



## The Abba Hillel Silver Digital Collection

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

Series 1: General Correspondence, 1914-1969, undated.

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

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Rosenberg case, 1951-1953.

# THE CONGREGATION MISHKAN ISRAEL

FOUNDED 1840

ROBERT E. GOLDBURG, *Rabbi*

ORANGE AND AUDUBON STREETS  
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

May 29, 1951

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

Dear Rabbi Silver,

Because you speak with courage and conviction for so much of American Israel, I beg your consideration of the following and will be guided by whatever counsel you may care to give me.

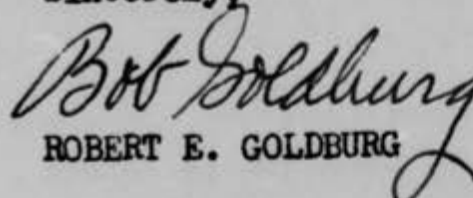
The statement made by Judge Irving Kaufman when he imposed the death penalty on Mr. and Mrs. Julius Rosenberg included, according to the press reports, a reference to his praying more than once in the synagogue and asking God's guidance before invoking the sentence. Considering the treatment of those who collaborated during the war with the Nazis, and the clemency granted to the Nazis since the war, I was shocked by his invoking the death penalty under the circumstances of the Rosenberg case. Since never before in American history has this been done, I felt that the Judge's severe sentence was due partially to the current hysteria and partially to his over-zealous patriotism. In any event, I could not see why the synagogue and the God of Israel had to be involved in such an issue and made, by the Judge, to sanction his action. The enemies of our people have charged often enough that our God is one of strict and stern justice without the attribute of mercy, and Judge Kaufman seems equally convinced of this concept.

I thought perhaps that a group of Rabbis might feel the same way and be willing to send a letter to the NEW YORK TIMES or find some other appropriate channel to answer Judge Kaufman. It might help in obtaining clemency for the convicted couple, or at least might deter other Judge Kaufman's from shielding their eagerness for retribution behind the facade of the Jewish religion.

I am a graduate of the HUC, Class of 1945. During the brief years of my ministry, I believe I have seen the development of trends which bode ill for American Jews and ultimately for the peace and security of all. I look to you, Rabbi Silver, for your counsel in this matter.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely,

  
ROBERT E. GOLDBURG

REG:AS



Rosenberg

June 5, 1951

Rabbi Robert E. Goldberg  
Congregation Mishkan Israel  
Orange and Audubon Streets  
New Haven, Connecticut

My dear Friend:

Permit me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of May 29th. I read it with a great deal of interest. I, too, feel that the imposition of the death penalty by Judge Irving Kaufman upon the Rosenbergs was unique in its severity. I do not believe, however, that it would be helpful to start a public agitation against his decision. From such an agitation, I am afraid no good could come to anyone concerned. I believe that those who are deeply interested in the matter would do well to write directly to the Judge and to the President of the United States, appealing for clemency, but avoiding criticism and condemnation.

It would not be desirable in my judgment to make this in any way a Jewish issue exclusively. If any group representation is made to the Judge or the President, it should be made by Jews and non-Jews, and by laymen as well as ministers.

With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

# THE CONGREGATION MISHKAN ISRAEL

FOUNDED 1840

ROBERT E. GOLDBURG, *Rabbi*

ORANGE AND AUDUBON STREETS  
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

June 11, 1951

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver,

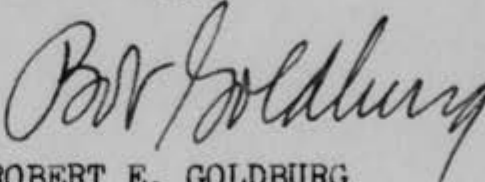
Thank you very much for your prompt and kind answer  
to my letter. Your counsel and advice is good.

I read a reprint of your recent sermon in yesterday's  
edition of the New York Compass and as usual I thought  
it exceptionally fine.

I know how busy you will be at the C.C.A.R., but I will  
try to see you for a moment and thank you for your letter  
to me.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bob Goldberg". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

ROBERT E. GOLDBURG

REG:AS

# Committee To Secure Justice In The Rosenberg Case

JOSEPH BRAININ  
Chairman

DAVID ALMAN  
Executive Secretary

January 7, 1952

1050 SIXTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.  
BRyant 9-9694

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Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple  
E. 105 Street at Ansel Road  
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Thank you for giving us permission to reprint your letter to Mr. Bloch.

The letter will be printed in full, from the salutation to Mr. Bloch to the words "presidential use" which end the concluding paragraph, with no deletion or changes of any kind.

An asterisk after Mr. Bloch's name will be explained below the letter by: "Emanuel Bloch, counsel for the Rosenbergs".

A double asterisk or other sign after "presidential use" will be explained below the letter by: "Rabbi Silver has given permission to reprint this letter in its entirety, in view of the fact that portions of it have previously been published without authorization."

The letter will be introduced by the words "A letter by Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver."

The complete list of others to be included in this brochure follows:

Commonweal Magazine, January 9, 1953  
Dr. Roland H. Bainton, Yale Divinity School, Conn.  
The Churchman, editorial November 1, 1952  
Jewish Examiner, editorial, October 24, 1952  
Boston Chronicle, editorial, November 29, 1952  
Hillel Rogoff, editor Jewish Daily Forward, Nov. 29, 1952  
The Nation, article by Arthur Garfield Hays, Nov. 8, 1952  
Mary Van Kleeck, sociologist  
Dorothy Thompson, The Washington Star, April 12, 1951  
The Rev. John Paul Jones, N.Y. Times, Nov 28  
The Jewish Day, editorial, October 16, 1952  
Max Lerner, New York Post, June 19, 1952  
Jewish Chronicle, editorial, Indianapolis, Indiana, Dec. 5  
Father Frank North, Nashotah House, Wisconsin, in a letter to the President  
Rabbi Dr. Meyer Sharff, Brooklyn, N.Y.  
Jewish Morning Journal, column by Jacob Glatstein, Oct. 29, 1952  
Dr. Rudolf Carnap, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, N.J.



Dr. Harold C. Urey, Nobel Prize Winner and renowned  
nuclear scientist  
Samuel B. Gach, editor and publisher of The California  
Jewish Voice, Nov. 26, 1952  
Rabbi Abraham Cronbach, Cincinnati, Ohio  
A cable from twenty Israeli Rabbis, Nov. 18, 1952  
Charles E. Raven, Prof. Emeritus, Cambridge University,  
England, Chaplain to HM, the Queen  
Dudley Collard, attorney, England  
The Very Rev. C. W. Chandler, Dean of Waikato, New Zealand  
Duke of Bedford, Woburn, Bucks, England  
Rev. Stanley Evans, England  
Sydney Silverman, Member of Parliament, England  
Lord Chorley of Kendal (formerly Cassel Prof. of Law in  
the University of London)  
Nicole J. Dreyfus, prominent lawyer, Paris  
Janet Jagan, Member Georgetown Town Council, British Guiana  
Jewish Western Bulletin, official organ of the Jewish  
Council of Vancouver  
Editorial, Toronto Hebrew Daily Journal, Nov. 24, 1952  
D. N. Pritt, London, Queen's Counsel

The only text in the brochure, aside from the above-indicated quotations, will consist of the words: "The people Speak Out on the Rosenberg Case", and the words "Issued by: National Committee to Secure Justice in the Rosenberg Case, 1050 Sixth Avenue, New York 18, New York. BRyant 9-9694.

I hope that the information given you here is satisfactory. As soon as copies are off the press I will send several to you.

In closing, I should like to express my humble admiration to you for your great courage on this issue as well as on many other issues. Such inspired leadership as you have given, to Jews and non Jews alike, Has always been the hope of our country.

Sincerely,

*David Alman*

David Alman  
Executive Secretary

# Committee To Secure Justice In The Rosenberg Case

JOSEPH BRAININ  
Chairman

DAVID ALMAN  
Executive Secretary

January 12, 1952

1050 SIXTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.  
BRyant 9-9694

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B. Z. Goldberg  
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Dr. John L. Simon  
Leon Straus  
Lois Timmins  
Elizabeth Todd  
Dr. Leonard Tushnet  
Dr. Gene Weltfish

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
Cleveland Temple  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Enclosed you will find several copies of the brochure, "The People Speak Out in the Rosenberg Case" which I promised to send you as soon as copies were available from the printer.

We took extreme care to carry out the letter and the spirit of our agreement. An earlier proof issued, in which the printer had taken upon himself to cut your letter was rejected and destroyed.

I think you will be satisfied, on reading the brochure that we have adhered to the agreement.

If, however, you feel that we have taken any liberties, I would appreciate your telling us so, and we will make whatever changes you desire in our next printing.

Please accept our thanks for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

*David Alman*  
DAVID ALMAN  
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY



Hundreds of thousands  
of Americans appeal  
for clemency . . .

# THE ROSENBERGS MUST NOT DIE!

*The New York Times*  
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.  
"All the News That's Fit to Print"  
ADOLPH S. OCHS, Publisher 1896-1935  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1952.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Send a letter, telegram  
or post card to The . . .  
President, White House,  
Washington, D. C., urging  
him to commute the  
death sentence for Ethel  
and Julius Rosenberg.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO SECURE JUSTICE  
IN THE ROSENBERG CASE

1050 SIXTH AVENUE

NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

## 200 LETTERS BACK ROSENBERG APPEAL

Urey, Dr. Shapley, Rabbi Silver  
Oppose Red Spies' Execution  
—Clemency Bid Up Today

Letters from 200 scientists, clergymen, educators and union officials were filed yesterday in Federal Court in support of a move by Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, Soviet atom spies, for a commutation of their death sentence.

Federal Judge Irving R. Kaufman will hold a hearing today on a petition by Emanuel H. Bloch, defense counsel, for judicial clemency. It will be opposed by James B. Kilsheimer 3d, assistant United States Attorney.

The Rosenbergs, convicted of transmitting secret atom bomb data to the Soviet Union, are scheduled to be put to death the week of Jan. 12. They are in the death house at Sing Sing.

One of the letters was written by Dr. Harold C. Urey, Nobel prize winner and noted nuclear scientist, of the University of Chicago. Dr. Urey's letter, dated Dec. 16, said he had read the trial transcript and that the Government's case "rests on the testimony of David and Ruth Greenglass. I found the testimony of the Rosenbergs more believable than that of the Greenglasses."

### Urey 'Outraged' by Penalty

Dr. Urey continued: "Accepting the verdict as correct, I am amazed and completely outraged by the unequal punishment which has been given. I believe the Rosenbergs are or have been Communists or very sympathetic to Communist ideas. I regard such people as unreliable generally, but I do not believe in punishing people unless they commit crimes."

The 200 letters were from persons here as well as from England, France, Australia, Japan, Italy and Mexico. Among the writers were Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of the Harvard College Observatory; Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver of Cleveland and Waldo Frank, author.

In their affidavit the Rosenbergs contended that the Government's case "stands or falls on the testimony of David and Ruth Greenglass."

"We have never been able to comprehend," the Rosenbergs said, "that civilized and compassionate consciences could accept a smiling 'Cain' like David Greenglass—or the 'serpent' Ruth, his wife, who would slay, not only his sister, but his sister's husband, and orphan two small children of his own blood."

"How firm is a verdict predicated upon the testimony of 'accomplices,' trading their Judas words for a few years of their miserable lives?"

"We have always said that David, our own brother, knowing well the consequences of his acts, bargained our lives away for his life and his wife's."

EMANUEL H. BLOCH  
COUNSELOR AT LAW  
401 ~~xxx~~ BROADWAY  
NEW YORK 7, N. Y.  
PHONE WORTH 2-6851

October 17, 1952

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
Cleveland Temple  
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Sir:

I am the attorney for Julius Rosenberg and Ethel Rosenberg, his wife, who were sentenced to death upon their conviction for violating the espionage laws of the United States by conspiring to transmit information about the atomic bomb to the Soviet Union.

The innocence of the Rosenbergs, maintained stoutly by them at all times, and evidenced by their pleas of not guilty and testimony at the trial, is still an issue that has not been laid to rest. I expect to continue or institute proceedings immediately to prove their innocence. In the event, however, that these proceedings are unsuccessful, the Rosenbergs may still apply to the sentencing judge, and thereafter to the President, for a reduction of sentence, irrespective of the issue of guilt or innocence. In the event, however, that these proceedings are unsuccessful, the Rosenbergs may still apply to the sentencing judge, and thereafter to the President, for a reduction of the sentence, irrespective of the issue of guilt or innocence.

The death sentence in this case is unprecedented. No civilian court in the entire history of the United States has ever ordered such a punishment for espionage. Even the confessed atomic spies--Fuchs, Greenglass and Gold, characterized by the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy as the most dangerous received only jail sentences. Moreover, Ruth Greenglass, the wife of David Greenglass, also an avowed espionage agent, was never indicted or prosecuted in any manner, but, on the contrary, was permitted to remain a free woman. Both the Joint Committee and the House Committee on Un-American Activities, who assumed the guilt of the Rosenbergs, relegated their acts to a minor and unimportant position.

Moreover, the core of the charge against the Rosenbergs was traffick with the Soviet Union during World War II at a time when the Soviet Union was our ally, there was no charge in the indictment or proof at the trial that the Rosenbergs had any intent to injure the United States.

Finally, this is in contrast with the punishment meted out to such traitors as Axis "Sally" or "Tokyo" Rose who had traffick with our enemy during World War II and yet received the relatively mild sentences of ten and fifteen years.

Shock, horror and revulsion have been expressed at the sentence of death in this case, a feeling that it is cruel and inhuman and barbaric. Many believe it to offend the American tradition for humanity and justice. Others are uneasy that the rest of the world will look askance at the execution of such a sentence in the United States, and fear that the prestige of our country will thereby be undermined.

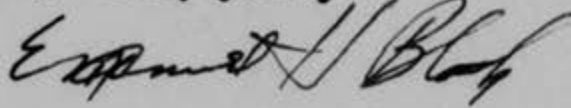
It will be relevant, if, as and when I shall be constrained to ask for commutation of the sentence, to submit to the court or the President expressions of public opinion concerning the death sentence.

I, therefore, take the liberty to ask you, as an outstanding citizen, to communicate with me your views on this aspect of the case so that the same may be presented for

2- the Court's consideration. The public may also be interested in your views on this subject, but, if you desire that the same be confidential except for Court use or executive use, may I assure you that I will treat your reply in a confidential manner.

I would be grateful for your immediate response since time is running short.

Very truly yours,



Emanuel H. Blech

EEB:

AC?



October 23, 1952

Mr. Emanuel H. Bloch  
401 Broadway  
New York 7, New York

My dear Mr. Bloch:

Permit me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of October 17th. I have accepted the verdict of the courts in their conviction of the Rosenbergs for violating the espionage laws of our country. The crime of which they have been found guilty is a heinous one, and I find no sympathy in my heart for men and women who betray their country. I was especially resentful of the effort that was made to drag in the issue of anti-Semitism in this most unfortunate affair.

However, I believe that the death sentence which has been imposed is unprecedented in the legal annals of our country as a punishment for espionage in peace-time. I believe that our country is strong and great-hearted enough to be merciful. Should, therefore, an appeal be made to the court or to the President of the United States for clemency and for commutation of the death sentence, I am prepared to add my name to such a plea.

I do not wish any publicity to be given by you to this letter of mine or to my position in the matter. I wish it to be held confidential except for court or Presidential use.

Very sincerely yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

Rosenberg *Situation*

October 29, 1952

Dr. Abraham Cronbach  
3098 Riddle View Lane  
Cincinnati 20, Ohio

I received your note. I am enclosing herewith copy of a confidential letter which I wrote to Mr. Bloch. I believe that this letter fully states my position.

With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er  
Enc.



Dear Dr. Silver:-

Will you send or sign an appeal to President Truman that he commute this dreadful sentence ? Will you let me know ?

Cordially Yours,

*Abraham Cronbach*

Abraham Cronbach

3098 Riddle View Lane,  
Cincinnati 20, O.

EMANUEL H. BLOCH  
COUNSELOR AT LAW  
401 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK 13, N.Y.  
PHONE WORTH 2-6851

November 13, 1952

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

Dear Rabbi Silver:

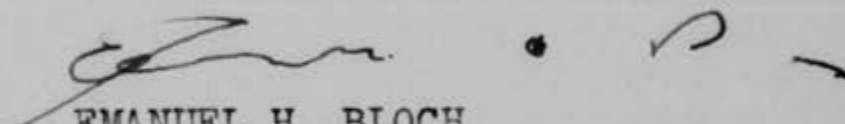
I wish to acknowledge your letter of October 23, 1952 expressing your opinions concerning the sentence of death upon my clients, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. I regret that I was unable, because of the press of legal work in that case, to respond to you with the promptness that I should have liked to.

I am sure that your letter, together with the many many others that have been sent to me, will carry great weight when annexed to a petition for the reduction of the death sentence, either before the sentencing judge or the President of the United States.

Except for these purposes, I shall keep your letter, pursuant to your request, in the strictest of confidence as I have until this point.

May I add that I am very grateful to you for having troubled to communicate with me in this matter.

Respectfully yours,



EMANUEL H. BLOCH

EHB/yf

# EMERGENCY COMMITTEE OF THE ARTS AND PROFESSIONS TO SECURE CLEMENCY FOR THE ROSENBERGS

108 WEST 44th STREET • NEW YORK 36, NEW YORK • Circle 6-2927

December 16, 1952

Dear Rabbi Silver:

I am writing to you about a most urgent matter -- clemency for the Rosenbergs. As you know, they are scheduled to die in less than thirty days -- the week of January 12th.

The prominent citizens whose names appear underneath my signature share my concern and have authorized me to write to you on their behalf as well as my own.

We enclose a copy of an advertisement which embodies a plea for clemency. This advertisement will appear (full page) in the New York Times on or about December 29th.

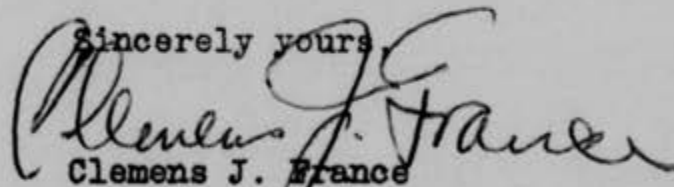
We ask you to join with us in this "Plea for Clemency" by adding your name to ours and others as a sponsor of the advertisement.

We believe that you, like ourselves, are appalled by the severity and finality of the unprecedented sentence. The imposition of the death penalty would irreparably hurt our good name throughout the world, as is already manifest. It would traduce those American ideals which are based upon a deep regard for human life. In the most profound sense, justice and humanity demand the exercise of executive clemency in the Rosenberg Case.

✓ In addition to yourself, we are asking about seventy other distinguished persons to sponsor the advertisement. A list of their names is attached. Your affirmative answer will add substantial weight to the growing plea for clemency and may be decisive in saving these two lives.

A card and self-addressed envelope are enclosed. Since time is running out, may we ask that you fill out and mail the card to us at once.

Sincerely yours,

  
Clemens J. France  
Attorney, Providence, R.I.

Rabbi Abraham Cronbach  
Cincinnati, Ohio

Rev. Kenneth Ripley Forbes  
Philadelphia, Pa.

Waldo Frank  
Writer, Truro, Mass.

Rev. John Paul Jones  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Stephen Love  
Professor of Law, Northwestern University  
Chicago, Ill.

December 18, 1952

Dr. Clemens J. France  
108 West 44th Street  
New York 36, New York

My dear Dr. France:

I regret that I cannot permit the use of my name as a sponsor for the "Plea for Clemency" which is to appear as a full-page advertisement. I have fully explained my position to Mr. E. H. Bloch, the attorney for the Rosenbergs, in my communication to him of October 23, 1952.

Very sincerely yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

Please add my name as a sponsor of the "Plea for Clemency", for the Rosenbergs, a full page advertisement which will appear in the New York Times on or about December 29th.

Name .....

Address .....

City .....



# Julius Klein

PUBLIC RELATIONS

WESTMINSTER BUILDING • 110 SOUTH DEARBORN STREET • CHICAGO 3, ILLINOIS  
110 South Dearborn Street  
Chicago 3, Illinois

Chicago 3, Illinois  
January 2, 1953  
TWX: C

Mr. Bernard Katzen  
625 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York

My dear Bernie:

I spoke to Dr. Silver today about the Rosenberg case and as we both thought, apparently he has been misquoted.

1. He never signed a petition for clemency for the Rosenbergs.
2. He wrote a letter to Mr. Bloch last October in reply to a letter from him in which he (Dr. Silver) condemned the treason of the Rosenbergs and called it a heinous crime but stated that if a request for clemency should be made, that he would have no objection if his name is added to those seeking clemency with the Court or the President; but the letter in no way expressed any sympathy for the crime the Rosenbergs committed. I am getting a copy of the letter so I can show it to you when I am in New York the next time.
3. Dr. Silver requested that no publicity be given to his letter and obviously Mr. Bloch disregarded that request too.

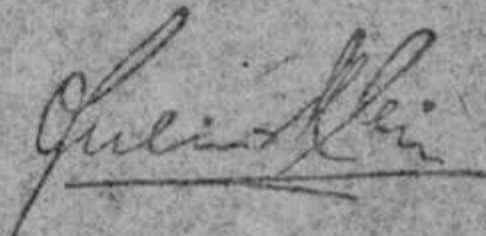
Now there is no reason for either you or me to be alarmed about Dr. Silver's position. He is a servant of God, and pleaded for clemency as he would in any other case, but never did he condone or minimize the grave crime committed by these traitors.

Kindest personal regards.

Sincerely yours,

Julius Klein/sr

cc: Dr. Abba Hillel Silver



January 5, 1953

Mr. Emanuel H. Bloch  
401 Broadway  
New York 7, New York

My dear Mr. Bloch:

Under date of October 17th you wrote me to express my views on the Rosenberg case. In your letter you stated: "The public may also be interested in your views on this subject, but if you desire that the same be confidential except for Court use or executive use, may I assure you that I will treat your reply in a confidential manner." On October 23rd I gave you my views and stated: "I do not wish any publicity to be given by you to this letter of mine or to my position in the matter. I wish it to be held confidential except for court or Presidential use."

My letter was not kept confidential. It was evidently turned over to the Emergency Committee of the Arts and Professions, who proceeded to use it in a full-page advertisement.

Dr. Clemens J. France wrote to me and to others, I assume, under date of ~~January~~ <sup>December</sup> 16th, requesting the use of my name as sponsor for such an advertisement. Under date of December 18th I wrote to Dr. France stating: "I regret that I cannot permit the use of my name as a sponsor for a 'Plea for Clemency' for the Rosenbergs which is to appear as a full-page advertisement. I have fully explained my position to Mr. E. H. Bloch, the attorney for the Rosenbergs, in my communication to him of October 23, 1952."

I deplore this action and I think that an explanation is in order.

Sincerely yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

JANUARY 5, 1953

DR. CLEMENS J. FRANCE  
108 WEST 44 STREET  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

UNDER DATE OF DECEMBER 18 I EXPRESSLY DENIED YOU THE RIGHT TO USE MY NAME IN CONNECTION WITH A PLEA FOR CLEMENCY FOR THE ROSENBERGS WHICH WAS TO APPEAR AS A FULL PAGE ADVERTISEMENT. I FIND IN THE CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER THIS MORNING THAT YOU HAVE DISREGARDED MY EXPRESSED WISHES. I REGARD THIS AS ALTOGETHER ~~REPREHENSIBLE~~. EQUALLY REPREHENSIBLE IS THE USE OF AN EXCERPT FROM MY LETTER TO MR. BLOCH OMITTING THE FIRST PARAGRAPH WHICH WAS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF MY POSITION IN THE CASE IN THAT I STATED THAT I ACCEPTED THE VERDICT OF THE COURTS, THAT I REGARD THE CRIME FOR WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN FOUND ~~GUILTY~~ AS A HEINOUS ONE, THAT I FIND NO SYMPATHY IN MY HEART FOR MEN AND WOMEN WHO BETRAY THEIR COUNTRY, THAT I WAS ESPECIALLY RESENTFUL OF THE EFFORT THAT ~~WAS~~ MADE TO DRAG IN THE ISSUE OF ANTISEMITISM IN THIS MOST UNFORTUNATE AFFAIR. RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE DO NOT ACT IN THIS ~~MANNER~~.

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

JANUARY 5, 1953

MR. EMANUEL H. BLOCH  
101 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK 7, NEW YORK

FOLLOWING IS COPY OF TELEGRAM SENT TO CLEMENS J. FRANCE:



January 5, 1953

General Julius Klein  
110 Dearborn Street  
Chicago, Illinois

My dear General Klein:

In connection with my correspondence with Mr. E. H. Bloch, the attorney for the Rosenbergs, which I sent you, you may be interested also in the enclosed letter which I sent to Dr. France of the Emergency Committee of the Arts and Professions who requested me on December 16th for the use of my name in connection with a proposed advertisement. In spite of my expressed request not to use my name, they have proceeded to use it in their advertisement of today.

With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er  
Enc.



**DON'T WAIT**

**TELEGRAPH**

FORM 6249 (50)

# WESTERN UNION

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

1220

SYMBOLS

DL=Day Letter

NL=Night Letter

LT=Int'l Letter Telegram

VLT=Int'l Victory Ltr.

1953 JAN 6 PM 3 02

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GQ.CLA160 LONG DL PD=NNW NEWYORK NY 6 143P=

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER, THE TEMPLE=

EAST 105 & ANSEL RD=

YOUR TELEGRAM OF YESTERDAY REACHED ME ONLY THIS MORNING.  
REGRET THIS DELAY IN REPLYING. PLEASE BELIEVE THAT WE FULLY  
RESPECTED YOUR LETTER DATED DECEMBER 18 IN WHICH YOU STATED  
THAT YOU COULD NOT PERMIT USE OF YOUR NAME AS SPONSOR FOR  
PLEA FOR CLEMENCY WHICH WAS TO APPEAR AS FULL PAGE  
ADVERTISEMENT. HOWEVER WHEN YOUR LETTER TO MR BLOCH BECAME  
MATTER OF PUBLIC COURT RECORD IN CLEMENCY HEARING BEFORE  
JUDGE KAUFMAN, WHEN IT WAS MENTIONED IN LEADING NEW YORK  
NEWSPAPERS AS WELL AS MANY NEWSPAPERS THROUGHOUT THE  
COUNTRY, WE BELIEVED WE COULD PROPERLY QUOTE FROM IT WITH,  
OF COURSE, SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO RECORD FROM WHICH IT WAS  
TAKEN. IT WAS NOT OUR INTENTION IN ANY WAY TO CONNECT YOU  
OR ANY OF THE INDIVIDUALS FROM WHOSE STATEMENTS QUOTATIONS  
WERE USED IN THE SECTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT HEADED APPEALS  
FOR CLEMENCY AS SPONSORS OF ENDORSERS OF THE ADVERTISEMENT  
ITSELF=

END 1=

## CLASS OF SERVICE

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GQ.CLA160 SHEET 2=

WE BELIEVE THIS IS CLEARLY SHOWN IN THE ADVERTISEMENT. HOWEVER, WHILE QUOTATIONS USED IN THAT SECTION ARE INDEPENDENT OF ANY ENDORSEMENT OF ADVERTISEMENT, WE BELIEVED THAT SINCE THEY WERE ALREADY PUBLIC, THEY COULD AGAIN BE USED PUBLICLY. CHOICE OF EXCERPTS FROM YOUR LETTER AS FROM OTHER STATEMENTS WERE GUIDED BY TWO FACTORS, SPACE LIMITATIONS AND OUR JUDGEMENT AS TO WHAT PARTS WOULD SPEAK MOST DIRECTLY AND MOST ELOQUENTLY FOR CLEMENCY FOR ROSENBERGS. AS WAS MENTIONED TO YOU OUR LETTER OF DECEMBER 16, ADVERTISEMENT WAS ORIGINALLY MEANT FOR PUBLICATION IN NEW YORK TIMES. HOWEVER AFTER TIMES SENT US PROOFS, IT REFUSED TO CARRY ADVERTISEMENT AS DID EVERY OTHER NEWSPAPER IN NEW YORK. SHOCKING ILLUSTRATION OF DENIAL OF FREEDOM OF PRESS IN BROADEST SENSE. WE WERE FORCED TO GO TO NEWSPAPERS IN OTHER PARTS OF COUNTRY. THEREFORE ADVERTISEMENT YESTERDAY APPEARED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER, WASHINGTON STAR AND ST LOUIS POST DISPATCH=

:END 2=

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# WESTERN UNION

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

1220

(58)

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GQ.CLA160 SHEET 3-

WE ARE DEEPLY SORRY TO HAVE CAUSED YOU ANY ANNOYANCE OR EMBARRASSEMENT. PLEASE BELIEVE THAT WHATEVER MISTAKE MAY HAVE BEEN MADE, OR WHATEVER MISUNDERSTANDING, OUR PURPOSE WAS ONLY TO SPEAK OUT FOR CLEMENCY FOR THE ROSENBERGS. THE TIME IS SO SHORT, THE NEED SO URGENT FOR OUR OWN SAKES AND FOR HUMANITY. YOU HAVE OUR DEEPEST RESPECT FOR THE COURAGEOUS STAND YOU HAVE TAKEN FOR CLEMENCY=

CLEMENS J FRANCE=



EMANUEL H. BLOCH  
COUNSELOR AT LAW  
401 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK 13, N.Y.  
PHONE WORTH 2-6851

January 6, 1953

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

Dear Rabbi Silver:

I received your letter dated January 5, 1953 in which you express your strong belief that I did not keep your letter to me, concerning your views on the Rosenberg case, confidential except for "court use or executive use".

I do not know whether you wrote this letter to me after my telephone conversation with you yesterday afternoon. I hope not.

In any event, may I reassure you that I did not betray your confidence, and that no one except the both of us knew that you had sent me a communication in which you explained your position on the Rosenberg case.

I have been a member of the Bar of the State of New York for the past 28 years. My reputation for honesty and integrity, I believe, is unquestioned and unblemished. I have never broken my word to anybody in all my life. I did not break my word to you. I do not know what more I can add to try to convince you of this fact.

I have studiously avoided becoming entangled in any mass activity or public relations in the case. I have acted on behalf of my clients as a lawyer and I have conducted myself accordingly.

It would seem not improbable that any organization that may have been formed to protest against the barbaric sentence in this case may have turned to you, as one of our great outstanding citizens and religious leaders, to enlist your endorsement in support of a clemency plea. Any communication to such effect, therefore, of such organization, such as "The Emergency Committee of the Arts and Professions", to procure your favorable sentiment is not surprising, but, you may be secure in your own thinking, that their attempt to draw you out in a public statement did not emanate from me, directly or indirectly, or was any such attempt occasioned by any knowledge that I had received your views.



Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

-2-

January 6, 1953

May I repeat what I said yesterday. I trust that your justifiable resentment against anybody who betrayed your confidence should not redound to the disadvantage of my clients, for they, as I, were not responsible for such breach of trust. Moreover, their lives are involved and should not be jeopardized by some stupid or disreputable act on the part of anyone not acting in their behalf.

When I submitted your letter to Judge Kaufman on the appeal for judicial clemency, I submitted your entire letter. After it was submitted in Court, it became a public record available to anyone who desired to inspect the same, at the office of the clerk of the Court. Consequently, if anybody looked at your letter, it was possible for them to excerpt part of it and fail to reveal the other parts without which, of course, your entire position could not be made clear. I assume that this is how this Emergency Committee obtained the quotation from your letter.

Again, I implore you to grant me an audience, which will be completely private and confidential, so that I may gain from your wisdom and obtain advice which I badly need.

Most respectfully yours,



EMANUEL H. BLOCH

EHB/yf

P.S. After the receipt of your telegram, I was successful in communicating with Clemens J. France of Providence, Rhode Island, the Chairman of the Emergency Committee, as well as the Acting Secretary of the Committee. Both of these persons promised me that the organization would write to you, explaining the incident and refrain from using your name in any public way in the future.

EHB

To: Editor, St. Louis Post Dispatch

January 7, 1953

Editor  
Washington Star  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

I understand that an advertisement appeared in your paper sponsored by the Emergency Committee of the Arts and Professions which carried an excerpt from a letter which I wrote in connection with an appeal for clemency for the Rosenbergs. This letter was to be submitted for Court use or Executive use in the clemency appeal. It was not to be used in connection with a public agitation.

Under date of December 18, 1953, I wrote to the Chairman of the Emergency Committee of the Arts and Professions, Dr. Clemens J. France, stating: "I regret that I cannot permit the use of my name as a sponsor for a plea for clemency for the Rosenbergs which is to appear as a full-page advertisement." In spite of that, my expressed wishes were ignored, and only an extract of the letter was published in the advertisement which might mislead people as to my true position in the matter.

I am, therefore, enclosing my letter in full and I trust that you will find space in your valued newspaper to publish it.

With kindest regards, I am

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er  
Enc.

JANUARY 7, 1953

DR. CLEMENS J. FRANCE  
108 WEST 14 STREET  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

RECEIVED YOUR TELEGRAM OF JANUARY SIXTH. YOUR EXPLANATION  
~~entirely~~ <sup>Not</sup> satisfactory. I MUST AGAIN REPEAT MY REQUEST TO  
YOU THAT IN THE FUTURE YOU DO NOT USE ANY PART OF MY LETTER  
IN ADVERTISEMENTS.

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

January 7, 1953

Dear Rabbi Silver,

I'm writting this letter to you as I was very shocked by something that I read in the Monday, January 5, 1953, St. Louis Post-Dispatch Newspaper. I would enclose a copy of the advertisement that appeared therein, however I donot have a personal copy available at the present time.

Briefly, the full page advertisement was entitled "Must the Rosenbergs Die" and was published by the Emergency Committee of the Arts and Professions to Secure Clemency for the Rosenbergs. The advertisement contained among other things an alleged excerpt from a letter allegedly written by you to Judge Irving R. Kaufman, U.S, District Court, on application for judicial commutation of sentence Dec. 30, 1952. The excerpt printed is as follows,....."....I believe that the death sentence which has been imposed is unprecedented in the legal annals of our country as a punishment for espionage in peace-time. I believe that our country is strong and great-hearted enough to be merciful. Should, therefore, an appeal be made to the Court or the President of the United States for clemency and for commutation of the death sentence, I am prepared to add my name to such a plea." The advertisement also contained a plea for funds and to have others write to the president for a request for a commutation of the sentence imposed.

I do not know whether your permission was obtained to publish this letter or if such a letter was actually written by you or if you have indorsed the work of this committee and those who compose same. Other than your own name I am unfamiliar with any of the other names appearing in the advertisement.

I have always associated your name with those who are leaders of American Jewery and the leaders of Jewery throughout the world. Being a life long Zionist I have likewise associated your name with the outstanding leaders of that



cause. I know many others both Jew and non-Jew who share my sentiment.

I personally feel that your name being associated with a cause as here presented has done irreparable harm to both American Jewery and to Zionism in this country. The possible reprecussions maybe be world wide. I would appreciate very much if you have the time to do so if you would answer this letter and state to me your reasons for your actions. Of course you are under no obligation to do so, but, if you do see fit to do so I will greatly appreciate it. My faith in you as a leader of your and my people has been shaken and I would like to hear your side of the story.

Although we have never met I extend to you my very best personal regards. I hope to hear from you real soon.

Sincerely,

*Jack H. Kaplan*

*address:*

PVT. JACK H. KAPLAN US 54063522  
POST J.A.G. OFFICE  
FT. LEONARD WOOD, Mo.

January 14, 1953

Pvt. Jack H. Kaplan US 54063522  
Post J.A.G. Office  
Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri

My dear Friend:

I received your letter of January 7th addressed to me at the Zionist Organization of America in New York and forwarded to me here. I wish I had the time to answer your question more fully. The excerpt to which you refer and which appeared in the St. Louis Post Dispatch unfortunately did not give a clear statement of my position in the matter. I wrote to the editor of the paper asking him to publish my letter in full, which you will find in the enclosed brochure. The letter was sent to the attorney for the Rosenbergs for use in a clemency plea. You may also be interested in the enclosed clipping of an article which appeared this morning in the New York Times. Yesterday the press carried the report that Professor Einstein, too, joined in an appeal for commutation of the sentence.

One can only follow the dictates of one's conscience in such matters.

With warmest regards and all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

## CLASS OF SERVICE

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# WESTERN UNION<sup>(48)</sup>

1201

## SYMBOLS

DL=Day Letter

NL=Night Letter

LT=Int'l Letter Telegram

VLT=int'l Victory Ltr.

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

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•GQ•CLA235 PD=CINNATI OHIO 11 240P=

1953 JUN 11 PM 3 51

•RABBI ABBA H SILVER=

THE TEMPLE EAST 105 ST AND ANSEL RD:

:GROUP OF PEOPLE IN CLEVELAND ANGUISH STRICKEN OVER THE  
PLIGHT OF THE ROSENBERGS IMPLORE YOU TO GRANT AN AUDIENCE TO  
A DELEGATION WHICH THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEND TO YOU THEY  
HOPE THAT A WAY SATISFACTORY TO YOU MIGHT BE FOUND IN  
WHICH YOUR INFLUENCE MIGHT BE EFFECTIVE FOR MERCY THE  
PERSON ASKING ME TO APPROACH YOU IS MRS MIL ROTHENBERG  
10127 SOUTH BOULEVARD CLEVELAND 8 ANXIOUSLY YOURS=

:CRONBACH=

6/12/53

Dear Dr. Silver:

Because I know that the Rosenbergs are on your mind, I send you this copy of a telegram I forwarded to you today, to make certain that it will not misarry.

I believe with all my heart that there are many people of influence who would gladly associate themselves with you in this last minute effort. Professor Albert Einstein this very morning has demonstrated anew how utterly fearless he is in the face of those who would smother basic human principles. Perhaps you could reach him by telephone, and then together go after your colleagues in leadership among Orthodox and Conservative bodies. Dr. Brodie's intercession is certainly a most compelling and should give courage to traditionalist spokesmen. Would appreciate hearing from you.

With warm personal regards,

Sincerely

Louis Rittenberg



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CTD390

1953 JUN 12 PM 2 52

CT.NB318 PD=NEW YORK NY 12 226P=

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER=

ANSEL RD

THE TEMPLE EAST 105 ST AND EUCLID AVE CLEVE=

BELIEVE YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED THAT ISRAEL BRODIE, CHIEF  
RABBI BRITISH EMPIRE AND RABBI LEO BAECK HAVE CABLED  
APPEAL TO PRESIDENT EISENHOWER URGING CLEMENCY ON  
HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS=

JOSEPH BRAININ=

SW-1 7755

NO	TO	JK.
12 312P		med.
E. LY ATTEMPTS		

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W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

1220

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1953 JUN 12 PM 2 10

GGQ CLA191 LONG DL PD=CD NEWYORK NY 12 1204P=

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER=

DELIVER 19810 SHAKER=

AS AMERICAN OF NORMAL INSTINCTS AND AS JEW CONSCIOUS OF PRECEPTS OF MERCY UNDERLYING JUDAISM I AM HEARTENED BY JTA NEWSDISPATCH TODAY THAT BRITISH EMPIRES CHIEF RABBI ISRAEL BRODIE HAS JOINED YOUR COURAGEOUS COMPANY IN PLEA FOR CLEMENCY FOR ROSENBERGS. YET THESE POWERFUL VOICES REFLECTING DEEP CONCERN LEST UNPRECEDENTED STIGMA ATTACH TO JEWISH COMMUNITY IN AMERICA APPEAR POWERLESS IN FACE OF HYSTERIA AND FEAR IN HIGH QUARTERS. PROMINENT MEMBER OF NEW YORK BAR OF ROMAN CATHOLIC FAITH CHIDES ME ABOUT APPARENT CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE AMONG ORGANIZED JEWISH LEADERSHIP. HE BELIEVES IF YOU TOOK IMMEDIATE INITIATIVE YOU AND OTHER JEWISH SPIRITUAL SPOKESMEN COULD ENLIST ACTIVE SYMPATHY CHRISTIAN CHURCH DIGNITARIES AND TOGETHER STIR THE HEART OF PRESIDENT DWIGHT EISENHOWER, HIMSELF A RELIGIOUS MAN, TO COMMUTE SENTENCE ON GROUNDS OF HUMANITARIAN MERCY EQUALLY BASIC TO CHRISTIANITY. PURELY AS AN INDIVIDUAL WITHOUT PRESUMING TO JUDGE GUILT OR INNOCENCE OF ROSENBERGS IT SEEMS TO ME THAT ONLY BY DEFERMENT OR COMMUTATION, RATHER THAN BY EXECUTION NOW, CAN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY HOPE FOR ULTIMATE REMOVAL OF

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STIGMA OF TREASON, BY SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE IN MORE  
TRANQUIL CLIMATE, AS IN THE HISTORIC DREYFUS CASE.  
FAITHFULLY YOURS=

LOUIS RITTENBERG EXECUTIVE EDITOR UNIVERSAL  
JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA FORMER EDITOR OF LIBERAL  
JUDAISM 920 RIVERSIDE DRIVE NEW YORK CITY=



## CLASS OF SERVICE

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# WESTERN UNION

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

FX-1201

(14)...

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BB081

## DUPLICATE OF TELEPHONED TELEGRAM

B. LLS249 PD=TDB REVERE MASS 15 339PME= 1953 JUN 15 PM 5 31

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER=

CLEVE=

*Temple @ 105 & Ansel Rd*

DURING YESTERDAYS MEETING OF CONGREGATION TIFERETH ISRAEL  
REVERE MASSACHUSETTS THE MAJORITY PRESENT APPROVED AND  
SIGNED A ROSENBERG CLEMENCY APPEAL. APPEAL AND NAMES  
BEING MAILED TODAY TO YOU THIS HEARTFELT ACTION PLUS  
THE OUTCRY OF WORLD SPIRITUAL LEADERS AND NEW UREY  
TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT SHAMES SILENCE OF ANY JEWISH  
LEADERS WE BESEECH YOU SPEAK OUT TO AMERICAN JEWRY TODAY

*wy 1-2040*



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# WESTERN UNION (05)

FX-1201

## SYMBOLS

DL=Day Letter  
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W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

The filing time shown in the date line on **DUPLICATE OF TELEPHONED TELEGRAM** is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of delivery is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

NA294 PD=NEW YORK NY 15 338PME=

RABBI DR ABBA HILLEL SILVER=

1953 JUN 15 PM 4 11

19810 SHAKER BLVD CLEVE=

WILL YOU MAKE FURTHER APPEAL FOR CLEMENCY FOR ROSENBERGS

URGENT SEE UREYS STATEMENT REPLY COLLECT=

P M KOVITZ=

RC 517P *sent mailed June*  
Q *ULTATE*  
WX-1-2040

OF SERVICE  
full-rate  
Cable-  
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a suitable  
above or pre-  
the address.

# WESTERN UNION

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

FX-1201

1547.

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B. LLS 249/2=

1953 JUN 15 PM 5 32

WILL YOU ANSWER US=

FRANK SIEGEL EDWARD SIEGEL MORRIS SIEGEL REV PHILIP  
BOOKSPAN HARRY CORIN ROBERT FISHER=

*self*  
*Mld*  
*call back 10 min*

19 Thornton Street  
Revere, Massachusetts  
June 15, 1953

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
Cleveland  
Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver

Enclosed is an appeal to President Eisenhower asking clemency for the Rosenbergs, and about which we referred to in our wire to you.

Two of

/The individuals signing this letter are over 75 years of age. One of them is regarded uniformly as one of the most pious, devout and scholarly among Greater Boston's Jewry.

The individuals signing the appeal are members of the Congregation Tifereth Israel Revere.

The outspoken statements at yesterday's congregational meeting and the accompanying petition show very clearly that the bulk of our Jewish brothers and sisters will respond to even the slightest kind of leadership.

We the undersigned at this time feel called upon to say that if outstanding Jewish leaders like yourself were to really speak up, even now, that the resulting response would be such as could make the difference between life and death for the mother and father of two small children. If Jewish leaders do not speak up and if this shameful tragedy is not averted it will be to the everlasting shame of the Jewish people and particularly to those Jewish leaders who remain silent.

Sincerely,

Frank Siegel Edward Siegel Maria Siegel  
Rev. Philip Bookspan Harry Corin  
Benjamin C. Weinstein 440. Samuel Weinstein  
Robert Fischer



Cleveland Ohio,  
June 16, 1953

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver  
The Temple

Dear Rabbi:

In the event that I am unable to speak to you personally, I take this means of addressing an appeal to you. This appeal comes from one who was confirmed by you in the class of 1931. One whose family, was for many years a member of the Temple, who knew you and Mrs. Silvers' family long before you occupied your present pulpit.

As things stand, on Thursday evening Julius and Ethel Rosenberg are scheduled to be electrocuted. This sentence, handed down in a whirlpool of hysteria, has shocked the world, and I am aware of the fact that you have expressed yourself publicly on this matter.

Two people, with divergent views as to the guilt of this couple, could debate at length on the merits of the Government's case, and the integrity of the department charged with giving them a fair trial.

However, time is running out and unless President Eisenhower is prevailed upon to grant clemency, our Government will have carried out the murder of two people whom I believe to be innocent. A 5 to 4 vote by the Supreme Court is a clear indication that justice may not have been done.

Furthermore, this is not just a case of the lives of two people who happen to be Jews. Democracy in America will also suffer, if this inhumane sentence is carried out. The reactionaries, the fascists, the McCarthys' will use this as a pretext to direct new attacks against the progressive and democratic sections of our country.

And So, I appeal to you to address a personal plea to the President Of The United States, to grant clemency, to stay the execution in in order that new evidence can be presented to the American People and the Courts of Law.

I am confident, that as the foremost spokesman of American Jewry, you will rise to the occasion and do everything in your power to influence President Eisenhower and stop this execution.

Sincerely yours,

*Irving Lomsky*  
Irving Lomsky  
1654 Hawthorne Dr.  
Cleveland 24,



TELEGRAM RECEIVED 10:15 A.M. JUNE 17TH

SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER  
THE TEMPLE  
CLEVELAND, OHIO

MANY PEOPLE THIS CITY HAVE URGED ME TO REQUEST YOU TO AGAIN  
APPEAL TO THE PRESIDENT FOR CLEMENCY ON BEHALF OF THE ROSENBERGS.

RABBI SAMUEL SACKS  
206 MAIN STREET  
VENICE

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GO CLA218 PD=NEWYORK NY 19 239PME=

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER

=URGE YOU TELEPHONE EISENHOWER TO GRANT CLEMENCY TO THE  
ROSENBERGS=  
=GEORGE EVANS FRED HABER LEON SUMMIT=

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

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GO. CLA280 PD=LOS ANGELES CALIF 19 1258P=

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER, CONGREGATION TIFERTH ISRAEL=

=EAST 105 ST AND ANSEL RD CLEVE=

URGE YOU REQUEST PRESIDENT NOT TO EXECUTE ROSENBERGS  
ON SABBATH:

=MR AND MRS ALFRED LEWIS LEVITT=

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BQ. CLA294 PD=WS LOS ANGELES CALIF 19 140P=

RABBI A HILLEL SILVER=

CLEVE=

GREAT DOUBTS PLANTED CONCERNING ROSENBERGS RECEIVING

EXTREME PENALTY PLEASE INTERCEDE=

STONE FAMILY=

1953 JUN 19 PM 5 22



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GQ CLA292 PD=WS LOS ANGELES CALIF 19 137P

=RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER

=CLEVE=

PLEASE ASK CLEMENCY FOR ROSENBERGS. YOUR PLEA SHOULD  
BE HEEDED=

=FRANCES DOLIN=

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==GQ GQ CLA 338 P =LOS ANGELES CALIF 19 223 PMP=

RABBI ABBA HILLER SILVER =

: CONGREGATION DIFERTEH ISRAEL =

: REQUEST INTERCEDE WITH PRESIDENT SAVE ROSENBERGS LIVES  
SABBATH =

EVELYN BERKOWITZ 1324 NORTH NEW HAMPSHIRE LOS ANGELES =

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

# CLASS OF SERVICE

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# WESTERN UNION

1201

## SYMBOLS

DL=Day Letter  
NL=Night Letter  
LT=Int'l Letter Telegram  
VLT=Int'l Victory Ltr.

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

The filing 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

GQ. CLA330 PD=NEW YORK NY 19 443P=

:RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER =

:AS A LEADER OF AMERICAN JEWRY WE IMPLORE YOU TO USE YOUR  
INFLUENCE WITH OUR PRESIDENT TO STOP THE ROSENBERG EXECUTION  
WE DISAGREE WITH THE PRESIDENT THAT MILLIONS MAY DIE  
BECAUSE OF THEIR ACT THERE HAVE BEEN NO MURDERS AND WE  
EXPECT THERE WILL BE NONE THEIR DEATH WILL BE MURDER =

:ROSE BOLHOWER MAY BOLHOWER 15 EAST CLARKE PLACE  
BRONX WILLIAM KARSON MICHAEL STOGOL =

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1953 JUN 19 PM 7 34

00. CLA362 PD=TDBH LOS ANGELES CALIF 19 228PMP:

=RABBI HILLEL SILVER=

:CLEVE=

:WE ADMONISH YOU TO INTERVENE ON BEHALF ON THE ROSENBERGS.

THIS UNPRECEDENTED HATE IS AN AFFRONT TO HUMANITY=

:BERNICE BOWMAN, MAY FINEGOOD, RUTH VILLA LOVOS,

ANN HACHETT, MR AND MRS WM CLAR, LORAIN BOTMAN,

DENICE DAVIS=

:(NOTE ADSE WELL KNOWN)=

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE



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GO. CL 345 PD=LOS ANGELES CALIF 19 218 PMP=

RABBI ABBA HILLELL SILVER, CONGREGATION DIFEREITH ISREAL=

105 ST AND ANSEL RD CLEVE=

URGENTLY REQUEST THAT YOU APPEAL PRESIDENT EISENHOWER  
NOT TO PERMIT EXECUTION OF THE ROSENBERGS ON THE SABBATH=

SIDNEY GREENSPAN=

# CLASS OF SERVICE

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# WESTERN UNION

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

FX-1201

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LD6 CG<sup>1</sup> NL PD

CLEVELAND OHIO JUNE 20 1953

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER, THE TEMPLE

105TH AND ANSEL RD CLEVE

FUNERAL SERVICE FOR ETHEL AND JULIUS ROSENBERG TAKES PLACE 2 PM  
TODAY SUNDAY IN NEW YORK RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING YOU AND OTHER  
MINISTERS CONDUCT MEMORIAL PRAYER AT YOUR SERVICES. COMMITTEE IS  
FIRMLY CONVINCED EVENTS WILL VINDICATE ITS BELIEF IN THE ROSENBERGS  
INNOCENCE AND THE CHILDRENS FAITH IN THE PATRIOTISM OF THEIR  
PARENTS

CLEVELAND COMMITTEE TO SECURE CLEMENCY FOR THE ROSENBERGS



# Must the Rosenbergs Die?

## a plea for clemency

**E**THEL AND JULIUS ROSENBERG are scheduled to die the week of January 12. They were charged with conspiring to convey military secrets to the U.S.S.R. when that country was our World War II ally.

Hundreds of thousands of Americans believe that serious questions concerning this case remain unanswered. Further, they feel that the death penalty would be an expression of hysteria rather than an act of justice by a great country.

*Lest they die and future evidence prove, too late, their innocence, we urge you most seriously to consider:*

### Why the Unprecedented Sentence?

Never before in American history, either in peace or war, has a civil court imposed the death penalty for passing information *even to an enemy*, let alone an ally. In recent cases similar to that of the Rosenbergs—both at home and abroad—no death penalties have been imposed.

- Axis Sally and Tokyo Rose, confessed traitors during World War II—ten years' imprisonment.
- Four American Nazis, convicted of passing vital aircraft information to Germany in 1941 (Mulzahn Case, Detroit)—five to fifteen years.
- David Greenglass, confessed spy—fifteen years.
- Ruth Greenglass, confessed spy—freed.
- Harry Gold, confessed spy—thirty years.
- Dr. Raymond Boyer, Canadian, convicted of espionage. Sentenced to two years in prison.
- Dr. Klaus Fuchs, British, who confessed to transmitting atomic information to the Soviet Union—fourteen years' imprisonment.

And, right now, a U.S. Military Court in Korea is trying Staff Sgt. Giuseppe Cascio on charges of having conspired to "give intelligence to the enemy." If found guilty, the maximum sentence is life imprisonment.

Why the death sentence for the Rosenbergs?

### "Atmosphere or Evidence?"

According to Dr. Roland H. Bainton of Yale Divinity School, "I can see no other explanation than a wave of public hysteria..."

Arthur Garfield Hays, famous American lawyer, says, "It is the *damnable* death penalty that causes the uneasiness."

The Churchman (Protestant Episcopal publication) in a Nov. 1, 1952 editorial, characterized the sentence of the Rosenbergs as "both excessive and cruel," pointing out that "only the Rosenbergs, who appear by any reasonable standard to have been small fry alongside such brilliant physicists as Boyer and Fuchs, received the death sentence."

### What Proof of Guilt?

The case against the Rosenbergs hinged on the testimony of David and Ruth Greenglass. The U.S. Court of Appeals declared that, without this testimony "the conviction could not stand." Yet this testimony was not corroborated by a single other witness.

"There were an unusually large number of reasons for mistrusting the evidence of David Greenglass. To begin with, he had pleaded guilty to the conspiracy for which the Rosenbergs were being tried, and had not yet been brought up for sentence; thus he might hope, and he expressly said he did hope, to obtain some advantage for himself as a result of giving evidence against the Rosenbergs."

"It is my considered professional opinion that a conviction based upon such evidence from such sources cannot be regarded as reliable and should not be sustained," D. N. Pritt, distinguished British lawyer, Queen's counsel since 1927.

David Greenglass was sentenced to fifteen years. His wife Ruth, who also confessed and was indicted, was never brought to trial.

Truly David Greenglass, as Mr. Pritt said, had a "terrible incentive for lying!"

### What About the Atom Bomb "Secrets"?

Of the evidence of Greenglass on the atom bomb "secrets" *Life Magazine's* science editor wrote: "Greenglass' implosion bomb appears illogical, if not downright unworkable."

John Desmond Bernal, Professor of Physics at the University of London, states: "In my opinion as a scientist with special knowledge of the physics of explosives, the exhibits do not involve the use of a new and original principle, and... would not be of advantage to a foreign nation."

*In support of his opinions, Prof. Bernal cites six different books or publications, dating back to 1888, all dealing with the supposed "new principle"!*

Recently affidavits were submitted to a U.S. Court by three world-famous scientists.

- Prof. Jacques S. Hadamard, member of the American Academy of Sciences, the French Academy of Sciences, Honorary Chairman of the International Congress of Mathematics.
- Prof. Thomas Reeve Kaiser of the University of Manchester, England, expert in nuclear physics.
- James Gerald Crowther, lecturer at Harvard University, author of sixteen scientific books, war-time director of the Scientific Department of the British Council.

*All three affidavits pointed to the Greenglass testimony about the exhibits as being "implausible" and "inconceivable."*

Yet the supposed value of the alleged "secret information" which Greenglass claimed he gave the Rosenbergs was the basis for the death penalty!

### An Appeal to Reason

In the words of Waldo Frank, noted author, "So many worthy men and women, who have followed the testimony, express doubt of the findings; so much irrelevant emotion about Russia and communism has been allowed to permeate the case, that it should surely be the human part of justice in a great nation not irrevocably to destroy the future possibility of righting a conceivable wrong.... For the sake of our good name and for human love, the sentence should be commuted."

- Wire or write: The President, The White House, Washington, D.C., urging that he commute the death sentence.
- Join with signers of this statement by filling out this form and mailing it to the Committee:  
Please add my name as a signer of the Plea For Clemency.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

- I enclose \$\_\_\_\_\_ to help in placing additional ads in major newspapers throughout the country.

Emergency Committee of the Arts and Professions to Secure Clemency for the Rosenbergs. 108 W. 44th St., New York 36, N. Y.—CI 6-2927

what  
you  
can do

This advertisement was paid for by popular subscription and published by the

**EMERGENCY COMMITTEE OF THE ARTS AND PROFESSIONS  
TO SECURE CLEMENCY FOR THE ROSENBERGS**

### and from all over the world

**ARGENTINA** "... Demand salvation of Rosenbergs as an act of humanity and justice."

FRANCISCO M. PITTA  
Sec'y, Argentine Legue for the Rights of Man

**AUSTRALIA** "... reprieve Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, the victims of a second Dreyfus Affair..."

ERNEST PLATZ  
Acting Sec'y, Jewish Council to Combat Fascism and Anti-Semitism

**DENMARK** "... for the lifting of the death sentence for the Rosenberg couple."

MARTIN ANDERSEN NEXO, Writer

**ENGLAND** "... I contemplate with horror the possibility that the death sentence could be carried out..."

SYDNEY SILVERMAN  
Member of Parliament

"... I cannot but deplore the death sentence upon the Rosenbergs both in itself and from its inevitable effect upon British and world opinions."

PROF. CHARLES E. RAVEN  
Chaplain to Her Majesty, The Queen

**FRANCE** "I consider the sentence of death imposed in a trial conducted in such a cavalier manner as a crime against the universal conscience."

PROF. J. ORCEL  
Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle

"With all my heart I am for clemency."

FERNAND LEGER, Painter

"In name of French working class, strongly protest death sentences..."

QUATREPOINT  
General Confederation of Labor

**GERMANY** "... for revocation of the death sentence."

ANNA SEGHERS, Writer

**HOLLAND** "... death sentence of Rosenbergs cannot but become detrimental to general belief in the good will of the United States..."

THEUN DE VRIES

**INDIA** "... I saw the protest aroused by the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti... I hope that the American people will not add another such disgraceful action to their record."

D. D. CASAMBI  
Tata Institute of Fundamental Research

**ISRAEL** "20 Religious Leaders Urge Truman Clemency..."

NEW YORK TIMES, November 19

**ITALY** "Speaking for millions of democratic Italians... clemency and justice for Ethel and Julius Rosenberg."

PIETRO NENNI  
Secretary, Socialist Party of Italy  
Member, Chamber of Deputies

**JAPAN** "... over four hundred scientists, artists, clergymen, writers, and musicians, unanimously agree that Rosenbergs should be granted clemency."

RISAKU MUTAI, Congress of Intellectuals

**MEXICO** "If the American government sends these parents to their deaths it will be remembered forever as the most shameful act committed against American democracy."

DAVID ALFARO SIQUEIROS, Painter

**NEW ZEALAND** "... I cannot believe that in this instance the President of your Republic will allow this sentence to stand."

THE VERY REV. C. W. CHANDLER  
Dean of Waikato

**NORTHAFRICA** "We hope with all our heart that the Rosenberg children will again have their beloved mother and father..."

FRANCOIS JOSEPH CAVIGLIOLI  
Architect Laureate

LIST OF PERSONS BEING ASKED TO SPONSOR ADVERTISEMENT IN NEW YORK TIMES

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver	Aaron Copland
Dr Albert Einstein ✓	Dr Rudolph Ganz
Carey McWilliams	John Hersey
Prof Thomas Emerson	Prof Fowler V Harper
Olin Downes	Dr Harold Urey
Prof Harlow Shapley	Marshall Field
Prof Kirtley Mather	Senator Wayne Morse
Vladimir Horowitz	Dr Grenville Clark
Senator William Langer	Bishop W J Walls
Dr Bernard Loomer	Dr Mordecai Johnson
Dr Algernon Black	Prof Oswald Veblen
James Thurber	Lion Feuchtwanger
Father Shelton Halle Bishop	Ernest Hemingway
Rev John Haynes Holmes ✓	Dr Joseph Fletcher
Dr Ernst P Boas	Oscar Hammerstein
Uta Hagen	Hon Hubert Delaney
Arthur Miller	Prof Robert Lynd
Thurgood Marshall	Archibald MacLeish
Dmitri Mitropolous	Sholom Asch ✓
Aran Bontemps	Millen Brand
Pearl S Buck	Erskine Caldwell
Leonard Bernstein	Lillian Hellman
Roger Baldwin	Hon Claude Pepper
Dr Harold W Dodds	Dr Zechariah Chafee
Bishop G Bromley Oxnam ✓	Bishop Francis John McConnell ✓
Clarence E Pickett	Dr Alexander Meiklejohn
Stringfellow Barr	Dr Robert M Hutchins
Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill	Dr Frank Aydelotte
Elbert K Fretwell	Gian Carlo Menotti
Walter Piston	Wallingford Riegger
William Schuman	Rudolf Serkin
Randall Thompson	Alfred Barr
Chaim Gross	Peter Blume
Jacob Lawrence	Ben Shahn
Crockett Johnson	Emily Greene Balch
Dorothy Canfield Fisher	Prof William Ernest Hocking
Prof Linus Pauling	Prof Ralph Barton Perry
Bishop William Scarlett	Cardinal Samuel A Stritch
Rabbi Uri Miller	James P Warburg



# **The People Speak Out— On the Rosenberg Case**

**Dr. Roland H. Bainton, Yale Divinity School, Connecticut**

"I was shocked when I read that the death sentence had been imposed upon Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, and I am glad to have the opportunity of saying a word which might have some influence in altering the sentence. . . . I feel that the sentence is too severe because it is not commensurate with that meted out to others guilty of the same offense. . . . We should by no means allow ourselves to determine life and death in terms of emotions engendered by a succession of disillusionments."

**THE CHURCHMAN (Protestant Episcopalian),  
in an editorial on November 1, 1952:**

"The Churchman feels that the death sentence, in the light of the far milder treatment of more serious offenders than the Rosenbergs, is both excessive and cruel. We believe that the execution of these two individuals will only hurt the name of the United States. . . ."

**From editorial in the Brooklyn JEWISH EXAMINER,  
October 24, 1952**

"The value of the information transmitted to the Rosenbergs by the second-rate electrician David Greenglass, is arguable at best. The Journal of the American Association of Atomic Scientists as well as The Scientific American stated that these 'secrets' were not particularly important.

"German war criminals guilty of ghastly atrocities during World War II, as well as American traitors like Tokyo Rose and Axis Sally, escaped the supreme penalty.

"It would seem from the above that the punishment of the Rosenbergs is unduly harsh."

# THE PEOPLE

**From an editorial in the BOSTON CHRONICLE,  
November 29, 1952, entitled "Clemency for the Rosenbergs"**

"Those of us who recall the relatively light sentences meted out to Tokyo Rose and Axis Sally for their treasonable activities during World War II cannot help from considering the death sentence of the Rosenbergs as "cruel and unusual punishment." Their trial was conducted in an atmosphere conducive to the severity of their sentence, the supreme penalty, and in making this observation we are cognizant of its weight without regard to the innocence or guilt of the sentenced persons on the basis of flimsy or substantial evidence."

## **A letter by Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver**

"My dear Mr. Bloch:\*

"Permit me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of October 17. I have accepted the verdict of the courts in their conviction of the Rosenbergs for violating the espionage laws of our country. The crime of which they have been found guilty is a heinous one and I found no sympathy in my heart for men and women who betray their country. I was especially resentful of the effort that was made to drag in the issue of anti-semitism in this most unfortunate affair.

"However, I believe that the death sentence which has been imposed is unprecedented in the legal annals of our country as a punishment for espionage in peacetime. I believe that our country is strong and great-hearted enough to be merciful. Should, therefore, an appeal be made to the court or to the President of the United States for clemency and for commutation of the death sentence, I am prepared to add my name to such a plea.

"I do not wish any publicity to be given by you to this letter of mine or to my position in this matter. I wish it to be held confidential except for court or presidential use."\*\*

\* Emanuel Bloch, defense counsel for the Rosenbergs.

\*\* Rabbi Silver has given permission to reprint this letter in its entirety, in view of the fact that portions of it have previously been published without authorization.

**From article entitled "Justice and Compassion for Julius and Ethel Rosenberg," by Hillel Rogoff, editor JEWISH DAILY FORWARD, November 29, 1952**

"Those who are sincerely interested in the fate of the Rosenbergs should know that now there remains but one means by which they can be saved from the electric chair and that is to move President Truman to commute the death sentence to a lesser punishment. And the appeal to the President should be made on the ground of humaneness, compassion and mercy. . . . Now all energies must be exerted toward one goal—to stop the execution. If this should succeed, then those who believe in the possibility of vindicating them can attempt to do so."

# **E S P E A K O U T**

**THE NATION, article by Arthur Garfield Hays,  
November 8, 1952**

"... We may try, but we cannot forget the two young Rosenberg children. . . . It is the damnable death penalty that causes the uneasiness."

**Mary Van Kleeck, sociologist**

"In New York six months ago I spent many hours reading transcripts of testimony and documents of the trial. As a sociologist concerned with public opinion in international relations, I found many evidences that both judge and prosecuting attorney permitted and even intensified the injection into the trial of political issues, which had no bearing on the guilt or innocence of the defendants. May I join with others to take such action as may be possible to prevent these deaths and thus to avert this irremediable disaster in our nation's history."

**Dorothy Thompson, THE WASHINGTON STAR,  
April 12, 1951**

"The death sentence . . . depresses me . . . in 1944, we were not at war with the Soviet Union. . . . Indeed, it is unlikely that had they been tried in 1944 they would have received any such sentence."

**The Rev. John Paul Jones, N. Y. TIMES, November 28**

"To the Editor of The New York Times:

"The imposing of the death sentence on the two Rosenbergs is, to say the least, a troublesome matter for the conscience of thoughtful people.

"In the first place, even when conceding that the Rosenbergs have been guilty of transmitting information to the Soviet Union, the trial evidence and conduct do not remove all doubts about either the wisdom or justice of inflicting the death penalty. Great stress has been laid that this alleged crime was begun in wartime but equal stress has not been laid upon the fact that it was not connivance with a wartime enemy but with an ally. . . .

"While a layman is hardly qualified to comment upon matters of due process it is important to remember that at least some quite capable and disinterested lawyers assert that there were violations. It is hard to dispel the feeling that the mood and temper of the present time have created an atmosphere in which a fair trial has been extremely difficult, if not impossible. . . .

"Commutation of the sentence to life imprisonment will keep the Rosenbergs from doing further harm, will set a quite sufficient example of the dire consequences of subversive acts, and at the same time make it possible to correct an injustice, at least partially, should later evidence or study prove such to be the case."

**From editorial in THE JEWISH DAY, October 16, 1952**

"... believing in our democratic system of justice and in the just application of our laws, we feel that we are entitled to appeal to the President that he should commute the death sentence."

# **ON THE ROSE**

**Max Lerner, NEW YORK POST, June 19, 1952**

"I agree that the death sentence was unprecedented and harsh."

**From editorial in the JEWISH CHRONICLE, Indianapolis, Indiana, December 5, 1952**

"We believe that President Truman ought to commute the death sentence imposed on Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. . . . Justice in the United States must not be more vindictive than in other civilized countries."

**Father Frank North, Nashotah House, Wisconsin, in a letter to the President**

"Dear Mr. President: As a priest I am as much opposed to Communism as anyone. But surely the sentence of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for passing on atomic information to Russia while she was our ally is way out of line. In the interests of justice and decency can't you do something about their death penalties? Surely this would also be of value from the standpoint of propaganda."

**Rabbi Dr. Meyer Sharff, Brooklyn, N. Y.**

". . . As a devout Jew, I revere our country's laws, which carry out the humane principles enunciated in the Torah, and I am reminded that the Declaration of Independence is of one piece with our leader Moses' exhortation: 'Proclaim freedom throughout the land.' Therefore, it is inconceivable to me that in our country a death sentence should be so lightly given, as was the case in the Rosenberg Trial.

**From THE COMMONWEAL, widely-circulated Catholic weekly, January 9, 1953**

"The Rosenbergs were lawfully tried and, at least as far as the letter of the law goes, lawfully sentenced to pay the supreme penalty. Whether they would have received as drastic a sentence had they been tried, say, in 1946 rather than during the cold war, is doubtful.

"Whenever the state takes a life, so final is the step, there must be a certain hesitation in putting the stamp of approval upon the decision. In the case of a political crime, our tradition of political liberty makes one doubly hesitant. It is foreign to our temper as a people and to the spirit of our history to stand in the street calling for blood. . . .

"Alive, the Rosenbergs represent a constant threat to the Communist conspiracy. From hour to hour who can be sure when one or the other of them will not break down and talk? Dead, their secrets die with them. . . ."

**JEWISH MORNING JOURNAL, column by Jacob Glatstein, October 29, 1952**

"One can readily see that America can very well agree not to snuff out the lives of the Rosenberg couple and not to give them the maximum penalty, which our country has never before given anyone in time of peace, and which was not given even to Dr. Klaus Fuchs, who much more directly, scientifically and consciously betrayed his country."



# ROSENBERG CASE

**Dr. Rudolf Carnap, Institute for Advanced Study,  
Princeton, N. J.**

"Thank you for sending me the affidavit by Professor Bernal in connection with the Rosenberg Case. I have read it with great interest. It confirmed my earlier belief that the Court has greatly overstated the importance of the scientific information contained in the sketches of implosion lenses by David Greenglass, or by any accompanying details which a man with his very limited theoretical background was able to furnish. For this reason I feel that the severity of the sentence is out of proportion to the actual damage which could possibly have been done."

**Dr. Harold C. Urey, Nobel Prize Winner and  
renowned nuclear scientist**

"I found the testimony of the Rosenbergs more believable than that of the Greenglasses. However, accepting the verdict as correct, I am amazed and completely outraged by the unequal punishment which has been given.

"Only the last two took the witness stand and maintained they are innocent and they were convicted on testimony which I do not believe is conclusive beyond a reasonable doubt. If we are going to begin to give the death penalty for espionage, I should like to have it introduced in a case in which the guilt is certain."

**From column by Samuel B. Gach, editor and publisher of  
THE CALIFORNIA JEWISH VOICE, November 26, 1952**

"If the Rosenbergs are ignited the world will see it as punitive politics; as hysterical fear overriding judgment and justice. The end result would be the stimulation of less trust and less regard for America and the world.

"It is yet not too late to show the world that sanity still prevails in our U.S.A., and that fear is as yet localized and has not spread to epidemic proportions.

"You can still save the two Rosenbergs from brutal murder by wiring President Truman for clemency."

**Rabbi Abraham Cronbach, Cincinnati, Ohio**

"It is argued that, through the betrayal of atomic secrets by the Rosenbergs, Russia gained a military advantage. That the act alleged of the Rosenbergs imparted to Russia any military advantage has, by no means, been proved. But granted that such advantage for Russia might have ensued, others convicted of the identical crime—Fuchs, Greenglass, Gold, Sobell, Slack, Simons, May, Brothman—have not been sentenced to die: they have been sentenced to terms of imprisonment. If the death penalty was, in those other cases, not requisite for our national defense, why should it be so regarded in the case of the Rosenbergs?"

## **A Cable from Twenty Israeli Rabbis, November 18, 1952**

WHATEVER THE PARTICULARS WE APPEAL TO YOU MR PRESIDENT IN THE NAME OF GOD AND THE QUALITY OF MERCY TO SAVE THE LIVES OF THE COUPLE WHO ARE PARENTS OF TWO LITTLE CHILDREN STOP EVEN IF WE ASSUME THAT THEY HAD SINNED AGAINST THE LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES THEY SHALL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO DO SO IF KEPT UNDER SURVEILLANCE BUT SOME DAY THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO PROVE THEIR INNOCENCE STOP IN SUCH CASE YOUR CONSCIENCE AND THE CONSCIENCE OF THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE CLEAN NO INNOCENT LIFE SHALL HAVE BEEN TAKEN GUILTLESSLY STOP LET YOUR EXCELLENCY CALL TO MIND THE MILLIONS OF GUILTLESS JEWS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES AT THE HANDS OF THE NAZIS DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND THE CLEMENCY THAT WAS EXTENDED TO THE PERPETRATORS OF THOSE MURDEROUS AND CRUEL ACTS OF MONSTROSITY STOP WE HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT AN ACT OF CLEMENCY IN THIS CASE IS EXCEEDINGLY VITAL AND YOUR NAME AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF AN HONORABLE PORTION OF MANKIND YOUR DEEP RELIGIOUS FEELING AND YOUR AWARENESS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOOD WITHIN YOU LEADS US TO LAY BEFORE YOU THIS OUR HUMBLE PETITION IN FULL HOPE THAT YOU WILL GRANT IT STOP GOD ALONE KNOWS THE WHOLE TRUTH STOP MAY THIS YOUR CLEMENCY BE A FITTING CROWN TO YOUR GREAT CAREER STOP

### **Charles E. Raven, Professor Emeritus, Cambridge University, England; Chaplain to HM, the Queen**

"As one who has spent much time during the past twenty-five years in the United States and has a deep concern for Anglo-American friendship I cannot but deplore the death sentence upon the Rosenbergs both in itself and from its inevitable effect upon British and world opinion.

"... this savage verdict underlines the conviction that America, instead of leading the world to a more righteous and liberal way of life, is becoming so hysterical in its dread of Communism as to betray the very principles upon which its Constitution was founded and which its past history has always respected.

"The sentence of death, whatever the merits of the case, is a tragic event for all lovers of the Republic."

### **Dudley Collard, attorney, England**

"Even if the guilt of . . . Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were satisfactorily established, and I am far from being convinced that this is the case, I should be profoundly shocked at the passing upon them in time of peace a sentence of death, which in my opinion is unworthy of any country with a claim to call itself civilized. My opinion is shared by all my professional colleagues at the Bar of England to whom I have spoken of the matter, irrespective of their political opinions."

### **The Very Rev. C. W. Chandler, Dean of Waikato, New Zealand**

"Assuming that Julius and Ethel Rosenberg are guilty, it must be borne in mind that it was during World War II, when Russia was an ally, that these persons committed these offenses. As heinous as the offense may be, it does not merit a death sentence, and I cannot believe that in this instance the President of your Republic will allow this sentence to stand. It would be cruel, inhuman and barbaric in the extreme and would raise a storm of protest throughout the world if one of the chief partners in the world's Democratic States, countenanced the infliction of a death penalty, where even a modicum of doubt existed as to the guilt of the persons concerned."

### **Duke of Bedford, Woburn, Bucks, England**

"Capital punishment for political offenses is unworthy of a truly civilized government and suggests its inability to protect itself adequately from hostile or objectionable political influences, either by sound administration at home, or by a just, imaginative and enlightened policy in its dealings with foreign nations."

### **Rev. Stanley Evans, England**

"The view of this section of British opinion is that so much evidence was allowed as to opinion and so little offered as to the fact of guilt that these two people would never have been convicted by an English Court, still less sentenced to the extreme penalty of death.

"We are watching with the deepest anxiety your efforts to secure remission of this terrible sentence."

### **Sydney Silverman, Member of Parliament, England**

"... I have no hesitation at all in saying that I contemplate with horror the possibility that the death sentence could be carried out in such a case by any civilized country; least of all the United States upon whom history has placed in our time so heavy a responsibility for the wise leadership of so many nations in the onward march of civilization. ... To exact the extreme penalty from these two unfortunates in these circumstances is to make the Rosenbergs personally responsible for all the errors of the statesmen of the world which since the end of the war have so tragically lost the peace for which we all hoped. That may, as many think, be the sole responsibility of the U.S.S.R.; it surely is not that of the Rosenbergs."

### **Lord Chorley of Kendal (formerly Cassel Professor of Law in the University of London)**

"I am strongly averse to the death penalty, carrying out of the death sentence in such a case as this. I shall be glad to add my name in an appeal to the President for clemency."

### **Nicole J. Dreyfus, prominent lawyer, Paris**

"It is with the saddest feelings that I learned of the death sentence against Julius and Ethel Rosenberg and I raise my voice to demand a revision of the judgment."

### **Janet Jagan, Member Georgetown Town Council, British Guiana**

"I am in full agreement with the opposition against this ruthless measure ... and join in the world-wide protest against such inhuman treatment."

## **From the *JEWISH WESTERN BULLETIN*, official organ of the Jewish Council of Vancouver**

"The Bulletin does not question the conviction of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg. We do feel, however, that the request for clemency directed to President Truman that he should commute the death sentence imposed on these people, is fully justified. . . .

"Finally, it should be noted that this statement represents the unanimous opinion of the Editorial Committee of this publication."

## **From lead editorial in the *TORONTO HEBREW DAILY JOURNAL*, November 24, 1952**

"It is also important to know that appealing to their president is not only the task of citizens of the United States. It is the duty of all right-minded liberal people in the entire world to let their voices be heard, and to appeal to the president.

"The example of the 22 Rabbis of Israel, who appealed directly to President Truman on behalf of the Rosenbergs, must serve as an example.

"We are of the opinion, that all liberal and progressive people in Canada must join in this appeal and ask President Truman to spare the lives of the Rosenbergs, because where the law is too harsh there is room for compassion. It is human to commit a crime, it is also human to forgive.

"In the case of the Rosenbergs, it is no excessive request that the death sentence not be carried out. Precedents for this are numberless."

## **D. N. Pritt, London, Queen's Counsel**

"I am forced to the conclusion that, even if the conviction of the Rosenbergs had rested on reliable evidence that they had conspired to obtain some information, any sentence expressed by the judge to be based on such inaccurate and unproved assertions as to the importance of the information would have to be set aside on appeal under any procedure which provided for a free review of the sentence by an Appellate Court.

"Unfortunately, the procedure applicable to this case does not provide for such a review, any more than it provides for a consideration of the credibility of the witnesses or the reliability of the evidence. Were the procedure different, it may well be that the whole matter would have been disposed of already. But there is, in effect, no appeal at all to any court from either of the two main defects of this trial, namely, the unreliability of the evidence and the gravely excessive sentence.

"The duty of securing a review on these points thus rests on public opinion throughout the world. After full study, for the reasons which I have expressed above, I must express the view, from a purely professional standpoint, that it would offend against all Anglo-Saxon standards of justice that the convictions, let alone the sentence, of the Rosenbergs should be allowed to stand."

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## **National Committee to Secure Justice in the Rosenberg Case**

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[undated]

# MERCY for the ROSENBERGS

By ABRAHAM CRONBACH

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*Dr. Cronbach is a distinguished rabbi and scholar. He is a former professor of Social Science and the author of several books on peace. Rabbi Cronbach is the Honorary Chairman of the Jewish Peace Fellowship.*

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*Published by*

**THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO SECURE JUSTICE  
IN THE ROSENBERG CASE**

**1050 Sixth Avenue, New York 18, N. Y.**

*Pardon the double caption. They were read without my knowledge.*

**T**HE American people are a merciful people. American sympathies are ever awakened by human suffering. In a thousand ways, among which our vast benevolences furnish glorious examples, Americans have demonstrated that they are warm-hearted and not hard-hearted. Brotherhood is our ideal, recurrently acclaimed within our several religions as well as by our unchurched. All of us have, at times, fallen short of those ideals. But, deep in our souls, we cherish those ideals. Rare is the American who does not honor mercy and does not revere brotherhood.

Also among American ideals is that of loyalty to the United States. Sometimes religious ideals and national ideals conflict, and devout people occasionally affirm that there is a law of God which is higher than the law of the state. This is not our own position. Most of us defer to the laws of the state without reservation. The laws of the state should be obeyed. To the laws of the state, everyone owes allegiance.

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg have been convicted of a law violation. Large numbers of people look upon this conviction as unjust, like the conviction of Leo Frank or Alfred Dreyfus or others who, though pronounced guilty, were subsequently proved innocent. Some deem Julius and Ethel Rosenberg innocent. There are also those who, while non-committal as to the couple's guilt or innocence, do nonetheless insist that the trial was unfairly conducted. Persons versed in the law have pointed out what they regard as improprieties in the proceedings. But we shall waive all this. Let us concede that Julius and Ethel Rosenberg did commit the crime with which they are charged. Let us grant that the trial entailed no breach of justice. Still, is it compatible with the finest in the American spirit that Julius and Ethel Rosenberg be put to death?

It is argued that, through the betrayal of atomic secrets by the Rosenbergs, Russia gained a military advantage. That the act alleged of the Rosenbergs imparted to Russia any military advantage has, by no means, been proved. But granted that such advantage for Russia might have ensued, others convicted of the identical crime—Fuchs, Greenglass, Gold, Sobell, Slack, Simons, May, Brothman—have not been sentenced to die: they have been sentenced to terms of imprisonment. If the death penalty was, in those other cases, not requisite for our national defense, why should it be so regarded in the case of the Rosenbergs?

## UNIQUE FACTORS

**T**HE misdeed imputed to the Rosenbergs is said to have had its inception in 1944 and 1945. At that time, the United States and Russia were allies. It is difficult to see why Russia should, at that time, have found espionage at all necessary. The United States was, at that time, sharing its military secrets with Russia as it was with England and with Canada. As matter of public record, Harry Hopkins himself, at that period, mediated the transfer of nuclear materials to the Soviets. The law against atomic espionage does not, it is true, distinguish between a friendly power and a hostile power. It forbids the betrayal of atomic secrets to *any* foreign power. But must the punishment be made equally severe in both

instances? There is a huge difference between a friendly power and a hostile power. In the breadth of that difference, is there no room for mercy?

The law violation of which the Rosenbergs are accused is alleged to have occurred at a time when the atomic bomb was unknown to everyone except a few highly trained experts; it was prior to Hiroshima. The day after Hiroshima, all of us knew about the atomic bomb. Previous to Hiroshima, none of us knew. Even if the Rosenbergs did conspire to betray atomic secrets, they could not possibly have comprehended the import of what they were doing. Clemency to the Rosenbergs can, in no way, constitute a precedent against the death sentence for future infractions. The factors in the case are utterly unique. Never can those same factors recur.

All of this applies regardless of what might be said about the people by whom the Rosenbergs are being aided. Among those seeking to save the Rosenbergs are people of all political parties, several religious cults, and various walks of life. All of them are people like the reader and the writer of these words, Americans whose interests lie in America, who have everything to gain if America gains and everything to lose if America loses. By no stretch of the imagination, can any friend of the Rosenbergs, in any way, profit by anything through which America is injured.

The sinister word "Communism" has entered into the situation. There are words which, by a kind of fatal spell, dissipate thought and generate fury. Among such words, "Communism" plays at present a dreadful role. The word conveys so many different meanings that it has become almost void of meaning but, the less meaning a word holds, the greater sometimes its potency for passions which unbalance thinking.

## THE OMINOUS WORD

**L**ONG before the cold war began, a communist was understood to be someone who aims to overthrow the United States government "by force and violence." Our imbroglio with Russia has, during the last seven years, woefully intensified this charge. A communist is now asserted to be someone who promotes the interests of Russia in opposition to the interests of the United States. Would it be out of place to ask the reader: Have you ever met anyone who advocated the overthrow of the United States? Have you ever read any book, article or pamphlet which urged such overthrow? Have you ever heard any public speaker recommend such overthrow? It is sometimes maintained that people harbor such designs but keep them secret, forbearing to express them openly. Yet how can we possibly know anyone's unexpressed thoughts? With equal warrant, one might accuse, of clandestine subversiveness, Dwight Eisenhower, Adlai E. Stevenson, Harry S. Truman or Robert A. Taft. Still, let us suppose that the friends of the Rosenbergs consist only of traitors. How does that touch the merits of the Rosenberg case? How does that alter the preciousness of mercy? Must the Rosenbergs suffer because of the sins of their friends?

The truth will have to be sought in the sinuosities of the human mind. Every life is beset with frustrations. All of us suffer vexation and disappointment. Psychologists have studied the tendency of organisms, whether human or animal, to retaliate for frustrations by striking back. If the organism can not reach its real offender, it attacks some substitute, some "displacement," as the psychologists call it; like the man who, reprimanded by his employer, yet not daring to answer his employer, comes home and vents his spleen on his wife and his children: or like the boy who resented the domination of his father but, powerless to get even with his father, waited twenty-five years and shot down "Father" Abraham. That boy's name was John Wilkes Booth. This displacement of grievances is a familiar psychological phenomenon. Unable to get at those who are the real causes of our woes, we wreak vengeance on scapegoats.

## OUR BASIC TROUBLE

FOR some people, the scapegoat is the Jew. For others, it is the Catholic. For still others, it is the "capitalists" or "Wall Street." The favorite scapegoat of the present hour is the "communists." This does not deny that there really are people who call themselves communists and who feverishly advance extreme theories about the obligations of the privileged toward the under-privileged. Most of us Americans dissent from those theories, even though the Republican Party and the Democratic Party to which we belong may count, among their followers, people holding views but slightly less radical. The fact is that the opinions propounded by the communists have little to do with the conflict. Communism is, for us, hardly a vehicle of political or economic ideas. It has grown to be an unconscious symbol of the troubles which embitter our lives.

Regrettably the Rosenberg case has become implicated with that deadly word. Were the case to be judged on its merits, a great swell of protest would arise against the sentence of death. Public opinion would encourage and support the President in commuting the sentence.\* The issue has unhappily gotten entangled in clichés which cause Americans to forget that Americans are merciful.

One is reminded of the adage, "Know thyself." If we would look deeply into our souls, we might find that our troubles are rooted not in the "communists" but in the frustrations of our private lives. Once aware of this, we would recall words spoken more than nine decades ago by the noblest American of them all. Ours would then be the hope that America's splendid ideals of mercy and of brotherhood will yet reign within all hearts "when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

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\* The case can not come before the President until all juridical expedients have been exhausted. The Committee to Secure Justice in the Rosenberg Case is engaged in raising funds to finance an appeal to the Supreme Court and, if granted, a new trial.



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**RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER, 19810 SHAKER, CLEVELAND OHIO**

AS AMERICAN OF NORMAL INSTINCTS AND AS JEW CONSCIOUS OF PRECEPTS OF MERCY UNDERLYING JUDAISM I AM HEARTENED BY JTA NEWS DISPATCH TODAY THAT BRITISH EMPIRES CHIEF RABBI ISRAEL BRODY HAS JOINED YOUR COURAGEOUS COMPANY IN PLEA FOR CLEMENCY FOR ROSENBERGS. YET THESE POWERFUL VOICES REFLECTING DEEP CONCERN LEST UNPRECEDENTED STIGMA ATTACH TO JEWISH COMMUNITY IN AMERICA APPEAR POWERLESS IN FACE OF HYSTERIA AND FEAR IN HIGH QUARTERS. PROMINENT MEMBER OF NEW YORK BAR OF ROMAN CATHOLIC FAITH CHIDES ME ABOUT APPARENT CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE AMONG ORGANIZED JEWISH LEADERSHIP. HE BELIEVES IF YOU TOOK IMMEDIATE INITIATIVE YOU AND OTHER JEWISH SPIRITUAL SPOKESMEN COULD ENLIST ACTIVE SYMPATHY CHRISTIAN CHURCH DIGNITARIES AND TOGETHER STIR THE HEART OF PRESIDENT DWIGHT EISENHOWER, HIMSELF A RELIGIOUS MAN, TO COMMUTE SENTENCE ON GROUNDS OF HUMANITARIAN MERCY EQUALLY BASIC TO CHRISTIANITY.

PURELY AS AN INDIVIDUAL WITHOUT PRESUMING TO JUDGE GUILT OR INNOCENCE OF ROSENBERGS, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT ONLY BY DEFERMENT OR COMMUTATION, RATHER THAN BY EXECUTION NOW, CAN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY HOPE FOR ULTIMATE REMOVAL OF STIGMA OF TREASON, BY SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE IN MORE TRANQUIL CLIMATE, AS IN THE HISTORIC DREYFUS CASE. FAITHFULLY YOURS

**LOUIS RITTENBERG**  
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