

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 Folder Box 185 69 930

B'nai B'rith exhibition hall, 1956.

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BACKGROUND MATERIAL FOR RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER ON B'NAI B'RITH AND CORNERSTONE-LAYING OF B'NAI B'RITH EXHIBIT HALL AND BUILDING

Since its founding in 1843, B'nai B'rith has acted as a major force in unifying Jews, despite differences in ritual, national origin or economic status, to serve their people, their country, and all humanity. Wherever Jews have settled in towns and cities throughout the United States, the B'nai B'rith lodge has led in building synagogues, libraries, community centers, hospitals and homes for orphans and the aged. It has been the cement with which many Jewish communities were constructed. In recent decades, B'nai B'rith has assumed responsibilities of training and guiding Jewish youth, both on and off the college campus, promoting the expansion of civil rights, aiding the social and economic development of Israel, stimulating adult Jewish education, and providing community services to our men and women in uniform and our hospitalized veterans.

Today, in laying the cornerstone of a magnificent exhibit hall and B'nai B'rith building, B'nai B'rith has undertaken another major enterprise. It is seeking to erect a structure that will, to a large extent, tell the story of the part played by Jews in the development and defense of our country. It is a story that has been much neglected, both by our own people and consequently by our neighbors. In almost every field we Jews have played a distinguished role. One needs only to recite some of the names: in law, Louis D. Brandeis, Felix Frankfurter, Benjamin N. Cardozo; in medicine, Dr. Bela Schick, Dr. Selman Waksman, Dr. Jonas Salk; in social work, Lillian Wald, Sophie Irene

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Loeb, Frieda Miller; in philanthropy, Nathan Straus, Felix Warburg,

Julius Rosenwald, Jacob Schiff; in music, Ernest Bloch, Samuel Barber,

Aaron Copland, Pierre Monteux, George Gershwin, Isaac Stern, Jascha

Heifetz, and numerous others; in literature, Lillian Hellman, Edna Ferber,

Arthur Miller, Fannie Hurst; in labor Samuel Gompers, Sidney Hillman,

David Dubinsky; in science, Albert Einstein and Robert Oppenheim; in public

service Oscar Straus, Henry M. Morganthau, Jr., Senator Herbert H. Lehman; in industry, David Sarnoff and the dozens of men who built the garment and moving picture industries in this country.

It is important that we should know who these people are and what they did. They can become, and should become, guiding stars for our youth in particular--lasting proof that we have done and are doing our share in fortifying our country both from without and within. The new B'nai B'rith building will contain documents, photographs, sculpture, paintings, and all kinds of historic material designed to refresh our memory of their achievements. It will increase the pride and prestige of all of us. Owing to its location in Washington, the nation's capital, it will be visited by thousands of sightseers and students, both Jewish and non-Jewish, who will thereby gain a new appreciation of one of the many cultural strands which have made America what it is today. The building should prove specially attractive to scholars in the field of American Jewish history, since it will contain an authoritative collection of books on this subject.

I am particularly delighted that one section of the building will be devoted to a permanent exhibit on man's struggle for political and civil liberty. This section of books and manuscripts will document our struggle against totalitarianism and anti-Semitism. And I hardly need tell this audience how gratified I am that there will be another section dealing with the connections between the United States and Israel. It is a bond which we must continually work to strengthen, expressing as it does both our faith in democracy and in the future of the Jewish people.

B'nai B'rith has done much to strengthen that bond, beginning in 1865 when it sent funds to aid victims of the cholera plague in Palestine, and continuing with the establishment of aid to many religious and educational institutions there. After World War One it raised funds for housing and emergency relief, and established two colonies in honor of past presidents Alfred M. Cohen and Henry Monsky. In the months of tension before and after the new State of Israel was founded, B'nai B'rith provided for Israel tools, machinery, ambulances and many other items valued at millions of dollars. In 1950 it established a B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation at the Hebrew University, and last year dedicated a veterans rehabilitation center at the Tel Hashomir Hospital in Tel Aviv and a Home for Maladjusted Children near Jerusalem. During the current campaign B'nai B'rith members have purchased or sold \$6.5 worth of Israel bonds, planted thousands of trees in the B'nai B'rith Forest, part of the Great Martyrs Forest, and conducted many other projects under the aegis of its B'nai B'rith Israel Committee. On the

Background Material for Rabbi Silver - 4

political scene, under the vigorous leadership of Philip M. Klutznick, B'nai B'rith has intervened strongly to promote peace in the Middle East and security for the new state.

There is one more function that this new exhibit hall should help to perform. It will help to guarantee the future of the Jewish people. Here in this country there can be little future for us as a group unless we can encourage and stimulate a revival of Jewish thought and learning, of art and philosophy, of religion and theology. This was the soil that nurtured the achievements which will be noted in this building; it is our task to prepare fresh ground for new and greater accomplishments. B'nai B'rith--indeed all of us--hope and expect that this new structure will raise the sights and enlarge the vision of our people, spurring them on to new advances in medicine, art, philosophy, music, industry, labor, law and government--achievements based on our heritage and rich in a distinctive Jewish approach and insight.

REMARKS OF RABEI ABBA HILLEL SILVER AT CORNERSTONE-LAYING CEREMONY, B'NAI B'RITH, 17th STREET AND RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C., on MAY 6, 1956, at 3:00 P. M.

It is altogether fitting that the B'nai B'rith, the foremost humanitarian service agency of American Jewry, should erect an impressive building here in Washington at the crossroads of American life which will not only house its national activities, but which will tell in pride and gratitude, to the many who will come to this city for the future from all parts of the nation — nay, from all parts of the world — the heroic and magnificent story of the contribution of American Jews to the life, progress and defense of America. It is a story worthy to be told not alone to ourselves, but to our fellow citizens.

Our beginnings here were humble, as were the beginnings of all peoples who came to these shores. Steadily through the years, and more rapidly in the last century, our numbers increased, and we shared eagerly and gratefully in the growing and evolving life of America.

Our people became in outlook and in hopefulness, true children of the new world, and in service and devotion, loyal and proud citizens of the United States. They served it patriotically in peace and in war. They made creditable contributions to its material prosperity, to its political and social progress, to labor and industry, to its arts, science, literature and music. They supported generously all the philanthropic and social institutions of their communities, Jawish and non-Jawish alike. They have been not an unworthy and unimportant part of the noble mosaic which is America.

Why should not this story of the American Jewish community, so creditable in itself and so complimentary to the greatness and goodness,

page 2 Silver

the freedom and opportunities of American life - and both so mutually complimentary - be told in an impressive and dramatic manner for the edification of our citizens.

B'nai B'rith has never limited itself to the construction of buildings, however useful and worthy they have proved to be. Through the years it has devoted itself to constructive building in all fields of vital Jewish and human interest.

Tt has worked for unity and harmony in Jewish life. It has not been doctrinnaire or parochial or violently partisan. It has sown no discords in the American Jewish community throughout its long and honorable career. This cannot be said of all national Jewish organizations, some of whom have unfortunately distinguished themselves by their competitiveness and by their monopolistic proclivities. B'nai B'rith has served catholic Israel. I well remember the decisive role which B'nai B'rith played in the critical days in our long struggle for the establishment of the State of Israel. Here was an issue which threatened the most serious cleavage in the Jewish community of America. It was at that time that the B'nai B'rith raised its clear and persuasive voice, calling for unity and discipline in Jewish life and pleading for the surrender of lesser loyalties and pet ideologies, in order to meet the challenge of a great historic hour.

Binai Birith was tremendously helpful in maintaining the solidarity of the American Jewish community and since that time it has contributed significantly to the upbuilding of the State of Israel. This unity in behalf of Israel has fortunately been retained in the years since the establishment of the State of Israel, inspite of irresponsible attacks made by a handful of Jewsxxxxx x who, in their embittered words and acts, reflect the sentiments neither of America nor of Judaism.

Wherever there was Jewish need, local, national or international, there B'nai B'rith stretched out an eager helping hand, never stopping to inquire as to origins or ritual loyalties, never drawing a line of divisiveness in the house of Israel.

B'nai B'rith has been the champion of human rights, not only of Jewish rights. Jewish rights will never be secure in the world as long as the rights of all other peoples and minorities are not secure. I am pleased to know that the building which B'nai B'rith is erecting here will contain a permanent exhibit of the epic story of the struggle of man against the dark forces of intolerance and bigotry.

B'nai B'rith has also fully realized that the Jewish people cannot survive without Judaism. No Jewish community ever survived for long which did not cultivate Jewish learning and study and the prescribed way of Jewish religious life, at least in its essentials. It is therefore very gratifying to know that increasingly B'nai B'rith is devoting itself to its adult Jewish education, to the training of Jewish youth on and off our college campuses, and to the encouragement of Jewish scholarship.

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B'NAI B'RITH LAYS



Convention delegates and visitors at cornerstone ceremony for new B'nai B'rith Building in Washington. President Philip M. Klutznick presided. The addresses of the two principal speakers, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver and Sen. Herbert H. Lehman, are published below.



Rabbi Abba Hillel Silwer

It is altogether fitting that the B'nai B'rith, the foremost humanitarian service agency of American Jewry, should erect an impressive building here in Washington at the crossroads of American life which will not only house its national activities, but which will tell in pride and gratitude, to the many who will come to this city for the future from all parts of the nation—may, from all parts of the world—the heroic and magnificent story of the contribution of American Jews to the life, progress and defense of America. It is a story worthy to be told not alone to ourselves, but to our fellow citizens.

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B'NAI B'RITH HAS BUILT MORE THAN BUILDINGS

By Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

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(Continued on page 33)



When sudden illness prevented Dr. Maurice Goldberg, VP of BB, from attending the convention, his message of greetings at opening session was read by his wife, a past president of Women's Dist. No. 5. Harry Dobkin, Director of the BB National Youth Service Appeal, was also ill, and the convention passed "get-well" resolutions for both.

ployment of the Physically Handicapped, the study of good government and the improvement of immigration laws, cooperation with Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and the sponsorship of public naturalization ceremonies in federal and state courts.

The name of the Vocational Service Bureau was also changed by dropping the word Bureau.

DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

(Continued from page 10)

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FLORIDA



NORTH CAROLINA

DUNCRAGGAN INN

HENDERSONVILLE, NO. CAROLINA
World-Famous Cuisine
Professional Entertainment—All Sports
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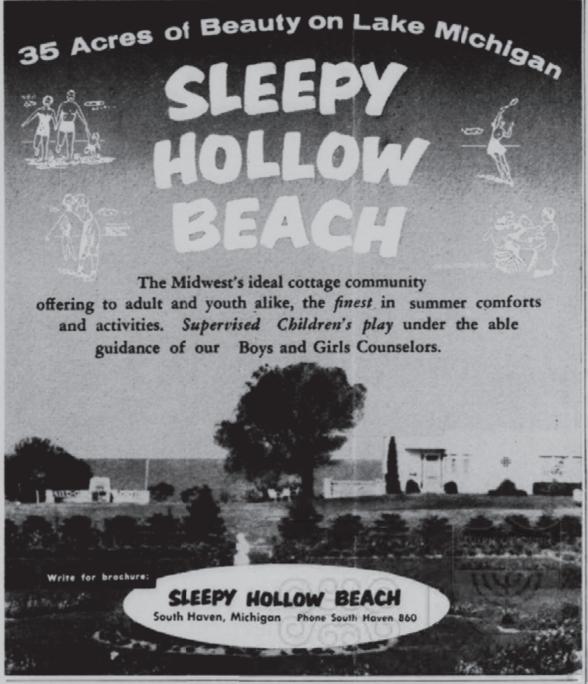


Breezy Point Lodge, Minnesota's fabulous million dollar resort. Beautiful vacation paradise in the Northwoods. Ideal climate. Friendly, informal atmosphere. Golf, wonderful swimming beach, tennis, bowling, shuffleboard, fishing, boats, motors, guides, dancing, orchestra, planned entertainment, superlative food. 20 Family Activities. Children's camp program. American Plan from \$14.00 per day, including three meals a day and midnight snack.

Write for Folder: Jack Salenger, 1017 W. Washington, Chicago 7, Ill.

FLORIDA







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Write or phone South Haven, Mich. 124 for __ Illustrated Brochure and Reservations. __

A Vacation and Renewed Health at

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World Famous Baths for Arthritis, Rheumatism, etc.

St. Clair Beach

ish education, to the training of Jewish youth on and off our college campuses, and to the encouragement of Jewish scholarship.

Sen. Herbert H. Lehman

(Continued from page 11)

cannot shirk the responsibility that accompanies it.

Today the challenge posed by Communism to our free way of life is more formidable than ever before. The new and softer face presented by the ruling group in the Kremlin reveals no weakening of their basic determination to impose their kind of society and their view of man upon the whole world. The free world is properly concerned lest the Communist bloc, by concentrating all its human and material resources, achieve military superiority.

The Kremlin is building weapons as destructive as those we have developed. Indeed, they may be building them fast, today than we are. But as long as Communist pilots, soldiers, scientists, and workers have to keep looking over their shoulders to see if they are being shadowed by their suspicious and intolerant masters, we should enjoy a clear advantage. If our scientists can work free of the restraints of serving any ideology but truth, we should not need to fear being outstripped by Communist technology. And we would have a better claim, too, on the minds and hearts of the millions throughout the world who are still uncommitted in the contest between democracy and Communism.

Unfortunately, we in this country have weakened our own cause by misreading the nature of the Communist threat, and the true requirements of American loyalty and security. For too many years we have lived in a fog of synthetically-manufactured fear. We have treated with elaborate dignity the smears and reckless charges which in a happier day we would have recognized immediately as false. We have seen Congress permit its chambers to be used as a privileged sanctuary for the launching of irresponsible assaults against the good name of perfectly loyal individuals and institutions.

In the last year or two, the fog has begun to lift. For this improvement, courageous individuals, and organizations like B'nai B'rith and others, who refused to be stampeded or silenced by the political demagogues, are to be congratulated. But much remains to be done.

Only the other day the Attorney General proposed to Congress the adoption of a law that he said would permit government agencies to retain employees against whom security charges have been filed until final adjudication of their cases. This surely is the plain requirement of



Triennial Convention

of

B'nai B'rith

Supreme Lodge

May 5-9, 1956 Washington, D. C.



PHILIP M. KLUTZNICK President of B'nai B'rith

Convention Program

May 5-9, 1956

Statler Hotel, Washington, D. C.

SATURDAY, MAY 5-2:00 P.M. Congressional Room

PRE-CONVENTION ONEG SHABBAT

"THE FOUNDATIONS OF JEWISH SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL UNITY"

Symposium based on papers submitted by:

Dr. Mordecai M. Kaplan, Professor of the Philosophies of Religion at the Jewish
Theological Seminary of America and founder of the
Reconstructionist Movement.

Dr. Simon Rawidowicz, Professor of Hebrew Literature and Jewish Philosophy Brandeis University.*

Dr. Emanuel Rackman, Rabbi of Congregation Shaaray Tetila, Far Rockaway, New York.*

Dr. Bernard J. Bamberger, Rabbi of West End Synagogue, New York City.

DR. TRUDE WEISS ROSMARIN, Editor of the Jewish Spectator.*

Dr. Horace M. Kallen, Dean, Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science, The New School for Social Research.*

SUNDOWN-REGISTRATION-Mezzanine Lobby

^{*}Participants-Oral Presentation Saturday

SATURDAY, MAY 5

7:30 P.M. OPENING SESSION—Presidential Room

National Anthem...Mrs. HERMAN HERTZBERG

Invocation...... RABBI EMIL W. LEIPZIGER, Rabbi Touro Synagogue, New Orleans, Louisiana

Welcome ROBERT E. MCLAUGHLIN, President, Board of Commissioners,
District of Columbia

DR. MAURICE GOLDBERG, Vice President, Supreme Lodge

Remarks-on behalf of the Women's Supreme Council of B'nai B'rith-

MRS. LOUIS L. PERLMAN, President

Ratification of Appointment of Convention Committees

President's Message on the State of the Order.

PHILIP M. KLUTZNICK, President, B'nai B'rith

Report of Credentials Committee

Report of Rules Committee

9:30 P.M. CONVENTION COMMITTEE MEETINGS, (Rooms Posted)

SUNDAY, MAY 6

9:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. MEETINGS OF CONVENTION COMMITTEES

1:30 - 2:30 P.M. PLENARY SESSION—Presidential Room

3:00 P.M. CORNERSTONE EXERCISES, B'NAI B'RITH BUILDING erected by

THE B'NAI B'RITH HENRY MONSKY FOUNDATION 17TH STREET AND RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, N.W.

Chairman—PHILIP M. KLUTZNICK

Posting of Colors-Jewish War Veterans of the United States

National Anthem

Greetings-Frank R. S. Kaplan, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Henry Monsky Foundation

MRS. LOUIS L. PERLMAN, President, Women's Supreme Council

Address-Hon. HERBERT H. LEHMAN, U.S. Senator from New York

Address-RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER, The Temple, Cleveland, Ohio

Cornerstone Ceremony-Mrs. HENRY MONSKY

Prayer Service { RABBI ARTHUR J. LELYVELD RABBI HABOLD WEISBERG

(District of Columbia Police Department Band)

INSPECTOR CHARLES BENTER, Conductor

PRIVATE OLIN MAXFIELD, Assistant Conductor

SUNDAY, MAY 6—STATLER HOTEL

6:30 P.M. B'NAI B'RITH ACTIVITIES PANORAMA DINNER-Presidential Room, Statler Hotel

Chairman-Mrs. Louis L. Perlman

Invocation—RABBI HARRY SILVERSTONE, Tifereth Israel Congregation

Greetings by Overseas Delegates:

ALEXANDER ELIASH, President of the District Grand LABEL A. KATZ, Chairman, Lodge of Israel

Youth Commission

Introduced by:

JACK MORRISON, President of the District Grand DR. WILLIAM HABER, Chairman Lodge of Great Britain and Ireland

Hillel Commission

DR. PAUL JACOB, Vice-President of the District Grand HENRY E. SCHULTZ, Chairman, Lodge of Continental Europe

Anti-Defamation Commission

DR. ISRAEL DRAPKIN, Chairman of Latin American DR. MAURICE JACOBS, Chairman, Committee

Vocational Service Commission

Presentation of Awards

Crusade for Freedom-Presentation: WILLIAM A. GREENE, President

Acceptance: SIDNEY G. KUSWORM, Chairman B'nai B'rith Commission on Americanism and Civic Affairs

Membership-Special Triennial Convention Award

Presentation: BERNARD ROMAN, Chairman

Membership Cabinet

Acceptance: JEROME SCHULMAN of District Six STANLEY YESKEL of District Three

B'NAI B'RITH ACTIVITIES PANORAMA

"THE NEW DAY"-Produced and directed by HIMAN BROWN

Starring Donald Cook with Nancy Walker, Martin Agronsky, Ed Herlihy, DON RICHARDS, BOB DALTON, PETER BARASH, ROSALIE GOODE and WILLIAM

Benediction-RABBI TZVI PORATH, Montgomery County Jewish Community Center

MONDAY, MAY 7

9:00 A.M. "IN MEMORIAM"—Necrology—RABBI MEYER PASSOW

BUSINESS SESSIONS (extending to adjournment on Wednesday, May 9)

TUESDAY, MAY 8

7:00 P.M. CONVENTION BANQUET—Sheraton Hall, Sheraton Park Hotel

Chairman: PHILIP M. KLUTZNICK, President, B'nai B'rith

National Anthem

Invocation RABBI NORMAN GERSTENFELD, Washington Hebrew Congregation

Address. The Honorable John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State

Presentation B'nai B'rith President's Medal

Presentation of Award to B'nai B'rith

to Joseph Cherner (Posthumously)

ABRAHAM FEINBERG, President
Development Corporation for Israel

Benediction RABBI DAVID PANITZ, Adas Israel Congregation

* *

Musical Selections UNITED STATES MARINE BAND

CAPTAIN ALBERT SCHOEPPER, Leader

C.W.O. DALE HARPHAM, Assistant Leader

RICH TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL SINGING ROCKETS OF PARK FOREST, ILLINOIS

W. JAY HOEL, Director
Courtesy of Alban Coen,
Administrator, Rich Township High School



FRANK GOLDMAN Honorary President



MRS. LOUIS L. PERLMAN President, Women's Supreme Council



SIDNEY G. KUSWORM Treasurer



Maurice Bisgyer Secretary



Mrs. Arthur G. Laufman Director of Activities, Women's Supreme Council



FRANK R. S. KAPLAN Chairman, Board of Trustees Henry Monsky Foundation



MAX J. SCHNEIDER District One



ABRAHAM GLOVSKY District One



JOSEPH M. FINKLE President, District One



I. W. GAREK District Two



MARTIN M. GLUCHOW President, District Two



JUDGE SAMUEL WEISS District Three



ALBERT F. PARADISE President, District Three



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AARON RICHE District Four



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