

Rabbi Albert G. Minda
Narrator

June Stern
Interviewer

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Albert G. Minda **-AM**
June Stern **-JS**

JS: In this series of taped interviews Rabbi Albert G. Minda will record factual matters and incidents of interest in his life. He will describe the Jewish community and Minneapolis as he knew it when he came to Minneapolis in 1922, and its development to the present time -- this early Fall of 1968. Of course, he will describe his role as Rabbi of Temple Israel for over 40 years, its growth and its place in the community. I am June Monasch Odgendorf[sp?] Stern. I consider this project a special honor and privilege because my family, the Monasches, were early settlers in Minneapolis and were Temple Israel members before Rabbi Minda came to Minneapolis. Many times the Rabbi was a guest in my family home in my youth, and now we enjoy his stimulating company in our home. He is my spiritual inspiration and has guided me through times of sorrow and joy. He confirmed me, and married me and my children. We truly know each other. I introduce Rabbi Minda to you in this new manner of recording time, place, and happening. Rabbi Minda?

AM: Thank you, June, for your warm and generous introduction. I have appreciated your friendship over these many years and I pray God that it may continue thus for a long time to come. This is a significant day on which I record this tape. It is July 30, 1968, which marks my 73rd birthday.

JS: My congratulations, Rabbi.

AM: Thank you, June. And what is more, the day after tomorrow, August 1st, marks the 46th anniversary of my coming here to Minneapolis. I was born in Holton, Kansas. My parents came to America from Lithuania at the end of the last century. I received my first public school education in Evansville, Indiana. Some of my earliest memories there are the celebration of the end of the Spanish American War, which took place on the Ohio River. I also remember the McKinley-Bryant campaign. When I was in the fifth grade my parents moved to Kansas City where I completed my public school education and one year of high school. It was then, as a lad of 16, that I went to the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. That was the year 1911. I was to be there eight years, completing my high school education, taking my bachelor of arts degree at the University of Cincinnati in

1918 and being ordained at the Hebrew Union College by the venerable Dr. Charleston Kohler in the year 1919. Now I must explain that in those days one took their secular education along with the theological education at the Hebrew Union College. You went to the High School in the morning and to the College in the afternoon. It was quite a program but it was also a most enjoyable program, both from the point of view of the experience and the subject matter.

JS: How did you come to the vocation and the calling of a Rabbi at the young age of 16, Rabbi?

AM: I had decided that I wanted to become a Rabbi after my Bar Mitzvah at the age of 13. But undoubtedly my choice was due to the influences in my home and the direction of my parents. I do not mean to imply that they forced me into the rabbinate, but what they were and what they taught me, that inevitably seems to me is the pinnacle of perfection and I am grateful for that. My father was a Hebrew scholar and the main interest in my home was the study of Hebrew books, both of the ancient times as well as the modern "high (?) scholar" period. He wrote many poems and I think that my introduction and love of this scholarship was due to the example he set. My mother exemplified in our home the classic beauty, virtue, propriety, respect and reverence for that which was used in the past and also for that of the present. I had three sisters and two brothers. They were all older than I was except one brother who was four years younger. There were in a sense two generations in our family, but all children were of the same father and the same mother, and we had a sense of family unity and solidarity. And when I went off to college my family was very helpful in seeing to it that I spent my Easters(?) there and I am happy, indeed, particularly on my birthday, to record this sense of indebtedness. Today, on my 73rd birthday, I am pleased to record that of the six members of our family I still have today two brothers and one sister, who all reside in Kansas City, Missouri.

When I was in Kansas City, I studied Hebrew and I used the Bible under the tutelage of a very fine professor. His name was Mr. Meyer Goldberg.

JS: During Bar Mitzvah time?

AM: Before Bar Mitzvah and after. I also came under the sponsorship and also the instruction of Rabbi Harry H. Mayer of Temple B'nai Judah in Kansas City. He set for me the image of the Rabbi which I was to carry with me all during my college years and which in a deep sense has remained with me today even though you might ask how I happened to the Hebrew Union College, which as you know is the rabbinical seminary for the Reform Jews. Well, in the first place, my father and my mother, while in a very profound sense were religious persons following the Jewish beliefs, were liberal in their outlook, so it was not surprising that as a youngster, in addition to my Hebrew training, I enrolled in the religious school of the Temple B'nai Judah, which was a Reform Temple. And when it came time to choose the College in which I was to prepare myself for the Rabbinate, it was only natural that I should choose the same kind of school. I have no regrets for this choice because Reform Judaism as I have known it, and as I have preached

it, it seems to me was the Jewish way of life, and the service that I have felt was effective for the generation of American Jews as I have come to know it.

JS: Very foresighted, Rabbi, that you should realize this at such a young age.

AM: Yes, it was a young age to make a choice of a life's calling and also a young age to make this particular choice. So far as my calling is concerned, after these many years, I have no regrets whatsoever, and if I were that young age again today (laughing) -- I say that somewhat whimsically -- I would again make the same choice. Each of the years in Cincinnati were years of fulfillment, and I believe that coming to the college at the age of 16 was very good. The Rabbinate is something more than the training of the mind. It calls for discipline of the heart and the deep sentiments of the soul. And so it's like a young priest, when you begin to nurture a sundry soul with the young child. When he comes under the influence of great men in the formative periods of his life, it means much so far as his dedication to his calling of the Rabbinate. The Rabbinate is more than a profession, it is a calling, and I had a wonderful time in Cincinnati. My relationship with the faculty, with the students and with the community of Cincinnati gave me a feeling that I was at home, in what I was doing and in what I aspired to become. We had a college song we sang in those days, because the college was more than studies; we had our fun periods and our lighter moments. The song ran like this: " (unclear) We'll all be rabbis some fine day, then how we will preach and pray," and then we wound up by saying (??) Amen." Well, after eight years of study at the college in Cincinnati, I had the opportunity to become the assistant to Rabbi David Pilson(?), a member of the first graduating class of the college, who was the Rabbi of (?) Temple in Cincinnati. But I did not feel that I wanted to accept this position, because I had been under the tutelage of these men of the college for eight years and I thought that I wanted to go out on my own, that what I would accomplish which was good would be to my credit, and I would have to pay the price for any mistakes and failures that I might commit. And so it was that I received a call to South Bend, Indiana, which in those days was known as the place of the Studebaker plant, which at one time made the Studebaker wagon, then made Studebaker automobiles. In addition to becoming the Rabbi of South Bend, I also became the Rabbi of the Reform Temple in Vincennes, Indiana.

JS: How far away?

AM: About 40 miles from South Bend. Vincennes was an unusual town. It had about 2,000 inhabitants, dating back to the Civil War, and it had about 40 Jewish families, and they were wonderful people. It so happened that when in my communicant years at the college I was sent out to officiate during the High Holy Days, I went to Vincennes, Indiana, and I had a very lovely experience there, and so it was that when in the year 1919 I was ordained, Vincennes remembered my officiating there and asked South Bend to consider me as its Rabbi, which it did, and I went there in the Spring of 1919. The way it worked out was this. I would go to Vincennes on Friday afternoons, preach in the lovely little Temple there on Friday night, stay over Friday night in some boarding house, and then on Saturday morning I would conduct a Religious School. How I did it I don't know,

because I had a few youngsters from the Confirmation Class, all the way down to children in the first grade, and I tried to do the best I could in departmentalizing what I had to present. We had about ten(?) kids altogether. And I still recall, I came there in the Spring of 1919, and that year I had my first Confirmation class.

JS: Of two or one?

AM: Four, and I remember them all so well. I have a picture of that class with me sitting in the center of the class, with a regular frock coat and what is more, with a mustache I had grown in order to look older! I'm not worried about that problem today on my birthday (laughter). Now, you may ask what was happening in South Bend. Well, I would return from Vincennes, Indiana on Saturday afternoon, and on Sunday morning from nine to eleven used to superintend the Religious School in the South Bend Temple and also teach Confirmation class, and then from eleven to twelve I would conduct "church." We were amongst those who had Sunday morning services, and that also applied to the holidays!

JS: You celebrated them on Sunday?

AM: With the exception of Rosh Hashanah and of Yom Kippur. Now South Bend was a young congregation. Its first Rabbi was Abraham Kumbah(sp?), who later became a professor at the Hebrew Union College. Dr. Kumbah was a wonderful spiritual leader, and he had already become a legend in South Bend when I arrived there a few years later, as I was told, concerning his great concern, love and interest in the underprivileged. He was a man who combined the social justice passion of the psalms, and the mysticism of the psalms. He was very liberal and he did not lay too much emphasis upon ritual, so that in many senses, I was the more conservative and tried to introduce some of the things that I felt that Dr. Kumbah had not emphasized sufficiently. I spent three very happy years there, in the Temple and in the community.

I've always been grateful to the South Bend community because it means much for a young man who is just starting his Rabbinate to have a happy association and joyous experience. And so, it was in South Bend where I started out my experience as a Rabbi and also in Vincennes, where I found very generous and liberal acceptance on the part of people as well as different organizations in which I participated.

JS: You're also going to tell us about meeting Frances.

AM: Yes, that is something that would be a great omission indeed. Because after three years, I received a call to come to Minneapolis to preach and to consider assuming the pulpit of Temple Israel. But I must go back to South Bend, where one of the projects I carried on there was conducting a Bible Class. And Frances, after her work in Ann Arbor at University of Michigan...

JS: What was she doing there?

AM: She was studying at the University and was a member of this Bible Class. Many of you who have known her all these years may not know her maiden name, Frances Gertrude Holinger. Well, we had a lovely Bible Class and the members of the class always arranged it so that when it was time to go home, I was to accompany Frances to her home. It was love almost at first sight, when I met her, but the matter of importance was the matter of Bible class, and also a matter of a year and a half. Well, I came to Minneapolis the Saturday before Purim, which was the Council of Jewish Women's Sabbath. I had preached there at that time on Friday evening and also on Sunday morning. In those days when a congregation chose the Rabbi, they had three or four candidates for the position come and preach, and then after hearing them all, they would make a selection. Well, I didn't know what the outcome would be. I was impressed with the congregation and the people.

And then, one Sunday evening in May, I received a telegram from Mr. Jonas Weil, the president of Temple Israel here in Minneapolis, stating that I had been elected Rabbi! I was very much pleased, of course, but I told no one about the matter until I went over to Frances' home and informed her that I was leaving South Bend. I couldn't tell what her reaction was, but I was determined that when I left South Bend I would take along with me the best that South Bend had to offer! And on Decoration Day, I proposed to Frances and much to my supreme joy and happiness, she accepted. I came to Minneapolis August 1, 1922, to spend the month here in orienting myself in the community and in the Temple. And may I say this was done on my own volition, for which I received neither compensation nor any salary. But my only regret was that it compelled me to be away from Frances, just a short time after we had become engaged. My work "in charge" began on September 1, 1922.

At this point, I think I ought to say something about the background of the Temple, its history, and also its place in the community. Dr. Samuel Deinard, who had been the Rabbi of the Temple since the year 1901, for two decades, died the year before I came, on Yom Kippur eve, 1921. Until I came here, the pulpit remained unoccupied. Various individuals, including laymen, took charge, and many of the Rabbinic functions were carried on by Dr. Maurice Lefkowitz, who had been Rabbi in Duluth, Minnesota for a number of years and is now living in Minneapolis. I found that the memory of Dr. Deinard was a very, very strong one, accompanied still by his friends' and the congregation's bereavement at the loss of a Rabbi at the young age of 40 years. So the memories of Dr. Deinard were both a challenge and an inspiration.

I was a young man, having been a Rabbi for three years, and I suppose that what I had to offer was my youth, my rabbinical training, and may I say, the sense of earnestness and zealotry towards the works to which I had dedicated myself. It was a very awesome thing, the first holiday season, to stand in the pulpit of Dr. Deinard and to preach to those who were under his tutelage for two decades. But I went forward, with solid [unclear] and responsibilities which have become mine. And after the holidays, I was duly installed as Rabbi of the Temple. My parents and members of my family were in attendance, and the

man who preached the installation was none other than Harry H. Mayer of Kansas City, who was my teacher during the days before I went to college.

JS: Could you tell us, Rabbi, something about the congregation itself, members of families, and where the structure was located?

AM: Yes, that's very important. The congregation known as Temple Israel came into existence when it was incorporated in the year 1878 under the name of Shaare Tov, which translated means Gates of Goodness, an unusual name. I know of no other congregation at least in modern times that has borne this name. I also feel, that to my knowledge, the name has no roots in the literature. The congregation began with a small number of people who had come here in the late '50s and in the early '70s. They came mostly from countries in Central Europe -- Germany, Romania, Austria. But they didn't come directly from Europe as immigrants. They had come here to America and had settled in cities on the Eastern coast and also in the South, and in the Midwest. They began to come to Minneapolis for various reasons. Some of them came in order to escape the yellow fever plague in the South, some of them came because of the riots that had occurred in the city of Cincinnati. Others came, I suppose because they needed work(?), and I suppose they came here, like other Americans, because they saw in this section of the country and in the small towns the potential of the future. They came here in spite of all they'd heard about the severe winters and torrid summers. They settled here a short time and then their attention was directed to the needs of the community. They had no Jewish cemeteries; in order to bury their dead, they had to go to St. Paul, which in those days, considering the transportation, was a long way. They encountered special difficulties when in the winter time, they had to face snow drifts and other difficulties of transportation.

So it was by 1876 they organized what is known as the Montefiore Cemetery Association and purchased ground at 42nd and Third Avenue South. Later on, I shall discuss how the Montefiore Cemetery Association, which consisted mostly of Temple members, remained independent of the Temple, then merged with Temple Israel and is now known as the Temple Israel Cemetery.

JS: Am I to understand that Montefiore preceded the Temple structure?

AM: Not only did it precede the Temple structure, but it preceded the Temple incorporation. However, I want at this point to interpolate a few items which probably should have been included before. After I was engaged to Frances, I wrote Jonas Weil, the president of our Temple, that I had become engaged. He wrote back a note of congratulations that facetiously indicated that when I first came to Minneapolis to be interviewed, I did so under false pretense, that I had no "intentions" whatsoever, and of course, that was true. I became engaged after I received the call to Minneapolis! But I wrote back to Jonas Weil in the same vein saying that when the congregation engaged me, now they were engaging two persons at the same salary! And that has continued through the years, because Frances has not only been a helpmate so far as our family is concerned, but a helpmate in my work in the arduous congregational family. We were

married in South Bend on November 14, 1922. After our honeymoon trip, to Frankfort(?), Indiana, we returned as bride and bridegroom to Minneapolis, and I officiated at the Sabbath Eve Service following our return. We had a "Yom Kippur crowd" (a very large number of congregants) in attendance at this service!

JS: For a double purpose, I'll bet. [Laughter]

AM: This time they didn't come to hear me so much. They wanted to see the woman whom I had brought into the community as my wife, and also as wife of their Rabbi. I may add that the congregation was not disappointed, and I do believe that they have not been disappointed in these many years. I want to just offer this commentary in this regard, that the wife of a Rabbi carries many of the responsibilities that devolve upon the Rabbi in the congregation and in the community. She's just not a private individual, and therefore it is very important indeed, that the woman that the Rabbi selects to join him also joins him in his life's calling.

JS: Rabbi, we could make another tape, altogether, for Frances alone, and her contributions to the community.

AM: Oh, thank you, but I do think that too oftentimes you hear someone say, or there have been some wives of Rabbis who say, well, there isn't anything different in this regard than any other marriage. But I don't think that's true. The congregation tendered us a very beautiful reception and they received us in their hearts and in their homes, and in their social lives, with much warmth and affection. We took an apartment at the Buckingham Apartment Hotel at 15th Avenue South. We had no car, and in order to get streetcar transportation, we had to circle Loring Park. It was a very cold winter, and the sharp winds roaring across the lake brought with them a sense of the elemental forces which are so evident in Minnesota winters. But with the stamina of youth, we survived despite the cold to which we were subjected from time to time.

It is very interesting that a year before I came to Minneapolis, the congregation changed its name from the Hebrew title Shaare Tov to Temple Israel. And also it took another momentous step when it affiliated itself with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which is the national organization of Reform temples in this country.

JS: How many years before was the UAHC established?

AM: Oh, it was established many years before...in the 1870s. This matter of affiliating came up time after time after time.

JS: You don't know what the reason was, why they hadn't affiliated before?

AM: Well, I don't think it was a matter of ideology at all. Frankly, June, I think that what disturbed them was the fear of finances, how much they would have to contribute to national and international Jewish causes(?) And so it would come up, be laid on the table,

committees would study it, and it was sort of an impasse(?), because Dr. Deinard himself belonged to the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and here's a congregation that was of the "foreign" type... but they finally came into the fold.

We had no Men's Club. The minutes show that the project of the Men's Club was started several years back, but was not viable and did not live, and so one of the first things I did when I came to Minneapolis was to call together a group of young men whose fellowship I enjoyed, and I placed before them the matter of organizing a Men's Club. We used to meet at lunch, and amongst them were men like M. J. Rosen, Ed Rubin, Maurice Edelstein, Maurice Rose, George Stromberg, Irving Rosecrantz...and there were others. And in December of that year, 1922, we had our first meeting in the old Temple House, the Smith house, and Irving Rosecrantz was the first president of the newly organized Men's Club.

JS: When you talk about the Temple House, Rabbi, where was this physical structure?

AM: I'm going to come to that, June, in just a moment. I want to revert now to the Sisterhood. The Sisterhood began its existence years back when it was known as the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society, and they did an excellent job not only in the field of financing social service, but also in helping the Temple in programs. They'd raise money for the mortgages, and altogether the women were valiant in their support of the Temple. And in 1920... I'm sure that that's the date... the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society or the Temple Auxiliary, as it was now called, was affiliated with the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods which had been organized in Cincinnati in 1911. Mrs. Henry Weiskopf became the first president, and then the president before the Sisterhood derived its new name, when I came, Mrs. Larry Milkert(?) was the president and she had as her great co-worker Mrs. (?), known to us as Ruth.

The first undertaking of the Men's Club was to organize a Boy Scout troop in which I was very much interested, and this was done. We had as our first Scoutmasters two young men, twins, who you recognize as your relations, the two Monasch boys. What were their given names?

JS: Jerome and Stanley. They still talk about it to this day, and when they are in town they always see the boys that were in the Boy Scout troop.

AM: The Boy Scout troop, Temple Israel #10, did a fine job, and we carried on for many years, until recent years when, due to the fact that many of the boys live in outlying districts, it just didn't seem possible for them to come to the Temple where the Boy Scout meetings were held. We had some fine boys, and some fine scoutmasters, and it was with a great degree of regret that I saw the Boy Scout troop discontinued.

Now then, June, you asked me about the Temple House. Well, after the Temple was built, in 1903....

JS: And you are talking about the Temple down on Tenth Street?

AM: Tenth Street and Fifth Avenue. Not many years after that the Minutes show that the Board of Trustees indicated that the congregation needed a new temple located in another section of the city, more convenient to reach by the congregation. Their plans did not come through. Then in the year 1916 a very fine gentleman by the name of John Weisman was in the real estate business, and offered the Temple a residence at 24th and Emerson South at a very reasonable price. This big wooden residence had years back been the one occupied by a lumberman known as Smith. The offer by Mr. Weisman was accepted and that became known as the Temple House. It was remodeled so that we had an auditorium that could seat about 200 people, and the classrooms were the rooms on the first floor and the second floor. I used to teach one class that was once the kitchen. And from time to time I suspected that the aromas of what had been cooking still remained behind long after the kitchen had been abandoned! We had a fireplace which was in the living room of the residence, and this room became the meeting place for the Sisterhood, for the Men's Club, and the Religious School.

[End of first tape]

JS: We now continue with the second recording in the series by Rabbi Minda. Ok, Rabbi?

AM: Thank you, June. And I'm going to continue now with my efforts in promoting the Temple program. The Sisterhood not only assisted the Temple in the matter of finances, but also carried on a cultural program. I organized a Bible Study group, when you study the Bible using the Bible itself as the text, which consisted of women of different ages. I recall very happily one of my attendants, a very remarkable woman, Mrs. Henry Weiskopf. I also had a group of women, not many, but very devoted, who undertook the study of Hebrew. We used to meet every two weeks. In those days we didn't know too much about catering people who'd come in and prepare meals. The women themselves went into the kitchen, prepared meals for the different functions, and saw to it that they were properly served.

I introduced a congregational Bulletin which carried the notices of the various activities of the Temple, its services, and the programs of its various organizations. I want to say at this point, that we had, or rather I had, no secretary; for that matter, the congregation had no stenographer. The work was done in the office of the Secretary, who at the time that I came was Jesse Barron(?), and in the office of the Treasurer, Mr. Julius Eisenstadt. I had no Ritual Committee; in fact during all the time of my active Rabbinate, there was no Ritual Committee. Up to that time the matter of ritual came up before the Board for consideration for approval or disapproval. The Board was very considerate in this regard; they realized that as a Rabbi, I would try to introduce such rituals as were meaningful and consistent with the spirit of Reform Judaism. I introduced the recitation of the Kiddush on Sabbath evening; they'd had it before, but for some reason or other, it was dropped. When I introduced the Kiddush I began to get some comments through the grapevine, so to

speak. Some of the congregants didn't like it. They thought this was reverting to Orthodoxy(?), and I realized that the congregation was not yet ready for it. I myself was not particularly pleased with the format that I was using. Then, a few years later, I introduced it again.

JS: Possibly you could explain what the Kiddush service is?

AM: The Kiddush Service is the blessing recited over the cup of wine on the Sabbath Eve and on the Eve of the various holidays. It is rather amusing, as I think back, to discover all of the objections that were made, which represented (?) One of these was that it was during the Prohibition era and we shouldn't(laughing) use an alcoholic beverage even for a religious ceremony. They forgot the fact that the government made special provisions for the use of wines in religious rituals! This time the Kiddush experiment was very successful and so it was continued, and to this day it is a very inspiring feature of our Sabbath Eve service, particularly since the Cantor does not recite it, but chants it. And what is more significant, the congregation now joins the Cantor in special expression of the Jewish chant.

JS: Should we take time here to explain the size of the congregation when you came and the size you are speaking of now?

AM: I'm glad you mentioned it, June, because I had it in mind. When I came here in 1922, we had approximately 275 members in the congregation.

JS: You're talking about families?

AM: Yes. And I think we had something like 200 children in the religious school.

JS: Do you recall exactly when the Tenth Street structure was built?

AM: As I think I indicated, it was dedicated in the year 1930. Another matter dealing with ritual... the minutes of earlier years record the fact that at one meeting the motion was made to abolish the sounding of the cornet on Yom Kippur. When the president, Mr.Stromberg, moved the motion out of order, there was an appeal on the decision of the chair, but the chair was sustained. So when I came, the cornet was sounded instead of the shofar, and there were many people who felt that the shofar should be sounded rather than the cornet. I was in sympathy with this, except for the fact that I recall from my own youth an individual trying to sound the shofar very unsuccessfully and instead of being an inspiring ceremony, it provoked tittering amongst the congregation. I said that when the time comes when we can get someone to blow the shofar adequately, and it becomes an inspiring sound, then I will be all for it.

JS: It's difficult to blow a shofar.

AM: Oh yes, it requires skill. It requires good lung power, too. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations developed a shofar with a cornet mouthpiece during the war.

JS: That's World War I?

AM: No, World War II. And all these years the cornet was used to sound. During World War II, Roland, my son, was stationed at Fort Snelling and he was the cornetist, and so when UAHC produced the shofar with the cornet mouthpiece, Roland in uniform blew it; he was the first to help introduce the shofar again in the ritual of the congregation. We, however, maintained the sounding of the cornet because we have a special shofar service with the cornet that I think is most inspiring. And when some people said, "Now that we're blowing the shofar why do we need the cornet?" I said, "They both serve their purpose." I was not one to see the cornet shofar service abolished.

There is another matter in regard to ritual. Many Temples all over the country would conduct a congregational Seder in the Temple on the first or second night of Passover. I felt that the Seder was a matter of family observance, and for the Temple to hold the Seder was to discourage people from having the Seder at home and so I developed a slogan "A Seder for Every Home," and I used to take a survey of the children in the Religious School on the Sunday following the Seder, and I found that 90 to 95% of the children had attended some home Seder.

There was one amusing incident that I recall in connection with this campaign for a Seder in every home. The Sunday before Passover, I said to the children, "We should have a Seder in every home, and I want you to go home and not let your parents rest until you exact a promise from them to conduct a Seder in the home." Granted that I made a call on one of our congregants that Sunday afternoon, and the mother says, "What did you say to the children this morning? Because my husband took a nap after lunch, one of the kids went up to his room and said to him, "You cannot rest...." (laughing). That was carrying it a little too far! And I think I need say a word here in regard to my whole attitude in these matters. I felt, like many of my colleagues, that the early Reformers, in their attempt to adapt Judaism to the times, cut out a rather significant and inspiring ritual. They tended too much towards rationalism; they had the idea that man was all mind and not emotion. And then the psychologists came along and told us that man is mind, but he also has emotions. And I thought that many of these rituals that were then discarded should be re-introduced to bring back something of the warmth and the life that radiates from these ceremonies both in the synagogue and in the home. And I felt that by orienting the congregation in this regard, this could come about without any kind of idea of actual conflict. And I'm very happy to say that over the years, we have gone ahead with these ideas, and some people who at first objected to some of these rituals, later on came to recognize their beauty and would have objected if we had discarded them! I did not force them on the congregation, or high-pressure them into accepting them. When any matter of this kind came before the Board, the Board very graciously accepted my reasons, and went along with me in my policy in this regard.

JS: What you are saying is not too different from what other congregations were doing at that time. Am I right in saying that Reform Judaism was void of a great deal of ceremony and tradition?

AM: That's right.

JS: And in those years, it slowly swung a little bit more to Conservative Judaism's thinking in bringing back into the service and the lives of Reform Jews some more ceremony and tradition.

AM: I think you've made a good statement, June. Sometimes some congregants would accuse me of being Orthodox and attempting to have the congregation reversed. Actually it wasn't a matter of Orthodox Judaism at all. These were ceremonies that were a part of our Jewish heritage. One of the main principles and motivations of Reform is that our ancestral faith must recognize the need, the circumstances and the ? in which it is to function. There are eternal principles in Judaism which we recognize, but there are also those factors in our heritage which represent the adaptation of our fathers to the needs of our age. Judaism is a tree of life which grows and which agreed to grow in the various styles in which it was planted. And so, the Reformers acted in accordance with their desires and made Judaism a vital and inspiring force in the lives of the Jewish people. But as I said, in their desire to cut away some of the underbrush that was preventing the growth of the Jews, they perhaps went too far. In my efforts to reintroduce some of these ceremonies I was merely recognizing that the time would be to change and that the people needed some of the warmth and the light that had been radiated by these rituals and ceremonials of the past.

And there were other instances in which I acted on this principle. Let us take the matter of the Rabbi's garb. When I was ordained at the Union Hebrew College in the year 1919, my sister, of blessed memory, presented me with a gift of an old-fashioned frock coat. Well, there came a change when the Rabbis and other clergymen began to wear a cut-away coat with grey striped trousers. It served its purpose although sometimes, depending upon the physical contour of the Rabbi or clergyman, he looked something like a penguin! So in Reform Temples as well as in Conservatives and Orthodox synagogues, the custom arose of the clergyman wearing a pleated gown, and I felt that this would also be appropriate for me and I'd appreciate it in my own pulpit. I ordered such a gown which I felt would serve the purpose. I wore it on the pulpit, and then from the underground and through the grapevine I began to get some of the reactions of the congregants-- humorous, and some not so humorous. We heard that the gown was referred to as the Rabbi's maternity gown!

JS: This is the new one...

AM: The new one... that's right. So I decided that the time wasn't quite right for the introduction of the pulpit gown. I bided my time, and it wasn't too long afterwards when I sensed that this would be the time to re-introduce the pulpit gown. And I did so. I encountered no objections this time, and the majority of the congregation felt that the

Rabbi wearing the pulpit gown added to the dignity of the worship. Then some years later, a Mr. Walter Reidel(?), who had come from Germany, came to me and said that one of the memories he had of the Rabbi in the congregation in Germany was wearing a white robe on the Holidays, and that he would be very happy to contribute these robes for the Rabbis and the Cantors to wear. And so, I introduced these gowns on the Holidays services, white gowns in accordance with the spirit of the Rabbinic law, and this met with the general approval of the congregation as well as the appearance of a "stoll", something like the tallis which the Cantor and the Rabbi wore over their robe. Now, these are not major matters, yet they're matters that have to do with the general spirit of the service and the spirit of Reform Judaism in its attempt to make the worship prayers meaningful and inspiring to the congregation, as the congregation assembles for services of worship. This has been my philosophy, attempting to make Judaism relevant both in its ethical and moral sense as well as in its ritual sense, because ritual is a part of our daily lives, too. We're not just embodied spirits. When the flag of our country passes by in a parade we take off our hats, we salute the flag. Well, many say why do such a thing? But the fact of the matter is that the flag symbolizes all that our country stands for, and our plans and hope for the future, its' ideals. And it is at this time that you are giving expression outwardly to that which is in our hearts and in our minds. And so it is, too, that we have the custom of tipping our hats when a woman passes by, thus indicating our respect for her. Now of course people can show respect in many ways, but this is the symbol which somehow meets an inner need, and thus we've gone along with these matters over the years. There is another ceremony that we use and that is that when the child first enters the Religious School we have a Consecration Service where the five-year-old child in the kindergarten class or the first grade comes up to the pulpit, and we explain the significance of the Torah that he or she is to study, with that which is in the Torah, and as a souvenir reminder of the occasion he or she is given a miniature paper Torah. Here's the symbol and here's the ceremony that has meaning, I think, both for the child and for the parents.

JS: That and the Confirmation Service I always think of as the most meaningful services that we do here at Temple Israel.

AM: The Confirmation Service was the ceremony introduced by the early Reformers, and it has been adopted by the Conservative congregations and perhaps even by some of the Orthodox, though I'm not altogether too certain about that. But since you mentioned Confirmation, I must at this point relate to you some of my early battles which I fought and achieved victory. When I first came, for my first Confirmation I had a service which was held on the Sunday nearest Shavuot, the Festival which marks the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, to which our Fathers pledged their faith and loyalty, to God and His written word. Well, I found that this was not satisfactory...

JS: You mean the date?

AM: The date. At my Shavuot service, I practically had no one in attendance, and in looking over the congregation on Sunday morning of Confirmation, I recognized that

those who were interested in the confirmands, members of their family and friends, were there, but the others who were not interested were not present and were probably out on the golf course. So I said, "What have I accomplished? I have literally abolished Shavuos as a holiday, and defined nothing, so far as holding services on Sunday morning." So I decided that I would not hold services on Sunday morning, but on Shavuos morning. Well, this raised considerable objection among some of the congregation, particularly when a gentleman who was a good friend of mine said Rabbi Hirsch in Chicago can hold his Confirmation on Sunday, why can't we? And this one man carried on the battle year after year.

One year he brought it before the Board and I recall very distinctly, the President said at the Board meeting, "Well, in matters of this kind we should defer to what the Rabbi feels is right and appropriate." I introduced a Resolution at the annual meeting of the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1924 in this matter of holding services of Confirmation on Shavuos and this Resolution in recent years has been re-affirmed. I think sometimes the Bar Mitzvah is making things too easy by following the path of least resistance, and I think this idea of shifting a holiday where it should traditionally be observed, like Confirmation on Shavuos, is one in this regard. Now it so happens that over all these years we've had Confirmation on Shavuos morning; it's established and no one objects to it, and our services have been well attended, and I think the whole matter of Confirmation takes on a meaning when you have it rooted in some historic event like the revelation on Sinai and the history of the Jews in subsequent years.

I also want to present a picture of the general community and its people at the time when I came to Minneapolis, August 1, 1922. The American Jewish Year Book gives the Jewish population of Minneapolis for the year 1918 as 15,000 out of the general population of 375,000. The same Year Book cites 20,000 Jews out of a general population of 482,872 in the 1960 census. You see, therefore, that we have not had a great growth over the years. For 1968, we estimate that there are about 22,000 Jews in Greater Minneapolis. This, of course, does not include St. Paul. You must remember that the greatest growth in population of Jews took place in the '80s and '90s of the last century, when we had migration of masses of Jews who came from Eastern Europe. Some came directly to the Eastern ports of New York and Baltimore. We also had Jews who came through Galveston, Texas; this was an effort on the part of the American Jewish community to see to it that the Jews did not settle altogether in the crowded Eastern cities, but should be settled in the communities of the Midwest. Who were the Jews who came here? Well, they came originally, as I indicated, from Central Europe; German and Bohemian Jews, who constituted the core of the so-called Reform Jewish community. On the South Side and on the North Side of Minneapolis we found the Russians, Lithuanians, Romanian Jews. For anyone who wants some more detailed account of the Eastern European migration, I would ask them to consult W. Gunther Plaut's volume, "The Jews in Minnesota," and Rabbi Gordon's book, "Jews In Transition." There was not only a geographic distance that separated these various groups, but also the social difference, even among Eastern European Jews who in their synagogues and religious practices brought with them that which they had known in their native land.

At the time I came here, the first generation was still engaged in arduous efforts to become rooted in the American soil. They worked at humble trades and they had humble occupations, but this did not deter them from their efforts to give their children the best kind of education, both secular as well as Jewish. And so today, if you find Jewish men and women occupying high places in the professions, in the commercial and industrial world, it was because of the parental program of giving, at any cost, the opportunity to their young people of making not only a living for themselves, but also a life. And it is indeed a source of gratification in seeing how the personalities that make up our wonderful community threw themselves into their educational program and worked hard to achieve their goals. They kept on in their school work, many of them, sold newspapers, and others engaged in other work at the same time.

Now what were the institutions that we had to work with the community when I came? There was first of all what was known then as the Associated Jewish Charities, which is now called the Jewish Family and Welfare Services. When I came Bernice Felsenthal, the daughter of the well known foreign Rabbi in Chicago, Bernard Felsenthal, was the Director of the Association. I was elected a member of the board and I recall very well how so much of our time was spent in reviewing the reports of how money was distributed to various families who were poor. We would have, for instance, coal, clothing, food. It hardly seems possible that today, so much of the work of the Jewish Family Child Welfare Association deals with more fundamental problems, social and behavioral, and that practically nothing of the so-called charity is carried out by this organization. Times have indeed changed and so much that was done in those days by private organizations has been taken over by governmental agencies under the general heading of anti-poverty. Some of the personalities who were very much concerned with the Associated Jewish Charities were Mr. Isaac Kaufman, Mr. Arthur Brin, Mr. I.S. Joseph, A.N. Bur ?. Another organization that concerned itself with the welfare of the immigrants who came to this city was known as the Hebrew Free Loan Society, which was a group that collected funds and then loaned them out to various individuals without any interest in order that they might get a start in providing a living for themselves and their families.

JS: Was this business ventures that they were backing, or...?

AM: Well, venture is hardly the word. It was much more humble than that, June. If a man wanted to peddle, the Society would give him money in order to buy a wagon, a horse, and supplies, and the record of repayment was indeed a remarkable one. This Free Loan Society was a unique institution among Jewish groups, not only here, but everywhere else where Jews were found in any large numbers. And it is in accord with the highest concept of Jewish Charity as stated by the celebrated philosopher, ?, who said that the highest charity is that which enables the under-privileged individual to achieve a living by himself. And to make this possible represents efforts to maintain the dignity of the individual and the sanctity of his personality.

Another institution that characterizes the efforts of Jewish parents was the Talmud Torah, which already has its building and a fine program carried on in the North Side of the city. The genius of that institution was to be found in the personality of Dr. George Gordon, who by profession was an obstetrician, but he spent as much time in advancing the program of the Talmud Torah as he did in his own profession. He would go around securing scholarships in order to keep the Talmud Torah economically sound, making it possible for all children who wanted to attend even though they did not have enough money to pay the tuition. The Talmud Torah also had its program of securing funds. Before Purim, it would conduct a Purim food sale, and during Hanukkah week it would promote a dinner dance which became an institution in the Jewish pride(?) of community.

JS: But those still exist today, don't they?

AM: That's right. The Talmud Torah has gone forward, of course, in the subsequent years and is regarded as one of the outstanding institutions of its kind in the country. The Minneapolis Jewish Community was a very much Zionist oriented one. This was in a great measure due to Dr. Deinard and Dr. Gordon, who were [breaks off].

[End of second tape]

AM: Thank you, June. In the last tape, I failed to mention the name of the synagogue over which C. David Matt was Rabbi, which is the Adath Jeshurun. I had been talking to you about the reception given to Rabbi Matt on the occasion of their tenth anniversary of service in the Adath Jeshurun. Frances and I could hardly believe that. (laughing) For ten years! And here we are, thank God, on August 1st of 1968, marking the beginning of our 47th year in one congregation and in the same community. Where time is indeed a relative matter depends upon the one who experiences the events that time brings with it!

On the North Side there were a number of synagogues. The community was small, but my memory recalls the Orthodox synagogues which were established there. The largest one was the Keneseth Israel Synagogue, which was a fine building located in the midst of the great North Side Jewish district at Lyndale and Sixth Avenue North. The Rabbi of the Keneseth Israel was a very venerable and scholarly gentleman by the name of Rabbi F. M. Goldberg (?). I spoke at this synagogue on the second day of Rosh Hashonah at the invitation of two of his officers, Mr. Max Davis and Mr. Max ? I recall very appreciatively the warm welcome that I received not only from Rabbi Goldberg, but from the congregation itself. My text was taken from the Siddur, the binding of Isaac and what was supposed to be his sacrifice, which of course never took place. In the new Siddur(?) leading up to what was supposed to be done, or not done, on the summit of Mt. Moriah, the text regarding Abraham and Isaac said, "And the Jew walks together." And the thesis of my sermon was that today, here in America, there might be a gap between the generations, but through our various programs of communications between parents and children this gap could be avoided as the two generations walk together. I remember years later I was visiting a patient in Mt. Sinai Hospital and the patient had difficulty in speaking, but he said something in a mumbled voice about togetherness. Later on I

learned from a sister of the patient that what he was referring to was my text given in that sermon years ago, "And the two of them walked together." So you see that sometimes a sermon might not be just a sermon, which is heard in one ear and goes out the other, but also leaves a lasting impression.

JS: Rabbi, you will really never know the number of people who remember parts of what you have said at a particular time throughout these years.

AM: Well, that's very gratifying to hear, and that is why after many years of preaching, I do not feel there is substance in the phrase which is sometimes used, and that is, "the foolishness of preaching." I want to say, as I speak of Rabbi Shapiro(?), that all through my Rabbinate, I tried to cultivate the friendships of my distinguished colleagues no matter what their particular denomination or category might be. I've always felt that we were allies, partners, each working in his own respective sphere to achieve a common goal and that is the desirability of the Jews and Judaism in our American environment. The Adath Jeshurun on the South Side started out as an Orthodox synagogue, then on the arrival of Rabbi Matt became Conservative. But Beth El started out as Conservative and had as its Rabbi David Aronson, and I was chosen to have the dedication of the residence at Fourteenth and Penn Avenue North where church services were held, and on this site the synagogue was built, for which I also participated in the dedication services. Times have changed; Beth El Synagogue is now building its new structure in St. Louis Park, and of course the changes in the Jewish community on the North Side have been tremendous in the recent years. And one looks back somewhat wistfully to the time when it was strong and functioning, and now, or in the near future, will have practically disappeared. And of course the Temple on Third Street and Fifth Avenue South, when it was built, was located in the neighborhood of its members, on what is today the inner city. I wasn't there too long before Jews began moving to the West Side and it was not unexpected that sooner or later a new Temple would be built that would be more convenient, as to location.

JS: The other congregations up North were all small, some with and some without any Rabbis or buildings, is that right?

AM: That's right. But they're still in existence today. For instance, one of them is the Sharei Chesed Synagogue of which Rabbi Levine has been Rabbi for these many years. In fact, Rabbi Levine came to Minneapolis from Indianapolis, Indiana a year after I came to Minneapolis. I received a letter from a friend of mine in Indianapolis informing me that he was coming, and even though I myself was new to the community, I was very happy to extend him a warm welcome and our fellowship has been a close one in all these subsequent years.

You know, as I reminisce on all these matters, I can't help feeling somewhat ancient, particularly as I recall a statement that I found in a book I picked up as I was browsing in a book store whose title was "How to Grow Old Gracefully." And the book went on to say that if you do not want to appear old, do not talk about anything that happened more

than two weeks ago (laughter). But it is of course gratifying to recall these occasions, not only the institutions but also with the personalities, they and the others who have laid the foundation for the grand community that we have today. The Bible says, "Consider the yesteryears", and sometime I will approach the days, living in an affluent age, that will recognize that what they have today was brought about through the fear, the faith, the courage and the hard work of these pioneers. Things like this don't just happen. These institutions and these causes are the sharing of men and women who came upon the scene, who did their work, and for those of us who remember them when they're gone. In mentioning synagogues, I failed to mention the B'nai Emet Synagogue, which in recent years has been under the leadership of my good friend Rabbi ? and has now taken steps toward building a new edifice far out in the St. Louis Park district and is another sign of what has in recent years happened to the Jewish community on the North Side.

The other organizations that were functioning in getting a lot of jobs done in their respective spheres when I came to Minneapolis in 1922 were the women's organizations. Each synagogue, of course, had its own sisterhood of women who represented their "right arm" in aiding the synagogue in all of their various programs. There was one organization that was comprised of all the Jewish women of the community, even though for the most part its leadership consisted of women from our own Temple. I refer to the Council of Jewish Women. The Council of Jewish Women in the early days conducted a religious school for children on the North Side, it did social welfare work, and established a Settlement House on the South Side, which for a number of years did a magnificent job. Some of the substantial Jewish citizens of our community who lived on the South Side came under the influence of the Council of Jewish Women's Settlement House, and represented a formidable [unclear] during their formative years.

JS: That was in the early days of Temple building wasn't it?

AM: Well, before that, June, they had a much more modest house on the South Side, an old residence that became the Council Settlement House, which was up until that time in the Adath Jeshurun. I recall some of the outstanding personalities in the work of the Council of Jewish Women... Mrs. Amy Wykoff, who was a very loving personality, and Sadie Kantor. Sadie was the moving spirit in the settlement house work, and carried on valiantly in that field as she did in other fields, particularly with the religious education program of our own Temple. We had at that time a Minneapolis lodge of the B'nai B'rith and it had done a fine piece of work in previous years in connection with receiving Jews who were immigrants coming to this town via Galveston. Among the moving spirit of B'nai B'rith were such outstanding leaders as Jonas Weil, Arthur Green, Joe Schanfield, David Jeffrey. Each of these names carries with it an association not only with B'nai B'rith, but also of their cooperation in so many other areas of Jewish community life. I have to make special mention of Mr. Joseph Schanfield, who in my mind was a saintly character, and to whom so many Jews in difficulty turned in the hour of their need. Schanfield was also the president of the Jewish Sheltering Home, which took in children who were temporarily homeless or whose parents had to work, and there they found temporary shelter.

JS: Was it only Jewish children?

AM: It was only Jewish children, at that time. When the Community Chest was organized around 1920, the Jewish Associated Charities became one of the constituent members of the Community Chest, which today is known as the United Fund of Hennepin County. There were other institutions in the community in which I was interested. One of them was what became known as the Emanuel Cohen Center. Emanuel Cohen and his wife Nina Morais Cohen had already passed on when I came but I heard much about them from friends. Emanuel Cohen was an outstanding lawyer and Nina Morais Cohen was the daughter of a great Rabbinic leader. She did an outstanding job in her study group, which was sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women. Some of the women leaders in the Jewish community owed much to the inspiration she gave them in her group, which studied Jewish history and Jewish ideals. Amongst these women were Mrs. Maurice Wolff, Mrs. Arthur Green, Mrs. Barrie and Mrs. Mickolas, Miss Rebecca Michaels. Emanuel Cohen, desirous of ? excellence, left a sum of money to the Jewish community to the Associated Jewish Charities, which appointed a committee headed by Mr. Arthur Brin, and on which I also served. After careful study of the needs of the young people and ourselves on the North Side, it was determined that a large residence on the North Side be purchased, rehabilitated, and a program instituted. This became known as the Emanuel Cohen Center. In recent years with an expanded program, Emanuel Cohen Center became the Jewish Community Center, which is now about to dedicate a new building. There is a social club known as the Gymal Daled Club which I think has as its predecessor the Young Youth Club. I was asked to speak at the Gymal Daled Club when I first came, so I tried to give the letters a meaning and spoke of this in connection with the ancient tribe of Gads(?). This club occupied rooms on the second and third floors of the building located between Ninth and Tenth Street on Hennepin Avenue, where committees would meet, lectures would be held, and...

JS: Social events?

AM: Social events. And it also had a gymnasium and where also the (unclear) . It performed a very useful function. I recall that when Israel's Ben Gurion came to town a luncheon meeting was held there at the Gymal Daled Club which was attended by a large group of people. So the social aspect of the Jewish community was not neglected, particularly when you recall that in connection with the synagogues, with the auxiliary organizations, with the Talmud Torah and the Zionist organizations, there were social activities to which people came, not only in the interest of the cause but also the desire to meet their friends and to carry on socially. When I came the Oak Ridge Country Club had already been established in Hopkins. I think it was started two years before I came and its first president was Mr. Isaac Kauffman, who shortly thereafter passed away and his great managerial work was carried on by his business associate, Mr. Ralph Hamburger, who also became the chairman of the building committee of our new Temple in 1927 and later on became the president of the Temple. For the most part the members of Oak Ridge Country Club were those affiliated with Temple Israel. And as you know, the community

grew larger, the various sections of the community advanced in so many ways, and so the membership of Oak Ridge Country Club expanded and members were those who came from different sections or segments of the community.

I made a previous reference to Montefiore Cemetery Association that was organized in the year 1876, two years before the establishment of Temple Israel. While it was composed of members of Temple Israel, it always remained an independent organization up until about 15 years ago. It was then that a number of the old timers took a special interest in the cemetery, the passing off from the earthly scene, and it was felt that there had to be some permanent sponsoring organization and the Temple, therefore, incorporated it within its organization. The cemetery, over the years, has acquired a new grounds and still remains the burial place for the families of Temple Israel members and occasionally for those who are not. The original property can be found at Forty-Second Street and Third Avenue South.

I think that this covers the organizations that I found when I first came here to Minneapolis and with which I had contact or associations with in some form or other. Now I want to return to Temple Israel. I indicated, before, that the Temple acquired what became known as the Temple House at Twenty-Fourth and Emerson Avenue South, and this was largely made possible through one of its members, John Weisman, who offered it to the Temple for the generous purchase price of \$14,000, with the provision that its premises would be used to erect thereon a house of worship and used for other congregational purposes. Well, when I came here, I found the Temple House. It was used for Religious School, for the meeting place of auxiliary organizations such as the Men's Club, Sisterhood, and the Boy Scouts. The Temple House served a useful purpose, because the Temple on Tenth Street was inadequate and also because it was inconvenient to reach. But there is one thing sure... the Temple House was inadequate for Religious School particularly. Even though it had been supplied with a fire escape, it was still a fire trap, and sure enough, one day during the week a fire broke out in the Temple House. It was fortunate that it was a minor fire, and also that there were no Religious School pupils in the building. We had to meet for several Sundays in the Religious School rooms of the old Temple, and the Sunday before we were to go back to the Temple House, I met with the children at the Religious School students' assembly and I told them that when they went home they should tell their parents that we need new quarters for the Religious School. Well, some of the kids went back and told their parents that the Rabbi wanted them to bring new quarters, and I received inquiries from some saying, why the quarters, and why did they need to be new? (laughing)

We met for the High Holy Days at various places, including at the Church of the Redeemer, on Eighth Street and Second Avenue South. This was the Universalist church; the church's leader was Dr. Marion . It was the year 1925, our son Roland had been born in April of that year, and on Yom Kippur eve I told the assembled congregation that I had two important announcements to make. One of them was that, as Superintendent of the Religious School, I would not assume any responsibility for the safety of the pupils of the school meeting in the Temple House. The second announcement was that during the

course of the year, Mrs. Minda and I had been blessed with a baby boy, but that if he were old enough to attend Religious School, I would not send him to the school over which I was presiding. Well, the reaction was just what I wanted it to be. A number of the parents said to each other, "If that school isn't good enough for the Rabbi's kid, then it isn't good enough for mine either." And that's just what I wanted to hear. Well, the building committee was revived. It had now as its chairman Ralph Hamburger, an associate of Mr. Isaac Kauffman, who headed the committee. And immediately after the holidays, there was a meeting at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. I. H. Reuben on Humboldt Avenue in the Nineteenth Street Block. And there the committee chairman said that the campaign for a new building, particularly for a Religious School wing, must be started immediately. And so it was.

We had a meeting in the Gold Room of the Radisson Hotel in which funds were raised, and considering the fact that in those days it was the hard dollar that we were dealing with, there were generous contributions. Then we set out to have various architects draw up plans for the building, but before doing so, we took a second look at the site at Twenty-Fourth and Emerson Avenue South, on which the Temple House stood, to see whether, considering the needs of our present membership, and future membership, this would be the site that would serve the purpose. And after making a study of it, it was decided that Twenty-Fourth and Emerson Avenue South would be the site on which the future Temple would be built. It was a wise decision, and even though over the years there has been much shifting of the Temple population, it still remains the most accessible, the most centrally located, and the fact is that we have space in the future on this site if we plan for future expansion. Amongst the plans submitted to the building committee were those of a young architect, Mr. Jack Liebenberg, representing the firm of Liebenberg and Kaplan. His plans were accepted and although funds were still being solicited, we felt we had enough money to go ahead, and the contract was let to the Falcon Construction Company, who may I say, at this time, did a very wonderful job. This structure of ours, from the point of view of the building materials of which it is composed, is a modern building(?) in every sense of that term. The progress made in preparing for the building of the edifice was very good. We did not have the opportunity to sell the old edifice on Tenth Street, but work on the new Temple began in the fall of 1927, and we had the last service, a very touching service, in the sanctuary of the Tenth Street Temple in June of 1927. The building progressed in just a year's time and was ready for dedication in September of 1928.

JS: What did you do in the interim period without a sanctuary?

AM: We still had the old building on Tenth Street, where we could conduct Friday evening services, and as for the Religious School, we used the rooms of the Calhoun Secretarial School on the second floor of their building near Lake and Hennepin. It was from this Secretarial School that the pupils of the Religious School marched down to the new Temple site when we broke ground for the new Temple. And there are some men and women in the congregation today who still remember this event.

JS: I was a pupil.

AM: I think today the youngsters are so accustomed to being hauled around in buses, whether they would submit to a march, which was a considerable number of blocks...

JS: What I remember about it is that we carried the American flag.

AM: Good enough. We still have the original spade with which the ground was broken.

JS: Well, there was a pot, though, too, wasn't there, or a cornerstone that contains some interesting documents?

AM: That's right. At the laying of the cornerstone in the summer when the Temple was being built, we deposited a box which contained various documents and other materials which we felt generations to come might find interesting. It was on Saturday evening and Saturday morning that we had dedicatory services, and then on Sunday evening we had a congregational dinner celebrating the dedication. Rabbi Solomon Schechter, who was then Rabbi of the KM Temple in Chicago, gave the dedicatory sermon on Friday evening. And the Saturday morning service was dedicated to a unique organization, if I recall correctly; Pauline Tan (?), who is now Mrs. Howard Randow, of the North Shore of Chicago, was a member of the Junior congregation and brought greetings on this dedicatory Sabbath morning.

JS: If this was part of the youth group why was the Junior congregation...?

AM: Since you're particularly concerned about the Junior Congregation, may I say that shortly after I came here, I called together some of the youth to survey the field, and we had a banquet at the Leamington Hotel, at which time Mr. Arnold Edelman, who is now an attorney in Cleveland, Ohio, was elected president of the Junior Congregation. I shall speak about the Junior Congregation later, because as I look back over the years, I think that it performed a very constructive role in the lives of our youth. And we did it without too much fuss. We didn't have Youth Directors or anything of that kind, but somehow or other the program was being carried out.

Now let's revert to the Temple, which we dedicated in September 1928. The Religious School now had adequate quarters, but the fact of the matter is that I urged a building not to provide just quarters for the Religious School; it was necessary to over-build to provide for future needs, because I had faith in the growth of the congregation and that sooner or later we would need more room than was being occupied at the time, and the building committee complied with my request. So we had some vacant rooms that were not being occupied at that time. Also, at first the building committee and the congregation thought that it would build only the first wing of the new Temple -- that is, the Religious School - - but the more they considered this matter, they felt that as long as we were building, we might just as well build the entire structure, including the sanctuary.

[End of third tape]

JS: Tape number four in a series of tapes by Rabbi Minda.

AM: As I was saying, the financial arrangements which the Temple had made were good. They were based upon pledges received from our congregants payable over a certain number of years. And we also had arrangements with a local bank so far as the mortgage was concerned. Everything would have gone along splendidly, except for what happened in October of 1929, when the stock market crashed and the Great Depression set in. People today, when they hear of that Depression, cannot quite appreciate what it actually meant. It was a crisis, not only for the country, but for individual families. There were bankruptcies in business, unemployment, disarrangements of all sorts, and a cloud of gloom and despondency set out over this country. We here in the Northwest did not feel the full effects of the Depression until the year 1932 and then it hit us very hard, and it also hit us at Temple Israel. We would come to board meetings and be compelled to consider applications for the reduction of dues, for resignations, and also letters informing us that pledges made in good faith could not now be paid when they were due. Those were indeed critical days, and we had to consider what we might do to deal with this state of affairs. There were some board members, not many, I am glad to say, who said that various churches were making arrangements for cancellations of loans, or a reduction of loans, and suggested that we might do the same thing in view of the fact that some of the banks themselves were making such arrangements in view of the crisis. The majority of the board however, and for which I give the board great credit, said, we made the loans in good faith, even as did the banks, and we would do everything possible, short of breaking our backs, to make good the obligations that we had assumed. But where was the money to come from? Somebody came up with the idea that what we ought to do is to invent a bazaar in which we would go out and solicit various items, giving names of people to the Temple, and sell them, and this way we could help meet the financial obligations we had assumed.

A committee was formed under the sponsorship of the Men's Club, which at that time, I think, was headed by Mr. Max D. Levy. We got together one Sunday morning to consider plans, and the question arose as to what should we call this bazaar. Someone brought out a dictionary and was looking through it and came across the word "Rigadoo", which means an English dance, and he or she suggested that we call this project Rigadoo. And Rigadoo thereafter became a word to be conjured with! The Rigadoo was held for the first time in the year 1933. It was a real project. One of the main aspects of it was selling chances for an automobile as a grand prize on the last night of the Rigadoo. It would start on Saturday evening and continue on Sunday afternoon and would reach its grand climax on Sunday evening. Well, it captured the imagination of the people. We had more individuals offer their services in conducting the Rigadoo, and the men who assumed the chairmanship over the five years that this was conducted had a real job on their hands. They would take off three months before the Rigadoo was held in order to see to it that the many arrangements would be made so as to have the Rigadoo a success. And it was a success. Over the five years the Temple was able to realize the net sum of \$25,000, and

\$25,000 today may not be much, but it meant very much in the days of the Depression. I, of course, entered into the spirit of the project because I realized that here was a supreme effort on the part of our members to meet our obligations, despite the fact that there were aspects of it, like the games of chance, that didn't altogether appeal to me, like the canopy in the front of the Temple, which was decorated with various colored lights. But it was something, I suppose, that had to be done, and we never defaulted one penny on either principal or mortgage interest. And we established a record in financial circles that still holds good even today. A member of Temple Israel can go to a bank today without feeling that his association with Temple Israel would do him any harm in securing a loan! After the Depression, Mr. I. S. Joseph became president of the Temple and he instigated a valiant effort to have the mortgage wiped out and it wasn't many years after that this came about, and it was an occasion for thanksgiving at the annual meeting of the congregation that we had discharged our obligation in accordance with the honor and the dignity of the institution that was our religious institution. I think at this point I should mention one of the men who served as chairman of the Rigadoo and others who performed such valiant services. There was Max Levy, I. S. Joseph, Ralph Hamburger, and ?. They would go down Nicollet Avenue to these various individuals and establishments, because in order to be assured a certain income it was necessary to have people purchase tickets for admission to the Rigadoo and these tickets likewise would give one the opportunity to win the various prizes including the grand prize of an automobile.

After we had overcome some of the financial difficulties, we felt safe, therefore, to build within the Temple various programs that would fulfill the purposes for which the Temple stands for and for which the new edifice was erected. One of the projects which I was concerned about was the installation of a new library in the room which was designated for it and which was equipped by the family of the late Isaac Karlen(?) in his memory by his family. The library over the years has grown and it has seen its accreditation by the Jewish Welfare Board and today it is a library that is used by the young and old, university students and others who seek access to Jewish literary sources. There is another project which I began in a very humble way on our moving into the new Temple edifice and that is the beginning of the Jewish art gallery. We had nothing but white plaster walls and no matter where the walls were, I placed on them some pictures of Jewish interest, and in this way we started a pioneer effort not only in our own congregation, but amongst the congregations of America, of establishing Jewish art galleries and a museum of family and ritual objects. There came a time during the Depression when the son of the founder of the ? was in Jerusalem and he saw a bronze flag depicting a gentleman holding a book in his hand and meditating as to the state of his soul. It was called "Bowed to Shiva-The Penitent One." And when I saw this flag I just couldn't forget the penetrating eyes of this "Penitent One." The Temple, due to the Depression, was not in position to purchase this flag, and so I went to my friend, Myron Cohen, whose family has been associated with the Temple from its very beginning. And I said to him, "Myron, I'd like to have this flag for our gallery." His mother that year was celebrating her hundredth birthday, and Myron, very generously as he always was, made possible the purchase of this flag, which you see today in the first of the galleries we established, namely, the David and Florence Rosenblatt galleries. David Rosenblatt made possible the remodeling of the corridor to

transform it into the format of the galleries, with proper lighting and an exhibit feature, and it was the forerunner of the other galleries that were to follow. And so as one looks upon the flag which Myron Cohen contributed in memory of his mother, we recognize that he too was a part of this pioneering effort. Other galleries were established. When I say "were established," I mean that the art format was provided for, but I established a Temple art fund, and through the art fund these various objects were purchased.

Now, to the other programs. The Religious School received our attention. We tried to provide a curriculum in accordance with requirements established by the Department of Religious Education of the Union of America Hebrew Congregation, which had as its director Dr. Emanuel Kammeron (?). We did something else for the Religious School that I think set a precedent even for the day. Rabbi Harry Margolis of Mt. Zion Temple in St. Paul established a normal school, in which he thought to give instruction to the teachers that would better equip them for their teaching role in the transfer of Jewish knowledge. We would import outstanding authorities in the various fields of Jewish scholarship and ask them to give the fruits of their knowledge and of their research.

The Junior Congregation, which I established when I first came here, consisted largely of University students and also seniors in high school. Today, that doesn't seem possible, but it was. In fact, members of Jewish fraternities on the University of Minnesota campus would vie with each other to be elected president of our Junior congregation. Part of this program was the institution of character, but I must admit that one of the most attractive features was the dances that we would hold on Sunday afternoon. Not only would the people of our own congregation come, but from others reaching out over to the young people in St. Paul! I was always present at these dances, and tried to do my best to make them as sociable as possible. The young people had a good time, and what is more, out of these dance sessions came friendships, friendships which not among a few culminated in marriage. And I still know some of these married couples, who look back gratefully and with a sense of nostalgia to these affairs which vested the happiness of their united ties. The Depression had an affect upon all people of all ages, and when I see today how some of our young people are supplied with money to do almost anything they want, I think of the limited resources that the young folks in those days had. Those were bleak times, and only those who lived through it can appreciate what it meant.

Now I want to try and bind the Temple to the Jewish community, because while I gave the major portion of my time and energy to the Temple and its programs, I felt that the Temple was part of the Jewish community, and as Rabbi of the Temple I had to become involved in its welfare and in its institutions. And so this morning I want to talk about the Minneapolis Federation for Jewish Service. One of the problems confronting the community was the multiplicity of various drives, campaigns and collections for various institutions and causes on the local level, and on the domestic scene as well as abroad. Some institutions were joined, of course, with the Community Chest, as for instance the Emanuel Cohen Center.

The Talmud Torah raised its funds independently largely through the efforts of Dr. George Gordon, who literally would go around in various places and peddle "scholarships" which were required for the maintenance of the Talmud Torah in addition to the tuition fees which it received. Then there came to the city representatives of national institutions, for instance the Denver Hospital (?), and what was then known as the Children's Orphan Asylum. And there were the schlichim, who came from Israel to solicit funds for the various new settlements and their orphanages. There was hardly a week in which there was not some kind of solicitation. There was no considered effort to challenge how much money these causes or institutions collected, because it depended upon the ability of the solicitor as well as the one contacted in the community who would go around with him to collect for the various funds. And of course you had the various drives for the foreign relief, the United Jewish Appeal, and the various drives in behalf of what was then known as Palestine, and the Jewish National Fund. So it was a very unorganized effort on the part of the community to do its share in the matter of giving financial support to these various causes and institutions. And there was a waste of manpower. They were called upon to help in these various efforts and some of the solicitors represented institutions that really were not doing the job they were supposed to do. The matter of integrating the community so that there would be, so far as possible, one effort to collect for these funds went to the President of the B'nai B'rith, Mr. David Jeffrey.

When I came to the community it was a matter of concern for the Associated Jewish Charities, and my interest was channeled and I was appointed chairman of the Federation committee to see what could be done. That was around 1928, because the Federation itself was organized in 1929, and it took at least a year's effort for the community to get prepared for the formal organization. The committee studied the matter very carefully and came up with a plan, namely, that it would take care of 19 domestic institutions such as the Denver Hospital, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the American Jewish Committee(?) and the American Jewish Congress. It would take care of local social institutions such as the Talmud Torah, The Home for the Wayfarers, the (?). It would assume responsibility for collecting funds for the Talmud Torah, and it would campaign for funds and assume responsibility for contributions for the United Jewish Appeal, United Palestine Appeal. But it was one thing to draw up a plan for a Federation, and it was another matter to sell the idea to the community. I went around to the various organizations peddling the idea. I must say, even Dr. Jardine(?) was a little skeptical as to the practicality of having such a federation. He said -- and I can well understand this -- that if he gave up his project of selling scholarships and the Federation would not get the support that is merited, that the Talmud Torah would find itself very much handicapped in its finances. In 1929 we organized and in the following year we carried on a campaign and then became incorporated. Our first attempt was a very successful one, particularly since the idea was a new one. (?) was most helpful in drawing up the constitution for the Federation. The constitution, in addition to the other purposes, also provided for a council which would scrutinize various projects initiated in the community which called for community support. Well, you know what happened. We here in the Midwest felt the effects of the Depression last, and we were the last to recover, and the bottom fell out of the Federation

campaign, as you will note when I tell you that it was in 1932, as I remember, that we raised in the entire community for all the beneficiaries of the Federation, \$28,000. That was a low compared with the year 1948 when I was chairman of the campaign and we reached a new high, \$1,250,000. The achievement of this goal was maintained throughout the years and was broken only last year, when the Federation, as the result of the Six Day War in Israel, went beyond the \$1,250,000 and achieved its goal of something over \$2,000,000. I think that in addition to bringing an efficiency in the collection and distribution of funds, with very few duplications, the Federation did something more. It brought a sense of unity in the Jewish community, in that all agencies, and synagogues, and the educational institutions were all represented on the board and deliberated each other, as Jews and not as members of the various causes that made applications, and in accordance with their best abilities tried to distribute fairly, and deftly, the funds that they had collected. In addition to all this there was a sense of community. When an institution wanted to build, it came before the Federation to receive its sanction, and this also has been helpful through all these years. Sanctions in this year, 1968, included when the Talmud Torah was seeking to build a new structure to replace the old one. It came to the Federation, and a special committee was set up to examine the project, and it came up with a report commending the cause of the Talmud Torah to the general community. When the Emanuel Cohen Center became the Jewish Community Center, it set up plans to build a new structure to carry on its activities, came to the Federation, and received its approval. Altogether, the Federation has been an institution that has served the community well. It has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for various causes, local, national and foreign, and what is more, it has brought a sense of unity and discipline to communal life.

Now I want to turn from the Jewish community to the community at large. I have always felt that the Jew on the American scene had a dual responsibility, to become involved in the life of the Jewish Community and at the same time to take his rightful place in the affairs of the community at large. I had done this when I was the Rabbi in South Bend for three years and I had the same feeling when I came to Minneapolis. The climate in Minneapolis, however, was quite different. It startled me because I found that the atmosphere, on the surface, was very much anti-Semitic, which expressed itself in many ways. First of all, in the civic life in the community, Jews were not elected to membership in the various organizations such as Rotary and Kiwanis. I was very much surprised that Rotary here did not have a Rabbi, but the fact is that at that time they had no clergyman at all... and that organization such as the Athletic Club did not accept Jewish membership... and the AAA, of all organizations, did not accept Jewish members, perhaps because in addition to granting the various privileges in connection with the automobile, it has a social club.

In political life, the Jew was practically a non-existent figure. In the early days, Mr. Simon Meyer, a member of our congregation, was in the Minnesota legislature. Later on we had an alderman in the City Council, but we had no judges on the bench who had been elected to the judiciary. Mr. Robert Connor,(?) a very outstanding lawyer, had been appointed by Governor Theodore Christianson to fill a vacancy on the Hennepin County

District Court bench. He tried to run for a regular place on the bench in the election but he decided that there was too much anti-Semitism to make the race. But the worst part of the whole anti-Semitic situation was that the big corporations and industry barred Jews from employment; no matter how qualified they may have been, the very fact that he was a Jew shut the doors in his face.

JS: Plus the housing...

AM: Yes. I'm glad you mentioned that, June. There was, of course, a section of the city where there would be restrictions against selling property to a Jew. Even domestic help, on applying for a job in Jewish homes, might raise the question, "Are you Jewish?" All this gave Minneapolis a bad reputation, so much so, that one journalist writing an article on Minneapolis called the city, "The Capital of Anti-Semitism." Well, that title wasn't exactly accurate... there was anti-Semitism in the city but it was not the capital in the sense that it was spreading the propaganda to other sections of the country. I felt very deeply about this, but it did not deter me from my philosophy of life and from the philosophy of Judaism. I was a man of good will, and felt that I would have to approach the community and individuals thereof in that spirit, and also be joined with other men of good will in proving the victimization of our people. And I found such men. The National Conference of Christians and Jews had been organized and there were some of us who felt that we should have a local branch. There was such men as Dr. Charles Dean, director of St. Mark's Church, and Sr. John Duncan of the Ascension Catholic Church, and there were laymen, too, who felt that the atmosphere had to be changed.

At this point, I want to interrupt by stating why the anti-Semitic situation arose here in Minneapolis. It was, first of all, a part of a negativism which the early settlers and pioneers brought with them from the New England section of the country. They came in and occupied the ground floor, economically and socially. Even when the Scandinavians came to this country, they too encountered this negativism. In addition to this, the Jews who came in the late '60s and '70s and then those who came from Eastern Europe in the '80s and '90s were latecomers. They were good people, but humble people concerned with humble trades and businesses, and this did not help either. So that accounts, too, for the fact that unlike cities like Cincinnati, or even St. Paul, where the Jews occupied at first a humble position in the economy, but they became rooted in the soil of their community and it needed them, not only in their personal status, but in their business, so in those towns, the Jews who came as immigrants and started with nothing came to establish department stores... but it did not happen this way in Minneapolis.

In Minneapolis, the Round Table of Christians and Jews had been started as the result of the various activities of the Ku Klux Klan, the Silver Shirts and other groups of that kind, which spread through the country. The Silver Shirts here in Minneapolis were creating a bad atmosphere, particularly for many young people who were born and reared here, and wanted to stay on but found the doors barred. The local Round table of Christians and Jews affiliated with the National Conference of Christians and Jews when it was

organized in 1938. Carl(?) , who had been a minister in a small town, Neenah, Wisconsin became the executive secretary.

[End of fourth tape]

JS: Tape number five in the series of tapes by Rabbi Minda.

I must comment on your modesty, Rabbi. The organization of the Round Table of Christians and Jews was not accomplished without your diligent work and undying effort to achieve its meaningful end. You and you alone laid the ground work for the better understanding between Christians and Jews here today. You were a pioneer in this field. May I speak for every member of the Jewish community in offering our gratitude for your contribution to our lives. Many Minneapolis organizations, too, have honored you often with testimonial dinners for your many interests in the civic life of this Minneapolis community.

AM: Efforts call for the experience of hardships and mine was no exception in this regard. And what I want to say is that there were so many individuals of good will who cooperated in so many ways, and laid the foundation for the kind of community that we have today. Amongst the other organizations that solicited my support and cooperation was the Minneapolis Urban League which was founded, if I remember correctly, in the early thirties, and was one of the first attempts in the community to help in the solution of the race problems, particularly in the sphere of economics. Over the years, the Urban League has done a most constructive job and did its work in the spirit of good will and conciliation and was not characterized by some of the things that are happening today, on the part of those who are called militants. I also cooperated with the Minneapolis Council of Churches, which was an overall organization consisting of the various Protestant churches. And whenever I found it possible I accepted invitations from various church and religious groups to speak before them at their church and various meetings. I found a very sincere response on the part of those people to learn more about the Jews and the Jewish faith. One of the projects of the Round Table of Christians and Jews was for a team consisting of a Rabbi, a priest, and a minister to speak expressing the idea that despite our justified differences there were common ties of fellowship and brotherhood that united us in our common places as members of these human families.

JS: Where did you speak?

AM: We'd speak before civic groups, service clubs, women's organizations and sometimes before labor groups. Any type of organization that was involved in the matter of human fellowship called for our cooperation. And we had some very interesting sessions as we'd go around to greet them, not on the golf links, but in places as interesting and even more challenging. The work of the Round Table called for much of my efforts, and I want to say of my colleagues in the Twin Cities (unclear) I also want to refer to the efforts of the Minneapolis Council of Churches in this field of interfaith understanding and as a result, I spoke in many pulpits and before the forums of various religious

organizations. One of the outstanding programs in this regard was the Forum of States held in the Minneapolis Auditorium in 1928. The speakers on the program were Dr. Roy Smith -- he was the pastor of a Methodist Church and spoke on "Why I am a Protestant," and Mr. Quinn of Chicago, who was the Corporation Counsel there, spoke on "Why I am a Catholic." Mr. Clarence Darrow, the noted attorney, spoke on "Why I am an Agnostic" and I spoke on "Why I am a Jew."

JS: Now this was in 1928, before the Round Table?

AM: Yes, that's right. We had a big crowd and the forum was praised and aroused considerable interest. Another effort of mine in the community was my interest in schools, and I was a member of various citizens committees for education, whose path was amongst others to secure candidates for the school board who were the best and most advanced backers of education in our city. At one election I was chairman of the citizens committee for education. And so it was that we worked year in and year out and I think as a result of our efforts and due to a change in climate of the country at large, our community did change, and when one looks about he is not only surprised but very thankful for the change that has come about. Jews are admitted into organizations that heretofore barred them from entering. Large industrial and commercial organizations accept Jews of ability in their employment. And Jews have won places in the political life of the community. We have in the year 1968 a Jew as mayor. This community's atmosphere has become benevolent and one that is based on ideals of fellowship. We still have much ground to cover in regards to the inter-racial situation, but in this field, too, we made progress and I'm optimistic as far as the community is concerned.

There is one other field in which I think we've made progress and that is intra-faith understanding. I always felt that the Jews, despite their background and religious faith, social standing, the country from which they came, ought to have a sense of common identity and unity. One of the first things I did when I came to Minneapolis in 1922 was to arrange for a joint Thanksgiving service with Adath Jeshurun. One year I arranged for joint services during the ten Days of Awe between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. I've had here in my own Temple Men's Club meetings which members of the other congregations joined in. And for a number of years the Hadassah women in our congregation had joint Sabbath eve services on the Sabbath Eve nearest the New Year, and so I do feel that while there is still some divisiveness and lack of understanding between Jews in various groups and institutions, yet there is a common appreciation of one another here in Minneapolis to a degree that does not prevail in other cities' Jewish communities.

I want to mention another organization which was established about twenty years ago, and this is the Minnesota Rabbinic Association, consisting of Rabbis of the three different groups-- Orthodox, Conservative and Reform. It started this way. Dr. B.O. Regan (?), who was then associated with the University of Minnesota Medical School, asked me to convene the Rabbis to give him their opinion in the matter of a problem with which they were confronted in the University Hospital and Medical School. I did so, and the meeting

of the Rabbis was very helpful to Dr. Regan. After that meeting was held, I felt that it would be very helpful if instead of meeting intermittently from time to time as problems arose that had to do with medicine and Judaism, we would have an organization of a permanent character that would consider matters that were common to all of us, regardless of denomination of Jews. And so I called another meeting of the Rabbis and the organization was formed, and I became its first president. Throughout these years we have built a fine fellowship and the matters we have considered have been important, not only for us, as Rabbis, but for the community at large. One of the matters so considered was that of conducting weddings only in the synagogues and in the homes instead of at hotels under surroundings and in an environment not conducive to the sanctity of the marriage ceremony. We set a time when this rule would go into effect. It was a matter that the Rabbis took on their own initiative, not even in consultation with their respective boards. We notified the congregation during the High Holy Days that we would not officiate at any weddings outside the synagogue and the home, and this has had splendid results. Never do we hear any bridal couple asking us to make an exception. Minneapolis is one of the few cities in the country where such a rule has been in effect. The Rabbis have also made pronouncements on other subjects... the procedure at funeral services, the matter of interfaith dating, the observance of the Sabbath. Altogether it has been an organization which has enabled men of different denominational backgrounds to work together for a common cause without compromising their respective principles.

Now I want to turn for a moment to another page on my life which I think is very important, and that is my travels. In 1931 I went to Europe and then to Palestine with a seminar from the American University in Washington, D.C. This is a Methodist institution, and I was the only Rabbi in the group, which consisted largely of Methodist ministers and their wives. It was a great experience for me. In Europe we visited various countries such as France and Italy and Greece and Turkey. We went through the Mediterranean countries, stopping in Rhodes and Cypress and Antioch, and then spent two weeks in what was then known as Palestine. We stayed at the American Oriental Institute(?) in Jerusalem. We had study sessions and made various trips. Palestine then, of course, was not the Israel of today, but it showed what was ahead for this country where the pioneers were redeeming the soil and building their own lives through literally blood, sweat and tears. The Arab problem was a problem even then; we saw the evidences of the riots that had taken place throughout the country in Jerusalem, in Hebron and in other places. It was my first visit to the Holy Land and I was deeply inspired to be in the country and on the soil that had made history for the Jews in ancient times and from which such great contributions came to the civilization of the entire world. In 1934 I went to London for the convention of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. This is an organization established for the purpose of promoting liberal or progressive Judaism throughout the countries of the world. Hitler was then on his way to power in Germany and I saw some of the people from Germany who had come to London for this meeting. They were cautious in what they had to say, but I doubt very much that despite their fears, they actually realized what was in store for German Jews. In 1938, I joined up with the European seminar conducted by Sherwood Eddy, whose early years were spent with the YMCA and who at that time lead a seminar to Europe every summer, visiting various

countries and meeting with personalities in the top echelon who would give us an insight into what was happening. And there was plenty happening. We realized that Europe was sitting on a volcano, but we did not quite realize that in a year's time war would erupt in Europe.

JS: Where did you go on that trip?

AM: We went first to England, where we spent ten days visiting the important personalities. We had sessions with Lord Halifax --Halifax was the "State Department" of Great Britain, with the Archbishop of Canterbury, and with Mr. Attlee of the Labor Party. We met with Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, who was in exile in London, and we had a special off the record conference with Nehru. He gave us deep insight into the European scene. We went to Berlin where Hitler was now in power, and we saw the beginning of the tragedy that was to take place later on. When we were in Berlin we saw the shops that had been ransacked and some of them destroyed. We talked to Jewish leaders and the very atmosphere filled us with a sense of dread, fear and foreboding. We were in Denmark, Sweden, Finland and in Russia. The story in Russia would be a chapter to relate all by itself! We were there in 1938, shortly after the purges, and all one had to do was to converse with Jews or Russians to discover the fear and the repression which they were experiencing. From Russia we went to Warsaw, and this, too, could take a chapter to relate one's reaction. I do not do so, because so much has already been written on the subject and I would only be repeating what other travelers and students have observed. From Warsaw we went to Vienna. We were there four months after Hitler had marched in, and compared to Vienna, Berlin seemed almost a paradise, if I may use such a term at all, but the contrast was truly so great. We came into the city and from the signs that we saw, antisemitic in character, we felt that the air was charged with poison. It is remarkable how a person coming from a free country where he knows no fear, could in such a brief period of time be overwhelmed with a sense of fear as well as death. And that's what happened to us in Vienna. There was another Rabbi on the European Seminar Tour, Rabbi Milton Grafton(?) of Birmingham, Alabama, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Brin, who were not with us in Vienna. But our experience of fear was like those of the other members of the party, who were men and women who occupied public positions where they could influence public opinion. It was not difficult for us to enter Vienna, but what we feared was whether we would be able to get out of Vienna! We left on a Saturday night and the railroad station was crowded with people who were seeing off their relatives who were fleeing to other countries. It seemed like, from the weeping and sobbing we heard, that we were attending a mass funeral! And another scene that I shall never forget was the lines of Jews standing outside the American Consulate waiting, hoping, that they might get visas that would enable them to leave the country.

JS: How did you know they were Jews?

AM: One could easily see that they were Jews. The Jews were, outside of I suppose the liberals, the only ones who were the real victims of Hitler's oppression. The others, of course, suffered, too, but it was the Jews against whom Hitler was directing everything

that he had in his power to see to it that Vienna would be free of them and then later, of course, taking the steps to get them out of the country by sending them to the concentration camps.

JS: But they didn't wear any arm bands at that time?

AM: Oh yes, the arm bands were there. The mercantile establishments had signs on them and they'd give the date when it was established so that people would know that it wasn't a Jewish store. Jewish stores had been taken over by Hitler's agents and they were conducting the business. Sufficient to say that it was an emotional experience that I truly hope that neither I nor anyone else will ever have to experience again. When I came back to America I was emotionally exhausted and I tried to tell the stories as well as I could, but of course not even knowing then what was to happen later on at the crematoria at the various concentration camps. A year later I was attending a meeting of the National Conference of Christians and Jews at Williams College in Massachusetts and in one of the sessions we were talking about war and peace and there was a strong group who were making their pronouncements, when all of a sudden the session was interrupted by someone coming in and announcing that Hitler had now invaded Poland. It seemed so ironic in the light of our session as to what was the reality in the world situation, with Hitler becoming a figure that was to shake the very foundation of our civilization. We were now confronted with the reality of a world that had not only changed in Europe, but also that changed America, particularly for American Jews. When I had come back from Europe in 1938 I tried to convey something of my impression of what was happening and what was liable to happen. But no prophesy could ever approximate the realities at the beginning of World War II and the years that followed.

American Jewry organized itself to bring relief to the victims of Hitler and to rescue so far as possible the Jews who were thinking to escape from the fiery furnace in which they ultimately found themselves. We in America thought that we were doing a good job, and it was a good job, but as we look back now, retrospectively, we realize what we did not then, that a greater catastrophe than we ever expected was taking place under our own eyes. The United States could have done much more to make possible the entry of the immigrants, but as a recent volume revealed -- it's called, I think, "Six Million Perished" - our government, even though it knew of the plans of Hitler to make Germany and the rest of Europe "Judenfrei," did not take adequate steps at all. And thus it was that Jews piled into boats, unseaworthy in many cases, and began sailing over the waters, knocking for entrance in the various countries of Europe, and they too failed them. They refused them entry. And they had a good example. If the United States, great and rich and powerful, would not permit them to enter, then why should they? And then of course the situation in Palestine was worsening. There was the infamous White Paper which limited the number of Jews to enter what was then Palestine. I looked upon this tragic scene with a great sense of concern. I had not been what you might call a Jewish nationalist. I was of course concerned with the development of Palestine and wanted to see to it that it developed as the haven of rescue and security for oppressed Jews and as a Jewish Cultural Center in the land where the prophets preached and the Rabbis taught. I was

more concerned with this aspect that I was with the matters of Jewish statehood, but when I saw what was happening... where the nations of the world were regarding Jews as expendable and they were meeting in many cases in graves in the deep waters of the sea, then my point of view radically changed, and I said to myself, if this is the situation, then I want to join with those who are active in seeing to it that a Jewish State is established. And I'm so thankful that I realized at that time that the realities of the world called for a Jewish State where Jews could come by right and not by suffering.

And of course, we all know what has happened since then, with the miracle of the resurrection of the Jewish State. You know, of course, of the trials and the difficulties which the modern State of Israel has experienced. But it has demonstrated to the world what the Jew can do. The State would become something to which the Jews of the world could not only look to with pride but also with a sense of hope. So finally, the war years ended. We had our casualties here in our own congregation. The first casualty in the city of Minneapolis was a splendid young chap by the name of Ira Weil Jeffery who fell in the attack by the Japanese at Pearl Harbor. We had another, one of the sons of an old time family by the name of Harvey Robitshek. The participation of our men of the Temple in World War II is recorded on a beautiful bronze plaque that is suspended on the wall as you enter the Community House. I mention these two young men because they happened to be sons of Temple old-timers, but you will find others there who gave their lives on the altar of freedom and of country. But perhaps I should mention something of my addresses given not only at the Temple but before other organizations of the city before the outbreak of World War II, on my return from Europe in 1938.

I came back from Europe with a feeling of emotional exhaustion and yet, when I spoke before various groups, I spoke with a sense of pain and at the same time restraint. I felt to do it this way would be more effective than if I was to give full vent to the emotions that stirred my heart and my soul. I tried to ease the particularity to my non-Jewish audiences, saying that what was taking place was not merely an attack on the Jews, but that the Jew was a symbol of our civilization based on the Judeo-Christian ethic, and Hitler was using the Jews as a special target, and that hiding behind this attack was a plan for the attack on everything that has been in our Western civilization for 2,000 years. The Rabbis of old, in commenting upon the Hebrew word, Sina, which means hatred, said don't read the word Sina, but read it Sinai, and when the nations oppressed the Jews through hatred, they were not only expressing the hatred of the Jews, but they were expressing their hatred for the moral laws which came out of Sinai. And similarly, the people I think, got some inkling of what was happening but did not quite realize it until America entered the war, and some of them did not realize it until after the war was won and the Allied troops entered Germany and had the opportunity of seeing the various crematoria in which thousands of men, women and children were incinerated as if they were worn material to be disposed of, and without consideration for that which they represented as human beings. And so, at this time when the world is in such critical condition and when the nations of the world have stockpiled atomic and hydrogen bombs, I cannot help but pray that the world will use these inventions of the genius of man to bring about a heaven on earth, rather than to have our civilization go down the drain to the fires of hell.

In 1963 I became Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Israel after serving four decades in its pulpit. And that fall, Frances and I went to Europe, where I had the privilege of speaking before various liberal Jewish congregations associated with the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

JS: Did you re-visit any of the countries you did before?

AM: Yes, I did. And I was happy to see that so much of the war's ravages had now been re-built with edifices for residences as well as for business purposes. We spoke at the liberal congregation in London and we were gratified to see the spirit in which the services are conducted there. In many respects they resemble our services, but in others they are just a little more conservative than we are here. From London we went to Amsterdam and there we had the privilege of speaking in the synagogue of Dr. Jacob Sodendorf, whom we had here to speak at the Temple several years before. Rabbi Sodendorf is a very remarkable and able person and we recall particularly the hospitality he offered us in the Sukkah on the outside adjoining the Temple after the regular service, which I preached. He also was our guide through the Reich Museum and never have we had such a presentation and elucidation touch these ears, and when I remarked how effectively he is doing his job, he said he should be able to do that because he had come to this museum ever since he had been a little child, when he had been taken there by his mother, who interpreted for him the various paintings, particularly those of Rembrandt. From Amsterdam we went to Paris and we had the opportunity there of speaking at the "Liberal" synagogue. I spoke in English and we had a gentleman, the president of the congregation, who was also an outstanding figure in the World Union for Progressive Judaism, translate my English into his very fine French. I kept saying to myself, I hope my English is as good as his French, but evidently from the reaction of the congregation, they caught what I was saying and the message I'd come to deliver.

Then, the following spring, Frances and I fulfilled a desire that we had cherished for a long time, and that was to make a trip to what is now known as Israel. In 1931, I was impressed by the development that was taking place in then Palestine, but I never anticipated seeing the growth, the development and the progress that had taken place in the intervening years, particularly since it had become a state. Here was truly a modern miracle in which both God and man served as partners in the redemption of the land, the soil and the people. I recall one Saturday night at Haifa that a boat of immigrants had landed in the harbor from Romania, so we received permission to visit the boat before the passengers disembarked and we had the opportunity to talk to them. I asked one of the Romanian Jews how long he'd been waiting to come to Israel, and he gave a very significant answer. He said, "I've been waiting for 2,000 years!"

[End of fifth tape]

JS: We now start tape number six in the recording done by Rabbi Minda.

AM: Thank you June. I wanted to continue with our trip to Israel and also our visit to Haifa and the interrogating of the immigrant from Romania. We had been privileged to visit the boat carrying immigrants from Romania. It was now in the harbor at Haifa. It was a remarkable scene to see how systematically and humanely the Joint Distribution Committee, which made possible the trip, dealt with its passengers. Each family had already been assigned as to where it was to go in Israel, based upon the particular occupation and aptitude of the individual immigrant and perhaps also of his family. The children as a token of welcome were given bags of confections. They were not to be greeted by their relatives until they had landed in their particular settlement in Israel. And if one wanted to see how much good was being done with the money that Jews had given to the Joint Distribution Committee, that one visit to the boat that Saturday night was most revealing, and we can be very grateful, indeed, we in America, for having had the privilege to come to the help and the aid of our less fortunate brethren. They were welcomed with outstretched arms and they felt that they had come to people who now understood them and whom they were to join in rebuilding and redeeming the land.

Another point of interest, of course, was the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. I had no idea of the identity of the building, the type of instruction that was being given there and the atmosphere that indicated that here was a seat of learning and education that in a comparatively few years had been erected and which was now attracting scholars from all over the world. I had one experience there which in a sense was gratifying. The secretary to the then president of the university, Dr. Eiloff (?), served as our very able guide. She took us through the library, and she took us to the card index room which had the listing of the books that had come from all parts of the world. And Frances said to me, "Perhaps they might have some of the things that you have written." I said, "I don't think they would bother about that." "Well," she said, "let's try." So we went to the card index drawer marked "M" and there, lo and behold, the name Minda appeared! It was exciting. They must have had four or five different listings of various things that I had done. Where in the world they got hold of them, I don't know, but anyway I couldn't help but be pleased, and Frances was particularly thrilled, since she had made the original suggestion! I had another interesting experience there; I attended the installation of the chief Rabbi, Rabbi Ruziman (?), at the headquarters there in Jerusalem of the Orthodox, which they feel is the authoritative Rabbinat. I had a most difficult time to get in even though I had a card of admission, but I finally worked my way in so that I had a seat in the front row of that auditorium. I don't know whether they took any movies or not but I am afraid that one of my real Orthodox colleagues there in Jerusalem would feel somewhat dismayed if they saw me and knew who I was, that a foreign Rabbi was there in the front row of this solemn installation service.

JS: What about the Dead Sea Scrolls?

AM: The special building for the Dead Sea Scrolls had not been built; that's a remarkable building, I understand, that is in the shape of the pottery in which the scrolls were originally found. But we saw them in a sub-basement and it was truly a thrilling sight, to see those scrolls which had been buried in a cave for so many years, now come to light.

We were able to make out the inscriptions on these scrolls and to see the remarkable degree of their preservation.

JS: Could you read...

AM: I could read some of it, not all of it. Some of the words, the Hebrew letters are not exactly the same letters that we have here. We have a glass case out here in the corridor in which we have the inscriptions from one of the scrolls. So we came away from Israel after seeing the cultural centers, educational institutions like the Hebrew University, the Weisman Institute, the Technion, with the feeling that here was a great little country that had so much potential in the way of contributing not only to the life of its own people, but to the peoples of the world. And it pained our hearts indeed to be told that the budget had to give way to military defense that ran into hundreds of millions of dollars. If Israel could have peace, that money could be used for its development and to bring to the entire community a degree of stability and civilization, which had not been there during almost its entire history. So we came back with a message of hope for the future, in contrast with the feeling that was mine when I came back from Europe in 1938. I hope that it will not be too long when Frances and I may be able to visit Israel again. We have a particular object of interest because people have come back and they have said that in the forest representing the state of Minnesota, in the John F. Kennedy Park outside of Jerusalem, they have seen a special plaque inscribed with the names of Frances and myself due to the giving of the people to the Jewish National Fund here in Minneapolis.

JS: Could you document what year that was?

AM: That was, I think, three or four years ago. Some people have taken pictures of it and have shown it to us, which has only whetted our appetites to go there and see it for ourselves. And of course the other reason is, because things happen so fast in Jerusalem, we are anxious to see the further development and progress that has been made since last time we were there.

June, you were kind enough to present me with an outline of what we have already taped and suggestions as to future subjects. Amongst these suggestions you have outside speaking engagements, conferences, honors, etc. When I first read this suggestion, I thought of a verse in the first chapter of the biblical Book of Job: "The Lord said unto Satan, whenst comest thou," and then Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro in the earth and from walking up and down in it." Well, I've done a lot of walking, but I've not only gone to and fro in the earth, but I have flown hither and yonder in the skies, and as I review my various travels I begin to realize that the amount has been considerable. I have gone to the annual conferences of the Central Conference of American Rabbis which have been held in different parts of the country. This is the organization of Reform Rabbis which consists now of over 900 members and for the most part represents the alumni of the Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion. I think of the 50 conferences which have been held during the 50 years since my ordination, I have missed only two. These have been wonderfully stimulating meetings

from the point of view of the papers presented and the business transacted, but also from the point of renewed friendship with colleagues which goes back many, many years. I've had the privilege of participating in these meetings, and when I use the term "privilege" I do so advisedly. I have attended the bi-annual meeting of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which likewise have been held in different parts of the country. The UAHC, as this Union is commonly called by its initials, is, so to speak, the layman's organization. Rabbis belong and attend these meetings, but for the most part these have been attended by laymen representing the various congregations which belong to the Union. And so these have been constants in my group of travels. However, I have attended many other meetings sponsored by different organizations. Years back, as chairman of the Committee on Church and State of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, I convened two meetings held under the Synagogue Council of America, which is the overall organization to which are affiliated the Reform and Conservative congregations. The subject of this meeting was religious education in the public schools.

JS: Now, how long ago would you say that was?

AM: I would say that was 25 years ago. It was the first time the Synagogue Council of America and its constituent organizations considered this subject, which has become so relevant and important in subsequent years. In fact, as a result of this meeting, I was invited to give the first paper on this subject before the meeting of the National Community Relations Activity Council which was held in New York City, which since then has always occupied an important place on the agenda of its various conventions. Then, too, I attended meetings sponsored by the Joint Distribution Committee and a very important conference about six years ago, small in number, which was sponsored by the American Jewish Committee. Dr. Abraham Joshua Heschel, of the Jewish Theological Seminary and a noted author, called me as President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis to attend a meeting in New York City at which Cardinal B (?) was to be present and in which he was to present some of the preliminary drafts to be submitted to the Vatican Council, called by Pope John XXIII, dealing with the Council statement on the Jews and particularly in reference to the so-called Jewish responsibility for the crucifixion of Jesus.

JS: Well, now, that would be before the last Ecumenical Council, right? Most probably five or six years ago?

AM: Yes, that's right. There is a picture in our gallery of modern Jewish personalities of Cardinal B (?) and several others as well as my own picture. It was a very important meeting dealing with an extremely delicate subject. I was very much impressed by Cardinal B (?), who, by the way, attended a university in Berlin at the same time as Dr. Heschel did and is also a noted Hebrew scholar.

Now then, let us get near home so far as attending conferences and my other speaking engagements. I naturally can't cover them all over a span of 50 years, so let us proceed on those meetings and speaking engagements that I participated in near home. Under the

auspices of the Jewish Chatauqua Society, I filled a number of engagements at colleges and universities in the territory and in some instances far away from us....

JS: Probably you should explain this Chatauqua Society?

AM: Yes, the Jewish Chatauqua Society is an organization that goes back many years. It was founded by a Rabbi Henry Berkowitz of Philadelphia. Dr. Berkowitz was a member of the first graduating class of the Union College. When he died it was taken over by the National Federation of Temple Brotherhood. Its purpose is to bring information regarding Jews and Judaism to various colleges and universities in an academic manner. It will sponsor lectures by Rabbis on the various campuses; it will present volumes on Jewish subjects to the library; it will send Rabbis into camps and it will also sponsor lectureships in many institutions, for which in many instances academic credit is given. For instance, I lectured for five years, one semester each year, on the campus of Hamline University in St. Paul. I gave the course on Jewish History. And then, too, as I say, I lectured at the various State Teachers Colleges and about six years ago, the Chatauqua Society sent me to Puerto Rico to give a course of lectures on Jewish subjects at the university there. It was a very interesting experience. My lectures had to have an interpreter who would interpret what I said in English in his Spanish. It was the first time I've ever lectured under those conditions. And I had some strange experiences. When I would tell a joke, I had to wait for the interpreter to give it in Spanish, so I didn't get a reaction to my narrating the joke until perhaps a couple minutes later, when the students responded in a way in which I hoped they would, by laughing at what I thought represented my sense of humor. For a number of years, particularly when Dr. Donald Cowling was president of Carleton College, I would make regular appearances there at the Chapel, and also during Religious Emphasis week. It was a very inspiring experience and I always found a hospitable welcome not only on the part of Dr. Cowling, but also of the students.

Now, as to my speaking experiences here in the cities. I of course spoke to various church groups and civic groups, but there was one experience that I had that impressed itself on my memory. In 1927 there was a Forum of Faith sponsored at the Municipal Auditorium....

JS: I think we have documented this; is this the one with Clarence Darrow?

AM: Yes. Then we don't need to go into that any further, but I do want to speak about my speaking experiences as president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis during the years 1961-63. I was invited to speak at the installation of Rabbis in the pulpits at dedications of temples and at various conferences sponsored by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

JS: Were those the years you were president of the Conference?

AM: Yes. During the years 1961-'63 there was a conference that I regarded as very important, held in New York which dealt with the problem or the challenge of the aged.

They had speakers representing the sociological point of view, the psychiatric point of view, and I was asked to speak on the treatment of the aged from the religious point of view. I found my visits to the various congregations in different parts of the country very stimulating. I came away from them with a feeling of optimism, with the conviction that the American Jews would not disappear from the American scene. I found in so many communities the hard core of laymen and lay women who were dedicated Jews, who were rooted in the American soil and yet maintained their loyalty to their ancient faith. They not only gave of their material substance to the Temple in many instances in which I was helping to dedicate, but they were giving of themselves. I realize that under some of the conditions that prevail today in American life and society, we will no doubt lose a number of Jews, particularly those Jews who remain so because of anti-Semitism; with anti-Semitism disappearing, they are liable to disappear. The Jews that I saw represented this fine type of American Jew who occupied positions of leadership not only in their respective temples, but in the community at large, and who held the high respect and esteem of their fellow men. It was another instance of fulfilling what the prophets of old called the saving remnants. And our viability through the ages has never depended upon numbers, upon promises, but through the dedication of the people who from the past drew inspiration to carry on in the present and to live for the future. This coming April will mark the 50th anniversary of my ordination at Hebrew Union College.

JS: Is there going to be a special service?

AM: I'm hoping that it might be marked in some way. As I have indicated, my first three years after ordination were spent at Temple Beth El in South Bend, Indiana, which was a small congregation, but nevertheless a program of diversified activities. As I look back over the 47 subsequent years at Temple Israel in Minneapolis, I cannot help realizing the many diversifications and additions that have accrued to the program of rabbinical service. In the first place, I think that since that time, the Rabbis have been more and more concerned with the matter of religious education, not only on the primary and secondary levels, but also upon the adult level. It has come about slowly, but nevertheless even at snail's pace, there has been progress. So as you examine the bulletins of various congregations, you really discover fine offerings of programs of education for the adults. And the Rabbi has come to feel the necessity of this because he has found that so many adults have gone through life only with history that has taken them out of the Garden of Eden. And in many instances they feel no sympathy for the religious point of view because they've never had the religious point of view presented to them on the adult level. And this has been the belief in our own congregation. From the very beginning of my Rabbinate here I fought more and more in different ways to make adult education essential.

JS: Are you thinking of adult education as history of the Jews and its interpretations, or are you thinking of it as reforms and social implications?

AM: Well, social reforms and implications are part of Jewish education because you cannot study the ancient Hebrew process without coming to grips with the social

implications of the teachings for those days and their relevance for the present. Is that what you had in mind, June?

JS: Well, I was thinking, that many people who belong to the Reform group today -- whose background wasn't necessarily Reform-- and I was wondering whether you felt the need more strongly now for religious education because of this change in the synagogue association?

AM: That is a part of it. And more and more we are beginning to realize that people who have become members of the Temple with different religious denominational backgrounds -- Jewish, but with not quite an appreciation of Reform -- need orientation in the history and in the passage and in the idea of Reform Judaism.

JS: Not that we didn't need it years ago, too. But at least we had a clear understanding, I think, of what Temple stood for.

AM: That's right. We didn't quite realize the necessity then as we have in recent years as the congregation has grown bigger. And there have been various ways in which this adult education is presented. Some years back we introduced the Sunday Morning Breakfast Discussion Group under the auspices of the Men's Club. Then not too long ago, we had the Annual Retreat Forum in which the men would go out to some nearby resort for a weekend, and the hours would be spent in discussions on various topics and in reading various books and magazines, and also in prayer and in meditation. And of course we've had for years Bible Study groups sponsored by the Sisterhood and the Adult Education committee. All of which has fulfilled in some measure our hope that someday we might have an Adult Education program which is so necessary for the viability of the Jew and for his leading a complete Jewish life. In fact, I suggested several years ago that one of the things that the entire Jewish community might do regardless of different viewpoints was to establish a College of Jewish Studies which would offer courses in depth for laymen and lay women, for the training of Jewish teachers as well as for the enlightenment of our non-Jewish friends.

JS: Do you picture this in the surrounding area, or as sponsored purely from the synagogue?

AM: Not merely from the synagogue. This would be supported by the entire Jewish community as a communal institution. There is no reason why this couldn't be done ideologically. And also, from a financial point of view, if we realized at long last that while sending aid to Israel and supporting a hospital and all of our other agencies are important, yet at the same time, we cannot overlook that which not only feeds the body but which sustains the soul. What I had in mind in making the suggestion about the establishment of a College of Jewish Studies was an institution that they had in Chicago, by the name of "The College of Jewish Studies of Chicago." Here they had an upper echelon of professors and instructors who give courses in Hebrew, Hebrew literature, Jewish philosophy, and other cognate subjects. And they offer various degrees, even

leading to a Doctor of Philosophy degree. Men and women who attend that institution and become graduates with various degrees are able to secure positions as teachers on different levels of Jewish subjects, and also perhaps if there are openings, to become a professor in some college or university. This is a dream of mine, but someday, as I hope and pray, I think it will be fulfilled.. It would be one of the best investments that our community could make. I also had that kind of a vision about our Federation for Jewish Service. There were people in those days before the Federation was established who thought that it wouldn't come about, that you couldn't unite the various groups in our community in the Federation. But unite they did, and you have today a Federation for Jewish Service without which there would be a great vacuum in our community life.

I want to turn now to another aspect of the Rabbi's program as it has developed over the last half-century. The Rabbi all through the years has been regarded as the confidant and a consultant. He is used by men, women and children for advice on the different problems of life, whether they be of the family, religious, or even of economic concern. But life has become with the growing years very tense; otherwise, how to account for the fact that today there aren't enough psychiatrists to take care of all the people who seek ministration from the men of psychology, and those psychiatrists who require also a medical degree to practice. I think this tenseness and strain has been due to the growing technology... the developing impersonality of human rights... the two wars... and more, which we have experienced...the trans-valuation of values in which people become more concerned with that which they have, rather than what they are, or seek to become. And so, as a result, the Rabbi, over the passing years, has been placed in a position of one to whom people turn. Now, a Rabbi is not a psychiatrist and it would be foolish for him to regard himself as such. I have taken various courses in psychiatry and psychology only to give me an understanding of people's emotional, psychological and spiritual problems, and enable me to recognize what should be a case to be taken over by a psychiatrist. On the other hand, I've had people who've gone to psychiatrists and who've turned to me because they felt I might be certain of their needs. One of them is that they are lonely people and they have no one to turn to, to talk out, so to speak, their hearts, and in the Rabbi they find a sympathetic ear, a sympathetic heart, and a confidant. But even the Rabbi cannot meet the needs of all those who come to see him, particularly in the case of many of these people who are lonely. They haven't any companionship. They haven't anyone who they feel is devoted to and concerned about them, and loneliness is a malady that only companionship can cure. Now, a psychiatrist can't create companionship for them, and in my case, I can't go out and create a being so that afflicted person feels he's bound to them by ties of concern and sympathy. I've always had the open door to receive these people. But it is not only the people of my congregation that turn to me. People in the non-Jewish community have heard me on various occasions and have come to know me, have come to my study or called me on the phone to consult with them. I, of course, never interfere with any discipline or relationship which they have in their own ministerial pastor, if they have one of these. In some instances they don't have any church affiliation at all. In one case, I had a Catholic woman who consulted me on a problem. She asked me what the Jewish point of view was in regard to psychiatry in general, and I told her what it was and then I said, "Well, why did you call me then as a Rabbi?" Well, she said, she felt that I

was a representative of the oldest religion in Western civilization, and she wanted to know what this religion had to say on the subject. So the Rabbi, despite his manifold duties, I think has a responsibility in this regard. People who turn to him in a sense express their trust, their confidence and their faith in him, not only as a person, but as a man of God who might give to them the healing gift that religion has always brought to people in the centuries gone by.

JS: You also get people that have religion problems, a conflict, that come to you..?

AM: Oh, very much. Religious problems, marital problems, problems that have to do with relation of parents to children... relations between Jews and non-Jews... these confrontations of Rabbi and people cover the entire spectrum of human relationships on all the different levels of human life.

JS: Could it be said that they are coming to you for a spiritual "lift"?

AM: That's the feeling that I have and that's the only feeling I want to convey. I never want to pass as a psychiatrist or an amateur psychiatrist. While I have taken some work in these fields, I am not qualified or authorized to do that sort of counseling. They come to me as a spiritual leader who from the source of religion might give to them some measure of help, of uplift, of encouragement. And I may say, too, amongst the various types of people who come for help, there are those who have suffered bereavement and were overwhelmed with the burden of their grief. And those who were passing through the tunnel of darkness, and are seeking to find the light at the end of that tunnel.

JS: Actually, anything to do with marriage, death, and birth, these things you have dealt with on a counseling basis. But then you feel that is new, the loneliness of people.

AM: The loneliness of people. I have expressed in the title, *The Lonely Crowd*, the impersonality of human rights, and the tensions and strains created by wars... and turmoil. These are the complex cases that emerge from a complex society. And I don't think there'll be anyone who will deny that society has become complex for almost every individual. Does that cover that situation?

JS: Tape number seven in the series of tapes by Rabbi Minda.

AM: Yes, June, you give the number of the tapes, but I'm looking out the window and it's raining and my thoughts turn to what is happening in America on this election day, which to my way of thinking is a Holy Day. The American people in all sections of the country are going to the polls to exercise their great privilege and responsibility of casting their ballots for those men and women who are to lead our country in the years to come. And the voters will be the American population, not merely of one age, of one economic path or religious view, people of all ages and of all classes, and so my theme as I continue this tape this afternoon will be the Rabbi as he touches upon all ages of his people from the cradle to the grave.

JS: Rabbi, we're going to do this in connection with your duties as part of your Rabbinate, correct?

AM: That's right. The birth of a child is a very important and significant event in the life of a family, but also in the life of the congregation. And as the Rabbi, I recognized this aspect first of all whenever I found it possible to be present at the bris or circumcision of a male child and also by the naming of a female child at the congregation service.

JS: Well, now, we name more than the female child, don't we?

AM: Yes, that's right.

JS: And that's a similarly new custom.

AM: Yes. I need to analyze that custom. I think that it's a very meaningful custom, because it recognizes that we not only rejoice with the family but we welcome, as it were, right from the cradle, a future member of this congregation, or of some other congregation. I think in the birth family there is one statement that recognizes this fact, when we pray that the child will grow up with the Torah, that is the Jewish education, the wedding canopy (the chupah, or outdoor tent), and for the good will of all, the photos. This is a beautiful, idealistic and realistic statement of what we pray will be the objective and aims of the newly born child.

JS: In the service on Friday night, when you bless the child—is a similar statement made at that time? For both boys and girls?

AM: Not always, but actually it should be a part of the new induction ceremony of the male child. A similar prayer might be offered for the girl, in which we might say, may this child grow up in Israel with the virtues and ideals of the Matriarchs in Israel, Sarah and Rebecca, and Leah and Rachel.

JS: Do you recall how long ago it was when this service was put in as the regular ritual?

AM: Yes, I should say at least twenty years ago. Now then, the next recognition of the child's growth and progress is when the child at five years old is ready to go to religious school. And that is a very significant step in the chronology of the child's life because now he begins his Jewish moral and ethical education. And to mark this I introduced what a family that originated with Rabbi Samuel Wold of Cincinnati showed me, and that is the Consecration service, during which on the last day of Succos we call the "newly enrolled" children of the kindergarten and the first grade to the pulpit. We take out the torah and explain as simply as we can what it means, and then we direct the children's remembrance of this occasion. We give them a miniature favor Torah. It has become an established ceremonial in our congregational calendar almost to the same degree as our confirmation ceremony.

JS: Now, that's been going a longer time than consecration. I can recall seeing all the pictures down in the gallery of the consecration and the confirmation classes, but I don't recall what the first date is of confirmation.

AM: It goes back. Some of the fathers, mothers, grandmothers and fathers today were amongst the early confirmands. The next recognition of the child's growth and progress, spiritually speaking, was the Bar Mitzvah ceremony, which in recent years has been revived in Reform temples. When I came here, every once in a while there would be a Bar Mitzvah ceremony simply performed, but in recent years it has become quite common for boys who reach their thirteenth birthday to prepare for Bar Mitzvah and then carry out the ceremonial. The preparation consists of the study of Hebrew, and study of the background of the confirmation ceremony, a general knowledge of Jewish life and customs and history, and the preparation for the ceremony itself, which consists of being able to chant the blessings before and after the reading of the Siddur, of the Torah, a reading of the last section of that day's reading of the Torah in Hebrew, and then the blessings before and after the Haftarah, as well as the Haftarah or the Siddur portion itself.

It has many aspects that I think prove very effective. For instance, the individual expression of the Bar Mitzvah all centers on him, and gives the young adolescent a feeling that he's important, not only on his thirteenth birthday, but that his life thereafter will be one in which through his own efforts he will make himself worthy of recognition by his family and by those who come in contact with him. Usually there is a luncheon or a refreshment table after the Bar Mitzvah. Very fortunately, we have not had the ceremony abused as it has been, for instance, in the Eastern part of our country where extravagant dinners and receptions are held in which the religious aspect of the Bar Mitzvah ceremony recedes into the background. I think, however, we can stand improvement here in one respect. Parents who come to the Bar Mitzvah and who justly have a sense of pride in the day and in their son, never come to the Temple afterwards. They don't come before and they don't come afterwards, so I think, in many cases, the Bar Mitzvah ceremony takes place in a vacuum. About four or five years ago there was agitation to have the girls Bat Mitzvah, which means the Daughter of the Commandment. This originated with the Conservative movement in this country and has become quite common in Conservative congregations. I was opposed to the introduction of the Bat Mitzvah. We had made a breakthrough in the Reform movement when you included girls in the Confirmation ceremony; this has no traditional foundation, but it was introduced anyway. We had some very nice ceremonials with the Bat Mitzvah. The girls seemed to be impressed and I hope that it will all be for the good. There is one thing sure, however; we don't have the difficulties that other congregations have in that when a boy or girl is a Bar Mitzvah or Bat Mitzvah, they don't remain in the Religious School for confirmation. The Rabbi makes them take a written and an oral promise that they remain in that. We never had to do that; our children stay on up until the time they are sixteen years old when they experience the most inspiring Confirmation service held, *ban shura*?, which is the special product, if I may use that term, of the Reform movement. The next step in the growth and

development of the child is the high school graduation which takes place two years after confirmation.

JS: Now, originally, after confirmation there wasn't any high school. The formal high school is something new...

AM: Well, this is not exactly formal--it's informal discussions, the writing of a paper, sometimes a course in comparative religion in which the students go around visiting various churches. It's not altogether a new venture, it goes back a number of years. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of the members of the Confirmation class come back to pursue their high school studies. I hope we're going to be able to do something that will enable us to attract a larger group of young adolescents to come to their high school group.

You mentioned, June, the Junior Congregation. We had a junior congregation which consisted of pupils after confirmation and university the year I came here. I organized such a body at that time. As I remember, Mr. Arnold Edelman was the president of Junior Congregation, and he had sponsored the Sunday afternoon dances of which you and I have spoken here before and which played a definite role in the life of the older adolescent, particularly during the years of the Depression. I was reading through the Minutes of the congregation the other day and I came across a report of Ira Weil Jeffery, who was later to lose his life at Pearl Harbor. The report he gave to the Board of the congregation was the year's activity in the Junior Congregation. He said they had 92 members, average attendance 75. They conducted a Junior Congregation Sabbath Eve Service, they had book reviews, they had a dance, they had a homecoming breakfast for college students, they showed a travelogue, the proceeds of which they sent over to Palestine. So you can see it was a varied program and its purpose was educational and social and also to keep these young people attached to the congregation.

When I came here in 1922, they had no Hillel Foundation on the University of Minnesota campus. They had a Menorah Society, and I took it upon myself to conduct a study group for the Jewish students on the campus to which both young people of the Temple and non-affiliates of the Temple were invited and attended at one noon hour each week in one of the lunchrooms of the fraternity houses on the University campus. Every once in a while someone now a mature man or woman reminds me of the study groups which I conducted at that time. Then, of course, our next step is to recognize the young men and women when they're about to enter upon their collegiate or university career.

JS: That comes simultaneous to graduation from the high school, doesn't it?

AM: Yes. That's right.

JS: And you do have a special Friday night reserved for that also, in giving out diplomas.

AM: Well, no, the high school diplomas were given out in connection with the high school graduation of our religious school. It's the end of their sophomore year.

JS: And it's a two year program for the high school so that's what makes them a graduating senior from high school. So when the person begins college, it is simultaneous almost to the finish of the high school program in religious school.

AM: That's right. And of course the way I was involved in the public high school graduation was first of all to send a note to our high school graduates to congratulate them, and then also by my participation in the baccalaureate exercises which were held in the various schools of the city. In those days, the young men and women didn't get married as easily as they do today, and I didn't get to see all of them as much as I would like through their university careers. Most of them would be away from the city. But then sooner or later I would receive the announcement of their engagement, which always pleased me very much, and then officiate at their marriage ceremony. I always counseled with them before the marriage ceremony, not only in connection with the ceremony itself, but about married life, and I always felt that their marriage was an hour of fulfillment not only for them and their families, but also for myself. But interspersed between these major events, would be other events in the cycle of life for the people whom I was serving. Some of them very happy and some of them very sorrowful. I wanted to be with my people on both occasions of their lives; I wanted to visit them in their hours of sickness, so I made regular calls upon them in the hospitals and in their homes. And during the war I sought to give counsel to parents whose sons had been sent from the country in foreign fields of military service. And I knew how they felt, because my own son Roland was sent from us for two and a half years in the South Pacific. The major burden of my counsel was that they must try to live normally day by day, and live each day at a time, and if all was well today to pray that it would be as well on the morrow. And of course there were other occasions of counseling for marital troubles, troubles in the relationship of parents and children... my assistance was called upon in all the various stages of growth of the life of the individual and their various relationships. And so, the pastoral side of the Rabbinate I found increasing from year to year. It was a very trying experience because you wanted to share not only objectively in the difficulties of the family, but also to let them know that their pain was also my pain. And of course in all this ministration I had the good fortune of having Frances to share with me. She was a great help, in the friendships she gave as well as in words that came from her mind and her heart.

The caption for this tape has been "From The Cradle To The Grave." We are all mortal and we share the same common destiny. I was called in when some of my congregants were in extreme pain to offer prayers and to recite the Jewish declaration of faith in the Lord(?). I tried to help them as best I could in the various arrangements for the funeral. And then the funeral service, I always regarded as a very important duty. Here were people who were walking through the Valley of Shadow and how could I best bring light to them in the night of their darkness. Through the selection of the proper prayers and various readings I tried to bring them comfort, and through the eulogy I tried not merely a

tribute to the departed but through this tribute to bring home to those bereaved that which they still had, the preciousness and the tenderness of memory which would give them rays of light in their darkness and warmth in their faltering. As a result of my research in the material for funeral and memorial services, I published a book, an anthology of readings and selections that would be suitable for Rabbis and other clergymen to use not only as readings but also in preparation of their tribute.

JS: What was the name of the book?

AM: The name of the book is "Speak To The Heart," and it's made use of by a number of Rabbis all over the country. Fifteen years of the publication was made possible through Rabbi Minda's Publication Fund of Temple Israel, and so it was that the reality of death and its place in the program of human life I recognized, and tried to deal with it with all the resources in my possession.

June had mentioned to me how difficult it must have been to have done as much pastoral ministrations as I could, because as the years went by the congregation has become larger. When I came here in 1922 the congregation was between 250 and 275. Now it has grown to 1,500 member families. If you figure the average of three to a family, you can see that there are 4,500 individuals who come to seek one's philosophy in the pastoral ministrations. And it's a great privilege as well as a responsibility to serve people pastorally. Of course, it is all time-consuming and there are some Rabbis who resent the time that it takes, but I never resented it, even though I found at times that it was not only time consuming and energy consumer, but it also was a field that one could possibly spend his entire day in covering. Which brings me now to something I wanted to say under this heading, and it is this: the word Rabbi means "My Teacher" and that has been the function of the Rabbi throughout all the ages. He had to be a learned man, he had to be a scholarly man, he had to be what the Hebrew called a wise disciple. And this meant that he had to keep on studying all the time. And Rabbis today complain that this scholarly function must oft times be neglected because of the multitude of duties that has been imposed upon the modern Rabbi.

Now there are some Rabbis who have been in the active Rabbinate for a long time, have had big congregations, and have still managed to keep up their scholarly pursuits. I am thinking of a man for instance like Rabbi Solomon B. Frehaus(?), whose scholarship is recognized universally. He is a good friend of mine --now retired-- so I knew how he conducted his Rabbinic program. And if he did not carry on his pastoral program as others did he left it to his assistants. He had the opportunity to include scholarship, and he has produced some wonderful volumes which are most helpful. And I think that in this day, we have to recognize -- and congregations have to recognize -- that the opportunity to pursue scholarly studies should be given even though at times other phases of his Rabbinical program might have to be somewhat lessened.

A Rabbi like Solomon B. Frehaus is an example of this type. His forte is the Responsa that develops amongst the Rabbis in which questions are asked as to ritual, principle

ideals, and how they give the answers. It is all based on the Talmud, and he has made a great contribution to rabbinic literature through this medium, and we are all greatly indebted to him. And I am sure that the congregation, in making possible the time in which the Rabbi worked, understood the contribution he was making and perhaps they were willing to forgive him if he did not give more time to his pastoral duties. I think other congregations have likewise understood the need for certain gifted men to develop their scholarship potential so as to enrich the life of the culture of American Jewry as well as of culture and religion in general.

There is one thing sure, however: that any Rabbi, no matter whether he be in an exalted or humble position, cannot neglect his scholarly studies. He must learn, he must teach, because if he does not do this then he stunts his intellectual growth and he does not develop intellectually as he should. And the congregation can easily recognize this, if the man is not feeding himself so that he gives to them material fresh from the depth of his studies. In my own particular case, I have not produced great scholarly monumental work, but I've tried within my own field to give permanence to some of my thinking and to some of my studies and to have these published.

For instance, I have been asked on a number of occasions to speak to nurses who were receiving their training in hospitals and in universities on how to deal religiously with a Jewish patient. These training schools recognize how important this is, to establish rapport between the nurse and the patient or between the non-Jewish doctor and the patient or the administrator of the hospital. And I feel that perhaps the material in these lectures should be given permanent form, so one year when I spent several weeks in Florida, I used my time to put down my thoughts on paper and I had published, through the Rabbi Minda'a Publication Fund, a manual entitled "Ministering to the Religious Needs of the Jewish Patient." This manual has gone into its second printing and meets the needs of doctors, nurses and hospital administrators in various institutions all over the country-- Catholic, Protestant, as well as Jews.

I also have been collecting material ever since my college days to be used for funeral and memorial services. And I felt that just as I was indebted to certain Rabbinical colleagues for the material they have produced, so I wanted to share this material with them, and I have published, again through the Publication Funds, an anthology of statements to be used for this purpose. It is called "Speak to the Heart" and my colleagues have told me that they have found this very helpful. The Rabbi is oft times called upon, frequently in a large congregation, to officiate on sad occasions and they need new and varied material, and it is this that I hope will be found in this anthology, "Speak to the Heart." I've also had published a two-volume collection, "Over the Years," which consists of sermons, papers, and addresses which I felt represented some of my best thoughts and insights, and I wanted these to have some permanence; at least I would be on record as to what I have said. I also published a brochure called "The Fire on the Altar," which consists of significant addresses I've made on significant occasions in the life of the Temple. And so in this way I have tried to make some contribution in the field of what I hope I might call scholarship.

JS: Rabbi, you are an authority on Abraham Lincoln. Have you ever written anything for publication?

AM: Yes, I'm glad you mentioned that. I have, since my college days, been a Lincoln buff and I have studied Lincoln all through the years. I am now in the midst of collecting materials for what I hope someday, if the Lord permits me, will be a dissertation on Lincoln's use of the Bible. I had to interrupt my studies because of priorities dealing with the history of my Temple in connection with its 90th anniversary, but as soon as I finish with this, I hope to resume my research of Lincoln and the Bible. But I have published much on Lincoln in various newspapers. I've given a number of addresses, some of which are to be found in the volumes "Over the Years," on Lincoln's birthday. And the press has carried various articles on different aspects of Lincoln's life, so that, too, has been more or less of an extracurricular scholarly activity.

JS: Is the Temple trying to be completed this year?

AM: I pray so. The more I go into it, the more I find material that touches on this to be used that I hope that it will be completed. I want to draw this section of our discussion together by saying that every occasion in the Rabbi's calendar and his daily program represents an opportunity to teach. When I meet friends at a social gathering, someone will propound a question to me that has to do with Jewish life or literature that means something to them. When I answer that question, I'm teaching. When a Rabbi talks to children of the Nursery School in simple language, he is teaching them. And so, the term Rabbi must be implemented in all the different phases of his life, whether he appears before an audience or gives a radio address -- and in order to do this adequately and effectively and with due authority, he must be prepared. That's why I've always taken seriously any assignment given to me, because I wanted to speak with the authority of the past, and the sense of relevance of the present, and above all as a representative of the authentic principles of the Jewish faith.

JS: You have been most generous over the years with your time for adult studies of Jewish history or literature, and for the various phases of your community activities. The Temple members and I, when you say your interpretation of Rabbi is as my teacher, this is the way we have felt towards you over the years.

AM: This suggests one other thing which represents another dimension. After five years, under the auspices of the Jewish Society, I gave an accredited course over at Hamline University on Jewish history and literature. I want to say a word about the teaching that comes forth from the pulpit as a part of the Sabbath service and also the holiday services. Sometimes distinctions are made between what is called a lecture and a sermon. I suppose that distinction is justifiable, but whether it be a lecture or a sermon, teaching is involved as some information is passed from the Rabbi to the person in the pew, because it may not be merely information but helpful to the individual to which it is directed. Over the years I developed a series of special services on Friday evening that were focused to

certain groups, or to certain holidays, and that would call for a special preparation. For instance, I introduced a Sabbath Day Institute for teachers in the Christian Sunday School and there has been remarkable response. We've had something like a thousand people from various churches throughout Hennepin County that have come to this Sabbath Day Teachers' Institute. The Department of Christian Education of the Minneapolis Council of Churches has cooperated splendidly with me in this project.

And so, here again, it was a matter of a Rabbi teaching, teaching that which pertains to Judaism and Jewish history, which was relevant to the teachers in their own programs. And so I would speak on, for instance, a subject like the Synagogue in the time of Jesus, the Jewish home in the time of Jesus, the books they read in the time of Jesus. You'll see from these topics that I was directing the attention of the audience to that which was relevant to them out of Jewish sources and Jewish history. Then I introduced another service, a religious service for public school teachers. I would alternate each year, this service with that for the Sunday School teaching. And my purpose in introducing this service was not in any sense to violate the principle of separation of church and state, but it was to have the teachers see the spiritual home of Jewish children that they were teaching, and what transpires at such a service. And my theme of my address would be gauged accordingly, and after services we would have a tour of our art galleries and ceremonial museum.

Another service of this special kind that I introduced was a re-consecration of the marriage service for married couples. It was my thought that in this day and age when a lot of people were cynical about the whole institution of marriage, it would be a helping hand -- perhaps an inspiring experience -- once more on various anniversaries to renew the covenants into which these married couples had entered when their lives were united and their destinies became one.

JS: Now, you didn't single out any particular couple, you just said it was going to be a re-consecration service for married people, right?

AM: Yes. On my anniversary I would invite especially those whose marriages I had consecrated over these years.

JS: Your own marriage anniversary?

AM: Right. Anyone was privileged to join in the ceremony in which I offered the blessing. Let me say that I invited one year Rabbi Posman of Columbus to give the sermon. He was so impressed with the service that when he returned to his own pulpit he introduced it and has been conducting it in the subsequent years. Then I felt that the holidays should be recognized at the Sabbath Eve services and so on Hanukkah I had a special musicagogue -- if I may use that term -- prepared, called "Let There be Light," in which I traced the evolution of development of light in the history of Judaism. I would have the pulpit arranged in the form of a big Menorah, each branch of which would consist of a candelabrum of five candles, and it was quite a sight to behold all these

candles shedding their rays of light on the pulpit to commemorate the Hanukkah festival of light. And so, too, on the Sabbath of Passover Eve I developed another musicagogue in which in music and in a statement I traced the stories of freedom throughout the ages, beginning with the first Festival of Freedom celebrated by mankind, and that is the Passover. I call this musicagogue "Freedom Eternal Light."

And so it was in these various ways that we had special services such as welcoming the new members of the congregation and also...[tape cut off]

AM: on my involvement not only in the Sabbath services and holiday services but at our Saturday morning services. In years gone by we never had as many Bar Mitzvahs as we have today, and we have a regular Sabbath morning service in the Deinard Memorial Chapel. We do not have a large attendance, but we do have adults, and besides we have the members of the confirmation and the pre-confirmation class. I would speak to the Saturday morning congregation on a text from Torah Siddur of the week and once a month the service would be in charge of the members of the confirmation class. They would be assigned a certain theme and each one, or three or maybe four, would deal with a certain aspect of that theme as it was broken down.

I always enjoyed the Saturday morning service, first of all because the chapel offered a certain warmth and intimacy, because I was talking not only to the adults, but to the youth. We had our own congregational singing and did not depend upon the choir, so we were in a sense fulfilling something of an inner need. Then, of course, on Sunday morning we had what was called an assembly for the religious group only, but in a sense, it was a service of worship. We would use the worship service which was to be found in the back of the Union Hymnal and then I would speak to the pupils on some theme that happened to deal with a patriotic holiday or some other occasion, or just on some Jewish principle or ideal to which I thought their attention should be directed. At other assemblies I would take one of these newly framed pictures from our gallery of modern Jewish personalities and deal with the life or the personality of this man or woman. I wanted the youngsters to realize that we had not only great Jewish people in years gone by, but they were blessing our lives even today.

Let us continue now with some other aspects of the Temple. I think first of all of the Temple Board of Trustees. Because the synagogue is a democratic institution, its governing board is elected by the congregation members at the annual meeting, and the size of the board has been changed from time to time as the congregation has grown, to be sure that we get new blood, so to speak, and that the board does not become merely a self-perpetuating body. I think today we have something like over 30 members who sit on the board, older members and younger members. There is a constitution rule that a member of the board can only serve for a certain number of years and then he is automatically dropped. He may stand for re-election every subsequent year. The president also has the power to appoint three members at large. The president of the Men's Club, the Sisterhood, and the Couples Club automatically sit as members of the board, as do the Rabbis. I think that is a wise decision because oft times in connection with the business

matters of the Temple, and the relationship of the Temple and its various members, the Rabbi may present certain ethical insight that's important to be considered by a board that is in charge of administering the affairs of a religious organization.

I have found, on the whole, that members of the board over the years have been serious-minded, dedicated people. I have sometimes complained that formal religious duties sometimes have been neglected, as for instance in attendance at evening services. But on the whole, they have done a good job and have maintained the dignity and prestige and the status of a Jewish house of worship. My relationship to the board has always been a very cordial one. I've had respect for the board for its opinion, and I think the board has had respect for me and for the point of view which I at times express, even though they may not have agreed entirely with that which I was presenting.

Once in a while I've had to take a firm and unpopular stand on certain matters. I recall years back that I was asked by the mayor of the city to go and see the racist picture "The Birth of a Nation." He wanted my opinion on it because the black people of the community felt that this picture was not good for race relations. I did go and I also appeared in court when a motion for an injunction to have the picture stopped was being argued. And I appeared there with a number of colored and white people. Well, at the next board meeting a member of the board stated what he thought were objections to my getting involved in a matter of that kind, and of course I had to defend my position, which was that if the Jews and particularly the Rabbi were not ready to take a stand on the matter of prejudice and bigotry, who is, and I thought that I would have been derelict if I had not taken the stand and spoken out as I did.

But on the whole, it has been a satisfactory experience to deal with the board and to have the board and I walk together in the advancement of our cause. And I think, objectively viewing our progress, there has been progress and advancement which can only come about in a democratic institution like the synagogue, where the Rabbi and the board cooperate in fulfilling its program. So, too, I've been involved in the Sisterhood program. The women have done a remarkable job in this Temple, going back to the early days of what was the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society, being called upon to render service, preparing meals, putting on affairs to raise money, organizing study groups, cooking in the kitchen -- I can't recall an occasion where the Sisterhood failed us. And I was always glad to cooperate whenever I could because of the valiant women who were doing their share in promoting our common cause. When I think of what the Sisterhood has done to lead our various programs, I think of the Rabbinic statement which reads, "Because of righteous women was Israel redeemed from Egypt."

And so it has been with the Men's Club, which was my "first born child" when I came to Minneapolis. I've had a fine fellowship with the Men's Club and its board. For a number of years we used to meet downtown at lunch every week. We didn't always discuss Men's Club business; we had to first of all sort of perform the role of downtown quarterback, diagnosing the previous football game the University of Minnesota had played, but we did give due consideration as to how the Men's Club could assist the Temple in fulfilling

its program. And of course its monumental achievement for its initiative in carrying on the Rigadoos, was so helpful in our financial difficulties during the days of the Depression.

Then, too, there have been the adult study groups which have been carried on in different levels that were Institutes of fixed lectures whose subjects would range from marriage, child studies, Jewish literature, the relationship of Judaism and Christianity, to the question of the retreat in which the men of the Temple were invited to go on a weekend to some nearby resort for study and meditation. Then, of course, we talked about youth groups, the junior congregation... and we haven't gone into detail, I think, on the matter of Camp Teko.

JS: No, I don't think we've mentioned Camp Teko. That was in 1940, wasn't it?

AM: Yes. I suggested that we have a program for our youth during the summer, and he came up with the idea of a day camp. I think he came in 1945... and in the summer of that year Camp Teko was organized for our youngsters, who would be taken out to Lake Nokomis in the morning by bus for water sports, and then brought back by bus to the Temple for games and other indoor activities.

JS: A typical day camp program.

AM: That's right, and it grew in popularity. It took care of not only Temple youth, but when accommodations were free we admitted the youth of other groups. That went on until a few years ago, when the Men's Club purchased the site of the former Boy Scout camp on Lake Minnetonka and this is now used as a play site where Camp Teko carries on its activities. The youngsters go out there on the bus and they spend the entire day there. They do not come back to the Temple, but in the late afternoon, they are brought back to their homes by bus. And in the last two years an extra two weeks have been added to the regular schedule, which provides a wilderness camp for the older boys and girls. By wilderness camp we mean where they stay out at the camp during the day and spend the night there.

The years between 1950 and 1960 for the Temple represented years of growth, of development and expansion in many ways. Since the end of World War II, with the boys returning from the war front, coming back into civilian life, assuming the responsibilities of marriage, marked also a growth of these young people in their affiliation with the Temple, so much so that the Temple by 1955 had a membership of 863 families, and by 1967 it had reached 965 family members and is on the way to becoming a roster of 1,000 and even more. This growth in membership and expansion of programs called for the expansion of staff, mostly in the office, but in the rabbinic as well as the educational staff. I mentioned the fact that Rabbi Richard Goldberg had become my assistant. He was followed by Mr. Harry Glasser, who came to us from New York. Glasser resigned in 1967 and he was succeeded by Leonard Devine.

In 1967 the administration of the Temple called for the engagement of an administrator. He took charge of all the financial business, care of the property, and the Temple personnel, as well as acting as the executive agent for what is now known as Temple Israel Cemetery. I then found that in addition to an educator and administrator we had a need for more rabbinical assistance, and so it was that we investigated the rabbinic field and Rabbi Max A. Shapiro, who had been ordained at the Hebrew Union College, was called to join the rabbinic staff, first as assistant and then as an associate. Later, when I, in accordance with arrangements made prior to Rabbi Shapiro's affiliation, retired, Rabbi Shapiro succeeded me as Rabbi of the Temple and I assumed the title of Rabbi Emeritus. As Rabbi Emeritus I have in these years not entirely disassociated myself from Temple activities. From time to time, particularly on the High Holy Days, I have preached, I have been available for consultation, and have been fully active in community work. In the meantime, the Temple program has advanced greatly under Rabbi Shapiro's officiating, in the field of social justice and in the religious education program both on the child and the adult level.

Five years ago Rabbi Shapiro found that he too needed assistance an assistant, particularly in view of the fact that Rabbi Glasser decided that he wanted to pursue his calling in the field of education. And so it was that Rabbi Eric Goldberg, who just had been ordained at the Hebrew Union College, was summoned to fill the place of assistant rabbi. He remained for two years and then it was that our present associate Rabbi Herbert Rutman, assumed the post as associate Rabbi. Under the rabbinic administration of these men, the program, as I indicated before, has been intensified and expanded. The congregation now numbers something like 1,500 families, which makes a large congregation. In my opinion, it is almost too large. There has been talk from time to time of having another Reform congregation in the community and many of the board members of the Temple feel that this would be a good thing. However, to start a new congregation requires dedicated men and women and a considerable sum of money, and it is not likely that in the very near future such a congregation will be established, particularly since the suburbs of our community are not located at a great distance and that presents no problem whatsoever.

And so in this rambling sort of a way, I have talked on, and on, and on, sometimes going forward and then remembering something that I omitted. But I wanted this to be in the form of a conversation, just as if I had used the sofa in the living room of my home. This coming March will mark the fiftieth anniversary of my ordination as Rabbi at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. I am indeed grateful that the Lord has preserved me for all these years. If I had it to do again, I would pursue the same calling that has blessed me now for this one half a century, and as I approach this mark, I am not only grateful, but I am also optimistic regarding the future of our Temple and the future of the American Jewish community, and I pray that the present wave of tumult and turmoil may find its way along the paths of regents and ultimately be granted charity and peace. With this I will say not only Amen, but a double Amen.

JS: Thus we conclude the Minda story. You have listened to Rabbi Minda, the scholar, the Rabbi, the community man and the family man. His warmth, humanitarianism, dedication, and his humility permeates his every act in every avenue, personal, professional and private. You now know Rabbi Minda as a man. His impact and import to his family, the Temple, the community, state and nation will only be fully comprehended after this documentation has become history. Hopefully, these words will ever be mindful of the deeds so modestly described, and, as one ponders this transcript, be convinced that Rabbi Albert G. Minda built in Temple Israel, a memory of a house not made with hands alone, but with the spirit eternal and in heaven. Respectfully submitted, June Monasch Ogendorf Stern. Thank you.

Jews in Minnesota Oral History Project
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