



The Abba Hillel Silver Digital Collection

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

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

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

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

Reel
53

Box
19

Folder
1294

Schiff, Jacob, 1919.

[From *Boston News Bureau* of February 22, 1919]

Bolshevism Revealed

There are too many people who are trying to convince themselves that the Bolsheviks are at heart good people who are endeavoring to help humanity and are saying that the violence and bloodshed in Russia is merely an unfortunate incident in the progress of a noble cause to be attributed to the natural reaction of an oppressed and ignorant people after centuries of degradation.

Their number finds recruits from otherwise intelligent people who constitutionally like to sympathize with what they are pleased to consider the under dog, and they are swelling the usual company of "long-haired men and short-haired women" who are flirting with parlor socialism.

Within the week women of the highest social connections have taken their places on a Boston platform before a large gathering where the deportation of alien anarchists was condemned, and every mention of the I. W. W. and the Bolsheviks was wildly cheered.

There are some subjects into whose exact details the American press is naturally reluctant to go. Probably for that reason the testimony this week of R. E. Simmons before the Senate committee investigating Bolshevism has not yet become generally known.

Mr. Simmons was formerly a representative of the department of commerce in Russia who left Archangel for this country last November.

These are days when it is necessary to call a spade a spade, and every word of his testimony should be known to every woman as well as every man in this country. Mr. Simmons read to the Senate committee decrees of various Bolshevik Soviets which we reproduce from the *New York Times*.

A decree issued by the Soviet of the City of Vladimir follows: Vladimir is the capital of the province of the same name, 75 miles from Moscow.

"Any girl having reached her eighteenth year and not having married is obliged, subject to the most severe penalty, to register at the Bureau of Free Love of the Commissariat of Surveillance.

"Having registered at the Bureau of Free Love, she has the right to choose from among the men between the ages of 19 and 50 a cohabitant husband.

"Remarks—(1) The consent of the man in the said choice is unnecessary. (2) The man on whom such a choice falls has no right to make any protest whatsoever against the infringement.

"The right to choose from a number of girls who have reached their eighteenth year is also given to men.

"The opportunity to choose a husband or wife is to be presented once a month.

"The Bureau of Free Love is autonomous.

"Men between the ages of 19 and 50 have the right to Choose from among the registered women, even without the consent of the latter, in the interests of the State.

"Children who are the issue of these unions are to become the property of the State."

The decree states further that it has been based on the "excellent example of similar decrees already issued at Luga, Kolpin, etc."

A similar "project of provisional rights in connection with the socialization of women in the City of Hvelinsk and vicinity" has been published in the Local Gazette of the Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, Mr. Simmons said.

At that the Bolsheviks of Vladimir, Luga, Kolpin, Hvelinsk, etc., are conservatives as compared with those of the City of Saratov. Saratov is the tenth largest city in all Russia, with a population of 217,000.

Mr. Simmons read a decree dated March 15, 1918, issued by the Anarchist Soviet, which was charged by Lenine and Trotzky with the government of the City of Saratov. The official translation of the decree reads:

"This decree is proclaimed by the Free Association of Anarchists in the town of Saratov. In compliance with the decision of the Soviet of Peasants and Soldiers and Workmen's Deputies of Kronstadt, the abolition of the private possession of women."

MOTIVES.

"Social inequalities and legitimate marriage having been a condition in the past which served as an instrument in the hands of the bourgeoisie, thanks to which all the best species of all the beautiful women have been the property of the bourgeoisie, have prevented the proper continuation of the human race. Such ponderous arguments have induced the present organization to edict the following decree:

"1. From March 1 the right to possess women having reached the ages of 17 to 32 is abolished.

"2. The age of women shall be determined by birth certificate or passports or by the testimony of witnesses, and on failure to produce documents their age shall be determined by the Black Committee, who shall judge them according to appearance.

"3. This decree does not affect women having five children.

"4. The former owners may retain the right of using their wife without awaiting their turn.

"5. In case of resistance of the husband he shall forfeit the right of the former paragraph.

"6. All women according to this decree are exempted from private ownership and are proclaimed the property of the whole nation.

"7. The distribution and management of the appropriated women in compliance with the decision of the above said organization are transferred to the Anarchist Saratov Club. In three days from the publication of this decree all women given by it to the use of the nation are obliged to present themselves to the given address and give the required information.

"8. Before the Black Committee is formed for the realization of this decree, the citizens themselves shall be charged with such control. Remarks: Each citizen knowing a woman not submitting herself to the address under this decree is obliged to let it be known to the Anarchist's Club, giving the full address, full name, and father's name of the offending woman.

"9. Male citizens have the right to use one woman not oftener than three times a week, for three hours, observing the rules specified below.

"10. Each man wishing to use a piece of public property should be a bearer of certificate from the Factories Committee, professional union, or Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Council, certifying that he belongs to the working family class.

"11. Every working member is obliged to discount 2% from his earnings to the fund of general public action. Remarks: This committee in charge will put these discounting funds with the specifications of the names and lists into the state banks and other institutions, handing down these funds to the popular generation.

"12. Male citizens not belonging to the working class in order to have the right equally with the proletariat are obliged to pay 100 roubles monthly into the public funds.

"13. The local branch of the state bank is obliged to begin to reserve the payments to the National Generation Funds

"14. All women proclaimed by this decree to be national property will receive from the funds an allowance of 238 roubles a month.

"15. All women who are pregnant are released of the direct State duties for four months, up to three months before and one month after childbirth.

"16. The children born are given to an institution for training after they are one month old where they are trained and educated until they are 17 years of age at the cost of the public funds.

"17. In case of a birth of twins the mother is to receive a prize of 200 roubles.

"18. All citizens, men and women, are obliged to watch carefully their health and to make each week an examination of urine and blood. Remark: The examinations are to be made daily at the laboratories of the Popular Generation Health.

"19. Those who are guilty of spreading venereal disease will be held responsible and severely punished.

"20. Women having lost their health may apply to the Soviet for a pension.

"21. The Chief of Anarchists will be in charge of perfecting the temporary arrangements and technical measures concerning the realization of this decree.

"22. All those refusing to recognize and support this decree will be proclaimed sabotage, enemies of the people and counter anarchists and will be held to the severest responsibilities.

"(Signed) COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SARATOV, RUSSIA."

It is time for plain talking. Bolshevism and I. W. Wism are simply new-fangled names for anarchy. This Bolshevism with which some of our "best people" are flirting is organized hatred, plunder, savagery and lust.

When people talk about the "social revolution," and the overthrow of the present "capitalistic society," what is meant is not merely a return to barbarism, they want to return to the lowest form of savagery.

q
June 16th, 1919

Mr. Jacob Schiff,
Care Kuhn, Loeb & Co.,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Schiff,

I am taking the liberty of sending to you a statement from the "The American Citizens' Committee of Polish Birth and Descent", which was sent to me by a friend in Washington.

My friend, who is in close touch with the House of Representatives, implies in his letter to me that this is the beginning of a systematic and well organized program on the part of this organization.

I thought you might be interested in reading this document.

With kindest regards,

Very sincerely yours,

AMERICAN CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE

OF POLISH BIRTH AND DESCENT.

2806-10 E. Allegheny Ave.,
Philadelphia, Pa.

June 9, 1919.

Pursuant of resolutions adopted by organizations, composed of American Citizens of Polish origin, we, the undersigned, join in the following letter of protest:

The attacks instituted recently against the people and the government of Poland have gone beyond the stage of mere misrepresentation. They have developed into a campaign.

Spectacular parades of mourning have been followed by fresh reports of pogroms--one at Poryck, Volhynia; another at Czanstochowa--issued in New York by the Zionist organization of America on the strength of advices from what it calls its Bureau at Copenhagen. We have now all the stage settings of a highly organized, well equipped, amply financed and extremely dangerous propaganda designed to cripple the nascent Polish Republic financially and disqualify it politically.

Americans cannot afford to accept this campaign of propaganda sympathetically or even to regard it with indifference. Now can either Poles or Jews, resident here but not naturalized, allow it to proceed without protest if they would be loyal to the decent, honest civilization for which the United States stands as chief protagonist at this critical hour of mankind's enfranchisement.

We Poles who have sought and received the great boon of American citizenship feel for the land of our origin the solicitude that longs to see there, firmly established, political institutions similar to those we enjoy in the United States--complete equality before the law, common participation in government, even handed justice, peaceful pursuit of livelihood. We believe that such a Poland, contributing to the welfare of mankind, must contribute to the security and the well being of our country here.

These are the reasons compelling us now to add our word to the statements made officially by United States Government observers, regarding the mischievous reports of massacres of Jews in Poland. They are the reasons, too, which urge us to endorse Premier Paderewski's demand for an immediate and impartial investigation of the charges brought against the Polish people. A systematized propaganda such as this which is now in operation, misleading so many thousand of Jews and liable to mislead millions of just but unformed Americans, can be effectively disposed of only by first hand facts, authoratively examined and officially reported.

Meanwhile, as contrasted with the series of Zionits "Reports" and with the sensational parades to the music of dargos, we have the formal communication to our State Department made by Hugh Gibson, our Minister to Poland, in which he says he has received no report of atrocities perpetrated against Jews in Poland, Galicia and Lithuania, with the exception of the Pinsk and Vilna affairs. Mr. Gibson's communication, read by William Phillips, assistant secretary of state, before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives in Washington, caused postponement of consideration of the resolution to rebuke governments of Eastern Europe for reported pogroms.

Minister Gibson, in his message to the State Department, cited the sources on which he had drawn for his denial of the accusations against the Polish People. They embraced the local newspapers, the Jewish journals duly included; the American Food Relief Administration; the Red Cross, and the Jewish organizations;--all of those bodies basing their reports to Mr. Gibson on information derived from their own agents traveling in Poland. At Vilna, where first hand information was procurable from Lieutenant Colonel Dawley, U.S.A., and representative of the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, no pogrom, no massacre occurred. What did happen was that the Poles dispersed an attack by bolshevists which involved house-to-house fighting.

To those who are acquainted with the history of Poland in its relation to the Jewish people it should be the last country of Europe to be subjected to these malignant slanders, for it has been the refuge and the hope of Jewry, elsewhere harassed, persecuted and tortured, throughout the centuries.

During the fanaticism incident to the Crusades it was Poland that received and defended the Jewish fugitives from the universal blood thirst of Christian Europe. During the 16th and 17th centuries the Jews of Poland exercised complete autonomy, including special authority for policing and taxation. No change of government in Poland affected Jewish interests adversely, save and only when Polish independence was destroyed and Russian, German or Austrian tyranny contrived means of oppression.

Today, the Jews number about one-seventh of the Polish population. They have 18 representatives among the 200 in the Polish Parliament. In the Polish army, more than 80 o/o of the medical staff are Jews. The Chief Judge Advocate General is a Jew. Four score secretaries of the Army General Staff are Jews. Politically, the Jews in Poland are even more favorably situated than our native born Americans here; for universal franchise prevails and Jewish women, in common with their Polish sisters, have the ballot on equality with men. Nearly a hundred years of consistent fostering of race prejudice by the German, Russian and Austrian imperial governments have failed to make the native Poles, in the hour of their manumission from bondage, do worse to their Jewish fellow citizens than accord to them political and civil rights identical with those enjoyed by the majority of the population.

The national readjustment has been accepted with profound satisfaction by the mass of Jewish people resident in Poland. Such objections as have been raised have come from the more ignorant and have been inspired by foreign agitators. Thus, some Polish Jews have demanded exemption from taxation and have campaigned against the sale of the new government's bonds. A widespread endeavor to escape universal military service, instituted as a matter of national safety, had been inaugurated among the Jews on the score of being merely resident aliens and distinguished from Polish citizens. There is a movement afoot which seeks concession by the Polish government of an independent and autonomous state consisting exclusively of Jews--a political absurdity comparable only to a proposal that New York's East Side should govern itself independently of Congress.

These various reactions against the plain, simple principles underlying a democracy and a real republic may well have evoked local instances of resistance against enforcement of law and compulsion of order. We had them here, in the United States and in a city so orderly and patriotic as Philadelphia, when the measure for conscription was adopted in Washington-- and arising among the same element of the population. It is still easy to recall the parades of the pacifists, with their banners that flaunted cowardice, their women who shrieked disloyalty and their men who marched trembling behind them. Had there been then another America available for propaganda, it would have had

long distance reports of bloody pogroms in the United States whenever the local police force broke up a pacifist demonstration or an indignant American swung one patriotic fist and did it himself.

They were merely the underworld of Jewry here. They are merely the underworld of Jewry there. Both constitute the most wretched element of a race originally courageous, frequently altruistic, essentially progressive, instinctively democratic and naturally intelligent. One generation, and they emerge from the miasma of hunger, timorousness and distrust into which they have been plunged by the dynasties of the world's tyrants. For the present, here as well as abroad, they serve to furnish the tools of that disorder, plotting, cabal and bolshevism which is the menace of civilization at large and of Poland on the one hand and the United States on the other. The Polish people, including the great mass of Jewish citizens there, comprehend the situation well and are seeking, with the full understanding of an intelligent sympathy, to ameliorate it as speedily as foreign machinations can be overcome.

Poland is the warden of the gate in Eastern Europe. She has been re-created into a free and independent nation for that very purpose. She must be strong to keep watch and ward, not as a political entity, but also as a commercial and economic factor. If German desperation to the West and South and Russian ruin on the East and North, combined, can paralyze Poland at the outset of her career—if, by the aid of their financial and commercial agencies working secretly through the Jewish bolsheviks and internationalists here in the United States, they can discredit the Poles as being a nation of murderous moujika or sabering Cossacks—a task of incomparable value to the foes of democracy, and of America, will have been performed. And the first great achievement towards genuine freedom for the Jews in Europe will have been brought to naught.

As Americans first, but also as citizens who realize the importance of Poland for the preservation of democracy in Europe, we ask that Premier Paderewski's request for a prompt, official investigation be complied with. We ask it for the sake, not alone of the 86 per cent of Poles who are being villified, but of their Jewish fellow citizens in Poland. We ask it, too, not only for our reputation here as blood kin of the Poles in Europe, but in order that the Jews of the United States may learn what is the truth and may be deterred from lending themselves to a propaganda which is aimed primarily not at Poland, not at the Poles, but at the very civilization, at the very institutions here which have been their refuge and their salvation since this country has been free, even as Poland and its institutions gave them refuge and preserved them when freedom abided there.

John B. Kliniewski,
Chairman,
American Citizens' Committee
of Polish Birth and Descent.

Josef F. Slomkowski,
Representative,
Polish American Citizens'
League of Pennsylvania.

Committee of Protest:

Gabriel J. Kraus, M.D.
Vitold E. Balukiewicz,
Vincent Domanski,

Leo J. Wojczynski, M.D.
Emil Schurgot
Anthony Ziernicki,

Gregory J. Kociel

Philadelphia, June 8th, 1919.

Resolved: That the Chairman of the American Citizens' Committee of Polish Birth and Descent be instructed to appoint a Committee and, in conjunction with the Representative of the Polish American Citizens' League of Pennsylvania, to issue to the President of the United States, the State Department, the members of the Congress at Washington, the Governor of Pennsylvania, the members of the Pennsylvania State Legislature at Harrisburg and the public press of the United States, a formal protest against the campaign of villification now assailing the Polish people and the Polish Government, coupled with our endorsement, here given, of the demand made by Premier Paderewski for an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation of the charges brought that Jews have been wantonly slain by their fellow citizens in Poland.

June 16th, 1919

Mr. Charles R. Berne;
Secy. to Hon. Chas. A. Mooney,
20th District, Ohio House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. Berne,

I am very grateful indeed to you
for the letter which you sent me recently.
I have placed it in the proper hands.

With kindest regards and again
thanking you, I am

Very sincerely yours,

The Wladomosci Codzienna,

A local Cleveland paper publishes the following

Wladomosci Codzienna, a Cleveland Polish paper, under date of Wednesday, November 20th, publishes the following:

Jews AGAINST A FREE POLAND

The Jewish Committee of Zionists has made again an effort with the Associated Press to publish news about so-called pogroms on Jews in Poland. According to the news, Polish Legionnaires have beaten up Jews in Siedlcech, Chrzanowic, Dambrowie, Janorzanie, etc.

This is the news received by Jewish cable. It does not please the Jews to ~~acknowled~~ acknowledge free Poland, with a free government which does not give away the country, as Russians and Austrians have done, for Jewish benefit- a government which will tolerate Jewish cheating, swindle, usury and other speculation, which are systematically practiced in Poland.

We are writing in this manner to the American press and we are pointing out the truth. "

Wladomosci Codzienna is published at
1917 Fairfield Avenue, Cleveland.

.....
KuryerDziennik Wlaskowy, a Chicago Polish paper, under date of November 20th, 1918, publishes a telegram from New York, as follows:

JEWISH SLANDER IS BLOOMING IN FULL

"The special enemies of Poland do all in their power whatever may hurt the Poles in the opinion of the world.

They make ~~unjust~~ of small street fights with Jewish cheaters; they make pogroms in Poland, and the lies spread through all the American press.

Lately, the Jews have let into the world a fable that tells of pogroms in Austria, Hungary, Poland and Bohemia. They organized fighting Jewish brigades in self-defense.

2
KUHN, LOEB & CO.

William and Pine Streets

New York, June 27, 1919

My dear Rabbi Silver:

Acknowledging receipt of your thoughtful letter of the 24th inst., with enclosure which I have read with interest, this is not the first instance in which we have received warning of the defamatory campaign the Poles in this country are conducting in revenge for the exposure which has been made by our people here of the bloody pogroms that have doubtless been visited upon the Jewish population of Poland. Former Ambassador Elkus, Judge Julian Mack, others and myself have had and are having frequent conferences about this situation, and we have thus far deemed it better not to answer back to the Poles in this country, for we want to avoid what might become a race conflict.

We realize that, in the present state of affairs, the American people desire that nothing shall be permitted to interfere with the establishment of a free Poland, and because of this we are afraid we cannot count to any large extent upon the sympathy of the American press. It may, therefore, be advisable to let this agitation on the part of the Poles in this country spend itself, but we are busy in Paris, through Mr. Louis Marshall and Dr. Cyrus Adler, to look after the protection of our co-religionists in Poland under the new Treaties and otherwise, and in this Mr. Marshall and Dr. Adler - as they informed us only yesterday by cable - have been

Rabbi A.H. Silver (2)

entirely successful.

With kindest greetings, believe me,

Yours faithfully,

Isaac H. Schiff

Rabbi A.H. Silver,
The Temple,
East 55th Street & Central,
Cleveland, Ohio.

MM

[1919]

YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUESTED AT

A DINNER GIVEN IN HONOR OF

MR. JACOB SCHIFF

MR. JULIUS ROSENWALD

ON MONDAY EVENING, DECEMBER THE TWENTY-THIRD

AT SEVEN O'CLOCK

THE BLACKSTONE

PLEASE REPLY TO
THE BANQUET COMMITTEE
1110 COLUMBUS MEMORIAL BUILDING

AS THE SEATING CAPACITY OF
THE BANQUET HALL IS LIMITED,
PLEASE REPLY PROMPTLY.

Mar 350