

THE JEWISH LABOR AND POLITICAL ARCHIVES

A Bund group poses on an outing with bicycles.
London, England, ca. 1902-1903. YIVO Archives.

Featured Artifact

A LETTER FROM THE SPECIAL COUNSEL TO PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON TO THE UNITED HEBREW TRADES

One of the major collections in the Jewish Labor and Political Archives is the collection of the United Hebrew Trades, a federation of Jewish labor unions organized in New York in 1888 under the leadership of Yiddish journalist Jacob Magidoff; founder and leader of the Socialist Party of America Morris Hillquit; and founder and long-time editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward* Abraham Cahan.

Established during a time when other smaller Jewish trade unions were struggling to survive, the United Hebrew Trades adopted an early set of principles that promoted mutual support between all unions; helped establish unions in trades that had not yet organized; and spread Socialist ideology among Jewish workers. The UHT became instrumental in helping organize unions and teaching workers how to hold meetings, arrange contracts with owners, keep proper financial records, and organize and lead strikes.

Found in the collection is a letter to William Wolpert, Secretary of the United Hebrew Trades, from Lee C. White, the Special Counsel to President Lyndon B. Johnson. White was an influential figure behind the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which aimed to grant equal voting rights to racial minorities.

In his letter, White acknowledges the importance of the work being done by the United Hebrew Trades as a member of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. This letter demonstrates that the scope of the UHT's work was far-reaching and extended beyond the Jewish labor movement.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 25, 1965

Dear Mr. Wolpert:

We are, of course, aware of the excellent work being done by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights in securing support for the voting rights legislation now pending in the Congress. Your efforts and those of your organization have added to the strong prospects for early and favorable action and we wanted you to know of our appreciation.

It occurred to me that you might wish to have a printed copy of the President's message on voting rights delivered to the Joint Session of Congress on March 15 and I am therefore enclosing one.

Sincerely,



Lee C. White

Special Counsel to the President

Mr. William Wolpert
United Hebrew Trades
175 Broadway
New York, New York

Enclosure



CONSERVATION:

65% complete

Approximately 2.275 million pages conserved



PROCESSING:

25% complete

Approximately 875,000 pages processed



DIGITIZATION:

Digitization has officially begun

(PROGRESS AS OF JULY 2024)



**YIVO RECEIVES
A \$270,000+
GRANT FOR THE
JEWISH LABOR
AND POLITICAL
ARCHIVES
DIGITIZATION
PROJECT**

The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research is delighted to announce that it has been awarded a grant of over \$270,000 from The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference), German Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF), and the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ).

This grant will enable YIVO to process and digitize approximately 196,000 pages of the Holocaust-related items from YIVO's Jewish Labor and Political Archives (JLPA).

Much of the material was collected by members of the Jewish Labor Bund during World War II, at great risk to their lives, and documents various aspects of the Holocaust and its aftermath, including Nazi atrocities in the extermination camps and ghettos, armed and intellectual acts of Jewish resistance, and the renewal of Jewish life in the immediate post-war period. Materials in the collections include correspondence, manuscripts, newsletters, ephemera, and photographs.

The grant will allow for enhanced description of the Holocaust related materials in the JLPA and their digitization, which will increase their accessibility worldwide. This greater accessibility will, in turn, lead to new avenues for research, documentation, and scholarship; the development of new Holocaust education resources based on previously unavailable primary documents; and greater awareness of the Bund's role in anti-Nazi activities and its covert operations during the Holocaust.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Consisting of nearly 200 collections encompassing 3.5 million pages of archival documents that were collected by the Bund Archives, the Jewish Labor and Political Archives (JLPA) forms the world's most comprehensive body of material pertaining to Jewish social and political activism in Europe and the United States. Spanning the years 1870 to 1992, the JLPA tells the story of Jews' involvement in the European political and revolutionary movements of the 20th century and resistance to the Holocaust, as well as their impact on the American labor movement and the fight for fair wages and workers' rights. YIVO is now in the midst of an 8-year project to digitize these unparalleled materials and make them available for free access online.

As of July 1, 2024, the JLPA project has raised over \$5.7 million toward its \$8.5 million goal. We welcome your support as we make this historic archival resource available to a global audience. Thanks to a matching challenge grant from an anonymous foundation, your support will now have an even greater impact!

We are profoundly indebted to Irene Pletka for her generous lead support of this extraordinary collection.

For more information and naming opportunities, please contact Melissa S. Cohen at **212.294.6156** or via email at **mcohen@yivo.org**.

ABOVE: The Bund Archives collected materials documenting Nazi atrocities. These photographs show Nazis forcibly cutting the peyes and beards of religious Jews in the Łódź Ghetto. Poland, ca. 1940. YIVO Archives.

JLPA PROJECT SUPPORTERS



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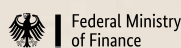
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Ellen Odoner and Edward Kerson

AS OF JULY 1, 2024



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on the basis of a decision
of the Bundestag

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Supported by the German Federal Ministry of
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Responsibility and Future



The National Endowment for the Humanities:
Democracy demands wisdom.