

# CONVERTING Jews to Judaism

Hillel Units Spread to 30 Colleges as A. L. Sachar, Their Director, Publishes "Sufferance Is The Badge", His Opus

By EDWARD E. GRUSD

IF WE are to believe Walter B. Pitkin, author of "Life Begins at Forty," Dr. A. L. Sachar is just setting out on the great adventure. He celebrated his 40th birthday this year—and what a prodigy he is! Hercules, in his infancy, wrestled with serpents; Sachar, in his Pitkinfancy, wrestles with world-wide Jewish problems.

But a birthday, even the 40th, is not the occasion for this article. Years mean nothing; Methuselah lived to be nearly 1000, but what did he accomplish? It is of Dr. Sachar's accomplishments that we would write, for they directly concern B'nai B'rith and American Jewry as a whole.

The year 1939 is of historic importance; it brought peace and war, refuge and refugees, triumph and disaster on many fronts. And now it brings two events that are of importance to every Jew in America. These events are (1) B'nai B'rith's startling and significant expansion of its Hillel Foundation program, and (2) the forthcoming publication of "Sufferance Is The Badge," a book that tells about the position of the Jew in the post-war world in relation to the entire economic and social background of that tragic and amazing world.

★ Abram Leon Sachar is immediately connected with these two events. He is directing the Hillel expansion program, and he is the author of "Sufferance Is The Badge."

Dr. Sachar has for quite a few years been National Director of the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations, of which today there are 12. But now he is also directing the activities of 18 new Hillel extension units which B'nai B'rith has set up in that many universities. In other words, there are now 30 Hillel units in American colleges, and soon there will be even more.

Fortunately, Dr. Sachar is so well known to American Jewry that very little introduction is necessary. His earlier book, "A History of the Jews," has been read by many thousands; and he himself is known at least by sight to many tens of thousands, for he has thrilled audiences almost everywhere in America with his dynamic lectures on Jewish history and modern problems. Suffice it to say, therefore, that he was born in New York City; received his B. A. (and Phi Beta Kappa key) at Washington University in St. Louis in 1920; was awarded his Ph. D. after three additional years of study at Cambridge University, in

England; and began teaching history at the University of Illinois the same year. That year, 1923, was when the late Rabbi Ben Frankel was serving as spiritual leader of the tiny Jewish community of Champaign, seat of the University of Illinois. Shocked at the cynicism, ignorance, and indifference of the Jewish students toward their own faith and people, Rabbi Frankel with the help and inspiration of Prof. Edward Chauncey Baldwin, beloved Christian faculty member, founded a modest little cultural and social center for Jewish students, which he called, by some inspiration, the Hillel Foundation. B'nai B'rith soon adopted it, expanded it, and established others on campuses of other colleges with large Jewish enrollments. In 1928 Dr. Sachar left his teaching post to become Director of the Illinois unit.

Four years later he succeeded Dr. Louis L. Mann of Chicago as National Director of all the Foundations, while retaining his position as Illinois Director. Meanwhile, he gave further evidence of his discernment by marrying the charming Thelma; they are the parents of two sturdy sons. Rapidly the youthful executive became a national figure in Jewish life. His inspiring lectures on his favorite subject won instant acclaim through the length and breadth of the land; "Factors in Jewish History" was his first book; and with the publication of "A History of the Jews" in 1929 his future was assured. Contributions of trenchant articles to the Jewish and general magazine press aided the process.

He is a great teacher—and we use the adjective advisedly. Great teachers make their subjects fascinating to students, subtly compel their attention every minute, fill them with a thirst to know more and to study independently, for themselves—really inspire them to learn. Large numbers of people are known to have left Dr. Sachar's lectures only to rush pell-mell to the closest library to read books he mentioned. He makes Jewish history *live*: when he talks about Theodor Herzl, it is as though a great romance were being unfolded; when he lectures on the life of Solomon Maimon, you are inclined to kick yourself for once having deemed that subject dry; under his magic voice and gestures, the Bible justifies its reputation as a best-seller. And he writes the same way.

That is why his "History of the Jews" exerted so wide an influence.

and that is why "Sufferance Is The Badge," to be published soon by Alfred A. Knopf, is going to be a best-seller. It will deal with the Jew from 1918 down to November, 1939. It will tell about him in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, in America. But it will do all this against the background of the world situation, so that the reader will understand the relationship. Jewish history does not hang in the air; it emerges from social conditions, which in turn condition it. Sachar's book will take you through the "peace" of Versailles, down through the resulting conditions in Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Soviet Russia, Poland (Olav Hasholom!) the Baltic States and the Balkan States, Italy, Arabia, France, England, North and South America, and Palestine. Hitler and Mussolini peer wickedly through the pages: wars, revolutions, pogroms are there; but also the flaming constructive accomplishments of Jewry. And the theme of the book is the ineluctable nexus of the Jew to democracy—a demonstration that Jewish life cannot function in a totalitarian milieu, whether it be Germany, Italy, Russia, or any other type of dictatorship. There is no other book in any language which tells the story of the Jew in the post-war world in this fashion.

★ This, then, is the man in charge of B'nai B'rith's great national program for American Jewish college youth, a program that is without doubt one of the most vital contributions to the well-being of the Jew in America. For the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations mould and cultivate Jewish leadership and loyalty among our strategic group—college students, the natural and obvious group on which to base our hopes for the future.

And that is why B'nai B'rith has now launched an ambitious expansion of this program. During the past 16 years, the Hillel Foundations have affected thousands of Jewish college students in a dozen universities, have reached both their Jewish hearts and their Jewish heads. But not enough campuses were being served. There are at least 100 important colleges in America whose Jewish students also need Hillel's guiding hand and inspiring voice. It is Hillel's goal to reach them some day.

Meanwhile, a magnificent beginning has been made with the introduction of Hillel extension service to the



Rabbi Harry Kaplan  
Ohio State  
Ohio University



Rabbi Samuel Sandmel  
North Carolina  
Duke



Dr. Isaac Rabinowitz  
Michigan  
Mich. State Normal



Rabbi Theodore Gordon  
Penn State, Bucknell,  
F. & M.



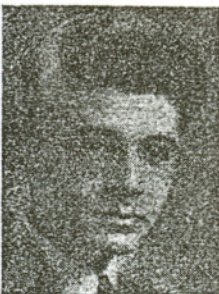
Rabbi Bert Klausner  
Alabama, Ala. Poly.,  
Mississippi State



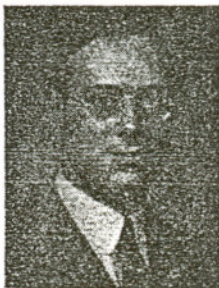
Rabbi Maurice Pekarsky  
Northwestern  
Chicago



Rabbi Max Kadushin  
Wisconsin



Rabbi David Polish  
Cornell



Rabbi A. Goodman  
Texas



Rabbi Lawrence Block  
Georgia

### THE NEW HILLEL SET-UP

#### Full-fledged B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations

University	Location	Approx. number Jewish students	Director
Illinois	Champaign	1200	Dr. A. L. Sachar Rabbi Judah Goldin (Assoc. Director)
Wisconsin	Madison	1000	Dr. Max Kadushin
Ohio State	Columbus	1100	Rabbi Harry Kaplan
Michigan	Ann Arbor	1400	Dr. Isaac Rabinowitz
California	Berkeley	1000	Rabbi Max Merritt
Cornell	Ithaca, N. Y.	800	Rabbi David Polish
Texas	Austin	500	Rabbi Abram Goodman
Northwestern	Evanston, Ill.	700	Rabbi Maurice Pekarsky
Alabama	Tuscaloosa	400	Rabbi Bertram Klausner
Penn State	Penn State, Pa.	550	Rabbi Theodore Gordon
North Carolina	Chapel Hill	375	Rabbi Samuel Sandmel
Indiana	Bloomington	300	Rabbi Martin Perley

#### B'nai B'rith Hillel Extension Units

Missouri	Columbia	400	Dr. Isadore Keyfitz
Ohio U.	Athens	250	Rabbi Harry Kaplan
Purdue	Lafayette, Ind.	100	Rabbi Meyer Simon
Bucknell	Lewisburg, Pa.	50	Rabbi Theodore Gordon
Franklin-Marshall	Lancaster, Pa.	100	Rabbi Theodore Gordon
West Virginia	Morgantown	100	Rabbi Selig Miller
Florida	Gainesville	175	Rabbi Max Eichorn
Georgia	Athens	150	Rabbi Lawrence Block
Virginia	Charlottesville	300	Rabbi Albert M. Lewis
Maryland	College Park	400	Rabbi Ely Pilchik
Duke	Durham, N. C.	100	Rabbi Samuel Sandmel
Chicago	Chicago, Ill.	1200	Rabbi Maurice Pekarsky
Michigan State	East Lansing	225	Rabbi Arthur Zuckerman
Iowa	Iowa City	250	Rabbi Morris Kertzer
Michigan State Normal	Ypsilanti	50	Dr. Isaac Rabinowitz
Ala. Polytech.	Auburn	30	Rabbi Bertram Klausner
Mississippi State	Starkville	50	Rabbi Bertram Klausner
Texas A. & M.	College Station	75	Mrs. J. J. Taubenhau



Rabbi Max Merritt  
California



Rabbi Judah Goldin  
Illinois



Rabbi Martin Perley  
Indiana



Rabbi Selig Miller  
West Virginia



Rabbi Meyer Simon  
Purdue



Rabbi Morris Kertzer  
Iowa



Rabbi Max Eichorn  
Florida



Rabbi Ely E. Pilchik  
Maryland



Three Hillel veterans poring over plans for further Hillel extension work, and recalling 16 years of successful Hillel Foundation activity. Left to right: Dr. A. L. Sachar, National Hillel Director; Dr. Edward Chauncey Baldwin, non-Jewish professor who first pointed out the need for Hillel Foundations 16 years ago; and Mr. Isaac Kuhn, Jewish leader of Champaign, who gave vital support to Hillel in its early years of struggle, and who continues to do so today.

Jewish student bodies in 18 universities in addition to the 12 at which regular, full-fledged Hillel Foundations are now operating. This means that enormous numbers of Jewish college students in no less than 30 great institutions of learning are now organized by B'nai B'rith for the purpose of building up their own Jewish background, loyalty, and morale. And still others are clamoring for the same service. They will receive it just as fast as American Jewry responds with concrete cooperation.

What does Hillel extension service consist of? The simplest answer is this: it is as close an approximation as possible to the work now being done by full-fledged Hillel Foundations. Support for the extension work comes principally from the Jewish communities in the cities, States, and Districts where such extension units function.

Hillel Foundations are cultural, social, and religious centers for Jewish university students; so are the new Hillel extension units. Hillel Foundations are supervised by trained Directors, although the students themselves, through democratic self-government, get invaluable training for future Jewish communal responsibility by managing their own activities; the same is true in the extension units. Regular classes, of college calibre, in Jewish subjects, are conducted both at Hillel Foundations and at extension units. Both bring together Jewish students, in harmony and comradeship, through social affairs. Both conduct religious services, Orthodox and Reform, in a manner that is specifically directed at and appeals to Jewish college men and

women. Both have programs, run by and for students, that include dramatics, oratory, writing, athletics, debating, forums, discussion groups, social work, philanthropy, and the whole gamut of student activity, tinged with Jewish significance yet streamlined in form, that appeal to Jewish students of today and give them training designed to make of them more intelligent and active Jewish leaders and followers of tomorrow.

The only difference is one of degree. The average Hillel Foundation, with a larger budget, larger Jewish student body, and full-time Director, naturally is able to apply greater concentration to the program. The average extension unit has a smaller budget, smaller Jewish student body, and usually only a part-time Director (although several have full-time Directors). In many cases the Director of the Hillel Foundation also serves as part-time Director of an extension unit nearby. The Hillel Foundation ordinarily has more elaborate permanent quarters, where activities take place morning, noon, and night, seven days a week; while the extension unit usually organizes its activities at stated times. Obviously, the more support given to the extension units by Jews in the area, the better-equipped they will become and consequently the more active and fully-rounded in program.

Each Hillel Foundation is supervised by a full-time Director, in almost every case a rabbi, and many thousands of Jewish students are active in the manifold programs of these great institutions. Additional thousands of alumni, fortified by their undergraduate experience at Hillel, live

throughout the country, and are active in Jewish life.

★ It is a grand record and a great achievement, but Dr. Sachar knows that there still remain many worlds to conquer. At the last meeting of the National B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation Commission, which governs the Foundations, and on which every B'nai B'rith District is represented, he brought forth his program of Hillel extension service. It was enthusiastically endorsed, and later authorized by the Executive Committee of B'nai B'rith. The program envisages three types of extension units: (1) in colleges close to existing Hillel Foundations which can be supervised personally by the Hillel Directors; (2) in colleges that can be served by rabbis or other qualified leaders who live in or near the community in which the college is located; and (3) in isolated colleges where either full-time or part-time Directors can be appointed if sufficient financial support can be obtained through local initiative.

A committee, consisting of Dr. Sachar, Dr. Mann, and Dr. Philip Seman, worked for months, sifting the requests for Hillel extension units that were received from all parts of the country. This committee firmly resolved that all financial support for the new extension program must be stable, and not fly-by-night. It therefore got commitments, as far as possible, through B'nai B'rith Districts, State associations of B'nai B'rith lodges, Federations, and similar permanent, responsible agencies.

And so, this very season, B'nai B'rith was able to establish, as a beginning, 18 extension units. There are

at least another score of college centers that are anxious to receive the same service, and yet another score of prospects after that. But B'nai B'rith is building only as rapidly as is consistent with stability and success.

✳ Many devoted souls helped pave the way for these extension units. Five B'nai B'rith Districts, for instance, have appropriated substantial sums of money with which to aid, wholly or in part, the units within their borders. B'nai B'rith women's auxiliaries are helping. And State associations of lodges. And many individuals.

At the University of Missouri, Rabbi Ferdinand M. Isserman, of St. Louis, headed for several years the Jewish student work on the campus, until the Hillel extension unit was set up. Dr. Isadore Keyfitz, the Director, is on the staff of the Bible College as the official Jewish representative at the University. So that he may devote his full time to teaching, he is being assisted at Hillel by Beryl Rubenstein, a graduate student. Full college credits will be granted at Missouri and other schools to those who successfully complete their Jewish studies.

At the University of Chicago, too, the way was paved for a Hillel extension unit. For some years Dean Charles Gilkie, a non-Jew, sponsored Jewish student work on the campus, financed largely by the Chicago Jewish Charities under the leadership of Rabbi George Fox. Dean Gilkie has generously offered to continue his cooperation, and the Chicago Jewish Charities will continue to finance all student activities. The appropriation made by District No. 6 of B'nai B'rith is making it possible for a graduate student to take care of all routine work; he is Sadyah Maximon, son of the late Registrar of Hebrew Union College. The Director of the Chicago unit is Rabbi Maurice Pekarsky, who also supervises the work at Northwestern University. B'nai B'rith women of Chicago are warmly cooperating.

To Mrs. J. J. Taubenhau goes the unique distinction of becoming the first woman executive in the Hillel set-up. She is Director, on a voluntary basis, of the new Hillel unit at Texas Agricultural & Mechanical College, where her late husband was professor of soil chemistry for 30 years. Together they sponsored, for many years, a local Hillel Club on the campus, which was the nucleus for the new Hillel extension unit; the budget is furnished by District No. 7. Mrs. Taubenhau, incidentally, is the sister of Mrs. David de Sola Pool of New York. Rabbi Henry Cohen of Galveston is the godfather of the unit, which will be under the general direction of Rabbi Abram V. Goodman, Hillel Director at the University of Texas.

Several of the Directors in the extension service set-up are full-time rabbis in college communities or

## Paper Hails Hillel

THE "Daily Illini," daily newspaper of the University of Illinois, has editorially praised the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation and Jewish fraternities there for sheltering eight undergraduate refugees from Germany.

"Were it not for the Hillel Foundation," the editorial states, "the eight students might not be at the University, gaining an education with no strings attached. Were it not for the Jewish fraternities and sororities, the eight students might have no place in which to live during their days on the campus. But there is no shouting. Any ballyhoo or sentimentality about 'the wonderful work' the groups are doing, is conspicuous by its absence. The rest of us at the University may be justly proud of the strength of character and purpose exhibited without publicity by these Jewish groups on the campus."

nearby towns. For example, Rabbi Meyer Simon of Lafayette, Ind., is serving the Hillel extension unit at Purdue University on a part-time basis. The same is true of Rabbi Selig Miller, whose pulpit is in Fairmount, W. Va., but who directs the Hillel unit at the University of West Virginia. Rabbi Lawrence Block of Athens, Ga., devotes part of his time as Hillel Director at the University of Georgia. Rabbi Arthur Zuckerman of Lansing, Mich., directs Hillel at nearby Michigan State College.

In District No. 3, the largest sup-



Mrs. J. J. Taubenhau, first woman executive in the Hillel set-up. She is Director of the Hillel Extension Unit at Texas A. & M. College.

port for the new Hillel units is coming from the B'nai B'rith women's auxiliaries, through their councils. Rabbi Theodore Gordon now has a graduate student aiding him in routine work so that he can serve two Hillel extension units in addition to his duties as Director of the Penn State Hillel Foundation.

In many different parts of America, Jews are eagerly responding to their opportunity for real service by supporting these Hillel units. The Jews of West Virginia carry the financial burden for the Hillel unit at the State University there; the Jews of Iowa do the same for their State University. And so it is in many places.

✳ Good things have good by-products. The maintenance of a full-time rabbi has long been one of the basic problems of the small Jewish community. The spread of the Hillel extension service is going to help solve this problem increasingly. For example, the small Jewish community in Tallahassee, Fla., had no permanent rabbi until the Hillel extension unit was established at the nearby University of Florida, making it possible for a full-time rabbi to serve both the Hillel unit and the Tallahassee congregation, by means of a sharing of expense. The same is true in Charlottesville, Va.

At the Universities of Maryland and Iowa, the Hillel extension units have full-time Directors, both rabbis. Maryland University is close to both Washington, D. C. and Baltimore, and the B'nai B'rith men and women of those cities are financing the project. At Iowa an equally ambitious program is supported by District No. 6 and the Jews of the State.

Thus 18 new Hillel fledglings have started out on their careers, fluttering straight toward the same light that for 16 years has been the beacon for the dozen full-fledged B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations. They carry with them the hopes and blessings of American Jewry. In all cases, the Presidents of the Universities where these extension services have been established have warmly welcomed them, and they have been enthusiastically received by the Jewish leadership of every State affected. In addition, some eight or ten extension units will probably be established in other universities soon, perhaps next semester. So far, Districts No. 1 and 4 are without these units, but in both the program is now being thoroughly explored.

Naturally, the extension service cannot be expected to possess the complete effectiveness of the full-fledged Hillel Foundation. But thousands of Jewish students, formerly marooned during four years of college residence, are or soon will be given a measure of Jewish influence which will tie them more closely to the religious and cultural values of their ancient heritage; and they will thus be able more effectively to serve American Jewry.