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1453

Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1949-1950.

UNION OF AMERICAN

HEBREW CONGREGATIONS / RABBI MAURICE N. EISENDRATH, PRESIDENT

New York Office: 3 EAST 65TH STREET, NEW YORK 21, N. Y.

April 12th
1949

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

Dear Friend:

I have just returned to New York from an extended trip to Chicago and the Middle West. Upon my arrival here I learned to my great satisfaction that the Executive Committee of the New York Federation had unanimously decided to invite you as the principal speaker at its annual dinner meeting on May 19th.

Needless to say, you can rest assured that this invitation has my heartiest endorsement and that I am genuinely hopeful that you will do everything within your power to accept. There can be no doubt that our movement here in New York City needs just the kind of stimulation and challenge that you alone can give it. All that you have done for K'lal Yisroel during your career, and more particularly during the past critical years, will lend added weight to the religious message which you would bring to us and which, as you yourself have so frequently stated both privately and publicly, is direly needed today. Especially is such a spiritual appeal required in metropolitan New York. Because of the large following that you have here, your word would be most effective and would tangibly help in the impact that we are seeking to make, more particularly now since it has been decided to move our headquarters here.

For these and many other reasons, therefore, I do hope that you will permit nothing to prevent your acceptance.

I have likewise just learned, through Colonel Greenman and Rabbi Davis, that you indicated that I had failed to reply to a recent communication from you. I have no recollection of any such letter that I have not answered. I presume, however, that you refer to the telephone conversation that we had some weeks ago. I really did not believe that you were desirous of hearing from me in that particular instance, as the content of your conversation appeared to be so final. Needless to say, I was tremendously disturbed over that telephone con-

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

- 2 -

April 12th, 1949

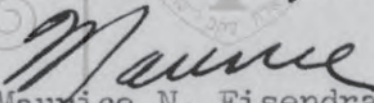
versation because it was the first time in the many years that I have had the privilege and joy of being associated with you that there were any unpleasantries between us. I do hope that you have forgotten this occurrence, even as have I, and that we may look forward to a continuation of the friendship that we have known for the past many years.

I realize that there is still a complex problem in Cleveland which is unresolved. I am prepared to sit down with you and with some of the lay leaders of our Union to try to effect a mutually satisfactory answer to this difficulty which, after all, is not one of my own making, nor is it for me personally to resolve. It is rather the responsibility of the Union's Executive Board, and I am hopeful that together we may settle it in a true spirit of sympathetic understanding.

Regardless of this particular issue, however, our need for just the kind of message that you alone can bring is too great, that I trust that we will have you as our principal speaker on May 19th.

With warmest personal greetings, I am

Yours most cordially,


Maurice N. Eisendrath



April 15, 1949

Dr. Maurice N. Eisendrath
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
3 East 65th Street
New York 21, New York

My dear Eisendrath:

Permit me to acknowledge your letter of April 12th. I have accepted the invitation of Mr. Greenman to attend the meeting of the Federation of Reform Synagogues in New York on May 19th. I trust that the meeting will be successful.

With reference to the matter which we discussed on the telephone and to which you refer in your letter, I should like to say that I did not request you or Dr. Glueck to intervene in the Cleveland situation. There was a question which was raised at the Executive of the Union at the time of the Convention in Boston as to whether the Suburban Congregation should be admitted to the Union. That question was disposed of, wisely or unwisely as the case may be.

Knowing of the situation here in Cleveland and the history of the new congregation whose creation was inspired by an anti-Zionist odium and a violent opposition to the teaching of Hebrew to Jewish children, and of the manner in which they raided existing reform temples to get their members, it would have been an act of simple common sense on your part and on the part of Glueck not to involve yourselves in the situation in any manner, certainly not to endorse this congregation which in every regard is an ideological replica of the Houston congregation. The Union, I had assumed, had disassociated itself from the Houston ideology at its Convention in Cincinnati, and so did the C.C.A.R. The Union membership did not wish to see congregations built for the sole purpose of fighting Zionist and discouraging the teaching of Hebrew.

Nevertheless, on the occasion of Rabbi Goldberg's resignation from the Suburban Temple (who has since stated publicly his complete disillusionment with the purposes and activities of this dissident group), you and Glueck found it necessary to send a letter to that congregation giving them a "mi she-berach", and "on behalf of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Hebrew Union College, would like to assure you as President of the Suburban Temple, and through you, the officials and the congregation of the Temple that we are deeply interested in its welfare and in its progress and in its being increasingly strengthened by the advancement of Liberal American Judaism". Is this the type of Liberal American Judaism represented by this Suburban Temple that you and Glueck would like to see "progress and increasingly strengthen"?

It is this amazing and incomprehensible performance of yours which aroused my indignation and that of many others in the community. The Union requested us, you will recall, to assist in the founding of a new reform congregation in the suburbs. We gladly complied, and The Temple contributed money as well as a group of initial founders for this new congregation. While this congregation is being established, you find it necessary to encourage another competing congregation to be established in the same area - a congregation which is hostile to the point of view not alone of the new temple but of the long-established reform temples in the city, among the oldest in the Union

Dr. Maurice N. Eisendrath

-2-

April 15, 1949

whose help you solicited in the establishment of the new congregation. Frankly, I am at a loss to understand the mental processes responsible for such an attitude.

Very sincerely yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS :er



JAMES H. MILLER
18675 PARKLAND DRIVE
SHAKER HEIGHTS 22, OHIO

October 19, 1949

Rabbi A.H.Silver
c/o The Temple
Ansel Road & East 105th Street
Cleveland, Ohio

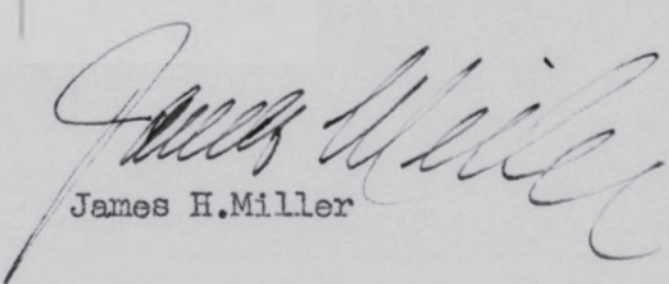
My dear Rabbi Silver:

Mr. A.L.Harris of our Union was in to see me today, as I know he also tried to see you or talk to you in regard to a luncheon meeting that he is trying to arrange for Tuesday noon, November 1st for Mr. Coons, the newly appointed executive vice chairman of the combined campaign of the Union who wants to come to Cleveland and discuss plans with us for the Union for a future campaign, and I hope that you will be in the city and able to be with us.

As soon as the time and place for the luncheon will be decided on we will get in touch with you again. In the meantime I hope you are enjoying the best of health, and with my kindest regards, I am



Cordially yours,


James H. Miller

1949-1950

MINIMUM GOAL

\$1,875,000

TEMPORARY LETTERHEAD

COMBINED CAMPAIGN

OF *The Union of American Hebrew Congregations*
Hebrew Union College • Jewish Institute of Religion

3 EAST SIXTY-FIFTH STREET • NEW YORK 21, N. Y.

October 21, 1949

National Chairmen

DR. SAMUEL S. HOLLENDER
General Chairman
HERBERT R. BLOCH
FRED LAZARUS, JR.
PHILIP MEYERS
HERMAN M. STEIN

Campaign Committee

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JACOB ARONSON
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DR. MAURICE N. EISENDRATH
DR. NELSON GLUECK
DR. JAMES G. HELLER
LESTER JAFFE
BENJAMIN S. KATZ
OSCAR M. LAZRUS
—and the National Chairmen

Co-Treasurers

DAVID F. KAHN
LEON LEDERER

Executive Vice-Chairman

ISIDOR COONS

Director of Campaign

SAUL S. ELGART

[Committees in Formation]

1421

Dr. Abba H. Silver
The Temple
East 105th at Ansel Road
Cleveland, Ohio

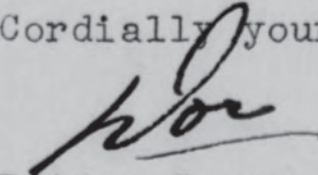
Dear Dr. Silver:

Perhaps you have heard that I have accepted an invitation to try to help the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion get on their feet financially through the National Combined Campaign for 1949-1950.

I am happy to associate myself with the Campaign because I believe that much needs to be done to make secure the position of Reform Jewry in America and I look forward with real pleasure to working closely with you in this meritorious undertaking.

With kind personal regards, I am

Cordially yours,


Isidor Coons

Chairman, Executive Board:
JACOB ARONSON
President:
RABBI MAURICE N. EISENDRATH
Vice-Chairmen: IRVIN FANE
FREDERICK F. GREENMAN
DR. S. S. HOLLENDER
PHILIP MEYERS
EUGENE B. STRASSBURGER
Treasurer: DAVID F. KAHN
Honorary Secretary:
RABBI GEORGE ZEPIN
Administrative Secretary:
RABBI LOUIS I. EGELSON
Comptroller: HYMAN KANTER

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

34 WEST SIXTH STREET • CINCINNATI 2, OHIO • PHONE PARKWAY 7345

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE BROTHERHOODS • THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE YOUTH

October 31, 1949

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

Dear Dr. Silver:

Mr. Jacob Aronson, the Chairman of our Executive Board, would like you to serve as a member of a committee to plan the program for the General Assembly of the Union scheduled for Cleveland, Ohio, next November.

Mr. Aronson has appointed Mr. Eugene B. Strassburger of Pittsburgh as Chairman of the committee.

Please let me have your acceptance.

With kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Eugene B. Strassburger
Administrative Secretary

LE:SG

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

HONORARY MEMBERS

Marcus Aaron, *Pittsburgh*
 Lee M. Friedman, *Boston*
 Simeon M. Johnson, *Cincinnati*

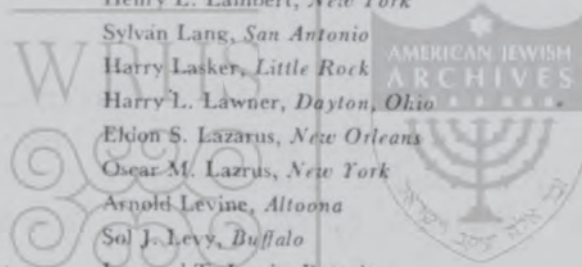
Rabbi Julian Morgenstern, *Cincinnati*
 Herbert C. Oettinger, *Cincinnati*
 Henry Oppenheimer, *Baltimore*
 Dr. Hiram B. Weiss, *Cincinnati*

Herman Wile, *Buffalo*
 Isidore Wise, *Hartford*
 Rabbi Jonah B. Wise, *New York*

J. S. Ackerman, *Chicago*
 Gilbert S. Ades, *Louisville*
 Jacob Aronson, *New York*
 Emil N. Baar, *New York*
 Charles W. Baker, *Los Angeles*
 Louis Barnett, *Memphis*
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 Rabbi Morton M. Berman, *Chicago*
 Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein, *Rochester*
 Benjamin Blumberg, *Terre Haute*
 Rabbi Barnett R. Brickner, *Cleveland*
 William L. Bush, *Washington, D. C.*
 Jesse Cohen, *Brooklyn*
 Joseph H. Cohen, *Boston*
 Lawrence B. Cohen, *New York*
 Mrs. Hugo Dalsheimer, *Baltimore*
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 S. Mason Ehrman, *Portland*
 Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath, *New York*
 Judge Solomon Elsner, *Hartford*
 Irvin Fane, *Kansas City*
 M. M. Feld, *Houston*
 Max Feldberg, *Boston*
 Fred F. Florence, *Dallas*
 Jacob Logan Fox, *Chicago*
 Rabbi Solomon B. Freehof, *Pittsburgh*
 Alex Frieder, *Cincinnati*
 Louis K. Friedman, *Pittsburgh*
 Rabbi Nelson Glueck, *Cincinnati*
 Robert P. Goldman, *Cincinnati*
 Frederick F. Greenman, *New York*
 Irwin M. Grinsfelder, *Baltimore*
 Gustav P. Heller, *West Orange*

Rabbi James G. Heller, *Cincinnati*
 Dr. S. S. Hollender, *Chicago*
 Louis C. Isaacson, *Denver*
 Lester A. Jaffe, *Cincinnati*
 David F. Kahn, *Cincinnati*
 Dr. Herbert I. Kallot, *Detroit*
 Samuel Kassel, *Chicago*
 S. Herbert Kaufman, *Harrisburg*
 Edmund I. Kaufmann, *Washington, D. C.*
 Daniel Edward Koshland, *San Francisco*
 Henry L. Lambert, *New York*
 Sylvan Lang, *San Antonio*
 Harry Lasker, *Little Rock*
 Harry L. Lawner, *Dayton, Ohio*
 Eldon S. Lazarus, *New Orleans*
 Oscar M. Lazrus, *New York*
 Arnold Levine, *Altoona*
 Sol J. Levy, *Buffalo*
 Leonard T. Lewis, *Detroit*
 D. Arthur Magaziner, *Philadelphia*
 Rabbi Louis L. Mann, *Chicago*
 Rabbi Jacob R. Marcus, *Cincinnati*
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 Albert F. Mecklenburger, *Chicago*
 Philip Meyers, *Cincinnati*
 James H. Miller, *Cleveland*
 Julien W. Newman, *New York*
 Milton A. Pearlstine, *Charleston, S. C.*
 Dr. George Piness, *Los Angeles*
 A. B. Polinsky, *Duluth*
 Sydney W. Roos, *New York*
 Robert Rosenbaum, *Philadelphia*
 Adolph H. Rosenberg, *St. Louis*

Louis A. Rosett, *New Rochelle*
 Mrs. Louis A. Rosett, *New Rochelle*
 Judge Sol Rubenstein, *Albany, N. Y.*
 Benjamin F. Saltzstein, *Milwaukee*
 Samuel Samson, *Huntington, W. Va.*
 Gilbert Sanders, *Trinidad*
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 Judge Joseph G. Shapiro, *Bridgeport*
 Alfred Shyman, *Seattle*
 Archibald Silverman, *Providence*
 Sydney J. Silverstein, *Oakland*
 Laurie T. Simonsky, *Toronto*
 Jack Skirball, *Hollywood, Cal.*
 Herman N. Slotsky, *Sioux City*
 Benjamin Spinoza, *Boston*
 Harry I. Stern, *Philadelphia*
 Leonard J. Stern, *Columbus, Ohio*
 Lee M. Sterne, *Albany, Ga.*
 Eugene B. Strassburger, *Pittsburgh*
 Roger W. Straus, *New York*
 Lewis L. Strauss, *Washington, D. C.*
 George M. Stutz, *Detroit*
 Israel N. Thurman, *New York*
 Mrs. Leon L. Watters, *New York*
 Herschel Weil, *Lexington, Ky.*
 Lee B. Weil, *Birmingham*
 Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein, *Chicago*
 Aaron Weitzenhoffer, *Oklahoma City*
 Harry G. Willis, *Jersey City*
 Amiel Wohl, *Cincinnati*
 Walter Wolf, *Indianapolis*



November 1, 1949

Rabbi Louis I. Egelson
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
34 West Sixth Street
Cincinnati 2, Ohio

My dear Rabbi Egelson:

Thank you for your letter of October 31st. I shall be very pleased to serve as a member of the committee to plan the program of the General Assembly of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

1949-1950

MINIMUM GOAL

\$1,875,000

TEMPORARY LETTERHEAD

COMBINED CAMPAIGN

OF *The Union of American Hebrew Congregations*
Hebrew Union College • Jewish Institute of Religion

3 EAST SIXTY-FIFTH STREET • NEW YORK 21, N. Y.

November 2, 1949

National Chairmen

DR. SAMUEL S. HOLLENDER
General Chairman
HERBERT R. BLOCH
FRED LAZARUS, JR.
PHILIP MEYERS
HERMAN M. STEIN

Campaign Committee

J. S. ACKERMAN
JACOB ARONSON
A. B. COHEN
DR. MAURICE N. EISENDRATH
DR. NELSON GLUECK
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LESTER JAFFE
BENJAMIN S. KATZ
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—and the National Chairmen

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Executive Vice-Chairman

ISIDOR COONS

Director of Campaign

SAUL S. ELGART

[Committees in Formation]

1421

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

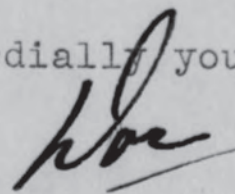
Dear Dr. Silver:

My visit with you was most enjoyable and I thank you again for the generous amount of time which you gave me in your busy day, and for your interest in the forthcoming Campaign on behalf of the Unions and the Colleges.

As I suggested, Mr. Albert Harris, representing our Campaign in Cleveland and vicinity, will undertake to work out the details in conformity with decisions made at the luncheon meeting. I know that he will wish to be in touch with you for your guidance and your assured cooperation.

With kind regards, I am

Cordially yours,



Isidor Coons
Executive Vice-Chairman

Chairman, Executive Board:
JACOB ARONSON
President:
RABBI MAURICE N. EISENDRATH
Vice-Chairmen: IRVIN FANE
FREDERICK F. GREENMAN
DR. S. S. HOLLENDER
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EUGENE B. STRASSBURGER
Treasurer: DAVID F. KAHN
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Administrative Secretary:
RABBI LOUIS I. EGELSON
Comptroller: HYMAN KANTER

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

34 WEST SIXTH STREET • CINCINNATI 2, OHIO • PHONE PARKWAY 7345

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE BROTHERHOODS • THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE YOUTH

November 14, 1949

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

Dear Dr. Silver:

Mr. Eugene B. Strassburger, the Chairman of the Committee on Program for the Next General Assembly of the Union, is calling a meeting of the committee at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Friday, December 2, 1949, at 2:30 p.m.

This will be a preliminary meeting, attended in the main by those members of the committee on the Executive Board of the Union who will be in Atlantic City for a meeting of the Board on December 3. If you happen to be in the vicinity of Atlantic City at that time, please arrange to attend the meeting. In any case, you will be informed as to the results of that meeting.

With kind regards, I am,

Cordially yours,

Louis I. Egelson
Administrative Secretary

LE:SG

Chairman, Executive Board:
JACOB ARONSON
President:
RABBI MAURICE N. EISENDRATH
Vice-Chairmen:
IRVIN FANE
FREDERICK F. GREENMAN
DR. S. S. HOLLENDER
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EUGENE B. STRASSBURGER
Treasurer:
DAVID F. KAHN
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Administrative Secretary:
RABBI LOUIS I. EGELSON
Comptroller:
HYMAN KANTER

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

34 WEST SIXTH STREET • CINCINNATI 2, OHIO • PHONE PARKWAY 7345

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE BROTHERHOODS • THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE YOUTH

November 15, 1949

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Friend:

Mr. Jacob Aronson, the Chairman of the Executive Board of the Union, would like you to serve as a member of the Committee on Code of Jewish Faith and Practice. He has appointed Rabbi Morton M. Berman of Chicago as Chairman of this committee.

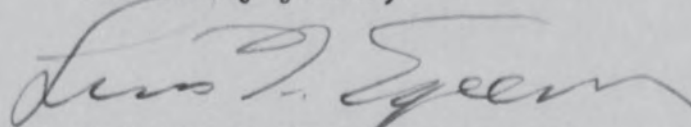
Rabbi Berman would like to have a luncheon conference of the members of this committee to meet with him on Saturday, December 3, 1949, from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m., at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Atlantic City, where the annual meeting of the Executive Board of the Union will be held beginning that evening.

Please let me know on the enclosed postal card whether you will attend.

Under the present straitened circumstances of the Union, it is impossible to pay the expenses of those who attend the meetings of this special committee. If you think that your congregation would pay your expenses in attending this important meeting and would wish us to write to them to suggest that they do so, we would be glad to write the necessary letter if you will so inform us.

With kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,


Administrative Secretary

LE:jbm

November 21, 1949

Rabbi Louis I. Egelson
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
34 West Sixth Street
Cincinnati 2, Ohio

My dear Rabbi Egelson:

In reply to your letter of November 14th, Rabbi Silver will be unable to attend the meeting scheduled for December 2nd in Atlantic City.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary to Rabbi Silver

Chairman, Executive Board:
JACOB ARONSON
President:
RABBI MAURICE N. EISENDRATH
Vice-Chairmen:
IRVIN FANE
FREDERICK F. GREENMAN
DR. S. S. HOLLENDER
PHILIP MEYERS
EUGENE B. STRASSBURGER
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RABBI LOUIS I. EGELSON
Comptroller:
HYMAN KANTER

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

34 WEST SIXTH STREET • CINCINNATI 2, OHIO • PHONE PARKWAY 7345

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE BROTHERHOODS • THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE YOUTH

December 8, 1949

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
19810 Shaker Blvd.
Cleveland, Ohio

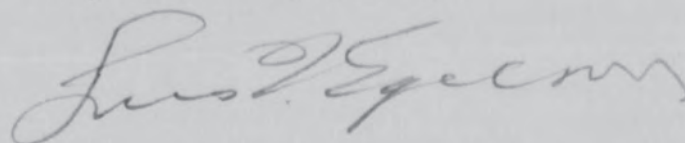
Dear Rabbi Silver:

I am sorry that you could not attend the meeting of the Committee on Program for the Next General Assembly of the Union.

A well attended meeting was held on Friday, December 2, at Atlantic City and a copy of the report submitted by Mr. Strassburger to the Executive Board is enclosed herewith. I hope you will find it possible to attend the next meeting of the committee.

With kindest regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,



Administrative Secretary

LE:MR

Encl.

Atlantic City, N.J.
December 4, 1949

To Members of the Executive Board
Union of American Hebrew Congregations

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Your Committee on Program for the next General Assembly of the Union met in the Ritz Carlton Hotel, Atlantic City, on Friday, December 2nd. The meeting was well attended and the interest manifested was most gratifying.

Careful consideration was given to the many suggestions received after the last Biennial for improving our convention program by providing for fewer set speeches and greater delegates participation, more time to discuss the problems of the Union, and for a little leisure to renew friendships.

Since the year 1950 constitutes a half century mark and is at the same time the 75th anniversary of the founding of our Hebrew Union College, your committee felt that our program for the General Assembly should partake of a fresh appraisal of the meaning and challenge of Liberal Judaism.

It was our thought that "Reform Judaism of Tomorrow" be the theme for our meeting. The Convention would be keynoted by a Town Hall meeting on the subject, with three or four speakers, at one of the opening sessions. On succeeding days there would be a series of three or four seminars or workshops on the broader educational aims of Reform Judaism; newer devices in programming new activities of the temple; temple financing; the increasing value of religious worship; the Reform Temple and the community at large. These workshops may be set up for two groups: the smaller and the larger congregations.

The anniversary of the College would be given a prominent place through a special program and perhaps a pageant depicting the past history of the College and the Union and Reform Judaism in America.

Consultation Sessions may be set up in advance, through correspondence, so that congregational delegates may bring their problems to members of the staff, at the convention, for counsel and guidance.

The business sessions at the convention would be devoted to discussions of the Placement Plan, the 10% Assessment Plan; the New Name of the Union. It was suggested that congregations be requested to select their delegates as early as possible, so that they might be informed about these various subjects through a series of bulletins sent out in advance of the convention.

It was voted to devote four full days to the convention, beginning Sunday morning, November 12th and closing with a banquet on Wednesday evening, November 15th. We prepared a list of outstanding

speakers, and the President of the Union was authorized to select one or two as the Banquet speakers, with the proviso that the speaking program would not exceed one hour.

Your committee decided to meet again in the near future, perhaps in conjunction with the next meeting of the Administrative Committee, and proceed to add another story or two to the foundation previously laid.

Respectfully submitted,

EUGENE B. STRASSBURGER
Chairman, Program Committee



UNION OF AMERICAN

HEBREW CONGREGATIONS / RABBI MAURICE N. EISENDRATH, PRESIDENT

3 EAST SIXTY-FIFTH STREET, NEW YORK 21, N. Y.

December 8, 1949

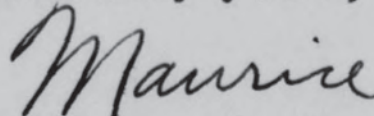
Dear Abba:

A really historic occurrence in the life of Liberal Judaism has just been consummated and because of your great devotion to the Union and your service in our cause, I should like to share with you this joyous news before it is made public.

I am enclosing the letter Mr. Jacob Aronson sent to our Executive Board members, which contains a careful recital of the facts. I would like to underline his request for the utmost secrecy.

With warmest personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath

officers
Chairman, Executive Board:
JACOB ARONSON
President:
RABBI MAURICE N. EISENDRATH
Vice-Chairmen: IRVIN FANE
FREDERICK F. GREENMAN
DR. S. S. HOLLENDER
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EUGENE B. STRASSBURGER
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Honorary Secretary:
RABBI GEORGE ZEPIN
Administrative Secretary:
RABBI LOUIS I. EGELSON
Comptroller: HYMAN KANTER

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION • NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE SISTERHOODS

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

3 EAST SIXTY-FIFTH STREET • NEW YORK 21, N. Y. • PHONE REGENT 7-7800

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE BROTHERHOODS • THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE YOUTH

C O N F I D E N T I A L

December 8th
1949

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:

I beg to supplement the oral report concerning developments in connection with the location of national headquarters in New York which I made at the meeting of our Board held in Atlantic City over the last weekend.

Those who were present will recall that I explained the exhaustive efforts to find either an existing building or appropriate site. As you know, our National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods has conducted a House of Living Judaism campaign to collect funds for this purpose. Some time ago, we were advised that a distinguished individual was interested in our movement and prepared to contribute a substantial amount for construction of an appropriate building to serve as a memorial to his deceased parents.

We recently were fortunate enough to obtain an option on property at the southeast corner of Fifth Avenue and East 65th Street, in New York, with frontage of 50 feet 5 inches on Fifth Avenue and a depth of 100 feet on East 65th Street. Upon exercise of the option, the contract of sale provides for purchase price of \$200,000, of which ten percent is payable on signing of contract and the balance on closing of title. The contract provides for return of the down payment in the event (which is not anticipated) that municipal authority for the construction of our type of building is denied.

Also, I reported at the meeting of the Executive Board that the proposed agreement with the donor provides for aggregate contribution by him of \$412,500, and the full details of this proposed agreement were reported at the Executive Board meeting. The agreement with the donor provides, following the demolition of the present structure and clearance of the site, for the construction of a new building of appropriate dignity and impressiveness.

Our real estate advice is to the effect that the price of the present property is definitely on the low side, and that is easily understood when we consider the beauty and prestige of the location.

I was not at liberty at the Executive Board meeting to disclose the identity of the donor because definitive contract with him awaited formal execution to follow authorization at the hands of the Executive Board.

As you know, the Executive Board, with deep appreciation and gratitude, authorized the making of agreement with the donor and at the same time authorized purchase of the existing property. It is with extreme satisfaction that I now have the honor of advising that Memorandum of Agreement providing for this magnificent contribution has just been formally concluded and executed and that our generous donor is Dr. Albert A. Berg, distinguished surgeon and citizen of New York.

For the present, and pending an appropriate publicity announcement, it is important that the name of our donor be held in confidence and, even after that is announced, which we hope may take place next week, it is, if anything, more important that the location of the property be also held in confidence, to the end that our discussions with the municipal authorities and relations with the present tenant may not be prejudiced. Your cooperation in this regard will be very much appreciated.

I cannot close this progress communication without recording our sense of tremendous gratitude not only to Dr. Berg but, as well, to the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, who have contributed and are continuing to contribute so nobly towards the realization of our long-cherished dream for a worthy House of Living Judaism.

With regards to each of you, I am

Yours faithfully,

Jacob Aronson, Chairman
Executive Board

December 13, 1949

Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
3 East 65th Street
New York 21, New York

My dear Maurice:

I was very happy to receive your note informing me of the most generous gift that was made to the Union, and of course, I am delighted with it. I hope that rapid progress will be made in the direction of establishing the headquarters of the Union in New York.

With all good wishes and wishing you a very happy Chanukah season, I remain

Very cordially yours,

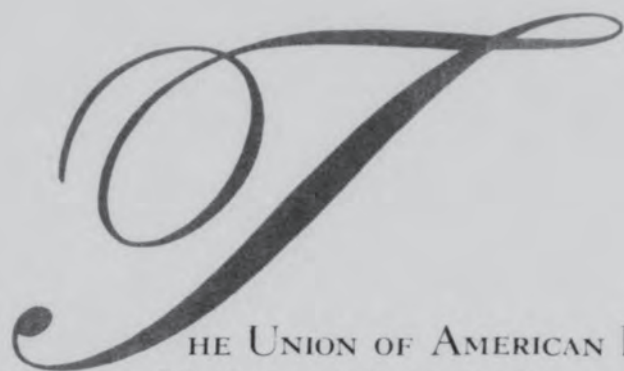
ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

FOR YOUR
SYNAGOGUE



A MASTERPIECE IN STERLING SILVER



THE UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS presents its newest and remarkably beautiful ritual object intended for weekly use in the synagogue—an heroic-size sterling silver Kiddush cup.

It is a massive goblet, $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches in height, hand-made to our order by the nationally renowned firm of silversmiths, the William B. Meyers Company of Newark, N. J. The design is original, majestic, handsome—a blending of lovely Jewish symbolism with exquisite craftsmanship. The cup with its silver cover weighs eighteen ounces. The bowl is lined with gold. The Hebrew Kiddush prayer is engraved around the base.

The cover is also of sterling silver and hand-made by the same craftsmen. While the cup may be purchased without the cover, there are two important reasons for buying both. The cover serves to “dress up” the cup and the two pieces make an incomparable ensemble. The second reason is hygienic; for example, in many places in the south you cannot leave a liquid uncovered for even a second without attracting a six-legged arthropod.

Here is a wonderful answer to give to the members of your congregation who ask you to suggest a beautiful yet truly serviceable gift to present to the synagogue, either as a memorial or in honor of a joyous occasion. Space for the gift inscription is provided around the top of the cup.

The price of the cup, with cover, is \$120.00; without cover \$100.00, plus expressage. Cost of inscription, according to length, at current engravers' rates. Immediate delivery.

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

MERCHANTS BUILDING . CINCINNATI

1137

COPY SENT TO YOUR
RABBI

January 31, 1950

Dear Mr. President:

For a number of years, much serious thinking has been devoted to the evolving of a plan for rabbinic placement that would be acceptable both to congregations and to rabbis. The aim was to eliminate the chaotic condition in connection with pulpit placement. To that end, a commission was appointed, representing the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. This placement commission met about a half dozen times during the year and prepared a plan, a copy of which is attached hereto as Document A. The plan was submitted to the CCAR at its meeting at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in June, 1949. Suggestions were made at that meeting for modification of the plan. These modifications are embodied in Document B, attached hereto.

Additional explanatory material with reference to the plan was prepared by the Chairman of the commission, Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn. That material is appended hereto as Document C.

The plan was presented to the Executive Board of the UAHC at its meeting in Atlantic City on December 3-4, 1949, and was approved by them in principle, with the provision that the plan be submitted to the congregations affiliated with the UAHC, asking for any suggestions that they may have for modification of the plan.

Will you please be good enough to consider this plan at a board meeting of your congregation and let me have any suggestions that you may have for changes, within sixty days. The suggestions coming from the congregations will then be collated and transmitted to the commission on placement for their consideration.

The plan, if and when modified, will then be submitted to the Executive Board of the UAHC at its next meeting, as well as to the other organizations mentioned above, and subsequently to the General Assembly of the UAHC to be held in Cleveland, Ohio, November 12-15, 1950.

I shall look forward to hearing from you with reference to this plan no later than April 1.

With kind greetings, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Louis I. Egelson

Louis I. Egelson
Administrative Secretary

LE:jbm

Document A

REPORT OF THE JOINT PLACEMENT COMMISSION

of the
Central Conference of American Rabbis
and the
Union of American Hebrew Congregations

I. INTRODUCTION

This is the third serious attempt made by the Central Conference of American Rabbis to organize a system of rabbinical placement and thereby to replace the chaos and anarchy of the past with a procedure that would be orderly. In 1942 Rabbi James G. Heller, chairman of the Conference Committee on Placement and Ethics, proposed our first plan for placement. In the following year a revision of his plan was considered. In 1948 Rabbi Louis L. Mann, chairman of a Joint Commission of the Conference and the Union, presented a second proposed plan. After due deliberation a year ago in Kansas City, the Conference, feeling that further study was needed, directed your present Commission to meet during the year for that purpose, and to prepare a plan for consideration at this time.

The report now being proposed is the result of five meetings of the full Commission, plus additional sessions of the Conference and Union representatives respectively. To the members of this group, whose cooperation has been more than exemplary, your chairman wishes at the immediate outset to express his grateful appreciation. Two names should be singled out for special thanks. One is that of Rabbi Max Maccoby, who served diligently and devotedly as secretary. The other is that of our beloved colleague, Dr. Stephen S. Wise, awlawv ha-sho-lom. Up to the time of his final illness and death Dr. Wise attended all but one of our meetings and helped us immeasurably out of the richness of his great wisdom and experience.

Previous attempts to establish a placement plan have failed primarily for two reasons. First, because of the professional displacement necessitated by the war. Second, because of the existence of two separate seminaries for the training of Liberal rabbis. Never has there been any question, however, that a plan was desperately needed. Now both previous obstacles are happily removed. Now, therefore, is the time for the Conference and Union together to undertake definite action toward correcting a situation which threatens to become intolerable. To that end, we offer the following plan.

II. GENERAL AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

A. The general aim and the primary purpose of a Placement Plan is to better religious life and work among our congregations, to improve relations between congregations and rabbis. The practice of the past must not be permitted to stand in the way of a better system, designed to aid congregations to find rabbis, and to assist rabbis in finding posts where they can do their best work. The relationship between congregation and rabbi is a sacred one, which depends in large part upon the special fitness of the rabbi, the attitude toward him of the

congregation from the beginning, and the compatibility that comes to exist between them. The plan that follows is a serious effort, resulting from prolonged deliberation, to substitute some measure of orderliness for the present anarchy, without, however, drifting into such hierarchical controls as would deprive congregations or rabbis of individual choices or adjustments.

Your Commission has, therefore, approached the task assigned it with an understanding that the problem of placement is one that concerns all the organizations represented by it. Obviously the problem can be solved only when we set up a system of genuine and comprehensive cooperation among these organizations. A harbinger of such cooperation has been the splendid spirit of mutual consultation and concession among the representatives of the three major agencies constituting our Commission.

B. It is our belief that a Placement Bureau can be created without involving either rabbis or congregations in any kind of hierarchical system. Throughout this report there will be discovered a recognition that in the last analysis the final choice must rest with individual rabbis and congregations. No bureau or committee should arrogate to itself the privilege of forcing upon a congregation a rabbi whom it neither chooses nor wants. Nor, per contra, should a rabbi be directed to accept or retain a pulpit which he does not want. These considerations should be regarded as basic. Our aim is to suggest a system that will enhance, rather than diminish or impair, the rights of both congregations and rabbis. (3)

C. In the program that follows, we attempt to set up the minimum of necessary machinery. Detail in the elaboration and administration of the plan should be left for later determination by the Placement Bureau itself.

III. THE MAKE-UP OF THE PLACEMENT BUREAU

A. The agencies to be represented on a Placement Bureau shall be the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (called henceforth in this report simply "the School"). We propose that each of these three agencies be represented by four delegates of its own choosing. 12

About twenty per cent of the graduates of the School are engaged in the work of Hillel Foundations. It was felt wise, therefore, to approach Dr. Abram Sachar and Rabbi Arthur Lelyveld, to explore the possibility of Hillel's participation in this plan. The prospects look favorable. It is our hope that future negotiations will clinch the matter, determine the method of participation, and provide for representation by Hillel on the governing body of the Placement Bureau.

1. The Commission proposes for purposes of fairness and equality that the Union and the School be required to include among their respective representatives on the Placement Bureau not less than two laymen for each.

2. Each of the agencies represented on the Bureau will be expected to bear its proportion of the financial cost of the Bureau's operation.

B. The Placement Bureau shall engage the services of a director, who may be either a rabbi or a layman. He shall be selected by the members of the Placement Bureau in a manner which they shall determine.

C. The Bureau is to be located for the present at the New York office of the School.

1. We suggest in its deliberations the Bureau consider the advisability of utilizing or establishing regional representation.

D. This plan is to include in its operation all member congregations of the Union, all members of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and all graduates of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. It shall also include those graduates of the HUC-JIR who are not members of the CCAR or of any other rabbinical body, who shall indicate that they desire to be included in the plan and will abide by its rules. It shall also include those congregations, not members of the UAHC, which shall indicate that they desire to be included in the plan and will abide by its rules.

E. This plan shall become operative upon adoption by the three bodies. The Commission urges upon them speedy action.

F. Amendments to this Plan may be made at any time by concurrent action of the three bodies.

G. The Bureau shall be authorized to adopt its own rules of procedure.

IV. HOW THE BUREAU IS TO OPERATE

A. All contacts, negotiations and recommendations involving the placement of rabbis shall be directed by both congregations and rabbis solely through the Placement Bureau. The Commission is unanimously agreed that this is the crux of the problem of placement. Such a system must be exclusive, or it will prove to be useless. To permit exceptions would destroy the whole. Unless every rabbi and every congregation agree to abide by the same orderly and fair course of procedure, the rule will become nugatory, and the scrupulous will be penalized. Experience alone can demonstrate that this plan is feasible, and that it can be administered with equity. This Commission was instructed to set up not an advisory committee, without power, but a genuine plan for placement. To create no more than an advisory body without power would neither eliminate the ills of the present system nor, would it justify the energy or expense involved. Only a system of placement, consistently followed, providing for no exceptions to its rules, can be considered.

B. Recommendations of candidates for pulpits, to be made by the Placement Bureau to congregations, may be of either one or several men, depending upon circumstances and the request of congregations.

If multiple recommendations are decided upon, they are to be kept to a minimum. Each rabbi shall be given full, fair and equal consideration, before a selection is made.

C. Congregations shall have the right to indicate to the Bureau the kind of rabbi they believe best qualified to fill their pulpit. They may describe to the Bureau or its representative the various qualifications they have in mind. The Bureau shall give due consideration to such requirements as age, character, capacity, experience, etc.

D. Assistant or associate rabbis shall be recommended by the Bureau in accordance with the wish of congregations expressed to it.

E. Seniority or length of service in the rabbinate shall not be the sole criterion of selection. Only where all other factors and considerations are equal shall length of service in the rabbinate be the deciding factor.

F. Trial sermons are not the ideal or the fairest method of determining the fitness of candidates. We cite the language of the Code of Ethics, accepted by the CCAR in 1940: "Every rabbi should be judged by his complete record. ... The trial sermon method is neither adequate nor conclusive, and may even become undignified and detrimental to religious values." We conclude that the Placement Bureau should make every reasonable effort to discourage trial sermons. Under no circumstances shall their use be sanctioned as the sole or the principal criterion in the selection of a rabbi.

G. In default of such action by the rabbi, it shall be the responsibility of the Placement Bureau to decide when a congregation shall be advised that its rabbi intends to accept another position. The responsibility shall, however, rest upon the Bureau after so advising the rabbi in question, to insure proper notification to the congregation. It shall also require that no rabbi shall abandon a pulpit without giving his congregation reasonable notice, and sufficient opportunity to secure a successor.

H. The Bureau shall accumulate and keep such records as it may require. It shall itself decide the precise nature and extent of these records.

I. It will be wise to provide against the contingency in which a congregation believes that it has filled its pulpit, only to discover that the rabbi invited to serve them was unwilling to come. To obviate this condition it is suggested that the Bureau secure a definite commitment from the rabbi in question, stating that if elected he will serve. Such a commitment, obtained by or through the Bureau, is to be regarded as binding on both congregation and rabbi. If, having entered into such an arrangement, either party withdraws, sanctions may be imposed as outlined hereinafter.

V. SANCTIONS

A. Sanctions are distasteful. But we shall deceive ourselves if we believe that a placement plan will work without them. It is, there-

fore, our recommendation that the Placement Bureau be empowered to impose such sanctions as experience shall demonstrate to be needed. In every case such sanctions shall be defined and imposed with the utmost caution, lest the career of a rabbi or the reputation of a congregation be irreparably damaged.

B. We suggest the consideration of the following proposed sanctions, here listed in ascending order of severity. In passing, it should be noted that this proposal of a scale of penalties follows similar procedures long in practice by the medical and legal professions.

1. An official reprimand by the CCAR against an offending rabbi, or by the UAHC against a congregation which has refused to cooperate. *Cooperate in what?*
2. Refusal by members of the CCAR to visit or to speak before congregations that have not abided by the proper procedure.
3. Removal of an offending rabbi from all committees or commissions of the CCAR and/or the UAHC; similar removal of all representatives of an offending congregation from all committees or commissions of the UAHC.
4. Decision of the Placement Bureau to set aside for a specified time consideration of a rabbi who has not abided by the placement procedure.
5. Refusal of the Placement Bureau to deal further with particular congregational committees or officers who in its judgment have committed an offence; communication of this decision to the congregation, with the request that, if it wish, it appoint a different committee or a different set of officers to represent it in dealings with the Placement Bureau.
6. Withdrawal by the UAHC from an offending congregation of its services and assistance.
7. As a final and extreme penalty, to be invoked reluctantly, when all else has failed, expulsion of the rabbi from the CCAR, or of the congregation from the UAHC. It is to be hoped that such a step will never become necessary. Without this possibility, however, rabbis or congregations may feel that they can disregard lesser penalties or sanctions.

C. No sanctions shall be invoked except after a full and impartial hearing. When an alleged violation has come to the attention of the Placement Bureau, a preliminary confidential investigation shall be undertaken at once by a committee of the Bureau, consisting of not less than one rabbi and one layman. During the course of such an investigation, further contacts or negotiations by either rabbis or congregations shall be suspended. The investigating committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the Placement Bureau at the earliest possible moment. The Bureau as a whole shall then decide whether sanctions are to be invoked, and if so what sanctions.

D. A rabbi or congregation against whom sanctions have been decided upon, shall have the right to appeal to a competent, impartial and independent Committee on Appeal. We propose that such a Committee on Appeal shall consist of (1) the Chairman of the Board of the UAHC (or, if he cannot serve, a lay-deputy to be appointed by him); (2) the Chairman of the Board of the School (or, if he cannot serve, a lay-deputy to be appointed by him); (3) the three immediate past-presidents of the CCAR. Should any of these last named three be disqualified, or unable to serve, previous past-presidents of the CCAR shall be invited, starting with the most recent and proceeding toward those presiding earlier over the CCAR. Should the Placement Bureau decide upon the employment of sanctions, and an appeal be in the process of a hearing, the sanction shall be neither instituted nor announced, until the Committee on Appeal shall have rendered its decision, and advised the Placement Bureau of that decision.

E. In case the Placement Bureau decides upon disciplinary action and that recommendation is sustained by the Committee on Appeal, the Placement Bureau shall thereupon transmit the verdict and the record to the Executive Committee of the CCAR in the case of a rabbi or to the Executive Committee of the UAHC in the case of a congregation, with the request that the body in question implement the verdict arrived at upon the basis of the record. In all such cases the Placement Bureau shall simultaneously notify the offending party.

VI. CONCLUSION

We do not assert that the foregoing is a perfect plan. Your Commission is fully aware of its difficulties and defects. Even after discussion and decision by the CCAR and UAHC, it will not be possible to set up a system that shall have the guarantee of perfect operation. Among the difficulties and defects may be noted the contention that any scheme which involves judgment upon human beings by their fellows can never be wholly objective. Such an objection applies equally to the present usage, where there is no system.

A certain price must be paid for a placement plan. Even with most careful provision against hierarchical control, no system or plan is compatible with complete individual freedom. Order is to be gained at the price of a partial sacrifice of sovereignty. But we believe that the plan proposed is flexible, that it is not repressive, that it can be modified as experience is gained, that amendment will not be difficult.

With these reservations in mind we recommend strongly to the CCAR and UAHC the adoption of this plan, the setting up of the machinery provided for, proceeding from the period of debate to that of action. This entire matter has been discussed for at least eight years. Both CCAR and UAHC have indicated their acceptance of such a plan in principle. The time has come to translate the principle into practice.

* * * * *

MEMBERS OF JOINT COMMISSION ON PLACEMENT

Mr. Alfred A. Benesch

Rabbi Morton M. Berman

Mr. Aaron W. Davis

Rabbi Louis I. Egelson

Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath

Mr. Lee M. Friedman

Rabbi Nelson Glueck

Rabbi Abram Granison

Rabbi James G. Heller

Rabbi Bertram Korn

Mr. D. Arthur Magaziner

Rabbi Louis L. Mann

Mr. Albert F. Mecklenburger

Rabbi Julian Morgenstern

Mr. Robert Rosenbaum

Rabbi Jacob Rothschild

Rabbi Jacob P. Rudin

Rabbi Jacob Shankman

Judge Joseph G. Shapiro

Mr. Laurie T. Simonsky

Mr. Israel N. Thurman

Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn,
Chairman



Rabbi Max Maccoby,
Secretary

Document A

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of the
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and the
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4. Decision of the Placement Bureau to set aside for a specified time consideration of a rabbi who has not abided by the placement procedure.
5. Refusal of the Placement Bureau to deal further with particular congregational committees or officers who in its judgment have committed an offence; communication of this decision to the congregation, with the request that, if it wish, it appoint a different committee or a different set of officers to represent it in dealings with the Placement Bureau.
6. Withdrawal by the UAHC from an offending congregation of its services and assistance.
7. As a final and extreme penalty, to be invoked reluctantly, when all else has failed, expulsion of the rabbi from the CCAR, or of the congregation from the UAHC. It is to be hoped that such a step will never become necessary. Without this possibility, however, rabbis or congregations may feel that they can disregard lesser penalties or sanctions.

C. No sanctions shall be invoked except after a full and impartial hearing. When an alleged violation has come to the attention of the Placement Bureau, a preliminary confidential investigation shall be undertaken at once by a committee of the Bureau, consisting of not less than one rabbi and one layman. During the course of such an investigation, further contacts or negotiations by either rabbis or congregations shall be suspended. The investigating committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the Placement Bureau at the earliest possible moment. The Bureau as a whole shall then decide whether sanctions are to be invoked, and if so what sanctions.

D. A rabbi or congregation against whom sanctions have been decided upon, shall have the right to appeal to a competent, impartial and independent Committee on Appeal. We propose that such a Committee on Appeal shall consist of (1) the Chairman of the Board of the UAHC (or, if he cannot serve, a lay-deputy to be appointed by him); (2) the Chairman of the Board of the School (or, if he cannot serve, a lay-deputy to be appointed by him); (3) the three immediate past-presidents of the CCAR. Should any of these last named three be disqualified, or unable to serve, previous past-presidents of the CCAR shall be invited, starting with the most recent and proceeding toward those presiding earlier over the CCAR. Should the Placement Bureau decide upon the employment of sanctions, and an appeal be in the process of a hearing, the sanction shall be neither instituted nor announced, until the Committee on Appeal shall have rendered its decision, and advised the Placement Bureau of that decision.

E. In case the Placement Bureau decides upon disciplinary action and that recommendation is sustained by the Committee on Appeal, the Placement Bureau shall thereupon transmit the verdict and the record to the Executive Committee of the CCAR in the case of a rabbi or to the Executive Committee of the UAHC in the case of a congregation, with the request that the body in question implement the verdict arrived at upon the basis of the record. In all such cases the Placement Bureau shall simultaneously notify the offending party.

VI. CONCLUSION

We do not assert that the foregoing is a perfect plan. Your Commission is fully aware of its difficulties and defects. Even after discussion and decision by the CCAR and UAHC, it will not be possible to set up a system that shall have the guarantee of perfect operation. Among the difficulties and defects may be noted the contention that any scheme which involves judgment upon human beings by their fellows can never be wholly objective. Such an objection applies equally to the present usage, where there is no system.

A certain price must be paid for a placement plan. Even with most careful provision against hierarchical control, no system or plan is compatible with complete individual freedom. Order is to be gained at the price of a partial sacrifice of sovereignty. But we believe that the plan proposed is flexible, that it is not repressive, that it can be modified as experience is gained, that amendment will not be difficult.

With these reservations in mind we recommend strongly to the CCAR and UAHC the adoption of this plan, the setting up of the machinery provided for, proceeding from the period of debate to that of action. This entire matter has been discussed for at least eight years. Both CCAR and UAHC have indicated their acceptance of such a plan in principle. The time has come to translate the principle into practice.

* * * * *

MEMBERS OF JOINT COMMISSION ON PLACEMENT

Mr. Alfred A. Benesch

Rabbi Morton M. Berman

Mr. Aaron W. Davis

Rabbi Louis I. Egelson

Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath

Mr. Lee M. Friedman

Rabbi Nelson Glueck

Rabbi Abram Granison

Rabbi James G. Heller

Rabbi Bertram Korn

Mr. D. Arthur Magaziner

Rabbi Louis L. Mann

Mr. Albert F. Mecklenburger

Rabbi Julian Morgenstern

Mr. Robert Rosenbaum

Rabbi Jacob Rothschild

Rabbi Jacob P. Rudin

Rabbi Jacob Shankman

Judge Joseph G. Shapiro

Mr. Laurie T. Simonsky

Mr. Israel N. Thurman

Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn,
Chairman



Rabbi Max Maccoby,
Secretary

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

MERCHANTS BUILDING . CINCINNATI

1137

COPY SENT TO YOUR
RABBI

January 31, 1950

Dear Mr. President:

For a number of years, much serious thinking has been devoted to the evolving of a plan for rabbinic placement that would be acceptable both to congregations and to rabbis. The aim was to eliminate the chaotic condition in connection with pulpit placement. To that end, a commission was appointed, representing the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. This placement commission met about a half dozen times during the year and prepared a plan, a copy of which is attached hereto as Document A. The plan was submitted to the CCAR at its meeting at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in June, 1949. Suggestions were made at that meeting for modification of the plan. These modifications are embodied in Document B, attached hereto.

Additional explanatory material with reference to the plan was prepared by the Chairman of the commission, Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn. That material is appended hereto as Document C.

The plan was presented to the Executive Board of the UAHC at its meeting in Atlantic City on December 3-4, 1949, and was approved by them in principle, with the provision that the plan be submitted to the congregations affiliated with the UAHC, asking for any suggestions that they may have for modification of the plan.

Will you please be good enough to consider this plan at a board meeting of your congregation and let me have any suggestions that you may have for changes, within sixty days. The suggestions coming from the congregations will then be collated and transmitted to the commission on placement for their consideration.

The plan, if and when modified, will then be submitted to the Executive Board of the UAHC at its next meeting, as well as to the other organizations mentioned above, and subsequently to the General Assembly of the UAHC to be held in Cleveland, Ohio, November 12-15, 1950.

I shall look forward to hearing from you with reference to this plan no later than April 1.

With kind greetings, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Louis I. Egelson

Louis I. Egelson
Administrative Secretary

LE:jbm

February 8, 1950

Mr. Sidney N. Weitz
Leader Building
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Sidney:

You have probably received a copy of the report of the Joint Placement Commission. You may be interested in the letter which I sent this morning to the Secretary of the Union, Rabbi Magelson.

With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er
Enc.

February 8, 1950

Dr. Solomon By Freehof
4915 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh 13, Pa.

My dear Sol:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter which I sent this morning to Rabbi Egelson. It is self-explanatory. Failure to include a statement of the "other side" seems to suggest an attempt to stampede the congregations of the Union into support of this plan.

I read your comments on the plan made at Bretton Woods. I am fully in agreement with you. I regard the plan as unrealistic and unwise - one which will create greater evils than those which it presumes to correct.

As ever yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er
Enc.

February 8, 1950

Mr. Daniel Jeremy Silver
Hebrew Union College
Cincinnati 20, Ohio

My dear Daniel:

I received your letter and the enclosed report of the Joint Placement Commission. I agree with you fully, but I would not be too greatly concerned. This project is far from approval and enactment. It is altogether unrealistic, unworkable and in my judgment, very unwise.

I am greatly displeased with the fact that this plan was sent to the congregations of the Union accompanied by the covering statement of Rabbi Gittelsohn, giving the arguments for it, and that no statement giving the arguments against it was likewise included with the material. On a matter so vital, when the judgments of the Boards of congregations throughout the country are being solicited, all the relevant arguments pro and con should have been placed before them. As it looks from appearances, your reaction is a very valid one. It seems to be an attempt to pressure and stampede the congregations into the acceptance of this plan. I am writing today to Rabbi Egelson about this very matter.

With all good wishes; I remain

As ever yours,

AHS:er

copy of Dr. Freehof's letter
for Dr. Silver's file.

February 10, 1950

Rabbi Louis I. Egelson
34 West 6th Street
Cincinnati 2, Ohio

Dear Louis:

I just received a copy of the letter which Dr. Silver sent you in reference to the Joint Placement Plan. I agree with him absolutely. You know that I opposed this plan on the floor of the Conference at Bretton Woods, although the vote showed that I was in a small minority. Nevertheless, there is no question; it would do greater justice to the situation if arguments on the other side were included in the letter to the boards. Then even if the plan were adopted, the evils feared by the opponents might be considered and perhaps somewhat obviated.

As a matter of fact, before this subject is discussed by the Board of Rodef Shalom Congregation, I expect to write them a letter mentioning the reasons for my opposition to it. I consider it only just to do so. Unfortunately this will put me in a position where, before our Board, I will be opposing a suggestion of the Union. But this ought not to be so. The Union itself should present both sides of the question.

Let me hear from you.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Sol

SBF/rms

National Terminals Corporation

1200 WEST NINTH STREET

Cleveland 13, Ohio

February 23, 1950.

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

Dear Rabbi Silver,

I am attaching a copy of letter together with
a list of Committee members appointed by Mr.
Weitz. I checked with your Secretary and she
advised the date as indicated in the notice
meets with your approval.



Very truly yours,

ABE:cks
encl.

COPY

NATIONAL TERMINALS CORP.

**1200 W. 9TH STREET
CLEVELAND 13, OHIO**

February 23, 1950.

**Mr. Charles Ascherman
3270 Warrensville Center Rd.
Cleveland 22, Ohio**

Dear Mr. Ascherman,

Mr. Sidney Weitz, President of The Temple, has appointed me Chairman and you as a member of the Committee for securing contributions in support of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion.

Rabbi Silver has consented to give us a briefing on the needs at a meeting in The Temple Parlor at 8:15 Tuesday evening, February 28. I hope all members will be present. Will you kindly indicate on the self-addressed enclosed post card if you will attend?

Very truly yours,

**A. B. Efroymson
Committee Chairman**

**ABE:cks
encl.**

Same letter sent to:

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Leonard L. Broida, | 3212 Redwood Ave., | Cleveland 18, O. |
| Louis Balantzow, | 3450 Norwood Rd., | Cleveland 22, O. |
| Lester H. Colbert | 2691 W. Scarborough Rd., | Cleveland 6, O. |
| Jerome N. Curtis | 3564 Ingleside Rd., | Cleveland 22, O. |
| Alfred A. Benesch, | 1106 Citizens Bldg. | Cleveland 14, O. |
| Sam M. Friedman, | 2964 Courtland Blvd., | Cleveland 22, O. |
| E. H. Friedheim, | 2925 Eaton Rd., | Cleveland 22, O. |
| Harry Gellin, | 3145 Yorkshire Rd., | Cleveland 18, O. |
| Bert J. Krohngold, | 13600 Shaker Blvd., | Cleveland 20, O. |
| William M. Neye, | 3653 Lynfield Rd., | Cleveland 22, O. |
| A. M. Luntz | 2821 Drummond Rd. | Cleveland 20, O. |
| Sidney N. Weitz | 940 Leader Bldg. | Cleveland 14, O. |

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

COMMISSION ON

Information about Judaism

Joint Auspices: UAHC and Central Conference of American Rabbis

CHAIRMAN: RABBI HARRY W. ETTelson, *Memphis*
VICE-CHAIRMAN: RABBI EDGAR F. MAGNIN, *Los Angeles*
SECRETARY: RABBI LOUIS I. EGELSON, *Cincinnati*

MERCHANTS BUILDING · CINCINNATI 2, OHIO

Members of the Commission

| | |
|--|--|
| Gilbert S. Ades, <i>Louisville</i> | Isaac Kuhn, <i>Champaign</i> |
| Rabbi Israel Bettan, <i>Cincinnati</i> | Dr. Louis Levy, <i>Memphis</i> |
| Rabbi Baruch Braunstein, <i>Allentown</i> | Rabbi David W. Pearlman, <i>Stamford</i> |
| Jacob D. Dresner, <i>New Orleans</i> | Rabbi H. Goren Perelmutter, <i>Johnstown</i> |
| Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath, <i>Cincinnati</i> | Gilbert Sanders, <i>Trinidad</i> |
| Rabbi Abraham Feinstein, <i>Chattanooga</i> | Leonard N. Simons, <i>Detroit</i> |
| Rabbi Benjamin Friedman, <i>Syracuse</i> | Rabbi Sidney S. Tedesche, <i>Brooklyn</i> |
| Rabbi Joseph I. Gorfinkle, <i>Mt. Vernon</i> | David L. Ullman, <i>Philadelphia</i> |
| Rabbi Milton L. Grafman, <i>Birmingham</i> | Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein, <i>Chicago</i> |
| Robert I. Wishnick, <i>New York</i> | |

16

501 University Ave.
Syracuse 10, N. Y.
February 24, 1950

Rabbi Abba H. Silver
19810 Shaker Blvd.
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Colleague:

Our Committee on Holiday Sermon Pamphlet would very much like to have you contribute a sermon for Yom Kippur Morning for the forthcoming pamphlet.

Since this year is the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Founding of the Hebrew Union College, we are asking some of our outstanding men in the rabbinate, who have, at the same time, acquired the serenity of years, to contribute to this pamphlet.

I trust that I may have your acceptance. In order that we may have the pamphlet out as early as possible this year, I would appreciate it if I could have your sermon by April 1.

I wish to call attention to the fact that the Holiday Sermon Pamphlet is intended primarily for congregations that are without religious leaders.

With kind greetings and trusting to receive your acceptance, I am

Very sincerely yours,

בן ציון / פ/פ

Benjamin

Benjamin Friedman, Chairman
Committee on Holiday Sermon Pamphlet

BF:MR

[February, 1950]

FOOTNOTES TO REPORT OF JOINT PLACEMENT COMMISSION

(The following proposed changes in the Report of the Joint Placement Commission, suggested and approved by the Central Conference of American Rabbis in June, 1949, are being sent to you for your guidance and consideration in discussion of the Plan. Any similar comments made by your Board will be considered by the Joint Placement Commission at its meeting in February, 1950.)

(1) In Re Section III, A.

Although no specific wording was suggested for this section, the Conference urged that the principle of rotation in office by the members of the Placement Bureau be considered. Your Placement Commission would add to that the hope that, insofar as may be possible, the principles of both rotation and continuity ought to be considered. The Placement Commission voted that a statement should be included in the Report that each group represented in the Bureau should determine its own method of appointment and that the final draft of the Plan include a set term for which representatives are to be appointed to the Bureau.

(2) In Re Section III, A, 3.

The Conference proposed, and your Commission approves, the addition of some such paragraph as the following at this point:

3. Only those rabbis who would undertake not to change pulpits for the period of their appointment to the Bureau should be so appointed.

(3) In Re Section III, C.

For the present no mention be made of the location of the Bureau. The Conference suggested the elimination of this paragraph.

(4) In Re Section III, D.

There is a redundancy here which is to be eliminated by striking out the phrase "and all graduates of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion."

(5) In Re Section IV, B.

The Conference noted a possible inconsistency between the final sentence of this paragraph and Section II, paragraphs 4 and 5 of the CODE OF ETHICS adopted by the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1940, particularly the hope expressed there "that the congregation make an earnest effort to reach a decision on each man before inviting another."

Your Commission was directed, insofar as may be possible, to work out a reconciliation between these apparently conflicting objectives. The specific manner of affording equal treatment to all

candidates within the framework of the abovementioned CODE OF ETHICS shall be determined by the Placement Bureau itself.

(6) In Re Section IV, E.

The wording of this paragraph is to be changed to read as follows:

E. It shall be the purpose of the Placement Bureau to provide advancement for those who by their accomplishment and experience have merited such promotion, it being understood, however, that seniority alone cannot be the sole criterion.

(7) In Re Section IV, G.

This paragraph is to read as follows:

G. A rabbi who intends to leave his pulpit should give adequate notice of that intention to his congregation. By the same token, a congregation desiring to terminate its relationship with a rabbi must give him adequate and proper notice. In default of such action by the rabbi, it shall be the responsibility of the Placement Bureau to decide when a congregation shall be advised that its rabbi intends to sever his connection with the congregation. The responsibility shall, however, rest upon the Bureau after so advising the rabbi in question, to insure proper notification to the congregation. It shall also require that no rabbi shall abandon a pulpit without giving his congregation reasonable notice and sufficient opportunity to secure a successor.

(8) In Re Section V, A.

This paragraph is to read as follows:

A. Sanctions are distasteful. It is our earnest hope that it may never become necessary to invoke them. Should a situation ever arise, however, which, in the judgment of the Placement Bureau, demands the imposition of sanctions, the Bureau shall be empowered to impose such sanctions as experience shall demonstrate to be needed. In every case such sanctions shall be defined and imposed with the utmost caution, lest the career of a rabbi or the reputation of a congregation be irreparably damaged.

(9) In general, the Conference requests that, wherever possible or necessary, the CODE OF ETHICS of the CCAR be coordinated with the provisions of the Placement Plan.

[February 1950]

Document B

FOOTNOTES TO REPORT OF JOINT PLACEMENT COMMISSION

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Your Commission was directed, insofar as may be possible, to work out a reconciliation between these apparently conflicting objectives. The specific manner of affording equal treatment to all

candidates within the framework of the abovementioned CODE OF ETHICS shall be determined by the Placement Bureau itself.

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The wording of this paragraph is to be changed to read as follows:

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(9) In general, the Conference requests that, wherever possible or necessary, the CODE OF ETHICS of the CCAR be coordinated with the provisions of the Placement Plan.

March 2, 1950

Dr. Solomon B. Freehof
4915 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh 13, Pa.

My dear Sol:

I do not know whether you have received a copy of the enclosed. I think Rabbi Gittelson's letter begs the point. Congregations were asked to comment on a placement plan, make suggestions and given all the reasons for having such a plan without being informed of the objections which have been raised, not to this or that item in the proposed plan, but to the whole idea of a placement arrangement. In view of the position taken by Gittelson - and I do not see why he should be the deciding voice in the matter - do you not think that it would be advisable to get up a statement signed by a number of rabbis and circulate it to the congregations ourselves? To wait until the Biennial Convention has acted upon it, which seems to be the present plan of the proponents of the project, is in my judgment very unwise.

I plan to write to Rabbi Egelson and tell him that the Gittelson letter is entirely unsatisfactory.

As ever yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CONCORD
UNIVERSITY AVENUE & MADISON STREET

DAVID M. HOLSTEIN, *Honorary President*
H. HIRAM WEISBERG, *President*
ALEXANDER E. HOLSTEIN, *Vice-President*

BENJAMIN FRIEDMAN, *Rabbi*

IVES JACOBS, *Treasurer*
TRACY H. FERGUSON, *Secretary*
ALBERT ORENSTEIN, *Assistant Secretary*

SYRACUSE 10, N. Y.

March 24, 1950.

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
19810 Shaker Blvd.
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Abba:

I hope you received my previous letter inviting you to contribute a sermon for Yom Kippur morning to be included in our 1950 Holiday Sermon Pamphlet. It was a letter in the name of the entire committee sent to you about three weeks ago. We look forward to including your Yom Kippur morning sermon in our pamphlet.

Grace and my grandson have been in Syracuse for the past ten days. The other day I took Jimmy to see my Temple and asked him, "who is the Rabbi here". His answer was "Rabbi Silver". He certainly is loyal.

With best wishes to you and to Virginia from all of us at home;

As ever,

Ben

Benjamin Friedman

BF:fs

March 27, 1950

Rabbi Benjamin Friedman
Temple Society of Concord
University Ave. & Madison St.
Syracuse 10, New York

My dear Ben:

Thank you for your letter of March 24th. I also received your earlier letter but I have been away from the city and my correspondence has lagged.

I shall be very happy to send you a sermon for inclusion in the 1950 Holiday Sermon Pamphlet for Yom Kippur morning. I shall try to get to work on it within this coming week.

With all good wishes to you and yours in which Virginia joins me, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

[March 1950?]

Document C

Explanatory Material
on the
PLACEMENT PLAN
by

RABBI ROLAND B. GITTELSOHN, Chairman
Joint Placement Commission
UAHC and CCAR

Anyone who has ever served his congregation as a member of a committee charged with the responsibility of selecting a new rabbi will immediately agree that no task requires a greater degree of wisdom, patience and tact. Perhaps the only inter-personal relationship which can compare to that between rabbi and congregation is the marriage bond. In both cases, complete compatibility between partners is essential. In both cases, therefore, a wise and proper choice of partner is indispensable for future happiness. The alternative is apt to be a rather miserable measure of unhappiness.

For many years now the most thoughtful rabbis and laymen alike in congregations served by the Union have agreed that this sacred relationship between them should not be left to chance. Up to the present time we have had neither system nor control in the filling of our Liberal pulpits. The consequence has too often been an unseemly and improper chaos. The problem clearly before us is to devise a plan of placement which will eliminate such chaos, yet which will infringe to a bare minimum on the autonomy of both congregations and rabbis.

Your Joint Placement Commission confidently believes that it is on the right road toward such a system. The plan which we have officially reported, which has already been accepted by the Central Conference of American Rabbis and is now under consideration by the congregations of the Union, provides for a Placement Bureau consisting of these major and equal partners:

1. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations
2. The Central Conference of American Rabbis
3. The Hebrew Union College -- Jewish Institute of Religion

Each of these participating agencies is to be represented on the Bureau by four delegates of its own choosing; to safeguard the interests of laymen, the plan specifically stipulates that in the case of the Union and the College-Institute, not less than two representatives of each must be laymen. There is also provision for a full-time Director of Placement, either rabbi or layman, who is to be selected by the Bureau after it has been established.

How will this Bureau operate? To begin with, all contacts and negotiations between congregations and rabbis concerning pulpit placement will be channelled through the Bureau. Congregations will be expected to direct inquiries toward rabbis and rabbis to make contact with congregations only through the medium of the Bureau. That this should eliminate a great deal of aggressive and competitive tactic that has been present on both sides of the equation in the past should be obvious.

No one -- certainly no member of the Placement Commission, which has labored diligently over this plan for more than a year -- would pretend that perfection is possible. Both rabbis and laymen will accept whatever plan is finally approved not without reservations and worries. The purpose of this brief article is to shed light on the legitimate reservations which will at once occur to every experienced layman.

Such as: - - -

Question: Will a Placement Bureau Deny the Congregation Its Right to Select the Rabbi It Wants?

Answer:-- no. Our proposed plan clearly specifies that no congregation can ever be forced to accept a rabbi it does not desire, and by the same token no rabbi is ever to be assigned to a congregation which he does not wish to serve. In the very nature of the case, however, a competent Placement Bureau will know more about both rabbis and congregations than any one individual -- however skilled and wise -- could possibly have at his fingertips. Therefore, it will be in strategic position to recommend for each inquiring congregation the rabbi or rabbis best suited for its particular pulpit. Note, please, the phrase, "rabbi or rabbis." The plan specifically provides that the Bureau may make either single or multiple recommendations, dependent upon the circumstances in each case. But a congregation is never obliged to accept the recommendation or recommendations of the Bureau! If, after duly considering the man or men proposed, it does not desire to engage any of them, it can return to the Bureau with a request for still further candidates. It will remain the right of the congregation itself to choose its rabbi and the right of the rabbi himself to select his congregation. Only if the Bureau knows a strongly compelling reason why a particular rabbi is not properly qualified for the pulpit in question or does not have a moral right at that particular moment to accept that pulpit will it deny a congregation the right of contacting a specific choice.

Question: Will the Placement Bureau Increase the Congregation's Chance of Securing the Best Available Rabbi for its Pulpit?

Answer:-- yes. Too often with our present total lack of system and order even the larger pulpits are filled primarily through oratorical contests of one kind or another. Rabbis know -- and it is time for congregations to be informed in their own best interests -- that some of the finest, most capable and consecrated men in the Liberal rabbinate are not even considered for prominent positions because they are quiet, modest men who have not caught the public eye. A Placement Bureau would have complete information on all rabbis. It would therefore be able and anxious to give each congregation a total picture of the man being considered, - not just his eloquence and prominence, but a complete resume of all the qualities and characteristics which combine in the making of the proper rabbi for their pulpit. Perhaps it would not be too far afield to add that such a Bureau might also very considerably raise our standards of rabbinic practice. So long as rabbis ^{know} that only their public appearances and activities on a national level are apt to call them to the attention of other and larger congregations for possible advancement later, they cannot well be blamed for seeking such opportunities. When the conscientious rabbi knows that a properly-constituted and fairly-operated Bureau will judge him on his record in his own present pulpit, he will have added incentive to put forth his utmost in rabbinic ability.

Question: Will the Placement Bureau Help our Congregations in Any Other Way?

Answer:-- Most assuredly yes! For one thing, it ought to reduce the incidence of what one observer has called "rabbinic leap-frogging." We rabbis recognize, no less than do you laymen, the danger and inequity of colleagues who have but recently

come to a new pulpit leaving for larger if not greener pastures before the passing of a reasonable period of time. Without some kind of system, there is nothing we can do about such conduct except to deplore it. Only a Placement Bureau such as that being envisaged in this plan will be able to say to an individual rabbi: "You have but recently come to your present congregation. You owe them more than a year or two of your leadership and ability. Until you have decently discharged your present obligation, we cannot in good conscience or faith recommend you to another group." Our plan will thus protect the congregation against this current danger.

There is another serious congregational problem too which can be largely if not entirely eliminated through this kind of plan. More than one congregation in recent years has approached a rabbi to interest him in the pulpit and has carried its negotiations with him up to the very point of fulfillment where terms were accepted and the rabbi elected,-- only to discover after such election that pressure brought to bear by the man's present congregation had induced him to change his mind. Sometimes in such situations a rabbi who was altogether innocent of any such intention has been unfairly accused of "playing off" one congregation against another. Such confusion can benefit neither the congregation nor its religious leader. We have provided, therefore, that upon request of a congregation which has decided upon its choice of rabbi, the Bureau may secure a commitment from that rabbi in advance that upon election he will definitely consent to serve.

Question: Aren't the Sanctions Provided in This Placement Plan a Reflection on the Integrity of Both Rabbis and Congregations?

Answer:-- We do not think so. They were certainly not intended as such, and ought not to be so interpreted. Rabbis and congregants alike are human beings. Human beings are not perfect. If they were, laws and sanctions of all kinds would not be needed. Many laymen and rabbis involved in pulpit placement today do the wrong thing not because they lack ethics and good taste, but either because they have never been told the right procedure or because with no system at all in operation they feel they must adopt the tactics used by others in order to succeed. A system of placement is no more a reflection on the integrity of rabbis and laymen than a system of law is a reflection on the character of the vast majority of a nation's citizens. We need a traffic bureau, so to speak, which will establish the rules of procedure and then administer such rules for the benefit of all.

Question: Would It not be Wise to Begin With a Looser Plan or Perhaps Just a Voluntary Code of Ethics, To be Followed Only By Those who Wish to?

Answer:-- Definitely not! We who have served on the Placement Commission are frank to say that in our judgment a placement plan must be on the basis of "all or none." To adopt a purely voluntary plan, to be followed only by those who will themselves agree to it, would be merely to countenance and perhaps even compound our present confusion. It would mean to penalize the very rabbis and congregations who would most scrupulously abide by the code in question. Rabbis and congregations can reasonably be expected to make whatever sacrifices may be called for by a plan only if they have the positive assurance that all others will be bound by the same rules and that all, therefore, will operate on a basis of equality. This is obviously the real meaning of democracy, be it political or congregational. We do not wait for unanimity in our local or federal governments before accepting a given law. We agree that whatever legislation the majority believes to be necessary and desir-

able should be accepted and observed by all. Exactly the same principle is involved here. Assuming the acceptance of such a plan as this by a clear majority of all the Union's congregations, to be fully effective it must then become the operative procedure for all congregations.

Question: Would Congregations not Have to Relinquish Some of Their Sovereignty To Accept a Placement Plan?

*not
call*

Answer: -- It would be both foolish and dishonest to deny that this is so. There is a price to be paid whenever chaos is fashioned into order. The price here, as in all such cases, is that each of the three major participants would have to surrender part of its own precious autonomy for the sake of gaining a greater good and a larger freedom for all. Congregations would do well to realize that in point of actual fact the rabbis are being asked to surrender even more than they. To the individual rabbi a given pulpit opportunity can well shape the remainder of his life. He does not lightly contemplate, therefore, giving over to a Bureau the decisions which may spell for him the difference between professional success and failure, between personal fulfillment and frustration. Yet the rabbis of the Conference are so thoroughly convinced that the alternative is very much worse, that in June 1949, at Bretton Woods, they overwhelmingly voted approval of the plan now being considered by the Union.

There is one further word to be spoken. We have referred here to three participating agencies:-- the Union, the Conference, and the College-Institute. There is another interested party more important than any of these because it includes all of them together and more. That other party is the total welfare and future of Liberal Judaism in America. We cannot afford the continuation of a chaos which reflects damage on the cause of Judaism. We have an inescapable obligation to effect at once whatever changes may be needed to restore dignity and confidence to the sacred relationship between Liberal congregations and rabbis. In the long-run, whatever diminishes such confidence will be bad for the cause all of us cherish; whatever increases it will be good for all of us individually and for the whole which is greater than any of its parts.

[March 1950?]

Document C

Explanatory Material
on the
PLACEMENT PLAN
by
RABBI ROLAND B. GITTELSOHN, Chairman
Joint Placement Commission
UAHC and CCAR

Anyone who has ever served his congregation as a member of a committee charged with the responsibility of selecting a new rabbi will immediately agree that no task requires a greater degree of wisdom, patience and tact. Perhaps the only inter-personal relationship which can compare to that between rabbi and congregation is the marriage bond. In both cases, complete compatibility between partners is essential. In both cases, therefore, a wise and proper choice of partner is indispensable for future happiness. The alternative is apt to be a rather miserable measure of unhappiness.

For many years now the most thoughtful rabbis and laymen alike in congregations served by the Union have agreed that this sacred relationship between them should not be left to chance. Up to the present time we have had neither system nor control in the filling of our Liberal pulpits. The consequence has too often been an unseemly and improper chaos. The problem clearly before us is to devise a plan of placement which will eliminate such chaos, yet which will infringe to a bare minimum on the autonomy of both congregations and rabbis.

Your Joint Placement Commission confidently believes that it is on the right road toward such a system. The plan which we have officially reported, which has already been accepted by the Central Conference of American Rabbis and is now under consideration by the congregations of the Union, provides for a Placement Bureau consisting of these major and equal partners:

1. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations
2. The Central Conference of American Rabbis
3. The Hebrew Union College -- Jewish Institute of Religion

Each of these participating agencies is to be represented on the Bureau by four delegates of its own choosing; to safeguard the interests of laymen, the plan specifically stipulates that in the case of the Union and the College-Institute, not less than two representatives of each must be laymen. There is also provision for a full-time Director of Placement, either rabbi or layman, who is to be selected by the Bureau after it has been established.

How will this Bureau operate? To begin with, all contacts and negotiations between congregations and rabbis concerning pulpit placement will be channelled through the Bureau. Congregations will be expected to direct inquiries toward rabbis and rabbis to make contact with congregations only through the medium of the Bureau. That this should eliminate a great deal of aggressive and competitive tactic that has been present on both sides of the equation in the past should be obvious.

No one -- certainly no member of the Placement Commission, which has labored diligently over this plan for more than a year -- would pretend that perfection is possible. Both rabbis and laymen will accept whatever plan is finally approved not without reservations and worries. The purpose of this brief article is to shed light on the legitimate reservations which will at once occur to every experienced layman.

Such as: - - -

Question: Will a Placement Bureau Deny the Congregation Its Right to Select the Rabbi It Wants?

Answer:-- no. Our proposed plan clearly specifies that no congregation can ever be forced to accept a rabbi it does not desire, and by the same token no rabbi is ever to be assigned to a congregation which he does not wish to serve. In the very nature of the case, however, a competent Placement Bureau will know more about both rabbis and congregations than any one individual -- however skilled and wise -- could possibly have at his fingertips. Therefore, it will be in strategic position to recommend for each inquiring congregation the rabbi or rabbis best suited for its particular pulpit. Note, please, the phrase, "rabbi or rabbis." The plan specifically provides that the Bureau may make either single or multiple recommendations, dependent upon the circumstances in each case. But a congregation is never obliged to accept the recommendation or recommendations of the Bureau! If, after duly considering the man or men proposed, it does not desire to engage any of them, it can return to the Bureau with a request for still further candidates. It will remain the right of the congregation itself to choose its rabbi and the right of the rabbi himself to select his congregation. Only if the Bureau knows a strongly compelling reason why a particular rabbi is not properly qualified for the pulpit in question or does not have a moral right at that particular moment to accept that pulpit will it deny a congregation the right of contacting a specific choice.

Question: Will the Placement Bureau Increase the Congregation's Chance of Securing the Best Available Rabbi for its Pulpit?

Answer:-- yes. Too often with our present total lack of system and order even the larger pulpits are filled primarily through oratorical contests of one kind or another. Rabbis know -- and it is time for congregations to be informed in their own best interests -- that some of the finest, most capable and consecrated men in the Liberal rabbinate are not even considered for prominent positions because they are quiet, modest men who have not caught the public eye. A Placement Bureau would have complete information on all rabbis. It would therefore be able and anxious to give each congregation a total picture of the man being considered, - not just his eloquence and prominence, but a complete resumé of all the qualities and characteristics which combine in the making of the proper rabbi for their pulpit. Perhaps it would not be too far afield to add that such a Bureau might also very considerably raise our standards of rabbinic practice. So long as rabbis ^{know} that only their public appearances and activities on a national level are apt to call them to the attention of other and larger congregations for possible advancement later, they cannot well be blamed for seeking such opportunities. When the conscientious rabbi knows that a properly-constituted and fairly-operated Bureau will judge him on his record in his own present pulpit, he will have added incentive to put forth his utmost in rabbinic ability.

Question: Will the Placement Bureau Help our Congregations in Any Other Way?

Answer:-- Most assuredly yes! For one thing, it ought to reduce the incidence of what one observer has called "rabbinic leap-frogging." We rabbis recognize, no less than do you laymen, the danger and inequity of colleagues who have but recently

come to a new pulpit leaving for larger if not greener pastures before the passing of a reasonable period of time. Without some kind of system, there is nothing we can do about such conduct except to deplore it. Only a Placement Bureau such as that being envisaged in this plan will be able to say to an individual rabbi: "You have but recently come to your present congregation. You owe them more than a year or two of your leadership and ability. Until you have decently discharged your present obligation, we cannot in good conscience or faith recommend you to another group." Our plan will thus protect the congregation against this current danger.

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able should be accepted and observed by all. Exactly the same principle is involved here. Assuming the acceptance of such a plan as this by a clear majority of all the Union's congregations, to be fully effective it must then become the operative procedure for all congregations.

Question: Would Congregations not Have to Relinquish Some of Their Sovereignty To Accept a Placement Plan?

Answer: -- It would be both foolish and dishonest to deny that this is so. There is a price to be paid whenever chaos is fashioned into order. The price here, as in all such cases, is that each of the three major participants would have to surrender part of its own precious autonomy for the sake of gaining a greater good and a larger freedom for all. Congregations would do well to realize that in point of actual fact the rabbis are being asked to surrender even more than they. To the individual rabbi a given pulpit opportunity can well shape the remainder of his life. He does not lightly contemplate, therefore, giving over to a Bureau the decisions which may spell for him the difference between professional success and failure, between personal fulfillment and frustration. Yet the rabbis of the Conference are so thoroughly convinced that the alternative is very much worse, that in June 1949, at Bretton Woods, they overwhelmingly voted approval of the plan now being considered by the Union.

There is one further word to be spoken. We have referred here to three participating agencies:-- the Union, the Conference, and the College-Institute. There is another interested party more important than any of these because it includes all of them together and more. That other party is the total welfare and future of Liberal Judaism in America. We cannot afford the continuation of a chaos which reflects damage on the cause of Judaism. We have an inescapable obligation to effect at once whatever changes may be needed to restore dignity and confidence to the sacred relationship between Liberal congregations and rabbis. In the long-run, whatever diminishes such confidence will be bad for the cause all of us cherish; whatever increases it will be good for all of us individually and for the whole which is greater than any of its parts.

[March 1950?]

The proposed plan for a Placement Commission is undesirable from nearly every point of view. It is a radical and unwarranted departure from the tradition of synagogue organization and autonomy, and is an impairment of the independent status of the Rabbi. Although the plan presumes to obviate certain difficulties which have arisen in the matter of engaging rabbis and securing pulpits, it will create even more serious difficulties both for the congregations and the rabbis; in fact, it may do irreparable hurt to congregational life and to the American rabbinate.

The Placement Commission proposes a complete control over Rabbi and congregation in the matter of pulpit placement. No matter how much the statement of the plan may be softened in its phraseology, the control which it proposes is a complete one. If the plan is adopted, no rabbi will be able to accept a congregation except through the Placement Commission, and no congregation will be able to accept a rabbi except through the Placement Commission. Of course, neither the Rabbi nor the congregation need accept the first or the second offer of the Commission, but after refusing once or twice the Rabbi or the congregation will simply have to do without pulpit or Rabbi. No pulpit will be obtained and no Rabbi will be accepted except through the Commission. This is the core of the proposal; and anticipating beforehand the inevitable incidents of non-compliance with it, the plan proposes strict sanctions and penalties in the hope of enforcing a basically unworkable plan.

The principal argument in favor of such a revolutionary step in American congregational life and in the rabbinate is the fact that from time to time seeming injustice is done by congregations in the selection of rabbis; i.e., that men of lesser ability or experience are given preference over more able and better equipped men. Furthermore, an undignified situation develops when many rabbis offer themselves as candidates for an available pulpit. While such incidents of unfairness and undignified conduct undoubtedly occur, it does not follow that under the new plan such injustice will be obviated or that dissatisfaction will not be as wide-spread with the recommendations of Placement Commission as with the independent selection of a congregation. There is no guarantee that "undignified" pressures will not be resorted to on

the part of applicants for pulpits which will be directed towards the Placement Commission.

There is much discontent in the Methodist Church where ministers are assigned, and in those churches in which the Bishop makes the assignment. Injustice is not absent from any plan which is executed by fallible human beings.

The proposed new plan which is hostile to the very genius of the autonomous synagogue and the independent rabbi will inevitably tend to suppress the career of young and promising men. A Commission such as is proposed is bound to give undue weight in its considerations to seniority and length of service. Younger men will be told to "wait their turn". No such Commission will have the courage to appoint a promising man "out of turn" without invoking the same wide-spread criticism which is invoked today when a congregation prefers a younger man. A congregation acting independently may occasionally make a bold decision of this kind, but a Commission cannot.

No profession would dream of constricting itself within such a framework. Colleges and universities, professional schools of all kinds, art institutions, not to speak of business management would regard such a scheme as abhorrent and as distinctly harmful to the progress of their professions and colleges. Decidedly, they insist upon a maximum of freedom and flexibility, in selecting their key people. Certainly the rabbinate and the congregations ought not to stultify themselves by submitting to what must, in the final analysis, come to be a mechanical system of appointment and advancement by seniority. Young men of unusual ability who would be discouraged from entering other professions where such a procedure prevailed, would certainly be discouraged from entering the rabbinate.

The present informal method undoubtedly encourages at times unseemly competition and intervention on the part of individuals whenever there is a congregational vacancy, but the proposed new method would be infinitely worse. All the pressuring and intervention will be directed against half a dozen men who will have the fate of the rabbinate and the congregations in their hands. The pressure on these men will be contin-

uous, and their decisions will in all probability meet with as little general satisfaction on the part of those whom the Commission will fail to recommend as is the case today.

Under the plan there will be a Commission which will be increasingly entrenched with growing power over Rabbi and congregation. The Commission will gradually shake down and come under the control of one or two of its members. Perhaps the executive director of the Commission, because he is the permanent member while the term of offices of the other members may be temporary, will become the actual controlling force in the Commission, and therefore, in the congregational life of American Jewry and of its rabbinate. The whole tone of the rabbinate will change. A dictatorship which nobody wants, neither the proponents nor opponents of the Placement Plan, may develop which would be disastrous to the freedom and independence of American Judaism. Whatever little benefit the plan might bring is surely outweighed by the danger which it entails.

Some years ago a Code of Rabbinic and Congregational Ethics was adopted by the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. It is in the direction of urging upon rabbi and congregation full and loyal adherence to the sound principles enunciated there that the prospect of any improvement in the unsatisfactory condition lies, not in the desperate experiment such as is contemplated in the proposed new plan which is both inoperative and alien to the spirit of the synagogue and the rabbinate.

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

April 3, 1950

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

Dear Abba,

Below are the notes that I wrote out. Use them
in connection with your statement in any way you wish.

As ever,

Sol

SBF/rms



The Placement Committee proposes a complete control over rabbi and congregation in the matter of pulpit placement. No matter how much the statement of the plan may be softened the control which it proposes is a complete one. If the plan is adopted, no rabbi will be able to accept a congregation except through the Placement Commission and no congregation will be able to select a rabbi except through the Commission. Of course, neither the rabbi nor the congregation need accept the first or the second offer of the Commission (of a pulpit or rabbi respectively). But after refusing once or twice the rabbi or the congregation will simply have to do without (pulpit or rabbi). No pulpit will be obtained, no rabbi selected except through the Commission. This is the heart of the proposal. And to enforce it strict penalties are to be used.

451
Such a system of absolute control over rabbi and congregation will never be accepted unless rabbi and congregation are first convinced that the present evils will be greatly diminished under the new plan and no serious additional evils incurred.

As for present evils, they are considerable. Injustice is frequently done in the selection of rabbis. But there is no question that any new plan will likewise fall into injustice.

Dr. Silver
Page 2
April 3, 1950

There is plenty of discontent in the Methodist Church where ministers are assigned or in those churches in which the Bishop makes the assignment. Injustice is not a unique difficulty to one plan or another executed by fallible human beings.

The one real evil which the Placement Plan will obviate is the fact that the present method is undignified. It is an ugly spectacle when scores of rabbis offer themselves as candidates for available pulpits, or when congregations shop around in a rather cheap way. There is no question that a method whereby rabbis are selected at headquarters will be more dignified. But for this one advantage gained, many new evils will be incurred. The new evils are as follows.

1. The new method will tend to suppress the career of young and promising men. A committee of this nature is bound to give undue weight to seniority and length of service; and younger men will be told to "wait their turn." No such committee will have the courage to appoint a promising man "out of turn." A congregation acting independently may occasionally make a bold decision of this kind but a committee cannot. Thus, the rabbinate will be slowed down in its self-renewal. The scheme will tend to petrify the rabbinate. NO
refuse

2. The present informal method leads to certain political planning and scheming on the part of congregation and rabbi. But the new method will be infinitely worse. All the political schemes will be directed against half a dozen men who have the fate of the rabbinate and the congregations in their hands. The pressure on these men will be continuous and varied and the influence that in turn they will be able to exert a dangerous thing for rabbinate and congregation. Thus the scheme will "politicalize" the rabbinate and congregational life.

3. An inevitable consequence of the above will be that the independence of rabbi and congregation will be greatly diminished. The committee will gradually shake down under the control of one or two of its members. Perhaps the Executive Director of the Placement Commission, because he is permanent where other members may be transient, becomes the actual controlling force in congregational life. The whole tone of the rabbinate will change. Now it is somewhat chaotic, but at least outspoken, depending upon no one man's favor, except perhaps occasionally. Under the plan there will be a committee increasingly entrenched with growing power over the fate of rabbi and congregation. Whatever little benefit the plan might bring is surely far outweighed by the dangers it entails.

THE UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

34 W. SIXTH STREET, CINCINNATI 2, OHIO

1442

COPY OF LETTER SENT TO YOUR PRESIDENT

April 7, 1950

Dear Friend:

I have not received word from you as to the action of the Board of your Congregation with reference to the Rabbinical Placement Plan about which I wrote you on January 31, 1950.

A meeting of the Joint Placement Commission is planned for April 23, at which time suggestions made by congregations for modification of the Plan will be considered.

I would appreciate very much hearing from you within the next week or ten days.

With kind greetings, I am

Sincerely yours,

Louis T. Egelson
Administrative Secretary

LE:mab

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

April 16, 1950

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

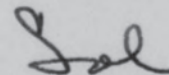
Dear Abba:

I have read your statement embodying some of the thoughts that I put in my statement to you; and I think you have made a powerful case against the Placement Plan.

I am sending it as you suggested to Gittelsohn to be read before the Placement Commission on April 23.

With best wishes,

As ever,



SBF/rsf

UNION OF AMERICAN

HEBREW CONGREGATIONS / RABBI MAURICE N. EISENDRATH, PRESIDENT

New York Office: 3 EAST 65TH STREET, NEW YORK 21, N. Y.

April 19th
1950

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

Dear Friend:

Although I am still confined to the house due to the unfortunately prolonged illness, concerning which Rosa spoke to you over the 'phone, the doctor is permitting me at least a little while with my secretary. I am, therefore, hastening to send you this brief note to tell you how deeply I do regret my utter inability to accept your very gracious invitation to be with you on May 14th in connection with your Centenary celebration.

Only this long and tedious illness could possibly have prevented my eager acceptance, as there has been no time in the past that I have failed to accept your always generous invitations to me, and I do remember with great fondness the several most gratifying experiences that I have had in your honored pulpit.

Particularly do I regret this inability to share in the auspicious milestone which your historic congregation has attained and to rejoice with you in the unique accomplishments which it has enjoyed under your rare and inspired leadership.

Will you please express to your people my own profound sense of personal disappointment. I trust that I may be with you at some future time.

Once more thanking you for your thoughtfulness in asking me, and with warmest personal greetings, I am

Yours most cordially,

Maurice N. Eisendrath
Maurice N. Eisendrath

UNION OF AMERICAN

HEBREW CONGREGATIONS / RABBI MAURICE N. EISENDRATH, PRESIDENT

New York Office: 3 EAST 65TH STREET, NEW YORK 21, N. Y.

April 20th
1 95 0

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

Dear Friend:

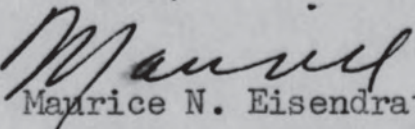
In writing to you yesterday I had in mind that you might wish to use it to convey to your congregation my sense of regret at not being with you and my felicitations upon this 100th anniversary. I, therefore, did not include the other matter to which Rosa referred over the 'phone, as it involves a rather serious and critical situation which has arisen in the National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods, and concerning which I would like to talk to you at length when I next see you.

It is a situation which demands my personal presence at this meeting, which has already been once postponed due to my illness, and which was set some weeks ago for May 14th, so as to be absolutely certain that I could be in attendance.

Therefore, both this meeting, which I cannot now possibly avoid attending, and which cannot be again postponed, as well as my doctor's rigid prohibition against any additional travel this season, add up to my utter inability to be with you.

I am certain you know me well enough to realize that no lesser reasons than the above would have prevented my being present upon your joyous anniversary celebration.

As ever,


Maurice N. Eisendrath

officers

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION • NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE SISTERHOODS

Chairman, Executive Board:
JACOB ARONSON
President:
RABBI MAURICE N. EISENDRATH
Vice-Chairmen: IRVIN FANE
FREDERICK F. GREENMAN
DR. S. S. HOLLENDER
PHILIP MEYERS
EUGENE B. STRASSBURGER
Treasurer: DAVID F. KAHN
Honorary Secretary:
RABBI GEORGE ZEPIN
Administrative Secretary:
RABBI LOUIS I. EGELSON
Comptroller: HYMAN KANTER

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

34 WEST SIXTH STREET • CINCINNATI 2, OHIO • PHONE PARKWAY 7345

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE BROTHERHOODS • THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE YOUTH

April 21, 1950

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

Dear Dr. Silver:

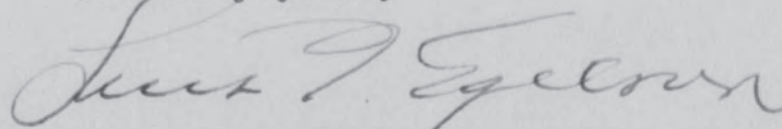
I have just had a letter from Mr. James H. Miller informing me that you have May 24 and May 25 open for a meeting and he suggested that I select one of these dates for the preliminary meeting at Cleveland at which we hope to organize the Committee on Arrangements for the forthcoming General Assembly of the Union.

I am writing you this brief note to hold Thursday evening, May 25, open for that meeting.

I am leaving town today for about a week and, as soon as I return, I will send out the regular notice for the meeting.

With kind regards, I am,

Cordially yours,



Louis I. Egelson
Administrative Secretary

LE:SG

April 24, 1950

Dr. Maurice Eisendrath
3 East 65th Street
New York 21, New York

My dear Maurice:

I received both of your letters. I regret very much that your protracted illness and the necessity of your attending a pressing meeting in New York on May 14th will make it impossible for you to participate in our Centennial Service on that day. I understand fully the reasons and I regret very much that you will not be with us. I shall, of course, convey to the congregation your message of greeting.

With all good wishes to you and Rosa, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

Chairman, Executive Board:
JACOB ARONSON
President:
RABBI MAURICE N. EISENDRATH
Vice-Chairmen: IRVIN FANE
FREDERICK F. GREENMAN
DR. S. S. HOLLENDER
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Union of American Hebrew Congregations

34 WEST SIXTH STREET • CINCINNATI 2, OHIO • PHONE PARKWAY 7345

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE BROTHERHOODS • THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE YOUTH

May 3, 1950

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

Dear Rabbi Silver:

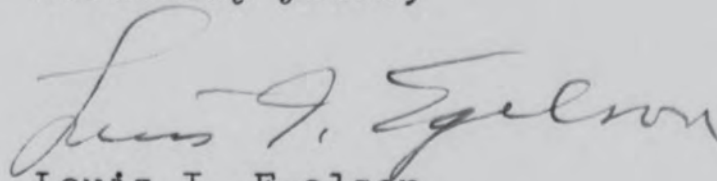
I am sure you know that the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, and the National Association of Temple Secretaries will meet in Cleveland, November 12-15, of this year. We shall need the help of the Cleveland community in carrying out the necessary arrangements that will make the above meetings a success.

I should like to have a preliminary meeting of the rabbis, presidents of congregations, sisterhoods, brotherhoods, youth, as well as the members of the Executive Boards of those organizations residing in Cleveland, together with the Cleveland members on the Executive Committee of the Ohio Valley Council. At this meeting we will discuss the organization of the Cleveland General Committee on Arrangements.

I trust that you will be able to meet with me Thursday, May 25, 1950, at 8:00 p.m., at the Hotel Cleveland, in one of its parlors. The meeting room will be posted on the Hotel bulletin board in the name of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

Please make every effort to be present. I shall be obliged if you will reply on the enclosed card.

Cordially yours,



Louis I. Egelson
Administrative Secretary

LE:jp

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Union of American Hebrew Congregations

34 WEST SIXTH STREET • CINCINNATI 2, OHIO • PHONE PARKWAY 7345

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE BROTHERHOODS • THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE YOUTH

May 8, 1950

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple-Tifereth Israel
E. 105th & Ansel Rd
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

I had intended having a meeting of our Program Committee a day in advance of the meeting of the Executive Board of the Union but, since the Executive Board meeting has now been set for June 24 and 25 in New York City, I feel that our Program Committee must meet much earlier.

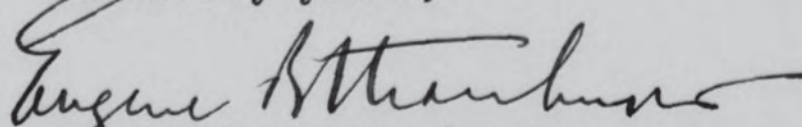
There is much work for our Committee to do in order to have a worth while program at the General Assembly which is to meet in Cleveland, Ohio, November 12-15.

I am therefore calling a meeting of our Program Committee on Friday, June 2, 1950, at 10:00 a.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time, at the office of the Union, 3 East 65th Street, New York City.

A card is enclosed herewith on which you may indicate your attendance. I do hope that you will put forth every effort to be present.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,



Eugene B. Strassburger
Chairman

Program Committee for
Forty-First General Assembly

EBS/bs

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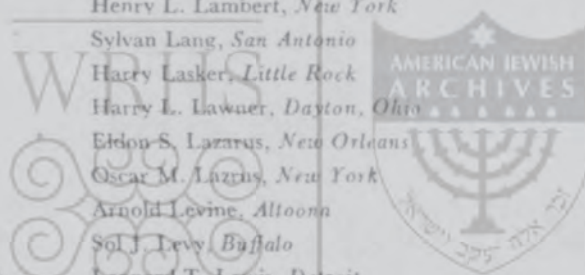
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CHICAGO FEDERATION *of the*
UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

1445

RABBI HERMAN E. SCHAALMAN, DIRECTOR

72 EAST ELEVENTH STREET, SUITE 600, CHICAGO 5, ILLINOIS

May 11, 1950

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

Dear Colleague:

Rabbi Blumenfield has asked me to assist him in locating a speech recently delivered by you dealing with the relationship of the American Jewish Community to the new state of Israel.

I had originally written to the College Library, but having failed in locating the material there, am now turning to you directly with the request that you send me a copy of your most recent speech dealing with this matter, if you have one available. I know that Rabbi Blumfield will most certainly appreciate your help in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Herman E. Schaalman

Rabbi Herman E. Schaalman
Director

HES:rc

*Sent copy?
"Liberal Judaism + Israel"*

Telephone:

WABASH 2-8943

1949-1950

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\$1,875,000

TEMPORARY LETTERHEAD

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May 17, 1950

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Nat'l Campaign Director

SAUL S. ELGART

[Committees in Formation]

1421

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
19810 Shaker Blvd.
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

I know how really busy you are with a myriad of activities, but because the fiscal year for our Combined Campaign terminates on June 30th, I must ask your guidance as to how we can undertake to improve the situation in your congregation during the few weeks remaining to us to gather money for this campaign.

While the country as a whole has contributed approximately 50% more than as of the same date last year, our campaign in Cleveland is dragging. Our records reveal that the total received in cash to date from the congregations of Cleveland is \$25,440.14 as compared with the total of \$32,835.37 to the credit of last year's campaign. I think that you would share with me a feeling of dissatisfaction if your fine congregation and community did not at least measure up to its contribution of a year ago. We are hopeful, of course, that a substantial increase can be recorded.

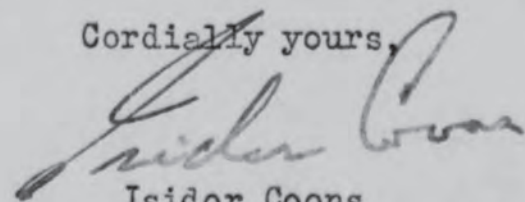
As of this date, The Temple has contributed a total of \$9,110.00 as compared with \$12,815.00 contributed to the Combined Campaign of last year. Of the total contributed by your congregation to date \$8,000.00 has come from the congregation as compared with \$10,200.00 last year; \$1,110.00 has come from individuals as compared with \$2,615.00 received from individuals last year.

I am writing similarly to Mr. Sidney H. Weitz, President of your Congregation, to Mr. Alfred A. Benesch, member of the Executive Board of the Union, and to the rabbis and appropriate officers of the other congregations in Cleveland.

It will be appreciated if I may hear from you promptly as to what we can do from our end to improve the situation.

With kind regards, I am

Cordially yours,



Isidor Coons
Executive Vice-Chairman

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Joint Auspices: UAHC and Central Conference of American Rabbis

34 W. SIXTH STREET · CINCINNATI 2, OHIO

Union & B'nai May 25, 1950

Dear Colleague:

As you know, we have introduced the custom of displaying at the sessions of the C.C.A.R. the new books which our colleagues published during the past year. If, therefore, you have any book which appeared during the past year, since June, 1949, please send us one copy, addressed to me. I shall appreciate it if you will do that at once so that we will know how to plan the exhibit.

With all good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Emanuel Gamoran

Educational Director

EG:JBM



703
UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

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♦

MEMORANDUM

Date May 31, 1950

From Rabbi Louis I. Egelson

To Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

Enclosed are the minutes of the organizational meeting held in Cleveland, Ohio, May 25, 1950, to form a Cleveland General Assembly of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

I am looking forward to working with you and your group in order to make the 41st General Assembly of the Union, the 18th Biennial Assembly of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, and the 5th Biennial Assembly of the National Association of Temple Secretaries a grand success.

Minutes

Meeting Held at Cleveland, Ohio

Thursday, May 25, 1950, 8:00 P.M.

To Organize Cleveland Committee on Arrangements for
Forty-First General Assembly of the UAHC

A meeting of the presidents and rabbis of congregations affiliated with the Union in Cleveland, sisterhood presidents, Executive Board members of the Union, Sisterhood and Brotherhood residing in Cleveland, was held at the Hotel Cleveland, Cleveland, Ohio, Thursday, May 25, 1950, at 8:00 p.m.

The following were present: Rabbis Barnett R. Brickner, Maurice Davis, Enoch H. Kronheim, Julius J. Nodel, Abba Hillel Silver, Samuel Silver, Myron Silverman, Earl S. Stone, Messrs. David Dietz, Emil Elder, J. W. Grodin, James H. Miller, Sidney N. Weitz, and Mesdames Sol Gitson, Marvin Gardner, William Fine, and Martin D. Rosenberg.

Rabbi Louis I. Egelson, the Administrative Secretary of the Union, called the meeting to order and explained the purpose of the meeting. He asked for the nomination of a presiding officer. Mr. Sidney Weitz proposed that Rabbi Egelson preside at the meeting which he agreed to do.

Rabbi Egelson stated that the heads of the various groups were called to this meeting to organize a Cleveland Committee on Arrangements for the forthcoming 41st General Assembly of the Union, 18th Biennial Assembly of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, and the 5th Biennial Convention of the National Association of Temple Secretaries. He called attention to the fact that it would be necessary to have subcommittees on:

1. Banquet
2. Hotel Reservations
3. Reception and Hospitality
4. Registration
5. Ushers and Pages
6. Exhibits
7. Convention Halls and Meeting Halls

On motion of Mr. James H. Miller, Mr. Abe Luntz was nominated as Chairman of the Cleveland Committee on Arrangements and was unanimously elected. Rabbi Abba H. Silver and Mr. Sidney N. Weitz agreed to confer with Mr. Luntz and urge him to serve as Chairman.

On motion by Rabbi Abba H. Silver, it was voted that the presidents of the five affiliated congregations, together with Mrs. Sol Gitson, Fourth Vice-President of the NFTS, were to serve as Vice-Chairmen of the Committee.

Subsequent to a general discussion regarding the activities of the various subcommittees, Rabbi Abba H. Silver proposed that the following shall constitute the General Committee on Arrangements:

The Chairman
Six Vice-Chairmen
Five Rabbis
Five Sisterhood Presidents
Two Union Executive Board Members
One NFTS Executive Board Member
Seven Chairmen of Subcommittees

This was unanimously approved.

Rabbi Egelson presented a tentative outline of the program for the General Assembly.

It was pointed out that the facilities of the Hotel Cleveland were not the very best that could be obtained in Cleveland for a Banquet. It was stated that the Carter Hotel has an air-conditioned banquet hall and could easily accommodate 900 people in that hall. The suggestion was made that Rabbi Egelson get in touch with the Carter Hotel for that purpose.

When mention was made of that item of the program referring to a dramatic presentation of the College and the Union, it was felt generally that such a program would be advisable and beneficial but that much care be exercised in selecting the personnel. It was thought that in addition to professional actors, some local people in Cleveland should be utilized for the presentation. It was further urged that Rabbi Egelson contact Mr. Paul Hurd, Manager of the public Music Hall to see whether we could obtain the use of that hall for this part of the program.

Rabbi Brickner called attention to the fact that while the Union does not request the local community for hospitality, nevertheless the Cleveland Jewish community would wish to extend some hospitality and he asked Rabbi Egelson to indicate what might be done.

Rabbi Egelson informed the group of the usual practice of entertaining the Executive Boards of the Union and Sisterhoods at a Dinner before the convention formally opens and suggested further that on one of the evenings of the convention (not the Banquet evening) the Cleveland community might wish to have a reception and serve modest refreshments.

It was decided to leave this matter for the consideration of the General Committee.



MEIER STEINBRINK
JUSTICE

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
JUSTICES' CHAMBERS
BROOKLYN, N.Y.

UNOFFICIAL

June 12th, 1950

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver,
East 105th St. at Ansel Road,
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

Recently we held a meeting of the Assembly of Delegates of the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues, of which I enjoy the privilege of being honorary president, having served it as president for a number of years.

When I first received in the mail some of the material relating to the creation of a placement commission for Rabbis, I was truly shocked by its content, for here was the first time when an attempt was being made to introduce, even though in modified form, dictatorship or totalitarianism in liberal judaism. To my mind it runs counter to the democracy and autonomy always enjoyed by liberal congregations. I found myself unalterably opposed to it, and at the meeting of the Assembly of Delegates Rabbi Roland Gittelson presented the argument for the plan and I vigorously opposed it, attacked it, and even felt justified in ridiculing it.

I am satisfied that, had the matter come to a vote, the suggestion for its approval would have been overwhelmingly defeated, but the counsel of wiser and older heads prevailed, and since a vote there could have no binding effect, even I was willing, that the matter be tabled, and even the motion to table was carried by a very close vote.

I have had the privilege of reading the statement issued by you and Dr. Freehof, and find myself in hearty accord with it. I have spoken with Rabbi Gittelson and have invited him, Dr. Eisendrath and Rabbi Daniel Davis to spend a day with me at my home in Sayville, Long Island, when I will try to make them see the light that they will truly ruin the Union of American Hebrew Congregations when

Dr. Silver, page 2.

6/12/1950

they begin to talk about applying sanctions to those Congregations that will not bend to the will of those who are sponsoring the present set-up of a placement commission.

I would be in entire accord with a committee on clearance, to which Congregations and Rabbis might turn for advice and guidance. I will never subscribe to the application of force or sanctions and I shall do everything I can to reconcile our differences; otherwise the matter will have to be fought out at the next biennial convention of the Union which is to be held, as I understand it, in Cleveland in November.

I thought I should write you that you might know what my attitude is in the matter.

With kindest regards and affectionate greetings to you and all of your family, believe me,

Faithfully yours,

David Stern

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

[Enclosed letter placed
in chronological order,
June 12, 1950]

The Temple

EAST 105TH STREET AT ANSEL ROAD

Cleveland 6, Ohio

RABBI

ABBA HILLEL SILVER, D.D.

JULIUS J. NODEL
ASSISTANT RABBI

EARL S. STONE
DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

LEO S. BAMBERGER
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

June 14, 1950

Dr. Solomon B. Freehof
4915 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh 13, Pa.

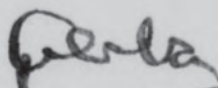
My dear Sol:

I think you will be interested in reading the enclosed letter from Judge Steinbrink. When you are through with it, please return it to me.

It was a delight to see you and Lillian in Cincinnati. I enjoyed the few days there very much.

I hope that you will have a most pleasant summer.

As ever yours,



ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

Enc.

Dear Abba
He sent me a similar letter. We
have had evidently a strong effect. Gittleson
& the committee seemed perceptive at
the Conference. Again congratulations on
the undiminished power of your utterances.
It was really thrilling to hear you!
SJC

June 14, 1950

Judge Meier Steinbrink
Supreme Court of New York
Justices' Chambers
Brooklyn, New York

My dear Judge Steinbrink:

Thank you for your kind letter of June 12th. I had read about the position which you took on the subject of the Placement Commission Plan, and I was very much pleased with it. I believe that the whole conception is unsound and a radical and unwarranted departure from the age-old traditions of the synagogue and the rabbinate.

I shall look forward with pleasure to seeing you in Cleveland in November at the Biennial Convention of the Union. It is always a delight to see you and to talk with you.

With all good wishes for a happy summer, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er

June 14, 1950

Dr. Solomon B. Freehof
4915 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh 13, Pa.

My dear Sol:

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ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er
Enc.

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS
MERCHANTS BUILDING • CINCINNATI

♦

MEMORANDUM

Date June 14, 1950

From Rabbi Egelson

To Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

Attached please find a copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Program Committee of the 41st General Assembly of the Union held in New York City on June 2, 1950.

There is still much to be done in the development of our program, and we are proceeding apace.

Minutes

Meeting of Program Committee of 41st General Assembly, UAHC

New York, N.Y.

June 2, 1950

A meeting of the Program Committee of the 41st General Assembly of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations was held at the Office of the Union, 3 East 65th Street, New York City, Friday, June 2, 1950, at 10:00 a.m.

The following members of the committee attended: Eugene B. Strassburger, Chairman; Jacob Aronson, Rabbi Bernard J. Bamberger, Rabbi Morton M. Berman, Rabbi Louis I. Egelson, Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath, Max Feder, Mrs. Louis A. Rosett, Dr. Calvert Stein, and Israel N. Thurman.

Mr. Abraham Allen, Publicity Director, was also present on invitation of the Chairman.

The Chairman, Mr. Strassburger, presented a brief outline of the tentative program of the convention. He stated that the mornings are to be devoted to business sessions; the afternoons to round tables, and the evenings to public meetings.

Rabbi Egelson reported that the Cleveland community will tender a reception, plus refreshments, during one of the evenings of the convention.

It was voted to have this reception on Sunday evening, after Rabbi Eisendrath's Presidential Message.

Rabbi Eisendrath stated that advance material on all questions to be discussed at the business sessions; namely, Rabbinical Placement, the Ten Per Cent Assessment Plan, and the New Name of the Union, will be sent to the delegates in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Thurman suggested that both sides of the Placement Plan be presented in parallel columns.

Symposium

A symposium is to be held on Monday or Tuesday evening dealing with Reform Jewish Practice. It was decided to call the subject of the symposium, "Trends in Reform Jewish Practice -- Is a Code Necessary?"

Rabbi Bamberger thought we ought to limit the symposium to three speakers -- a factual report on the results of the questionnaire by the Chairman of the Committee on Code of Reform Jewish Practice, Rabbi Morton M. Berman, for twenty to thirty minutes; one speaker in favor for about fifteen minutes, and one speaker opposed for about fifteen minutes.

Rabbi Eisendrath suggested that in addition to the factual presentation we have two rabbis and two laymen -- divided for and against -- each to speak for about ten minutes.

Rabbi Bamberger suggested further that there might be a discussion between the participants in the nature of a Town Meeting and then have questions in writing from the floor.

The final decision on this matter was that there be an address by the Chairman of the Committee, Rabbi Berman, for twenty minutes, to be followed by a panel discussion of Rabbi Berman and four speakers -- two rabbis and two laymen -- plus a Chairman for the evening. There is to be a microphone for each speaker at the table.

A summary of the questionnaire is to be mimeographed and possibly distributed in advance of the meeting, and Rabbi Berman is to talk on the trends in these practices.

Mr. Feder stated that we select a good chairman for the evening, so as to keep the discussion moving. He suggested Mr. Louis Nizer of New York. Mr. Feder was authorized to ascertain whether Mr. Nizer is a member of the Reform Jewish group.

Workshops

Rabbi Bamberger expressed the thought that at the workshops there be no formal presentation but that the chairman of each workshop put the question to the group.

Mr. Feder thought that the expert consultant might introduce the questions for five or six minutes and then throw open the questions for discussion.

The workshops are to start at 2:30 in the afternoon and close at 5:00 or 5:30 p.m.

The committee decided on five workshops; three of them on two levels; namely, the large and small congregations, and two of them on one level.

1. Sunday Afternoon -- on two levels -- to continue Monday afternoon:

"Our Religious Educational Program"

a. What shall we offer?

b. How shall we offer it?

2. Sunday Afternoon -- on two levels:

"New Activities in Synagogue Program"

3. Monday Afternoon -- on two levels:

"Youth and Adult Education" -- on the same basis as the workshop on "Our Religious Educational Program"

4. Monday afternoon -- on one level:

"The Synagogue as a Dynamic Social Force"

a. What should we do?

b. What shouldn't we do?

5. Monday afternoon -- on one level:

"Financial Security for the Synagogue"

Business Sessions

It was decided to have the discussion on the Ten Per Cent Assessment Plan on Monday morning; the Rabbinical Placement Plan on Tuesday morning, and the New Name of the Union on Wednesday morning.

Breakfasts and Luncheons

It was decided that whatever breakfast meetings are held should be informal. These breakfast meetings might be with presidents of congregations and or with rabbis.

The Monday luncheon could be set aside for Regional luncheons.

The Tuesday luncheon could be devoted to the needs of the Union and the College-Institute.

There was a general feeling that there should be no solicitation of funds at the luncheons. It was felt that that might put a penalty on coming to conventions of the Union.

The Evenings

The first evening, Sunday, is to be given over to Rabbi Eisen-drath's Presidential Address, with a reception and refreshments by the Cleveland community.

Monday or Tuesday evening is to be devoted to a symposium on Reform Jewish Practice, as mentioned above.

The other evening -- either Monday or Tuesday -- is to be devoted to a dramatization of the work of the Union and the College.

Rabbi Bamberger thought that we must have professional direction and that the pageant must be professionally staged. In the preparation of the pageant, we must have the cooperation of someone from our organization who knows the Union and the College.

Dr. Stein suggested that if such a pageant is put on, it should be filmed and used afterward in our schools and congregations.

Rabbi Bamberger thought that the pageant could be given in the Temple proper.

It was decided that a sub-committee be appointed, of which Rabbi Bamberger is to be a member, to meet with the Cleveland rabbis attending the CCAR meeting in Cincinnati and attempt to work this out.

If we should fail in getting up the pageant, Rabbi Bamberger suggested that we have an evening devoted to a concert on Jewish music.

The Banquet

Mr. Aronson pointed out that the banquet, now tentatively scheduled for Wednesday night, would not be well attended owing to the fact that many people would want to return to their homes on trains leaving Cleveland about eight o'clock in the evening. Instead he suggested that we have a banquet luncheon on Wednesday. The committee voted in favor of that proposal.

For the speakers, it was voted that Rabbi Eisendrath be authorized to secure Trygvie Lie and Aubrey Eban as the speakers.

Rabbi Eisendrath stated, in the absence of Mr. Abraham Allen, that Mr. Allen had suggested that a system of awards be introduced by the Union as an inducement to getting speakers at our banquet.

It was suggested that in addition to Trygvie Lie and Aubrey Eban, an award of thankfulness be given to Dr. Albert A. Berg.

On motion of Rabbi Berman, it was voted that the Chairman appoint a committee of three to prepare the awards and to select the awardees.

It was also voted that the Chairman be authorized to appoint whatever sub-committees may be necessary to carry out all matters in connection with the program.

As the Toastmaster for the banquet, Mr. Eugene Strassburger suggested the name of a gentleman in Cleveland.

It was decided to take this matter up with the Cleveland rabbis who would be in Cincinnati for the CCAR and if it is decided to secure this gentleman, Mr. Strassburger was authorized to extend the invitation.

Staff Consultation

Rabbi Egelson asked whether a definite time should be set aside for consultation with the members of the staff. He stated that there would be a desk in the registration area with a clerk to make appointments for staff consultation.

It was suggested that from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., from Monday through Wednesday, be set aside for consultation with the members of the staff.

It was voted that we recommend to the General Assembly that Mr. Jacob Aronson be chosen as the President of the 41st General Assembly and that Mr. Eugene B. Strassburger be elected as the Temporary Chairman of the Assembly.

Adjourned.

Eugene B. Strassburger
Chairman



Louis I. Egelson
Secretary

Committees

After the adjournment of the meeting, Mr. Strassburger appointed the following committees: On Pageant -- Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath, Rabbi Morton M. Berman, and Rabbi Louis I. Egelson; On Speakers on the Program -- Mr. Eugene B. Strassburger, Mr. Jacob Aronson, Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath, and Rabbi Louis I. Egelson.

It was suggested that the registration fee be \$15.00 and that that include the cost of the banquet plus the luncheon on Tuesday.

Rabbi Eisendrath was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Awards. It was Rabbi Eisendrath's suggestion that Rabbi Samuel H. Goldenson present Dr. Albert A. Berg to receive the award; that Rabbi James G. Heller present Aubrey Eban to receive the award; and that we endeavor to secure Hon. Herbert H. Lehman to present Trygvie Lie to receive the award.

June 15, 1950

Rabbi Louis I. Egelson
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
Merchants Building
Cincinnati, Ohio

My dear Rabbi Egelson:

I received the minutes of the meeting of the Program Committee which was held on June 2nd. I note that it was "decided to take up the matter of the Toastmaster for the Banquet with the Cleveland rabbis who would be in Cincinnati for the CCAR". Inasmuch as no one approached me in Cincinnati, I am wondering who this gentleman is who is being considered for the Toastmaster of the Banquet.

I note, too, that Mr. Allen had suggested that a system of awards be introduced as an inducement to getting speakers at our banquet". I regard this as a very unwise practice to use awards by organized reform Judaism of America as bait to attract speakers to a banquet.

I note furthermore Mr. Thurman's suggestion that "both sides of the Placement Plan be presented in parallel columns". I trust that this suggestion will be followed through.

With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

AHS:er



MEIER STEINBRINK
JUSTICE

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
JUSTICES' CHAMBERS
BROOKLYN, N.Y.

UNOFFICIAL

June 20, 1950

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

Dear Dr. Silver:

Just now there came to my desk the brochure entitled "The Temple", which tells the most interesting history of the development of your Congregation through the past 100 years. I have already glanced through it hastily and shall read every word of it at my earliest opportunity. Heartiest thanks for having sent it to me.

Also I am enclosing to you (and am sending a similar letter to Dr. Freehof) the substance of my argument at the recent meeting of the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues. While not wholly complete, the deleted portions were not of importance. I thought you might want to see this.

I have an appointment for Thursday with Dr. Maurice Eisendrath, Rabbi Roland Gittelsohn and Rabbi Daniel Davis, in the hope that I can convince them that they must drop the idea of sanctions or of ecclesiastical control, and that this should be placed on a voluntary basis. From all that I can learn it is Rabbi Gittelsohn who has taken the attitude of "all or nothing". If the fight must be carried to the biennial convention, then we must be ready for it.

With kindest regards and again my thanks,

Very sincerely,

enc.

DISCUSSION OF THE "PLAN"

Judge Meier Steinbrink

A layman might well pause before taking a view diametrically opposed to that presented by Rabbi Gittelsohn who outlined the plan with such eloquence and vigor, but who at two or three points that I hastily noted, made confessions which I believe condemned the plan itself.

Recently it was my good fortune, or ill fortune, to sit in the court and to try two cases, both of which involved theological differences and religious differences. In the decision on the one case, that of the proposed merger of the Congregational Churches of America with the Evangelical Lutheran Churches; and in the course of the opinion I then dictated, I quoted from a book by William E. Barton, a distinguished authority on congregational church history, in which he said - "The history of denominational organizations abound in warnings. The love of power grows easily among those who come to possess it, and some organizations, very innocent in their inception, have developed large and insidious powers of usurpation." Please keep those words in mind as we consider the subject before us. Please keep in mind, too, I dare say that tonight is the first time that many of you ever heard that already some of the plan has been changed as late as April of this year.

I remember discussing with one of our leaders, not connected with my Congregation, one of the fundamental objections to this plan as it was proposed and published in "LIBERAL JUDAISM", because it said that for the representatives of the Central Conference of Rabbis, four would be from the Union, two of whom shall be laymen, and four from the College, two of whom shall be laymen, which meant, of course, that you had

the probability that eight would be rabbis and four would be laymen. Tonight you have heard that that has been changed, so that somebody recognized weakness in the proposed plan...

I am going to take up what my friend, Rabbi Roland B. Gittelssohn, said in "LIBERAL JUDAISM", but before I do, I am going to recall some of the things that were said to you. He said of course that there is sacrifice of autonomy, but we are going to try to do this without too seriously interfering with the congregational freedom. Now, since when in Reform Judaism, or in Conservative Judaism, or in Orthodox Judaism, has there been a recognition for any need for ecclesiastical authority?

The Congregational Churches of America began with the landing of the Pilgrims, and they have been independent and autonomous of all ecclesiastical control from that day to this. We, too, have been entirely independent and autonomous of all ecclesiastical control, and yet, the admission is made, not only that there must be a surrender of some of this autonomy, but this Placement Commission made up in the way it has been suggested will have the power to impose sanctions (that is the word that has been used a number of times) on rabbis and on congregations. There are young aspiring rabbis in the rabbinate who have a right to look for better places. There are congregations that have the right to look for the type of rabbi that they desire.

I know a great congregation which, through the years, employing a number of rabbis, always wished one, at least one to be pulpiteer, one who could lecture while one or two of the others looked after the ministerial duties. Is this placement commission going to say that you may not have Rabbi "A" or "B". They are too young for your pulpit. That is the very kind of rabbi that I would want to come into my congregation if I was trying to build it on a firm and strong foundation.

My connection with the religious matters goes back about sixty-five years when as a child I began attendance at the religious school of the congregation with which I am still affiliated. I was Bar Mitzvo at its altar, I was married by its Rabbi, who was called from Albany as a very young man, and whom through the inspiration that comes with youth, made our congregation strong. I refer to none other than my friend, the late Dr. Alexander Lyons. When Dr. Lyons was growing old in the service, we did not need to look to a Placement Bureau or Commission to tell us whom we should have or whom we should not have. We selected Rabbi Isaac Landman, the distinguished editor of the "Jewish Encyclopedia", who wanted to return to the rabbinate, as his successor, and he did a fine job. When he was stricken ill and we knew that he could not carry on, those in charge of our congregational affairs then looked about, and they considered four young men. After conferring with the officers and the Senior Rabbi in Philadelphia, Dr. Louis Wolsey, they called to our pulpit a young man, Eugene Sack. I have never met a more earnest and energetic rabbi in my life.

I wonder if a Placement Bureau, empowered to impose sanctions, would have granted us the right to have Eugene Sack, when older men were waiting in other places to improve themselves. Human nature is the same the world over, whether it is among rabbis or bankers, engineers or lawyers. These young men have a right to aspire to the foremost pulpits in America, and no one has the right to say to our congregations that you may not have him, and if you take him, we will impose sanctions. That is the most perfect way in the world, it seems to me, to wreck the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Go out and tell the congregations that you are going to dictate to them, and see how long you will hold the 415 member congregations.

I know of a congregation in far away Texas that called to its pulpit a rabbi from New York under circumstances, - it doesn't matter whether I approved or not, but I wonder if that congregation would ever have received the approval of a Commission on Placement if they had asked for this rabbi.

Now let me go a step further. Rabbi Gittelsohn said to you, "No rabbi will be allowed to take a pulpit without the consent of the Placement Commission, and no congregation will be allowed to take a rabbi without its consent," and if they do, then the sanctions which had been read to you would be imposed.

I want to read to you excerpts from the article, written by Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn, in the December 1949 issue of "LIBERAL JUDAISM."

"Up to the present time we have had neither system nor control in the filling of our Liberal pulpits, etc."

Someone wants control -- no doubt about it. The clause about representation, which you heard tonight, has already been changed, so I will pass over it. But there is going to be a full time director of Placement, either rabbi or layman. Why fool yourself. You know perfectly well that in a very large measure, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations will quite probably follow the lead of Dr. Maurice Eisendrath, who is the President, and that of the Director; and likewise, I am certain that while there is constant conference between Col. Greenman and Rabbi Davis, that he too, in his very sweet and mild way, by suggestion, or however you please to call it, directs the affairs of the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues. Make no mistake about it, you will find that to be true in all national Jewish

agencies. There is no

doubt about it, the man who is the Director of this bureau will be the man who holds the reins.

A competent Placement Bureau? How certain are we that it is going to be a competent Placement Bureau. Because two or three times reference was made to the fact that these twelve men are going to be outstanding and distinguished men. I don't know, and you don't know either, if all this is wishful thinking or not.

Will the Placement Bureau help out congregations in any other way? The answer, most assuredly "yes." Only a Placement Bureau will be able to say to an individual rabbi - "You have but recently come to your congregation -- you owe them more than a year or two of your leadership. Until you decently discharge your present obligations, we can not in good faith recommend you to another group." I don't understand that coming from a Commission made up in good part of rabbis... "Until you have decently discharged your present obligations"? I have greater respect for the rabbinate and all of its members than that. And what if there are two or three or even four offenders. Is that any reason to put a halter around the necks of the individual congregations and rabbis?

Of course my good friend Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn is not sacrificing anything and isn't going to. He said, "we rabbis are the ones who are sacrificing." Why Rockville Centre wouldn't let him go under any circumstances. He knows he is perfectly secure. But if they had this Placement Plan when he was a young man, how sure is he that he would have been allowed to go to Rockville Centre.

"Would it not be wise to begin with a looser plan or vol-

untary code of ethics for those who wish it? Definitely not - a Placement Plan must be on the basis of all or none." I, for one, disagree emphatically with any such thesis or theory.

"Would congregations have to yield some of their sovereignty to accept a Placement Plan?" There is a price to be paid whenever chaos is fashioned into order."

I don't understand this. Where is the chaos? Let someone here stand up and say that they have had any difficulty that approached chaos. I know of no chaos in Judaism, excepting that which unfortunately sometimes appears in differences between those of Reform Judaism, those of Conservative Judaism, and those of Orthodox Judaism. Let us iron out those greater difficulties before we begin imposing sanctions and establishing something that will eventually fashion itself into a "frankenstein". It will come back to haunt us for a long time. I beg of you - don't disturb the independence or autonomy of your congregation, because there are many of them, and I say this advisedly, that will not accept this, and then - would you throw them out of the Union? What then will become of your Union of American Hebrew Congregations!

Judge Steinbrink also quoted from a letter from Mortimer Brenner, addressed to the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, casting disfavor upon the Rabbinical Placement Plan, and likewise referred to the joint statement issued by Dr. Abba Hillel Silver and Dr. Solomon B. Freehof in opposition to the plan.



MEIER STEINBRINK
JUSTICE

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
JUSTICES' CHAMBERS
BROOKLYN, N.Y.

UNOFFICIAL

September 19, 1950

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
Temple on the Heights
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear Dr. Silver:

At a largely attended meeting of Congregation Beth Elohim in Brooklyn, which meeting was held last week, the following resolution was passed unanimously:

"Resolved that we are opposed to the plan submitted by the Rabbinical Placement Commission and shall continue to oppose any plan which seeks to impose sanctions on congregations thereby destroying the autonomy which congregations generally have enjoyed since the formation of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

Further Resolved that we request our delegates to oppose any plan embodying such sanctions."

This I am sending to you for your information.

I have in mind the very effective part that you played in the discussion at the Biennial held in Boston two years ago anent the subject of moving the Union office to New York.

It would be a great mistake, I believe, if only laymen were to participate in the debate in opposition to this plan, and I am writing to you as I shall write to Dr. Freehof, requesting that you permit us to count on your aid by participating in the debate on this plan.

It may interest you to know that I am informed this morning by Col. Frederick F. Greenman that he has had a letter from Eugene B. Strassberger, who states "I have come to a conclusion about this matter rather slowly. I have talked to Dr. Freehof about it and have been somewhat influenced by him and you and have come to the conclusion that I am going to vote against the plan."

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

2. September 19,
1950.

I sincerely hope that you will do whatever you can with the delegates from Cleveland to give support for opposition to any plan involving sanctions against congregations.

Please let me hear from you.

To you and yours, best wishes for a happy and blessed New Year.



Very sincerely,



A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Abba Hillel Silver".