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Folder 8 – Kaplan, Harris – 1931 - 1933

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October 29, 1931.

Miss Cecelia Razovsky
625 Madison Ave.
New York N.Y.

Re; Kaplan Family

Dear Miss Razovsky;

Please call upon Mr. Chas, Goldberg 500 West 176th. Street N.Y. C.
and see if it is possible for him to give his sister and family any financial aid.

This family is in Juarez and in dire need and we are doing all
that is possible for them but due to our depleted treasury our work is hampered.

Mrs. Kaplan has just given birth to a fourth child.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Frank Zlabovsky
1016 Olive Street
El Paso, Texas.

DEPARTMENT OF SERVICE FOR FOREIGN BORN

The National Council of Jewish Women

INCORPORATED

625 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK

FROM

Merle Henoch

DATE

December 18, 1931.

TO

Mrs. Zlabovsky, El Paso

SUBJECT

Kaplan Family.

I think you will be interested in the report that our
local Section sent us regarding the Kaplan family.
Inasmuch as the Goldbergs cannot be of assistance at
this time, we are forced to close the case.

M.H.

MH/EH
Enc.

Jan 22, 1932.

Miss Sara Potash
417 South High Street
Longview, Texas.

Dear Sara;

I am in receipt of your checks for the Harris Kaplan case. I want to tell you that dealing with Mrs. Kaplan has had a great deal of grief connected with it. I am wondering if it is worth while after all to continue with an expenditure of \$10.00 monthly for people who I find are not really deserving. I realize of course we have no right to allow the child to suffer because of the Mother's shortcomings.

The enclosed is a letter received from our Department in New York with reference to Mrs. Kaplan. When you have read same please return to me for our files.

The grief that I have referred to is that each month I have turned the two checks over to the Mother namely, for \$1.20 and \$3.00 and instead of paying for the boy's lunches she was using the money for her personal needs. This matter was brought to my notice by the Principal of Morehead School that no lunch money had been paid since Sept. and that I owe the Cafeteria \$11.00.

I suppose you will blame me for this indiscretion but I was trying to put Mrs. Kaplan on her honor and place her in a more favorable light with the school faculty. As usual my kind heartedness miscarried. The last two checks received from you are to-day being forwarded to the Morehead School toward the payment of that debt and I have instructed the principal to give Harris a 10¢ lunch daily until the deficit is covered.

Yours very truly,

Jan 22, 1932.

Principal of Morehead School
North Kansas and Arizona
El Paso, Texas.

Re; Harris Kaplan

Dear Sir;

The enclosed two checks amounting to \$4.20 is toward the indebtedness for Harris Kaplan's lunches.

Mrs., Kaplan assures me that she will pay the balance. Kindly let me know within the next week if the balance is paid.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Frank Zlabovsky.

COUNCIL OF JEWISH JUNIORS



EL PASO, TEXAS

Jan. 25, 1932

Dear Mrs. Zlabovsky:

You do not know how distressed I am to learn you have been experiencing such difficulties with Mrs. Kaplan, but the only thing you can attribute such conduct to is gross ignorance, guess we should pity people like that instead of censuring them.

Naturally it is hard for me to suggest to you what steps to pursue in regard to this case, as you are much more familiar with it than I am. However as you say it is hard to deprive the child of such an advantage, because of the mother. You have tried to deal with her from the honor standpoint and find it does not work, so why not just send the money direct to the school and let the teacher take care of the lunch money, and you buy the car tickets for him in that way none of the money will come into the mother's hands. I realize this is a hard method to follow, but as the money is public property and neither of us have any say about it, we have to adhere to the best manner possible to obtain the results we hope to achieve.

I received a list of Harris' grades for the past two months and find them very good, it does seem a shame to discontinue his work, however his deportment is not what it should be, but hope that will improve.

Of course I do not blame you for a minute regarding the manner you handled the money for Harris, you tried to help the mother too, I do not see how any one could blame you, and I dislike your thinking I am as narrow minded as that. In fact I feel nothing toward you but utter gratitude, for without you we could not have accomplished what we have. Please dismiss such thoughts from your mind.

I am enclosing the two checks to you now, for it is about time for them, and will let you handle this in the manner you deem best. Please be kind enough to let me know any further developments in the case.

With kindest personal regards to you and your family, from Abbie and myself,

Most sincerely

Jatie

New address 333 S. High St. Apt C.

Feb. 2, 1932.

Principal of Morehead School
North Kansas and Arizona
El Paso, Texas.

Dear Sir;

The enclosed two checks amounting to \$4.20 is toward the indebtedness for
Harri Kaplan's lunches.

Kindly let me know what the balance is at the present time.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Frank Zlabovsky, Field Executive

Feb. 10 1932.

Miss Minnie Kaplan
710 West 23rd. Street
Omaha Neb.

Dear Miss Kaplan;

With reference to your letter of Feb. 1, in which you are perplexed about the bond issued for your parents I would strongly advise that your father become an American Citizen as soon as possible in which case the Dept. of Labor would release the bond.

However in the meantime you could get a bonding company to carry that bond for a small sum. You may appeal to the Dept. of Labor in this manner;

Send two affidavits from influential citizens who know your parents setting out in these affidavits that your parents are highly honored and respected and law abiding people. That since their arrival in Omaha they have contributed largely to the morale of the town, that the daughters are American Citizens (Name the daughters and give them high recommendations). That they are asking for a release of the bond because Mr. and Mrs. Kaplan feel that they are unwelcome in the U.S. due to said bond. (Here you may set forth other reasons why the bond causes their unhappiness and the releasing of said bond would make them very happy.) You will also attach letters from the Chief of Police and any other city official showing them to be good people and recommending release of the bond. Then a letter of appeal signed by you and your sisters and send this all to the Dept. of Labor and send copies of these affidavits to;

Mr. Isidore Hirschfield
1115 Connecticut Ave. N.W.
Washington D.C.

and enclose a letter asking him to intercede in your behalf.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Frank Zlabovsky

March 7, 1932.

Principal of Morehead School
Kansas and Nevada Streets
El Paso Texas.

Dear Madam;

Enclosed please find check for \$2.10 to cover the lunches of Harris
Kaplan to April 1, 1932.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Frank Zlabovsky, Field Executive.

March 9, 1932.

Principel Morehead School
El Paso, Texas.

Dear Sir;

Enclosed please find two checks totaling \$4. 20 to apply on the lunches for
Harris Kaplan.

x

Yours truly,

Mrs. Frank Zlabovsky, Field Executive

April 18, 1932.

Miss Sara Potash,
417 High Street
Longview Texas.

Dear Sara;

Wanted to tell you that Harris Kaplan is out of school with whopping cough and I doubt if he will be able to enter school again this semester. I would advise that next month you will please send his tuition check to me, in case he is able to go back to school I will pay it and if not I shall return same to you.

With kindest personal regards to yourself and sister,

I am yourstruly,

August 24, 1932.

Rabbi Joseph Roth
1416 North Mesa Ave.
El Paso, Texas.

Dear Rabbi Roth;

Mrs. Zlabovsky has asked me to send you a copy of a letter we received some time ago concerning Mrs. Kaplan. The enclosure is from Miss Cecelia Razovsky, who heads the department of Service to the Foreign Born of the National Council of Jewish Women.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Errol B. Lapowski, Secretary.

El Paso, Texas
Feb. 1, 1933.

KAPLAN CASE

The Kaplan case dates back to 1927. Mrs. Anita Kaplan a recent arrival from Parral was reported as being seriously ill in Juarez, Mexico. Mrs. Gus Zork and Mrs. Frank Zlabovsky called on this case at the home of Mrs. Libnick. Dr. Frank Schuster was called in on the case and he advised that said Mrs Kaplan be placed in Providence Hospital, for observation.

Dr. Schuster advised upon examination that the Wasserman test be given and the result was positive. Mrs. Kaplan became very indignant when she was informed of the outcome of the test and left the hospital without notifying the Immigration Department. It took soem time to clear this case and the cost at that time to the El Paso, organization was \$85.00.

Mrs. Kaplan returned to Parral. A year later she returned to this border with her husband and two children. Mr. Kaplan went into the installment business.

We next find her in Hotel Dieu having undergone an operation for appendicitis but without any cost to us. However, the money that she borrowed from other organizations and individuals was never paid.

We later find that the Kaplans are having a struggle and to add to their burden another child is born. We tried to help them in this way. Miss Ruth Kaplan who came to this border from Omaha, Nebraska and was ordered to depart from the U.S. at once went to Juarez where she took up residence in the Kaplan home paying \$30.00 monthly American Money. Shale Gechter who came from Mexico needed a home and our organization paid \$12.00 monthly for eight months to Mrs. Kaplan for Miss Gechter. Mr. Max Phillips took room and board also paying \$30.00 monthly. When Miss Gechter secured work she paid an additional \$5.00 monthly toward her maintenance.

When these people left we again find the Kaplans in financial difficulties and we also find that she is expecting another baby. We furnished them with groceries and old clothes and we wrote to our New York office to communicate with the brother of Mrs. Kaplan in New York for further assistance. (See enclosed attached copy of letter from New York).

During the spring of 1931 we furnished the Kaplans with Passover food. On the second day of Passover your chairman was reprimanded for allowing Jewish People to eat bread. Upon investigation it was found that on the second day of Passover Mrs. Kaplan had served bread and beer. When called upon she made the statement that she does not believe in these religious foolishnesses.

In the meantime a young man from Monterrey came to Juarez and want to live with the Kaplans. He was penniless but we secured funds for him from relatives in Texas and Mrs. Kaplan we well paid for her trouble.

On October 26, 1931 another child was born (her fourth) and Mrs. Zork furnished the layette. Mrs. L. Goodman on one of her trips to Juarez gave the family \$5.00 and Mrs. Ed Wisbrun made a gift of \$5.00. We took them groceries and the relief society gave \$25.00 to pay the midwife.

While recuperating from confinement we found Mrs. Kaplan suffering mental agony because Mr. Kaplan had beaten the oldest child mercilessly. It was then that we found out for the first time that little Harris was not his child. She appealed to us to help her start a second hand store. We brought for her almost a truckful of old clothes and gave her \$20.00 for the rent. She opened her store on Calle la Paz in Nov and was doing a land office business which lasted three months, during which time we continued to furnish her with old clothes.

Some how the business ceased to function and she wanted to open a restaurant. We refused to assist her in this new project but her determination won out and she seemed to succeed for a time but again she tired of this. During the time she had her cafe she defied Jewish tradition by keeping open on the Holy Days, Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur.

We find that she borrowed money and the equivalent of money wherever she could but paid no one. Mr. Kaplan succeeded in getting a job at two pesos a day and Mrs. Kaplan deplored her husbands hard labor. In November of 1932 Mrs. Kaplan appealed to the organization for 200 pesos stating that she wanted to leave for Mexico City. Mrs. Ed Wisbrun was detailed on this investigation and found that such an expenditure was not warranted.

Mrs. Kaplan sold the restaurant furniture and it was reported that she had raised enough for their departure to Mexico City but again we find that she had gone into the restaurant business and is asking for assistance.

From a psychological stand point we feel that money given to them robs them of perhaps the little individuality that may be left to them and that the future may build if left to their own resources. Her plea that her children need the U.S. is one to gain sympathy. We find that many children go to school in Juarez and prove excellent scholars. Among those I may cite two boys who are enrolled in the schools of Phoenix Ariz. and going through with honors and they previously attended school in Juarez.

We feel this report proves that this family has had our every consideration and assistance.

Respectfully,

Mrs. F. Zlabovsky.

Schooling of Harris Kaplan.

Harris Kaplan was kept in the schools of El Paso for four semesters and the tuition paid was \$6.00 monthly. This expense was borne by the Council of Jewish Juniors as a state project. In addition to the tuition the Juniors gave us \$4.00 monthly for his lunches and \$1.00 monthly to be used for street car fare making a total of \$11.00 monthly.

After due consideration we decided to allow Mrs. Kaplan to pay the school the lunch money which we gave to her as we felt it would give the case more dignity. To our amazement we found that the Mother used the money for her own needs and we had to reimburse the school for Harris's lunches.

The boy was taken out of the El Paso school system at the suggestion of the teachers who found that his mentality did not warrant this great expenditure.