

8/23/67

#16
Dear Colleague:

With regard to the idea of creating a national organization of scholars in the field of Jewish Studies,

The reaction of most Jewish scholars around the country has been quite favorable, but many suggest that before any new organization be created we wait to see what the American Academy for Jewish Research, which has re-organization in its agenda, does at its next meeting. Those of us who belong to the AAJR should make our feelings known on this question to its distinguished President, Professor Lieberman of the JTS.

Also, it has since developed that the National Foundation for Jewish Culture is planning to hold a "National Conference on Jewish Studies in (non-Jewish) American Colleges and Universities" in the New York City area either in December or January and we probably should also wait to see what develops from this Conference.

But one very constructive suggestion that has been made is to hold an "Annual Spring Judaic Studies Conference" outside of the New York City area (perhaps rotating in a five year cycle between Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cincinnati and Los Angeles, with 2-3 days of volunteered papers, especially by younger scholars, beginning the Spring of 1968. If such a meeting were to be held, I feel certain that many top quality papers would be volunteered by both Jewish and non-Jewish scholars of Judaism from the East, Mid-West, Far-West and South.

There is some hope that the American Academy for Jewish Research will cooperate with such a project since Professor Lieberman has indicated that the AAJR might be willing to hold a second meeting, outside of New York City, in the Spring, in addition to its regular December meeting at the JTS.

An "Annual Spring Judaic Studies Conference" outside of New York City, beginning in the Spring of 1968, in which younger Jewish scholars would have a significant share of the responsibility, which would focus on contemporary Jewish life and thought as well as on the more traditional areas of juedische Wissenschaft, would serve as a tremendous stimulus to Jewish scholarship in America at a time when our people is entering such a critical period in its history.

With every good wish to you and asking you to excuse the impersonality of this communication, I remain,

Very sincerely yours,

Allan Cutler
Assistant Professor
Jewish Studies & Medieval Religions
Temple University, Philadelphia

ADDRESS (thru January) c/o Jacob Cutler, 1014 S. Alfred St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90035.