Dear Governor Lehman:

When I saw you at your home on June 21st, you were good enough to say that you will give consideration to my request that you call a meeting of a group of people to whom I might present the program which we have worked out for a Jewish contribution to American religious life, particularly in its relation to the democratic tradition. I suggested that it would be most helpful if such a meeting could be held at the end of September, perhaps on Sunday, September 22nd, or September 29th, or possibly on one of the three following Sundays, November 17th, November 24th or December 8th.

In this connection, you may be interested in the material which we have prepared for the Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion, to be held at the Seminary on September 9th. I am enclosing herewith a copy of the printed pamphlet and also of a formal invitation, as well as the tentative program.

The enthusiasm for the Conference and the faith in it is so great that I am receiving, day by day, letters from clergymen, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish, from all parts of the country, extending good wishes and commending
the project.

We are holding a preliminary meeting of some of the members of the Conference on August 9th to formulate the agenda and to clarify some of the ideas in anticipation of the larger gatherings which will be held in September.

As I told you, it would be of inestimable value to us in this work to feel that we have your active sympathy and also to be able, with your assistance, to bring the significance of this project to the attention of some of the leaders of the Jewish community. It seems to me of vital importance that they, like everyone else, should come to realize the religious foundation of the democratic way of life, if we are to present an effective front against totalitarian thought. You yourself have expressed this idea so frequently that I am sure I need not stress it in writing to you.

I want to say again that there is no thought of raising funds at this meeting, or even of asking anyone to commit himself to serve as a member of the Board of Directors. The Seminary is equipped with sufficient funds to carry on this work for the next three years. My thought would be to present the problem to those attending the meeting, to ask their counsel on the basis of their experience in their local communities and then to suggest that I might call on them personally to discuss whether they would be willing
to serve as members of our Board.

With warm regards, I am

Faithfully yours,

Louis Finkelstein

The Honorable Herbert H. Lehman
The Executive Mansion
Albany, New York

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enc.