



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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

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

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

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

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League for Human Rights, Cleveland, Ohio, 1940-1941.

Western Reserve Historical Society

10825 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106
(216) 721-5722
wrhs.org

American Jewish Archives

3101 Clifton Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45220
(513) 487-3000
AmericanJewishArchives.org

THE LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
508 Chester Ninth Bldg.
Cleveland, Ohio

October 7, 1940

United States Dept. of The Interior
Office of Education
Washington, D. C.

Gentlemen:

Your radio series "Americans All Immigrants All" and "Democracy in Action" did more to strengthen democracy than any other radio program. It was the best program ever put on the air. Our organization still uses the records to help mutual understanding among the different nationalities.

It seems to us that the immediate problem facing America is the education of the large number of Americans of German descent and the 100,000 refugees from Nazi persecution. We know that a small percentage of the Germans in this country are Nazis but they can be taken care of in a legal manner, but the others, especially the non-refugees are in a pitiful condition--torn between loyalty to the U. S. and love for Germany as they knew it. Because they are not clear in their love for Germany, they hesitate to condemn the present Germany outright, and they are less able to rise in righteous offense against Hitler than are other nationalities. Many of them remember the unjustified persecutions they suffered because of their nationality during the last World War and they fear a similar situation now. There are indications of persecution already in this country toward anyone who has a German name or speaks German.

The good propaganda against Hitler in this country written either by well-informed Americans or German refugees who know the situation elaborate mostly on the undeniable fact that Hitler is the climax of many hundreds of years of development of German history, the development and victory of what we may call the Prussian spirit.

We hear, of course, especially through refugee utterances about the other Germany, the Germany of Weimar, of love for liberty and social consciousness. Several German literary works have been published here and plays performed on the stage,--these works of art, and this is true also of the modern German painters and sculptors, deal mainly with the immediate post-war social problems in Germany. They are very much limited in their expression by dealing with an unfortunate situation. In addition, as historical materialism was widely accepted as the social philosophy among the modern progressive Germans, they disregarded any connection with eternal ideas. Idealism, in their mind, had failed. In post-war Germany probably no other type of art was possible, but these manifestations do not appeal to those German Americans who didn't go through the World War struggle and misery in Germany but who enjoyed America's comparative security and well-being.

In the mind of many Americans and probably throughout the Democratic world an idea has become prevalent; the idea that one should wipe out the German people because they are eternal trouble makers. They are indeed, but it is also a fact that there has always been, for many hundreds of years, a spirited and courageous idealistic minority in Germany, a minority corresponding perfectly to the champions of liberty in England, in France and in the United States. The difference is that in the western countries these minorities became the ruling parties of the nation and especially in America were able to develop the principles of the Constitution and of the Bill of Rights in continuous progress with a few stagnations and drawbacks, while in Germany this group never came into power and lost all the battles they fought.

I would like to exemplify a little more. Johann Huss, though a Czech was a part of the Medieval Germany. He was the first militant Protestant and paved the way for Luther. His religious fight was closely connected with the social peasants' revolution. Huss was burned, the revolutionary peasants defeated. Then came Luther who was only successful because after a few years of vigorous fighting for individual liberty of the conscience, he allied himself with the young absolutism of the princes against the emperor. The masses of peasants, of the poor nobility and the lower classes in the growing cities inspired by Luther carried out revolts and revolutions for freedom and they were again completely defeated. Ulrich Von Hutten, Florian Geyer, Goetz Von Berlichingen were defeated leaders. There is a vast amount of literature, unknown in this country about them; like Goethe's play on Goetz Von Berlichingen, Gerhart Hauptman's "Florian Geyer", and the Swiss, Conrad Ferdinand Meyer's "Ulrich Von Hutten."

All these movements were social and religious in character, as a matter of fact, corresponding exactly to the fight of numerous sects in the early history of this country, who became so essential for the consolidation of our Democracy. The fight in the cities of Germany between the privileged merchants and artisans and the journeymen is another lost struggle for liberty.

Thomas Paine, Voltaire, the French Encyclopedists and Montesquieu are well known as moving forces in the progress of liberty in the western world. Exactly at the same time German philosophers and writers expressed the same ideas with which the German intellectual youth for many decades have been educated. The fact that these ideas didn't become potent in Germany is due to historical and social reasons; that they were transferred to the schools of higher education by governments who didn't practice them is a strange fact. But of course even the more reactionary German absolute princes indulged in the spirit of the 18th Century as a private hobby and since a very thin layer of the population enjoyed higher education and by this token were assured of good state positions these ideas did not become dangerous to the rulers. The masses in Germany were not mobilized until Marxism became the competitive and opposing ideology in Germany for them.

October 7, 1940

Religious and racial tolerance was never better expressed than in Lessing's "Nathan Der Weise" dedicated to Lessing's close friend Moses Mendelssohn. Until Hitler came into power the ideas Lessing expressed were taught in school though not practiced. Kant, of course, in his treatise of eternal peace and in his ethics gives us the complete philosophical foundation of human rights and the freedom of the individual. I think it would be quite possible to prove that what Kant demanded from individuals and nations Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln put into practice. In Germany the ideas were formulated, the revolution for liberty took place only in the minds of men because the state pressure was too strong for effective action.

Schiller in "Don Carlos" and much more strongly in his "Letters on Don Carlos" gives us the perfect blueprint of a state of freedom and justice.

The fight for liberty against Napoleon was perverted in Germany into narrow nationalism. Nevertheless there were brilliant men in government like Stein and Hardenberg in Prussia (neither of whom was Prussian by birth) and the students in the university who conceived of a better and freer world. Many of these students and writers had to escape to the U. S. after Metternich twisted the struggle for freedom into one of the most reactionary periods in Europe.

These young men of 1813 who stayed in Germany and remained loyal to the idea of freedom, became the leaders of the 1848 revolution which again was defeated mainly by Bismarck. Again many of the fighters became refugees in this country, for example, Karl Schurz.

I think that Karl Schurz is an excellent example of the true German spirit and of what Germans can do and probably will do if their longing for liberty can be activated. They differ in absolutely no way from the best fighters for liberty of other nationalities except that they never were successful in their own country. Germany never experienced liberty in action.

Although progressive Germans after 1918 believed that they could finally build Democracy, I think none of them knew what democracy in action meant because there was no experience in individual initiative and in the broad atmosphere of tolerance which is necessary to make democracy work, and which can only be acquired by traditions, at least of one generation.

Numerous new refugees who considered themselves fighters for liberty will tell you that they obtained in this country a completely different attitude toward men and things.

Coming into this country their intellectual attitude is unwavering for liberty, but their traditions under the Prussian atmosphere have thwarted their emotional and mental attitudes into cynical skepticism as soon as action is demanded. They do not believe that anything can be done. A hard

October 7, 1940

and thorough self re-education to obtain faith in liberty is necessary in order to adjust them. Many have gone through this re-education and have become Americans.

The problem for constructive propaganda among the better part of the Germans is to give them confidence in the good traditions of their own people, traditions which have to be put forward again to them and to the American people in order that the Germans will not be forced into a fatal cynical and defeatist position. I mentioned above the highlights of the real German spirit and their classical expressions but there are quite a few gems on a more popular level which could be used effectively on the radio. There are poems which children learned for decades in German schools dealing with America, poems which prove that Germans looking at the America of 80 years ago, were deeply concerned with the shortcomings here. For example; the quite sentimental poem of Freilighart, one of the refugees of 1848, deals with the negro problem, another of Seumer with the noble Indians. I have read these poems to American audiences and they were deeply moved.

A few years ago I found in the Harlem library a German treatise on slavery written by a Professor of the University of Goettingen about 1780.

The intention of this long memoranda is; would it not be possible to do on the air for North and South America a radio program preferably in both languages (German and English) to strengthen the belief of the Germans in this hemisphere in themselves and democracy by teaching them that democratic ideals are a part of their best traditions, and also to make known to Americans that there is another Germany.

Sincerely yours,

Grace E. Meyette
Maria Halberstadt

MH:eb

OFFICE HOURS:
9 TO 12 A.M., 1 TO 4:30 P.M.
9 TO 12 SATURDAY

DIRECTOR
GRACE E. MEYETTE

The League for Human Rights

508 Ninth Chester Bldg.

Cleveland, Ohio

PRospect 5730

SPONSORING COMMITTEE

E. M. Baker
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George Bellamy
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Elmer Scheuer
H. Walter Stewart
Clayton C. Townes
Mrs. Howard Thayer
Peter Witt
Monsignor Oldrich Zlamal

October 9, 1940

Rabbi A. H. Silver
The Temple
East 105th Street and Ansel Road

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Grace and I have worked out the enclosed proposal
for a broadcast.

I received a letter from Prof. Franz Oppenheimer
who sends you his kind regards.

Sincerely yours,

Maria Halberstadt
Maria Halberstadt

MH:eb
Enc.

OFFICE HOURS:
9 TO 12 A.M., 1 TO 4:30 P.M.
9 TO 12 SATURDAY

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87

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Peter Witt
Monsignor Oldrich Zlamal

October 19, 1940

Members of the Committee of Fifteen:

There will be a Committee Meeting on

Friday, October 25, 1940 in the

Tavern Room (Second Floor) of the

Hotel Statler at 12:15 P.M.

This meeting is a very important one,

and it is essential that all members

be present.

Sincerely yours,

Irving Hexter
Irving Hexter

IH:en

OFFICE HOURS:
9 TO 12 A.M., 1 TO 4:30 P.M.
9 TO 12 SATURDAY

DIRECTOR
GRACE E. MEYETTE

The League for Human Rights

508 Ninth Chester Bldg.

Cleveland, Ohio

PRospect 5730

SPONSORING COMMITTEE

November 18, 1940

E. M. Baker
Mrs. Clarence M. Ballou
Mrs. E. S. Bassett
Mrs. Stanlee Bates
George Bellamy
Rev. Phillip Smead Bird
Rev. Ferdinand Q. Blanchard
Professor Henry M. Busch
Miss Mildred Chadsey
W. C. Connelly
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Monsignor Oldrich Zlamal

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
The Temple, E. 105th and Ansel Rd.
Cleveland, Ohio.

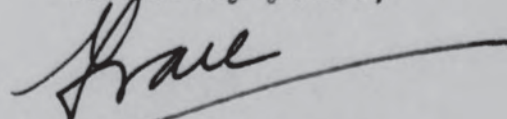
My dear Abba:

Following is the quotation I referred to in our telephone conversation this morning. It is from "The Passion Play of Oberammergau" by Janet H. M. Swift., page 143-144: published in 1930 by Fleming H. Revell Co.

"Meanwhile, plans were developing in America. Men and women of means and standing -- financiers, actors, artists, authors, social leaders -- who had been stirred to their hearts' depths by the Passion Play, were ready to have their names used as sponsors of the undertaking, and to underwrite, if necessary, the expense involved in carrying it out. An itinerary was arranged and reception committees were organized in the cities it was proposed to visit.

"The national chairman of the committee was George Gordon Battle, of New York; with Governor Alfred E. Smith as honorary chairman for the State of New York; John F. Hyland honorary chairman of the New York City committee; Addison Van Tine, treasurer; Elmore Leffingwell, secretary; Ludwig Nissen, chairman of the executive committee. Nationally known names were included in the list of sponsors, those of Burton Holmes, Frank D. Waterman, Royal S. Copeland, W. A. Harriman, Evangeline Booth, Mrs. Gutzon Borglum, Jane Cowl, Minnie Maddern Fiske, Ida Tarbell, Archbishop Mundelein, Rabbi A. H. Silver, Bishop W. A. Leonard, Newton D. Baker, Henry Turner Bailey, Judge Florence E. Allen, Lorado Taft, Jane Addams, and many others."

Sincerely yours,


Grace E. Meyette

GEM:en

November 18, 1940

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The Temple, E. 105th and Ansel Rd.
Cleveland, Ohio.

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Sincerely yours,

GEM:en

Grace E. Meyette
published in 1930 by Fleming H. Revell Co.

November 29, 1940

Rabbi A. H. Silver
2 East 105th Street
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Abba:

I am very disturbed over an article in "Social Justice." I refer to the story on Page 8 on Lion Feuchtwanger. Father Coughlin is correct in this instance and he could only have received this information from someone completely in the know in the refugee groups, as Feuchtwanger's activities have received no publicity whatever in this country. You will note the way Coughlin uses the material.

Today, I am forwarding to the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League whatever information I have on Feuchtwanger and recommending that they advise Feuchtwanger to retire from public life and continue with his literary interests; as he is no asset to the Palestinian or Refugee cause. I am sending you this notation for your information and to report what I have done on the matter.

I also want to call your attention to an article in the current issue of "Reader's Digest", on Page 70, which requires some action also. I have brought this to the attention of the two national organizations mentioned, as I think it requires the kind of national action which they are prepared to take if they will.

Sincerely yours,

Grace E. Meyette

GEM/eb

The League for Human Rights

508 Ninth Chester Bldg.

Cleveland, Ohio

PRospect 5730



SPONSORING COMMITTEE

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November 29, 1940

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Sincerely yours,

Grace E. Meyette

GEM/eb

Anti-Defamation League
130 N. Wells St.
Chicago

December 12, 1940

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

Dear Friend Abba:

I have just received some disconcerting information concerning which you may be somewhat advised. We have rather authentic advices that a new edition of the "Protocols" is about to be published, and distributed from Cleveland. Our old friend, Louis K. Birinyi, is apparently deeply interested in this enterprise. It is intended that copies of this new edition shall be sent to every officer in the United States Army. We are told that an endorsement by Henry Ford will appear on the inside cover, and also "THAT A STATEMENT BY RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER OF CLEVELAND WILL ALSO APPEAR IN THIS NEW EDITION."

Birinyi showed our informant confidential correspondence from Hitler and Mussolini. We learned, likewise, that he is still active with his Hungarian organization, which is attempting to further the Fascist cause.

There are, of course, one or two aspects of this advice which do not add up. There have been efforts made by the Ford organization to indicate good will toward the Jewish people. The proffers have not been of a character which to my mind reveal any great enthusiasm, and it was probably more of an economic stimulus than a moral one which lies behind these tentative proffers. At the same time, it strikes me that Mr. Ford would not personally consent to any endorsement of his being published in the "Protocols" and yet the magnate is an unpredictable person. It may be that in the mind of Mr. Birinyi and his associates, the use of an old Ford statement in re the "Protocols" is contemplated. Such a former statement may not have been copyrighted, in which event they could construe this fact in favor of their utilization of it.

I take it that your statement may have been excerpted from one of your writings, or one of your addresses. Its use will, of course, be subtle, and very likely intended as a later defense in the event of need, to enable them to point out that the printing of the "Protocols," which to them appealed as a very striking and important document, they have been sufficiently fair to publish the fact that the "Protocols" was a forgery. They, in turn, as we understand it, intended then to demonstrate that if you are correct, as may well be, the fact that you pronounced this a forgery presupposes that there was an original. This, of course, would sound plausible.

I write you now not to have you do anything about it, but to let me know whether you have any information at all, even by way of rumor, concerning this. You may be assured that the proper officials are already advised concerning this, and just as soon as the information is quite complete, adequate action will be taken.

With warm personal regards, I am as always.

Very cordially,

Richard E. Gustadt

December 16, 1940

Miss Grace Mayette
League for Human Rights
Chester-Ninth Building
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Grace:

I received the enclosed letter from Mr. Gutstadt. Can you get additional information about this matter? Please return the letter to me.

With best wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

AHS:BK

Enc.

The League for Human Rights
508 Ninth Chester Bldg.
Cleveland, Ohio



January 11, 1941

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

My dear Abba:

I have been meaning for some days to advise you of the American Committee for the Protection of Foreign Born, 901 Public Square Building, which is being organized in Cleveland under the leadership of Mrs. Minnie Golden.

~~not~~ You may be informed of this organization and may be approached for moral and financial support. My advice is thumbs down. If you need for any reason more complete information, of course I will be glad to provide it. I merely issue this as a warning.

We were quite right, evidently, about the American Rescue Ship Mission which has been exposed during the last two days in the New York Times.

Sincerely yours,

Grace E. Meyette

GEM:en

BY-LAWS ADOPTED BY LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ON FEBRUARY 11, 1941

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. The Board of Directors shall consist of not fewer than fifteen nor more than twenty-four persons.
2. The Board of Directors shall elect its successors.
3. For the year 1941, one-half of the membership of the Board of Directors shall be elected for terms of one year, and one-half of the Board shall be elected for terms of two years. Thereafter, their successors shall be elected for two year terms, providing for the annual election of one-half of the Board.
4. Members of the Board who fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Board of Directors shall be automatically dropped from the Board, unless the Board shall deem the cause of such absence necessary and proper.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The President shall annually appoint an Executive Committee of five persons from the membership of the Board of Directors.
2. The Executive Committee shall choose a Chairman to preside over its meetings and act for the President in the latter's absence or temporary inability to serve.
3. The Executive Committee shall exercise such powers as may be vested in it by the Board of Directors. Except for emergencies and specific authorization, its action shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

The League for Human Rights
508 Ninth Chester Bldg.
Cleveland, Ohio



February 13, 1941

TO THE COMMITTEE OF FIFTEEN

I wish to advise you that in accordance with the instructions of the Committee at their meeting held February 11, 1941, that the following people have been appointed to the Executive Committee:

M. E. Glass
Daniel Sherby
Leo W. Neumark
H. Jack Lang
Irving Hexter

Sincerely yours,

Irving B. Hexter

The League for Human Rights
508 Ninth Chester Bldg.
Cleveland, Ohio




February 13, 1941

BOYCOTT NOTICE:

The League for Human Rights is pleased to announce that the name of the Turner Type Founders Company has been removed from the list.

This company has demonstrated to our satisfaction that they do not promote Bauer Type and have reduced this merchandise to the actual minimum required by former contracts.

You can assist in maintaining this position by urging printers not to use or order Bauer Type.



LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

BUDGET

1941

THE LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

BUDGET REPORT

1941



(as submitted to the Jewish Welfare
Federation: February 20, 1941)

In presenting the budget for the League for Human Rights for 1941, we are of the opinion that there should be a short consideration of some of the basic problems involved in the operation of this group as a defense organization.

It is obvious even to people only remotely connected with this problem that part of the original job for which this organization was brought into being -- to boycott German merchandise -- has been reduced almost to a minimum by reason of the blockade and general American antipathy to Germany and German-made merchandise. There is, however, some merchandise coming in which requires some watchfulness, but that occupies a minor part of our attention.

However, the work of the third part of our original purpose -- "to assist in exposing the activities of the Nazis, and of their Propaganda Agents, in Free America" -- has not been diminished. In many ways it has been increased for the reason that even though there is strong anti-Hitler feeling expressed on the lecture platforms, in the magazines and daily papers and on the radio, too many people still fail to appreciate the full significance of the Nazi ideology. This complicates our task and demands all the skill and experience that can be mobilized in this direction.

In the last three or four years, the problem of combating anti-Semitism has occupied probably 90% of our attention. The complexity of combating anti-Semitism and its connection with Nazi activities prevents the adoption of any definite pattern for this work. While it is true that the Federal Bureau of Investigation has stepped into a number of un-American activities, they cannot concern themselves with any such problems until they become definitely anti-governmental. However, before they enter this phase, they all go through an anti-Semitic phase. Money is raised, financial support is solicited on the basis of anti-Semitic representations.

It is in this phase that the League has been most active. Because we are super-conscious of any anti-Semitic tendencies, we concern ourselves with such organizations long before they engage the attention of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

This anti-Semitic work can be roughly broken down into two general classes. First, that part carried on by professional anti-Semitic rabble-rousers and that acquiesced in by natural lay anti-Semites.

The successful operations in the first category can only be done by a great deal of work which must necessarily be highly secretive. The second phase must be done by highly constructive methods.

We are fortunate in having been able to effect much good in both these groups. The first by our work with the Federal Bureau of Investigation; in the second group, by method which we have pursued in the past year which has been exceedingly fruitful, but which at this particular point would be best not to discuss. We are constantly testing our own methods to determine whether we are following the correct procedure. Certainly, there is no set of rules for this game, and consequently, we must maintain ourselves in a highly fluid, opportunistic position. We cannot definitely say that ours is the right method. But we can definitely say that in the City of Cleveland every possible method is pursued and every experiment tried in executing our purpose. We are convinced that this acute watchfulness has had its rewards.

While other organizations engage in good will and anti-defamation work among their other activities, no other organization is exclusively devoted to such work, and no other has an experienced staff and office fully engaged in the problem. An accomplishment not inconsequential this year is that we have been more active and more successful than ever in gaining and holding the good will of the other organizations in the city so that more than ever, the League has become the single instrument through which all these organizations can clear their various anti-Semitic problems.

We, in this work, are firmly of the belief that without the repressive effort of the League, the situation would be worse than we find it at the present time.

No small attention is paid to the question of public relations. And while the work of the Conference of Jews and Christians has been helpful, it has been more in the open and has been a public manifestation; whereas, our work has been unseen and unheralded, but none the less effective. We have found ourselves able in a number of situations to correct at their incipency several things which had they progressed to their fruition, would have reacted badly on the entire Jewish community. This is all, in our opinion, part of the defense work.

We find that a number of smaller cities have been spending a great deal more for defense work than our estimated budget calls for. As an example, in spite of larger donations to the American Jewish Committee, anti-Defamation League and American Jewish Congress which Cincinnati makes, they spent even more on their local defenses, with the community half the size of Cleveland, than we have spent. Unfortunately, much of our money is spent in ways which never see the light of day, but the Welfare Fund can be assured that because of the work of a thoroughly conscientious Board of Directors that there has been no money misspent.

THE LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTSBUDGET FOR 1941

1. Bank Service Charge	\$ 10.00
2. Articles & Pamphlets for Distribution	850.00
3. Factual Research & Other Special Projects	300.00
4. Publications Mimeographed Here	600.00
5. House to House Distribution & Delivery	100.00
6. Lectures	500.00
7. Maintenance & Rent	1000.00
8. Miscellaneous (Ice, Water, Towels)	60.00
9. General Office Expense	125.00
10. Repairs on Equipment & Upkeep	200.00
11. Office Supplies & New Equipment	500.00
12. Postage	600.00
13. Printing and Stationery	500.00
14. Salaries, Director and Staff	9340.00
15. Special Investigation	6000.00
16. Subscriptions and Dues	500.00
17. Telephone & Telegraph	600.00
18. Travel Expense	200.00
19. Tax (Soc. Sec. & Unempl. Comp.) (Workman's Comp. to start 1941)	400.00
20. Education	400.00
21. Promotion	300.00
22. Advertising	2750.00
23. Boycott Activities	400.00
	<hr/>
	\$ 26,235.00

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF BUDGET

In the budget presented herewith, there are certain items which we feel should be clarified, inasmuch as the titles are not fully explanatory. We have numbered the various items on the budget which we wish to explain.

Item #2 - Articles and Pamphlets for Distribution:

This caption covers the purchase of material for dissemination to groups whom we believe would not normally receive, see or learn about such material. In the past year the League has sent out or caused to be distributed 524,700 purchased and free pieces of this type of material.

Through collaboration with such national organizations as the American Jewish Committee and several prominent publishing houses, we have been able to effect considerable savings in our purchasing of these pamphlets, and consequently the amount herein asked represents a very small investment considering the scope of our distribution. The League along with the Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Committee recommend this method of work very highly, therefore we feel this item of expense should be increased to make it possible to distribute more of this type of material.

Item #3 - Factual Research and Other Special Projects:

While this is a rather ambiguous title, there has never been a year in the history of the League that some special project has not arisen. As an example of this type of work, we cite the following: Through various connections we were able to obtain the complete mailing list in the city of Cleveland of the German Library of Information. Every name on this list is receiving the German propaganda piece entitled "Facts in Review". We have been analysing each issue of "Facts in Review" and sending out rebuttal statements to this list. This is but one of the many things we could cite, but for this purpose we think this example will suffice to explain this title.

Item #6 - Lectures:

We spent very little money for this type of thing during the past year, because a foreshortened budget warranted no extensive activities in this department. It is noted that \$90.00 was spent. This was spent to bring here a certain refugee lady, who, when she arrived, addressed five or six groups on the actual conditions in Germany and in occupied and unoccupied France with telling effect. Her demonstration of the fact that the refugee problem was not necessarily a Jewish problem but also a very important Christian problem uncovered, and we feel eradicated several bad sources of anti-Semitism, because we feel that the principles of anti-Semitism at the present time in certain middle income groups were normally not effected by emotional appeal or the usual propaganda put out by various un-American groups.

We would like to do more of this and, consequently have raised our requested amount considerably.

Item #15 - Special Investigations:

Unquestionably the most important work that the League has done in the past two years has been in the investigation field. It has uncovered an untold amount of subversive and anti-Semitic activity. It is in this field that we obtain our information which we supply to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and it is upon these investigations that we base all of our work, because whenever one of these investigations reveals a particularly bad spot, we intensify our efforts in that direction.

We have been greatly handicapped by lack of funds to carry out adequate investigation in this field, and we particularly stress the necessity for the amount which we request, so that we can extend the scope of this absolutely essential part of our work. The entire Jewish community must be more concerned with this particular phase of our work than any other work we do.

Item #20 - Education:

During the past year we entered the project of working with Parent-Teachers' groups, Settlements, YMCA, YWCA, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other groups of this kind. This work has been very successful and has provided very tangible results.

In none of the rest of the items have important increases been asked. The increases that we have requested are nominal and those which we need for taking care of the ever increasing tide of work which comes into our office.

When it is considered that the number of anti-Semitic organizations have more than doubled in the past year, it may be understood how much more voluminous our work has become.

The chairman of the League has visited a number of other cities and investigated the operations of the organizations in these cities which compare to the League for Human Rights. In every case we are proud to state that the scope of the Cleveland work is much more far reaching and costs very much less than that found in other cities.

The League for Human Rights
508 Ninth Chester Bldg.
Cleveland, Ohio



February 21, 1941

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver,
The Temple,
E. 105th Street and Ansel Rd.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Soon you will be considering the budget of the various
constituent organizations of the Jewish Welfare Federation.

Unlike most organizations, we cannot talk too much about
the work that the League for Human Rights does. We have
filed our budget application and have attached to it a rather
lengthy pre-amble and herewith attach it, so that you can
read it at your leisure in order to know more about the work
the League is doing and thus act upon the requested budget
with a foreknowledge of the facts.

If you want any additional information, I will be very glad
to have you call me, as I am always anxious to cooperate
with you.

Sincerely yours,

Irving B. Hexter
Irving B. Hexter

IBH:en

THE LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

In presenting the budget for the League for Human Rights for 1941, we are of the opinion that there should be a short consideration of some of the basic problems involved in the operation of this group as a defense organization.

It is obvious even to people only remotely connected with this problem that part of the original job for which this organization was brought into being -- to boycott German merchandise -- has been reduced almost to a minimum by reason of the blockade and general American antipathy to Germany and German-made merchandise. There is, however, some merchandise coming in which requires some watchfulness, but that occupies a minor part of our attention.

However, the work of the third part of our original purpose -- "to assist in exposing the activities of the Nazis, and of their Propaganda Agents, in Free America" -- has not been diminished. In many ways it has been increased for the reason that even though there is strong anti-Hitler feeling expressed on the lecture platforms, in the magazines and daily papers and on the radio, too many people still fail to appreciate the full significance of the Nazi ideology. This complicates our task and demands all the skill and experience that can be mobilized in this direction.

In the last three or four years, the problem of combating anti-Semitism has occupied probably 90% of our attention. The complexity of combating anti-Semitism and its connection with Nazi activities prevents the adoption of any definite pattern for this work. While it is true that the Federal Bureau of Investigation has stepped into a number of un-American activities, they cannot concern themselves with any such problems until they become definitely anti-governmental. However, before they enter this phase,

they all go through an anti-Semitic phase. Money is raised, financial support is solicited on the basis of anti-Semitic representations.

It is in this phase that the League has been most active. Because we are super-conscious of any anti-Semitic tendencies, we concern ourselves with such organizations long before they engage the attention of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

This anti-Semitic work can be roughly broken down into two general classes. First, that part carried on by professional anti-Semitic rabble-rousers and that acquiesced in by natural lay anti-Semites.

The successful operations in the first category can only be done by a great deal of work which must necessarily be highly secretive. The second phase must be done by highly constructive methods.

We are fortunate in having been able to effect much good in both these groups. The first by our work with the Federal Bureau of Investigation; in the second group, by a method which we have pursued in the past year which has been exceedingly fruitful, but which at this particular point would be best not to discuss. We are constantly testing our own methods to determine whether we are following the correct procedure. Certainly, there is no set of rules for this game and consequently, we must maintain ourselves in a highly fluid, opportunistic position. We cannot definitely say that ours is the right method. But we can definitely say that in the City of Cleveland every possible method is pursued and every experiment tried in executing our purpose. We are convinced that this acute watchfulness has had its rewards.

While other organizations engage in good will and anti-defamation work among their other activities, no other organization is exclusively devoted to such work and no other has an experienced staff and office fully engaged in the problem. An accomplishment not inconsequential this year is that we have been

more active and more successful than ever in gaining and holding the good will of the other organizations in the city so that more than ever, the League has become the single instrument through which all these organizations can clear their various anti-Semitic problems.

We, in this work, are firmly of the belief that without the repressive effect of the League, the situation would be worse than we find it at the present time. No small attention is paid to the question of public relations. And while the work of the Conference of Jews and Christians has been helpful, it has been more in the open and has been a public manifestation; whereas, our work has been unseen and unheralded, but none the less effective. We have found ourselves able in a number of situations to correct at their incipency several things which had they progressed to their fruition would have reacted badly on the entire Jewish community. This is all, in our opinion, part of the defense work.

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The League for Human Rights
508 Ninth Chester Bldg.
Cleveland, Ohio

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April 5, 1941

TO PRESIDENTS OF COMMUNITY COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONS

I am writing this letter to you, because the League for Human Rights finds itself in an anomalous position in the community. I find that much confusion exists among the people interested in welfare matters in the community as to just what our scope is, where our duties begin and where they leave off.

Unlike other agencies in this city that have been created by the Jewish Welfare Federation or the Community Council, ours is a rather difficult one to define. For instance, we know very well what the Jewish Vocational Service concentrates on. Their job is pretty clear cut. We know what the Refugee Service does, because their job is well defined.

But the work of the League is different, and consequently I would like to make clear to various responsible members of the Federation just what I, as chairman of the League, consider our scope to be, and it is along these lines that we intend to continue until we officially are instructed to the contrary.

First of all, one of our duties is the prosecution of the boycott of Nazi merchandise. I need not stress the fact that today this has become a minor problem because of the general world and war conditions. But growing out of this Nazi merchandise problem came a question of anti-Semitism. The question of anti-Semitism is a big one. It is impossible of solution by any single spectacular act or any series of such. It is a question of consistently keeping at the problem on an opportunistic basis.

The question of anti-Semitism is hydra-headed. There is a positive anti-Semitism and a passive anti-Semitism, both of which must be watched very carefully. There is the question of how much anti-Semitism is caused by non-Jews and how much is caused by Jews. There is the question of how much of it is carried on by professional anti-Semites and how much of it is due to the inherent anti-Semitic predilections of non-Jews which they have gained through generations of bigoted education.

Because this problem spreads itself "all over the lot," so to speak, our activities must do likewise.

Are we a public relations agency? My answer is yes, when bad public relations might reflect on the Cleveland Jewish community.

Are we an investigative agency? Definitely yes.

Are we a propaganda agency? Yes, when such propaganda, pro or con, affects the Semitic problem.

Should the League concern itself with Jewish behaviorism? My answer is yes, when the violation of good behavior endangers the Jewish community.

In my opinion we are and should be to the Cleveland community and all of its constituent bodies what the national agencies are to their constituent bodies. Where the various cities channel all of their anti-Semitic troubles through various national agencies, so should the Cleveland agencies channel their difficulties of the same nature through the League.

The League is set up to do a highly effective job, but it can only do such job as the agencies permit it to do. This means that by and large we can only fulfill our mission if the constituent agencies in the city will recognize and use our facilities. It has happened many times that individuals and/or organizations have taken independent actions in various matters when, if they had referred to the League, they could have used our files and information and received a good deal more information upon which to act.

When a business man is solicited for any special or new proposition, he usually calls the Better Business Bureau before making commitment. The League has fortified itself with a mass of information so that we may be able to act in a similar capacity for anyone who will take the trouble to call. We have no desire to usurp or encroach upon the duties of any other agency, but at the same time we know with a great deal of definiteness that no other agency is equipped to handle the various problems falling within the scope of anti-Semitism, public relations, anti-Nazi or boycott as well as we can.

Consequently, for the general good of the community, for the good of every organization in the community, it would appear that you as an individual and all organizations with which you are connected can serve the community best by taking advantage of the facilities offered by the League.

I have tried in this letter to crystallize the scope of our activities, and I sincerely hope you will transmit them to any of the constituent agencies with which you are connected.

Sincerely yours,

Irving B. Hexter
Irving B. Hexter

CLEVELAND BOYCOTT LIST

Euclid Gift House - 10644 Euclid Avenue

Ito's Japanese Store - Old Arcade

Wessler Manufacturing Co. - 3171 W. 106 Street

S. S. Kresge Company - All Stores

Bauer Type Foundry - 235 S. 45th St., New York

H. & H Grinding Company - 2129 East 2nd Street

Wichert Dental Supply Co. - 15017 Detroit Ave.

Kathal Wales Gift Shop - 13225 Shaker Square

Kraus Card Shop - Euclid Arcade

F. W. Woolworth Co. 5¢ & 10¢ Stores - All stores

The League for Human Rights
508 Chester Ninth Bldg.
Cleveland, Ohio