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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.

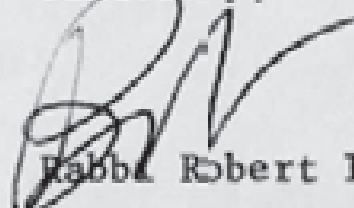
I have some mixed feelings about this committee due to the widespread concern with the question of giving our young people a desire to perpetuate Judaism, and toward that end to marry within the faith, and expressed these misgivings to our Fall board meeting in the hope that we could refer it to such 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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*E=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,

Isid.

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 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. Glazer





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 ECAR. 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 grantmanship - 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

Office of the President
Rabbi Robert I. Kahn
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

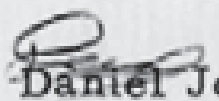
Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman
Massachusetts Ave. & Macomb St., N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20016

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?

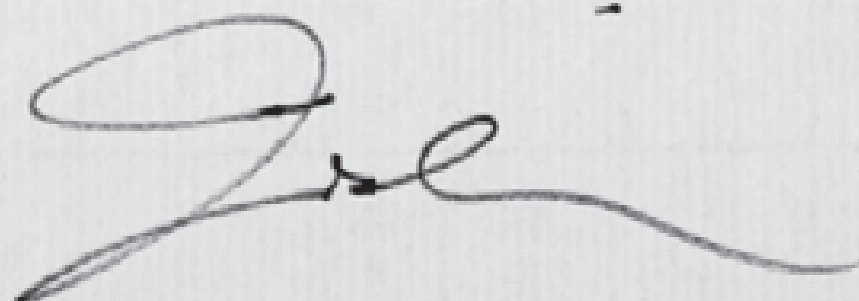
I trust that you will have ongoing work on which to report.
I will report on the possibilities for our symposium.

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

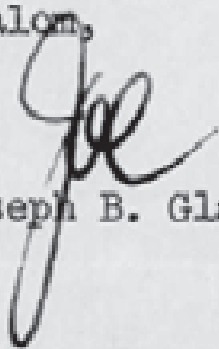
Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

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
(314) LY 2-7070

RABBI PETER RUBINSTEIN

November 2, 1975

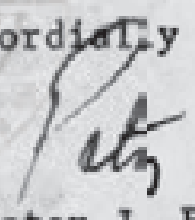
Rabbi Daniel Silver
The Temple
University Circle at Silver Park
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

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



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,

Laura Danz

Laura Danz

Secretary to Rabbi Zimmerman

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

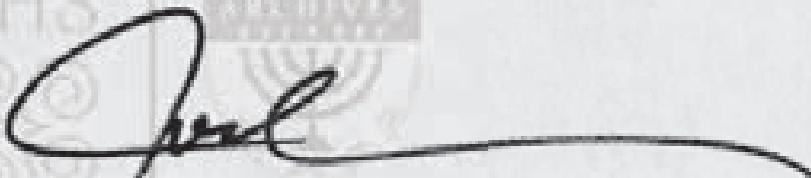
November 17, 1975

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,



Joshua O. Haberman

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



RABBI SHELDON ZIMMERMAN

STUDY:
123 EAST 95TH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10023

November 18, 1975
14 Kislev 5736

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

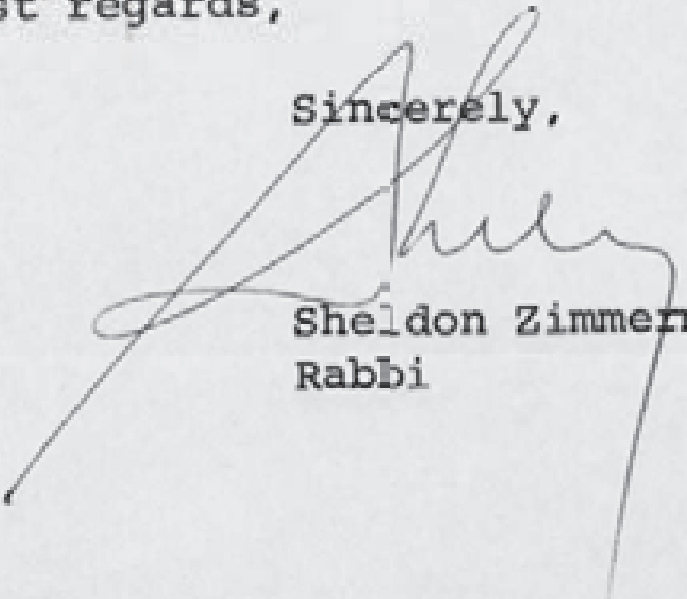
Dear Dan,

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,

SZ:ld


Sheldon Zimmerman
Rabbi

woodlands community temple

50 Worthington Road
White Plains, New York 10607
(314) 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 Silverman 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:

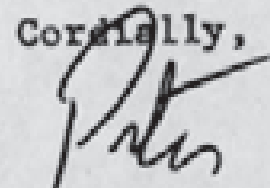
As long as I have a minute to regroup my mental forces, I would like to suggest my perception of where we are at this point and how I might be of some service in furthering our program.

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 88th 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

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

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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-universalism 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

5) HOLT EDUCATION (DAVID MURPHY?)
Program
What is Taught

6) THE EMERGENCE OF A
LONGSHORE

(GEORGE STERN - NYACK)

7) Temple Bulletin

8) Sound Action

9) MUSIC

Fred
KLEINER
Huntington
W Va

3) Theologians

Mutter

Joe LeDevin

PETER
KNABE (BRIET)

JIM
KAUFMAN
CALIF

ROGER
KLEIN
COLUMBIA

WILLARD Thel - HUC
LA

Youth movement

Paul SALGON Urmich

DAVID POSNER -

LARRY KESNER

RALPH MECKENBERG

ANN ALBON

LARRY LAUB

J. OF MECHANICS

3 pages with 12 copies

P.L.
S. 2.



old Phil & renew lead!

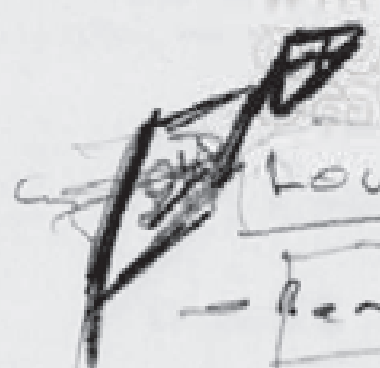
On industrial property major

committed to renew!

What are they looking for
What are some signs

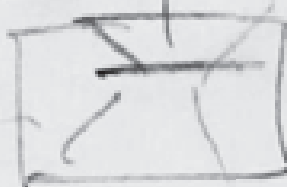
Theory -

Committed to survival

 Lou Silberman -

- Ben Martin

Carly Hoffman



1) Who ARE WE

REGIONAL COMPARISON

cinny - WEST COAST
ISRAEL

2) Where ARE WE

3) What ARE WE SAYING
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liturgy

Detroit

Printed curriculum

Nonman come NYC
m. kb cock

3) Theological

|| what has
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1) Who are we | Where are we

Topic - 2 CONGREGATIONS

TALK TO CONGREGANTS!

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3 DAY TRIP

2) Where are the institutions

1) Liturgy - CAROL WILKINSON

2) Education - a) STU GERTMAN
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b) HERB Z
WILKINSON

3) Seminary - NONMAN

Cohen - PRIVILEGE

with cook

CURRICULUM

DIFF between schools

4) Sermons



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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



20

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 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.

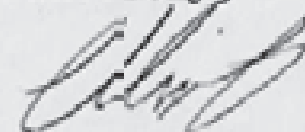
Your proposal is excellent, and we are having your request for a special allocation of \$1000 put on the agenda for consideration by the Board at its meeting next week. You note in your letter to Paul Steinberg that you will be reporting to the Board on this project, so perhaps both matters will be handled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

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New York, N.Y.

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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

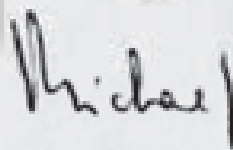
Dear Daniel:

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

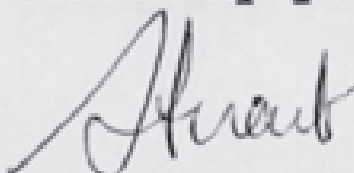
Dear Daniel,

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

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,

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

THE TEMPLE

H.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

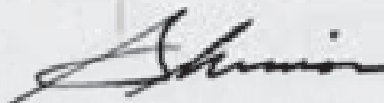
April 27, 1976

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

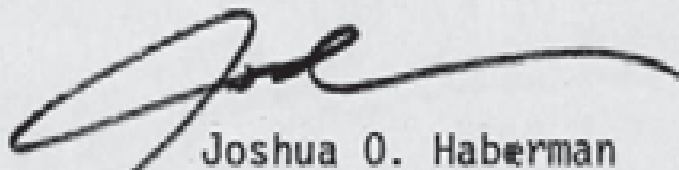
Dear Daniel,

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.