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

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

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

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Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1953-1954.

CENTRAL CONFERENCE  
OF  
AMERICAN RABBIS

ABRAHAM J. FELDMAN  
CHAIRMAN

SOLOMON B. FREEHOF

~~JAMES C. HELLER~~

JACOB R. MARCUS

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

*Philip S. Bernstein*

COMMITTEE ON APPEALS

OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN  
701 FARMINGTON AVENUE  
HARTFORD 7, CONN.

December 8, 1953

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPEALS:

I am enclosing copy of a letter which I received some weeks ago from Rabbi Morris Lieberman, Chairman of the Committee on Chaplaincy.

It appears from this letter that the only appeal which needs urgent consideration, is that of Rabbi Joseph D. Herzog, a graduate of 1953, HUC, who is serving his first pulpit in Park Forest, Ill. I have had a letter from his congregation urging that he be given deferment on the ground that he is their first permanent Rabbi (Park Forest is a new community), and that for him to go into the chaplaincy would disrupt all the work which they have done in establishing a new congregation and the only congregation in that community. I have spoken with Rabbi Herzog in person. He is not unwilling to go into the chaplaincy but he is torn between his sense of duty to the congregation and his sense of duty to his colleagues and the Rabbinate, and his patriotism.

As Rabbi Lieberman says correctly in the enclosed letter, the Appeals Committee in the past has not recognized "congregational needs" as sufficient ground for deferment.

I am wondering whether the members of the Committee on Appeals would not want to express their judgment in this matter, by mail rather than to go to the expense and the effort of calling a meeting of the Committee.

May I hear from you at your early convenience, since the Herzog matter is now becoming urgent, and if a meeting of our Committee is to be called it would take some time to make the necessary arrangements.

With warm personal regards, and every good wish, I am

Sincerely yours,

*Abe*

Dr. Abraham J. Feldman

AJF/sz



October 20, 1953

Dr. Abraham J. Feldman  
701 Farmington Avenue  
Hartford, Conn.

Dear Abe:

According to my records, the following men have requested deferment from the Committee on Chaplaincy:

Category A 1 - Amos Gunsberg, Herbert Hendel,  
Joseph D. Herzog, Sidney Jacobs,  
Nathan Goldberg, Randall Falk

Category A 2 - Seymour Baumrind, Benjamin  
Rudavsky, Henry Rabin, David  
Schwartz, Nathan Harshfield,  
Arthur Gilbert.

Under the present conditions as set up by the general military situation, the procurement efforts of all three rabbinical groups have practically come to a full stop. The Army has no openings until January, 1954 -- the Air Force is closed until October, 1954, and there is only one opening presently in the Navy. Immediate action therefore on all of these men who have requested deferment is not necessary, it seems to me. I should like to have a decision, however, about men who are in Category A 1 so that their status can be qualified prior to calling members of the February and June graduating classes of the HUC-JIR. Especially am I anxious for a decision to be made in the case of Joseph D. Herzog, whose appeal is pending on the grounds of congregational need. As a matter of general policy, the Appeals Committee has not sustained this as a ground for deferment, and I wonder whether this matter could not be resolved by correspondence between the members of the Committee without waiting until a formal meeting can be called. The other men who have requested deferment seem to have a record that would not entitle them to further postponement of the call to military service.



Page 2 - Dr. Feldman - Oct. 20, 1953

May I hear from you at your earliest convenience.  
I should like to go to Cincinnati some time within  
the next six weeks and I would not like to go until  
Herzog's case has been cleared up.

Hoping you are well

Sincerely,

Morris Lieberman





December 9, 1953

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

My dear Jos:

I need not tell you how profoundly grateful I am for your having come to us last Sunday and for the perfectly magnificent message which you delivered. Everybody is still talking about it. Both Virginia and I were happy to have had a chat with you following the meeting. The secretary of the Society will undoubtedly get in touch with you in connection with your traveling expenses, etc.

I am enclosing herewith my dues to the Central Conference of American Rabbis to the amount of \$10 which I understand is the minimum dues, and an additional \$90 as a contribution to the work of the Central Conference. I may wish to renew this contribution from time to time. As I explained to you, I cannot on principle approve of the action of the Central Conference of American Rabbis taken at its last meeting in fixing a scale of dues for its members based on their rabbinical salaries. It is a form of an income tax. It is not within the province of a voluntary professional organization like ours to impose.

It would have been far better if the Conference had established a basic membership dues, say of \$10, and then sustaining membership, say of \$25; Fellows or some other such name, \$50 or \$100, leaving it to the members of the Conference themselves to decide to what class of membership they wish to belong. This is done by many organizations which require more income than their basic dues makes available to them. At the same time it preserves the



December 9, 1953

voluntary character of the organization. I am sure that there are a great number of members in the Central Conference who would wish to contribute more than \$10 a year to it, especially in view of the many services which the Conference renders. I am further convinced that under such an arrangement the Conference would probably derive as much income from the members as it will under the one now adopted, which will lead to a good deal of undesirable pencil sharpening and evasions...

With all good wishes, I remain

As ever yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:rms  
enclosure





OFFICERS 1953-1954

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~~BUFFALO, N. Y.~~

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CLEVELAND, OHIO

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MAURICE GOLDBLATT, FINANCIAL SECRETARY  
INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

## CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

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

December 15, 1953

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JOEL Y. ZION, DENVER, COLO.

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

My dear Friend:

It was a great joy to be with you and to talk with you again. It is always an illuminating experience for me to have a conversation with you. You were very kind to speak so generously of my talk and I am glad that I had the opportunity to meet with you and with the men and women who have been so loyal to you through the years.

Many thanks for the check. You always come through in a big way. I know how much the Conference means to you and you must know how much you mean to the Conference. I can well see the justice of your plea and perhaps it may yet be possible to change the technique of getting more money. The method we adopted is really a lazy man's method. It makes it easier for the Treasurer of the Conference to get the money. Of course if all the members of the Conference were as generous as you, we would have no problem at all. However, I think I should present this matter to the Executive Board for revision and readjustment. In the meantime, many thanks for the check. It will help us get Regner started in his new job.

With kind greetings, I am,

Sincerely yours,

*Joe*  
Joseph L. Fink

JLF:as



OFFICERS: 1952-1953

JOSEPH L. FINK, PRESIDENT  
BUFFALO, N. Y.

BARNETT R. BRICKNER, VICE-PRESIDENT  
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STANLEY R. BRAY, TREASURER  
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BERTRAM W. KORN, CONFERENCE YEARBOOK  
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INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

## CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

OFFICE OF THE TREASURER  
ROCKDALE AND HARVEY AVENUES  
CINCINNATI, 29, OHIO

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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PHILIP S. BERNSTEIN, ROCHESTER, N. Y.  
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JOSEPH I. WEISS, NEPONSET, N. Y.

December  
15th  
1953

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

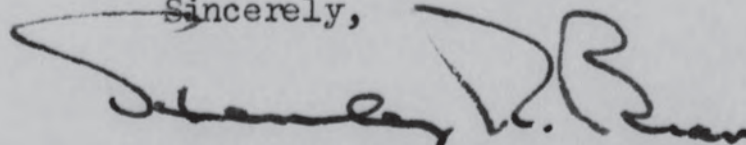
Dear Dr. Silver:

Joe Fink has relayed your check for \$100,  
designated as \$10 for dues and \$90 as a contribution. May  
I acknowledge receipt of same with gratitude.

At the same time he has sent me copy for our  
files of your views concerning a more adequate plan for in-  
creasing the income of the Central Conference of American  
Rabbis. This I shall hold in file. Either Joe or I will  
call it to the attention of the Executive Board at its next  
session. Possibly an even more effective procedure would be  
your offering this proposal at the next annual convention.

Meanwhile, warmest of personal greetings and  
regards!

Sincerely,



Rabbi Stanley R. Bray, Treasurer



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

4232 St. Charles Ave.,  
New Orleans, La.

February 3, 1954

Dear Colleagues:

The purpose of this letter is to obtain from the Committee on Arbitration & Ethics of the Conference, guidance as to procedure.

One of our Colleagues complains that the American Council for Judaism, in its Religious School project, has used subversive methods in encouraging some of his members to organize a Council Religious School. Recruiting letters were sent to members of his Congregation in which rabbinical assistance was promised. Indeed, the second of the series of letters mentioned by name a Rabbi who would help.

The complainant believes that what has been done in his community justifies the Conference in declaring this colleague guilty of unprofessional conduct, but is disinclined to make this direct charge since it would only embitter relationships and intensify the factionalism which has already been engendered.

He would prefer to have our Committee on Arbitration and Ethics inform the Rabbi officially representing the Council on this matter, that according to the facts stated by the complainant, he (the Council Rabbi) is doing that which is contrary to professional ethics, and ask for an explanation.

Further action by our Committee would, then, be dictated by the manner and the spirit of the response which our Committee would receive.

The purpose of this letter is to poll members of our Committee as to their preference of method:

I Shall we adopt the method proposed by the complainant and hopefully wait for an acknowledgment of error. - The method of Hillel let us call it.

or

II Shall we make a direct charge against the offender, hear his defense, judge it as a Committee and refer it to the Central Conference Executive Board. - The method of Shammai.

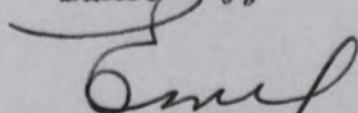
As Chairman, I am inclined to follow the spirit of our complainant.

Please vote for Method I or II and make any comment you desire.

Note that I have kept the case anonymous that you may consider the matter "in vacuo".

With fraternal greetings, I am

Sincerely,



Emil W. Leipziger.





# Congregation B'nai Jeshurun

ESTABLISHED 1848

ELY E. PILCHIK, RABBI

SOLOMON FOSTER, RABBI EMERITUS

MILTON M. MANSHEL, PRESIDENT

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver  
E. 105th St and Ansel Road  
Cleveland 6, Ohio

February 8, 1954

HIGH STREET AND WAVERLY AVENUE

NEWARK 3, N. J.

BIGELOW 2-4343

Dear Colleague:

The President of the Conference, Dr. Fink, has asked me to take on the Chairmanship of the CCAR Committee on Tercentenary. I accepted. He has named you to that Committee. This is my first communication with the members of the Committee. I need your help and I plead for a working together.

The only specific direction we have from the CCAR in this matter is the following recommendation by the Committee on President's Message which was unanimously adopted by the Conference in June 1953:

"We support the President in his eager desire that the CCAR play an appropriate part in the observance of the forthcoming American Jewish Tercentenary. Towards this end, we suggest that the President appoint a special committee which shall, in cooperation with other Jewish religious bodies, plan for the preparation of a volume stressing the spiritual contribution of the Jewish community in America." (page 191, CCAR Yearbook '53)

By way of background: I represented the Conference at the meeting of the Tercentenary Committee on Religious and Educational Participation, under the chairmanship of Rabbi Simon G. Kramer, last December. Nothing specific was accomplished and another meeting of this Committee is being planned. Beyond this, the American Tercentenary Committee has projected the official launching of the National Tercentenary on September 12, 1954 by way of a reconsecration service at the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue in New York, and the official closing on May 29, 1955 by way of an outdoor religious service at the Amphitheatre in Washington. The National Committee is also planning to issue a joint proclamation, declaring the period September 1954 through May 1955 as a time of religious observance and the designation of a Tercentenary Sabbath. This is all the progress that has been made to date by way of planning.

Negotiations are now under way for the projecting of a religious volume. I am not sanguine about the success of this. We certainly prefer to do it under the auspices of all three groups. Should we for whatever reason fail, then I think that we are charged with producing such a volume ourselves.

1. What are your suggestions with reference to the volume?
2. What other suggestions for CCAR observance of Tercentenary occur to you?
3. Do you think we ought try to arrange to meet together as a Committee before the Conference in June?

I'd appreciate your considered replies to these.

Cordially,

*Ely*

Same letter to Morton M. Berman, Philip S. Bernstein, Solomon B. Freehof, Norman Gerstenfeld, Joseph Klein, Bertram W. Korn, Jacob R. Marcus, Victor E. Reichert.



RABBI NORMAN GERSTENFELD  
WASHINGTON HEBREW CONGREGATION  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

FEBRUARY 19, 1954

DEAR DR. SILVER,

ATTACHED IS A LETTER I HAVE WRITTEN TO RABBI  
PILCHIK, CHAIRMAN CCAR TERCENTENARY COMMITTEE.  
I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR OPINION ON THE PROJECT.  
WILL YOU KINDLY WRITE ME AT YOUR EARLIEST CON-  
VENIENCE.

WITH FRIENDLY GREETINGS, I AM,  
CORDIALLY,

*Norman Gerstenfeld*

DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER  
TIFERETH ISRAEL  
E. 105TH ST. AND ANSEL ROAD  
CLEVELAND 6, OHIO



# Washington Hebrew Congregation

822 EIGHTH STREET, N.W.

Office of the Temple



WASHINGTON 1, D. C.

Phone District 8946

FEBRUARY 19, 1954

DEAR ELY,

IN RESPONSE TO YOUR LETTER OF FEBRUARY 8TH MAY I PRESENT THE FOLLOWING PROJECT FOR THE COMMITTEE'S CONSIDERATION:

OUR NEW TEMPLE WILL BE READY IN SEPTEMBER. WE EXPECT PRESIDENT EISENHOWER TO TAKE PART IN THE DEDICATION CEREMONIES SOME TIME IN SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER. SOON AFTER SUCCOTH WE PLAN TO HAVE A SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE TO INCLUDE AS GUEST PREACHERS SOME OF THE LEADING MEN IN THE REFORM RABBINATE, AS WELL AS DISTINGUISHED ORTHODOX AND CONSERVATIVE LAY AND RABBINIC LEADERS. THE UNIFYING THEME WOULD BE: "MAN'S OPPORTUNITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER FREEDOM".

I WILL BE HAPPY TO PROPOSE THAT THE CCAR COMMITTEE JOIN WITH US IN CHOOSING THE SPEAKERS. WE WILL PAY ALL EXPENSES. WE WILL ALSO PUBLISH THE VOLUME THAT WILL INCLUDE THESE MESSAGES. WE ALSO HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT WE CAN OBTAIN WIDE COVERAGE IN THE NATIONAL PRESS AND RADIO AND TELEVISION FACILITIES. WE ARE THE OLDEST HEBREW CONGREGATION IN THE CAPITAL OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY, FOUNDED BY A SPECIAL CHARTER FROM THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES A CENTURY AGO. THE SERIES CAN BE PRESENTED AS A JOINT EXPRESSION OF THE WASHINGTON HEBREW CONGREGATION AND THE CCAR COMMITTEE ON THE TERCENTENARY.

IN ORDER FOR ME TO PROCEED ALONG THESE LINES IT IS NECESSARY THAT I OBTAIN, WITHIN A FEW WEEKS, SOME FORMAL APPROVAL FROM THE COMMITTEE AND ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE BODY WITHIN THE CCAR. TO FACILITATE MATTERS I AM SENDING A COPY OF THIS LETTER TO EACH OF THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE LISTED IN YOUR LETTER, AS WELL AS TO JOE FINK AND BARNEY BRICKNER. I HOPE YOU LIKE THE IDEA. WILL YOU PLEASE LET ME HEAR FROM YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WITH ANY SUGGESTED CHANGES OF THIS PROJECT YOU MAY DEEM WISE. MAY I ALSO REQUEST THAT THIS MATTER BE KEPT AS QUIET AS POSSIBLE UNTIL THERE IS A FAVORABLE DECISION; FOR OTHERWISE SOME OTHER GROUP MAY SWIPE THE PROJECT FROM US. WE HAVE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO REACH OUT TO THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN THE COMING YEAR IN A MANNER THAT WILL BRING NEW STRENGTH TO AMERICAN JUDAISM.

CORDIALLY,

RABBI ELY E. PILCHIK  
CONGREGATION B'NAI JESHURUN  
HIGH ST. AND WAVERLY AVE.  
NEWARK 3, N.J.

CC - RABBIS MORTON M. BERMAN, PHILIP S. BERNSTEIN, BARNETT R. BRICKNER, JOSEPH L. FINK, SOLOMON B. FREEHOF, JOSEPH KLEIN, BERTRAM W. KORN, JACOB R. MARCUS, VICTOR E. REICHERT, ABBA HILLEL SILVER.



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

March 4, 1954

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

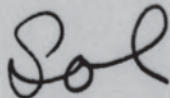
Dear Abba:

I got my bill from the Conference and on it the information that the \$5 dues that I had promptly paid was only a payment on account; that my dues from now on are \$100 a year.

You and I have talked about this once before when I was in Cleveland for your sixtieth birthday. There is no question that this income tax on the part of the Conference is unjust and a mistake. I am sure they would get the same amount of money if they continued the practice of equal dues for all and just raised the dues to \$10 or \$15 a year. They might even ask some of us to give a gift to the Conference, but to tax us according to income is, I am sure, wrong in policy. I am certain lawyers and doctors do not do it.

The question is can we or should we do anything about it? Those of us who pay higher dues are put in an uncomfortable position. If we protest, it is as if we are fighting only to save a few dollars. Have you any thoughts on the matter?

As ever,



Solomon B. Freehof

SBF:ljc



THE UNITED JEWISH CENTER

Danbury, Connecticut

JEROME R. MALINO  
RABBI

March 10th, 1954.

Dear Rabbi Silver,

I learned from Abe Feldman while we were discussing some business for the C.C.A.R. Liturgy Committee that you had written a piece called "What Is America?" which might well be included in the supplementary material we are preparing for the Tercentenary. I would greatly appreciate receiving a copy of this from you or an indication as to where I might find it.

With kindest regards and every good wish,

Yours sincerely,

*Jerome R. Malino*  
Jerome R. Malino

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,  
Congregation Tifereth Israel,  
East 105th St & Ansel Road,  
Cleveland 6, Ohio.

JRM:hk

*Abt "America"  
3/19*



**TODAY** is

*Someone's  
Special Blank  
Direct Envelope  
Birthday*

**TELEGRAPH YOUR GREETING**

*Call WESTERN UNION from any telephone*

# WESTERN UNION

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

1201

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DL=Day Letter

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VLT=Int'l Victory Ltr.

(47)

The time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

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RABBI ABBA H SILVER=

105 ST AND ANSEL RD=

FOR COMPLETING THE RECORD MAY I HAVE AN ANSWER TO MY CCAR  
ARBITRATION LETTER OF FEBRUARY THIRD PLEASE WRITE IT IS  
IMPORTANT=

RABBI EMIL W LEIPZIGER=



March 11, 1954

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

My dear Sol:

I was glad to hear from you. I felt exactly the same way as you do about the Conference income tax. You may be interested in the enclosed letter which I wrote to Fink some time ago. I also had occasion to talk it over with him when he was here for some occasion last December.

I am inclined to believe that they will reconsider this matter, certainly if more people make themselves heard on the matter. Personally, I do not intend to accept this arrangement at all.

I trust that you are well. With all good wishes, I remain

As ever yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:rms  
enclosure



March 11, 1954

Rabbi Emil W. Leipziger, Chairman  
Committee on Arbitration and Ethics  
Central Conference of American Rabbis  
4238 St. Charles Avenue  
New Orleans, Louisiana

My dear Colleague :

I refrained from answering your communication of February third because on the basis of the facts submitted in your letter, I could not give an opinion. You say that the complainant stated that recruiting letters were sent to members of his congregation for a new religious school fostered by the American Council for Judaism. You did not enclose copies of these recruiting letters. How can one say whether the one who wrote the letter or the rabbi whose name was mentioned in the letter was guilty of unprofessional conduct?

You state further that the complainant is disinclined to make the direct charge of unprofessional conduct against his rabbinical colleague, but he would like us to inform the rabbi that he is doing that which is contrary to professional ethics. I cannot follow the reasoning. I feel that the matter of the organization of separate religious schools by the American Council for Judaism is of sufficient importance to be discussed by the CCAJ in merito. In whatever cities such attempts will be made, our colleagues will have their toes stepped upon and controversy will ensue. This applies not only to the organization of Sunday schools, but as you know, in certain cities groups have broken away from older congregations to form new ones, motivated by the American Council for Judaism ideology, and that members of the old congregations were solicited to join the new one and that members of the Central Conference of American Rabbis either helped in the organization of such congregations or were not averse to accepting positions with such congregations after they were established.



page two

I believe that the whole subject should be carefully studied, and if possible, a line of policy defined by the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:rms





# CCAR *Journal*

CENTRAL CONFERENCE AMERICAN RABBIS

ABRAHAM J. KLAUSNER, D. D.  
Editor

March 11, 1954

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
Cong. Tifereth Israel  
E. 105th St. & Ansel Rd.  
Cleveland, Ohio

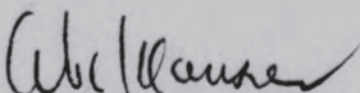
Dear Rabbi Silver:

Again I turn to you in the hope that you will be able to accommodate us with an article for inclusion in a special issue of the Conference Journal.

The issue we have in mind would concern itself with the Tercentenary. The members of the Editorial Board and the members of the Conference at large would delight, I am certain in your "Projection of the American Jewish community of the Future". Can you possibly find time for such an article?

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

  
Abraham J. Klausner

AJK:rc

EDITORIAL BOARD: Bernard J. Bamberger, Philip S. Bernstein, William G. Braude, Ely E. Pilchik, David Polish, Jacob P. Rudin, Samuel M. Silver, Jacob J. Weinstein.

EDITORIAL OFFICE: 63 Hamilton Avenue, Yonkers 5, N. Y.



March 16, 1954

Rabbi Abraham J. Klausner, Editor  
CCAR Journal  
63 Hamilton Avenue  
Yonkers 5, New York

My dear Friend:

Thank you for your kind letter of March the eleventh. I wish I could comply with your request and write an article for the Conference Journal. Unfortunately, I haven't the time. I have written on this subject twice now. One was an address which I delivered before the Central Conference of American Rabbis in '51 on "The Future of the American Jewish Community" and another was an address which I recently made before the National Conference of the Jewish Welfare Federations which the Conference published and distributed.

I really have nothing new in addition to say on the subject, and I don't like to keep repeating myself.

With warmest regards, I remain

Very cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:rms



Congregation B'nai Jeshurun

Established 1848

17 Waverly Avenue

Newark 3, N. J.

Ely E. Pilchik, Rabbi

March 16, 1954

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

Dear Dr. Silver:

I regret exceedingly that you will not be able to attend the first meeting of our CCAR Tercentenary Committee on April 12, but I fully understand. I should like to have from you a letter of suggestions which I might be able to read to our Committee and which would help us in the formulation of some ideas.

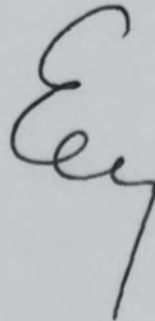
What are your thoughts with reference to the Conference observance of the Tercentenary? What do you think we can do as a Committee to help the Rabbis in their respective pulpits as they plan appropriate observance?

I am asking these things because after months of consultation with the National Committee, I've come to feel that rather little will be forthcoming from that moribund committee which is one of the lengthened shadows of the American Jewish Committee.

Thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely,

EEP:FC





EMIL W. LEIPZIGER, RABBI EMERITUS  
TOURO SYNAGOGUE  
NEW ORLEANS 15

March 17, 1954

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,  
The Temple,  
E. 105th St. at Ansel Rd.,  
Cleveland 6, Ohio.

Dear Colleague:

I want to thank you for your interesting letter in reply to my telegram .

The reason I sent out my letter to the members of the Committee without mentioning names and places, was to get an objective point of view of the members of the Committee as to whether, on the basis of facts presented to me, we should use a direct method of accusation, or the method of persuasion, to see that such encroachments will not be repeated.

I have heard now from all of the men but two, and all of them feel that we ought to adopt the softer approach, which I call, in my letter, the approach of "Hillel" (saving your reverence).

You seem to look at the problem a bit differently. You believe that it should be dealt with, not in relation to one case, but in relation to what may be an unfortunate policy on the part of the American Council.

I don't mind giving you now a more detailed account of the complaint. It comes from Sol Freehof. In one of the series of letters in which I rather pushed him for definite information, he wrote as follows: "For your guidance, the progress of events was as follows: There was a group of young people, possibly ten at most, which was opposed to the teaching of Hebrew in our school. They studied the Council's analysis of the Commission textbooks and decided that our school was not a Reform Jewish school any more. They gathered at a meeting at which Mr. Leonard Sussman of the Council encouraged them to form a separate school. A man who was present told me that they were uncertain what to do but that Mr. Sussman assured them that a separate school was the right procedure and that the Council was organizing separate schools of this kind all over the country. Their next letter, therefore, was a recruiting letter addressed to other parents in our Congregation and in two successive letters mentioned that they would have rabbinical assistance. In the second of the two letters they mentioned Rabbi Baron by name.

"All of these young people are members of my Congregation. They have been encouraged and strengthened in the project by the American Council and a colleague of mine, Baron, is guiding them in their separatist movement which seeks to detach still more members from our school.



EMIL W. LEIPZIGER, RABBI EMERITUS  
TOURO SYNAGOGUE  
NEW ORLEANS 15

March 17, 1954

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
Page 2

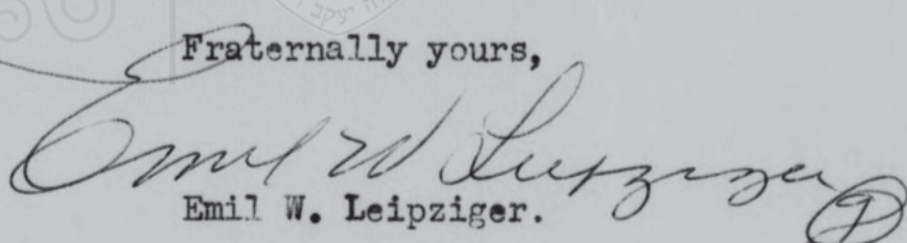
participating. I should like you to persuade him to desist from doing this. If he refuses we shall consider what next to do".

Freehof's state of mind is further reflected in his postscript, which says "I appreciate your mood of impartiality as Chairman but we are also friends. Will you give me your own reaction to my mode of procedure? All I want is peace and friendship in our Conference and decent relationship between our colleagues. Would you rather that I make a direct charge? I would rather not evoke any bitterness."

It seems to me it is now indicated, after I hear from the two other members of my Committee, that it is the desire on the part of the great majority of the Committee that we approach the American Council persuasively.

Trusting all things go well with you and yours, I remain

Fraternally yours,

  
Emil W. Leipziger.

ewl;g



March 24, 1954

Rabbi Ely E. Pilchik  
Congregation B'nai Jeshurun  
17 Waverly Avenue  
Newark 3, New Jersey

My dear Friend:

I too regret that I will not be able to attend the meeting on April 12th. I am not so sure that I have any special suggestions to make. It seems to me that the Conference ought not to be planning too many activities of its own. There will undoubtedly be very large national commemorative services in which the Conference along with the other rabbinical groups will participate. Every community in the United States of any size is planning to hold community celebrations in which again all rabbis are likely to participate. I know that such a celebration is being planned here in Cleveland. You are probably planning one in Newark.

The rabbis are being provided with considerable material on the history of the Jews in the United States from the headquarters of the Tercentenary Committee, and they may be relied upon to exercise whatever initiative on their part is called for.

As far as the Conference itself is concerned, it seems to me that if a special program is dedicated either in its 1954 or 1955 meeting to this celebration, that it would be quite adequate.

I am inclined to believe that the American Jewish community is in danger of doing too much rather than too little in celebration of this event. By doing too much it may defeat its purpose.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

ABRA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:rms



Congregation B'nai Jeshurun

Established 1848

17 Waverly Avenue

Newark 3, N. J.

Ely E. Pilchik, Rabbi

March 26, 1954

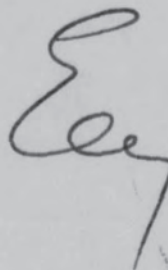
Dr. Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
East 105th Street at Ansel Road  
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

Thank you for taking the time to write me on the Tercentenary. I shall convey these thoughts to the committee at its meeting on the 12th of April. I feel that there is much weight in what you say and I really don't want to make a circus of it. I thought perhaps we could set down a few enduring things and somehow discreetly and appropriately give a lift to the Reform Movement during this observance.

Be assured of my very high respect.

Most cordially,



EEP:FC



CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS  
COMMITTEE ON ARBITRATION AND ETHICS

4238 St. Charles Ave.,  
New Orleans, La.

March 27, 1954

Dear Colleagues:

You will be interested in knowing that, according to the poll recently taken, all but two members of the Committee on Arbitration and Ethics thought we ought to use the exploratory and persuasive method of dealing with the American Council, in relation to the Pittsburgh School's matter.

On the basis of this vote, I have written a letter to Elmer Berger, with copies to Rabbi Baron and Mr. Sussman.

As soon as we get an official answer, we can decide whether it is necessary to go further. If we do have to go further, you will, of course, get copies of my official letter to them and their answer.

Sincerely and fraternally,



AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES  
*Emil*  
Emil W. Leptiger



CENTRAL CONFERENCE  
OF  
AMERICAN RABBIS

ABRAHAM J. FELDMAN  
CHAIRMAN

SOLOMON B. FREEHOF

JAMES G. HELLER

JACOB R. MARCUS

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

*Philip S. Bernstein*

COMMITTEE ON APPEALS

OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN  
701 FARMINGTON AVENUE  
HARTFORD 7, CONN.

April 15, 1954  
Dict. 4/14/54

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPEALS:

I have an appeal from one of the seniors at the Hebrew Union College asking for deferment in the matter of entering the chaplaincy. His appeal is seconded by President Glueck.

His name is Leonard Kravitz. He is described by Nelson as "one of our most excellent graduate students", and he has been given a fellowship to continue his graduate work in residence towards his Ph.D. degree. The special area of his research is the Maimunist - Anti-Maimunist Controversy. He is 25 years old and is married.

Nelson writes me as follows:

"As you know, I strongly encourage graduate studies. I should like to underline his own request ... that his entrance into the chaplaincy be deferred until he completes his graduate studies here which would take a maximum of three years. He is a most honorable and worthwhile person and desires to enter the chaplaincy as soon as he completed ~~ed~~ his graduate studies here.

"I hope that his request for deferment will be granted."

I have discussed the matter with Morris Lieberman, Chairman of the Chaplaincy Committee, who tells me that for the present we are not under pressure seeing that we have a full quota of chaplains.

Inasmuch as Mr. Kravitz has to know whether he may accept the graduate fellowship offered to him, I am taking this means of polling the Committee in the hope that he may make the necessary plans.

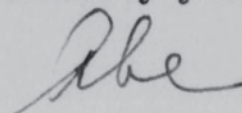
My personal inclination, in view of all the circumstances, would be to grant him the petition for deferment. However, I have no authority to do so without the consent of the members of the Committee.



I am planning now to hold a meeting of the Committee sometime during the sessions of the Convention of the CCAR, but under the circumstances this matter is urgent and I bespeak your kindness of a prompt reply.

With best wishes for a very happy Pesach, I am

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Abraham J. Feldman

AJF/sz





April 22, 1954

Dr. Abraham J. Feldman  
Central Conference of American Rabbis  
701 Farmington Avenue  
Hartford 7, Connecticut

My dear Abe:

Replying to your letter of April 15th, I believe  
that the request for deferment made by Leonard  
Kravitz should be granted.

With warmest Passover greetings, I remain

Very cordially yours,

ABRA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:rms



May 20, 1954

PROGRESS REPORT C.C.A.R. TERCENTENARY COMMITTEE

The Committee held its first meeting April 12, 1954. Attending: Joseph Fink, Morton Berman, Norman Gerstenfeld, Jay Kaufman, Joseph Klein, Julius Mark, Sidney Regner, Richard Bluestein and Ely Pilchik in the Chair.

I. Committee approved participation with Rabbinical Assembly and Rabbinical Council in a volume "Judaism in America" under general auspices National Tercentenary Committee. The three rabbinic bodies will underwrite approximate cost of \$5,000. Dr. Freehof to be asked to do chapter on Reform Judaism in volume. Dr. Freehof graciously accepted. Negotiations presently going on for culmination of project.

II. Committee approved observance plans of Washington Hebrew Congregation, involving CCAR joint sponsorship with said Congregation of a series of 24 Sunday morning lectures by guest speakers throughout the year. Conference to assume no financial obligations but to share responsibility in choice of speakers. Committee could only endorse. Approval of such joint auspices had to come from Executive Board. President Fink promised to poll Executive Board - he did and Board approved by substantial majority. Other Congregations planning similar large observances, seeking joint auspices with CCAR, may file with Conference.

III. It was reported that Liturgy Committee is preparing a special Tercentenary service to be used by Congregations on the Tercentenary Sabbath, weekend of Thanksgiving 1954.

IV. It was reported that the College is planning some projects. Information forthcoming.

V. It was reported that the U.A.H.C. is preparing materials which will be sent to Congregations.

Our Tercentenary Committee is to make a report to the Conference in June. Suggestions from you are solicited.

Respectfully,  
Ely E. Pilchik  
Chairman



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## CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

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599 DELAWARE AVENUE  
BUFFALO 2, N. Y.

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June 4, 1954

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
East 105th Street & Ansel Road  
Cleveland 6, Ohio

My dear Colleague:

The Executive Board of the C.C.A.R., on the recommendation of our Special Tercentenary Committee, decided to sponsor, with the Washington Hebrew Congregation of Washington, D.C., a special Tercentenary project.

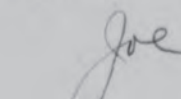
The Washington Hebrew Congregation will dedicate its new Temple within a few months. The Sunday morning services, from November, 1954 through May, 1955, will have a central theme relating to the Tercentenary Observance.

The C.C.A.R. joins this Congregation in sponsoring a series of addresses to be delivered by twenty members of the C.C.A.R. and eight lay leaders. All of these addresses are to be published by that Congregation in the special Tercentenary volume at the end of the year. The Washington Hebrew Congregation is underwriting the expenses as part of its Dedication Year Celebration.

I am happy to extend an invitation to you in behalf of the C.C.A.R. and the Washington Hebrew Congregation to deliver one of the addresses on Sunday morning next year. Dr. Gerstenfeld, as Rabbi of that Congregation, will extend an invitation to you in the form of a letter, indicating the date, etc. I write this letter to you merely to express the hope that you will find it possible to accept this invitation.

With fraternal greetings, I am

Sincerely yours,



Joseph L. Fink

JLF:as



RABBI NORMAN GERSTENFELD  
WASHINGTON HEBREW CONGREGATION  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

JUNE 9, 1954

DEAR DR. SILVER,

I TRUST YOU HAVE HEARD FROM DR. FINK AS TO THE JOINT PROJECT OF THE CCAR AND OUR CONGREGATION: A TERCENTENARY YEAR SUNDAY MORNING LECTURE SERIES IN OUR NEW TEMPLE FROM NOVEMBER 1954 THROUGH MAY 1955, AND THE ADDRESSES TO BE PUBLISHED IN BOOK FORM AT THE END OF THE YEAR. WE ARE EAGER THAT YOU BE ONE OF THE SPEAKERS.

I WOULD DEEP APPRECIATE YOUR KIND ACCEPTANCE WITHIN THE COMING WEEK. WILL YOU ALSO PLEASE SEND ME THE FOLLOWING:

1. DATE: WHAT SUNDAY MORNINGS FROM NOVEMBER 1954 THROUGH MAY 1955 WOULD BE THE LEAST INCONVENIENT FOR YOUR SCHEDULE? WHAT SUNDAY MORNINGS CAN YOU NOT COME? I REQUEST FULL INFORMATION ON THE DATES AS IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT TO ARRANGE A SCHEDULE THAT WILL FIT THE HEAVY PROGRAMS OF SO MANY BUSY RABBIS.
2. THEME: WHAT TITLE OR TITLES WOULD YOU SUGGEST AS THE UNIFYING THEME FOR THE ENTIRE SERIES? MY OWN SUGGESTION IS - "MAN'S OPPORTUNITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER FREEDOM".

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO BACK THIS PROJECT BUT ITS VALUE DEPENDS UPON THE QUALITY OF SPEAKERS WHO WILL ACCEPT OUR INVITATION. WE ARE THEREFORE VERY DESIROUS OF HAVING YOUR PARTICIPATION.

AWAITING YOUR FAVORABLE RESPONSE, I AM,

CORDIALLY,

*Norman*

*I'm moved by your offer of participation if you would visit the W.H.C. I do hope you will.*

P.S. WILL YOU KINDLY USE THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE FOR AN EARLY REPLY.

DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER  
E 105TH ST. AND ANSEL ROAD  
CLEVELAND 6, OHIO



June 15, 1954

Dr. Norman Gerstenfeld  
Washington Hebrew Congregation  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Dr. Gerstenfeld:

Thank you for your kind letter of June 9th.  
I regret very much that I will not be able  
to participate in the Sunday morning lecture  
series in connection with the Tercentenary  
celebration.

Very cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:rms



TEMPLE BETH ZION  
DELAWARE AVENUE  
BUFFALO, N.Y.

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

September 7, 1954

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

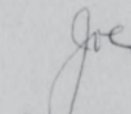
My dear Friend:

I am sorry you were unable to attend  
the C.C.A.R. convention in Pike, New Hampshire.  
I missed you very much.

I am sending you herewith a copy of  
my President's Message. I think there are  
points in it which will be of real interest to  
you.

I trust that you are well. I send you  
fond personal greetings for the New Year.

Sincerely,



Joseph L. Fink

JLF:as  
Enclosure



September 10, 1954

Rabbi Joseph L. Fink  
Temple Beth Zion  
Delaware Avenue  
Buffalo, New York

My dear Joe:

I want to thank you for your thoughtfulness in sending me a copy of your President's Message, which I read with great delight. It is a fine, forthright, and timely message.

I trust that you and your family are well, and I wish you all everything good for the coming New Year.

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:rms



Encl. 3

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CHURCH AND STATE

To the Central Conference of American Rabbis,

Colleagues:

For some years now the major portions of the reports of the Committee on Church and State have dealt with the relation of religion to public education. The philosophy of this Conference in this sensitive area has always been clear-cut and distinct; it was based upon a fundamental proposition - that in this nation Church and State were intended to be separate and must remain so. This proposition was derived from the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution from the writings of Jefferson, Madison, and others, from decisions of the United States Supreme Court and opinions of its justices, and from the traditions and institutions of this free land. The pronouncements of this Conference and its resolutions fall naturally and logically into a consistent and uniform pattern of undeviating adherence to this principle of separation. We have thought and believed and said that for the good of the State and for the good of Religion they - State and Church - should be kept separate and apart.

Today this problem of religion and education persists in its paramount significance. We are confronted in this field with attitudes generally held and conclusions zealously advanced, both of which demand thorough scrutiny and sober reflection. Among the most conspicuous and popular attitudes, certainly among the best publicized are these: (1) that the public schools are "secular" and "godless," and at their best they are neutral to religion and at their worst they foster a hostility to religion; (2) that the alarming increase in juvenile delinquency and the shocking disintegration of personal integrity and public morality are due in some measure to the "godless" character of the education and training received in the public schools; and (3) that a total view of life is unthinkable without a religious synthesis and the total education of man is impossible without religion. Upon the basis of these opinions, certain conclusions have been militantly drawn: (1) that the schools are responsible not only for communicating knowledge and acquiring skills but also for the cultivation of good citizenship and private virtue; and (2) that these results can be achieved only by introducing religion into public education.

These attitudes and conclusions are at the heart of the whole problem of religion and education. For our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens they have been the warrant for the conviction that the best possible kind of education can be achieved in their own church-controlled schools, in church-owned premises, with a church-approved curriculum and under church-supervised instructors; and these conclusions have further justified them in demanding some assistance from public funds in maintaining their system, claiming for tax-paying parents the right to the aid of the state and for their children the right to the services of the state. For many of our Protestant fellow-citizens, the same attitudes and conclusions have been the motivation for their endorsement and implementation of the Released Time program, for their approval of "teaching about religion" in the public schools, and for their present emphasis on the inculcation of moral and spiritual values through public education.

During the past year, two major statements have been released by our fellow-citizens in which the above-mentioned attitudes and conclusions were reiterated and underscored. The first was issued by the Roman Catholic Bishops of the United States and signed in their names by the Administrative Board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (Washington, D.C., November 15, 1952); the second was the formal message from the General Assembly of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (Denver, December 12, 1952). These statements were high-minded and



sincere and in many respects contain expressions on religion, morality and good citizenship to which we whole-heartedly subscribe, and yet it is with no inconsiderable hesitancy that your Committee refers to these statements and calls them to your attention. For the first, with its postulates of supernatural faith, the fall of man, the doctrine of salvation through Jesus, the supremacy of Christian faith and the primacy of the Catholic Church, is obviously not addressed to us; such categorical and ex cathedra assertions of Catholic dogmas place us outside the pale of interest or discussion. The second statement excludes us even more markedly, for it is cast in the form of "a letter to the Christian people of America," it salutes them as "Dear Fellow Christians," and it subsequently declares that "the abiding concern of their churches must be to proclaim the Gospel and to be evangelical so that all men will accept Jesus Christ as Saviour."

If these statements dealt solely with Catholic dogma or Protestant belief or Christian faith, the mandates of good manners, good taste, and good breeding would require that we remain silent about them. We are not engaged in polemics and we have no wish for controversy. But these pronouncements cover much broader areas. One deals with the public schools in which all the citizens of our land have a vital stake and it discusses public education which is not a specifically Christian area; the other also discusses the character of public education and outlines the duty of the State, of which we are a free and equal part, to provide help in the form of at least auxiliary services for those who attend their parochial schools. We realize, therefore, that what this Conference has to say on these subjects cannot be regarded as out-of-place or ill-mannered. These are the authoritative, official statements of American church bodies. They are very much our concern. God is our business - we are old partners with Him and in His work. America is our business - we are about to celebrate the Tercentenary of our Jewish settlement. Public education is our business - we send our children to public schools. The separation of church and state is our business - the forthright and historic resolutions of this Conference over the past fifty years are a matter of public record. We are devoted to God and loyal to our country and its institutions, and we will not exclude ourselves from the right to free and frank and full discussion of these vital questions and issues.

It is profoundly regrettable that this is a field where passionate controversy has been stirred up and where honest differences of opinion are suspected of being prejudices and are attacked and discredited. There are some who would even counsel this Conference to be silent or discreet in order to prevent antagonism or alienation and perhaps to achieve sympathy or agreement. We do not wish to be divisive or contentious. But your Committee believes that it would be unworthy for us to reduce our convictions to a quid pro quo basis, to be prompted by extraneous considerations, or to be motivated by fear of criticism or attack. Convictions are not wares to be peddled over political bargain counters for considerations of expediency. Dignity and integrity demand that opinions honestly held and based upon principles believed to be right and true be expressed without fear of controversy or ill-tempered abuse. We would not surrender this precious American heritage. To make honesty the victim of strategy or public relations by muzzling it is to destroy the very fabric of independent thought. It is in this spirit of recognition of its moral obligation to speak with freedom that your Committee has considered the public pronouncements of our Roman Catholic and Protestant fellow-citizens and the issues involved in them.

#### The "Secular" Public School

Your Committee deplores the current practice of describing the American public school system as "secular" and associating with this description connotations of



atheism, godlessness and even direct hostility to religion. It sees in this description and these connotations the use of a technique whereby quasi political sentiments are exploited and public suspicions and fears are aroused, all to the disadvantage of public education. It regards "secular" when applied to the public school as a legal term, so defined by Webster (New International Dictionary, 2nd edition, Unabridged) "belonging to the State as distinguished from the church; non-ecclesiastical; civil," and it agrees with those who point out that it is used "to represent a service for which the State is responsible" in contradistinction to services of a religious nature. In this sense it objects to the use of secular as a derogatory characterization, with the implication that the public school is hostile to religious values.

The record of the American public school reveals not only a concern for such values but in many instances it has achieved their highest expression. It has fostered reverence for the individual and respect for every personality, it has recognized religious liberty, cultivated tolerance, promoted fair play, afforded the opportunity for self-fulfillment through creative expression, encouraged the open-minded quest for truth, stimulated group cooperation, emphasized personal responsibility, and taught honesty and good government. In the class room and on the playground of the American public school system we can find the holy ground of religious values. Where the breath of little children sustains the universe - while they learn and play and grow - there we can find God. This is a far cry from what has been described as a "totalitarian movement" of "an all-embracing state-controlled school system and education completely devoid of religion."

We therefore applaud the Letter of the National Council when it states that "It is unfair to say that where religion is not taught in a public school that school is secular or Godless. The moral and cultural atmosphere in a school and the attitude, the viewpoints, and the character of the teachers can be religious, and exert a religious influence, without religion being necessarily taught as a subject." As we applaud this statement so do we hail the action of the American Legion at its Annual Convention last August of lauding the patriotism of the American public school teacher, of condemning "the authors of subversive attacks upon the public schools, whether they be dissident individuals or groups in the local communities, or inspired by evil forces, financed, directed, and operated by agents of subversion" and calling upon "every member of the American Legion to be on the alert in his community, to know the schools and to recognize these attacks when they occur, and to stand ready to support and defend them against all enemies."

Your Committee rejoices in these expressions favorable to the public school and recommends that this Conference reaffirm its unshakable faith in the American public school system and pledge its undiminished efforts to secure appropriate and adequate Federal Aid for Public Education and its unremitting labors for the improvement of the nation's public schools.

We espouse a moral and virtuous life for every person. We believe that our public schools make a contribution to this end. Yet we are not unmindful of the prevalence of immorality in high places and low, of juvenile delinquency and political corruption. However, we regard it as an unwarranted assumption to place the blame for such defections upon the public schools. This is making the public school a whipping boy for the ills of society. There are many factors and forces which contribute to the breakdown of virtue and morality - some are social, others may be psychologic, political, economic, industrial or military. A world in transition will question historic values; men under strain will yield to temptation. But



before the public schools be held culpable for every collapse of private or public morals, the homes of this nation, and its churches and social institutions, should examine their foundations and their structures, their records and their standards, and see if they be guiltless. No home and no family dare abdicate from its responsibility for its share in the good society. It little serves the cause of public morality to place blame without searching for truth. In the interest of scientific and factual information, your Committee respectfully suggests that studies be undertaken of the relative incidence of delinquency among the students of public schools and those of schools under other auspices. Similar studies might be made of crime and of political corruption. Only the facts will lead us to clarity of thought, lucidity of speech, and accuracy of judgment. Unless they are available any a priori blanket condemnation of the public schools is unfair, untrue, and immoral.

This is not to imply or to suggest that we regard education as desirable or even possible without morality or that we hold to a view of life that is Godless. Our concern for the moral life can be traced back to Sinai; we were born in Egypt but we achieved our character as a goy Kodosh at Sinai. That is where the Ten Commandments were written upon our hearts. We are a religious people; God is at the heart of our faith, of our history and of our destiny; He is in the Psalmist's ecstatic cry, in the Prophet's social vision, in Job's indomitable affirmation, in little synagogues and small school-houses, in centuries of martyrdom and in the indestructible power of the Spirit. God should be in the heart and soul and mind of every Jew. For us the universe is inconceivable without God, life is possible only with Him. He is our Father; we are His children, created in His image and receiving the imprint of His Divinity. We are therefore moral creatures, free to choose the moral ways of truth and righteousness, of justice and mercy. This is what we believe, and this is what we teach.

But we are convinced that we must teach this faith, this view of God and life and man, and these principles of morality, under our own auspices, in our own Synagogues, Temples and Religious Schools, on our own time, in our own way, and at our own expense.

We are further convinced that the free soil of America is hospitable not only to our religious views but to all religious views; this is why divergent faiths and sectarian groups have flourished and multiplied here. In their wisdom, the architects of this nation realized that these sects must be free from State domination, even as the State must not be controlled by them or be in alliance with them. They were too mindful of the ugly records in other places where warring sects and rival denominations competed unworthily and irreligiously for the support of the State. Their respect for religion was universal, they recognized its indispensability, but they were persuaded that faith and the responsibility for instruction in the principles of religion belonged properly and solely to the churches. They believed that this was a challenge to and the obligation of the churches. They, therefore, made the principle of the separation of church and state a basic and inviolable feature of our government, constitutionally prohibited the establishment of any religion, and consistently denied favors to any and all of the religious sects.

For this reason public tax-monies have been withheld from the support of parochial schools. We believe that the reasons are sound and that the practice should endure. We sympathize with the financially burdensome efforts of all those who wish to establish their own religiously-sponsored and controlled schools; we submit that their right to such schools is axiomatic and American; but we also insist that the



corollary to the right of establishment is the responsibility of maintenance.

We regret that this places us in disagreement with our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens who claim that "the State has the duty to help parents fulfill their task of religious instruction and training. (and) When the State fails in this help, when it makes the task more difficult and even penalizes parents who try to fulfill this duty according to conscience, by depriving their children of their right under our Federal Constitution to auxiliary services, this can only be regarded as an utterly unfair and short-sighted policy." Free from any consideration of the ambiguity of this statement and of its failure to spell out in clearly and explicitly defined terms what the ultimate objectives and the true limits of "State help" may be, your Committee regards such assistance as a violation of the principle of separation and believes that any deviation, no matter how slight, will lead inevitably to others which will be great. Your Committee does not consider it "unfair" to place responsibility where it legitimately and properly belongs nor does it believe it to be "short-sighted" to retain a principle and tradition which avoid granting "special benefits" to some or all religious groups. It cannot understand if it is right to receive some auxiliary services, why it would not be equally right to demand all services and complete State support; and if it is not right to claim and get the totality of support, it fails to understand how any specific part can be deserved or claimed. This Conference has stood unswervingly on the side of separation; your Committee recommends that it remain there.

#### Released Time

This brings us to the consideration of Released Time, of teaching about religion, and of emphasizing moral and spiritual values in public education, and to the statement of our Protestant fellow-citizens. While expressing hearty approbation of the American public school and advocating the separation of church and state to the extent of insisting that "the subsidization of education carried on under religious auspices would both violate the principle of the separation between church and state and be a devastating blow to the public school system, which must at all costs be maintained," the Letter of the National Council nevertheless "strives to delimit," in the words of the American Jewish Congress "its interpretation (of separation) to permit the utilization of the time, premises, or curriculum of the public school system for religious instruction or indoctrination." This is the objective of the Protestant point of view. In their own words, they seek that "provision should be made in some constitutional way for the inculcation of the principles of religion, whether within or outside the precincts of the school, but always within the regular schedule of a pupil working day." This in essence is the Released Time Plan, but something has been added. Our Protestant brethren see no inconsistency or contradiction in using public money for the benefits of religious instruction either in or through the public schools and in regarding the use of such money for similar purposes in parochial schools as a violation of separation. Your Committee believes that in each instance the violation is one and the same.

This Conference has steadfastly opposed the Released Time Plan. Even when the Supreme Court in the *Zorach-Gluck Case* (1952) decided that this plan was constitutional, this body voiced its objections against the program and reaffirmed its faith in Dismissal Time. During the past year our misgivings concerning the Released Time Plan have not been dissipated. Reports of abuses are widespread and violations of the plan itself, of the principle of separation, and of the explicit interpretations of the Supreme Court are shocking and alarming. In many cases, children are segregated and lined up in classrooms according to religious divisions; school officials publicize the religious program and even recruit pupil enrollment; teachers distri-



bute descriptive literature; and schools become partners with the churches in administrative procedures by keeping records and giving credit for these religious classes. In some cases, orthodox evangelical Christianity is taught through interpretation of the Bible in the schools by missionary and conversionary-minded teachers and in other cases Boards of Education open up public school classrooms for Bible and religious instruction by the professed clergymen of different faiths. The Executive Director (Erwin L. Shaver) of Weekday Religious Education of the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S. has stated (Religious Education, January-February 1953, p. 42) that 15% of the communities participating in the Released Time Program still conduct their classes in the public schools, in direct violation of the McCollum Decision.

Your Committee is dismayed that these abuses should not only be countenanced by over-enthusiastic public school authorities but that they should have the tacit sanction and active cooperation of religious leaders. It is inconceivable that in the name of Godliness and while arguing for the moral fibre of the nation, educators and clergyman should become partners in flouting the law of the land and in creating disrespect for constitutional authority. This is more than violation of separation; it is the formation of an unholy alliance that makes of religion contraband, to be smuggled and bootlegged into the public schools. The story of these abuses is part of the evil of the Released Time Program. Your Committee would be no party to it.

Your Committee, therefore, salutes the Legislature of the State of New Hampshire which defeated a bill that would have allowed students time off from public school classes for religious instruction, and it records its satisfaction that in isolated instances Protestant ministers have withdrawn from community Released Time Programs because of the imperfections of the plan.

However, the Zorach-Gluck Decision was a green light to the ardent supporters of Released Time, and your Committee would sound again its note of caution to our colleagues, not to be stampeded by local pressure nor to be victimized by current fears. We hold to the McCollum Decision and its spirit of "a high and impregnable wall of separation"; we accept the responsibility for the religious instruction of the children of our faith; and we should pledge our undiminished efforts to intensify our own system of religious education and to cooperate with all the religious segments and forces in our nation in achieving a uniform workable Dismissal Time Plan whereby all the children of the public schools may receive the religious instruction which they need.

#### Teaching 'About' Religion

Even at its best the supporters of the Released Time Plan realize that it is meagre and insufficient. This is why there has been much agitation to "teach about religion" in the public schools and why educators are advocating courses on religion. Recently the Committee on Religion and Education of the American Council on Education issued a report to this effect. Known as the Linton Report (directed by Dr. Clarence Linton, Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University), it recommends the factual study of religion in the public schools on the grounds that it is "thoroughly consistent with the principles of religious liberty, the tradition of separation of church and state, and modern educational theory and practice."

As your Committee respects the character and sincerity of those who labored to produce the Linton Report so does it also recognize the impossibility of understanding the history of man and the nature of society without the knowledge of the rise of religion and of the structure of contemporary religious institutions. But it



also discerns the difficulties and the dangers of this proposal and calls them to the attention of this Conference: what should be taught in such courses, and who should teach, and what will be the general effect of this instruction?

What should be taught? Will it be possible for the major faith groups to agree upon a syllabus or curriculum? Will areas of disagreement be skirted and avoided, and if so will what remains be reduced to simple and meaningless generalities? A Catholic spokesman (Msgr. F. G. Hocheralt, Director, Department of Education, National Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington, D.C.) expresses the concern that such a cooperative study, with its premises of the equality of all faiths, "may lead to interfaith projects in which Catholics may not participate." One of the leading Catholic writers, Dr. J. M. O'Neill (Commentary, June 1947) pertinently asked, "shall the schools teach concepts of religion that are common to all the religions of America. I doubt that there are any such concepts. If any could be found and phrased they would necessarily be so vague and general that no one could become much interested in whether or not anyone believed them." The Catholic Bishops themselves outlined "the constant danger to the religious spirit in a country such as ours.....of the common factor in the religious opinions held by various groups." The anxieties of Jews over such a program are well known, and even Will Herberg who pleads for instruction in religion in the public schools admits that they are well-founded. How should differences in belief and practice be treated?

What then will be taught? Others have already indicated the delicate lines of controversy (v. Philip Jacobson in Religious Education). If we teach "what is God?" and "How does He reveal Himself?", what about the basis of all Christian religious education, that "the mightiest act of God for man and his salvation was God's Incarnation in Jesus Christ?" Will there be room for instruction in Angels and Sin, in Papal Infallibility or the Assumption of Mary; will the Nativity be taught as fact or faith? What about God's Covenant with Israel or the miracles of the Old Testament? What will be permitted and what Verboten? If the objective history of religion is taught, can the fundamentals of the psychology of religion or of comparative religion be overlooked? And what religious texts would be used? "On the question of teaching religion in the public schools" writes Will Herberg "I have yet to see a plan that seems to me wise or practicable, and perhaps there is none." Your Committee would point out to this Conference the explosive nature of such a curriculum.

But a further danger - who would teach what? Would it be desirable to have ministers, priests and rabbis come into the public schools and explain their faiths, tell what they believe and why? And if not, can class-room teachers be relied upon to have both the necessary knowledge and the desired objectivity and impartiality for this task? Leo Trepp tells us (Religious Education, May-June 1953, p. 167) that in Napa, California, "65% of the teachers considered themselves too biased to undertake such teaching (biased in favor of their own faith) and 95% declared that they lacked the necessary knowledge to undertake the teachings about religion." Any observation would confirm the suspicion that at least the same percentages would prevail throughout the nation. But what would happen to this teaching about religion in those communities where public school classes are held in the facilities of Roman Catholic parochial schools and where the teachers are garbed teaching nuns? Will Catholics submit to instruction about Catholicism from non-Catholics, and would Protestants accept similar instruction from Catholics? Isolated instances have already forcibly demonstrated that pious sentiments and devout faith can be easily offended and outraged by the objective teaching of factual religion. How then can any kind of agreement or consent be achieved?



"Christianity" writes one spokesman (Percy L. Greaves, Jr., Christian or Secular Minds For Our Children, in Christian Economics vol. V. No. 10, May 19, 1953, p.1-3, published by the Christian Freedom Foundation) "is not an objective matter. It is very much a subjective matter which cannot be taught objectively by a non-believer. It is doubtful that any devout Christian would be satisfied with the 'friendly sympathy' of non-believing teachers. How can they incorporate the Christian spirit in the thoughts and actions of our trusting little children?.....They need the subjective influence of a Christian teacher who exudes Christian principles in every thought, word, and action. Christian parents and preachers should not settle for less."

Your Committee is not being unnecessarily alarmist. Admittedly it recognizes the wide disagreements which prevail among religious historians and the almost unbridgeable gaps which exist between the interpretations of the theologians; it knows that there will be very few teachers with the breadth of understanding of George Foot Moore, R. Travers Herford or James Parkes; it fears that Judaism will not be attractively or even adequately presented. But its chief concern is the danger of transforming every classroom into a small battlefield where competing groups will war to capture the souls of little children. The inexpertness of teachers may be overcome by training, but your Committee and this Conference dare not dismiss or ignore the avowed missionary fervor and evangelical purpose of those very high minded people who issued the official statement of the Protestant point of view. Too often have constitutional restrictions failed to limit excessive religious zeal. It is interesting to note that the most recent study of The Function of the Public Schools in Dealing with Religion no longer uses the phrase "teaching about religion" but for this very reason has substituted for it the formula "the objective study of religion." Obviously, as has been pointed out by Prof. W. C. Bower and other critics of this plan, "teaching connotes inculcation, whereas study connotes inquiry." Yet how will there be study without teachers?

What then will be the general effect of such objective study of religion? The late Prof. Coe reminded us (Religious Education, March-April, 1952, vol. 47, No. 2, p. 167) that there is "no such thing as religion in general, there is only religion in particular," and he warned us that "our culture is internally divided. It is, in fact, so divided that public school endeavors toward cultural unity by teaching religion are more likely to exacerbate our trouble than to alleviate it." Disagreement about curriculum, the inexpertness of some teachers, and the religious bias and zeal of others carry within themselves the seeds of contention and divisiveness. We should not be unmindful of the positive contributions to community tolerance and good will made by public education when it has abstained from teaching religion, and we should be extremely cautious about any program for which our schools, our teachers and our people are ill-prepared.

Beyond all the shortcomings and the difficulties of this objective study of religion, your Committee believes that the inclusion of such a course in the public schools is a departure from the traditional separation of church and state. It urges this Conference and our colleagues to encourage all Jews to understand and respect the faiths of our neighbors and to appreciate the achievements of their religious institutions, but it cannot give its endorsement to such a study in the public schools.

#### Moral and Spiritual Values

Because others who are sincerely concerned with religion in life share our apprehension of this objective study of religion and are skeptical of the sheer power of



the factual knowledge of religion to transform and exalt human behavior, there has been a growing tendency on the part of educators and churchmen to advocate an emphasis on moral and spiritual values in the public schools. The Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association under the chairmanship of Prof. John K. Norton (and including such notables as Mr. Eisenhower, Mr. Conant and Dr. Jansen) issued a notable study on this subject two years ago and individual communities have been formulating their own plans and implementing their own programs.

This emphasis is based upon the conviction that moral values can be found in all places and in every situation of life; the classroom is a fertile field for the discovery of such values and for their translation into action. Mr. Stewart G. Cole, the Educational Consultant of Los Angeles and one of the pioneers in the area of character-training in public education, further defines as spiritual values those moral experiences which are "inwardly significant." Among these moral and spiritual values which have been listed are the recognition of God and of man's dignity, patriotism, citizenship, fair play, the golden rule, human responsibility, honesty, loyalty, tolerance, cooperation, appreciation, and such "other characteristics which may be necessary for wholesome living." In Kentucky, where a program known as the Kentucky Movement has been initiated under the direction of Prof. William C. Bower, of Chicago, the heart of the plan is described as "a consistent effort to discover the most appropriate occasion and opportunities for teaching through effective tuition those values that occur in the everyday interaction of persons to their natural, social, cultural and cosmic world."

What should be the attitude of this Conference to this emphasis on moral and spiritual values? Objections have already been raised to its underlying philosophy. "Can you teach basic moral principles," it is asked, "without the religious sanctions in which they rest? And what are these sanctions to be? And if such sanctions as the will of God are introduced, can the teacher define them without entering the field of religious differences, controversy, or doubt?"

These are not idle or academic speculations. Writing from A Catholic Point of View, Gerald S. Sloyan of the Department of Religious Education of the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. (Religious Education, May-June 1953, vol. 48, No. 3, p. 156), notes that all these moral values have to be synthesized with revealed eternal truths. His desideratum is Cardinal Newman's idea that "Christianity and nothing short of it, must be made the element and principle of education."

Actually this transformation from public education to Christian education takes place when this program is activated. In Austin, Texas where the school authorities have published a booklet on Values for Better Living, in answer to the question "How do values develop?" three pyramids illustrate the Christian way, the Democratic way, and the Philosophical way. The responsibility of the school is defined "to help develop the values accepted as basic to our Christian (my underlining) democracy" (page 20); "young people" it is categorically asserted "must be taught a truly Christian and democratic set of values" (page 21); and "Christian precepts" must be "practiced in all human relationships" (page 29). In the light of this Christian character of education, it is pertinent to ask what would be the nature and extent of "Bible readings, devotionals, religious programs and special holiday celebrations" which are listed among the "meaningful spiritual opportunities" to teach the desired values, and how can the services, symbols and ceremonies of different religions be anything but second-rate in a system which is predicated upon the essentiality and primacy of Christian life and thought. That such an



emphasis contravenes the spirit and tradition of American Church-State separation does not seem to occur to the proponents of the plan.

Even The Kentucky Movement which is apparently the best and the most successful of these proposals and which realizes that any identification "of public education with a particular body of sectarian beliefs and practices is not only impracticable but improper" there is an open-eyed recognition of the pitfalls of the scheme and of the transgressions of men. It declares that "sectarianism has no place in the schools" and that "instruction in religion is the responsibility of the churches," but it also "includes the objective study of religion as one of the highest and most important forms of valuational experience and as an integral part of the cultural heritage." And your Committee has already given its estimate of such objectivity and non-partisanship and has pointed out its practical weaknesses; in our minds non-sectarian cannot be equated with general Protestantism or even with Christianity. This is not separation and there is altogether too much likelihood that in many places such programs will lead to violations of separation and to the thoughtless inclusion of sectarian, unconstitutional and controversial material in the public schools.

Your Committee is confirmed in its view of the wholeness of man and of the need and place of religion in man's life, in the spirit of Judaism it desires the sanctification of ever-widening areas of life, it pays homage to all who seek to raise the level of moral living in our nation, and it expresses admiration for the sincerity, character, and noble intentions of those who initiate programs like The Kentucky Movement, but it must remind this Conference that this area of moral and spiritual values requires painstaking further study, conscientious and thoroughgoing impartiality and unfailing vigilance and observation. It recommends to the members of this Conference that they cooperate unceasingly in close and united study with educators and other churchmen in the formulation of the best approach to teaching moral values, that they participate openly in free and frank discussion of the desired objectives of this program and of the contents of the curriculum, and that they invite expert Jewish educators and psychologists to engage in studies in this field - but all these things with careful safeguard and provision that the principle of the separation of church and state be not violated or damaged.

This is a subject which must be kept in the open arena of public discussion, free from passionate controversy and acrimonious dispute. In this connection, your Committee recommends that this Conference extend its heartiest congratulation to the Religious Education Association which is about to celebrate its Fiftieth Anniversary. Its publication Religious Education has been just such a forum for the temperate and objective presentation and "discussion of the issues in the field of religion and their bearing on education." We commend the Association for its half century of honorable service and wish it long life and increasing usefulness.

#### Questions on the Agenda

This report has devoted itself necessarily to the problems of religion and public education. There remain to be called to your attention several items which are germane to this specific field and others which are related to the general Church and State area. We refer to them only briefly lest we strain the patience of this body. (1) The practice of distributing sectarian tracts and Gideon Bibles continues uninterruptedly. While the authorities in some communities have refused permission for such distribution, in New Jersey Superior Court Judge J. Wallace Leyden has upheld the policy of a board of education which granted such permission. His decision has been appealed to the Courts Appellate Division. (2) In New York State,



the controversial recommendation of the Board of Regents to start the public school each day with a prayer has met with only halting and insignificant success. In New York City the Board of Education substituted the fourth stanza of "America" for the suggested prayer. (3) In our own association, upon the suggestion of your Committee, the Alumni of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion have established a prize for an essay on "Jewish Attitudes Toward the Attempt to Introduce Religious Education in the Public Schools in the Twentieth Century." This is but one step of many which must be taken to further interest and study in this field. (4) Consideration must yet be given to the problem of Federal Security for clergymen. There appear to be many arguments in favor of the inclusion of all clergymen in these benefits. Clergymen are citizens, they pay individual income taxes to the government, their bank accounts are insured by the governmental agency, FDIC, and they secure loans from the HOLC. Some clergymen who are in the employ of institutionalized agencies are already beneficiaries of Federal Security and the exclusion of the rest may be regarded as disqualifying and discriminatory legislation. This is a problem which raises many delicate questions. Will such benefits to clergymen make it easier for their respective church bodies? Could this be interpreted as "special benefits" and thus be violative of separation? How close to infringement does it come? Will the acceptance of such benefits further blur and confuse the principle of separation? These are questions to which your Committee must give future study and reflection.

#### Conclusion

There remains, finally, the task of reporting to this Conference some conclusions concerning the nature of this Committee and the scope of its work. The Church and State Committee is composed of men who are scattered all over this country; this composition precludes the possibility of close consultation and swift action. By tradition and precedent, this Committee has performed the functions of a watchdog; it is mandated to report to this Conference instances of violation of the principle of the separation of Church and State. The problems in this field have multiplied and expanded; there is no consideration which rises before this body which is more important. Religion and public education is one of the most vexing and vital issues of our times. Books are written about it; magazines are devoted to it. We labor in an area which requires research, documentation and study. Specialization is an acute need in a field which embraces the decisions of the Supreme Court, Released Time, the Objective Study of Religion, Moral and Spiritual Values in Public Education, and Federal Security legislation. The responsibility of your Committee is to study and suggest a consistent philosophy in these matters and a policy of action. The literature in this field should be brought to the attention of the Conference; books and articles should be reviewed; institutes should be held and workshops established. Consultative meetings should be held with representative Jewish and non-Jewish bodies. To achieve these ends your Committee must be reconstituted. The tasks of scouting and reporting can be left to a large nominal committee, but for practical working purposes, to function properly and to serve this Conference adequately, it is imperative that a small working committee or administrative commission be established, with adequate appropriations and definite areas of responsibility, and your Committee so recommends.

A last word about the place and nature of this report. The economy of the Conference program and the strains of time and human durability make it necessary each year to reduce and circumscribe the reports of this Committee. Its place on the program is always immediately after the world-shaking and nerve-exhausting report and resolutions of our Commission on Justice and Peace. Brevity is at a premium and haste is urged. This Conference does itself a disservice if it fails to devote adequate time



to the issues of Church and State. It would not be amiss if this Conference set aside a whole session each year to the problems with which we deal. It should be noted that the highest Christian bodies, both Catholic and Protestant, made only some phases of Religion and Public Education the subjects of their most important pronouncements. There is a similar need for this Conference to speak with a constructive, statesmanlike and authoritative voice. We have always spoken out boldly in behalf of separation; this must be the tradition in which we continue to labor. The problems of Church and State deserve the fullest time and the profoundest thinking of the best minds and noblest spirits of this Conference; we can accept no less.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacob K. Shankman

Chairman.

