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Only Yesterday, 1932.

"ONLY YESTERDAY"

BY

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
At The Temple, Sunday,
May 1st, 1932

I have been reading recently a very interesting and charming book called "Only Yesterday" written by Frederick Lewis Allen which tells the story of the last decade, reviews the things which we ourselves witnessed and experienced and recounts it all in a very fresh dramatic manner. He seizes upon the outstanding events of the past decade and builds his story around them.

In thinking over the fifteen years which I spent in Cleveland, I first thought that I would do the same thing; look back over these fifteen years and point out the outstanding events and movements of those years, very much along the line of the book "Only Yesterday." But on second thought I decided that it would perhaps be better, more interesting, more helpful, if instead of recounting events of the past fifteen years by way of retrospect, I would review them myself and give you my reactions to those events and movements of the past fifteen years as reflected in the sermons and lectures which I preached in the Temple pulpit during these years.

Fortunately I am able to do that because I have a record, a stenographic report, of all the sermons which I preached in the Temple pulpit in the last fifteen years. They make quite a collection. And it is interesting to me, using the great moments in the past fifteen years, to see what my reactions were, at that time, to those occurrences, and to see whether my ideas have changed in the course of the years or have been modified, and to contrast what I thought then and what I am thinking now.

Of course the first and greatest event of these fifteen years was the World War.

I came to the Temple pulpit just three months after the United States entered the World War. I was a young man then, not yet twenty-four. I was caught up in the spirit of the War like all of us were. I believed in the cause for which the Allies were fighting. I was a great admirer of Woodrow Wilson and followed his leadership faithfully and enthusiastically. I was not a pacifist then. I am not a pacifist now.

I went across during the war, in the summer of 1918, at the request of the American Government and the French

High Commission to see how our boys were fairing in the camps and various welfare agencies and institutions which were built up; what their treatment was in the hospitals so that I might report back home.

I was in the war therefore not as a combatant, but nevertheless as an active participator. I don't know how to pass judgment on myself at this time because of my participation in the World War. I knew much less then of course, than I know now. I understand much better now than I did then what the actual causes of almost all wars are. Life has brought a certain amount of wisdom and knowledge and realism to me as to all of us. And I doubt very much whether I could be induced to sanction another war now. I do not wish to be any tempestuous pacifist. In post bellum days it is quite easy to make heroic gestures, being opposed to all war when we are not in war.

I find in looking over the records of those years that I was never entirely blinded by my enthusiasm for the War. I tried to keep my intellectual balance. Thus when I came back in 1918 from visiting the battle-fields and spoke to you on Rosh Hashonah eve, 1918 - we were still in the war - I brought back a message which to many people at that time was very disappointing.

They expressed their disappointment to me. It was a sad message, dwelling upon the horror and the tragedy of the things which I saw over there and lacking altogether the heroics, the glamour, the romanticism which people thought I should have brought back with me from over there.

I find that my preaching too, during the war years, was not of a kind to win for me the whole-hearted approval of the one hundred percent patriots of those days. In fact I recall that I was asked to submit some of my lectures which I preached in the Temple on Sunday mornings, to the Secret Service. For my preaching had been reported as being unpatriotic, along with pro-Germanism. ^(Kaiser of Hitler!) I was complimented by the fact that a member of the Secret Service was in the Temple almost every Sunday morning taking down my lectures.

I pleaded against hate and the vile propaganda which was going on at the time and I tried in the midst of the tempestuousness aroused during the war, to keep the objectives of the war clearly before the minds of the people.

Well, the War ended and then there followed months of heartbreaking disillusionment. The ideals which

President Wilson had set as the goal of the War, were one by one being dismembered and destroyed. And the Peace Conference far from being a Conference of representatives of a great democracy, far from establishing peace and reconciliation, turned out to be a conference of thieves and cut-throats.

I find in June, 1919, that I preached on the subject; "Is The Treaty of Peace a Peace Treaty?" And I said in that lecture: "If what I say this morning will sound a bit strange to ears that have been accustomed to hear of the constant unity of the aims and purposes of the Allies in this war, ears that have been accustomed to hear almost nothing but praise for motives of the Allies from this pulpit, I hope that you will attribute the strangeness to the sense of disillusionment which I have experienced since the publication of the abstract of the Treaty of Paris."

"Perhaps I, myself, and the millions like me who are experiencing a certain amount of disillusionment are in a sense responsible for it. We want a bit too much of emotional idealists and too little of political realists. We flung our vision too far, winged our hopes too high. One is not justified in expecting perfection in an all too imperfect world. We dreamed, of course,

you and I, and millions like unto us in all parts of the world, that this war would mark the end of the thousand years of war and usher in the thousand years of peace. We hoped that this war would see the end of imperialism and the beginning of real democracy. We spoke enthusiastically about self-determination of small peoples, about open covenants openly arrived at, about a league of nations embracing all free and sovereign peoples. We spoke of the end of scheming diplomacy and the beginning of real democracy in the world. "

"Well, perhaps we were a little too innocent of the wiles and the labyrinthian maneuvers of European diplomacy. Perhaps our hope was a fond hope, but it certainly was a holy hope. We were not entirely to blame for this enthusiasm of ours. Did not our leader and our spokesman feed the flames of our enthusiasm? Did not Mr. Wilson, himself, speak eloquently, classically, enticingly of these same things, and did not his words imply that the other Allies had accepted his ideals, and did not the universal acceptance of the fourteen principles as a basis for the termination of hostilities and the signing of the armistice give assurance to our convictions that a new day

was dawning? We were not entirely to blame. The pathetic thing of it all, the tragedy of it all is that our ideals could have been realized if in the high quarters of our government there was resolution in place of vacillation, plan in place of theory, foresight in place of ignorance, prophetic statesmanship in place of compromise. For the Treaty of peace as we have it, cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be called a peace treaty. There is no promise of peace in it. It has many of the earmarks of the Peace of Vienna of 1815 and the Treaty of 1871. It is imperialistic to a degree and vindictive in a frightful measure. The spirit of *vae victis* (woe unto the vanquished) is written large in it. One looks in vain for this spacious generosity, that spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation, that healing sympathy which one was led to anticipate from the words of our leaders and our spokesman. One tries to catch in vain the accents of such sentiments as these from the mouth of our leader spoken during the days of the war: "You catch with me the voices of humanity that are in the air. They insist that the war shall not end in vindictive action of any kind, that no nation or people shall be robbed or punished because the irresponsible rulers of a single country have themselves done deep and abominable wrong."

And so I find already in 1919 that my disillusion-

ment with war and with the peace treaty which followed the war, begins. I find too, that my distrust of the League of Nations begins early and has continued to this day. And my reasons for it I find rather as cogent and valid in those days as they are today.

In April of the year 1923, I find myself speaking on the subject of "The United States Joining a World Court." And I say:

"As vigorously as I opposed the entrance of the United States into the League of Nations, just so vigorously would I now urge the adhesion of the United States to the permanent court of international justice. I would urge that the United States lend its full weight of prestige and influence towards making this court, now constituted, vital and effective. I would furthermore urge that the American people enthusiastically endorse the commendable efforts of President Harding and Secretary of State Hughes for adhesion of the United States to this permanent court; for I believe that in so doing we are in keeping with the tradition of American policy, we are in consonance with the ideals for which we fought during the war, and we are committing an act of international wisdom and high morality."

"You will recall the reasons for my opposition to the League of Nations. You will recall that I did not oppose the ideal of a league. I assume that there are few people in this land or elsewhere who are opposed to the ideal of a league of free nations, banded together for international peace and understanding. I believe that no higher conception has ever been projected in the world of international relationships than that of a league of nations."

"It is not his dream (President Wilson's dream) that we opposed, nor his league, it was the league which was saddled with the iniquitous Treaty of Versailles that we opposed; it was the league of Clemenceau, that hardened cynic and political realist,; it was the league of that astute politician and time-server, Lloyd George, that we opposed; it was the league of that chauvinist, Orlando, that we opposed. "

"It was not the league of nations or of peoples, but the league of victors, the league which was burdened with the responsibility of enforcing a treaty of victors, which meant perpetuating the defeat of the vanquished, the holding in perpetual serfdom those peoples which have not as yet gained full freedom and

self-determination; it was this concrete expression of the league which spelled for us, at least, entanglements of the most nefarious kinds, enmeshed and entangled into all the European chicanery and diplomacy, the scheming, thieving diplomacy of Europe. It was this league that we opposed. "

"But at no time did we suggest that the United States take no part in efforts looking towards international peace; at no time did we counsel the so-called proud isolation."

"Two years ago" (that means in 1921) "in speaking on "The Legacy and the Opportunity of Harding," I said: "And if we decide not to enter the League - and it is very likely that we shall decide not to enter the League as it is now constituted - we must, nevertheless, work for peace along other lines. First of all, a court of arbitration which shall adjudicate cases that may be adjudicated must be established, and power must be given unto it. We must work for a codification of international law, and we must work incessantly and vigorously for disarmament."

So that I find myself on the subject of war and peace fifteen years ago, moving along with the current, by and large, of the masses of the American people, and yet trying to find my

way to some kind of an intellectual balance in the midst of a world which was confused and shot through with passion and tempest. I find fifteen years later that my work as regards war and peace is a fourfold task.

First it is to mobilize public opinion around those agencies for peace which have been built up since the War. We have now a World Court of functioning European nations, - in fact all the nations other than America. We have a League of Nations. We have the Pact of Paris by the terms of which all the civilized nations of the world, themselves, were to outlaw war. We have agencies which if utilized, will make war in the future unnecessary.

Consequently it becomes a duty of a teacher of religion incessantly to mobilize public opinion around these agencies so that when a critical situation arises public opinion will demand that people turn to these agencies for the adjudication of their differences.

And secondly that my task as a teacher must be to work for the solution of those details which are the sources

of irritation, to work for a readjustment of the international situation so that those problems which are today driving peoples toward war, may be solved, one by one, and peace will come about not as a ~~tetal~~ ^{detailed} act, but it will come about as the sum of the number of small detailed acts, of solving the detailed irritational problems in the world.

Thirdly my task lies in the direction of working for disarmament.

And lastly my work lies in educating the youth of the world to the stupidity of war, the costliness of war, to free their minds of ^{the} romanticism of war, to inculcate in them the moral compulsion of peace along these lines, rather than the heroic and romantic.

I take it that along these lines lies my work in the years to come.

One of the great and perplexing problems of the last years has been the problem of debts and reparations. That problem is still uppermost in the world today. I find in 1922, in December of that year, speaking on the subject: "Shall America Help Europe and How?" I said:

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"What good will come to Europe if we cancel our debt at once? This will happen: The American taxpayer will finance European armies and European navies and European wars. There is today, in the year 1922, a million more men under arms in Europe than there were in 1913. Europe today is spending annually two billions of dollars on its armies and its navies. And Europe is supposed to be at peace! Before the war there was a German menace; before the war there was a balance of power which necessitated competitive armaments. Now Germany is destroyed and crushed utterly, and for another generation it will not figure as a military power, and yet in spite of it the heavily burdened, economically distressed European taxpayers are compelled to pay their governments two billions of dollars annually to support armies and navies. "

"We stand ready to help Europe as we stood ready five years ago to help Europe. But to help it How? The initiative, of course, must come from abroad. The nations of Europe must resolve, first of all, to live within their means; and that will necessitate a drastic, a radical reduction of armaments. That, to my mind, is a crucial point. First, as an economic measure, and, secondly as a

measure to safeguard civilization. Armaments must be reduced to the absolute minimum abroad and here. No great armies and no great navies have ever brought about peace in the world."

"Armaments must be reduced to enable the European peoples to live within their means, and these billions of dollars put into productive enterprises to help in the economic reconstruction. And then Germany must be made to realize that its finances must be controlled and organized in such a way as to compel her to pay her just debts. Germany devastated northern France and Germany must help to rebuild what it destroyed."

"The industrialists of Germany, the vast capitalists of Germany, are not so eager to have the mark rise, because by inflating the mark they are enabled to sell their competitors abroad, especially England. They pay their workingmen in worthless German marks, but they get for their exports very valuable moneys, and so they have, during the past year or two, manipulated the currency of Germany to such a point where the mark has become almost worthless on the exchange."

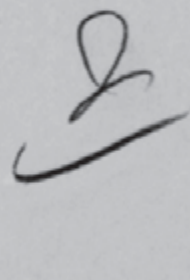
"Now if Germany wants help, - and the United States should help Germany, - Germany must likewise clean house."

"The reparations bill was stupid from the day it was presented. We knew it was an impossible thing. The reparations bill must be scaled down to a point where Germany can pay."

"There must be a balancing of budgets all around; there must be a removal of trade barriers all around; there must be an earnest, honest effort on the part of these peoples to help themselves; there must be an earnest, honest effort to help Russia. The European nations must help Russia, and they can help Russia. They need Russia. Not so much because they need the agriculture of Russia, but because they need the consumption of Russia's two hundred millions of people. If they can pay for food and for machinery and for the things they need, they can keep all the mills and factories and looms of Europe busy."

"This stupid political scheming which has isolated Russia has brought untold misery not alone upon the peoples of Russia but upon the peoples of the whole of Europe."

"My position on the subject of Allied debts and reparations has not changed since. I still believe they



they should be scaled down to a minimum and allied debts should be cancelled only when allied nations reduce their armament to an absolute minimum.

I find, too, that the early years of this fifteen-year period were years of great industrial conflict. In 1919, 1920 and 1921 there were numerous strikes in this country. You will recall the coal strike, the steel strike. There was a time when two million workingmen were out on strike.

Right after the armistice the cost of living had risen and wages had not kept pace with it and labor struck for these and for the right to organize. For years, the open versus the closed shop, was a burning issue in this country.

I find myself in the year 1920, speaking on the subject "The Coming Industrial Struggle - The Open vs the Closed Shop." And I said:

"That a crusade is on foot to universalize the open shop is evident to all. Manufacturers have organized locally and nationally; workers and propagandists have been employed and literature has been freely spread throughout the land advocating the

open shop. There is no doubt that a struggle is imminent. The reason why this struggle should take place at this particular time is, of course, easy to find. The fall of prices has thrown many workingmen out of employment, and for the first time in years the supply is greater than the demand, and so the propagandists of the open shop reason that this is the auspicious moment to break the power of organized labor and to win back complete control for capital."

"I suppose the remarkable, overwhelming triumph of the reactionary or conservative forces in the last national election has, in some measure, encouraged this movement at this particular time. "

"I want at the very outset to scotch an idea  which to my mind, is pernicious - an idea which is being injected into this controversy. Some protagonists for the open shop have appropriated for their particular form of organization the name "American." Theirs is the American plan - implying that any other plan is un-American. And I want to say at the outset that all this talk of one form of shop organization being American and

Christian and patriotic, while another is the very reverse of it, is all unmitigated balderdash and bunk, and particularly pernicious at this time."

"I believe that the issue of 'the open versus the closed shop' is really not the real issue; it is only the projected issue in this campaign. I believe that the employer who is in this crusade is interested less in the problem of the open shop than he is in the real question at the bottom of it; the question of collective bargaining, and the right of representation of labor in the management of industry."

"My belief is that this campaign for the open shop is an attempt to destroy trade unionism in the United States. While it is true that the open shop does not discriminate in theory against the union workingman, in practice, the union man is always subject to a blacklist, which the employer may call into being at any time; and, furthermore, if the union is ignored in the open shop, the workingman might just as well join a golf club as to join a union."

"Now, if the struggle is, as I conceive it, an attempt to destroy trade unionism in the United States, there

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are/few fundamental propositions which, to my mind, are telling and decisive in our deliberations."

"The first is that trade unionism in some form or other is here to stay. Because after all is said and done, the workingman sees in his union his one safeguard against exploitation, his one protection against selfishness and aggrindizement on the part of capital. The workingman knows that all his gains of yesterday, all the progress which he has made in the way of higher standards, of living - higher wages, better working hours, elimination of child labor, factory inspection, and what not - that all these gains have been won by the united and corporate efforts of organized labor against the consistent and continuous hostility of capital, with a few, very fine and illustrious exceptions."

"With the idea of the union goes the idea of collective bargaining, and that is my second fundamental proposition. Without the right of collective bargaining the union is ineffectual. The workingman cannot expect to sell his labor at an advantage if he is compelled to compete with his fellow

workingman in the labor market. In order that the contract between capital and labor be a fair and equitable one, there must be an equality of some sort established between capital and labor, and that equality can be established only when labor is organized."

That, I believe, is still my position in 1932. There will be many industrial struggles in the years to come, especially after the period of depression passes over, if it ever does pass over. I think I shall find myself in the years to come championing the same cause which I championed fifteen years ago, the right of labor to organize and to speak through its representatives.

I find that back in 1924 as I became aware of the trend toward centralization in industry and its threat to the security of the American workingman, I became keenly aware that some form of central control was needed to save the workingman from being totally victimized. And so in 1924 I

find myself speaking on "American Industry" and I said:

"The individual must be saved economically and culturally. He must be saved economically by means of changing our economic standards and our economic ethics. Our old notions must be revised; our old slogans are no longer applicable. The law of supply and demand, for example, may be a good law when it is permitted to operate without restraint and without tampering, but it becomes the refuge of the knave and the scoundrel at a time such as ours, when the law of supply and demand is arbitrarily being controlled and manipulated by industrial organizations so powerful that they can control the supply and they can stimulate the demand at will."

"The right of free contract must also undergo certain modifications in an economic world where the individual is no longer free to contract for his labor with another individual, but where he is compelled to face a tremendously powerful organization that can outwit him and outplay him. Free determination of prices in the open market is a notion likewise which must be

somewhat modified in a condition of society where prices may be and are being arbitrarily fixed frequently; and even the notion of property rights must undergo certain modifications and changes in a condition of society where most men are propertyless, and where an increasingly larger number of men do not even possess the tools with which they can earn it."

"The individual must be protected, and being unable to protect himself, the individual is fast turning to the state. The individual is beginning to demand that the state should protect him in his rights. If industry itself, will not correct its abuses, if industry will live off of child-labor, if industry will not introduce the ordinary sanitary precautions, if industry will not provide old-age pensions, unemployment pensions, sickness pensions"-(in those days I spoke of it as unemployment pensions. Since that time I have been speaking of it in terms of unemployment insurance)-"if industry will not ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ make possible a normal eight hour day of

labor, then the individual is compelled to turn to the state and demand that the state do these things which he cannot compell industry to grant him."

A few years later I find myself speaking of "Our National Debt to the Unemployed" in March 25th, 1928, long before the crash and long before the vast army of unemployed marched the streets of our city. I find myself on the same ground today.

During these fifteen years there was also a terrific red scare which you may recall. You ought to recall it on this May first because on May first, 1919 there was a terrible riot in the City of Cleveland, one of the ugliest riots that befouled the fair name of this city, a riot which was the culmination in this city and elsewhere of the terrific hysteria which seized upon the American people soon after the war. Heretics, communists and radicals were hounded, deported. The elementary American safe-guards of free speech and the right of assembly were discarded. Those were the days of the Quaker A. Mitchell Palmer, who was seeing red every day.

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And I find myself in November, 1930 speaking on "The Red Terror and the White" in the pulpit of the Temple. And I said: "There are to my mind two kinds of terrors - the red terror and the white. Much has been said of late concerning the red terror; little has been said of late concerning the white terror. Now, the red terror is brought about by the concerted action on the part of men who are determined to overthrow the present economic system by means of force. The white terror is brought about by the concerted action on the part of men who are determined to conserve the present economic system in all its detail by means of force. The means utilized by the red and the white are both fair and foul, and underlying both is a lie - the lie of force."

"Now to my mind, the white terror is a more invidious thing even than the red terror, because the red terror makes no pious pretenses, assumes no sanctimonious airs. It sets out clearly and openly to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat, and is reconciled to the use of every instrument that comes handy. The white terror sets out with

pious airs in the name of liberty and democracy, and law and order, and utilizes the same instruments for which it denounces the red terror."

"Why do I speak of this all? Because I believe that we are today being stampeded into a psychology of intolerance, of bigotry; because I believe that we are losing that gracious quality of being able to listen patiently to another man's opinion, even if that opinion differs radically from ours; because we have lost the capacity for looking at truth even if truth is ugly and unattractive; because men are terrifying us into a veritable intellectual stupidity; because we are being victimized by a systematic propaganda to keep us from thorough-going reforms, by waving before our eyes the spectre of revolution, the danger of radicalism."

"I read day after day of men being sentenced to terms in prison because they dared to criticize the president or because they dared to criticize a mayor or because they distributed some stupid, meaningless pamphlets attacking the government for interfering in Russia, and using unguarded language."

We would all be in prison today. - "I read daily of meeting halls being raided and men hurried to police stations upon no specific charges; I read of newspapers' offices being broken into by infuriated mobs, self-appointed protectors of American loyalty; I read of men dragged off platforms and refused the privilege of being heard. I read of these things so constantly that one is prone to ask one's self what is becoming of our common sense, of our sense of fairness of our supreme confidence, and the soundness and the wholesomeness of our institutions? Where is the dignity, the courage, the strength of conviction that can be magnanimous and tolerant before an opinion?"

It was in those days, some of you may recall, that a few men who believed in the right of free speech, dared to open a public open air forum on the public square just to break the grip of bigotry and intolerance which held our city and the rest of the nation in bondage in those days. On that subject too, I adhere today. I stand on the same position. A system that is afraid of being criticized is a system that ought to be destroyed.

In those years too, I find that anti-
Semitism waxed and increased appallingly. Every periodical
upheaval and every social upheaval gives rise to anti-
Semitism. And right after the war we had the Ku Klux Klan,
the Dearborn Independent and Mr. Ford; letters and circulars
were circulated throughout the country. We were very much
disturbed about the whole subject of anti-Semitism and the
Jewish position in the United States.

I find myself speaking in the Temple on
March 7th, 1920 and my subject was "Prejudice and How to
Meet it" and I said:

"For all practical purposes, my friends,
anti-Semitism, in some form or another is here to stay for a
good long while, because anti-Semitism is co-extensive with
every form of intolerance, and ^{tolerance} tolerance dies hard. Do not
fool yourselves. One year of glowing sentiments of brotherhood
and one fine phrase and one fine book will not scotch forever
the serpent of intolerance. It is a slow process of attrition,
of corrosion, of undermining, of education, of democracy - the
work of ages!"

"If my conclusions are true, how are we to meet it? How are we to meet prejudice? Why, in exactly the same way as we have met it for two thousand years. We have evolved a strategy, we have evolved a campaign of defense and offense. We succeeded in meeting it in its most loathsome and hurtful forms for two thousand years, and we shall be able to continue to meet it if we remain true to our program and to our strategy. What is this program?"

"First of all comes vigilance. Organize for defense. We must not, we dare not, permit prejudice to make invasions upon our legal, political rights; we must safe-guard these with all the power that is within us. "Eternal Vigilance is the price of liberty." We must be organized and sufficiently alert to defend our rights."

"Secondly, we must scotch lies and bear falsehoods and pocket no slurs and swallow no gratuitous insults. We must be ready for a dignified but a determined defense of our position, in this land as everywhere else."

"An attitude of indifference, or of cringing, or of mute submission will yield us no beneficent results."

"And thirdly, we must retain - and this is very important - our ancient spirit of pride. We must carry no favor, we must not worm and maneuver ourselves into places where we are not wanted; we must maintain, and more especially we must inculcate, in the souls of our children, that precious sense of Jewish dignity; we must inspire ourselves and our young ones with the thought that no people on God's earth has the heritage, the culture, the civilization, the ancestry, the records of seers and martyrs and heroes that Israel has."

In other words vigilance, organization and a sense of Jewish pride and dignity. Were you to ask me today in 1932 what our defense should be in the face of anti-Semitism I would give you the same recipe. I have no other. There is no other.

These fifteen years likewise witnessed the

struggle over prohibition. Prohibition became a law in 1919. I favored it. I advocated it. I have since been compelled to revise my opinion. As late as 1924 I find myself speaking on the subject "What Will America Do With Prohibition?" Six or seven years ago I was already keenly aware that it was not being enforced and that it had not been given a chance and I was then still an apologist for it.

My answer in ~~XXX~~ those days was 'the American people will ultimately make up its mind to enforce it.'

I was wrong then. I don't think the American people will ever make up its mind to enforce it. I think the wisest and most statesmanship way is to ^{re} appeal the law and to fall back upon the old method of training people into temperance and self-control.

Prohibition has failed in the United States!

These fifteen years were magnificent and in many ways glorious and yet in many ways they were tragic years for the Jewish people.

Five months after I came to the pulpit of the Temple of Cleveland the Balfour Declaration was issued by Great Britain which recognized the Zionist Ideal, the ideal of establishing in Palestine the National Jewish Homeland.

Since 1917 that country has made marvelous progress and it is one of the proud memories of these fifteen years and one of the greatest satisfactions that throughout these years I gave of myself, of my time and energy, without stint and without measure to the cause of the rehabilitation of Palestine and to the cause of Jewish renaissance there.

From a backward province it has become one of the most prosperous countries in the world. Towns and villages have been built, a marvelous system of health work has been established; a school system which received its crowning glory seven years ago with the establishment of the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus which today is broadcasting

an international program in celebration of its seventh anniversary.

I wish I had more time to dwell upon the fifteen years of progress in Palestine. But I haven't. The fifteen years were also years of war, of bloodshed, of pogroms, revolutions and counter-revolutions for the Jews of Eastern Europe. We were called upon to help our brethren over there and magnificently the American Jews responded. And one of the happiest satisfactions of these years which I shall treasure as long as I live, is the memory of having contributed in some small measure in this great service of human salvation and Jewish loyalty.

During these fifteen years, as I cast my eye backward, I find American Jewry has made marvelous progress. The stimulation of the war and the great wealth which came in the early days of this epoch gave rise to a tremendous activity, spiritual and religious, among our people. Synagogues and Temples, schools, Jewish community centers, Y. M. H. A's, Hillel Foundations, new academies, Hebrew libraries were enlarged.

It was a glorious period of Jewish building and extension which came to a sad halt with the economic crisis in 1929. X
I believe that it has not been permanently stopped. I believe it will resume when conditions in our country will again normalize.

Of two other things I should like to speak but I haven't the time this morning and therefore I shall speak of them next Sunday morning. - The changes which came over the moral life of our people in the fifteen years and the changes in their intellectual life and how I reacted toward them.

I shall also speak next week by way of prognostication, of anticipation, of prophecy, of what is likely to happen to our civilization in the approximate future.

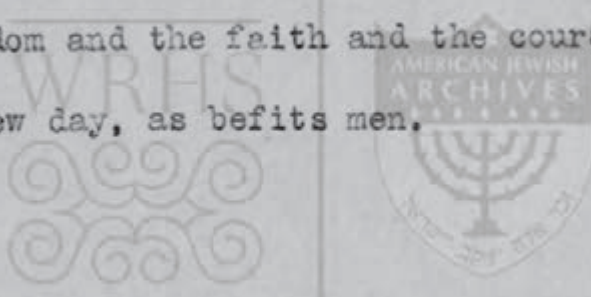
This morning's lecture I called "Only Yesterday." Next Sunday's lecture I shall call "Only To/morrow."

I began my fifteen years' ministry in 1917 in X
the midst of the tramp of marching armies. I begin my new period of ministry amidst the tramp of marching armies of another kind.

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In those days it was soldiers marching. In these days it is the unemployed who are marching. I do not know which hour is more serious or more solemn, the hour of 1932 or the hour of 1917.

Many desperate problems confront us in the years to come. Many new things are going to happen in the next fifteen years and I pray, together with you, that we may all have the wisdom and the faith and the courage to face the new tasks, ^{of} the new day, as befits men.



1- Record - rather reactions - true - changed views.

Memom 385

1. War - 1917 - ~~Came to Cleveland~~ ^{Came to Cleveland} ~~3 months after we entered~~ ^{3 months after we entered}

(a) young man - believed in cause & war - followed Wilson -

(b) not a pacifist - am not now -

(c) Went abroad in 1918 - to visit camps, hospitals - Wesley work

(d) Not entirely shocked - (1) brought back sad story. R.H. 1915.
disappointing to many.

(2) Pleaded against hate - vile propaganda - Secret Service
accused of lack of patriotism - Pro-germanism -

(e) Was soon disillusioned - Treaty of Peace - Confessions

(1) Intro - June 1 - 1919 - "Is the Treaty, Peace or Peace Treaty"

(f) My distrust of League - has continued to this day.

Latent and saddest proof of its weakness +
structural weakness was born in by Iran-Jap. Conflict

(g) No such objection to World Court - began work, advised of
it in 1921.

(1) Intro - April 29 - 1923 - "Shall the U.S. Join the
World Court"

(2) Still strongly advocate steps.

(h) What is my attitude to-day on War & Peace.

(1) I am a lot older & wiser - I know now better
than I knew then - what the real causes of war are -
economies - and I cannot conceive of myself
sanctioning any the war - Esp. since Agencies
+ Covenants - outlawing war etc - which did not
exist in 1917 or 1914 -

(i) My work as teacher has changed in these directions

(1) ~~public~~ ^{public} opinion around this agencies

(2) Work for solution of these ~~conflict~~ detail with
irritations + for readjustments & rectifications
which will eliminate source of future wars

(3) Work for propaganda disarmament.

(4) Educate young - warn them against false patriotism
and ~~the~~ romantic love of war - real international
defensiveness + cooperation - + moral compulsion of
maintaining peace.

2. ~~World~~ Reparations and Debt - Allied debts - Argument!

(1) Quote Dec. 24-1922, "Shall America Help Europe and
How?"

✓ Still holds total position.

3. Industrial Conflict. Right after armistice - Cost of

living had risen - wages had not kept pace - Latin strike
for these + for rest of organization - you will recall the
foreman, Coal Strike - No Steel Strike + many others. At
one period - 2 million workmen were out on strike -
No open vs the closed shop was a burning issue.

✓ (1) Quote, Dec. 19-1920. "Coming Ind. Struggle"

✓ Also restated May 21-1922. "Coal Strike" - defend the worker

(2) The trend towards centralization of industry and
its threat to the security of working man, and
the need for some form of social control
I have long detected and spoken of.

✓ (1) Quote, Dec. 14-1924. "American Industry"

✓ (2) also Mar. 25-1928. "Our Nat. Debt to the World"

I find myself in period of feverish preparation - preparing
for Unemployment Reform -

7 Boom + Crash.

- (1) Inst. - April 22-28. 'What Will Amer. Do with the Wrath,
Nov. 17-29' (p.8) 'The Nat. Get-Rich Quick Delusion'
" I send them that an era had come to close.

Red Scare. Am. went on a rampage - ~~hounding~~ ^{hounding} and
defeating radicals and communists. ~~May Day~~ ^{May Day} - 1919
was a bloody day - Esp. here in Cleveland - G. Mitchell
Palmer - the Jester - was seeing red - The Scare of Russia
and Bolshevism, properly explained, was giving our people
the shivers.

- ✓ (1) Inst. Nov. 30, 1919. "The Red Terror & the White"
Pulver Square - Open Air Meeting - nearest
right / free speech
I adhere to that position now!

6. K. H. H. - Ford. After every social upheaval.
Antisemitism - Submerged prejudices surge to surface.

- ✓ (1) Inst. March 7-1920 - "Prejudice, How to Treat it!"
I know no better recipe - vigilance - organization -
self-defense
I adhere to that pos. now!

6 Prohibition - became law 1919 - I favored it.
I have been compelled to reverse my position.
(1) I find that in 1924 - "What will Amer. do

with Prohibition? already keenly aware of the fact that
it is not being enforced - but still hoping that law
could be enforced - if politics could be taken
out of it - if proh. bureau would be reorganized,
"law has not been given a chance!" Still
apologist for it. Duty to get it changed!
Impressed with its great possibilities - My
view then was that "the Am. people will ul-
timately make up its mind to enforce it"
② I was wrong! up to Hoover's regime -

~~Sacco & Vanzetti - Electrocuted Aug. 23 - 1927 -~~

① Just. May 29, 1927. - Protest - "How do you feel about America
be just?"

This holds every Morney, too.

8/ Palestine - Balfour Declaration - Nov. 2, 1917 -
5 months - one of greatest milestones - Period
witnessed growth - Heb. Univ. broadcast.
- Pride & later further - advocated - worshipped -
- misorganized part of it -

9/ War Relief - Terra in the East - War & Poppy -
grateful to have played some role - which
still continues -

10. American J. life - Stimulation of war - New Org
and building - ^{Our own Temple} ~~dedicated to our~~ ~~the~~
community of Israel - ~~let us not~~
~~think just with father~~ - ③ ~~Porter religious~~
~~values~~

17. Moral decline - back-work of war - paganism -
transport millions - Contorted standards - Sex
Age - Jazz Age - Bad morals, Bad manners -
① of course, I preached against it - But prophesied
its passing - Called attention to New Moral
① note - Oct 10 - 1926 - "We Modern + US Americans"

^(p6)
Intel. Revolt - Swain Leis - Mentel -
13. Self Criticism - Usability - Rotarianism -
Complacency -
In extreme it was a "debunking" movement -
That too has run its course -
Age is now tired of aggression - Asks for
gentle ~~and~~ value & phil. of life -
Age & revived faith await our people.

13 And so we close a 15 year period of our life
Began it amidst travels & marching soldiers & war
We enter next period amidst travels & another army -
unemployed
A very depressed era - When anything may happen - When

new things are sure to happen—

~~We~~ I pray that I may have a warming wisdom
and faith enough to face the problems
of to-morrow—



AN ABSTRACT OF THE ADDRESS

"ONLY YESTERDAY"

BY

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER
SUNDAY, MAY 1st, 1932

I came to the pulpit of the Temple of Cleveland three months after the United States entered the World War. I was a young man then who believed in the cause of the Allies and followed the leadership of Woodrow Wilson.

I am a bit older and wiser now. I know now better than I knew then what the real causes of war are and I can not conceive of myself as sanctioning another war. Especially since ~~the~~ agencies which did not exist before the World War and covenants are in existence by which nations have pledged themselves to outlaw war and to submit all of their differences to amicable adjudication.

My work as a teacher of religion lies clearly in the direction of mobilizing public opinion around these peace agencies, in working for the solution of the detail international problems which are sources of irritation and future conflict, in advocating progressive disarmament and in educating the youth of the world against false patriotism and the romantic lure of war.

On the subject of reparations and inter-allied debts, I find that I am today of the same opinion that I was soon after the war. Reparations should be scaled down to an absolute minimum. Allied debts should not be cancelled until there has taken place a most drastic curtailment of armaments among the Allied Nations. I opposed the entrance

of the United States into the League of Nations then and I do so now. I favored America's adherence to the World Court then and I do so now.

The industrial conflicts which developed in this country soon after the War found me championing the cause of organized labor and the right of collective bargaining. I am more firmly convinced than ever now of the economic justice and ethical soundness of this position. I find in retrospect that I have spoken years before the debacle of 1929 of the necessity for some form of social control in industry of the trend toward centralization and its threat to the security of the American workingman. As far back as 1924 I advocated compulsory unemployment insurance.

Prohibition became a law in 1919. I favored it. I have since been compelled to revise my position. I was impressed with the great possibilities of this measure and I was a constant apologist for it, maintaining that the Law had not been given a fair chance and that the American people would ultimately make up its mind to enforce it. I was wrong. The American people will never ^{the} enforce/Prohibition Law. It can not be enforced.

As I look back over the fifteen years of my ministry I find that the post-bellum years were characterized by hounding and deporting of radicals and communists. I recall the May-day riots in Cleveland of 1919 and all the indecencies of the A. Mitchell Palmer regime. I gratefully recall the hard fight which a few of us put up in those days against this terrorism and in behalf of the elementary principles of free speech and human rights.

Five months after I came to Cleveland the Balfour Declaration was issued by Great Britain. It gave sanction to the age-old Jewish ideal of establishing in Palestine of the National Jewish Homeland. Since that time through Jewish initiative and pioneering enterprises the country has been transformed so that Palestine today is one of the most prosperous communities

in the world. The Hebrew University which crowns the educational edifice of Palestine is today broadcasting its first international program. One of my proudest memories of these years has been my active participation in this movement of the rebuilding of Palestine and the Hebrew renaissance.

These fifteen years have also been years of wars and pogroms, revolutions and counter-revolutions for the Jews in Eastern Europe. American Jewry was called upon to help their war-stricken brethren and it responded most loyally. I am grateful that in some small measure I could participate in this great service of human salvation.

I began my ministry in Cleveland amidst the tramp of marching soldiers. I begin the new period in my ministry amidst the tramp of the marching unemployed. Perhaps this hour is more freighted with destiny than the hour of 1917.