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Central Conference of American Rabbis, Task Force on Jewish
Identity, correspondence, 1974-1976.

אגוד הרבנים המתקדמים

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

790 MADISON AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 • (212) AG 9-2811

Office of the President
Rabbi Robert I. Kahn
1500 Sunset Blvd., Houston, Tex. 77005

January 14, 1974

Rabbi Daniel Silver
Temple Tifereth Israel
University Circle and Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Daniel:

I have been struggling with the Task Force on Jewish Continuity for some time. You may recall that at the meeting in Atlanta, after the long debate and vote on mixed marriage, Fred Gottschalk made a suggestion. I enclose a copy of that suggestion which he put into writing at a later date.

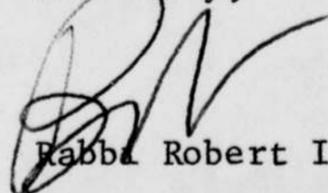
I had some mixed feelings about this committee due to the widespread concern with the question of giving our young people a desire to perpetuate Judaism, and toward that end to marry within the faith, and expressed these misgivings to our Fall board meeting in the hope that we could refer it to such organizations as the Council of Welfare Funds, etc.

The Board disagreed with me, however, and felt that while we might to call in other groups to cooperate or to send visitors to our committee, it would be more appropriate for the Conference itself to undertake the solution of this problem.

I have been thinking for some time now about the personnel of the committee. It is obviously too important just to toss off, and in casting about for an adequate chairman your name kept coming up in my mind. I am writing to ask if you would be willing to undertake this important responsibility. I would be very grateful to you personally and I know the Conference would be indebted if you were willing to accept this chairmanship.

Please let me hear from you soon.

Sincerely,



Rabbi Robert I. Kahn

RIK:ab

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*Ex-officio

Dear Bob:

[with Jan 14, 1979]

As a result of the action taken at the CCAR Convention in Atlanta, I propose that we begin as a Conference to deal with the roots of the problems which have generated the phenomenon of intermarriage, as well as a growing pattern of acculturation and assimilation which have plagued modern Judaism. It is my recommendation that the Conference undertake a systematic study through the creation of a task force, which might involve other than members of the Conference, for studying the quality of Jewish life in America, particularly as this is focused in our congregations and, especially, our Reform congregations; that we develop an approach for measuring the component of Jewish identity in our young people as this relates to our educational systems and congregational life and in our Movement. Particular stress should be laid upon those factors which lead to intermarriage, and here a group of specialists might be assigned the task of collating the published material which is already a small library, so that it might be properly digested for the Executive Board and then, hopefully, for the Conference as well. I suggest also that the 1976 Conference be devoted to the general topic of planning the spiritual future of American Reform Jewry, this in light of the past centennials of the Union and, by that time, also of the College-Institute.

Sincerely,

Fred.

January 29, 1974

Rabbi Robert I. Kahn, President
Central Conference of American Rabbis
1500 Sunset Blvd.
Houston, Texas 77005

Dear Bob:

I am sure that Joe told you of our conversation. I have great doubts that a body such as ours can be effective as far as the sociology of intermarriage is concerned. The cultural and mobility factors are overwhelming.

A task force on Jewish continuity might be useful in another way. Our concern is to sustain Jewish identity on the part of all our young people. Hopefully, they will marry within the faith. If they marry without hopefully their loyalties will be strong enough to draw their partner in. Whether this will happen depends on many factors not the least of which is whether they believe that it makes a significant difference that they remain Jews.

For the most part we have, as a movement, shied away from the question of Jewish singularity, the chosen people, why it's better to be. . . We clearly define and insist on the ethical requirements of "prophetic Judaism;" forgetting that a corollary of an ethical definition of Judaism is the feeling that: "I can take the same position as an agnostic or member of the ADA, many of my brothers do." The heavy institutional emphasis on interfaith and dialogue has also obscured an apologetic difference.

Were we to examine the sermons, writings and school curriculum of our colleagues we might find that they describe differences, but rarely provide students with the insights which justify difference or arguments which might convince him of the special beauty of the label Jew. Obviously these are not easy or popular arguments to make in our pluralistic society but they must be made, Certainly only if we, the teachers, are convinced will we convince others.

January 29, 1974

Proposal: A program to stimulate serious rabbinic and leadership thinking on the value and significance of difference.

1. Let us systematically encourage theologians, historians and educators to prepare papers, essays and seminars on a "rationale for distinctiveness." This must be done fairly publicly so that colleagues can respond. That response is its own contribution since everyone will sharpen his sights and to a certain degree modify his approach. The task force would suggest and enlist papers, provide public forums for their discussion and, hopefully, for their publication. We might adopt a three-tiered approach.

a. A retreat-institute with four to five papers and forty to fifty colleagues, reading and discussion.

b. A choice of papers and presentors with contrasting views for our regional conference during 1976.

c. The use of the '76 or '77 Conference for major presentations in this area and discussions of the issue.

2. While apologetics and theologies are being developed, we might meet with educators and sociologists to refine our understanding of how American Jewish youth would relate to^{or} assimilate these arguments. Obviously they cannot be beaten around the head. What kind of studies, audio-visual materials, experiences could be developed and made effective? Such methods must be field tested. This material should be available by the time of the designated Conference and presented there.

3. A review should be made of school texts, camp-institute programs, Jewish Chautauqua films etc., as to their implicit posture vis a vis this question of uniqueness and identity; and discussions held with appropriate professionals.

We would need sufficient funds for several planning meetings, the study institute, and hopefully a subvention for publication. We would need funds to hire researchers in the education and sociology areas.

I have proceeded on the assumption that our role as a Conference is to clarify thought and plot direction rather than to implement massive programs. For that we would turn to the UAHC and congregations.

January 29, 1974

I would be pleased to know your reaction to all of this. With all good wishes I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

cc. Glover



RABBI ROBERT I. KAHN, D.D., D.H.L.

TEMPLE EMANU EL 1500 SUNSET BOULEVARD
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77005 STUDY: 713 529-5771

June 10, 1974

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
University Circle & Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Daniel:

I sent my letter to you and your response to me to the Executive Committee of the CCAR. In the crunch of our Executive Committee's business, you and I were told they would like us to "flesh out" your proposal and re-submit it in October.

Would you do me the kindness of enlarging the description of what you have in mind? I would like very much for it to receive full consideration, and it needs a little more detail in terms of its purposes and its goals, as well as its philosophy.

I would appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Best personal wishes.

Sincerely yours,

Rabbi Robert I. Kahn

June 13, 1974

Rabbi Robert I. Kahn
Temple Emanu El
1500 Sunset Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77005

Dear Bob:

With all love I don't think there is more to say now on the project than I put into the original letter. In response to your request I suggested that it was time for us to look afresh at the question of identity and particularism. For too long Reform has waved the flag of a vague universalism which justified a number of good causes and a great deal of ethical vagueness. If you want to deal with ideas you've got to find the people who can wrestle with the question and find a way of exposing their writings and ideas to your audience. My proposal intended no more.

To go further than the original submission would be to preempt the thinking of the Committee and to fall victim to the sin of grantsmanship - tailor your program to what people will accept. As you know I have no vested interest in this undertaking. I only think it is one of a number of steps which ~~we~~ must urgently take if we are to retain any intellectual or philosophic credibility at a time when being a liberal boy scout isn't enough.

The only way I can suggest that might help you out ^{would} ~~will~~ be for me to explain the project in person at your October meeting. I hope you are well and that you have a good summer.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

אגוד הרבנים המתקדמים

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

790 MADISON AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 • (212) AG 9-2811

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1500 Sunset Blvd., Houston, Tex. 77005

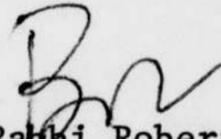
July 16, 1974

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Danny:

This is to invite you to join us at the Central Conference's Executive Committee meeting in October. We meet on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 29th and 30th. We would be pleased to hear from you on either day on the topic of Jewish identity. I think that your personal appearance will be the best selling job that we can make and I would appreciate your setting aside the time now.

Sincerely,



Rabbi Robert I. Kahn

RIK:ab

CC: Rabbi Glaser

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*Ex-officio

July 18, 1974

Rabbi Robert I. Kahn
1500 Sunset Blvd.
Houston, Texas 77005

Dear Bob:

I shall be happy to meet with the Executive Committee on Tuesday, October 29. I assume the meeting is in New York. I gather that you want me to put into words the content of my letter to you which I will be happy to do.

I trust the summer is progressing apace and it is a happy and restful one. I am just back from work in Israel and a vacation in Turkey and somehow the summer is half over.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

October 24, 1975

Rabbi Bruce S. Warshal
Touro Synagogue
1501 General Pershing Ave.
New Orleans, La.

Dear Bruce:

I propose to call a meeting of the Task Force on Jewish Identity
on either Monday, December 1 or December 8 in New York.
Which of these dates is best for you?

I trust that you will have ongoing work on which to report.
I will report on the possibilities for our symposium.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

October 24, 1975

Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman
Central Synagogue
123 East 55th Street
New York, N. Y. 10022

Dear Shelly:

I propose to call a meeting of the Task Force on Jewish Identity
on either Monday, December 1 or December 8 in New York.
Which of these dates is best for you?

I trust that you will have ongoing work on which to report.
I will report on the possibilities for our symposium.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

The Temple

UNIVERSITY CIRCLE AT SILVER PARK • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106 • 791-7755
BRANCH: 26000 SHAKER BLVD. • BEACHWOOD, OHIO 44122 • 831-3233

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER - RABBI

MAX ROTH
STUART GELLER
Associate Rabbis

LEO S. BAMBERGER
Executive Secretary

October 24, 1975

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Massachusetts Ave. & Macomb St., N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20016

Dear Josh:

I propose to call a meeting of the Task Force on Jewish Identity
on either Monday, December 1 or December 8 in New York.
Which of these dates is best for you?

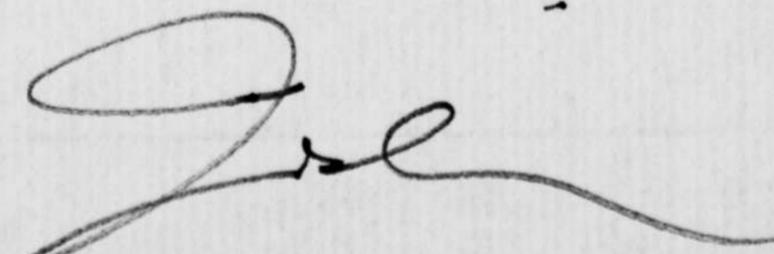
I trust that you will have ongoing work on which to report.
I will report on the possibilities for our symposium.

Sincerely,


Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Dear Danny
Dec 1, any time from
2PM on, is OK.
Dec 8 is out for me.



Our 125th Anniversary Year

October 24, 1975

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, N. Y. 10607

Dear Peter:

I propose to call a meeting of the Task Force on Jewish Identity on either Monday, December 1 or December 8 in New York. Which of these dates is best for you?

I trust that you will have ongoing work on which to report. I will report on the possibilities for our symposium.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

אגוד הרבנים המתקדמים

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

790 MADISON AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 • (212) 734-7166

Office of the Executive Vice President

October 29, 1975

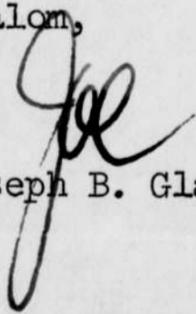
Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Danny:

December 8 is not good for a meeting - the meeting room here is not free that day; December 1 is OK but I will be out of town. If it is not necessary for me to be here, then by all means call your meeting for that day. Please let my secretary, Sara Siegel, know - better still, let her send out the meeting notices and get the return cards so she will know how many people to prepare lunch for.

All the best.

Shalom,


Joseph B. Glaser

JBG/s

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*Ex-officio

WOODLANDS COMMUNITY TEMPLE

50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607
(914) LY 2-7070

RABBI PETER RUBINSTEIN

November 2, 1975

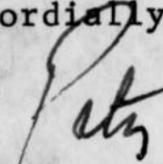
Rabbi Daniel Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Danny:

Thank you for your letter advising me of the possibilities of the future meeting of our very select committee. My Mondays are usually pretty open. If I have to take a choice, I would choose December 8th as the more convenient date. It really very much depends upon what time of the day would be involved.

To tell you the truth, I haven't been doing much work on the project but with the incentive of the upcoming meeting, I will put my thoughts together and follow through on some of the projects about which we had talked.

Cordially yours,



Peter J. Rubinstein, Rabbi

PJR/mp

100% COTTON FIBRE



RABBI SHELDON ZIMMERMAN

STUDY:
123 EAST 55TH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022

November 4, 1975
30 Heshvan 5736

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver,

Rabbi Zimmerman has asked me to drop a note
to you in answer to your letter of October 24th.

The best day for him is-

Monday, December 1st

His day is free until 7:00 p.m.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura Danz".

Laura Danz

Secretary to Rabbi Zimmerman

GILBERT

92-1337-20

Touro Synagogue

FOUNDED 1828

St. Charles Avenue at General Pershing

POST OFFICE BOX 15186

New Orleans, Louisiana 70175

BRUCE S. WARSHAL, RABBI

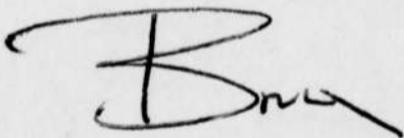
November 5, 1975

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Danny:

Monday, December 1 is definitely out for me. I can make a December 8 meeting for the Task Force on Jewish Identity. The December 8 date is not great and I will have to do some juggling, so please let me know as soon as possible if that is the date that we finally arrive on.

Sincerely,



Rabbi Bruce S. Warshal

BSW:sbl

November 11, 1975

Rabbi Bruce S. Warshal
Touro Synagogue
St. Charles Ave. at General Pershing
New Orleans, La. 70175

Dear Bruce:

There have been so many scheduling problems among the six of us over the December 1 or 8 dates that I have decided on another tack. I have arbitrarily chosen a date somewhat in the future - Monday, February 9, 1976. Hopefully, everyone can clear his calendar for that date. In any case, let's all try.

We will meet at 11 A. M. and the meeting should last until five. It will be held at the CCAR office.

I look forward to seeing you then. Hopefully each of us will have his assignment in hand. Happy Chanukkah!

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

November 11, 1975

Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman
Central Synagogue
123 East 55th Street
New York, N. Y. 10022

Dear Shelly:

There have been so many scheduling problems among the six of us over the December 1st or 8th dates that I have decided on another tack. I have arbitrarily chosen a date somewhat in the future - Monday, February 9, 1976. Hopefully, everyone can clear his calendar for that date. In any case, let's all try.

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Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

November 11, 1975

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Massachusetts Ave. & Macomb St., N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20016

Dear Josh:

There have been so many scheduling problems among the six of us over the December 1st or 8th dates that I have decided on another tack. I have arbitrarily chosen a date somewhat in the future - Monday, February 9, 1976. Hopefully, everyone can clear his calendar for that date. In any case, let's all try.

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Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

November 11, 1975

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, N. Y. 10607

Dear Peter:

There have been so many scheduling problems among the six of us over the December 1st or 8th dates that I have decided on another tack. I have arbitrarily chosen a date somewhat in the future - Monday, February 9, 1976. Hopefully, everyone can clear his calendar for that date. In any case, let's all try.

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I look forward to seeing you then. Hopefully each of us will have his assignment in hand. Happy Chanukkah!

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

November 11, 1975

Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser
Central Conference of American Rabbis
790 Madison Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Joe:

Because of scheduling conflicts I have moved the date of my committee meeting to Monday, February 9, 1976. I hope we can use the office meeting room at that time if it is available.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

WASHINGTON HEBREW CONGREGATION

Massachusetts Avenue and Macomb Street, N.W.

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20016

JOSHUA O. HABERMAN, D. H. L.

Senior Rabbi

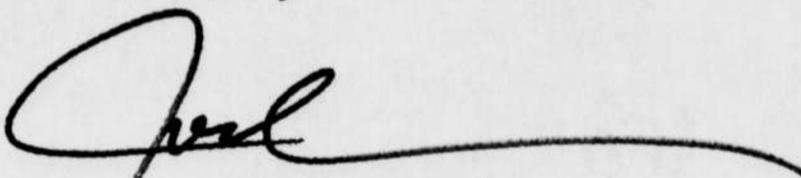
November 17, 1975

Dear Danny,

Monday afternoon, February 9th, 1976, will be OK for a meeting. Please note that I teach in the morning but could be at the meeting by 1:30 P.M. Can you change the meeting time which you now have set for 11:00 A.M. to 1:30 P.M.?

Looking forward to hearing from you,

As ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joshua', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joshua O. Haberman

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106



RABBI SHELDON ZIMMERMAN

STUDY:
123 EAST 55TH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022

November 18, 1975
14 Kislev 5736

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Dan,

Will meet you at 11 a.m. at the CCAR
office on Monday, February 9, 1976.

Looking forward to seeing you again
and with warmest regards,

Sincerely,

Sheldon Zimmerman
Rabbi

SZ:ld

WOODLANDS COMMUNITY TEMPLE

50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607
(914) LY 2-7070

RABBI PETER RUBINSTEIN

November 20, 1975

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Danny:

I have noted the meeting to be held on Monday,
February 9, 1976. I have cleared my calendar and will
be able to attend.

I look forward to seeing you then. I am working
hard to complete my assignment. As a matter of fact,
just today Shelley and I are bringing together some
of our congregants in order to discuss the subject.

My best wishes to you for a Happy Chanukkah.

Cordially,



Peter J. Rubinstein, Rabbi

PJR/jm

February 11, 1976

Rabbi Joseph Glaser
Central Conference of American Rabbis
790 Madison Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Joe:

We had a good, though small, meeting on Monday. Josh Haberman called Friday with his excuses and Sheldon Zimmerman called during the meeting. Nevertheless, we accomplished a good bit. Peter Rubinstein and Sheldon Zimmerman have completed two long open-ended discussions with carefully selected congregants on why they came to reform congregations and what they found when they came. I have completed my study of universalism-particularism in Confirmation services. It will be published in the next Journal. Bruce Warshal has done a theological piece on the third covenant (a permanent bond) which he is now readying for publication. In other words, we have done some basic thinking and studying and are now ready for the next step which is to organize a convocation for the fall.

We propose to hold a two-day convocation at the New York school. My working title is "Are We Prepared To Be Jews?" The convocation will be divided into three sections. Peter Rubinstein will be responsible for the first section which will explore who we are and what we are saying. It will center on a careful evaluation of the tapes he has already made and of four subsequent tapes which he will arrange (in other sections: the midwest, the south and southwest and California) correlated with data from Reform Is A Verb etc. and to get some idea of where our congregants' heads are. From his initial interviews clearly they are not members of our congregation because of the universalist trumpeting of our past.

The second part of the convocation will be devoted to our institutions and programs. We will develop papers analyzing school curriculum, the pulpit, congregational programming, liturgy, the curriculum of the college etc. The study I did of Confirmation services is a prototype of the kind of work we will ask various people to undertake. We want to take a good look at the language we use and the face that we offer our community.

[Feb 11, 1976]

2

The third part of the convocation will be devoted to more traditional theological and philosophic issues. Bernie Martin has agreed to do a paper tracing the universalist-particularist theme in the earlier reform theologians. Lou Silberman will do one on particularism in the midrash. Larry Hoffman will do a piece on the prayer book. There will be others.

We hope that the materials which will be presented can be published in the Journal and that some of the tapes and perhaps some of us can develop a day or two program on the question of loyalty and identity for the various regional meetings of our colleagues. Our mandate was not to come up with a platform, but to open up this area for discussion.

What do we need? This year we will need enough money to allow Peter to travel for three or four days to complete the interviews. He will make arrangements with local rabbis to have participants lined up and his presence will guarantee that the conversations will cover the same areas and be a useful basis for analysis.

Next fall we will need the money for a convocation. I do not propose paying anyone for their contributions. We will hold our committee meeting in conjunction with the convocation.

I would like to hear from you so that I can go ahead and make arrangements for the articles that we seek and with the college for a fall date.

I hope you are over your cold. We missed you.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp
Encl.

P. S. I am enclosing a sermon I did on Zionism which we have used effectively in Cleveland. You may have some use for it.

WOODLANDS COMMUNITY TEMPLE

50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607
(914) LY 2-7070

RABBI PETER RUBINSTEIN

February 23, 1976

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Danny:

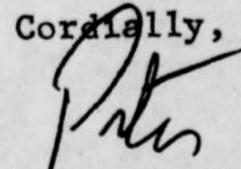
As long as I have a minute to regroup my mental forces, I would like to suggest my perception of where we are at this point and how I might be of some service in furthering our program.

In investigating where the Jewish community is, what is on its mind and how it presents itself, we have utilized the process of group discussion which was recorded and which is now being transcribed. Prior to making any definite plans as to our future direction, I would prefer to have you and the other members of the committee read the transcription of the discussions so that we might have your input and suggestions as to future discussions.

Following this, it would be useful to travel to various areas of the country which I believe could be handled in a single three to four day trip. I would plan to have a West Coast discussion during the convention and therefore would attempt to reach the Southwest - perhaps Phoenix or Tucson - the South Mid-West - Houston or Dallas - and the Midwest including Chicago and Cincinnati. Whereas it would be profitable to also have a discussion in the Southeast, I'm not sure it could be handled on this swing. Certainly, the extent of the travel is very open, but I would like to finalize the concept and to make assurances that there is money in the budget for this type of excursion. It seems to me that together with certain other indicators, we could come up with an important analysis of the theological position of the Reform Jewish community at this time.

I will be in touch with you in the very near future and hope also to have the transcriptions to you very soon.

Cordially,



Peter J. Rubinstein, Rabbi

PJR/jm



HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
Cincinnati • New York • Los Angeles • Jerusalem

40 WEST 68th STREET • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10023
(212) 873-0200

February 24, 1976

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver,
The Temple,
University Circle at Silver Park,
Cleveland, Ohio 44122

Dear Daniel,

It seems I made it back from Cleveland just in time. I arrived home to discover that I had some sort of flu, and have spent my time until now trying to fight it off while still doing justice to the demands of my teaching schedule. Unfortunately, I was unable to write this letter before now, and apologize accordingly. I hope, however, that you will recognize that time has not dimmed my appreciation for the time we spent together; nor for the very generous gift of books you so kindly made to me.

Let me turn to the first matter immediately, since I really did look forward anxiously to getting to know you a little, and I was grateful that you did not allow your busy schedule to limit the opportunity for us to converse together. I must also say how much I enjoyed seeing The Temple itself. Some day a lot of inner city Temples will regret disposing of their historical structures as if mere bricks and mortar could circumscribe a spiritual legacy so that the latter would necessarily wear out along with the former. I think The Temple is ample testimony to the fact that the material structure need not wear out in the first place, and that a new building does not necessarily reincarnate majestic ideas in all their fullness.

As for the books, what can I add to the assurance that I selected those which I use regularly, and the reiteration of my gratitude to you for having made them available to me. As you know, many are not available at all, and others I could[^] obtained only at prohibitive cost. The next time I quote Mann, you may say to yourself, "By the grace of Silver!" Many many thanks!

I have not forgotten your request for a paper next year. I have already begun thinking a bit about how to proceed with my research.

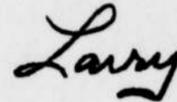
[Feb 24, 1976]

2

You may recall my mentioning a book on structuralism and art by Levi-Strauss. I mentioned it to Adele, and I think she might be interested in looking at it. It is a popular treatment of the subject, based on a series of radio interviews between Levi-Strauss and G. Charbonnier. It is called Conversations With Claude Levi-Strauss, G. Charbonnier, ed. The English translation is issued by Jonathan Cape, a British publisher, but American distribution in paperback form is available under the aegis of Grossman Publishers.

I look forward to seeing you again. Please give my best to your wife and our mutual Cleveland colleagues (in that order), but not necessarily -- recalling the letter to John Raynor -- to all mankind.

Sincerely,



Larry Hoffman

אגוד הרבנים המתקדמים

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

790 MADISON AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 • (212) 734-7166

March 2, 1976

TO: Chairmen of CCAR committees and Commission Delegations

Dear Colleague,

Each summer, following the annual convention, a major responsibility of the CCAR office is the collection, transcription and editing of materials for the Yearbook.

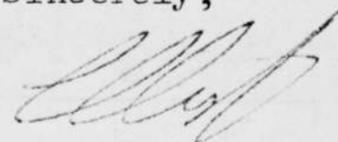
This year, in order to begin this process as much as possible before the convention, I am asking you as the chairman of a committee which will not be holding an open session at the convention to submit your annual committee report before the convention opens. Whether your committee will have met before June or not, even a brief report or minutes would be appreciated for our Conference's official record. Actions taken during the convention pertaining to your report will, of course, be included in the Yearbook.

Our printer has suggested that reports or minutes be submitted double-spaced, on one side of the page, for ease in editing and typesetting.

I would appreciate your returning the enclosed card indicating whether you will be submitting your report before or after the convention, or will not have a report to make this year.

Thanks for your help, and all good wishes.

Sincerely,



Elliot L. Stevens

/e
Enclosure

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*Ex-officio

אגוד הרבנים המתקדמים

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

790 MADISON AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 • (212) 734-7166

Office of the Executive Vice President

4 March 1976

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Dan:

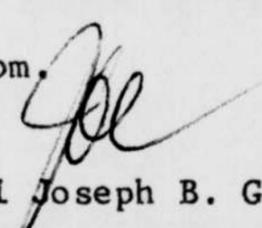
I didn't see your letter until my return from Israel a few days ago. I believe Arthur is also replying to you, but wanted to acknowledge and comment a bit.

Our Board meeting on April 6-7 will have to approve an allocation for the Fall convocation you are projecting as well as other expenditures, such as Peter's traveling. It would be helpful if you and Peter could give us some figures. The way it looks to me now, the Convocation could be virtually self-supporting inasmuch as we are paying no participants, and can charge a registration fee that would cover meals and prorate any rentals. If we use the Journal to publish, we are free of cost there, too. Am I missing anything?

As to dates, November is bad because of the World Union in Israel November 15-21 with several days lead time for travel, and then you have Thanksgiving at one end and Election Day at the other. As far as I can see, October is clear. Please select the date as soon as you can so that other things don't fill in. We are very pleased at the progress and solid substance that is emerging. I hear more and more the same question being asked.

Your sermon on Zionism is splendid. All good wishes.

Shalom.


Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser

cc: Rabbis Lelyveld and Peter Rubinstein

OFFICERS:

Arthur J. Lelyveld, *President*
Cleveland, Ohio

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New York, N.Y.

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*Ex-officio

March 11, 1976

Rabbi Joseph Glaser
Central Conference of American Rabbis
790 Madison Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Joe:

I am enclosing two letters which are self-evident. I don't think that the World Union dates need affect this convocation. As far as I know no one contemplated as a lecturer is involved.

The convocation should be self-sustaining except for transportation fees and hotel bills for the speakers. No honorariums will be offered. I will combine the annual meeting of our committee with the convocation. My guess is that we will have to pay for three to five men at an estimated cost of \$600. Lunch will be self-supporting. I do not propose a registration fee. I presume the College will not charge rental and I would like colleagues and HUC JIR students to be free to attend.

As my letter indicates, I have asked Peter Rubinstein about the expenses associated with his project. My guess is they would be on the order of \$400 for a four day taping trip, So we will require about \$1,000.

The convocation should result in the publication of papers in the Journal (I have talked to Bernie Martin) and the development of a program which can be taken to our 1976-77 Regional meetings so we can discharge our obligation to raise the issue of particularism and survival with our colleagues.

With all good wishes I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

P. S. I would like to hold a meeting of my small committee at the Conference. Bernie tells me that a Journal Board meeting is scheduled on Monday or Tuesday. Can you give me the day and the time of that meeting so I can schedule our meeting so that it will not conflict.

DJS:mp
Encl.

March 11, 1976

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607

Dear Peter:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter from Joe Glaser. I estimated to him that it would cost about \$400 for you to take the taping trip. Do you think this will be adequate?

I am eagerly looking forward to the receipt of the typed transcript of your first interviews. Happy Purim.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

March 11, 1976

Rabbi Paul M. Steinberg
HUC - JIR
40 West 68th St.
New York, N. Y. 10023

Dear Paul:

The CCAR Committee on Particularism would like to hold a convocation at the New York school on either October 25-26 or November 8-9, 1976. We intend to present a number of papers, some evaluative and others theological in nature. The analytic papers will examine the actual posture of our various institutions (synagogue, school curricula, prayer book. . .) on a particularism-universalim axis. We also plan to present the analysis of a number of tape interviews with congregants as to their perceptions of what we are saying.

The theological papers will deal with the various rationales of Jewish survival; the chosen people concept - election; the theological basis for the refusal to perform intermarriage and vice versa; the theological assumption of the new prayer book in this area etc.

It is our intention to publish the best of this material in the Journal and to develop speakers and materials through this conference at regional meetings of the Conference. It is not our purpose to develop a platform for the reform movement; but to raise the awareness of our colleagues in this neglected area of thought. Most of us passionately defend Israel and rush off in behalf of every liberal cause. Increasingly we find ourselves not only tired out but conflicted.

In any case, the papers and speakers should be of a high level. Our purpose is a serious one. You may recall the convocation on Judaism and Ethics which I organized a few years ago. We will invite rabbis from the area as well as the student body. We will charge for lunch and hope the College staff will help us provide it.

Would you check the College's calendar as soon as you can, I need to make a report for the CCAR Board at its early April Executive meeting. Many thanks.

I trust you are well. These have been busy but happy months for me and for mine. Happy Purim.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

March 15, 1976

Rabbi Elliot L. Stevens
Central Conference of American Rabbis
790 Madison Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Rabbi Stevens:

- our report

This has been a year of preparation. The Committee on Particularism held a meeting in February to plan a two-day convocation for the Fall at the HUC - JIR in New York on the theme: The Language of Survival. Members of the committee have examined the language through which the particularity of Jewish life is presented in school curricula, from the pulpit, at Confirmation services and in the prayer book. Tape interviews are being conducted to discover how congregants perceive Reform's stance and a number of scholars have been asked to prepare papers on the chosen people, election, the interplay between the universal and the particular in Judaism. . .

The papers which will be read at the Fall convocation will be published. The convocation will be open to members of the Conference. Plans are being made to prepare a discussion of this problem for regional meetings of the Conference during 1977. Our mandate is to encourage informed discussion of the particularistic elements in our liberal tradition.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

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8) SOUND ACTION

9) MUSIC

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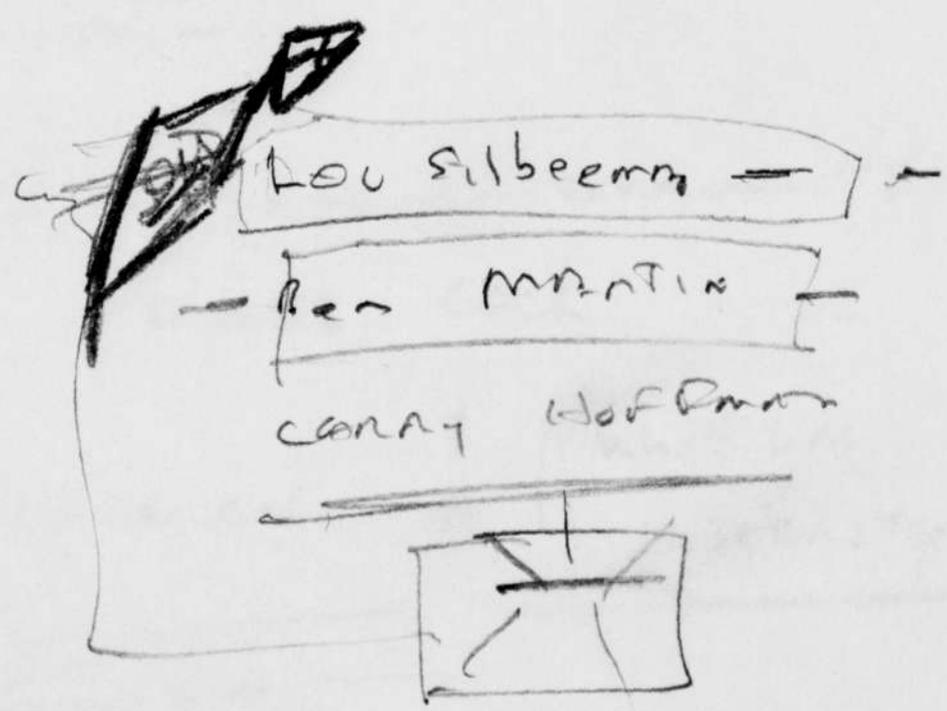
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MITE COOK

CUNNINGHAM

DIPP between schools

4) SERMONS



HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
Cincinnati • New York • Los Angeles • Jerusalem

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

40 WEST 68th STREET • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10023
(212) 873-0200

March 26, 1976

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Dan:

I read your letter and the plans of the CCAR Committee on Particularism to hold a convocation in New York. We would be delighted to have you on November 8 - 9, 1976 and will do everything we can to make the affair a meaningful and successful one.

I hope this letter finds you and yours well. We, too, have been very busy.

Chag Sameach! (for Passover).

Warm personal regards.

Cordially,

Paul M. Steinberg
Dean

PMS:hf

cc: Dr. Alfred Gottschalk

March 30, 1976

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607

Dear Peter:

Just to inform you that our convocation has now officially been set for November 8-9 in New York. I am to hear from Joe Glaser in two weeks about the funding for your taping trip.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

March 31, 1976

Rabbi Stuart Gertman
Westchester Reform Temple
255 Mamaroneck Rd.
Scarsdale, N. Y. 10583

Dear Stuart:

Several years ago I was appointed Chairman of a CCAR Committee on Particularism. Ours is an awkward title, but our mandate is to develop sensitivity among our colleagues and institutions for a new language which would express both the broad humane concerns of 19th century reform and the real survival concerns of 20th century Jewry. Our mandate is not to create another plank for a Conference platform, but to produce materials which will stimulate thought and create a clearer awareness of the issues.

A first step in this direction will take place on November 8-9, 1976 at the HUC-JIR in New York when we plan a public conference on the theme "The Language of Survival." It is my pleasure to invite you to participate in this Conference with a paper which would examine the language and impact of our schools in this area. We would like you to examine the Union curriculum, Keeping Posted, the Rocky Mountain curriculum, the Behrman House material etc. and to provide us with an understanding of the reasons (if any) offered students for Jewish survival. Do any of these curricula develop a consistent survival theology? Are some materials so universalistic as to call survival into question? What rationale is offered at the Confirmation level or before which suggests to a student the unique advantage of his remaining a Jew and of his working to assure the survival of a Jewish community? It is a big task but I know that it is a field in which you are deeply involved and that you will do a fine piece of work.

The Conference will pay your expenses to the Conference, any papers will be submitted to the CCAR Journal for editorial consideration.

With all good wishes I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

March 31, 1976

Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin
Isaiah Israel Congregation
1100 East Hyde Park Blvd.
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Dear Simeon:

Several years ago I was appointed Chairman of a CCAR Committee on Particularism. Ours is an awkward title, but our mandate is to develop sensitivity among our colleagues and institutions for a new language which will express both the broad humane concerns of 19th century reform and the survival concerns of 20th century Jewry. Our mandate is not to create another plank for a Conference platform, but to produce materials which will stimulate thought and create a clearer awareness of the issues.

A first step in this direction will take place on November 8-9, 1976 at the HUC-JIR in New York when we plan a public conference on the theme "The Language of Survival." It is my pleasure to invite you to participate in this Conference with a paper examining the perceived rationale of congregational social action programs as far as the universalist-particularist attitudes are concerned. The question is not whether such programs are effective but whether they effectively suggest the uniqueness of the Jewish ethic and/or the virtue of sustaining and maintaining the Jewish community. In other words, is social action a reinforcement of prophetic Judaism and the mission of Israel at its most universalistic or does it sensitize congregations to the special value to our world of a Jewish community and of the special attitudes of the Jewish tradition. Has the mission of Israel lead to the ACLU and the ADA or to a renewed faith in Israel?

I know this is a complex theme, but it is a significant one and I know of no one better equipped to deal with it.

The Conference with pay your expenses to the Conference and papers will be submitted to the CCAR Journal for editorial consideration.

With all good wishes I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

no

March 31, 1976

Rabbi Michael J. Cook
HUC - JIR
7850 Newbedford Ave.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45237

Dear Michael:

Several years ago I was appointed Chairman of a CCAR Committee on Particularism. Ours is an awkward title, but our mandate is to develop sensitivity among our colleagues and institutions for a new language which would express both the broad humane concerns of 19th century reform and the survival concerns of 20th century Jewry. Our mandate is not to create another plank for a Conference platform, but to produce materials which will stimulate thought and create a clearer awareness of the issues.

A first step in this direction will take place on November 8-9, 1976 at HUC-JIR in New York when we plan a public conference on the theme "The Language of Survival." It is my pleasure to invite you to give a paper on the theme of the language of the seminary. Frankly, the college faculty as a whole seems less attached to amcha, the k'lal etc. than our congregations. Is this so? What is the rabbinic student theologically exposed to? Have the various scholars different attitudes and approaches? Are there pressures towards theological conformity? Are students prepared to grapple with the problem of survival?

I know this is a difficult and delicate task, but it surely needs to be done and I know you would do ~~the~~ fine job with it.

The Conference will pay expenses to the Conference in New York and the papers will be submitted to the CCAR Journal for editorial consideration.

With all good wishes I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

March 31, 1976

Dr. Lou Silberman
The Divinity Quadrangle
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tenn. 37240

Dear Lou:

You may remember our conversation a few months ago dealing with the CCAR Committee on Particularism which I chair when you agreed to participate in a colloquium on particularism in the liberal tradition. The date of this colloquium has now been set: November 8-9 at the HUC-JIR in New York.

You indicated at the time that you would be willing to prepare a paper on midrashic sources which shed light on the inevitable tension between the universalistic and the particular. I hope that now that our plans have crystallized you will be able to be present and undertake this assignment. Our purpose, as you know, is to sensitize our colleagues to the issues raised by any and all threat to Jewish survival and to suggest that their thinking cannot concern need with a 19th century humanitarianism and the "mission of Israel."

The Conference will defray your expenses to the Conference and the papers will be submitted to the Journal for editorial consideration.

With all good wishes and many thanks I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

March 31, 1976

Dr. Bernard Martin
Department of Religion
Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Bernie:

Plans are now completed for the CCAR Committee on Particularism Convocation. It will be held in New York on November 8-9, 1976 at the HUC-JIR.

I am grateful that you are willing to prepare a paper outlining the theological position which opposes intermarriage. I am sure you have a better title, but this is what I remember from our luncheon. Please let me know your working title.

The Conference will take care of all of your expenses and, as you know, papers will be submitted to you for editorial consideration as far as the Journal is concerned.

As always,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

March 31, 1976

Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman
19 Hillcrest Lane
Rye, New York 10580

Dear Larry:

The colloquium of the CCAR Committee on Particularism has been fixed for November 8-9 at the New York school. I am delighted you will be one of our participants.

When we left the subject you were thinking about a paper on the "Balance Between Particularism and Universalism in The Gates of Prayer, possibly comparing G. P. with Avodat ha Lev and the UPB. If you want to revise the parents' focus by all means do so. You know the general area in which we are interested, but let me know.

The Conference will defray your expenses at the Conference and it is our intention to submit papers to the CCAR Journal for editorial consideration.

As always,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

אגוד הרבנים המתקדמים

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

790 MADISON AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 • (212) 734-7166

April 1, 1976

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, OH 44106

Dear Daniel,

Joe and I have discussed your letter of 11 March, in which you outline budgetary and other details for your proposed convocation at the College-Institute in New York this Fall.

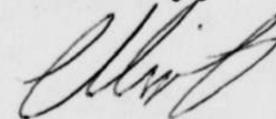
Your proposal is excellent, and we are having your request for a special allocation of \$1000 put on the agenda for consideration by the Board at its meeting next week. You note in your letter to Paul Steinberg that you will be reporting to the Board on this project, so perhaps both matters will be handled at one time.

On another matter, the Journal Board will be meeting on Tuesday, June 22, during lunch. We received a letter from the hotel specifically asking us not to schedule anything additional for Monday, inasmuch as we are apparently sharing the hotel with another group that day. Good times for your meeting would be Wednesday after the Alumni luncheon (i.e., at 3:00 p.m.), Thursday at lunch, any breakfast, or Wednesday at 11:00 in lieu of hearing Cesar Chavez give a report on the farm workers. Other business sessions are considerably more important, and the rest of the program is full.

Please let me know what you decide, so I can make arrangements with the St. Francis.

All good wishes.

Sincerely,



Elliot L. Stevens

/e

OFFICERS:

Arthur J. Lelyveld, *President*
Cleveland, Ohio

Joseph B. Glaser, *Executive Vice President*
New York, N.Y.

Ely E. Pilchik, *Vice President*
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*Ex-officio

Rabbi Michael J. Cook
7723 Spirea Drive
Cincinnati, Ohio 45236

April 4, 1976

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44122

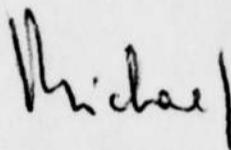
Dear Daniel:

I thank you for your invitation of
March 31 to give a paper at the
conference you outlined, scheduled
for early November.

I hasten to inform you, however, that,
despite the advance date of your
invitation, calendar commitments
preclude my acceptance.

With best wishes for the success
of the conference!

Yours truly,



Michael J. Cook

April 5, 1976

Rabbi Elliot L. Stevens
Central Conference of American Rabbis
790 Madison Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Elliot:

I was delighted to get your letter of April 1. My letter to Paul Steinberg did not suggest that I would be reporting to the Board in person. You and Joe will have to do that for me. I am delighted that funding will be forthcoming and I have already set the wheels in motion for our November convocation.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

WESTCHESTER REFORM TEMPLE

255 MAMARONECK ROAD • SCARSDALE, N. Y. • 10583
PHONE: 914 SC 3-7727

April 7, 1976

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Daniel,

I am pleased, honored and somewhat intimidated by your invitation to deliver a paper at the conference on "The Language of Survival" in New York on November 8 - 9, 1976. The pleasure and honor have overcome the intimidation, and I am happy to accept. I will begin to think about the broad parameters that you have outlined, and will be in touch with you if I have any questions. In the meantime I will start collecting the materials.

Coincidentally I am working on a study of the current status of Reform Religious Education and some of the material relates to the questions that you ask as they apply to curriculum development. If it is relevant I will include that in my paper as well.

Let me take this opportunity to wish you and your family a wonderfully Pesach season.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Stuart A. Gertman
Associate Rabbi

P.S. Beginning July 1st I will be moving to the Union to take up a new position as Associate Director of the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues. Correspondence after that date should be directed to 838 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10021.

SG:mg



HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
Cincinnati • New York • Los Angeles • Jerusalem

40 WEST 68th STREET • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10023
(212) 873-0200

April 8, 1976

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Daniel,

I look forward to participating in the conference here in New York, November 8th - 9th, 1976. I appreciate the latitude afforded me in approaching my topic, and can promise a paper that will meet the specifications we discussed.

Sincerely,

Lawrence A. Hoffman

LAH:ev

אגוד הרבנים המתקדמים

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

790 MADISON AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 • (212) 734-7166

April 8, 1976

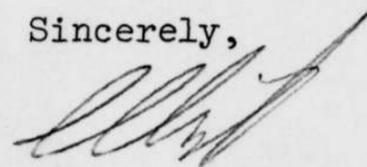
Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, OH 44106

Dear Daniel,

Just a note to let you know that the Board unanimously approved the \$1000 grant requested by your Task Force, after Ely Pilchik made some very laudatory remarks about your earlier convocation.

All good wishes.

Sincerely,



Elliot L. Stevens

/e

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*Ex-officio

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37240



Department of Religious Studies • College of Arts & Science

April 14, 1976

22

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
26000 Shaker Boulevard
Beachwood, Ohio 44122

Dear Dan:

Thanks so much for your letter and invitation. I shall see what I can do with the material and will put the dates, November 8-9, on my calendar.

With warmest greetings for the Passover season to you and your family,

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lou H. Silberman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lou H. Silberman

LHS/rk

April 15, 1976

Dr. Stuart A. Gertman
Westchester Reform Temple
255 Mamaroneck Road
Scarsdale, N. Y. 10583

Dear Stuart:

I am delighted and I look forward to the paper. If you have any questions as the work proceeds please do not hesitate to write.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

April 15, 1976

Rabbi Norman J. Cohen
HUC - JIR
7846 Newbedford Ave.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45237

Dear Norman:

Several years ago I was appointed Chairman of a CCAR Committee on Particularism. Ours is an awkward title, but our mandate is to develop sensitivity among our colleagues and institutions for a new language which would express both the broad humane concerns of 19th century reform and the survival concerns of 20th century Jewry. Our mandate is not to create another plank for a Conference platform, but to produce materials which will stimulate thought and create a clearer awareness of the issues.

A first step in this direction will take place on November 8-9, 1976 at HUC-JIR in New York when we plan a public conference on the theme "The Language of Survival." It is my pleasure to invite you to give a paper on the theme of the language of the seminary. Frankly, the college faculty as a whole seems less attached to amcha, the k'lal etc. than our congregations. Is this so? What is the rabbinic student theologically exposed to? Have the various scholars different attitudes and approaches? Are there pressures towards theological conformity? Are students prepared to grapple with the problem of survival?

I know this is a difficult and delicate task, but it surely needs to be done and I know you would do a fine job with it.

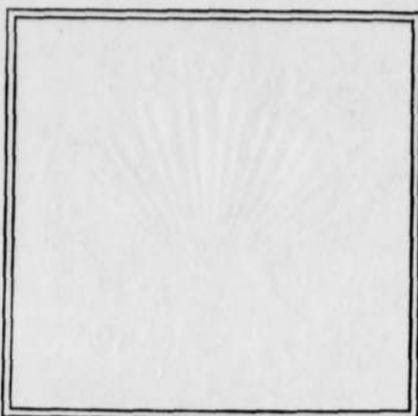
The Conference will pay expenses to the Conference in New York and the papers will be submitted to the CCAR Journal for editorial consideration.

With all good wishes I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp



April 20, 1976

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
26000 Shaker Boulevard
Beachwood, Ohio 44122

Dear Dan:

This will confirm my acceptance of your kind invitation to present a paper outlining a theological position contra intermarriage at the Convocation in New York on November 8th and 9th.

I will send you the exact title of my paper as soon as I have had time to think about it and formulate it.

I am delighted that you will submit all of the papers presented at the Convocation for possible publication in the CCAR Journal. They should constitute a very good symposium.

With kindest greetings and all good wishes, I am,

Most cordially,

Bernard Martin

April 30, 1976

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607

Dear Peter:

I have received an allocation of \$1,000 from the Conference for our convocation next Fall. I estimate that we will need \$750 for the logistics of the Conference itself, to bring men in etc. No fees will be paid which leaves us \$200 or \$250, for your taping tour. Can you somehow make out and get by, perhaps combining two stops with your trip to San Francisco? Let me hear from you. I trust all is well.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp



K.A.M. Isaiah Israel Congregation

1100 HYDE PARK BOULEVARD • CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60615

SIMEON J. MASLIN
Rabbi

April 27, 1976

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Dan:

Please excuse the long delay in answering your letter of March 31. A trip to Israel followed by Pesah made for a very tight calendar and a pile of unanswered mail.

My immediate reaction to your gracious invitation to participate in the November 8-9 conference on "The Language of Survival" was to beg off. As you probably know, I am now editing the Conference Tadrikh on life-cycle events and am having difficulty finding the time to get that work done. Also I am not sure that I quite understand what you are getting at in your description of the topic that you would like me to handle.

On reconsideration I realize that I must finish the Tadrikh work by the end of summer and that there should be time enough to do a decent job on a paper between the holy days and November 8. However, I am still puzzled by the topic. Let me see if I can rephrase and simplify your questions:

- 1) Is social action an essential part of Judaism?
- 2) Is there such a thing as a particularly Jewish impetus to social action?
- 3) Is the social action stance of Judaism (if there is, indeed, such a stance) an essential reason for the survival of Judaism?

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver

April 27, 1976

And, if all the above are answered affirmatively,
4) Can Jewish social action renew Jewish faith and
the sense of Jewish mission and mitzvah, or does
it simply lead Jews into liberal-activist organi-
zations?

I would like to work up a paper along these lines;
if that is what you have in mind, I accept. (In fact,
the topic might be a good one for Yom Kippur.) If
so, how long should the paper be and will there be
respondents? Can you give me a more exact idea of
time and place, and who else will be delivering
papers, and on what?

My thanks for the invitation and your kind
words. I look forward to hearing from you. Best
regards.

Sincerely,



Simeon J. Maslin

SJM:pmr

May 5, 1976

Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin
K. A. M. Isaiah Israel Congregation
1100 Hyde Park Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Dear Shimon:

Thank you for your kind letter of April 27. I envy you a visit to Israel.

Let me try and be more specific as to the paper that we seek. It would assume that social action is an essential obligation and that our social concerns have deep roots within the tradition. There is no need to justify the obvious. The question we want to address is whether in practice rabbis and congregations have related social action to specific Jewish needs, (Jews who are elderly - poor etc.) or only to the needs of "others." We want to know if anybody beside the rabbi has been concerned to relate community action to specific Jewish mandates and to create working conditions in which Jews do their things as Jews rather than as humanitarians.

We would like the paper to deal specifically with your point four which I would phrase in this way: Has the social action movement among liberal Jews enhanced the self-awareness of congregants as to their Jewishness? Is such action understood by them as a response to the mitzvot or have they seen congregational social action as a duplicate of the concerns espoused by a gamut of garden variety liberal-activist organizations? What do you think most people hear when we talk of the mission of Israel?

I agree the theme is worthy of Yom Kippur. I trust you will be willing to tackle it.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

June 15, 1976

Rabbi Joshua Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation
3935 Macomb St. , N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20016

Dear Josh:

Plans are now complete for the Task Force on Jewish Identity Conclave to be held on November 8-9, 1976 at the HUC-JIR in New York. The theme will be "Between Universalism and Particularism." I would like you to read one of the papers.

It seems to me that there are two areas in liberal Jewish thought where we must face the particularistic-universalistic tension. One is the question of intermarriage and the other is the question of dialogue, brotherhood and inter-religious cooperation. Bernie Martin has agreed to take up the question of intermarriage as it has been dealt with by liberal Jewish thinkers. He will deal not only with what has been said but what ought to be said. Would you be willing to deal with the question of the legitimacy of other faiths, the importance of dialogue, being Jewish versus being human etc. ? It would be an interesting paper.

I hope this finds you in good health and that I will see you in San Francisco. With all good wishes I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

WASHINGTON HEBREW CONGREGATION

Massachusetts Avenue and Macomb Street, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20016

JOSHUA O. HABERMAN, D. H. L.
Senior Rabbi

June 18, 1976

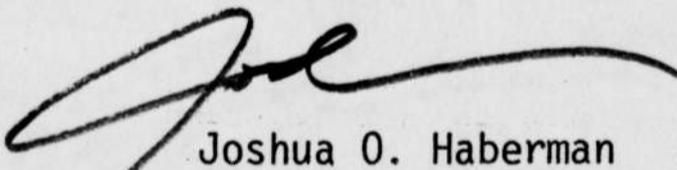
Dear Daniel,

I accept your invitation to deliver a paper at the "Jewish Identity Conclave" on the theme "Between Universalism and Particularism" with special attention to the implications for interreligious dialogue. Incidentally, I have not forgotten the position paper I still owe you regarding our 19th century Jewish philosophers and theologians bearing on the question of Jewish particularism. I hope to complete this paper prior to the Conclave.

My only problem with the conclave is its date. You are probably aware of the fact that the most popular of the tours now being sponsored by the World Union for Progressive Judaism in conjunction with its Golden Jubilee convention in Jerusalem is the one entitled "A Reform Jew's View of Israel" departing from New York on Tuesday, November 9th. Many congregations are sending delegates and sponsoring such tours, including our own. I could only participate in the program if my paper were to be scheduled on November 8th since I personally expect to lead our own Congregation's tour on the 9th. Would you consider rescheduling the conclave for a less busy time, possibly the week during or after Hanukkah?

Looking forward to seeing you at the San Francisco conference and with best regards,

As ever,



Joshua O. Haberman

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

June 24, 1976

Rabbi Norman J. Cohen
HUC - JIR
7846 Newbedford Ave.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45237

Dear Norman:

I sent you the enclosed letter on April 15 and I have not heard from you since - at least the mails have not delivered a response.

Will it be possible for you to be with us on November 8 and 9 to accept the assignment suggested?

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

June 28, 1976

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607

Dear Peter:

Do you want to change your stated topic in any way? I would like to have the Conference send out this announcement in its next packet, so if I do not hear from you I will assume that the language of the announced topic is satisfactory. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

June 28, 1976

Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin
Isaiah Israel Congregation
1100 East Hyde Park Blvd.
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Dear Simeon:

Do you want to change your stated topic in any way? I would like to have the Conference send out this announcement in its next packet, so if I do not hear from you I will assume that the language of the announced topic is satisfactory. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

June 28, 1976

Rabbi Stuart Gertman
Westchester Reform Temple
255 Mamaroneck Road
Scarsdale, N. Y. 10583

Dear Stuart:

Do you want to change your stated topic in any way? I would like to have the Conference send out this announcement in its next packet, so if I do not hear from you I will assume that the language of the announced topic is satisfactory. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

June 28, 1976

Rabbi Joshua Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation
3935 Macomb St. , N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20016

Dear Josh:

Do you want to change your stated topic in any way? I would like to have the Conference send out this announcement in its next packet, so if I do not hear from you I will assume that the language of the announced topic is satisfactory. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

June 28, 1976

Dr. Bernard Martin
Department of Religion
Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Bernie:

Do you want to change your stated topic in any way? I would like to have the Conference send out this announcement in its next packet, so if I do not hear from you I will assume that the language of the announced topic is satisfactory. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

June 28, 1976

Dr. Lou Silberman
The Divinity Quadrangle
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tenn. 37240

Dear Lou:

Do you want to change your stated topic in any way? I would like to have the Conference send out this announcement in its next packet, so if I do not hear from you I will assume that the language of the announced topic is satisfactory. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

June 28, 1976

Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman
19 Hillcrest Lane
Rye, New York 10580

Dear Larry:

Do you want to change your stated topic in any way? I would like to have the Conference send out this announcement in its next packet, so if I do not hear from you I will assume that the language of the announced topic is satisfactory. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.



HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
Cincinnati • New York • Los Angeles • Jerusalem

40 WEST 68th STREET • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10023
(212) 873-0200

June 29, 1976

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Since I am no longer located at the school in Cincinnati, I unfortunately did not receive your first letter, which was dated April 15, 1976. Even though I am still working on my Phd. dissertation, I am presently situated at the New York School as part of the Rabbinics Faculty.

I know how important the Conference on Particularism is and I share your concerns and aspirations. I regret, however, that I must turn down your kind invitation to deliver a paper.

I am presently working at a rather feverish pace in order to complete my thesis, which is a Prolegomenon to Midrash Pesikta Rabbati and the beginning of a critical edition, and it is simply impossible for me to accept any other 'assignments' at this time. I must finish the thesis by next year and any added burden would be a great hinderance.

I hope to attend atleast a part of the conference and I wish you all the best with it.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Norman J. Cohen

File

WASHINGTON HEBREW CONGREGATION

Massachusetts Avenue and Macomb Street, N.W.

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20016

JOSHUA O. HABERMAN, D. H. L.

Senior Rabbi

July 1, 1976

Dear Daniel,

You asked if I had any comments regarding the topic listed in the program for my paper "The Language of Survival - Dialogue and Ecumenism." If for the purpose of symmetry it is very important that you use the phrase "The Language of Survival," I can live with it. However, I think the topic as stated now is somewhat vague. Personally, I would much prefer the wording of my topic

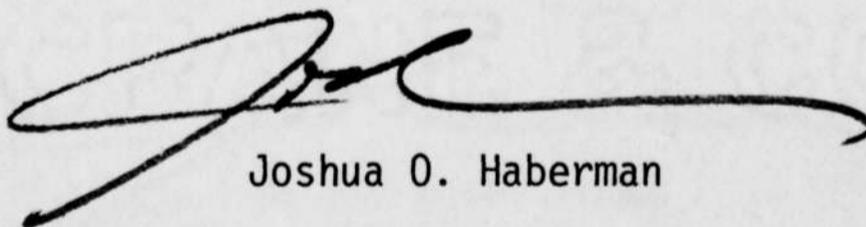
"Universalism and Particularism in the Inter-religious Dialogue"

This topic would more accurately describe the issue with which I am to deal according to the original letter in which you extended the invitation to me to participate.

Please let me know of your decision. I shall be leaving for Israel on July 13th.

Best wishes for a pleasant summer and fond greetings,

As ever,



Joshua O. Haberman

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

August 9, 1976

Dr. Lou Silberman
The Divinity Quadrangle
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tenn. 37240

Dear Lou:

I am enclosing a final tear sheet on our November Conference. I woke up this morning and recognized that it was only three months away and I would like to give you the same gentle nudge I gave myself. There will be a discussion after each paper so I hope you will be with us during the entire two days.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

August 9, 1976

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607

Dear Peter:

I am enclosing a final tear sheet on our November Conference. I woke up this morning and recognized that it was only three months away and I would like to give you the same gentle nudge I gave myself. There will be a discussion after each paper so I hope you will be with us during the entire two days.

I would like to hold a brief Task Force meeting at 9 A. M. on Tuesday, November 9 in order to make plans for our further work. Please mark this on your calendar.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

August 9, 1976

Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin
Isaiah Israel Congregation
1100 East Hyde Park Blvd.
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Dear Simeon:

I am enclosing a final tear sheet on our November Conference. I woke up this morning and recognized that it was only three months away and I would like to give you the same gentle nudge I gave myself. There will be a discussion after each paper so I hope you will be with us during the entire two days.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

August 9, 1976

Rabbi Stuart Gertman
Westchester Reform Temple
255 Mamaroneck Road
Scarsdale, N. Y. 10583

Dear Stuart:

I am enclosing a final tear sheet on our November Conference. I woke up this morning and recognized that it was only three months away and I would like to give you the same gentle nudge I gave myself. There will be a discussion after each paper so I hope you will be with us during the entire two days.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

August 9, 1976

Rabbi Bruce Warshal
Touro Synagogue
P. O. Box 15186
New Orleans, La. 70175

Dear Bruce:

Please find our schedule for the November Conclave. We are holding a committee meeting on Tuesday morning, November 9 at 9 A. M., in order to plan our next step.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

August 9, 1976

Rabbi Joshua Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation
3935 Macomb St. , N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20016

Dear Josh:

I am enclosing a final tear sheet on our November Conference. I woke up this morning and recognized that it was only three months away and I would like to give you the same gentle nudge I gave myself. There will be a discussion after each paper so I hope you will be with us during the entire two days.

I would like to hold a brief Task Force meeting at 9 A. M. on Tuesday, November 9 in order to make plans for our further work. Please mark this on your calendar.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

August 9, 1976

Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman
Central Synagogue
123 E. 55th St.
New York, N. Y. 10022

Dear Shelly:

I am enclosing a final tear sheet on our November Conference. I woke up this morning and recognized that it was only three months away and I would like to give you the same gentle nudge I gave myself. There will be a discussion after each paper so I hope you will be with us during the entire two days.

I would like to hold a brief Task Force meeting at 9 A. M. on Tuesday, November 9 in order to make plans for our further work. Please mark this on your calendar.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

August 9, 1976

Br. Bernard Martin
Department of Religion
Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Bernie:

I am enclosing a final tear sheet on our November Conference. I woke up this morning and recognized that it was only three months away and I would like to give you the same gentle nudge I gave myself. There will be a discussion after each paper so I hope you will be with us during the entire two days.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

August 9, 1976

Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman
19 Hillcrest Lane
Rye, New York 10580

Dear Larry:

I am enclosing a final tear sheet on our November Conference. I woke up this morning and recognized that it was only three months away and I would like to give you the same gentle nudge I gave myself. There will be a discussion after each paper so I hope you will be with us during the entire two days.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

August 9, 1976

Rabbi Joseph Glaser
Central Conference of American Rabbis
790 Madison Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Joe:

Enclosed please find a completed copy of our committee's projected conclave. I would appreciate if you would:

- a) Provide publicity in the next Newsletter; meetings will be open to all members of the Conference.**
- b) Check with the JIR so that all necessary arrangements have been completed. My original contact was with Paul Steinberg.**

I am particularly concerned that whatever lunch arrangements need to be made are made; that a single room be available for us for the two days and that the College indicate to its students that the Conference is open to them.

I would like to address a particular invitation to the New York Board of Rabbis. Whom do I write to?

I trust you are having a pleasant and productive summer.

As always,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp
Encl.

MEMORANDUM from
Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser

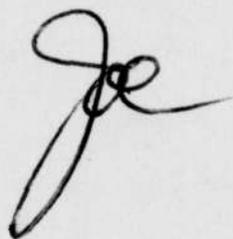
10 Aug 76

To Daniel Silver

Your 7-8 Nov Ideology Conference is
only three months away. We'd better
start forming up plans and arrangements
for it.

I look forward to hearing from you.

sib Jo



K.A.M. ISIAH ISRAEL CONGREGATION

1100 East Hyde Park Boulevard

Chicago, Illinois 60615

[1976]
Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin

8/12

Dear Dan -

Thanks for the "gentle nudge".

I doubt that it will get me
out of my mid-summer torpor,
but it might make me feel guilty.

I suggest a harsh shtock
around the first week of September.

I am planning to spend the
two days at the Conference. What
about accommodations?

Best -
Shim

MEMORANDUM from
Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser

13 Aug 76

To Dan Silver, Cleveland

JIR all set.

Should we charge reg. fee
or just lunch?

Will be in RH newsletter. All
else (א.פ.ז.).

מיוזמת

Joe

MEMORANDUM from
Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser

15 August 76

To Dan Silver

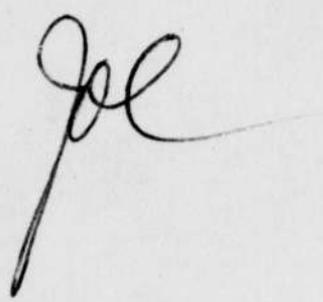
Our letters crossed in the mail. Great minds....

I have just put a nice article into the Rosh Hashana newsletter/

Now please send me the copy for a brochure which we will print and mail with the registration return. Describe the conference, and we will add in the program which we have and the registration form.

Looks very good.

Best.



790 Madison Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10021

WASHINGTON HEBREW CONGREGATION

Massachusetts Avenue and Macomb Street, N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20016

JOSHUA O. HABERMAN, D. H. L.

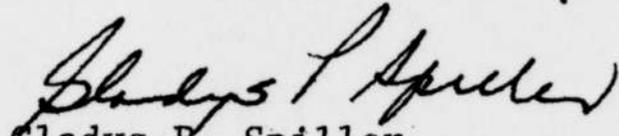
Senior Rabbi

August 16, 1976

Dear Rabbi Silver,

Your letter of August 11 is on Rabbi Haberman's desk awaiting his return to the city late in August.

Sincerely,



Gladys P. Spiller
Secretary to Rabbi Haberman

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106



RABBI SHELDON ZIMMERMAN

CENTRAL SYNAGOGUE
123 EAST 55TH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022

August 16, 1976
20 Av 5736

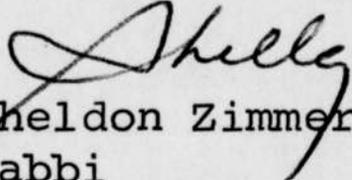
Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Dan,

Thanks for the nudge. I'm passing it
on to Peter so that we can prepare our
work and paper.

Best regards,

Sincerely,


Sheldon Zimmerman
Rabbi

August 17, 1976

Rabbi Ely Pilchik
Congregation B'nai Jeshurun
1025 South Orange Avenue
Short Hills, N. J. 07078

Dear Ely:

I spoke with Arthur yesterday. He asked about the Task Force on Jewish Identity and any ideas we might have concerning the program for the 1977 Conference.

Briefly, here is where we are. One article, the piece I did on Confirmation, has been published in the Journal. A conference on universalism and particularism is scheduled for early November. A copy of the conference program is enclosed.

Our original plan was to develop a traveling circus based on this conference which could visit with colleagues at their regional conferences during 1977. To accomplish this we would need official encouragement from the Conference and some kind of financial aid to take care of transportation etc. We thought we could arrange a full program which could replace the usual HUC-JIR faculty member. I would envisage three presentations:

- a) Evidence of current confusion (prayer book, school curriculum, sermons) in the areas of universalism-particularism, growing up in part from the lack of a shared theological language and resulting in the confusion of our congregations.
- b) A review of traditional philosophy and theology on this point - I call this getting beyond "prophetic Judaism" and it is a subject dear to my heart.
- c) Discussion of various strategies "encouraging" identity.

[Aug 17, 1976]

If we turn our thoughts to next year's Conference I see two possibilities:

A - an evening session of Particularism and Liberal Judaism with three presentations:

- 1) Liberal Judaism and the Judeo-Christian Tradition - the problem of being different, but the same.
- 2) Liberal Judaism and Zionism - the continuing tension.
- 3) Liberal Judaism and Current Identity Strategies.

We would be happy to suggest people.

B - A number of the Torah sessions could be devoted to areas within this general theme. Some suggestions:

The Founders of Reform and the Question of Universalism.

The Lingering Problem of Prophetic Judaism with Zionism.

Towards a Theology of Particularism.

Gates of Prayer and Jewish Identity.

The Religious School Curriculum and Jewish Identity.

Traditional Sources For A Universalist-Particularist Discussion.

If this is the way you want to go, I am sure we can suggest other topics and/speakers. If you want us to think along any of these lines, drop me a line. We plan to have a full Task Force meeting prior to our November Conference.

I hope this finds you in good health. One other question - Barry Greene wrote a few months back about speaking next Spring to an adult education group in your area. I am trying to get my calendar in order and have not heard from him since.

With all good wishes I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp
Encl.

CC Lelyveld

August 17, 1976

Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser
790 Madison Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Joe:

Thanks for taking care of everything. Would you make one change in the announcement?

Monday afternoon Stuart Gertman will speak at 1:30 on The Language of Survival - Curriculum and Text Book. Bruce Warshol will speak at 2:30 on The Language of Survival - Adult Education and Congregational Programs. At 3:45 Joshua Haberman will speak on Universalism and Particularism in Inter-Religious Dialogue. Bruce was inadvertently omitted.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

WOODLANDS COMMUNITY TEMPLE

50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607
(914) LY 2-7070

RABBI PETER RUBINSTEIN

August 19, 1976

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Danny:

I am very grateful to you for gentle nudging. We just returned from Israel and I have found it difficult adjusting to all the matters at hand.

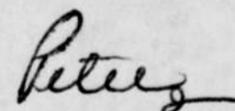
Please be assured that while in Israel I worked on the tapes and hope to have for you in very short order a copy of the transcripts.

As we discussed briefly on the phone and during our past sessions, it would be necessary, I believe, to conduct the same kind of interview with people in other parts of the country. I did not go to the Conference last June and was unable, therefore, to do any work as part of my round trip to California. As I recollect there is about \$250 appropriated for travel in order to conduct further interviews. If I am correct in this matter, I would be willing to make the necessary trip in just a few weeks. I am in dire need, however, for your advice and suggestions as to the cities and rabbis that might be worthwhile contacting. I do not know how far \$250 would take us into the heartland of the country, but I think it would be advisable for me to make a trip so that I might stop in two or three cities.

I will try to contact Shelley shortly so that we might coordinate our activities. You might react to a possible itinerary that I have outlined in my own mind which would include a city in the mid-west - perhaps St. Louis - and Atlanta.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Cordially,



Peter J. Rubinstein, Rabbi

PJR/jm

August 23, 1976

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607

Dear Peter:

The \$250 is available. Not having heard the tapes it is hard to know exactly what suggestions I might offer. Clearly, it is important to get out of the New York area. Atlanta, Richmond or Norfolk would bring you face to face with a totally different kind of Jew. Larry Forman in New York is an old associate of mine and I am sure would be helpful. Spiro in Richmond is bright and quite idiosyncratic. I do not know the young man in Atlanta. A town like Rochester, Buffalo or even Cleveland would give you a kind of midwestern look. I am sure Miller or Marty Silverman would be helpful. You would, of course, be welcome here.

I am delighted you are back and look forward to hearing of your progress.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

MEMORANDUM from
Rabbi Joseph B. Glaser

24 Aug 76

To Dan Silver

... But you must send me the
copy for the opening page of the
Brochure!

Best.

Joe

August 30, 1976

Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin
Isaiah Israel Congregation
1100 East Hyde Park Blvd.
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Dear Simeon:

Each committee member makes his own reservations. Joe Glaser has a list of hotels which give rabbis a break.

I am glad that you are getting down to your piece. Incidentally, I was impressed with the Tadrich. I happen to be working on a funeral guide for this congregation and read that material fairly carefully. Something is always lost by compression, but I thought you did an excellent job.

I don't know if you remember the piece I did in Jerusalem on Liberal Judaism Today, but I think you will find its spirit congruent to what you are doing. You are welcome to use it in any way that you wish.

I would appreciate it if you would add to the Basic Library for the Jewish Home: A History of Judaism, Daniel Jeremy Silver and Bernard Martin, Basic Books 1974. Our History is available in paperback as well as hard cover. As the work of two colleagues who have made a serious attempt to deal with Jewish ideas and values, it deserves a place in this publication.

I hope this finds you in good health. With all good wishes I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp
Encl.

The Temple

UNIVERSITY CIRCLE AT SILVER PARK • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106 • 791-7755
BRANCH: 26000 SHAKER BLVD. • BEACHWOOD, OHIO 44122 • 831-3233

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER - RABBI

STUART GELLER
Associate Rabbi

STEPHEN A. KLEIN
Assistant Rabbi

LEO S. BAMBERGER
Executive Secretary

August 31, 1976

Rabbi Joseph Glaser
Central Conference of American Rabbis
790 Madison Ave.
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Joe:

Here is the copy that you requested:

UNIVERSALISM AND PARTICULARISM - A Seminar - Nov. 8-9, 1976

The historic forces which brought about the creation of Reform Judaism inevitably tilted the movement's political and theological concerns towards universalist theologies and social programs which emphasized citizenship and belonging. We had been outcasts and wanted to be included. We had a special learning and wanted to participate in "civilization." We had been a state within a state and wanted equal rights. We spoke our own language and wanted to speak without accent.

These needs were desperately felt. For a century our thinkers continued to explore the tradition for those themes and emphases which validated these needs. But this is another age and other historic forces are at work. This is a time of disappointment, a tragic era, no fellowship of men of good will emerged. We have become aware that our curricula was not uncivilized nor our language uncouth.

As always, practical necessity preceded theological reassessment. The older attitudes were found wanting on the issue of Zionism. Fackenheim's eleventh commandment: "Do not give Hitler a posthumous victory," has suggested the ground on which the new thinking would begin. Interest in a code of practice revealed dissatisfaction with values determined largely from the outside. We were in a new era, but in many areas we still used a language and theologies appropriate to the past.

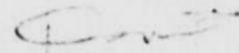
Our liberal movement has never held a conference directed solely by concerns of distinctiveness and particularism. Some will see this as part of a "return" to tradition. We are not returning so much as turning,

[Aug 31, 1976]

turning to the non-Jew and to the needs of the time. The high-sounding pronouncements of prophetic Judaism, once so compelling, now seem pale, incredibly vague and naive, to a people who have endured the Holocaust, a century of Russian anti-semitism and a half century of Jihad.

It is not a question of either/or; either universalism or orthodoxy; either particularism or ethical culture; but of a sharper awareness of where we are and what needs to be said. Discussants were not chosen as representation of a particular ideology. What they share is a concern for the development of a language which will effectively express Judaism's right to survive and reason for being, as well as the familiar prophetic concerns of Judaism.

Sincerely,



Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

CONTINUE DIRECTOR TO TRANSLATE AND
SPEAKER LIST.

CHICAGO
SINAI
CONGREGATION

5350 SOUTH SHORE DRIVE • CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60615 • TELEPHONE 288-1600

PHILIP N. KRANZ, RABBI

September 2, 1976

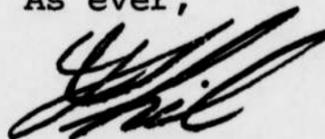
Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
26000 Shaker Blvd.
Beachwood, Ohio 44122

Dear Rabbi Silver:

I just returned from vacation and found your letter of August 11 on my desk. I would be delighted to help you with your research. I will send the material as soon as the Holidays are over. By the way, I found the confirmation article enlightening.

Everything is moving along beautifully here at Sinai. Nancy and I extend warmest good wishes to all the Silvers for the New Year.

As ever,



Philip N. Kranz

PNK:pk



HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
Cincinnati • New York • Los Angeles • Jerusalem

40 WEST 68th STREET • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10023
(212) 873-0200

September 3, 1976

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver,
The Temple,
University Circle at Silver Park,
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Daniel,

Thank you for your gentle nudge of August 9. I have been hard at work collecting data and determining a methodology of organization and analysis that will be appropriate. So far, no great surprises have turned up, but the picture is not completely painted yet.

I will certainly be present for all the papers and discussions. I would not miss them.

Best wishes for a good year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Larry'.

Lawrence A. Hoffman

WOODLANDS COMMUNITY TEMPLE

50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607
(914) LY 2-7070

RABBI PETER RUBINSTEIN

September 22, 1976

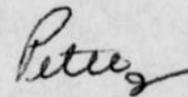
Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Danny:

Here, finally, are copies of the transcripts of our conversations. I plan to take the trip as soon as I can after the holidays. Please be assured, however, that all our material will be ready for the symposium in November.

Best wishes for a good New Year.

Cordially,



Peter J. Rubinstein, Rabbi

PJR/jm

Enc. 2

September 27, 1976

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, N. Y. 10607

Dear Peter:

I was delighted to receive the transcripts. I will get down to them as soon as the holidays are over.

The Conference is now well shaped and I look forward to seeing you there, if not before. With all good wishes for the New Year I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

September 30, 1976

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, N. Y. 10607

Dear Peter:

Enclosed is the Richmond Confirmation Service. I would appreciate if you would return it to me when you come.

If we ever take this material to the regional conferences I think it would be useful for the men to see how other congregations do things as well as to hear our conclusions.

It was good talking with you. As you can see, the whole emphasis is on a kind of pristine faith rather than on belonging.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

WOODLANDS COMMUNITY TEMPLE

50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607
(914) LY 2-7070

RABBI PETER RUBINSTEIN

September 30, 1976

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Danny:

It was good talking to you yesterday. I am all set for my trip to Cleveland on Thursday, October 14th. As I mentioned to you on the phone, I am going to need your help. I would appreciate it if you would be able to put together a group of 6-8 individuals of mixed sex, age and degree of involvement in the congregation. Half of these individuals should be from your congregation and, as you suggested, the other half should come from Eric Hoffman's congregation.

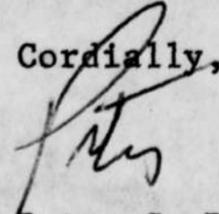
It would be important, I think, that the people who are chosen have been either born or raised in Cleveland or the mid-west. I must again emphasize that at least one of the individuals from each congregation be a person who would be considered a non-active member. The only other requirement is that all participants be thoughtful, literate people.

Let us plan the meeting for noontime to last approximately two to two and a half hours. I will be arriving in Cleveland at 10:19 A.M. and will find my way to The Temple by way of the Rapid. As I also mentioned, I will need a reel to reel tape recorder and if possible a multi-directional mike. If you do not have one available, let me know and I'll bring it from New York.

I will be taking a 7:00 P.M. plane back since there are some people I would like to look up in the area. Please know that you are invited to sit in on the "conversations", but it is not necessary since the discussion generally goes best without rabbinical guidance.

I look forward to seeing you on the 14th, if only briefly.
Thank you in advance for all your help.

Cordially,


Peter J. Rubinstein, Rabbi

PJR/jm



שלום רב כהן Oct 19, 1976

Shalom Elhott,

Just received The announcement
on the Univ. + Part. Seminar. Looks
very interesting, & The right direction.

Two comments:

1) Why be so defensive about
wanting to be Jewish? Why
write "although some will see
this as part of a "return" to tradi-
tion...."?

2) The question "why" ^{ALER} is awful!
Why Jewish survival is
assumable & even if the answer
is positive. This can not even
be a question.

A real & genuine Jewish question
is "How to develop a language of
creative survival"

Best wishes for a fine Seminar,

—on's's
Dr Samuel.

איגרת אוויר
AEROGRAMME



דואר אוויר
PAR AVION

Roni Elliott Shuman
CCAR
790 Madison Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10021
USA

קפסל שלישי

EXPÉDITEUR — SENDER — השולח

Leo Baeck

LEO BAECK EDUCATIONAL CENTER

P.O.B. 6283 · Haifa, Israel

קפסל שלישי

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איגרת שהושם בה דבר תישלח לפי תעריף של מכתב בדואר אוויר.

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WOODLANDS COMMUNITY TEMPLE

50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607
(914) LY 2-7070

RABBI PETER RUBINSTEIN

October 21, 1976

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver
The Temple
26000 Shaker Blvd.
Cleveland, Ohio
44122

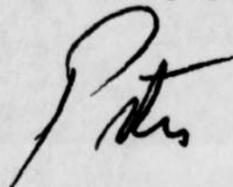
Dear Danny,

Everything went well in Cleveland. I was sorry that we didn't have more of an opportunity to talk. I very much understand the demands of your schedule. I am in the midst of having the discussion in Cleveland transcribed and will forward you a copy as soon as they are completed.

I look forward to seeing you personally during the symposium on November 8th and 9th.

With best wishes.

Cordially yours,



Peter J. Rubinstein, Rabbi

PR/so

October 22, 1976

Dr. Lou Silberman
The Divinity Quadrangle
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tenn. 37240

Dear Lou:

You have undoubtedly received the mailing from the CCAR office which includes the brochure on our seminar. The time is growing near and I am looking forward to our conference.

Would you be kind enough to bring a second copy of your lecture which you can leave with me? We hope to arrange for the publication and distribution of these lectures.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

October 22, 1976

Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman
19 Hillcrest Lane
Rye, New York 10580

Dear Larry:

You have undoubtedly received the mailing from the CCAR office which includes the brochure on our seminar. The time is growing near and I am looking forward to our conference.

Would you be kind enough to bring a second copy of your lecture which you can leave with me? We hope to arrange for the publication and distribution of these lectures.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

October 22, 1976

Dr. Bernard Martin
Department of Religion
Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Bernie:

You have undoubtedly received the mailing from the CCAR office which includes the brochure on our seminar. The time is growing near and I am looking forward to our conference.

Would you be kind enough to bring a second copy of your lecture which you can leave with me? We hope to arrange for the publication and distribution of these lectures.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

October 22, 1976

Rabbi Bruce Warshal
Touro Synagogue
P. O. Box 15186
New Orleans, La. 70175

Dear Bruce:

You have undoubtedly received the mailing from the CCAR office which includes the brochure on our seminar. The time is growing near and I am looking forward to our conference.

Would you be kind enough to bring a second copy of your lecture which you can leave with me? We hope to arrange for the publication and distribution of these lectures.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

October 22, 1976

Rabbi Joshua Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation
3935 Macomb St., N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20016

Dear Josh:

You have undoubtedly received the mailing from the CCAR office which includes the brochure on our seminar. The time is growing near and I am looking forward to our conference.

Would you be kind enough to bring a second copy of your lecture which you can leave with me? We hope to arrange for the publication and distribution of these lectures.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

October 22, 1976

Rabbi Stuart Gertman
Westchester Reform Temple
255 Mamaroneck Road
Scarsdale, N. Y. 10583

Dear Stuart:

You have undoubtedly received the mailing from the CCAR office which includes the brochure on our seminar. The time is growing near and I am looking forward to our conference.

Would you be kind enough to bring a second copy of your lecture which you can leave with me? We hope to arrange for the publication and distribution of these lectures.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

October 22, 1976

Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin
Isaiah Israel Congregation
1100 East Hyde Park Blvd.
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Dear Simeon:

You have undoubtedly received the mailing from the CCAR office which includes the brochure on our seminar. The time is growing near and I am looking forward to our conference.

Would you be kind enough to bring a second copy of your lecture which you can leave with me? We hope to arrange for the publication and distribution of these lectures.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

October 22, 1976

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, N. Y. 10607

Dear Peter:

You have undoubtedly received the mailing from the CCAR office which includes the brochure on our seminar. The time is growing near and I am looking forward to our conference.

Would you be kind enough to bring a second copy of your lecture which you can leave with me? We hope to arrange for the publication and distribution of these lectures.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

October 22, 1976

Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman
Central Synagogue
123 E. 55th St.
New York, N. Y. 10022

Dear Shelly:

You have undoubtedly received the mailing from the CCAR office which includes the brochure on our seminar. The time is growing near and I am looking forward to our conference.

Would you be kind enough to bring a second copy of your lecture which you can leave with me? We hope to arrange for the publication and distribution of these lectures.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

October 22, 1976

Rabbi Joseph Glaser
Central Conference of American Rabbis
790 Madison Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Joe:

I received the seminar flyer and it is quite well done. Thank you. I know I can leave the details of provisioning etc. in your hands. Can we make arrangements to have the Question-Answer part of each session taped? It would give us a complete record of the day and add to our understanding of just where the men are.

One of the mandates of the Task Force was to raise the issue of particularism in a Reform context. At one time I talked with the Board about putting together a program which would be available to regional meetings of the Conference. Is there still interest? If there is, we might try a three-pronged approach. Peter Rubenstein's tapes of congregational perceptions would make a fascinating session. I could put together the evidence I have gathered on current practice and the patent difficulty we have in developing less simplistic and equivocal language than that which we have been accustomed to in the past. Finally, Lou Silberman or Bernie Martin or I could relate the material to our theological concerns. In a day or a day and a half this troika could present an interesting program to the regions. If there is interest, I would raise the issue with the Task Force at the appropriate time.

Could you send me another dozen copies of the brochure? I hope to see you in November.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Minutes

Task Force On Jewish Identity - Tuesday, November 9, 1976 - 8:30 A. M.

HUC-JIR New York City - Present: Peter Rubinstein, Sheldon Zimmerman, Lawrence A. Hoffman, Bruce Warshal, Daniel J. Silver

Discussion concerned followup of recommendations to the Conference.

1. Silver undertook to gather the papers and present them to Bernard Martin for inclusion in a single issue of the Journal.

2. Hoffman and Rubinstein echoed the chairman's suggestion that an approach be made to the CCAR about developing a program based on these papers for presentation at regional conferences. Such a program would have three sessions: a) a presentation of where we are; b) a presentation of the theological issues and the search for both/and language; c) a practical discussion of how such language and attitudes can be introduced to our congregations.

3. There was a discussion of hosting another conference which would deal with specific theological and rabbinic issues detailing social action responses as they emerge from the sources rather than from the high-minded platitudes of "prophetic Judaism" and "mission rhetoric."

4. There was talk of the possibility of a book which could include essays by members of the Conference, by congregants as well as by thoughtful persons outside our movement. This book might be an outgrowth of a National Conference on Jewish Identity which could be sponsored jointly by CCAR and UAHC. Such a conference might precede or follow a Union Biennial or might take place independently in a camp setting.

5. The hope was expressed that we might sit down with the UAHC's Commission on Jewish Education as it develops new curriculum guide lines. The substance of the Gertman paper as well as our general area of concern might be

[Nov 9, 1976]

expressed and a mutually helpful discussion could ensue.

6. The liturgy committee ought to examine Silver's paper on Rosh Hashanah night before they complete work on the mahzor, particularly the perceived need for more ritual and a more colorful service. The chairman agreed to circulate these notes and committee members agreed they would add their comments and return them to him so he can prepare a submission to the Conference Board.

**UNIVERSALISM
and
PARTICULARISM**

2 mornings
1 evening
②
AT LEAST

21314

A Seminar

Progress Report



written on
notepad

JOB
JOB
CLASS

OR
NEED APPROVED
MEETING

Monday PM

November 8-9, 1976

at the

Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion

40 W. 68th St., New York City

sponsored by the

Task Force on Jewish Identity

of the

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

790 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10021

UNIVERSALISM AND PARTICULARISM: A SEMINAR

The historic forces which brought about the creation of Reform Judaism inevitably tilted the movement's political and theological concerns towards universalist theologies and social programs which emphasized citizenship and belonging. We had been outcasts and wanted to be included. We had a special learning and wanted to participate in "civilization." We had been a state within a state and wanted equal rights.

These needs were desperately felt. For a century our thinkers continued to explore the tradition for those themes and emphases which validated these needs. But this is another age and other historic forces are at work. This is a time of disappointment, a tragic era: no fellowship of men of good will has emerged.

Fackenheim's eleventh commandment: "Do not give Hitler a posthumous victory" has suggested the ground on which a new thinking would begin. Our liberal movement has never held a conference directed solely by concerns of distinctiveness and particularism, and although some will see this as part of a "return" to tradition, we are not returning so much as turning, to the non-Jew and uncommitted Jew alike. The high-sounding pronouncements of prophetic Judaism, once so compelling, now seem pale, incredibly vague and naive, to a people who have endured the Holocaust, a century of Russian anti-semitism and a half-century of *jihad*.

It is not a question of either/or: either universalism or orthodoxy; either particularism or ethical culture; but of a sharper awareness of where we are and what needs to be said, which provides the focus of this conference.

Discussants were not chosen as representatives of a particular ideology. What they share is a concern for the development of a language which will effectively express Judaism's right to survive and reason for being, as well as the familiar prophetic concerns of Judaism.

Registration fee: \$10.00, which includes lunch on both days.

There will be a brief opportunity for questions after each presentation.

PROGRAM

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8

10:00 a.m. "Congregational Perceptions: The Tale of the Tapes"

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein

Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman

11:15 a.m. "The Language of Survival: Social Action"

Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin

12:30 Lunch

1:30 p.m. "The Language of Survival: Curriculum and Text Book"

Rabbi Stuart A. Gertman

2:30 p.m. "The Language of Survival: Adult Education and Congregational Programs"

Rabbi Bruce Warshal

3:45 p.m. "Universalism and Particularism in Interreligious Dialogue"

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9

10:00 a.m. "Contra Intermarriage: The Theological Position"

Rabbi Bernard Martin

11:15 a.m. "The Language of Survival: Prayerbook and Liturgy"

Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman

12:30 p.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. "The Language of Survival in Midrashic Sources"

Rabbi Lou Silberman

2:45 p.m. "Do We Mean What We Say? Do We Say What We Mean?"

Rabbi Daniel J. Silver

ABOUT THE DISCUSSANTS

PETER J. RUBINSTEIN is Rabbi of Woodlands Community Temple in White Plains, New York and a member of the CCAR Task Force on Jewish Identity. He has served on the Executive Board of the Jewish Peace Fellowship and the Advisory Board of the UDC.

SHELDON ZIMMERMAN is Rabbi of Central Synagogue in New York City and on the Task Force on Jewish Identity. He is also Chairman of the CCAR Subcommittee on Alcoholism and represents the Conference on the Synagogue Council of America.

SIMEON J. MASLIN is Rabbi of K.A.M. Isaiah-Israel in Chicago and Editor of "A Guide For The Sanctification of Life" being prepared for the Conference by its Committee on Reform Jewish Practice.

STUART A. GERTMAN is Associate Rabbi of Westchester Reform Temple in Scarsdale, New York, and has edited "What Is The Answer: A Guide for Parents and Teachers to Difficult Questions" for the UAHC.

BRUCE WARSHAL is Rabbi of Touro Synagogue in New Orleans and a member of the Task Force on Jewish Identity. He has served on the Committee on Tenure and Security of the Conference and the Commission on Jewish Education.

JOSHUA O. HABERMAN is Rabbi of Washington Hebrew Congregation in Washington, D.C. and a member of the Task Force on Jewish Identity. He is Chairman of the North American Board of the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

BERNARD MARTIN is Professor of Jewish Thought at Case Western Reserve University and Editor of the *CCAR Journal*. He is co-author, with Daniel J. Silver, of *A History of the Jewish People*.

LAWRENCE A. HOFFMAN is Professor of Liturgy and Related Literature at the New York School of the Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion and serves on the Liturgy Committee of the Conference.

LOU SILBERMAN is Chairman of the Department of Religious Studies at Vanderbilt University.

DANIEL J. SILVER is Rabbi of The Temple in Cleveland and Chairman of the Task Force on Jewish Identity. He is co-author with Bernard Martin of *A History of the Jewish People*.

The Task Force on Jewish Identity was created to undertake an investigation of the question, "Why should Judaism survive?" The Task Force envisions a two or three year dialogue concerned with study of Jewish distinctiveness and singularity as it is reflected in the Religious School, youth work and pulpit.

November 11, 1976

Dr. Lou Silberman
The Divinity Quadrangle
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tenn. 37240

Dear Lou:

I want to thank you for your gift of mind and person to our Conference. The meetings remained on a high plane throughout and for that I am both proud and grateful. I left New York heartened by the evidence that if our theology is sometimes hazy and our language excessive, the heart of our movement is in the right place. I came away convinced of the importance of what I have come to call a theology of diminished expectations. I think we have promised too much (the messianic age) and, consequently, developed a "prophetic" language too full of high-minded sentiments and utopian postures, and so frustrating and unreal in our burdened age of life. I have been trying to formulate this concept under the general rubric, "messianic journey," and I thought you might be interested in my Rosh Hashanah sermon in which I tried to sketch these ideas for my congregation.

I hope you can get me a type script of your lecture this week. I would like to get it all in to Bernie Martin.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

November 11, 1976

Rebbi Lawrence A. Hoffman
19 Hillcrest Lane
Rye, New York 10580

Dear Lorry:

I want to thank you for your gift of mind and person to our Conference. The meetings remained on a high plane throughout and for that I am both proud and grateful. I left New York heartened by the evidence that if our theology is sometimes hazy and our language excessive, the heart of our movement is in the right place. I came away convinced of the importance of what I have come to call a theology of diminished expectations. I think we have promised too much (the messianic age) and, consequently, developed a "prophetic" language too full of high-minded sentiments and utopian postures, and so frustrating and unreal in our burdened age of life. I have been trying to formulate this concept under the general rubric, "messianic journey," and I thought you might be interested in my Rosh Hashanah sermon in which I tried to sketch these ideas for my congregation.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp
Encl.

November 11, 1976

Dr. Bernard Martin
Department of Religion
Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Bernie:

I want to thank you for your gift of mind and person to our Conference. The meetings remained on a high plane throughout and for that I am both proud and grateful. I left New York heartened by the evidence that if our theology is sometimes hazy and our language excessive, the heart of our movement is in the right place. I came away convinced of the importance of what I have come to call a theology of diminished expectations. I think we have promised too much (the messianic age) and, consequently, developed a "prophetic" language too full of high-minded sentiments and utopian postures, and so frustrating and unreal in our burdened age of life. I have been trying to formulate this concept under the general rubric, "messianic journey," and I thought you might be interested in my Rosh Hashanah sermon in which I tried to sketch these ideas for my congregation.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

November 11, 1976

Rabbi Bruce Warshal
Touro Synagogue
P. O. Box 15186
New Orleans, La. 70175

Dear Bruce:

I want to thank you for your gift of mind and person to our Conference. The meetings remained on a high plane throughout and for that I am both proud and grateful. I left New York heartened by the evidence that if our theology is sometimes hazy and our language excessive, the heart of our movement is in the right place. I came away convinced of the importance of what I have come to call a theology of diminished expectations. I think we have promised too much (the messianic age) and, consequently, developed a "prophetic" language too full of high-minded sentiments and utopian postures, and so frustrating and unreal in our burdened age of life. I have been trying to formulate this concept under the general rubric, "messianic journey," and I thought you might be interested in my Rosh Hashanah sermon in which I tried to sketch these ideas for my congregation.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

November 12, 1976

Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman
Central Synagogue
123 E. 55th St.
New York, N. Y. 10022

Dear Shelly:

I want to thank you for your gift of mind and person to our Conference. The meetings remained on a high plane throughout and for that I am both proud and grateful. I left New York heartened by the evidence that if our theology is sometimes hazy and our language excessive, the heart of our movement is in the right place. I came away convinced of the importance of what I have come to call a theology of diminished expectations. I think we have promised too much (the messianic age) and, consequently, developed a "prophetic" language too full of high-minded sentiments and utopian postures, and so frustrating and unreal in our burdened age of life. I have been trying to formulate this concept under the general rubric, "messianic journey," and I thought you might be interested in my Rosh Hashanah sermon in which I tried to sketch these ideas for my congregation.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

November 12, 1976

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, N. Y. 10607

Dear Peter:

I want to thank you for your gift of mind and person to our Conference. The meetings remained on a high plane throughout and for that I am both proud and grateful. I left New York heartened by the evidence that if our theology is sometimes hazy and our language excessive, the heart of our movement is in the right place. I came away convinced of the importance of what I have come to call a theology of diminished expectations. I think we have promised too much (the messianic age) and, consequently, developed a "prophetic" language too full of high-minded sentiments and utopian postures, and so frustrating and unreal in our burdened age of life. I have been trying to formulate this concept under the general rubric, "messianic journey," and I thought you might be interested in my Rosh Hashanah sermon in which I tried to sketch these ideas for my congregation.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

November 12, 1976

Rabbi Simeon J. Maslin
Isaiah Israel Congregation
1100 East Hyde Park Blvd.
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Dear Simeon:

I want to thank you for your gift of mind and person to our Conference. The meetings remained on a high plane throughout and for that I am both proud and grateful. I left New York heartened by the evidence that if our theology is sometimes hazy and our language excessive, the heart of our movement is in the right place. I came away convinced of the importance of what I have come to call a theology of diminished expectations. I think we have promised too much (the messianic age) and, consequently, developed a "prophetic" language too full of high-minded sentiments and utopian postures, and so frustrating and unreal in our burdened age of life. I have been trying to formulate this concept under the general rubric, "messianic journey," and I thought you might be interested in my Rosh Hashanah sermon in which I tried to sketch these ideas for my congregation.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

November 12, 1976

Rabbi Joshua Haberman
Washington Hebrew Congregation
3935 Macomb St., N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20016

Dear Josh:

I want to thank you for your gift of mind and person to our Conference. The meetings remained on a high plane throughout and for that I am both proud and grateful. I left New York heartened by the evidence that if our theology is sometimes hazy and our language excessive, the heart of our movement is in the right place. I came away convinced of the importance of what I have come to call a theology of diminished expectations. I think we have promised too much (the messianic age) and, consequently, developed a "prophetic" language too full of high-minded sentiments and utopian postures, and so frustrating and unreal in our burdened age of life. I have been trying to formulate this concept under the general rubric, "messianic journey," and I thought you might be interested in my Rosh Hashanah sermon in which I tried to sketch these ideas for my congregation.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

November 12, 1976

Rabbi Stuart Gertman
Westchester Reform Temple
255 Mamaroneck Road
Scarsdale, N. Y. 10583

Dear Stuart:

I want to thank you for your gift of mind and person to our Conference. The meetings remained on a high plane throughout and for that I am both proud and grateful. I left New York heartened by the evidence that if our theology is sometimes hazy and our language excessive, the heart of our movement is in the right place. I came away convinced of the importance of what I have come to call a theology of diminished expectations. I think we have promised too much (the messianic age) and, consequently, developed a "prophetic" language too full of high-minded sentiments and utopian postures, and so frustrating and unreal in our burdened age of life. I have been trying to formulate this concept under the general rubric, "messianic journey," and I thought you might be interested in my Rosh Hashanah sermon in which I tried to sketch these ideas for my congregation.

I hope you can get me a type script of your lecture this week. I would like to get it all in to Bernie Martin.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp
Encl.

November 12, 1976

Rabbi Joseph Glaser
Central Conference of American Rabbis
790 Madison Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10021

Dear Joe:

Enclosed please find the slip of my expenses. With all due modesty, I thought the Task Force seminar went exceedingly well. I will arrange with Bernie Martin for the publication of the papers. The Task Force will circulate minutes on our Tuesday A. M. meeting and, hopefully, develop followup ideas. Incidentally, I would like to coopt Larry Hoffman on to the Task Force if that is alright.

At our meeting the following specific suggestions were made:

I. The development of a program for use at regional CCAR conferences. The published papers and mimeographed type scripts of congregational interviews would provide background reading. We envision three presentations:

- a) A realistic look at the movement and at our congregations as to their use of a language of survival.
- b) A discussion of the theological issues which must be faced if we are going to become what I call both/and movement: both particularist and universalist. This discussion would cover messianism, election, chosenness, mission and revelation.
- c) A discussion of how we can restructure school curriculum, congregational programs, our liturgy etc. to meet our new responsibilities.

Peter Rubinstein and Shelly Zimmerman could do the defining task and Bernie Martin or I could do the theologizing, and the third session could be a joint presentation.

[NOV 12, 1976]

2

The most interesting fact to emerge from the Conference was the consensus that perhaps ninety percent of our movement and perhaps eighty percent of the rabbis take a both/and stance. The denatured universalists who worship at what I have called "the shrine of high-minded vagueness" are in a diminishing minority. They are not the problem. The problem is to deepen and sensitize the commitments of the majority to define the movement for all.

II. We would like to talk over these themes with congregants - perhaps at UAHC regional meetings. Incidentally, I did this last Sunday with our local region and the response was so enthusiastic that the region has asked to reprint my sermon, but I am talking about more than a Conference sermon. It might be useful to devote two or three sessions which we could structure appropriately.

III. The committee would like to meet with the UAHC's Curriculum Revision Commission and share with them our concerns and those of our movement. This would be an unstructured meeting at which the material of Stuart Gertman's paper would be raised.

IV. The CCAR might sponsor a volume of essays on the theme of "Survival: The Reasons." We would project articles on election, mission, messianism, the value of the symbol etc. This book could be designed as a study guide for adult education programs. It would not be a position paper for the Conference, but a series of individual presentations and would include material beside the rabbinic essays, those of the poets and writers of our time.

I would like your reactions to all of these suggestions. I know it has been an important growth experience for me. I have learned that if our collective theology is still a bit hazy, our collective heart is basically in the right place. I have become convinced of the importance of a theology of diminished expectation. If we are ever mandated to hold a followup conference I would want part of it to deal with the dangers of excessive messianism and of ethical absolutism and with the possibility of reintroducing to our social action concerns the casuistic approach (though not necessarily the conclusions) of the rabbis.

I hope you had a fine visit in Jerusalem. I am grateful to you and to Elliott and all of your staff for all of your help.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp
Encl.

אגוד הרבנים המתקדמים

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

790 MADISON AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 • (212) 734-7166

Office of the Executive Vice President

30 November 1976

Rabbi Daniel Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Dan:

While you are meeting at the Cleveland airport, I am typing this letter. Sorry to have to miss it, as I was hoping to discuss with you in person your 12 November letter, but I really came down with the flying Jordanian fungus which seems to have afflicted many of the people at the WUPJ meeting. My doctor doesn't like it at all, and contrary to both his and my dislike of antibiotics, has put me on a course, particularly in view of the fact that I have to take on the UAHC Board this weekend in Los Angeles on in-house promotions.

By all means coopt Larry Hoffman.

I like very much the idea of a presentation for regional conferences. I have a meeting of the regional presidents at the Convention each year, and would like for you to attend it at Grossinger's to explain to them what you have in mind. Those who want to opt for it can do so, and we can calendrate right on the spot, so that you won't have too many to go to in any short given space of time. We did this with Jack Bloom in San Francisco and it's working out well. They might well want to do this instead of a scholar-in-residence, and I would prefer that.

I love your description of the "denatured universalists."

I will take up the matter of discussions with congregants at Union Regionals with Ted Broido but that will now be two years off, and I'm not sure it's the best forum. I like better selecting certain cities for special day approaches, or even single congregations. That way we're not terribly tied to the Union with its many different interests.

I will also meet with Dan Syme. It is important that this be fed into the Curriculum project early and vigorously.

With regard to the volume, what comes out of your discussions in Cleveland today will bear on it, of course. Mazal tov on a splendid beginning.

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Cleveland, Ohio

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New York, N.Y.

Shalom.

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*Ex-officio

December 8, 1976

Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman
Central Synagogue
123 E. 55th St.
New York, N. Y. 10022

Dear Shelly:

The enclosed from Joe Glaser is self-explanatory. I hope you received the minutes and have some ideas to forward on how we may proceed.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

December 8, 1976

Rabbi Bruce Warshal
Touro Synagogue
P. O. Box 15186
New Orleans, La. 70175

Dear Bruce:

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Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

December 8, 1976

Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman
19 Hillcrest Lane
Rye, N. Y. 10580

Dear Larry:

The enclosed from Joe Glaser is self-explanatory. I hope you received the minutes and have some ideas to forward on how we may proceed.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

December 8, 1976

Rabbi Peter J. Rubinstein
Woodlands Community Temple
50 Worthington Road
White Plains, N. Y. 10607

Dear Peter:

The enclosed from Joe Glaser is self-explanatory. I hope you received the minutes and have some ideas to forward on how we may proceed.

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp

Encl.

December 88, 1976

Rabbi Robert Samuels
The Leo Baeck School
Edmond Fleg St.
French Carmel
Haifa, Israel

Dear Bob:

Thank you for your kind note. The papers of our Conference will be published in an upcoming issue of the Journal.

I wish the "why" of Jewish survival did not have to be raised, but we have a number of men (Reines, Mihaly, Bearman etc.) who are sowing much confusion. My piece was particularly devoted to the theme of language which, as you suggest, is crucial. It will be interesting to have the question of universalism and particularism raised in an Israeli context by some liberal thinkers.

With all good wishes I remain

Sincerely,

Daniel Jeremy Silver

DJS:mp