



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.

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179

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527

Peter Witt, 1939.

1/ Delighted - Didn't realize - Envy - buoyancy -
incorrigible youth -

Always regarded him - my younger contemporary

Evidently - too busy to grow old

" active to rest -

" wise to be disillusioned

At 70 - still opening caseaments on new horizons
stepping on thresholds of new daures

2/ So many things I liked -

Persons are symbolic abstractions -

mask - used by actors - emphasize down-
ward front of ind character -

Embodiment of an Idea - Idea behind

"The Lincoln Idea" - You heard W. read

his Tribute - You can get sp. affinity -

No accidental identifications - Master -

"The Lincoln Idea" - Whitman - Tom J. P. D.

Cl. Dawson - is reflected -

Democ. Humanism - Spacious, wild left
feathers - radical Americanism.

This term, unfortunately, is defined - by

howling patrioteering derisive - by derisive

With W. Amer. & his Iron-Hall brand -
free, frank, ~~heart~~, straight-forward -
hewing close to the line of ^{principles} fundamental
standards in criticism, just in appraisal
passionate in defense - all sweetened
by a spirit which never knew malice
or meanness.

3/. We all hunted with delight as he laid
about him with stout ^{his} ~~club~~ ^{involvement} and he -
labored the politicians, the stuffed-shirt
statesmen, the fakirs and impostors and
the "sacred cows" - & all cowardly big -
leaves in our civic life
But we relished the rich spray of his zestful
speech - and his gargantuan humor

Also sense - profound earnestness - sincerity
mission - ~~to~~ Henry George -
He sought not to excite into admiration
but to persuade into conviction
To keep our life free and clean & wholesome
To "our great past" traditions - from
vanishing from the hands of men
To establish justice - and ~~make~~ ~~the~~
to teach our people how to pass from Tip
of blood - spirit -

4/ True ideas - not congenial - men of marking
their throats shabls - primitive sort

Race of men creates illusion - deeper
Task of leader - attract - cherished illusion
W - stab of That -

shock to an complacency
Breath of Fresh air - stuffers
Purge - corrupters

A reliable compass -

5/ Fortunately - neither Rich nor a Philosopher
(Greek)
Servant of Man - "He" wanted. "They" wanted.
above all else Truth - to set themselves free.

6/ Earlier & Simpler Age - not in a want
That Age one for our generation -
Black-out - Recovering more frequent
Gun - passion ridden, half-pled, "conflict"
more "revolutionary" - less "Evolution"
Grateful that you had the Day -
In the days ahead - we shall have need even
- you spent intrepid - eyes, adventuring
40 years and kindly

70th BIRTHDAY PARTY

and

TESTIMONIAL DINNER

for

PETER WITT

① Delighted - Realize - Envy - Too busy - At 70
② Many things - Symbolic - Read - Walt - Dem. Humanism - "Lincoln Idea"
Sweetened - "Town Meeting"

③ Howled with - Rebuked - Sincerely - Mission
Inate - persuade -
Keep Amer - Past vanish - Justice - Tie

SEPTEMBER 21, 1939

④ Great Ideas - congenial - Race - Task - "Stab"
Compars - "Shock"
"Wind"
"Purge"

CITY CLUB
CLEVELAND, OHIO

5/ Rich - Philosopher - Servant - "They want"

6/ Easier - simpler - "Black-art"
Spirit



FORGET yesterday, believe in today, hope for tomorrow, and live your life in your own way, wholly unmindful of what others think or say, is my philosophy of life.

Forgetting yesterday means no worrying about the past. What's done cannot be undone.

Believing in today gets the most out of the present. It is the only thing we can be sure of.

Hoping for tomorrow is what makes for progress, even though most of the dreams, all born of hope, never come true.

So have I lived my life as far back as I can remember. So am I living it today. So will I continue to live it until the race is run. This makes life really worth living.

Because of my adherence to the rules here laid down, my life, in my opinion, has been a successful one. Always have I been the "captain of my soul."

Sometimes the price for so living (measured in the terms of the possession of worldly goods) has been high. That does not mean anything. And why? Because all the time the rewards in self satisfaction have been higher. That means everything.

And this raises the question, did I come to this way of life through my own efforts or was I aided by others. The answer, unhesitatingly is, mostly through the help of the latter.

First in this list are my parents. They were not "run of the mine"

kind. They did not subscribe to the brutal belief of their day, "that sparing the rod would spoil the child." I lived in a house but was brought up in a home.

Early in life my parents made plain to me the great difference between theology and religion; between believing the unbelievable and the doing of good. That made for a wonderful start.

At the age of 18 there came into my life Dr. L. B. Tuckerman, the greatest American Ohio has produced. He was a great doctor, a great surgeon, but still greater was his conception of the duties of citizenship. Had he kept his political likes and his economic views to himself, his patients would have come from among the wealthy.

To their homes he would have been driven in a carriage. Fat checks would have been his reward. He preferred, however, to do otherwise. His practice, therefore, was confined to the poor. To their homes he was transported by street car. Most of the fees that he charged were still on his books when he died. He was my preceptor in politics.

Next came Gene Debs, as lovable and brave a man as ever lived. Gene, the man who refused to go crazy when the nation went mad. Gene, who went to prison because he believed our Constitution meant what it said. Gene, who came out of prison without bitterness in his heart toward the crowd that persecuted him. He, 50 years ago, in giving me advice, said, "No matter what you do, do it so you will be on good terms with yourself." Did anyone ever utter anything sounder than that?

Then came Tom L. Johnson who, at the age of 46, quit the game of making money so he could give all his time to the advancement of his religion — the philosophy of Henry George. Tom L. Johnson, the man who went into office rich and came out poor; who gave everything he had to make Cleveland, as he often expressed it, "a happier place to live in, and a better place to die in."

It was my great privilege to be with him for nine years, during every minute of which he put up a fight against special privilege such as never was witnessed by any other people of any other city in our country's history.

He taught me much and made me, as he made every other man who came in contact with him, a better man for so doing.

And last but not least comes Mrs. Witt, whose love, whose affection and sympathetic understanding made it possible for me throughout the years to live the life I wanted to live.

I repeat in closing what I said in the beginning, my life, in my opinion, has been a grand success.



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MENU



FRUIT CUP

•

FRIED HALF CHICKEN

•

MASHED POTATOES

FRESH PEAS

•

COMBINATION SALAD

•

ROLL AND BUTTER

COFFEE

•

ICE CREAM AND CAKES