



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

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145

Box
51

Folder
9

Patriotism, White and Red, 1917.

March 9, 1917

I. Intro. I concluded my lecture last week with the admonition to be prayerfully calm under existing conditions. I appealed for coolness, deliberateness, thoughtfulness and caution. Since then events ~~XX~~ have transpired in this country and especially in our own city which make an accentuation of last week's appeal necessary. I shall ~~XX~~ take my text from events which have transpired during the last week.

II. The LaFollette incident.

1. LaFollette filibusters - reprehensible, undemocratic.

2. The meeting Monday night: the spirit which prompted it was good. Condemnation of act of LaFollette. But the meeting was reprehensible in many ways.

A. It was not representative, nor public.

B. It was undignified.

C. The atmosphere made for fever not for sanity. It was surprising to see level-headed business men lose their heads, indulge in exuberances they would never dream of. They permitted the cool waters of reason to become overheated by enthusiasms and hence to evaporate into irrationality.

3. Our position: We placed the responsibility where it belonged - upon the subscribers. We would not be stampeded into it. Had the subscribers decided to have LaFollette come in, LaFollette would have spoken here, if we had to throw a guard around the Temple. As it was we acted merely as the representatives of our patrons, and we cancelled the engagement.

4. The communications which we received gave us another insight into ^{mob} ~~XX~~ psychology. 1. Some invoked the maledictions of God

upon LaFollette, called him everything from traitor up, argued, threatened, begged. 2. Others called LaFollette a hero, a martyr, chided us for even daring to allow the subscribers to decide the issue ~~AND~~ insinuated that we were intimidated. 3. Still others were diplomatically neutral and non-committal and still others pleaded for freedom of speech.

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XX



I. Intro. I concluded my lecture last week with the admonition to be prayerfully calm under existing conditions. I appealed for calmness, deliberateness, thoughtfulness and caution. Since then events have transpired in our cases this country and especially in our own city which make an ascertainment of last week's appeal necessary. I shall take my text from events which have transpired during the last week.

II. The La Follette Incident. -

1. La Follette filibusters. reprehensible undemocratic.
2. The meeting Monday night: - The spirit which prompted it was good. Condemnation of act of La Fol. But the meeting was reprehensible in many ways.
 - a. It was not representative, nor public
 - b. It was unjustified.
 - c. The atmosphere made for fever not for sanity. It was surprising to see level-headed business men lose their heads. Indeed in exuberance they would have dreamed off. They permitted the cool waters of reason to become overheated by enthusiastic audience to evaporate into irrationality.
3. Our position: We placed the responsibility where it belonged - upon the subscribers. We would not be stampeded into it. Had the subscribers decided to have L. F. come on, La F. would have spoken here if we had to throw a guard around the Temple. As it was, we acted merely as the representatives of our patrons. We cancelled the engagement.
4. The communications which we received gave us another insight into mob psych. 1. Some invoked the maledictions of God upon La Fol, called him every thing from traitor, up, accused, threatened, begged. 2. Others called La Fol. a hero a martyr, chided us for even daring to allow the subscribers to decide the issue. 3. Still others were diplomatically neutral & non-committal and 4. Still others pleaded for freedom of speech.

W^m Teitelbaum,

Hotel Knickerbocker:—

I don't know who you are but I am
convinced that men of your ilk
are a real menace to democracy.
You fan your shallow patriotism into
a flame of furious intolerance which
consumes all the sanctities of our nation.
We shall act in this matter of Senator
La Follette in a manner reflecting
the best traditions of American
democracy.

Rabbi A. H. Silver

La Follette
file
1917

CLASS OF SERVICE	SYMBOL
Day Message	
Day Letter	Blue
Night Message	Nite
Night Letter	N L

If none of these three symbols appears after the check (number of words) this is a day message. Otherwise its character is indicated by the symbol appearing after the check.

WESTERN UNION



TELEGRAM

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT

CLASS OF SERVICE	SYMBOL
Day Message	
Day Letter	Blue
Night Message	Nite
Night Letter	N L

If none of these three symbols appears after the check (number of words) this is a day message. Otherwise its character is indicated by the symbol appearing after the check.

RECEIVED AT 59 TWELFTH ST., WHEELING, W. VA.

71G S 58 BLUE 2EXTRA

KR NEW YORK NY 340AM MAR 7 1917

26

RABBI H SILVER

WHEELING W VA

WRHS



AS A JEW OF HUNGARYAN BIRTH I VIGOROUSLY PROTEST AGAINST
 THE DESECRATION A SYNAGOGUE ON AMERICAN SOIL BY SENATOR LAFOLLETTE
 OR ANY OTHER TRAITOR I REFUSE TO BELIEVE THAT YOUR
 CONGREGATION WILL LEND ITSELF TO FANNING THE FLAMES OF A
 CIVIL WAR BY ENCOURAGING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO DIVIDE IN
 PROTECTING THEIR RIGHTS HONOR AND FLAG

WM TEITELBAUM HOTEL KNICKERBOCKER

1038AM

CLASS OF SERVICE	SYMBOL
Day Message	
Day Letter	Blue
Night Message	Nite
Night Letter	N L

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RECEIVED AT 59 TWELFTH ST., WHEELING, W. VA.

316GFC 50NL

GREENVILLE PA MAR 8 1917

SECY YOUNG MENS HEBREW ASSN

WRHS

WHEELING W VA



THE CANCELLATION OF HON ROBERT M LAFOLLETES SPEAKING DATE PROVES
 THAT TO TAKE GODS SIDE ON ANY QUESTION AS MR
 LAFOLLETTE DID IN DEFEATING PRESIDENT WILSONS MONARCHISTRIC UNCHRISTIAN
 AND WAR INSPIRING SHIP ARMING BILL IS STILL AS IT WAS AWAY
 BACK IN ABRAHAM ISAAC AND JACOBS TIME THE UNPOPULAR SIDE

WM LOOSER

called

940PM

Rabbi S

1239 P

3 D

Theodore William Schaefer, M. D.

514 GR. AVE. TEMPLE
KANSAS CITY, MO.

March 7, 1917.

Rabbi H. H. Silver,
Wheeling, West Virginia.

Sir!

The people of Jewish persuasion
are non-plused over your extra-ordinary
behavior

The mob-element of this country is
irresponsible. The public mind of this
country has been poisoned by the
subsidized Anglo-American press!
The whole political situation is entirely
malodorous. Popular government stinks.
There is a stench to democracy.
German hatred and German baiting,
a recrudescence of foul Know-nothingism,
is rampant ochlocratically. The next
movement will be an anti-Semitic
movement.

Rehabilitate yourself, Sir!!

Very truly yours,
Theodore W. Schaefer.

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER
CONGREGATION LESHEM SHOMAYIM

WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA,

March 8, 1917.

My dear Sir.

Your note is a characteristic display of hasty judgment, distorted vision and bad manners. Had you not jumped at conclusions after reading an uncertain newspaper item, but had taken the trouble to enquire you would have learnt that the Jews in this community as Jews, had absolutely nothing to do with the cancellation of Senator La Follette's lecture that the Temple Lecture Course is an inter-denominational or rather a non-sectarian institution, and that 75% of its patrons are non-Jews. The local B'nai B'rith Lodge, which has these lectures in charge, thought it fit when the sentiment against La Follette spread through the community, to permit the subscribers to the Lecture Course to decide for themselves whether they want the Senator to come or not. The subscribers by a vote of four to one decided against the Senator and his engagement here was accordingly cancelled.

May I suggest that hereafter you do not permit your calm judgment to become overheated and disappear in the hazy vapors of stupidity. Commiserately yours,
Abba Silver

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RECEIVED AT 59 TWELFTH ST., WHEELING, W. VA.

16 G W 157 N L

SI NEW YORK MCH 7 /17

RABBI H SILVER

WHG

328
WRHS

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

IF YOU ARE SINCERE IN YOUR DESIRE TO PERPETUATE DEMOCRACY AND WISH ANY LIGHT IF YOU AGREE THAT HUMANITY'S HOPE FOR SELF GOVERNMENT LIES IN THE SACRED FOLDS OF OLD GLORY AND SHE IS WORTH PRESERVING WITH OUT ATTEMPT AT PARADING BUT TO FOLLOW DUTY THEN PERMIT ME TO INFORM YOU THAT DURING THE SIX YEARS OF SELF SACRIFICE IN THE CAUSE OF PEACE AS SECRETARY OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-INTERVENTION ASSOCIATION I CAME IN TOUCH WHILE IN MEXICO WITH BOTH GERMANY AND JAPAN'S PERNICIOUS ACTIVITY AGAINST THE SAFETY OF THE UNITED STATES WASHINGTON ADMINISTRATION ITSELF WAS TOO BUSY PLAYING POLITICS AND REFUSES TO READ MY REPEATED WARNINGS UNTIL NOW AMERICA'S GREATEST MENACE TODAY IS THE HONEST PACIFIST I PLEAD THAT YOU DO NOT DEFILE YOUR TEMPLE BY HOUSING THE COUNTRY'S ENEMY BECAUSE SENATOR LA FOLLETTE IS NOT AN HONEST PACIFIST AM STILL UNSELFISHLY LABORING TO MAINTAIN PEACE IN MEXICO WHICH CONSTITUTES ONE OF THE GREATEST INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO PEACE ON RECORD.

WILLIAM TEITELBAUM,

clipping quote -

Wheeling Register
Mar 7, 1917

WRHS



"If the majority of ticket holders desire to hear LaFollette, he will certainly appear here for an address, and you might underscore this statement," said Rabbi Silver in speaking to a Register representative last night.

March 10, '19
GISTER, SATURD

RABBI RAPS PRESS AND PRESIDENT IN PATRIOTISM TALK

Charging President Wilson with assuming powers that do not belong to him, in his actions in regard to arming merchantmen, and declaring Wheeling newspapers to have been unfair in the LaFollette affair, Rabbi A. H. Silver, speaking on "Patriotism, White and Red," in the Eoff Street temple last night, gave his views on topics ranging from LaFollette to possible war with Germany.

"One man in particular, maybe an amateur trying to be witty, tried to make the report as inflammatory as possible," was the way the Rabbi referred to the LaFollette case, here, charging that newspaper men misrepresented facts concerning the affair, probably through a misunderstanding of the case. A few excerpts from the address follow:

"In voting on the ship arming bill as he did Senator LaFollette acted as he believed was right.

"Filibustering serves to stop the majority from ruling, therefore it is undemocratic."

"When a question is an international one filibustering is a menace: no statesman should avail himself of it.

"Branding LaFollette as a traitor is uncalled for. It was a right of those twelve senators to vote against the bill. Anyone who calls them traitors is a fool.

"The meeting of citizens Monday night should have been open to the public, and carried on more American-like.

"President Wilson is guilty of assuming powers that do not belong to him, when he seeks to arm ships. He forgets that he is only an executive. I am glad to note the way in which congress acted. Absolute power never should be given to one man.

"Red patriotism is that heated, passionate, holy-roller type that shuts its eyes to reason and logic. Just because the United States has an issue with Germany there are men who call all Germans every name they can think of.

"White patriots are the only true patriots. United States patriotism differs from that of any other nation. It is built on a deep love for humanity, for we are an international people."

Politicians, orators, criers for an army and navy that "can lick the world," the "no-nothing pacifist who would turn the other cheek," and others of similar type were denounced as "Red Patriots."

