



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

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

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

Series V: Writings, 1909-1963, undated.

Reel
173

Box
63

Folder
146

Statement on strikes, 1926.

BY RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER

A disastrous strike in the building industry of Cleveland occurred last year. Similar strikes are likely to occur in the future. It is clear to every right thinking man that in every such industrial dispute and resultant economic disorganization, the public ultimately pays the full price.

What provisions is Cleveland making to avoid such economic chaos in one of its most vital industries in the future? I regard it as most futile for men at the present time to indulge in academic discussions touching the right and wrong of the open or closed shop. We are confronted with an accomplished fact. The building industry in our city is highly organized and is likely to continue so. As long as such organizations exist, collective bargaining will be insisted upon, for without it unionism is meaningless.

Are we then to acknowledge that whenever important differences of opinion arise between employers and employees in the building trades there can be no way out except the way of conflict—the strike or the lockout? Is it not clear that whoever emerges victorious out of these protracted trials by ordeal, the city of Cleveland is ALWAYS defeated? The general economic life of the community ALWAYS suffers.

Following the desperate strike in the building industry of Cleveland in 1921, a board of conciliation, of which the writer was a member, was appointed to adjust the differences and to establish a general wage scale for the ensuing year. Perhaps the most important recommendation which that board made at that time was:

"We submit that public confidence and support can result only from a sense of justice to the public from the mutual protection of the rights of all parties concerned. And hence we recommend that the conciliation board provide for the creation of a permanent board of experts to be presided over by an impartial chairman, to the end that the public may have permanent representation in the settlement of wage disputes and all jurisdictional questions, and also in the abatement of abuses and in the development of general well-being within the industry. We regard the creation of such a board of supreme importance."

Why has this recommendation not been acted upon? Does it not offer the just and intelligent way out of our periodic and costly industrial struggles?

The year 1927 would become a red letter year in the annals of the economic progress of our city were such a board created within the next twelve months.



RABBI A. H. SILVER

News. Wex. 31-26

WHAT CLEVELAND NEEDS MOST

Jan 1927 For Cleveland News Dec. 1926 2623

A disastrous strike in the building industry ^{of} in Cleveland occurred ~~this~~ last year. Similar strikes are likely to occur in the future. It is clear to every right thinking man that in every such industrial dispute and resultant ^{economic} disorganization, the public ultimately pays the full price.

What provisions is Cleveland making to avoid such economic chaos in one of its most vital industries in the future? I regard it as ~~almost~~ ^{for men} futile ^{at} the present time to indulge in academic discussions touching the right and wrong of the open or closed shop. We are confronted with an ^{accomplished fact} ~~situation~~. The building industry in our city is highly organized and is likely to continue so. As long as such organization exists, collective bargaining will be insisted upon for without it unionism is meaningless.

Are we then to acknowledge that whenever important differences of opinion arise between employers and employees in the building trades ^{there can be} no way out ^{the way} ~~exists~~ except ^{out of} ~~that of~~ conflict, ~~a~~ strike or ~~a~~ ^{the} lockout? ^{Is it not} clear that ~~Whoever~~ emerges victorious ~~from~~ these protracted trials by ordeal, the city of Cleveland is always defeated. The general economic life of the community always suffers.

Following the ^{of Cleveland} desperate strike in the building industry in 1921 a Board of Conciliation of which the writer was a member, was appointed to adjust the differences and to establish a general wage scale for the ensuing year. Perhaps the most important recommendation ~~which~~ that Board made at that time was;

"We submit that public confidence and support can result only from a sense of justice to the public from the mutual protection of the rights of all parties concerned. And hence we recommend that the Conciliation Board provide for the creation of a permanent board of experts to be presided

over by an impartial chairman, to the end that the public may have permanent representation in the settlement of wage disputes and all jurisdictional questions, and also in the abatement of abuses and in the development of general well-being within the industry. We regard the creation of such a board of supreme importance."

the Why has this recommendation not been acted upon? Does it not offer ~~a most~~ just and intelligent way out of our periodic and costly ~~difficulties?~~ *industrial struggles?*

The year 1927 would become a red letter year in the annals of the economic progress of our city were such a board created within the next twelve months.

