptly, each according to his salary percentage.

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

Cordially yours,

Rabbi Phineas Smoller, Treasurer

PS:tg

P.S. Make all checks payable to the CCAR both for dues and for the Chaplaincy Fund and please send them in promptly. If you have already paid your Chaplaincy Equalization Fund assessment in Full, this letter does not apply to you. OFFICERS: 1952-1953

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

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> OFFICE OF PRESIDENT 599 DELAWARE AVENUE BUFFALO, N. Y.

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November 19, 1952

My dear Colleague and Friend:

From time to time in the past, the president of The Central Conference of American Rabbis has sent different kinds of communications to the members of The Conference. I recall receiving from several of my predecessors in this office presidential messages with the charm of a personal letter to a close friend who happened to be a professional colleague. Some of those messages had an intimate quality, and were enlivened with a candor that is possible only where friendliness and understanding that are completely reciprocal exist. But that could have happened only while we remained a small, compact professional body. Pleasant though it was, the practice could hardly be followed after The Conference had grown into a body of almost 700 men, stationed not only throughout the United States of America, but also in Canada. The British Isles, Australia, South Africa, Cuba, and the Panama Canal Zone.

There are members of this expanded rabbinic body whose personal friendship I seek, but, unfortunately, opportunity to cultivate that friendship on an intimate level is not provided in our busy schedule of work. I do feel a genuine closeness to those colleagues whose paths have crossed my path during my many years of professional life. But there are some others of The Conference whom I cannot address in the familiar terms warranted by long, personal association. Nevertheless. I send to each and every colleague greetings from a heart that is warm with real or potential friendship for you.

I began my presidency bent on enlisting your help and on winning your approval. I accepted a responsibility that, though weighty, is inspiring to me. My efforts in behalf of The Conference are progressing, and I am already recompensed with the elation that comes to him who is permitted to do the work he is most eager to do. Our Conference has a long tradition; I shall work within the broad framework of that great and liberal tradition.

At the last meeting of the Executive Board, the continuation of the work formerly done by our beloved and beleaguered Rabbi Isaac E. Marcuson, of blessed memory, was divided into three categories, and was assigned to three colleagues. Rabbi Sidney M. Lefkowitz of Jacksonville. Florida was appointed to serve as Recording Secretary. He has worked for The Conference in a variety of assignments and is particularly gifted for this responsibility. Please communicate with Rabbi Lefkowitz on any matters relating to the office of Recording Secretary. Rabbi Sidney L. Regner of Reading, Pennsylvania is now in charge of Conference publications. He has had wide experience with Conference matters dealing with publications. Please write to him on any question relating to books, pamphlets, or other publications by our Conference. Rabbi Bertram W. Korn of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania has accepted the responsibility of editing The Conference Yearbook. We are grateful to Rabbi Korn for his willingness to do the vast amount of work that the editing of the Yearbook entails on such short notice.

The next convention of The Central Conference of American Rabbis will be held in Estes Park, Colorado, just outside the City of Denver, from June 23rd through June 28th, 1953. We shall meet in one of the most picturesque regions of America. The scenery in Estes Park is majestic, the food and accommodations excellent, and the people of Denver are eager to extend their warmest hospitality and kindness to us. I hope to see you there. Please make early plans to attend. The program which our vice-president Rabbi Barnett R. Brickner of Cleveland, has prepared promises to be one of the best in the history of The Conference.

The American Jewish community can no longer afford the luxury of promoting, financing, and supporting isolated and competing groups and agencies aiming in island independence to serve the American Jew. This is one of the bleakest problems in our American Jewish life. We rabbis are not concerned with the confused and tortured motivations of the separate agencies set up to serve the American Jew. We rabbis are concerned with the efforts of those organizations to destroy the too few, too feeble attempts at unity painfully effected. It is high time that we of the rabbinate stepped in to spare the American Jewish community any further suffering from the divisive strainings of overlapping and competing agencies.

At the last meeting of our Executive Board, on October 28th, 1952, the following resolution on the question of the National Community Relations Advisory Council was adopted:

"The Executive Board of the Central Conference of American Rabbis expresses its deep regret at the withdrawal of the two great national American-Jewish agencies, the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith and the American Jewish Committee from the National Community Relations Advisory Council. We, teachers of Judaism, have advocated and worked for the coordination of effort in the field of Jewish community relations for the purpose of achieving greater effectiveness and of eliminating conflict and duplication among the several agencies in this area.

"We heartily welcomed the progress made toward this goal by the establishment of the NCRAC. We again commend the NCRAC for its achievements, which have notably benefited American Jewry and which have strengthened the cause of Democracy.

"In accordance with the resolution of the CCAR in 1952, we repeat that we believe that the recommendations of the MacIver Report were calculated to increase the effectiveness of the total community relations program. With the carefully considered modifications of the Evaluative Studies Committee, and the resolution of the NCRAC plenum, a fair and realistic basis was projected for further constructive coordinated effort, without jeopardizing the integrity, individuality, or independence of the constituent agencies.

"The withdrawal of the ADL and the American Jewish Committee seriously endangers the progress so painfully won and threatens injurious disunity. In the realm of community relations the well-being of the Jewish community in America is indivisible, and the interest of the whole takes precedence over that of a single organization.

"We endorse the majority decision of the NCRAC not to be diverted from its objective of effectively mobilizing the strength of the American Jewish community. "We urge the ADL and the AJC, who have rendered meritorious service to American Jewry for so many years, to return to the NCRAC so that the interest of the entire community may be protected and so that we may proceed with undivided vigor to the compelling labor of safeguarding Jewish rights and more fully realizing the democratic potential of our country."

We ask that each member of The Conference bring this resolution of our Executive Board to the attention of American Jewry in his own community, and to the attention of local offices of the various agencies serving American Jewry, both inside and outside the NCRAC, as forcefully as he can.

Appointments to committees for the June, 1952-June, 1953 year have been completed. We have distributed committee appointments as widely as possible. Those Conference members not included on committees this year will probably be appointed next year or the year following. We plan to ask every member of The Conference to serve on some committee of The Conference in the course of a five-year cycle. If you were not asked to serve this year, you surely will be asked to serve in the near future. We always welcome suggestions as to the particular committee on which you prefer to serve. We hope that each chairman will activate his committee as speedily and effectively as possible.

The prompt response to the appeal for the Equalization Fund has been most gratifying. This Fund is now in active operation. This Fund enables us rabbis on the home front to share in the sacrifices which our colleagues who are chaplains in the armed forces are making in their service to our country in these critical days. I want to remind the members of The Conference that our contributions to this Fund were made mandatory on all of us by an overwhelming vote of The Conference. If you have not yet made your contribution, one-half of one per cent of your annual salary, please send your check immediately to our Treasurer, Rabbi Phineas Smoller of Los Angeles, California.

May God bless you in your work in behalf of His people, His Torah, and all mankind.

Fraternally yours,

Joseph L. Fink

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PHINEAS SMOLLER, Treasurer Los Angeles, Calif.

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# Central Conference of American Rabbis

OFFICE OF PRESIDENT 599 DELAWARE AVENUE BUFFALO 2, N. Y. February 5, 1953

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD

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

# Dear Friend:

I am enclosing herewith copy of a letter I just sent to Sol Freehof in answer to a letter from him. I know that you have strong convictions on this matter too. I would appreciate hearing from you.

Congratulations again on your happy anniversary. Kindest personal greetings.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph L. Fink

JLF:as Enclosure February 5, 1953

Dr. Solomon B. Freehof Rodef Shalom Temple Fifth and Morewood Avenues Pittsburgh 13, Pennsylvania

Dear Sol:

I want you to know how much I appreciate your writing me as you did. I am grateful for the candor and the understanding with which you present your viewpoint on the question of the Equalization Fund.

There is much to be said on the different aspects of this entire problem. I am convinced that the members of the Conference feel strongly that this matter should not be placed in the hands of the Union, although I must confess that I have not given much thought to that possibility. The Union had to be persuaded, after much argument, to accept the pension plan and even now we are having difficulty in getting an adequate contribution from the Union. I personally question, Sol, that the Union would be willing to accept this additional financial obligation, although I quite agree with you that it could be a financial asset rather than a liability for the Union to accept it.

Increasingly, I can see a change taking place in the character of the Conference. This is due to two factors: One is the sheer numerical growth of the Conference. We now have close to 700 members. This prevents the Conference from being merely a consultative body of men who know one another and meet annually to receive stimulation from one another. The Conference was at one time that kind of body and was extremely valuable. It is now more in the nature of a professional association and, as such, must assume obligations and responsibilities like other professional bodies.

Secondly, The temper of the times has changed. Many men now look to the Conference not only for advice, but also for authoritative judgment and opinion in many matters.

I wish we could eliminate this entire Equalization Fund business. At best, it is a nuisance and at worst, it is a real headache to all of us, but some of the men in the Chaplaincy are suffering real need. They cannot maintain a wife, family, and other dependents on the Army allowance. I could quote from letters received from some of the Chaplains to indicate their deep unhappiness over their family difficulties. Until we are able Dr. Freehof

to find some better way to raise this money for them, I do not see what other plan we can follow other than the one adopted.

I am eager to discuss this and other problems with you in person when I see you. If you are in attendance at the New York Convention of the Union, perhaps we can get together then. In the meantime, I trust that you will understand that as President of the Conference, it is my duty to fulfill the will of the Conference as expressed by an overwhelming vote and until that will is changed, I am helpless in the matter.

Thank you again for writing me. Kindest personal greetings.

Sincerely,

Joseph L. Fink

JLF:as

# RABBI SOLOMON B. FREEHOF, D. D. RODEF SHALOM TEMPLE FIFTH AND MOREWOOD AVENUES PITTSBURGH 13, PENNSYLVANIA

February 8, 1953

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver Congregation Tifereth Israel E. 105th St. and Ansel Rd. Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Abba:

I have long been opposed to the principle of the equalization fund in the Conference and at your table two Sunday's ago I heard you express yourself similarly.

When I received the report of the Conference Committee on Chaplaincy I notice that the Committee decided to urge the President to make strong effort to extend the collections of the equalization fund. I felt impelled to write to him expressing my objection. I didn't presume to tell him yours. He sent me in return the enclosed letter. I am sending it to you. Please have your secretary return it for my files. It is interesting because a boy like Joe Fink,who I judge would normally agree with our viewpoint in this matter, believes that the whole nature of the Conference is changed and that it should be an authoritative rather than a consultative body. This is getting down to the basic ground of principle. I thought that perhaps you might want to write him.

Lillian joins me in best wishes to Virginia and you.

Sincerely,

SBF:ljc Enclosure

February 10, 1953

Dr. Joseph L. Fink 599 Delaware Avenue Buffalo 2, New York

My dear Joe:

I am delighted that it will be possible for you to occupy my pulpit on Sunday morning, March 1st. I know that the congregation will look forward eagerly to your coming. The Service will be broadcast. I would appreciate hearing from you as soon as possible concerning the subject of your address. Perhaps you will also enclose some notes about yourself which we might include in our publicity. Reservations have been made for you beginning Saturday night at the Wade Park Manor which, as you know, is one block from The Temple and a very good hotel. The Services are at 10:30. If you will come to my Study a quarter of an hour or so in advance, Rabbi Stone will acquaint you with the routine of the Service. He will conduct the Service and will introduce you. I do not know what your practice is, but we do not wear robes in our pulpit. I wear my outaway.

I received your letter of February 5th and a copy of the letter which you addressed to Sol Freehof. In the meantime, Sol had written to me about his communication to you.

As you probably know, I have refused to contribute to the Equalization Fund because the Conference made it mandatory - a sort of an income tax - and I am persuaded that the Conference has no authority to do it and should not do it. I should have been delighted to make a contribution to such a fund assisting chaplains who are serving our country to meet their needs, but I do not feel that it is up to the Conference to tax its members for this or any other purpose, and to threaten with punishment those who do not comply. While the Conference is a professional association, it is not a labor union, and those who joined it through the years have done so on the assumption that it is an organization for consultation, for the pooling of thought and interest, and for engaging in such projects as they all wish to do voluntarily. There was to be no compulsion and no punitive measures were to be employed in the case of those who did not agree or approve of any action of the Conference.

The fact that the Conference today has a membership of 700 instead of a much smaller one of some years ago does not change the basic conception of the organization. I know that the temper of the times has changed and that there are people who would like the Conference to give them the security of tenure, promotion and perhaps income. I saw that temper manifest itself in the effort which was recently made, and fortunately defeated, to set up a compulsory placement system for our colleagues.

If the intention is to convert our Conference into an industrial union, then it should be done after a frank and thorough discussion by the members of the Conference, and by constitutional revisions. The transformation should not be brought about surreptiously by the enactment from time to time of compulsory measures, financial or otherwise, which are contrary to the character and traditions of the Conference. Dr. Joseph L. Fink

-2-

February 10, 1953

Surely in this world of steadily mounting compulsory collectivization and coordinat ion, there should be preserved a few free voluntary associations of men, and certainly religious leaders, above all men, ought to be very apprehensive of the trend towards regimentation.

With all good wishes, I remain

As ever yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er cc: Dr. Solomon B. Freehof DELAWARE AVENUE BUFFALO, N.Y.

OFFICE OF THE RABBI JOSEPH L. FINK, PH. D., D.D.

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February 11, 1953

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver The Temple East 105th Street at Ansel Road Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Friend:

I want you to know how much I appreciate your interesting and valuable letter to me concerning the Equalization Fund. I am waiting to have a long talk with you on the subject because it involves some basic principles of Conference philosophy.

I am writing this note merely to give you the subject of my address on March 1. It is entitled "The Ultimate Victory." I note that this is Purim Day and I shall use the Purim theme.

I am glad that you advised me that you do not wear a robe and that the address will be broadcast.

It will be a high privilege to occupy your pulpit. Fondest good wishes to you and to yours.

Sincerely,

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Joseph L. Fink

JLF:as

# RABBI SOLOMON B. FREEHOF, D. D. RODEF SHALOM TEMPLE FIFTH AND MOREWOOD AVENUES PITTSBURGH 13. PENNSYLVANIA

February 11, 1953

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver Congregation Tifereth Israel E. 105th St. and Ansel Rd. Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Abba:

I am mailing you two little books that belong in your field more than in mine. I hope you will find them interesting.

By the time you get this letter you will have seen the American Zionist with an article that I wrote in your honor. There was an opening section to the paper as I wrote it originally which spoke of you and what I thought of you but the editors told me that the article need not be about you at all but simply it should be dedicated to you which I did. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that the article was not to deal with you but simply be dedicated to you, the opening paragraph spoke of you and what I thought of you. However, the editors needing to shorten the article, took what I said about you and cut it down and put it in italics below in excerpt as if it were from a letter from me. I hope you like the article. At all events, I meant to contribute to this issue which was published in your honor.

I am not a king but this year especially you are the man I "delight to honor."

Sincerely,

SBF:1.jc

February 13, 1953

Dr. Solomon B. Freehof 1915 Fifth Avenue Pittsburgh 13, Penna.

My dear Sol:

First, let me thank you for your lovely gift of the two books, a Commentary on Song of Songs and Mogen David. I am very grateful to you for them.

I have not as yet had the great pleasure of reading your article in the American Zionist. In fact, I have had very little opportunity to read anything in the last few weeks except letters and telegrams, etc. which have poured in from all over the world and which I have had to acknowledge. I am taking along quite a bit of reading matter with me when I leave for the Coast Monday morning, and I shall give myself the pleasure of reading your article at leisure. A few people in New York last week spoke to me about your article and were loud in their public of it.

I am sure that by this time you have received a copy of the letter which I sent to Fink. I have had an acknowledgement from Joe in which he writes: "I want you to know how much I appreciate your interesting and valuable letter to me concerning the Equalisation Fund. I am waiting to have a long talk with you on the subject because it involves some basic principles of Conference philosophy."

By the way, Joe will occupy my pulpit on March 1st while I will be on the Pacific Coast.

With warmest regards to you and Lillian, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

# 

Office of the President: CLIFTON AVENUE · CINCINNATI 20, OHIO

May 11, 1953

Dear Abba:

I hope very much that you will be able to attend the Conference. On June 24th I am going to give a paper on the status and plans of the College-Institute. It will deal, of course, with the merger.

There is a group of irreconcilables which is determined to make a "skandal" at the Conference.

During the <sup>B</sup>iennial there was a noon-day reception held by the New York Board of Reform Rabbis for all the Reform rabbis attending the Biennial. At that meeting Rabbi Berman went into a frothing tirade against the merger plan as adopted by the Board. Rabbi Phil Bernstein asked a question which was intended to elicit a commitment from me that the Board's action with regard to the merger would be affected or could be changed by any vote taken on it at the CCAR meeting as the result of the discussion there. I said that that would not be the case. The actions of the Board of Governors of the College-Institute are not subject to votes taken by any other body.

Some of our particular "friends" are going to try to make a big issue out of this matter. I hope that you will be present to join in the discussion.

With warmest regards, I am, as ever,

Sincerely yours,

Nelson Glueck

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, 19810 Shaker Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio May 14, 1953

Dr. Nelson Glueck Hebrew Union College Cincinnati 2, Ohio

My dear Nelson:

Thank you for your letter of May 11th. I am not at all sure that I shall be able to attend the CCAR meeting. My plans are still quite indefinite. Should I attend it, I shall, of course, want to participate in the discussion. Your position that the authority of the Board of Governors is not subject to any vote of the CCAR is, of course, a correct one.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

Dear Colleague:

The undersigned have thought that our colleagues might be interested in knowing our position with regard to the report dealing with the final integration of the Merger as a dopted by the Board of Governors on March 26th.

1. We have always interpreted Merger as the de facto unification of the Cincinnati and New York branches of the School.

2. We favor the implementation of the Plan as adopted by the Board of Governors. We regard the Plan as being consistent with the original intent of the Merger, and as the logical sequel of previous action.

3. We deplore the fact, that in addition to honest differences of opinion regarding details, irrelevant and sometimes irresponsible statements and inferences of an ideological nature have been made.

4. Since the implementation of the Merger will strengthen our single cause by eliminating all avoidable and unbearably costly duplication; since it will provide for the best possible utilization of the facilities of our Cincinnati and New York centers; since the details of the Plan respecting curriculum have been worked out by those responsible for the curriculum; since it is obvious that as time and experience demonstrate, changes in the Plan and particularly in curriculum organization can and certainly will be made subject to the approval of the Board of Governors,

5. We affirm our hearty approval of the Merger Plan for final integration as adopted by the Board and bespeak for our single school the continuing and responsible loyalty of all our colleagues.

June 1, 1953 Dana abben: Our good friend Som Woll has told me that he is going to see you doday. I am asking him to bring this to you for your examination and revision, so the basis of a I statement, which you, together with some of our colleagues, might be willing to sign and send out to the members of the CCAR or the HUK-JIR alumni organization. This is in accordance with your suggestion to me over the phone the other day. I mad your half. Os ever, yours, Nelson

June 3, 1953

Rabbi Samuel Wohl Isaac M. Wise Temple Reading Road and No. Crescent Cincinnati, Ohio

My dear Sam:

I am enclosing herewith the revised draft of a letter which is to be sent to a selected list of members of the CCAR. This draft is, of course, subject to revision. There should be at least 10 or 15 names appended as signators to the letter.

I was very happy to see you yesterday. Keep well.

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er Enc.

# TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS:

# Dear Colleague:

You have undoubtedly received from the President of the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion a copy of the reorganisation plan which was approved by the Board of Governors of the HUC-JIR at its meeting last March. We hope that you will give careful consideration to the report and to the reasons which prompted the reorganization proposals. You have probably received communications and read statements in the public press which criticize the action which was taken by the Board and which raises issues which appear to us to be fictitious.

The subject will come up for discussion at the forthcoming sessions of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. It is altogether fitting that our colleagues should have an opportunity to exchange views at that time and to acquaint themselves fully with the facts and the situation which prompted the reorganization plan. We deplore, however, the efforts which are being made to becloud the issue with suspicions and with ideologic motivations which simply do not exist.

The HUC-JIR merger was achieved five years ago. Some of us did not favor that merger, but after prolonged discussions and negotiations, it was carried through. We all accepted it as a <u>de facto</u> unification of the two institutions into one - one school which would operate two branches - one in Cincinnati, and one in New York.

The experiences of the last five years have led tue authorities charged with the administration of the School to seek a closer coordination of the work of the two branches, buth as a matter of administrative efficiency, the optimum in scholastic training, and as a result of pressing financial considerations. The main purpose of the new plan is to eliminate all avoidable and invariably costly duplication, to utilize to the best advantage the facilities both of the Cincinnati and the New York centers. Continuation of the present system is quite intolerable. The proposed plan is a helpful compromise solution. Both branches of the School will have important functions to perform in the total program of the HUC-JIR. The New York branch of the HUC-JIR will offer a complete course of study leading to the degree of B.H.L. and also a sixth year, the intern year. The New York branch will also hease the School of Education and our School of Sacred Music. In all probability there will be other departments developed if the HUC-JIR extends its services to the American Jewish community, whose logical locale will be in the city of New York.

No question of prestige is involved as between the two branches, and certainly, no question of ideology. And none should be raised to prejudice this plan. The step which has been taken is a logical development in the final integration of the marger which was adopted five years ago. Experience may show that the new plan may likewise require some modification in the future as time and experience will demonstrate. The Board of Governors, which certainly has the interest of the College and of American Liberal Judaism close to heart, and upon which our Alumni are represented, may be trusted to make the necessary adjustments and revisions from time to time.

Above all, let us bear in mind that we have now the interests of only one institution to consider, not of two competitive institutions in a temporary, competitive, suspicious and unhappy alliance.

Very sincerely yours,

-2-

OFFICERS: 1952-1953

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

BARNETT R. BRICKNER, Vice-President Cleveland, Ohio

PHINEAS SMOLLER, Treasurer Los Angeles, Calif.

SIDNEY M. LEFKOWITZ, Recording Secretary Jacksonville, Florida

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SIDNEY L. REGNER, Chairman of Publications Reading, Pa.

BERTRAM W. KORN, Editor of Yearbook Philadelphia, Pa.

# Central Conference of American Rabbis

OFFICE OF PRESIDENT 599 DELAWARE AVENUE BUFFALO 2, N. Y.

June 15, 1953

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD

SAMUEL A. BERMAN, Jersey City, N. J. PHILIP S. BERNSTEIN, Rochester, N. Y. HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN, Milwaukee, Wis. ALBERT S. GOLDSTEIN, Bronx, N. Y. MORRIS LIEBERMAN, Baltimore, Md. JEROME R. MALINO, Danbury, Conn. ELY E. PILCHIK, Newark, N. J. SIDNEY L. REGNER, Reading, Pa. KARL RICHTER, Michigan City, Ind. JACOB R. ROTHSCHILD, Atlanta, Ga. HAROLD I. SAPERSTEIN, Malverne, N. Y. NATHANIEL S. SHARE, New Orleans, La. ALBERT M. SHULMAN, South Bend, Ind. JOSEPH I. WEISS, Neponset, N. Y.

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

My dear Friend:

I do hope that you will attend the Estes Park convention.

The situation with reference to the H.U.C.-J.I.R. merger is rapidly approaching a boiling point. It looks as if we will have a serious battle on our hands. I am at a loss to understand the unreasonableness and intransigence of some of the men from the J.I.R. group. It will be of immense help to the Conference if you can be present. I hope you will come.

With fond personal greetings to you, I am

Sincerely yours,

Joseph L. Fink

JLF:as

# 17 June 1953.

Dr. Nelson Glueck Hebrew Union College Cincinnati, Ohio.

Dear Nelson:

A Aria

Since I shall be unable to attend the CCAR Convention at Estes Park I am anxious in some way to reply to the several communications received in the last few days from you and from a group of distinguished past presidents of the Conference on the subject of the merger. Some of the thoughts I shall express herein I have already covered in private conversation with you but I am anxious for you to have this written statement also. I am sending a carbon of this to each of the six men whose names are affixed to the communication of 11 June 1953 so that the entire group of you will know exactly how I feel.

To begin with I agree that there are no genuine ideological issues involved in the merger plan and that the members of the Board of the College-Institute are conscientiously seeking to serve the best interests of Reform Judaism and of k'lal Yisroel.

I agree entirely, also, that there is need for a real merger and that the fictional merger of the past several years under which two separate institutions were being maintained by a single Board and President makes no sense whatsoever. Something like the step now contemplated is, as far as I am concerned, inevitably in the right direction.

I, nevertheless, have grave personal fears on two counts. First of all, I believe that despite the good intentions of the Board the plan that has now been announced will result in the New York school withering on the vine. This, I know all of you would agree, would be a catastrophs.

In the second place, I am also convinced from my personal experience of seventeen years in the New York area that by reducing our New York school to so great an extent we will risk loosing a great deal of the ground that has been painfully gained in the New York area since your ascendency to the presidency of the College-Institute. I am very anxious, as I know you must be, to see our gains in this area maintained.

I have turned this matter over with utmost seriousness again and again in my heart and mind and have reached the

# 17 June 1953.

Dr. Nelson Glueck continued - page 2.

-3:24

conclusion that while I completely accept the principles and premises on which the merger plan is predicated, I nevertheless feel that some further adjustment should be made now and that it may be too late for corrective changes a few years hance.

Specifically, it would be my suggestion that not less than two full years of the rabbinical course be required at the New York school and that ordination take place at the end of the sixth and final year rather than at some prior point In the student's career. I honestly believe that this would fulfill the purposes which you and the Board have in mind without risking the dangers that I fear in the merger plan otherwise.

I have refrained from identifying myself with any organized opposition and I assure you that regardless of the final disposition, the College-Institute will continue under all circumstances to have my strongest personal loyalty and the largest financial support I am able to give it. I know, however, that you would not want me to have these thoughts in mind without extending to you the courtesy of having expressed them forthrightly.

I hope with all my heart that the discussion at Estes Park is not an acrimonious one and that regardless of the decision reached there all of us can continue to help build our beloved Alma Mater from strength to strength.

//Though this is somewhat in the nature of a formal communication with copies going to others, I nevertheless want to extend best wishes from Ruth and myself to Helen and yourself.

As ever.

For joier information with princes repords. Roland

Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn

rbg/b

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS:

Dear Colleague:

15

C P Y

> You have undoubtedly received from the President of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion a copy of the reorganization plan which was approved by the Board of Governors of the HUC-JIR at its meeting last March. We hope that you will give careful consideration to the report and to the reasons which prompted the reorganization proposals. You have probably received communications and read statements in the public press which criticize the action which was taken by the Board and which raises issues which appear to us to be fictitious.

The subject will come up for discussion at the forthcoming sessions of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. It is altogether fitting that our colleagues should have an opportunity to exchange views at that time and to acquaint themselves fully with the facts and the situation which prompted the reorganization plan. We deplore, however, the efforts which are being made to becloud the issue with suspicions and ideologic motivations which simply do not exist.

The HUC-JIR merger was achieved five years ago. Some of us did not favor that merger, but, after prolonged discussions and negotiations, it was carried through. We all accepted it as a de facto unification of the two institutions into one - one school which would operate two branches - one in Cincinnati, and one in New York.

The experience of the last five years have led the authorities charged with the administration of the School to seek a closer coordination of the work of the two branches, both as a matter of administrative efficiency and of the optimum in the scholastic training. The main purpose of the new plan is to eliminate all avoidable and invariably costly duplication, to utilize to the best advantage the facilities both of the Cincinnati and the New York centers. Continuation of the present system is quite intolerable. The proposed plan is a helpful compromise solution. Both branches of the School will have important functions to perform in the total program of the HUC-JIR. The New York branch of the HUC-JIR will offer a complete course of study leading to the degree of B.H.L. and also a sixth year, the intern year. The New York branch will also house the School of Education and our School of Sacred Music. In all probability there will be other departments developed if the HUC-JIR extends its services to the American Jewish community, whose logical locale will be in the City of New York.

No question of prestige is involved as between the two branches, and, certainly, no question of ideology. And none should be raised to prejudice this plan. The step which has been taken is a logical development in the final integration of the merger which was adopted five years ago. Time and experience may show that the new plan may likewise require some modification in the future. The Board of Governors, which certainly has the interest of the College and of American Liberal Judaism close to heart, and upon which our Alumni are represented, may be trusted to make the necessary adjustments and revisions from time to time.

Above all, let us bear in mind that we have now the interests of only one institution to consider, not of two competitive institutions in a temporary, competitive, suspicious, and unhappy alliance.

Very sincerely yours,

Abba Hillel Silver Julian Morgenstern

Emil W. Leipziger David Lefkowitz Abraham J. Feldman Jacob R. Marcus



2.

# **TENTATIVE PROGRAM**

# Sixty-Fourth

# ANNUAL CONVENTION

# of the

# **CENTRAL CONFERENCE**

of

# AMERICAN RABBIS



ESTES PARK, COLORADO STANLEY HOTEL Tuesday, June 23rd to

Sunday, June 28th Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Three

# PROGRAM

# MONDAY EVENING, JUNE 22, 1953 — 8:00 O'CLOCK MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

# TUESDAY MORNING, JUNE 23, 1953 — 9:30 O'CLOCK MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

### TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 23, 1953 - 2:30 O'CLOCK

Opening Prayer	
Greetings	Barnett R. Brickner
JEWISH SCHOLARSHIP AND CHRISTIAN	
TRANSLATION OF THE HEBREW BIBLE	Harry M. Orlinsky

# TUESDAY EVENING, JUNE 23, 1953 - 8:00 O'CLOCK

Opening Prayer	Nelson	Glueck
Reading of Weekday Worship Service		
President's Message	Joseph	L. Fink

### MEMORIAL TRIBUTES:

Henry Cohen	Leo J. Stillpass
Eugene Mannheimer	
Isaac E. Marcuson	Emil W. Leipziger
S. F. Mendelsohn	Jacob Singer
Karl Rosenthal	Manfred Swarsensky
Phineas Smoller	Alexander A. Steinbach
Louis Wolsey	James G. Heller
doration, Kaddish and Benediction	

## WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 24, 1953 - 9:30 O'CLOCK

# **REPORTS**:

President	Joseph L. Fink
*Financial Secretary	Maurice Goldblatt
Treasurer	Stanley R. Brav
*Finance	Maurice Goldblatt
*Investments	Stanley R. Brav
*Publications	Sidney L. Regner
Recording Secretary	Sidney M. Lefkowitz
*Rabbinical Journal	
*Solicitation of Funds	Nathan A. Perilman
*Synagogue Council	
Contemporaneous History	Bertram W. Korn
Art and Literature	Ely E. Pilchik
*Synagogue Activities	Eugene J. Lipman
*Arbitration and Ethics	Emil W. Leipziger
*Chaplaincy	Morris Lieberman
Equalization Fund	David J. Seligson
Division of Religious Activities of J. W. B. Responsa	
12:45 Noonday Service and Sermonette	Louis J. Cashdan

# WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 24, 1953 - 2:00 O'CLOCK

THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN HERITAGE — A F	PSYCHOLOGICAL
REVALUATION AND A NEW APPROAC	H Henry E. Kagan
Report on Constitution	Edward E Klein

# WEDNESDAY EVENING, JUNE 24, 1953 - 7:30 O'CLOCK

# THE STATE OF THE REFORM MOVEMENT, a Symposium

Α.	Our College-Institute	Nelson Glueck
В.	Philosophy	
	Recent History	Lou H. Silberman
	Current Trends	Abraham Shusterman
	Goals	Herbert A. Friedman
C.	Discussants	Morton B. Applebaum
		Leon Kronish

### THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 25, 1953 - 9:00 O'CLOCK

### Opening Prayer Sanford Rosen Business Meeting

#### **REPORTS:**

*Religious Work in Universities	Abraham Shusterman
*Curator of Archives	Sheldon Blank
Synagogue Music	Malcolm H Stern
Commission on Justice and Peace	Roland B. Gittelsohn
Commission on Church and State	Jacob R. Shankman
Marriage, Family and Home	Jerome D. Folkman
Committee on Intergroup Work	Julian B. Feibelman
*Rabbinical Pension Board	George Zenin
*Committee on Tenure	Emil W Leinziger
Advisory Placement Committee	Jacob P Rudin
Recruitment for the Rabbinate	Arthur J. Lelvveld
*Observer to the United National Organizations	Louis I. Newman
12:45 Noonday Service and Sermonette	

## THURSDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 25, 1953 - 2:00 O'CLOCK

#### PRACTICAL PROBLEMS OF THE MINISTRY, a Symposium

	Julius Mark, Chairman
Liturgy	Solomon E. Starrels
Retreats for Laymen	Gunther Plaut
New Temples	Robert I. Kahn
Adult Education	Max Maccoby
Rabbi Congregation and Community	Ferdinand M. Isserman
Committee Meetings	

#### THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 25, 1953 - 7:45 O'CLOCK

# CONTEMPORARY CURRENTS IN JEWISH THEOLOGY, a Symposium Samuel S. Cohon

Samuel S. Cohon Abraham J. Heschel David Polish

#### FRIDAY MORNING, JUNE 26, 1953 - 9:30 O'CLOCK

Opening Prayer	Martin Zion
REPORTS:	
Liturgy	Bernard J. Bamberger
Projects in Israel	Harold I. Saperstein
*Relief	David J. Seligson
*Subvention	Felix A. Levy
*Distribution of Union Prayer Book	Samuel Wohl
*Scouting	Philip D. Bookstaber
*Foreign Correspondence	Frank E. Rosenthal
*Unaffiliated	David Max Eichorn
*World Union for Progressive Judaism	David Wice

#### FRIDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 26, 1953 - 2:00 O'CLOCK

#### **REPORTS:**

Religious Education	Lawrence W. Schwartz
Adult Religious Education	Max Maccoby
Commission on Jewish Education	Barnett R. Brickner

NEW GOALS IN JEWISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, a Symposium Lawrence W. Schwartz, Chairman Abraham N. Franzblau

Allan Tarshish Edward Zerin

#### FRIDAY EVENING SERVICES, JUNE 26, 1953 - 8:30 O'CLOCK

Opening Prayer	
Reading of Service	Milton Rosenbaum
Conference Lecture, "Jewish Religious Contributions	
to the Making of America"	Samuel Sandmel
Conferring of Honorary Life Memberships	Joseph L. Fink
Adoration and Kaddish	William B. Schwartz
Benediction	

#### SATURDAY MORNING SERVICES, JUNE 27, 1953 - 10:30 O'CLOCK

Opening Prayer	Charles B. Latz
	ilton Greenwald
	Morton J. Cohn
Conference Sermon, "And Moses Grew"	
Adoration and Kaddish	
Benediction	Jerome Rosen

#### SATURDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 27, 1953

#### 2:00 - 3:30 O'CLOCK

## PSYCHIATRY AND PASTORAL COUNSELING, a Symposium

	Albert A. Goldman, Chairman
Counseling the Bereaved	Robert L. Katz
Counseling the Sick	Israel J. Gerber
Counseling Adolescents	Rayfield D. Helman
Counseling of Marital Problems	Albert M. Shulman

### 3:30 - 5:30 O'CLOCK

### SERMONICS AND SERMON TECHNIQUES

The Use of Hasidic Material in Preaching	Israel Bettan, Chairman Frederic A, Doppelt
The Sermon and the Jewish Scene	Leon I. Feuer
Current Thought and the Weekly Sermon	Nathan A. Perilman
Textual Preaching	Norbert L. Rosenthal
The Use of Modern Hebrew Literature in Prea	ching Samson A. Shain
The Social Message in the Sermon of Today	

### SATURDAY EVENING, JUNE 27, 1953 - 6:30 O'CLOCK

Alumni Association Dinner

#### SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 28, 1953 - 9:30 O'CLOCK

#### **REPORTS:**

Resolutions Committee President's Message Committee Nominating Committee Unfinished Business Committee on Thanks

**Closing Prayer** 

Emil W. Leipziger

#### SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 28, 1953 - 2:30 O'CLOCK

Meeting of the Executive Board

Reports marked \* to be presented to the Executive Board only. All others to be condensed.



FROM RABBI ABRAHAM J. FELDMAN 145 BALLARD DRIVE WEST HARTFORD, 7, CONN.

To Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

"JUST A LINE"

June 30, 1953

I thought that the copies of the enclosed correspondence will be of interest to you. LOUIS I. NEWMAN New York

# 271 Central Park W.

June 26, 1953

For Your Information

Rabbi Abraham J. Feldman, D.D. 145 Ballard Drive West Hartford 7, Conn.

My dear Rabbi:

I received your acknowledgment of my message for your anniversary almost at the same time as the letter regarding the "Unification Plan" to which your signature was attached.

I can understand the reasons why the other signatures are on the letter, but with reference to your own, let me remind you of the following:

As I recall it, you came to the Free Synagogue to do "internship" work in Flushing after receiving your Ordination in Cincinnati. If Doctor Wise, of whom you thus became a disciple, had deemed such "internship" sufficient, he would not have founded the Jewish Institute of Religion in 1922, in order to train Liberal Rabbis and to give them Semikah in New York. Whoever revised Doctor Wise's autobiography retained your name as one of the men associated with him in the past. It therefore seems inexplicable that under these circumstances you should have signed your name to a document defending a plan which would turn the clock back to the days before 1922. You of all persons should be aware of the true situation with reference to Doctor Wise's work, and you should have been the last person to have linked yourself with any effort to diminish or destroy it.

Sincerely,

Louis I. Newman

June 29, 1953

COPY

For Year information

Dr. Louis I. Newman 271 Central Park West New York City

My dear Doctor Newman:

I have read and reread your letter of June 26th, 1953, several times-and honestly, I cannot believe my eyes! It is an incredible performance! True it is that your zealotry has perplexed me often. But even in the light of that I had a right to expect from you some demonstration of anivus in judging and writing to a colleague who for all his insignificance was one of the several Rabbis who united to give you semichah. In passing I might say that I noted duly the omission of the names of Bernard Cantor (of blessed memory) and Abraham J. Feldman from the account of your ordination which you recently published. The fact that I noted it should please you ... By this standard of conduct and in the light of your reference to it in your letter, I am to presume, I suppose, that had you been the reviser of Dr. Wise's autobiography my name would not have appeared in that volume at all. The thought is frightening. At the same time it points-does it not?--- to the working of the Divine Hashgachah in my life.

The tenor of your letter is so utterly different from anything and everything that Dr. Wise-olov hasholom-ever said to me in the years following my internship with him. As I grew older in service and mature in judgment I found myself in disagreement with him on many occasions. Frequently I disagreed with him on Zionist policy. I disagreed with him in the matter of the American Jewish Congress. I voiced my dissent again and again. And he knew it, because I always sent him my published dissents. He used to tease me about these. But though I exercised my privilege as Jew and American to disagree with some of his views and some of his actions, neither my dissent nor his reaction were ever of a personal character, and I loved him as an elder brother even as he gave me many evidences of warm affection and regard for me and mine. You see, Doctor Newman, Dr. Wise was a big man and he could afford to be big toward those of us who disagreed with him amicably and respectfully. He was never pontifical towards me, never condescending. Dr. Wise was a big man.

I have read all the literature that has been sent to me, as to other alumni, on the subject of the merger. I even read your brochure. I have read it all carefully. I confess to the thought that after the Board of Governors has reached its decision, the procedure which followed was not of the most skillfull or wise. I think that was unfortunate and perhaps tragic.

But-at the same time- the principle of merger, of unification, is in my judgment sound, even if some modifications of the plan might be made and I think should be made. When the principle was attacked in the manner in which it was attacked by you and some others, I felt that it was wise and right for some of us older men to speak up and to point out that the issue was being befogged. Hence, after reading the very temperate statement which was prepared by one of the signatories, I authorized my signature to be appended.

Now, you dare question my motives for

signing that letter. For some peculiar reason you do not admit of the possibility of an honest disagreement with you and, therefore, you seem to be incapable of even talking or writing to one who thus disagrees, courteously, urbanely, as colleague to colleague, without suggesting unworthy motives to him. Read your own words:

> "I can understand the reasons why the other signatures are on the letter, but with

reference to your own, let me remind you etc." What "reasons" beyond their honest convictions in a given situation? And why do you, quite gratuitously, undertake to"remind" me of anything? A number of questions come to mind.

First---What gives you the right to speak---or write---to a colleague in that manner?

Second-What kind of "logic" is it that you "remind" me of-that because I served an internship in the Free Synagogue, therefore and thereafter through the rest of my life I should follow unquestioningly, submissively, slavishly whatever was promulgated from West Sixty-eighth Street? Seeing that I have been led to question some matters which were said to come miSinai-even as you presumably dojwherein is the chet of not being a yes-man to 68th Street andif I may dare indulge in the even greater blasphemy- of not being a yes-man even to West Eighty-third Street and Central Park West?

Third-What gives you the right (I resist the temptation of using a different and better word) to impute to me the desire to "destroy" Dr. Wise's work in connection with the Jewish Institute of Religion?

For reasons of health it was not possible for me to attend the CEAR convention in Colorado. As I write this I do not know what transpired there. I believed that the situation could be eased with amity and reason and justice-but not by such letters as you wrote to me and probably to others.

One final word. Mai desanai loch etc. I am sure that you do not like to be preached at or talked down to or accused of unholy motives, etc. Neither do I. So-L'chu no v'nivochechoh, and let us be kindly and gentlemanly about it.

I am going into the hospital next week for an operation.

If you choose to write me--not condescendingly, not pontifically, not with unwarranted imputations-I shall be happy to hear from you. I do not ask you to agree with me. I only suggest that since both of us loved Stephen S. Wise even though we did not always agree with him or he with us; if we must disagree let us do so in a friendly, gentlemanly way, without casting doubt upon the other's integrity.

If, on the other hand, your zeal does not permit you to write to me as friend to friend, then please do not write me, at least not during the period of my hospitalization and convalescence.

Sincerely,

Dr. Abraham J. Feldman

AJF/SZ

# SIDNEY E. GOLDSTEIN 30 West 68 Street New York 23, N.Y.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

# Dear Colleagues:

The members of the Central Conference of American Rabbis have received a number of communications in protest against the plan of reorganization of the curriculum of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. I should like to be present at the meeting of the Conference when this matter is discussed; but my health does not permit me to make the trip. However, I trust that as a graduate of the Hebrew Union College and as one of the founders of the Jewish Institute of Religion and as a member of the Faculty from the beginning, I may address you through this letter.

After studying the plan of reorganization carefully and after a number of conferences with Dr. Glueck I am convinced that the basis for the sorry and distressing situation in which we find ourselves is fundamentally a matter of funds. Dr. Glueck, whose training and travels and experience give him a world-wide outlook, is fully aware of the need for a virile and well-developed center of Liberal Judaism in New York City. He knows that two and a half million Jews, one-half of the Jews in America, dwell on the eastern seaboard and that they deserve a vital and vigorous program such as Dr. Wise and his associates planned when they founded the Jewish Institute of Religion.

But it is simply impossible for Dr. Glueck to maintain and to further this program with the funds that are now available to him. The plan that he proposes is not a matter of choice. It is the result of necessity, a necessity that has been imposed upon him by the rabbis and the congregations and the communities that have failed to give him adequate support. The basic question that we all face in this controversy is simply this: How can we make available to Dr. Glueck the funds he needs to maintain adequately the two Institutions, both of which are needed, one in Cincinnati and one in New York?

One thing that we can do is to secure additional funds from our congregations and from our communities. This ought not to be impossible. One of the Courses I give in the Institute is on "The Synagogue" and it is my duty to keep myself posted upon what is happening in the Synagogues in America. I know that congregations all over the country, and especially in the larger cities, have raised their dues or contributions; that they have expanded their programs; and that they have increased the salary of the rabbi and other members of the staff. But I find, with rare exceptions, that they have not correspondingly increased their contributions to the program that we are desperately trying to develop in the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. In truth I know that some congregations that are now protesting against this plan of reorganization have made no increase whatever in their contributions to the Combined Campaign. This sounds incredible, but it is nevertheless true. It does not seem fair on our part to protest against a condition for which we ourselves are responsible and that we have made little or no effort to correct through constructive action.

The second thing that we can do is to urge and to secure from the Combined Campaign a larger share of funds for the College and the Institute. The Combined Campaign this year will probably collect \$1,200,000 and the plan is to divide this sum fifty-fifty, that is, to give one-half to the Union and one-half to the College and the Institute. I cannot believe that it is either wise or fair to give the Union \$600,000 and to give only the same sum, that is, \$600,000 for the maintenance of two Seminaries. I know that the Union organization has developed a large staff and a rich program. But I am firmly of the

-2-

opinion that the <u>first charge</u> upon the Combined Campaign should be adequate funds with which to maintain the College in Cincinnati and the Institute in New York. I, therefore, believe that we should insist upon a redistribution of the Combined Campaign Fund, a redistribution that will make it possible for Dr. Glueck to develop the program that he wants and that we want and that we need.

I know only too well that Dr. Wise's last years were years of exhaustion as a result of his efforts to raise funds for the Institute; and I also know that Dr. Glueck is now expending himself beyond reason in an effort to meet an emergency for which we and our congregations and communities are directly responsible. Here in New York I live in the center of things and I am completely convinced that the one solution to our problem lies in making available to Dr. Glueck another \$250,000 or \$300,000. With this sum at his disposal he could develop the two Institutions and at the same time give us the service and the leadership that the Faculties and the students so greatly deserve. Unless we are willing to labor and to sacrifice both the College and the Institute will unquestionably suffer and the great Jewish community in and near New York will be deprived of the stimulus and the inspiration that a fully developed Jewish Institute of Religion can give. This is one way in which we can wisely and constructively solve our problem, and this we shall do if we have sufficient faith in our Movement and sufficient concern for the welfare and the advancement of the College and the Institute, both of which are dear to us.

> Fraternally yours, SIDNEY E. GOLDSTEIN

-3-

July 2, 1953

Rabbi Abraham J. Feldman 145 Ballard Drive West Hartford 7, Conn.

My dear Abe:

Thank you for the exchange of letters which you sent me. I am very happy that you rubbed the nose of this hypochondrias in the dirt. He well deserved it.

I am sorry to hear that you are going to have an operation. I hope that it will not be serious and I pray for your speedy recovery.

I, too, was unable to attend the Conference at Estes Park. Rabbi Stone was on his vacation and I felt that I should remain in the city. It is not clear to me, on reading the reports in the press, just exactly what the outcome of the debate was, but I gather that the issue has been postponed and that the Board of the College will have the final say in the matter, which is, of course, as it should be.

With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS :er