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Reel
152

Box
54

Folder
333

Crime in our big cities and what can the church do about it, 1929.

"CRIME IN OUR BIG CITIES AND WHAT
CAN THE CHURCH DO ABOUT IT."

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER.

THE TEMPLE, SUNDAY MORNING,

FEBRUARY 3, 1929, CLEVELAND, C.



Some of you are likely to be disappointed in what I have to say this morning. I have no revelations of any particular kind to make; I have conducted no private, secret investigation into the crime conditions of Cleveland, and I have received no confidential information; and I have no letters to send to the safety director, and no list of addresses to send.

This, of course, is not said in criticism of anyone, certainly not in criticism of the minister in our community who recently stirred up our community by his charge that crime and vice flourished in our midst "unashamed, unafraid and unabated." This minister undoubtedly was a man of courage and honesty. But the whole affair appeared to me rather small townish and a sort of an anachronism. That sort of thing was more popular a decade or two ago. In those days the ministers of certain denominations were unhappy unless they could lead some clamorous vice crusade every two or three years.

A minister today who is interested in the moral well-being of his community is wise if he chooses to work through organizations which have charged themselves with that responsibility, rather than to play the role of a reformer soloist. One is likely to attain greater results when one works with organizations already in the field in an effort to solve problems which are continuous,

rather than to work by himself. An organization is likely to give a more sustained attention to these problems, which cannot be solved in a day, or in a month, or in a year. And, again, he is sure to remove from himself the suspicion of being a seeker after publicity and notoriety.

Now the particular minister in question in our community is certainly beyond and above any such suspicion, but his activities might encourage other imitators of lesser integrity to seek this rather well known road to public attention; and that is bad; for we are likely to be treated again, as we were in the past, with that entire racket of preacher spies and muck rakers and vice crusaders and hell-raising parsons, an institution which we had hoped to have outlived by this time in the United States.

Crime and vice today in our great industrial centers are all too vast and extensive and their problems all too involved to be solved by any such simple methods as a raid or two upon speakeasies, or the wholesale round-up of the denizens of the underworld, only to be released the next day or the next week. And the church which puts its faith in such direct action methods is a shortsighted church, and the minister who hopes to clean up his city by gumshoeing for the police department only beguiles himself. The problem is too vast, involved and complicated for any such rudimentary method of solution.

This entire problem must be attacked by a

sustained and united and intelligent offensive on the part of the the social agencies in a community, the church included; and the causes of crime , the causes of vice, must be studied calmly and dispassionately by all the social forces of a community, and more particularly by the church. The church is not charged with the task either of making laws or of enforcing laws. It has a more difficult task. The church is charged with the task of creating, through quiet, persistent education, an ethical guidance, a social control, which is far more effective than legal prohibition, and without which social control all legal prohibitions are futile and ineffective. In the last analysis no law will be generally observed unless it represents the moral sentiments and habits of a people.

I repeat;--a truism which is often forgotten,--that no law, in the last analysis, will be generally observed unless it represents the moral sentiments and habits of the people. So that the primary concern of the church is not with the law, which is a suppression, but with the deeper layers of human life; with moral habits and standards of conduct in the individual, from which obedience to or resistance to law spring. At best law is only a part of social control, and a small part. The things you do or the things you do not do are determined not so much on what the law prescribes or prohibits. Our lives are directed largely by the moral tone and the social code of the people in whose midst we live, and the great

opportunity of the church is to influence that social code, that moral tone, not by invoking the strong-arm of the law, which is a desperate thing to do at best, but by training, quietly and patiently and persistently training each rising generation into finer and nobler patterns of thought and conduct. That is the business of the church.

And many churchmen fail to realize that it is much easier to write laws upon the statute books than to write them into the hearts of human beings. It is the business of the legislator to enact laws; it is the business of the executive to enforce law; it is the business of the church, as I see it, to make people want those laws; to change habits of thinking so that people will want to obey the law.

Thus, for example, the church would do a greater service to itself and to its cause if, instead of clamoring for the enforcement of the prohibition amendment, the Volstead Act; if, instead of fuming at each and every violator of that law; if, instead of summoning the police to close down this or that place where liquor traffic is carried on illegally,--tasks which do not belong to the church,--the church would devote itself to a systematic and scientific nation-wide educational campaign to convince people concerning the merits of this law. After all, this type of educational propaganda on the part of organized religion was responsible, in the first place, for the enactment of this law; and only this type of education will

ever make this law effective.

As things now stand, the church has failed to convince its own people of the desirability of this law, with the result that there are as many violators of the Volstead Act inside of the church as outside of the church; and I suppose if the census were taken it would be discovered that some of the finest wine cellars in the land belong to some of the most representative church people.

Now, if the church cannot persuade its own people,--and many of them the "best" people, so-called,--if the church cannot persuade its own people that the purchase of liquor is wrong, then the church ought not to be so assiduous in denouncing the police department for failing to arrest all the bootleggers in a community which cater to these respectable church people; for, after all, it is the respectable people and not the criminal that keep bootlegging going in the United States. This is no reflection on the prohibition law. I am speaking now of the province of the church. The church can render its greatest service to this law, and to any law, not by setting itself up as an arm of the executive, or of the law enforcement body, or of the police department in the city, but by devoting itself to that sphere in which it and it alone can be most effective,--the mind and the soul of a man.

The church ought not to permit itself to be sidetracked. It ought to deal with fundamentals, and if there is widespread crime and vice in a community, the

church, it seems to me, ought to share some of the blame for it, instead of pointing a finger of scorn and accusation at the political machine or at the police department, and saying, "They are the guilty one; they are responsible for conditions." The church ought to say, "They, and we, all of us, are responsible for these conditions!" For when there is widespread crime and vice, the church also has failed in its work, namely, the molding of character, the guiding of people into social ways of living. It has failed society in the deeper reaches of human life.

Now, there is no doubt in the world that crime has increased at an appalling rate in our land; that it is still increasing, and that year by year it is becoming a greater and greater menace in our land. I don't know whether you are aware of the statistics, but here are a few that might indicate the appalling extent of the crime situation in the United States, Cleveland included.

In 1924 there were 10,000 murders in the United States; in England and in Scotland there were 151. In 1925 there were 563 murders committed in the city of Chicago; in the city of London, twice the size of Chicago, 50. And in the city of Cleveland, which has a population of about one-seventh of the city of London, 86 murders. In the whole of Canada the ratio of murders to population is 1 to 200,000; in the United States it is 7 to 100,000. In the city of New York, in 1925, there were 1,445 robberies, and in the whole of England and Wales, 95. The 1927 record

for the city of Cleveland: 1196 robberies and assaults; 2242 burglaries and house-breaking; 6541 auto stealings and larceny; 347 cuttings, shooting and assaults; 1190 safe cracking and miscellaneous crimes; 138 murders and manslaughters, a total of 11,654 penitentiary offenses reported during 1927, and of these 11,654 crimes less than 3,000 arrests have been made to date, October 21, 1928.

In other words, more than nine months after these crimes were committed, only 3,000 arrests were made in the face of 11,654 crimes committed, and the report says: "It would be strange, indeed, if city officials could survey such a record with satisfaction, yet few steps have been taken to correct the situation." Cleveland is self-evidently fighting a losing battle with crime, yet no steps have been taken by the city management to increase the size of the crime-fighting forces of the city.

One of the most discouraging facts about the increase of crime in the United States is that most of the offenders are either juveniles or young people between the ages of 18 and 25. It has been estimated that the cost of crime to the United States annually is something like ten billions of dollars, about one-half the cost of the World War; about ten times our annual budget for education. We are the most criminal country in the world, the least law-abiding, the least self-disciplined.

What are the causes of this crime increase in the United States? Well, there are many. A great deal

of study has gone into the subject, and I have no time this morning to dwell on all of them, but only particularly with those causes with which the church can, in some measure at least, wrestle.

In the first place, there are general causes of crime which may be found in every land in the world,-- poverty, unemployment, lack of education, lack of opportunities for recreation, lack of normal outlets for the energy of our youth. These conditions prevail here and prevail throughout the world. In a sense, they are less prevalent in the United States than in other parts of the world. But there is this psychological difference: the poor and the dispossessed of the Old World are more resigned to their lot than those in our land. They are more fatalistically addicted to their deprivations. Generations of poverty, generations of being ground down, have given these denied and dispossessed of the world, in the Old World, a sort of fatalistic resignation to their condition which their confreres in this land do not possess.

They fret under these misfortunes, these restrictions, and frequently that resentment breaks out in lawlessness. Why, here is a great opportunity for organized religion, a time-honored, ancient challenge for the church to work together with other social agencies, and if need be, to inspire those social agencies to work, that the curse of poverty be lifted progressively more and more from the shoulders of human beings; that everyone who labors

shall be protected against the disabilities of unemployment; that every child born in this gracious land shall have an opportunity to educate himself, to acquire those tools with which a man alone can achieve success in life; to see to it that there are sufficient recreational centers for our young people, wholesome and stimulating. There is a constructive job for the church to devote itself to.

There are other causes for crime, some of them peculiar to our age and to our time,--the greater freedom between the sexes; the greater moral laxity which has set in all along the line; the weakening of parental authority; the tragic increase in the number of broken homes throughout ourland,--and many of this flotsam and jetsam of social wreckage that come to our juvenile/hail courts from broken homes. Here again is a vast opportunity of the church to work continuously and intelligently together with all other agencies in a community and throughout the land, to build up the morale of the people, the morale of our people, which has broken down in the last decade or two as a result of the war, as a result of our increasing prosperity.

It is a far greater thing to do, and a far more lasting thing to do, than clamourously to summon the patrol wagon of our city to close down this or that house of ill repute. This work can be done only through slow and patient educational work. That is the opportunity of the church.

There are other causes of crime. One of the greatest of course is the ease with which the criminal can get off. That in turn means that the police department of the community is being run by a political machine; that it has been corrupted. When politics enters the office of the prosecution of a city, and the police department, then it is inevitable that crime will increase. What happened in Chicago is a direct result of corrupt politics of the city of Chicago. Commercialized vice and crime are protected by politicians, and it is no wonder, then, that in the city of Chicago six policeman are shot for every criminal that is hung.

The inefficiency of the police is another factor contributing to the spread of crime. In the city of St. Louis, in 1924, there were 13,444 felonies committed and only 964 arrests made. The criminal knows that he has nineteen chances in twenty to escape arrest. That is a pretty good chance to take. The inefficiency of our police department members has come in for great criticism. The National Crime Commission, of Washington, two years ago conducted an investigation. The investigation committee was headed by ex-Governor Lowden of Illinois, and the police of some of our large cities were tested for intelligence, and a special test was made of the police of the city of Cleveland,--the same army intelligence test was applied to the police of our city, in Cleveland. Only 3% made Class A as against 9% of the United States private

soldier. Not a single detective made Class A; and only 4% made Class B, and only 23% made Class C; 25% of our detectives were of markedly inferior mentality. Of our patrolmen, only 33% were found to have average intelligence, and 25%--one out of four--were found to belong definitely to the moron grade of feeble-mindedness. And the question which this report asks is: "How can such men be expected, or even trained to apprehend criminals?"

I understand conditions in our police department have improved considerably since this investigation was made, and I understand also that conditions in Cleveland are generally better than in other cities in this country.

There are other causes which contribute to the spread of crime,--delaying prosecution. The marvelous thing about the crime situation in England, for example, is this: not that England punishes its criminals more severely than we do; not at all. The severity of punishment has nothing to do with the spread of crime. Not so long ago there were two hundred and some sixty crimes in England punishable by death. Pickpocketing was punishable by death, and it is reported that at no time was pickpocketing so widespread as on those occasions when an offender was hung, when the people would turn out in large numbers to see the man that is hung. Severity of punishment is no deterrent of crime, but swiftness and surety are. The knowledge that detection and swift punishment would follow

inevitably for the perpetration of a crime is what deters the criminal; and that we haven't in the United States.

Our unintelligent juries are said to be another contributing factor to the situation; the possibility of too many appeals; professional bondsmen. There are any number of factors which go into the situation.

What is the cure? Well, there are immediate possibilities for doing something, the most important of which, of course, is to smash the political machine; and that is not the job of the church. That is the obligation of every law-abiding and self-respecting citizen within a community. Political machines can be smashed, have been smashed. The trouble is that most of us are indifferent about the political administration of our community until conditions become so rotten and so terrible that we simply have to bestir ourselves in self-defense, and we clean house. But like a poor house-keeper, we clean house once and then we forget about it. There is a political machine in Cleveland that has to be smashed. It can be. We made beginnings of it at the last election. Now it requires aggressive following up. There are organizations in our city which are pledged to that task. There is a Citizens League; there is a Cleveland Association for Criminal Justice.

The citizens of our community ought to get behind these organizations, because only through organized effort can any good be accomplished by them. We ought to

insist,--and here the press of our city can do a great deal of our good,--on a higher grade of policeman and upon more policemen. Our criminal code ought to be simplified, and here is where our bar association can be of tremendous help. It is antequated; it is too cumbersome. From what I understand, it is more concerned with protecting the criminal than protecting the community. And above all, an effort should be made ,--and here is where the judiciary of a community can be of service,--a concerted effort should be made to eliminate delays of trials, where a man's guilt or a man's innocence would be swiftly declared.

Now, is all this the function of the church? Not at all. The church is not the only institution in the life of a community. What the church ought to devote itself to are these underlying facts, these mainsprings of conduct, these sources and origins from which human actions spring. After all, all law ultimately is an ethical problem. Moral people observe the law; immoral people violate the law. The church ought to get into the realm of motifs, of habits, of patterns and their work; the church ought to busy itself with children and adolescents and their work, giving direction and setting up ideals, molding character, fashioning patterns of conduct. The church ought to get into the realm of grown men and women, and hold up aloft, in an age of shifting standards, in an age of moral confusion, in an age when most people don't know whither they are bound,--hold up before the eyes of

the confused men and women today those enduring and abiding ideals of social life,--purity, chastity, loyalty, aggressiveness.

I sometimes think that the time is fast approaching when the American people will have to have a new Puritan revival. If America is to fulfill its destiny; if it is not to be victimized by its own continued prosperity; if it is not to continue to become morally more slovenly, more flabby and weak, it will have to, in an effort to survive as a great race, reform itself after a higher pattern of living and thinking. It will have to resume a more rigid discipline of conduct and live by higher standards of human life and family life, and in this new reformation, which is desperately needed--and no one knows how desperately, unless he has been in close touch with crime and vice situations throughout the land,--in this work of the new reformation the church has its supreme opportunity of preparing the minds and the souls of men for it.

To sum up: religion has a definite moral mission in society; that it performs its mission through education only. That is its only weapon. Education is an arduous task, for it is slow and patient and does not show immediate results; but the church which forsakes this task and turns to the more dramatic and exciting, but altogether ineffectual methods of moralizing a community, is a short-sighted church and a foolish church.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE ADDRESS

"CRIME IN OUR BIG CITIES AND WHAT
CAN THE CHURCH DO ABOUT IT?"

BY

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER
AT THE TEMPLE, Feb. 3d, 1929

Some of you are likely to be disappointed this morning. I have no revelations of any kind to make. I have conducted no secret investigation into the vice and crime conditions of Cleveland; and I have received no confidential ^{information} ~~investigation~~. I shall accordingly send no letters to the Safety Director nor publish any list of addresses for guidance of the policy.

I have no criticism to make, mind you, of the minister who recently stirred up our community with his charges that vice and crime flourished in Cleveland, unafraid and unabated. He was both courageous and honest. Only the whole business seemed to me a bit small-townish and anachronistic. These things were more common a decade or two ago. At that time ministers of certain denominations were quite unhappy unless they could lead a clamorous vice crusade every two or three years. ^{This} ~~which~~ was part of the "revivalist" type of religion - religion by stampede, hysteria and the patrol wagon. ^P A minister today in any of our large cities serves the cause of civic morality best by working through organizations which have charged themselves with such responsibility, rather than by playing the role of a reformer soloist. ^{The} ~~This~~ method of attacking a major civic problem which is recurrent or continuous, through organizations already in the field, is much more effective and promises ^a much more sustained application to its solution. Incidentally it removes ^{the} ~~any~~ suspicion from the minister that he is seeking

publicity or personal prestige. Dr. DeBow is certainly above any such suspicion. But his example may inspire imitators of lesser integrity who may exploit this well-known short-cut to public attention. We shall thus again be treated to that racket of self-appointed ^{preacher-}spies and snoopers, muck-rakers and hell-raising parsons, ^{who} ~~which~~ we had hoped ^{were} ~~was~~ a thing of the past.

The problems of crime and vice in our great industrial cities are too vast and complicated to be solved by any such simple methods as a raid upon a few speak-easies or a spectacular round-up of the denizens of the under-world. The church which puts its trust in such "direct action" methods is a short-sighted church and the minister who hopes to clean up a city by ^{acting the sleuth} ~~gun-shooting~~ for the policy department only beguiles himself.

Crime and vice today must be attacked by a sustained, united and intelligent offensive on the part of all the organized social forces in a community - the church included. And the causes of crime and vice ^{must} ~~should~~ command the closest study on the part of all these agencies - and of the church particularly.

The church is not charged with the responsibility either of making laws or of enforcing them. It has a more difficult task. Through quiet persistent education and ethical guidance the church must build up a social control which is more powerful than legal prohibitions and without which all legal prohibitions are of no avail. In the last analysis no law will be generally observed unless it represents the moral sentiments and habits of a people. The prime concern is therefore not with ~~the~~ law but with the deeper layers of a people's life, with moral habits and standards of conduct, whence obedience or resistance to law springs.

At best law is only a part of social control. The number of things which we do or do not do because of law is after all very limited. Our lives are largely directed by the moral tone and the social code of the people among whom we live. The great opportunity of the church is to influence this social code, not by invoking the arm of the law but by the slow and patient process of training each new generation into nobler patterns of thought and conduct.

Many churchmen fail to realize that it is much easier to get laws written down on statute books than written into the hearts of men. The business of legislators is to write laws in books. The business of executives is to enforce them. The business of the church is to educate people to want them.

Thus the church and its ministers would do much more for the cause of prohibition if instead of clamoring for ~~the~~ ^{its} enforcement and fuming at its violators and summoning the police to close down this or that speak-easy, they would carry on a systematic and continuous educational campaign throughout the land to convince people of the fundamental worthiness of ~~the~~ ^{this} law. This type of educational propaganda achieved the enactment of the law in the first place and a similar propaganda alone can make it effective ^{in the future}. As things stand now the church has failed to convince even its own constituents of the moral value of this law. There are as many violators of the Volstead Act inside the church as outside. I suppose that if a census were taken it would be discovered that some of the choicest wine cellars in the land ~~were~~ ^{are} in the homes of some of our most respectable church deacons. If the church can not persuade its own people - and many of them are the "best" people, that it is wrong to buy liquor, it should not blame the police for failing to arrest all the bootleggers who sell liquor to these good people. It is the

"respectable" people of our land and not the criminals who keep bootlegging alive.

The church ought not ^{to} permit itself to be side-tracked. It should deal with fundamentals. Its province is the minds and souls of men. When crime and vice are widespread the church should share in the burden of guilt along with all other social institutions. It is not justified in simply pointing the finger of scorn and accusation at the police department and the political machine and say, "they are the blame." Nor can it salve its ^{con}science simply by clamoring for a rigid enforcement of the laws. It must realize that it has failed in the deeper reaches of human life. In its own sphere it too has broken down.

Our record of crime is a national disgrace. The increase of crime in our midst is appalling. The causes are many. The church can not hope to wrestle with all of them. Other social agencies should do that. There are some factors however, in the crime situation with which the church ought to concern itself.

Much crime originates in poverty, unemployment, the lack of educational opportunities and the lack of recreational opportunities. The church ought to sensitize its people to a keen realization of these facts and summon them to constructive planning and action in these fields. Some of the causes of present day crime are characteristic of our age - the greater freedom between the sexes, the laxity in parental guidance, and the broken homes. Here again ^{are} ~~our~~ vast opportunities for the kind of education and ~~an~~ inspiration which the church can give.

~~The other important factors which contribute to the increase of~~

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rivalries, the story of their three hundred assassinations during the last ten years, of their vast wealth, of their corruption of city administration, of their lawlessness and graft, of their gun battles on public thoroughfares, of their complete contempt and disregard for Law is unlike anything in the history of peoples, savage or civilized, since the beginning of time. The whole life of the city has been defouled. There can be no peace and no security, no civic life in a community with such a cancer of crime eating at the vitals of community life.

But Chicago is not unique. Look at New York. I can't speak of Cleveland, the facts are not yet all revealed. What a seething mess of iniquity has been revealed in that city within the last year; a city administration honeycombed with graft, the courts, which are supposed to be the last stronghold of law and civic industry, bespattered with bribery and corruption, the police department charged with the duty of and property protecting the lives/of its citizens, turning extortionists and preying upon the very people whom they are supposed to protect.

A recent issue of a magazine summarized what has already been revealed in the city of New York during the last few months.

"Thus far one judge has been sentenced to prison, one has been removed, two have been indicted, seven have resigned their lucrative posts of honor and others are scheduled to go. A justice of the Supreme Court has disappeared - vanished completely. Approximately twenty lawyers face immediate disbarment proceedings. One policeman has been convicted, eleven others indicted, seven dismissed, and twenty-seven suspended on charges. A high city official has resigned under fire, and his assistant

I am afraid that there will be no solution in the United States until the Law is amended or repealed in such a way as to take the profit out of bootlegging.

Now it may be too late. It may be that this generation of criminals which the Volstead Act reared in our country will not return to lawful pursuits even after the Prohibition Amendment is appended or modified. It may be that they will look for ways of making easy money to which they have habituated themselves during the past decade. It may be that an entire generation will have to pay the price for a noble experiment which did not succeed. But surely the time has come when we must lay the axe at the roots of this poison, fruit-bearing tree if only to save the future generations.

I am not entering into the merits or demerits of prohibition. I was for it. I spoke for it and I voted for it. But clearly the byproducts of this Law have proved so bad, unforeseen though they were, so harmful, so menacing, that they more than counterbalance any good that has or may be achieved by the Prohibition Law.

The Prohibition Law may well have succeeded among a people more law-abiding than the American people, among a people more homogeneous than the American people. It may have succeeded in an age which did not suffer from the muddy backwash of the saturnalia of the last war, for every war leaves after it a hang-over.

It may have succeeded in a less restless age. I say it may have succeeded. I wish it had.

But it hasn't succeeded and is not likely to succeed and it becomes clearer and clearer to an impartial observer that the Law is setting up nests of rich criminals in every one of our large cities. It is corrupting government, undermining government institutions.

Nothing can be said for booze and liquor; nothing in its favor. A people can be prosperous and happy without it.

But the Volstead Act is not the whole story. And let's not beguile ourselves into thinking that our American criminal record is due entirely to the Prohibition Amendment. We were the most criminal nation in the world before Prohibition and we are likely to be even after the Prohibition Law is amended or repealed unless we do two things. Unless we train ourselves and our children, we ourselves, unless we train ourselves and our children into a greater respect for law as such and unless we take a more active and a more vital interest in our city government and in our institutions.

A fact frequently overlooked is this; that it is the decent citizen who subsidizes the bootlegger and it is he who pours the gold into the coffers of the lawless one; that it is he who has endowed crime.

There is a great element of hypocrisy in all of us. Presumably, we all like to have a Prohibition Law on the statute books to salve our conscience and well-stocked cellars at home to warm our stomachs. There is a great element of hypocrisy in the average American who likes to profess virtues which he has no intention of practicing. We enact laws for the benefit of other people.

Many of us voted for the Prohibition Law because it would do the workingman a good turn, with the result that it is we now who have the

booze parties and it is our sons and daughters who are chasing about with whisky flasks. The working man has been saved but we are going to Hell through it.

We must learn to respect the laws which we make or not make them. You know there is an element of piracy and lawlessness in the whole system of American life, business and industry, I suppose a survival of the old frontier days when every man was a law unto himself. But don't you forget this, that the gangster has learned the trick of hiring highly skillful legal talent who can fight the Law and ^{of} ~~by~~ buying up judges and whole city administrations. He has learned this trick from respected American business practice.

Recently Mr. Wickersham in an address stated the following:

"A surprising number of our people, otherwise of responsibility in the community, have drifted into the extraordinary notion that laws are made for those who choose to obey them. And, in addition, our law enforcement machinery is suffering from many infirmities arising out of its technicalities, its circumlocutions, its involved procedure, and too often, I regret, from inefficient and delinquent officials."

"Abundant evidence has been spread before the American people for years past of the need of a thorough overhauling of our whole system of criminal justice. Every day furnishes examples of the absence of that wholesome respect for law which ought to be characteristic of a self-governing people."

We must train ourselves into reverence for Law and our children, our Jewish children. For three thousand years we prided ourselves, we Jews, on being a nation law-abiding, law-revering, practically free from crime. Our Rabbis declared that if once in seventy years, once in seventy years, a Jew was found guilty of murder, there must be something wrong with the Sanhedrin, with the law courts which sentenced him for criminality was practically unknown in Isfael.

Our record in this country up to the days of Volstead was a clean record. Very few of our boys were found in the jails and penitentiaries of this country and almost none of our girls. Who ever heard of Jews killing? Who ever heard of Jews as hired assassins?

Unfortunately the whirlpool of lawlessness which has grown to such terrific power in this country has also sucked into it some of our Jewish young men. Jewish names are not missing today from the unholy records of bootleggers and gamblers and racketeers and vice leaders and Jewish quarters in all of the large cities of this country are not free from the pestilence of Jewish gamblers. And our own city of Cleveland and its Jewish sections are not free from their presence.

Now it is very hard and very unpleasant to point the finger of accusation against yourselves. It is much easier, I am sure, for a Rabbi to say the bootleggers, why they are Italians, Poles, Irish, not you. But that can't be said. We have our fair proportion of them. And the problem is ours, yours and mine. And every Jewish institution and every Jewish Synagogue and Temple and school is burdened with that problem.

to the task will the American people free itself from the tentacles of this octopus which is strangling our American life.

The criminal has hurled a challenge to American democracy, to our free institutions, to our peace and security. It is high time that we take up the gauntlet and answer the challenge.



crime, the political manipulations of our police departments, the unintelligency of our police, the delays in prosecution, the unintelligent juries, the professional bondmen, the antiquated criminal code should be handled by secular agencies within the community such as The Bar Association, The Citizen's League, The Cleveland Association for ~~the~~ Criminal Justice and the Judiciary.

The church performs its full duty when it functions as a dynamo of moral idealism in the community and as a training ground for character.



1. Dis appointed - conducted.
2. no criticism - small - touch -
3. A minister to-day - reformer socialist - ul. brw -
4. Cur voice - too mild - simple matters - said -
- Church - "direct action"
5. Must be attacked -
6. The Church is not changed - through Education -
- In last analysis no law -
- The primary concern
- At best law is only a part - The no. things -
- Our lives - The Church great defect -
influence Social Code - arm, Law Training
7. Many churches fail to realize, easier -
The business, the legislator -
 - (1) The Church would never - democracy -
 - (2) As things stand now - fails to confront
its own constitution - as many
violations
 - (3) If a crisis - anti-cellars -
 - (4) If Church cannot be made -
 - (5) It is "respectable" - Keep brotherly love alive
8. Side-trail - fundamental - When Cur - widespread
- have broken, just -

1. ^{Some of} You are likely to be disappointed this morning.
 I have no ^{of any character at all} resolutions to make. I have conducted no
^{personal} secret investigations into vice and crime conditions
 in Cleveland, and I have ~~never~~ received no private
 and confidential information ^{from this} bearing on the subject.
 I ~~have~~ ^{shall} accordingly ~~not~~ send no letters to the
 Safety Committee ^{nor} publish any list of addresses for the guidance
 of the police.
2. I have no criticism to make, mind you, of the ~~former~~
^{methodical} ~~methodical~~ ministers who recently started up our common
 with his charges that vice ^{is} rampant flourished in Cl. in abundance
 and unrepentant and unabated. - It seemed to me a bit
 small-townish and anachronistic. - ^{They think} It was more
 common a decade or two ago. ~~at that time~~ Ministers
 of certain denominations were ^{quite} perhaps unless they
 could ^{claypenny} ~~had~~ a ~~little~~ vice ^{from time to time} ~~circles~~. It was part
 of the "revivalist" type of religion - religion by stampede,
 and the paternal wagon.
3. ^A Ministers, to-day in our large cities, secure the cause of
 civic morality best by nothing through organizations
 which have charged themselves with such responsibility
 rather than by playing the role of a supreme solo-
 ist. This method of attacking a major ^{problem} ^{wherein with serious present} ^{Organizations already in the field}
 through a ~~collective body~~ ^{is} much more
 effective ^{and} ^{promises} more sustained application
 to the ^{relation of the problem} ~~cause~~ and incidentally ^{any} ~~abolish~~ the ~~manifest~~
^{reputation} ~~charge~~ of seeking publicity & personal prestige. Dr.
 Nelson is certainly ^{above} ~~begun~~ any such suspicion. Yet
 his example may inspire imitators of lesser integrity
 who will exploit this ^{well-known} ~~assumed~~ short-cut to
 public ^{attention} notice. We shall ^{thus again as with the past} ~~be~~ ^{pleased} ~~by~~
~~to see as we were in the past with a~~ ^{with}
~~an army~~ ^{of} self-appointed ^{preacher} ~~spies~~ and snoopers,

Vice crusades and belt-raising parsons -
TH. H. B. 11

4. Crime, to-day, and vice in our great industrial cities are, too, involved and complicated to be solved by any such simple methods as a raid upon a ^{few} speakeasies or the spectacular round-up of the denizens of the underworld - only to be released the next day or the next week. The Church which ~~admits~~ ^{seeks} to fight its trust ~~is~~ ^{is} such in such "direct-action" methods is a short-sighted, shallow - and the minister who ~~seeks to~~ ^{tries to} clean up the city ~~by~~ ^{by} showing for the police dept ~~only~~ ^{only} bequies himself.

5. ~~The problems of~~ ^{the problems of} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~vice~~ ^{vice} to-day must be attacked by ~~the~~ ^{an} ~~intelligently, and united~~ ^{intelligently, and united} ~~sustained~~ ^{sustained} efforts on the part of all the org. social forces in a comm. interested in them - the church included. And the causes of crime & vice ~~should~~ ^{should} command the closest study on the part of these agencies ~~and more particularly the church; particularly.~~

6. The Church is not charged with the responsibility
either of making laws or of enforcing them. ~~Each~~
~~has its own agency to~~ It has a new different
task. Through ^{quiet, persistent} education and ethical guidance it
must build up a social control which is
more powerful than legal prohibitions and
without which all ~~such~~ legal prohibitions are
of no avail. In the last analysis no law
will be generally observed unless it represents
the moral sentiment and habits of a people.
~~The church is one of the great social agencies~~
The primary concern of the church is therefore
not with the law ^{but} with the deeper layers of
a people's life, ^{with moral habits and standards of conduct} ~~where~~ ~~unconscious~~ obedience
or resistance to law ~~is formed~~ ^{is formed}. At best
law is only a part of social control. The

no. 3 things which we do or do not do because of law is after all very limited. Our ~~best~~ lives are largely directed by ~~the~~ the moral tone ^{and} the ~~thought patterns~~ social code into of the ~~people~~ ^{people} ~~namely~~ ^{which we move} when we live. The church's great opportunity is to influence that social code - not by ~~appearing the~~ ^{crossing the} ~~law~~ ^{axiom of the} ~~law~~ ^{law} but by ~~teaching~~ ^{teaching} ~~education and~~ ^{education} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~slow and patient~~ ^{slow and patient} process of training each new generation into ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~novel~~ ^{novel} patterns of thought and conduct -

7. Many churchmen fail to realize that it is much easier to get laws written down as statute books than written into the hearts of men. The business of legislators is to write laws in books. The business of executives is to enforce them. The business of the church is to train people to want them. Thus e.g. Churches + ministers would do much more for their cause if instead of ~~concerning~~ ^{concerning} for the enforcement of the Volstead law, and ~~summoning~~ ^{summoning} at ~~the~~ ^{the} violators, and ~~summoning~~ ^{summoning} the police to close down this or that speakeasy, they would carry on a system. and deliberate ~~threat~~ ^{threatening} campaign ~~summoning~~ ^{summoning} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~lead~~ ^{lead} to convince men concerning the fundamental merits of the law. This type of educat. propaganda achieved the enactment of the law in the first place. It alone can make it effective. As things stand now, the church has failed to convince its ~~own~~ ^{own} ~~contributions~~ ^{contributions} of the moral values of the law. There are as many violators of the Proh. ~~Prohibition~~ ^{Prohibition} inside the church as outside.

I suppose that if a census were taken it would
be discovered that some of the finest new cellars
of our land are in the houses of many of our most
respectable church deacons. ~~and~~ ^{And} if the
church cannot persuade its own people - that
and many of them the "best" people - that it is wrong
to buy the liquor, - why blame the police for failing
to ~~prevent~~ arrest the large army of all the bootleggers
who sell them the liquor. It is the "respectable"
people of our land ~~who~~ and not the criminals
who keep bootlegging alive.

8. The Church ought not to permit itself to be sidetracked. It should deal with fundamentals. Its province is the mind and soul of man. When crime & vice are widespread, the church must share in the burden of guilt along with all the social watchtowers. It cannot simply point the finger, read and make accusation at the police department, and ~~say not say~~ ^{at the police, magistrates, and} ~~there is~~ the blame. Nor can it solve its conscience simply by clamoring for rigid enforcement of the laws. It has failed in the deeper reaches of human life. It has been inefficient in its own sphere.

9. There is no doubt that crime is widespread.
appalling. (1924)

1) Murders. U.S. 10,000; Eng. & Scot. 151.

(92) Chicago. 563. London 50 (2 population).

Cleveland $\frac{1}{8}$ pop. = 86 murders.

(2) Robberies (1927) Canada 1 to 100,000; U.S. 7 to 100,000
U.Y.C. 1445 Eng. + Wals. 95
Cleveland (1927) 1.086.

Oberland (1927) 1.086.

Read (3) ^{Car. record in 1927} Juvenile. 18-25 → 1850. 1 in 4600
1927. 1 in 1000

(5) Cost. 10 billions = $\frac{1}{2}$ Cost of World War. = 10
Times what we spend on Education.

10. Causes. Many. Many studies have been made -

- (1) There are gen. causes not specific to U.S. (a) Poverty
(b) Unemployment (c) Lack of Educat. Opportunities
(d) Lack of Recreat. Sport. - less in U.S. -
but in Old World people resigned, not in U.S.
(A) Here is sphere of Org. Rel -

(3) Specific to U.S. - Inefficiency & Corruption -

(1) Politics. Thompson - Chicago - 6 policemen killed
in every criminal hung. graft - protection.

(2) Inefficiency & Police. St. Louis 1924.

13,444 felons. only 964 arrests
only 1 in 20 sent to jail.

A. Army Intelligence Test - Cleveland

(3) Welfare in Perspective.

(4) Too ~~too~~ unintelligent juvies

(5) Too many appeals.

(2) Cause characteristic of our age. - ~~for~~

(1) Greater freedom of Sexes.

(2) Automobile Facility of Parents

(3) Broken Homes -

(A) Here again - Church.

11. Cure - Eternal Vigilance

(1) Smash Pot. Machines. (4) Minimizing Delays

(2) More Police & Better -


(3) Simplify Criminal Code. | Challenge - Swift -
Chas. J. Fisher

12. Challenge to every citizen - Strengthen such
as Cleveland Assoc. for Criminal Justice.



Army intelligence test applied to police of C. - only 3%
made Class A as against 9% of U.S. privates -

Not a single detective made Class A. Only 4% Class
B. + 23% Class C. : 25% of markedly inferior
mentality -

of patrolmen only 33%  has average Intell.
25% belong to major grade of feeble-mindedness

And given asked by report: "How can such men be
expected or even trained to apprehend criminals?"

Based on Survey of C. Found. 9/19/21. Cont. has refused

AN ABSTRACT OF THE ADDRESS

"CRIME IN OUR BIG CITIES AND WHAT CAN
THE CHURCH DO ABOUT IT?"

BY

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER
AT THE TEMPLE, FEB. 3d, 1929.

Some of you are likely to be disappointed this morning. I have no revelations of any kind to make. I have conducted no secret investigation into the vice and crime conditions of Cleveland; and I have received no confidential information. I shall accordingly send no letters to the Safety Director nor publish any list of addresses for guidance of the police.

I have no criticism to make, mind you, of the minister who recently stirred up our community with his charges that vice and crime flourish in Cleveland, unafraid and unabated. He was both courageous and honest. Only the whole business seemed to me a bit small-townish and anachronistic. These things were more common a decade or two ago. At that time ministers of certain denominations were quite unhappy unless they could lead a clamorous vice crusade every two or three years. This was part of the "revivalist" type of religion - religion by stampede, hysteria and the patrol wagon.

A minister today in any of our large cities serves the cause of civic morality best by working through organizations which have charged themselves with such responsibility, rather than by playing the role of a reformer soloist. The method of attacking a major civic problem which is recurrent or continuous, through organizations already in the field, is much more effective and promises a much more sustained application to its solution. Incidentally it removes the suspicion from the minister that he is

seeking publicity or personal prestige. Dr. DeBow is certainly above any such suspicion. But his example may inspire imitators of lesser integrity who may exploit this well-known short-cut to public attention. We shall thus again be treated to that racket of self-appointed preacher-spies and snoopers, muck-rakers and hell-raising parsons, who we had hoped were a thing of the past.

Begin
The problems of crime and vice in our great industrial cities are too vast and complicated to be solved by any such simple methods as a raid upon a few speak-easies or a spectacular round-up of the denizens of the under-world. The church which puts its trust in such "direct action" methods is a short-sighted church, and the minister who hopes to clean up a city by acting the sleuth for the police department only beguiles himself.

Crime and vice today must be attacked by a sustained, united and intelligent offensive on the part of all the organized social forces in a community ^{of which} the church ^{is only one.} ~~included.~~ ~~And~~ the causes of crime and vice must command the closest study on the part of all these agencies - and of the church particularly.

The church is not charged with the responsibility either of making laws or of enforcing them. It has a more difficult task. Through quiet, persistent education and ethical guidance, the church must build up a social control which is more powerful than legal prohibitions, and without which all legal prohibitions are of no avail. In the last analysis no law will be generally observed unless it represents the moral sentiments and habits of a people. The prime concern ^{of the church} is therefore not with law, but with the deeper layers of a people's life, with moral habits and standards of conduct, whence obedience or resistance to law springs.

At best law is only a part of social control. The number of things which we do or do not do because of law, is after all very limited. Our lives are largely directed by the moral tone and the social code of the people among whom we live. The great opportunity of the church is to influence this social code, not by invoking the arm of the law, but by the slow and patient process of training each new generation into nobler patterns of thought and conduct.

Many churchmen fail to realize that it is much easier to get laws written ~~down~~^{into} statute books than ~~write~~^{enact} into the hearts of men. The business of legislators is to ~~make~~^{enact} laws, ~~in books~~. The business of executives is to enforce them. The business of the church is to educate people to want them.

Thus the church and its ministers would do much more for the cause of prohibition if instead of clamoring for its enforcement and fuming at its violators and summoning the police to close down this or that speak-easy, they would carry on a systematic and continuous educational campaign throughout the land to convince people of the fundamental worthiness of this law. This type of educational propaganda achieved the enactment of the law in the first place and a similar propaganda alone can make it effective in the future. As things stand now the church has failed to convince even its own constituents of the moral value of this law. There are as many violators of the Volstead Act inside the church as outside. I suppose that if a census were taken it would be discovered that some of the choicest wine cellars in the land are in the homes of some of our most respectable church deacons. If the church can not persuade its own people - and many of them are the "best" people, that it is wrong to buy liquor, it should not blame the police for failing to arrest all the bootleggers who sell liquor to these good people. It is the

"respectable" people of our land and not the criminals who keep bootlegging alive.

The church ought not to permit itself to be side-tracked. It should deal ^{only} with fundamentals. Its province is the minds and souls of men. When crime and vice are widespread, the church should share in the burden of guilt along with all other social institutions. It is not justified in simply pointing the finger of scorn and accusation at the police department, ^{or} ~~and~~ the political machine and say: "their's is the blame." Nor can it salve its conscience simply by clamoring for a rigid enforcement of the laws. It must realize that it ^{too} ~~has~~ failed ^{and failed} in the deeper reaches of human life. In its own sphere it too has broken down.

Our record of crime is a national disgrace. The increase of crime in our midst is appalling. The causes are many. The church can not hope to wrestle with all of them. Other social agencies should do that. There are some factors however in the crime situation with which the church ought to concern itself.

Much crime originates in poverty, unemployment, the lack of educational opportunities and the lack of recreational opportunities. The church ought to sensitize its people to a keen realization of these facts and summon them to constructive planning and action in these fields. Some of the causes of present day crime are characteristic of our age - the greater freedom between the sexes, the laxity in parental guidance, the broken homes ^{due to divorce and desertion}. Here again are vast opportunities for the kind of education and inspiration which the church can give.

The other important factors which contribute to the increase of crime, the political manipulations of our police departments, the unintelligence of our police, the delays in prosecution, the un-

~~intelligent juries~~, the professional bondmen, the antiquated criminal code, should be handled by secular agencies within the community such as ^{over} ~~The~~ Bar Association, The Citizen's League, ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~the~~ The Cleveland Association for Criminal Justice and the Judiciary.

The church performs its full duty when it functions as a dynamo of moral idealism in the community, and as a training ground for character, *where it is on the alert to guide and protect childhood and youth, and labor for the maintenance, the highest standards of personal*



We have got to save our children from that zestful iniquity. We have got to surround them from their earliest childhood, with such educational facilities, such moral and ethical guidance and training that they will be ours and not the underworld's.

And we have got to drive from our midst as lepers every Jew who sets up centers of gambling and vice and iniquity in a Jewish neighborhood. They corrupt our youth. They are a menace to our boys and girls.

And lastly, my friends, ~~and~~ ^{the} good elements in our communal life must enter more aggressively into the civic, political life. ^{It is evident also that} The underworld makes no considerable headway ^{anywhere} unless it is allied with government, unless it has won over as confederates, ^{the} politicians, ^{and the} members of the legislative or executive bodies of a city. ~~The whole system~~

^{Begin} ~~of administration in many parts of the country requires overhauling, sanitation.~~ ^{and sanitation} ~~The administration of many of our large cities requires overhauling.~~ In many instances it is too complex, too unwieldy. But this can

^{only} be done if and when the educator, the competent, the ~~so-called~~ decent citizens of a city ^{come} in and take hold. When you permit a city to fall into the hands of professional ward heelers and cheap politicians you can expect only a condition where vice will find a ready ally in politics, ~~and~~ ^{as such}

~~then you are sold out.~~ ^{but it can and should urge the best equipped and qualified} The church can ^{take no part in politics} ~~but it can and should urge the best equipped and~~ ^{as such}

I repeat what I said at the outset. In the next ten or twenty years the American people will have to fight it out with the underworld, with this empire of crime which we have permitted to be established in our midst and only the thoughtful men and women, who read the signs of the times, who know what is going on, only as they will rally

^{citizens in a community to interest them-}
^{directly} ~~themselves in~~ the political life of the city.

The other important factors which contribute
to the increase of crime, the political control
of our police departments, ~~the unintelligence~~
~~of our police~~, the delays in prosecution,
the ~~low~~ low intelligence of our juries,

