

**SPECIAL  
ISSUE**

# The Commentator

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67#5

# YESHIVA COLLEGE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

1978 marks the fiftieth anniversary of Yeshiva College. To celebrate this occasion THE COMMENTATOR offers a special commemorative issue. In an attempt to fully depict what life was like at Yeshiva College over the past fifty years, the next few pages will have a combination of articles from old issues and personal reminiscences from alumni and faculty. To evoke a smile, to call forth a tear, we proudly present this special anniversary issue.

By YECHIEL FRIEDMAN

Most Yeshiva students know little more about the history of the college than that which they gleaned from the outdated catalog when they were entering freshmen.

Besides a short history of our institution, the one-page article also extolls Yeshiva for what it has become today. Yet, the question remains, how did it get there?

In 1886 a group of Eastern-European Jewish immigrants formed the first yeshiva in America for the teaching of young Jews in the Lower East Side. The organizers, mostly local tradesmen, knew very little about running a school, though they were sincerely dedicated to the task.

### An Early Experience

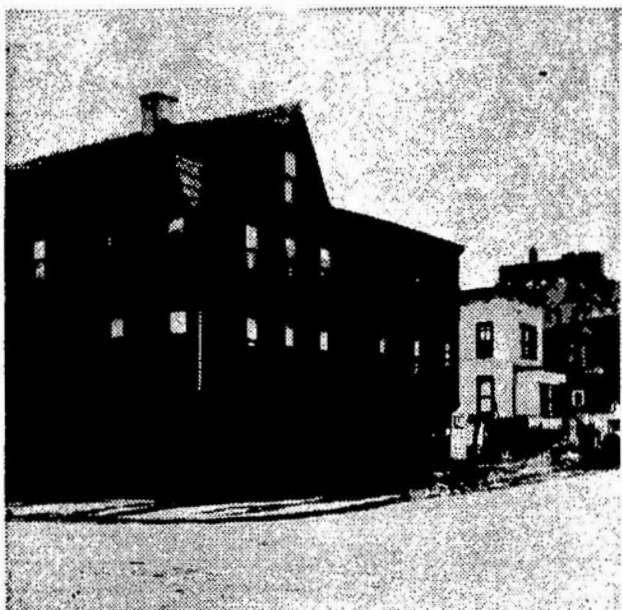
One of the first secular teachers hired by the school (none lasted too long) was Abraham Cahan, a clever young man who had shown great promise with his studies in a European yeshiva. In his autobiography, Cahan records that the curriculum at the time was loosely drawn to provide just for the study of the three "R's" — all within the "English department." Because the directors had no clear idea of what should be taught, the English department functioned haphazardly, more out of a perfunctory acknowledgement for these subjects than a sincere desire to provide the children with a modern education.

When Cahan tried to improve the situation by enlisting the other teacher, a fourteen year old boy who had just graduated public school, to pressure the directors for a \$50 allotment for new texts, he was criticized for being too extravagant. Cahan later became a prominent journalist, the editor of the Jewish Daily Forward, and a commanding figure in the Socialist movement for almost half a century.

### Establishment of RIETS

The Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS), was formed in 1897 as the response of the Eastern European Jewish immigrants to the increasingly secular Jewish Theological Seminary of the "Uptown" American Jews. It struggled in its first years, as did Yeshivat Etz Chaim, moving from shul to shul till 1904 when RIETS purchased a building in the Lower East Side for the then tremendous sum of \$28,500.

With the security of owning its own building, together with the accreditation of RIETS by the Agudath



— YUPR

Amsterdam Avenue and 185th Street in the 40's.

HaRabbanim, the administration turned its attention, successfully, to improving the quality of the religious instruction in RIETS.

### A Student Strike

Though continually gaining students as a result of the excellent quality of its instruction, RIETS was forced to close its doors in 1907 because all its students went on strike to protest the director's continuous rebuffing of student requests for secular instruction.

The strike was successful. The Board of Directors and all officers were replaced, but the new directors pleaded financial instability. These problems were partially solved in 1915 with the merger of Yeshivat Etz Chaim and RIETS.

From then on, the new institution, called RIETS, was on the road of constant growth. A high school, called the Talmudical Academy, was established. More importantly, a new President of the Faculty was hired, Rabbi Dr. Bernard Revel, a graduate of NYU and



— YUPR

The College building under construction in the 50's.

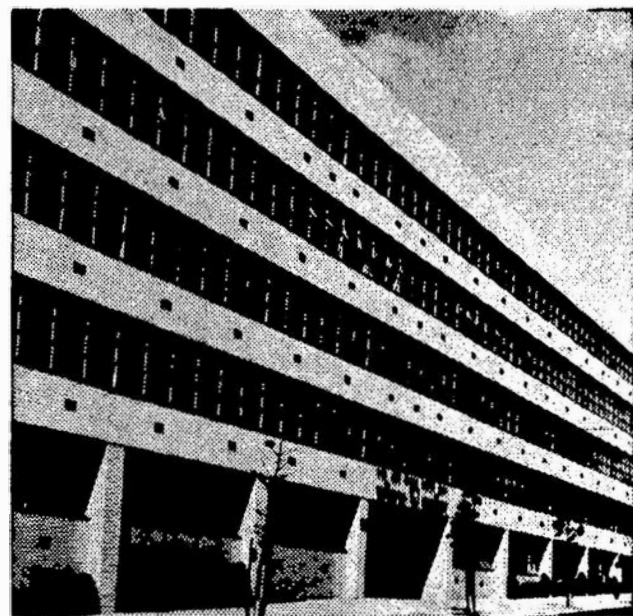
Dropsie College, as well as a universally acknowledged scholar in both religious and secular studies.

### Early Growth

Soon, RIETS found itself with another division, the Teachers Institute, founded in 1917 as a supplemental religious school by Rabbi Judah Leib Fishman (Maimon), Rabbi Meir Berlin (Bar-Ilan) and other prominent members of the Mizrahi Organization of America.

To keep up with this rapid expansion, RIETS began a fund raising campaign to raise 5 million dollars for the creation of a new educational complex. With the money eventually raised, a site also had to be chosen. The proposals included an estate in southern New Jersey, a large tract of land near where AECOM is presently located, and the present site of the Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital and Medical Center.

These sites were all rejected because they were either too far from New York City, too large, or too expensive. Finally, the building committee settled on a two-block area, known as the Barney Estate, lying west of Amsterdam Avenue between 186th and 187th Streets, in the Washington Heights section of upper Manhattan. This represented about fifty city building lots. Later, additional property to round out the parcels on the west side of Amsterdam Avenue and the Horton Estate on the east side of Amsterdam Avenue were



— YUPR

Furat Hall today, 1978.

acquired. The total real estate value of the purchase was reported to be \$1,274,960.

### A College and Grad School

With the granting of a charter by the Regents of the University of the State of New York, the newly formed Yeshiva College soon began producing outstanding graduates, and later, outstanding graduate students.

The first graduate program in Jewish and Semitic studies was initiated in 1935 and expanded into a full graduate school in 1937, ten short years before the establishment of the Harry Fischel School for Higher Jewish Studies, a companion institute to the (later renamed) Bernard Revel Graduate School, which offers identical coursework during the summer semesters.

Another more important step forward in 1945 was YU's attaining full university status as recognized by the New York State Board of Regents, which distinguished YU as the first university in America under Jewish auspices. Two other new schools were also formed in that year; another high school and the Institute of Mathematics, now known to us as the Belfer Graduate School of Science. The Community Services Division was also formed that year.

All this impressive growth was achieved under YU's new president, Dr. Samuel Belkin. This master plan of expansion neared completion in 1952 with another amendment to YU's charter, facilitating the establishment, in 1955, of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Still other schools of the fifties included Stern College (1954), Teachers Institute for Women (1952), Cantorial Training Institute (1954), the James Striar School of General Jewish Studies (1956), the Sue Golding Graduate Division of Medical Sciences of AECOM (1957), the Ferkauf Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences (1957), and the Wurzweiler School of Social Work (1957).

### Effects of the Expansion

With this rapid expansion, the University was in an especially favorable position to take advantage of the effects of the go-go sixties, the post war baby boom, the Russian launching of Sputnik and its impetus to American education, and government aid to education.

The advent of the seventies was a time for change in YU, but it took the administration too long to change. Nevertheless, new schools were established, one in Los Angeles called the West Coast Teachers College (1970) and the now much heralded Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law (1976).

These changes may have boded well for the University as a whole, but they nevertheless detracted from the undergraduate division. The recent closing of the Belfer Graduate School, to be replaced with a scientific research institute, and the recent change of administrators under the current president, Dr. Norman Lamm, may be steps in the right direction. Nevertheless, like YC's new business program, only time, as well as the administration's cooperation with the student body, can really tell.

## Stepping Out

## The Middle Ages

By MORRIS BIENENFELD



While leafing through the back issues of COMMENTATOR trying to pick out those articles which would capture the spirit of Yeshiva College during the past fifty years, it suddenly dawned upon me that Yeshiva had become middle aged. Moreover, it seemed to me that Yeshiva had fallen prey to the middle age syndrome.

Upon reaching one's late forties — early fifties, the individual suddenly discovers that he is in that vague period of life between youthful exuberance and hoary wisdom commonly known as being middle aged. This realization often comes as quite a shock to those who fancied themselves remaining twenty-one forever. As a result, there is a frantic attempt to capture the last vestiges of one's rapidly fading youth. A battle is waged against the two sure signs of increasing age — the ever widening waistline and the receding hairline. This is the first symptom of that incurable disease, the middle age syndrome — the unshakeable quest for one's lost youth.

The second symptom comes as a direct corollary of the first. After losing on the battlefield, the individual decides not to attack the enemy directly but to devise a new strategy. Instead of trying to be youthful, the individual decides it is far easier (and less strenuous) to merely appear youthful. Thus, there is a sudden rush to acquire the necessary accoutrements of youth and adopt youthful habits and slogans. It is, perhaps, only in old age that the individual realizes his search for youth was an exercise in futility.

This being Yeshiva's fiftieth birthday it is advisable to check for any signs of the middle age syndrome. Unfortunately, it seems that Yeshiva, too, has succumbed. In an attempt to show youthful energy, Yeshiva is instituting new programs for the coming semesters. Yet, the existing programs, the core of Yeshiva College, are in total disarray and are in serious need of repair. The

present overload of college requirements, the lack of teachers, dearth of courses and general malaise must all be remedied before any new programs will have any significance. As of now, it is merely a middle aged attempt to recapture the heyday of Yeshiva's youth.

Upon closer investigation the second symptom of the middle age syndrome appears as well. The year 1978 heralds the arrival of a new dean to Yeshiva College, a dean from "our generation," a dean with a fresh outlook and new ideas. Yet, for the most part, the real decision makers are men who have been here for decades and view the present problems with the same tunnel vision that served them years ago. Until this power structure is dismantled, the appointment of the new dean is only the attempt to put on a youthful face.

The attempt to appear what one is not, a sure sign of the middle age syndrome, is a serious problem at Yeshiva. To one segment of the Jewish community (most noticeably readers of the Jewish Press) YU depicts itself as a "black hat" yeshiva. From the Madison Avenue type offices on the fourth floor, press releases spew forth with reports of untold students flocking to the Beis Medrash, h'kias awards, and the institution of the Chaver system. Yet, all this propaganda does little to alleviate the massive problems that exist in YP and RIETS. What is, perhaps, even more disturbing is that the powers that be, genuinely believe that all is well and that RIETS can operate in the same manner as it did 80 years ago. A quick glance at the shiur attendance records should shatter any such dreams of complacency. The refusal to recognize one's own obvious failing is an indication of the increasing severity of the middle age syndrome.

Upon becoming middle aged, however, one is not fated to suffer from the middle age syndrome. On the contrary, the individual can recognize being

middle aged for what it is, and work to make this period of his life the most productive. The situation at Yeshiva is similarly not without hope. With a little daring, a lot of work and a little luck, Yeshiva can avoid the middle age syndrome and relax instead in that blissful period known as the prime of life.

Since this is my first and last column, I will not burden the reader with any prolonged maudlin farewells. Instead, I would like to simply thank the many faculty members and friends who have made my years at Yeshiva interesting and enjoyable.

## What Is To Be Done?

By DR. DANIEL C. KURTZER

A few days after I arrived at Yeshiva College to assume the Deanship last October, members of THE COMMENTATOR staff asked me to outline my plans and hopes for the College. I articulated a position which was to evoke a fair amount of student opinion, pro and con: namely, that my goal for Yeshiva College was the furtherance and institutionalization of quality. Such quality would be manifest not in the breadth of our curriculum but in the depth of our offerings.

How does one define quality? In the past, University administrators defined the substance of undergraduate education by referring to the achievements of Yeshiva College graduates. The phenomenally high percentage of professional and graduate school acceptances "proved" that the College was first-rate. Employing these criteria, we failed to notice some alarming indicators of institutional decline: e.g., the severe reduction in the number of full-time faculty; the seemingly unchanging nature of the curriculum, and the precipitous decline in student enrollment.

Perhaps even more significantly, the University failed to no-

tice the changing intellectual climate at Yeshiva College. As a result of the pre-professional orientation of so many students — somewhat ironic in the face of the administration's by-now classic defenses of the "liberal arts" orientation of the College-Yeshiva entered a period of intellectual malaise, characterized by stagnation in scholarly discourse between students and faculty.

This last point was particularly distressing to me, for when I was an undergraduate there was an intellectual ferment on the campus that made it worthwhile to live with all the other problems. This ferment extended the length of the Judaic-secular spectrum: Emanuel Rackman, David Berger, Aaron Lichtenstein, Irving Greenberg, Charles Liebman, Ernest Simon, Michael Weinberg, Daniel Gasman — even if one did not participate in the great debates of those years, it was always reassuring to know that the debates were taking place here.

All of this, therefore, provided the backdrop for my insistence upon a goal of quality for Yeshiva College. We would not accept second-best; and, in the same way that we were and would be subjected to student demands for improvement, we

Cambodia "incursion" and the consequent Kent State Massacre, in the spring of 1970, brought with them to YC massive rallies, cancelled classes, an expedition of faculty and students to Washington, and the option of no grades for that semester. The political turmoil went hand-in-hand with cultural changes. While flower children, communards, and dropped-out followers of the Pied Piper of Harvard (Timothy Leary) never exactly overran the Washington Heights campus, the students' hair grew distinctly longer, and one could even discern an occasional pothead in one's classes.

Violence or sit-ins did not materialize at YC (except for a little flap over whether YC was secular enough to receive Bundy money from the State). In retro- (Continued on Page 12, Col. 5)

## A Message From Dr. Lamm

It is with great pleasure that I greet the faculty, the student body, and the alumni of Yeshiva College on this Golden Jubilee of its existence.

Yeshiva College is a tribute to the vision of its founder, the late Dr. Bernard Revel, of blessed memory, who had the insight and the foresight to draw upon his rich knowledge of the Jewish tradition in order to formulate a philosophy of education that will both articulate with the sources of our sacred heritage and prove consonant with the needs of American Jewry in the Twentieth Century.

The Torah U'Mada philosophy of Yeshiva, or "synthesis" as it is sometimes called, remains a most novel and potent idea. Despite its detractors from the right and the left, it remains the most significant means of advancing our full tradition in the context of contemporary culture.

In my own years as a student at Yeshiva College, I met some of the finest human beings it was my privilege ever to know, both as my teachers and as my fellow students. Some of those teachers are still with us, and many of those who were then students are now members of the faculty. I can say the same of the faculty and student body of 1978 — they are a precious reservoir of academic talent, Jewish commitment, human sensitivity, and personal generosity.

I pray that our successors, at the centenary of Yeshiva College, will be able to think of us warmly and appreciatively as we do of those who first began the great adventure that is Yeshiva College.

would impose a similar requirement on the student body, i.e., to raise the academic and intellectual standards of Yeshiva College.

In pursuit of this goal, we have embarked on a variety of programs and some structural renovations:

— Together with the faculty, we are evolving rigorous but fair procedures to govern the appointment, promotion and tenure of faculty;

— A first rate accounting program will be launched next term. When it receives State approval, the program will allow our graduates to sit for the CPA examination with a BA degree;

— The Humanities division will institute a pilot course in "Great Books" as an alternative to the English 3-4 requirement;

— The Jewish Studies division will unveil significant improvements in most areas of its curriculum;

— We are evolving science enrichment programs with AECOM which will provide a capstone to a dramatically improved undergraduate science curriculum; and

— With the help of friends, we might even break ground for a gymnasium.

These are just some of the projects already in motion. But even they are not enough. Most of all, we must, on the one hand, overcome the attitudinal barriers which stand in the way of quality and, on the other hand, mobilize our resources — as never before — for the benefit of undergraduate education. Specifically, we must accomplish the following:

— Improve faculty working conditions and thus improve the morale of the institution;

— Provide the institutional support for the re-emergence of Yeshiva University as the focus of Jewish intellectual activity in the United States;

— Improve the quality of student life, especially in terms of physical facilities.

These are realistic and realizable goals; and they are no less important than the goals set by the founders of Yeshiva College fifty years ago: to establish the pre-eminent institution of higher learning devoted to Judaic and secular studies.

## Yeshiva College, 1963-1978

By DR. MANFRED WEIDHORN

To an outside observer, YC hardly qualifies as a modern institution of higher learning, so lacking is it in such necessary tribal rituals as football rallies, panty raids, fraternity initiation, and co-ed dorm parties. Those uncharitably disposed might even think that it has yet to emerge from the eighteenth century. Such perceptions notwithstanding, a chronicler would note that during the last decades the school has not been untouched by the currents of social change sweeping through America.

Some fifteen years ago, to be sure, the hot local issues were whether the faculty coach of the YC College Bowl team should have worn a skullcap on television and whether reproductions of Modigliani nudes on dormitory walls constituted, if not idol wor-

ship, at least idle libido worship. On the other hand, a new faculty member who attended a reception at Dean Isaac Bacon's house soon after the start of the fall 1963 semester might recall that a topic of discussion, earnestly introduced by the Dean, was whether the US was morally justified in helping topple the Diem regime in Saigon. In the light of subsequent events, all the discussants — like, indeed, all of America — seem to have been hopeless waifs. Ill-fated semester! A bare few weeks later, John Kennedy's body was a-moldering in the grave, and the Era of Bad Feelings had begun: a dozen years of waving fists, gunshots heard round the world, the blood of great ones on the floor, foreign policy debates in the streets, police riots, and a flood of young refugees from — and not, for once, to — America.

In its own parochial way, YC participated in these events. Who remembers now, or who would not rather forget, that in early 1965 student leaders circulated a letter to President Johnson backing his Vietnam policy to the hilt? It garnered a lot of signatures. Most Americans, of course, felt that way too; the tunnel, everyone knew, was only a short underpass. A couple of years later, however, the teach-ins had finally come to even YC, as well as a mimeographed anti-war "journal" with articles by faculty and students. Teachers who had primly kept their personal values out of the classroom found themselves, not without misgivings, injecting anti-war statements into their lectures.

It was a time, all parties to the controversy agreed, when everyone had to take a stand. The

## Faculty Adds 21 Profs; Sciences Cap Majority

October 24, 1960

Rabbi Joshua Shmidman has been named visiting lecturer of Jewish philosophy, announced Dr. Isaac Bacon, Dean of Yeshiva College.

An alumnus of Brooklyn College, Rabbi Shmidman was ordained at Mesivta Rabbi Chaim Berlin.

The natural science division has been increased by nine members of the faculty, the language division by five, and the psychology staff by two.

Dr. Robert Schutz, Mr. Samuel Blackman, and Mr. J. Merriam Peterson were appointed assistant professors of chemistry. Dr. Schutz received his BS from Ohio State University and his MA and PhD from Harvard University.

Dr. Azriel Rosenfeld and Dr. Donald J. Newman are lecturing in mathematics and Dr. Leon Landowitz in physics. All three are associated with the Yeshiva University Graduate School of Science.

### Physicists Added

Dr. Aaron Krumbain, an alumnus of New York University, and Dr. David Finkelstein, who received his doctorate from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, were named to the physics department. Dr. Fred Goodman

was appointed assistant professor of biology.

A graduate of the Free University of Prague, Dr. Nina Syniawska is now lecturing in Russian at the College.

Mr. Murray Feder and Mr. Henry Strutz were added to the German departments. They are alumni of the City College of New York and are also teaching there at the present time.

The Hebrew department added Chaim Leaf and Rabbi Meyer Feldblum to its faculty.

Professors Norman Gordon and Burtan Milenback, graduates of NYU and YU respectively, were named to the psychology department.

The labor relations course is being given by Mr. George Perkel, associate director of research for the Textile Workers Union.

Mr. Paul Lion, who received his BA and MA degrees from NYU was appointed visiting lecturer of speech.

A graduate of Columbia University and coach of the Yeshiva College wrestling team, Mr. Henry Wittenberg was named instructor of physical education.

Mr. Jacob Dienstag, chief librarian of the Mendel Gottesman Library, has been appointed lecturer in library techniques. He received his MLS at Columbia University.

## Class Caps Now To Be Required

February 17, 1937

The regulation governing the class caps will go into effect on March 15, according to the act of Student Council which made these regulations official last Monday night.

These rules require all students to wear their class caps between the hours of 3 pm and 9 pm on school days. The caps must also be worn at any function sponsored by the College administration or by Student Council in the Yeshiva building.

Classes are expected to meet before next week to decide on the colors of their caps which in all cases must be peaked. Any color combination except the Blue and White of Yeshiva College may be used, but no two classes may wear the same colors.

The colors chosen by the several classes will be retained by them throughout their stay at Yeshiva. Future freshman classes will be required to choose their colors at the beginning of the year.

Enforcement of these regulations will be in the hands of the cap committee, consisting of the class presidents. Students found violating these rules three times will be penalized in such manner as the committee may see fit. Such penalties may take the form of fines or possibly, even suspension.

## Main Building, 1927



— YUPR

## Council Urges Students: Watch Ethical Standards

November 5, 1959

A resolution asking for a solution to the problem caused by unethical practices on examinations was passed by Student Council at its October 7 meeting. In addition, Student

Council passed a resolution which requested the students not to patronize the poolroom located in the vicinity of the campus.

In its first resolution, which was subsequently presented to Dr. Isaac Bacon, Dean of Yeshiva College, Student Council asked for a two-phase solution to this problem.

First, that immediate action be taken in the form of stricter proctors, including professors supervising their own examinations, and stringent punishments in the case of repeated violations; secondly, a long-range program of curriculum evaluation and the establishment of a back file of final examinations. In addition, all student leaders were requested by Benjamin Hirsch '60, president of Student Council, to "remember their positions by fully upholding the spirit of this resolution."

While Student Council maintained that it has no objection to the game of pool, per se, it "strongly disapproved" of students frequenting the room near the Yeshiva, because of the unsavory reputation, in general, of such establishments. This resolution was mimeographed and circulated among students before the holiday recess.

"With these resolutions Student Council has moved closer to creating a favorable climate of opinion based on integrity, trust, and responsibility," Mr. Hirsch said. "Both resolutions," he continued, "stress the reawakening of Jewish awareness and religious consciousness in every Yeshiva student."

### EXPLAINS CHECK-UP

The purpose of the regulation requiring students of the Yeshiva to receive permission before accepting teaching jobs is to facilitate check-up on attendance, Norman B. Abrams announced last week. A complete record is necessary in order to excuse absences of those students who teach, he said.

## YC Seniors Protest GRE's

April 2, 1959

"The Senior Class demonstration on March 17 against counting the Graduate Record Exam for honors was completely justified in the light of past events," the class stated in a resolution passed by an overwhelming majority of those present at a class meeting, March 26.

The resolution, which was presented during this past week to Dr. Simeon Guterman, Dean of Yeshiva College, went on to request that the administration discontinue the procedure of counting Graduate Record Exam scores as the eighth-term's marks towards honors.

### Marbles Roll

The "demonstration" consisted of dancing in the middle of Amsterdam Avenue prior to taking the GRE test, and rolling marbles along the floor, singing various songs, and applauding rhythmically during the exam.

The GRE was originally administered four years ago in an effort to evaluate the College's curriculum. Two years ago the Faculty Committee on Scholastic Standing established the policy of counting it toward honors which has been strongly criticized by students ever since.

### The Commie Fights

THE COMMENTATOR has always fought against this policy. In its Dec. 12, 1957 issue THE COMMENTATOR stated, "It seems ridiculous that a college administration could really base one-eighth of a college career on one test whose standards it cannot supervise."

The March 4, 1959 COMMENTATOR had this to say, "How could one conceive of counting the results of a test whose duration is a few hours for even as little as one-eighth of a grade or average which judges four years of work?"

## Junior Trips To Israel Ended

December 11, 1958

Yeshiva University administration officials have decided to discontinue student group trips to Israel under YU sponsorship.

"During the time a student is still in the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary or Teachers Institute, we will not encourage him to leave for Israel," stated Dr. Samuel Belkin, President of Yeshiva University.

Dr. Belkin had been questioned about an article in the October 27 issue of THE COMMENTATOR reporting the opening of an Israeli branch of the Jewish Theological Seminary. The article had gone on to say, "Unfortunately, Yeshiva University has done nothing to combat this, and as far as Israel is concerned, the general policy of our institution seems to be, let well enough alone."

### 12 Juniors in Institute

This change in policy means the end of the "Teachers Institute—Israeli study plan" which had sent sixty college juniors to Israel since 1950. Twelve juniors are currently attending classes in the Chaim Greenberg Institute and Hebrew University, both in Jerusalem.

The abandonment of the program was met by adverse comment on the part of many members of the student body, particularly those who had studied in Israel under the auspices of the plan.

### Continuous Education

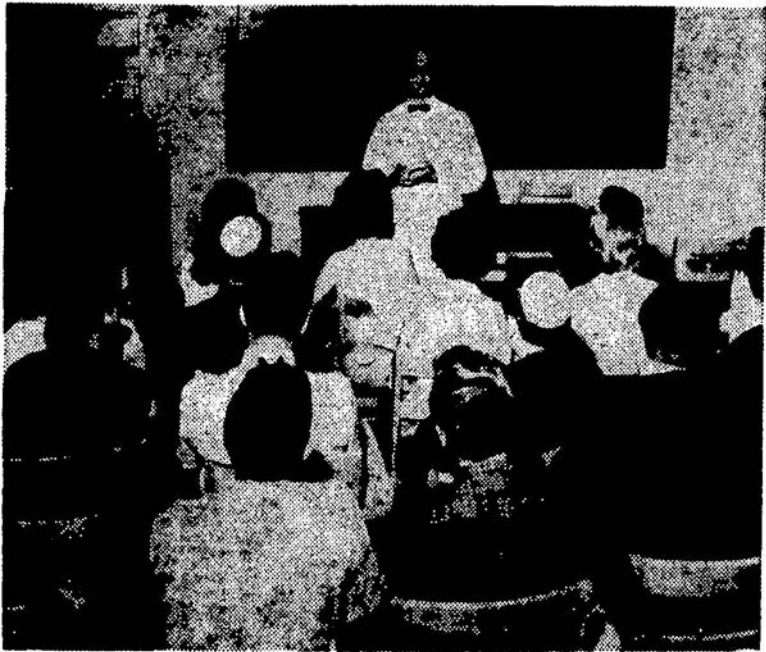
Dr. Belkin stated that the plan would be discontinued because he felt "our teachers are as good as any in Israel. A college education should not be disrupted by a leave of absence."

The President also stated that individual students will be permitted to leave College to go to Israel, "but only at their own risk." Dr. Belkin concluded that preliminary plans are under way for the establishment of a post-graduate branch of Yeshiva University in Israel.



Yeshiva's chem labs: only the faces have changed.

— YUPR



—YUPR

## Rabbi Moses D. Tendler Appointed Dorm Adviser

November 23, 1955

Rabbi Moses D. Tendler, rosh yeshiva in RIETS and instructor in Biology at Yeshiva College on leave, has been appointed Guidance Counselor for the dormitory, announced Dr. Samuel Belkin, president of the University. He will serve as a counselor on all personal problems and will be readily available to all students for informal discussion of their problems.

Rabbi Tendler is meeting with all dormitory residents in order to acquaint himself with their problems. "By means of these interviews," he said, "I hope to impress upon the students the importance of adopting a healthy Jewish attitude when solving their problems." Students should feel at liberty to speak freely, as none of the information revealed in these discussions will be divulged, Rabbi Tendler assured.

### Program Expanded

With the appointment of Rabbi Tendler, the guidance program instituted by the administration last year has been expanded. The new guidance counselor will have at his disposal all the facilities of the Psychological Clinic and the College Guidance Department, as

well as the services of several members of the College faculty who have volunteered to assist him. Undergraduates Sylvan Lent '56, Bernard Rothman '57, and Isaac Sadowsky '56, will also assist.

### Students Apathetic

"The reason that last year's guidance program failed to prove a success," explained Rabbi Tendler, "was student apathy and general suspicion of the guidance service, arising from ignorance of its aims. However, we are trying again this year to make the students realize that the guidance service is here to help them," declared Rabbi Tendler.

Anyone who wishes to speak to Rabbi Tendler may apply for an appointment through either Mr. Baer's office or by personally contacting the Rabbi in room 202, Mondays through Thursdays, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## Abrams Says Yiddish Made Scapegoat By Lazy Students

January 2, 1964

Mr. Norman B. Abrams, administrative director of RIETS, recently presented the administration's official view on the controversy centered around the Yiddish shiurim in RIETS.

Many students find the use of the Yiddish language an unnecessary burden in the study of Gemara. At present only a few shiurim are taught in English. "Of course," Mr. Abrams said, "the administration recognizes that a problem exists in 1963 that did not exist in 1915. Yiddish is no longer used as the *mamma lashon* in the majority of Jewish homes. Students are not as familiar with the language as they used to be.

"But we also recognize that from generations of use, Yiddish has evolved into the accepted *Gemara lashon*. The *Roshei Yeshiva* use this language because it is a way of life." Mr. Abrams continued, "I personally imagine it similar to Hebrew. Just as davening does not have the same warmth in a translated language, so, too, Talmud could not be learned as well in any language other than Yiddish."

Mr. Abrams explained that he was not asking the students in RIETS to learn or look at Yiddish as a new language, but he was asking them not to use ex-

pediency as a reason to abolish a time-honored tradition.

"If a student prepared a text sufficiently well during the *leinus* period, he should with little effort, be able to follow his *rebbe's* Yiddish comments," Mr. Abrams insisted. "By the end of his first year a student should no longer experience any language difficulty."

### A Scapegoat For Other Faults

Mr. Abrams suggested the use of the Gottesman Library and the reading of Yiddish papers to help students add to their Yiddish knowledge.

Mr. Abrams made an interesting point when he said, "After 37 years of experience in RIETS, I have come to suspect that students are using Yiddish as a scapegoat. They do not speak out against their *Rebbis* because of respect, and of course the students will not blame themselves for their lack of Talmudic progress. Therefore, they take out their disappointment on an inanimate entity, a language — in this case, Yiddish."

"There are many reasons other than laziness why students do not succeed in their Talmudic studies. Personality conflicts, family troubles, and poor *chavrusa* choices are major factors, but with a little patience and effort, these problems can be dealt with."

## Dr. Tendler Resigns Post

October 24, 1960

Dr. Moses D. Tendler has resigned from his post of Assistant Dean of Yeshiva College and taken a leave of absence from his administrative duties, revealed Dean Isaac Bacon.

Dr. Tendler will continue, however, as an Associate Professor of Biology at the College and as an instructor of Talmud at RIETS.

"As a result of my recent concentration on applied areas of bacteriology that deal with the combating of cancer by the use of antibiotics which is more time consuming than the theoretical work I had previously done," stated Dr. Tendler, "I have requested the leave of absence."

### Seminars To Be Continued

Dr. Tendler added that he anticipates returning to administrative duties in about a year. During this time, the Sabbath and *nidah* seminars that he instituted will be continued.

"I feel that I will now be able to publish material on mechanical problems brought about by modern technology. The use of rennet in cheese is a situation requiring for its solution a scientific background of greater depth than that possessed by most rabbis," he concluded.

## Council Votes Silence On Defense Loyalty Oath

January 7, 1960

Student Council has accepted the recommendation of the Loyalty Oath Committee "to remain among the 700 colleges not protesting the oath and affidavit of the National Defense Loan Act."

David Segal '62, chairman of the committee, emphasized that the report was neither in favor nor against the oath. "We feel that Council should only take an official stand for the entire student body if it would produce an effect on the situation," he stated.

### No Bandwagon Hopping

Mr. Segal also pointed out that "to come out against the affidavit now would only be jumping on the bandwagon started by Harvard and Yale." Under the NDL Act a student accepting a government loan must sign an oath proclaiming his loyalty to the government and an affidavit that he "does not believe in or support any organization teaching the overthrow of the United States Government."

The Kennedy-Clark bill introduced in congress to eliminate both the affidavit and the oath was defeated in the Senate. Senator Jacob Javits (R-NY) then amended the bill to delete only the affidavit from the NDL Act.

Despite Senate passage of the

amended bill, it has been sent back to a committee.

Benjamin Hirsch '60, President of Student Council stated, "congressional opinion is against the affidavit and it will probably be withdrawn in the near future, therefore, Student Council took no stand."

## YU Pickets

May 5, 1960

More than thirty Yeshiva College students picketed in front of the 181st St. branch of F. W. Woolworth demanding that equal rights be extended to the Negroes in the South.

The picketing started at 5 pm, Thursday, April 21, and continued throughout the Thursday evening shopping rush. The placards protested Woolworth's policy of segregating lunch-counters in their Southern stores and urged the shoppers to voice their disapproval of this policy by boycotting the store.

Pamphlets calling upon passers-by not to buy at Woolworth's were also circulated.

The picketing was part of an organized movement on the part of Metropolitan College Students who have picketed various Woolworth stores on 76 occasions. The Metropolitan Students for Non-Violent Civil Rights Action, of which Yeshiva is a member, also held rallies and is conducting a fund-raising campaign.

Student Council endorsed the MSNVCA and called upon the student body of Yeshiva to aid in the "massive resistance." The Council resolution noted that despite the inaction of other religious colleges, as Jews we were morally required to uphold the equality of all men.

The Student Councils of Hunter, Brooklyn, Pratt, and Queens Colleges have also endorsed the League of Metropolitan Students. Chaim Charytan '60 is a member of its Steering Committee and Murry Geller '60 and Teddy Berman '60 are Yeshiva's representatives.

## Math Again Heads YU Major Choice

March 24, 1952

Mathematics continues to be the leading major of Yeshiva College students according to statistics released by Mr. Morris Silverman, registrar.

The figures indicate that 13.8% are majoring in Mathematics. However, this represents a 4.5% decline from last year.

Psychology majors numbering 11.1% still comprise the second largest group. Political Science majors, whose numbers have increased from 7.8% to 10.7%, replace English for the third position.

The most substantial increase was made in the number of Pre-Med majors who have almost doubled to 6.1% from last year's 3.4%.

Increases were made in the following subjects: Chemistry, Political Science, Physics, Biology, Pre-Med, French, and German.

The following decreased in number: Mathematics, Psychology, History, Sociology, Hebrew, Philosophy, and Classical Languages.

English majors showed no change, remaining at 9.3%.

## Unexcused RIETS Absence Results In Letters Home

December 4, 1962

All RIETS students who are absent without a valid excuse from either the morning sessions in the Beis Medrash, or from the afternoon Shiur will have letters sent to their parents, announced Mr. Norman B. Abrams, registrar of the Rabbi Issac Elchanan Theological Seminary.

Students who arrive at the Beis Medrash after the attendance has been checked, at 9:20 am, should report directly to the Office of RIETS (Room 110-Main Building) in order that the absence may be changed to a lateness. The ruling took effect on November 24.

The decision to inform parents is not due to increased absenteeism, stated Mr. Abrams, which is at a minimum, and is considered "almost perfect." However, there has been an unnecessary amount of lateness, which it is hoped, will be reduced by the new regulation.

Mr. Abrams added that parents complain about their son's progress and thus are entitled to be informed as to the extent of ab-



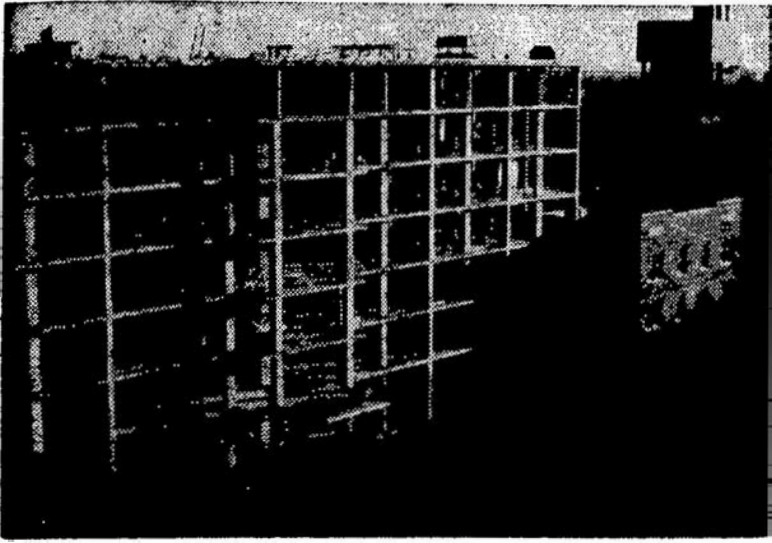
—YUPR

sence. Mr. Abrams further commented that although there is no cut system in RIETS, 5-7% absenteeism is expected and tolerated.

Although the attendance regulation was announced shortly after the appearance of a COMMENTATOR editorial criticizing the Beis Medrash attendance system, Mr. Abrams emphasized that there was "no connection whatsoever." "I did enjoy reading the editorial," he added.



—YUPR



— YUPR

## Dorm Residents Suspended

March 24, 1958

Ten New York City residents have been suspended from the dormitory for one week because of "unsatisfactory" minyan attendance. Thirty other students, most of them from out of town, received "suspended suspensions." This means they will be evicted if their minyan attendance continues to be "unsatisfactory."

The suspensions were issued by Rabbi Moshe Klein, dormitory supervisor. He explained that attending minyan two times a week would be considered satisfactory by his office.

When the suspensions were first announced, student leaders proposed that the students involved, instead of being suspended, be compelled to attend seminars on the importance of tefila b'tsibur.

This proposal was rejected by the administration. However, a seminar is being organized on a

voluntary basis to discuss tefila.

The Assistant Dean, Rabbi Klein's immediate superior, told THE COMMENTATOR he was in accord with the suspension policy. He felt that the religious guidance program this year had been "adequate."

Student leaders pointed out that the suspensions were in direct violation of Residence Hall Regulation VIII in the handbook issued by the administration. This regulation states, "Repeated failure to attend services renders the student liable to disciplinary action by the student court." The supervisor's office, student leaders said, had ignored the court completely in this matter.

## Council Meeting Highlighted By Picasso Incident

December 30, 1965

Two major questions of concern and interest to all Yeshiva College students were brought up at the Student Council meeting Wednesday, December 22.

A controversy over paintings arose when dormitory authorities removed a Picasso painting of a woman, unclothed, from a dormitory room in RIETS Hall. In light of this, Student Council decided to air the problem at a meeting, and Rabbi Morris Besdin, chairman of JSP, was asked to offer the halachic viewpoint.

It was emphasized that, aside from any other considerations, the painting was removed because it violated written dormitory rules which prohibit the hanging of anything on dormitory walls. Rabbi Besdin stated that in a room containing this type of distraction, one is not permitted to put on tefilin, read the Shema, mention God's name, or make a bracha. A Yeshiva College student is expected to do all those things in his room at some time. He added that wearing tefilin requires a clean body and a clean mind, and "would anyone dare put on tefilin with pictures like these on the wall?"

In reply to a question from one of the many students who jammed the Rubin Hall Synagogue, Rabbi Besdin declared that students have a right to form their own opinions. But here, at a school dedicated to Torah, and in a place where we are building a Torah community, students cannot claim the freedom to belief and action that is contrary to Torah. Rabbi Besdin also expanded on the various religious dangers inherent in certain forms of art.

## Council To Bring Dorm Supervisor Before College Judiciary Committee

January 9, 1962

Student Council will bring Dormitory Supervisor Rabbi Joshua Cheifetz before the Faculty-Student Judiciary Committee for allegedly usurping the powers of Student Court. A resolution to this effect was passed at the December 25 meeting of the Council.

During the week of December 18, seven students were expelled from the dormitory by the supervisor for committing infractions which student leaders felt were within the jurisdiction of the court. In past years complaints comparable to the one made by the supervisor were brought before Student Court.

Student Council President Tobias Berman stated, "I brought this topic before Council not only because of the unjust action taken by Rabbi Cheifetz but because of his reluctance to postpone sentence until the legal question could be settled."

The Student Council decision followed a lengthy discussion and question-and-answer period attended by Rabbi Cheifetz and approximately 175 students in the dorm cafeteria.

Rabbi Cheifetz stated that he was not familiar with the Fleisher Report passed by last year's Student Council and approved by University President Dr. Samuel Belkin which governs College student activities and, upon reading the report, stated that he did not believe these regulations pertained to matters of the dormitory or of religious misbehavior. Hence, he refused to consider the possibility of allowing the displaced students to remain in the dormitory until the issue could finally be resolved by the Judiciary Committee.

In other action, Council voted unanimously to send a strong resolution to Dr. Belkin protesting the fact that the recent tuition

December 16, 1948

Recently, my father received a letter, a copy of which was sent to me. It read like this:

Dear Mr. Keller,

Please be informed that your son is not complying with the Dormitory regulations applicable to Minyan Attendance. This condition must be corrected immediately or he will be requested to vacate his dormitory room.

Your immediate attention concerning this matter is vital in order to help carry out our planned program to fruition.

Yours truly,

(signed) Dormitory Committee

I understand moreover that I was not the only one whose parents received this letter, but that it was sent via registered mail to the homes of over one hundred dormitory residents. It seems that the "Dormitory Committee" was quite busy.

### What Is The Purpose

It goes without saying that I was quite perturbed over my parents' receipt of such a letter — not, as you might suppose, because I was afraid of the consequences this letter was designed to bring about. Not at all. It caused me great pain to think that my parents should receive from an institution whose philosophy and direction they thought to be dictated by the loftiest and most idealistic principles of morals and religion — Jewish re-

ligion that is — such an evident manifestation of inquisitorial tendencies, and slavish regard for outward appearance.

I should like to ask this so-called "Dormitory Committee" just exactly what is the purpose of these "regulations applicable to Minyan Attendance." Just what is this "planned program" that they are so intent on "carrying to fruition"? If it is to create a group of spiritual yes-men with the unique moral strength of being able to get up, get dressed and run fast enough downstairs,

so that they can arrive at the synagogue before 7:40 — the time of taking the attendance — they are succeeding. If it is to make of the prayer an oppressive burden to boys in their most impressionable years — they are succeeding. If it is to remove from the morning services every vestige of sanctity, if it is to make of the putting on of the tephillin a purely make-any-suggestion of serious prayer, a matter to be made fun of — then they are succeeding nobly.

I should like to ask the Dormitory Committee what they think is the cause of the incessant talking in the rear of the Beth Ha Medrash during the services. Do people who come of their own free will to pray in what they consider a holy place, act in such a manner? I should further like to ask the honorable members of this committee why they find it necessary to place counselors at the exits of the synagogue to see that no one "escapes" before the end of the service.

From these significant tendencies to be noted on the part of the students, it is not difficult to see that, if the Dormitory Committee has any idea that compulsory Minyan attendance causes an increase in spirituality, they are so far mistaken in their medieval conceptions that they would appear ludicrous, were not the consequences of their equally outmoded tactics pitiable.

I did not write this article merely to call names or to appear smart, but to call to the attention of those in whose power it is to change these conditions, a situation which, if not remedied, will continue to manifest itself in the now all-too-common sight of boys in the dining room bent-schewing and doing homework or waving to friends at the same time.

Minyan is compulsory, as is English Composition, but Judaism — basic Judaism — which is so sorely needed — is not. If the Yeshiva stands for the ideals so talked of by these speakers, let it teach them and practice them; but if it is mechanical operation — if it is to be only interested in polished door knobs and accreditation, it is no place for me or any one else who calls himself a Jew.



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A "typical" YC student twenty years ago.

## New Facilities Promised For YU Residence Hall

November 25, 1957

Canteen and laundry facilities will soon be installed in the College Dormitory, announced Rabbi Moshe Klein, supervisor of the Residence Hall. He further stated that the school has plans for building basketball, handball and tennis courts on the land adjacent to the dormitory which will also be landscaped. The parking lot,

formerly located on that site, will be now situated in vacant land on the corner of 185th and Amsterdam Avenue.

The canteen will contain milk, coffee, soda, cake, cigarettes and candy machines. Three washing machines, two driers, one extractor and two ironing boards will be installed in the laundry room.



A view of Amsterdam Ave., during the pre-Gottesman Library years.

— YUPR

# Personality Survey

December 24, 1951

Almost half of the students polled in a recent COMMENTATOR survey, 48.7%, did not know that Simon Hellerstein '51 is president of the Yeshiva College Student Council. Only 21.8% and 30.4% of those who filled out the questionnaire knew that Bob Rozen '53 and Marty Lindenbaum '54 comprise the remainder of the Executive Council, serving as vice-president and secretary-treasurer, respectively.

These figures are a portion of the results of a poll conducted by THE COMMENTATOR. Students were asked to identify some of their undergraduate leaders, as well as the names of the dean, registrar, and coach of the basketball team. Three hundred and two out of a total student enrollment of four hundred and eighty-three (62.5% of the student body) filled out the questionnaire, leaving little doubt as to the reliability of the survey.

## The Average Score

The average student at YC could answer no more than seven of the fifteen questions which were posed to him. Considering that two of the questions asked, calling for the name of the dean and registrar, were practically "give-aways," the average score is surprisingly low.

The longer a man attends the College, the more he is expected to be familiar with student life. The survey shows, however, that there is, on the whole, very little difference between the knowledge of freshmen, sophomores and juniors. The greatest variation is between juniors and seniors, where the average number answered correctly jumped from 7.4 for the juniors to 10.3 for the seniors.

## TI, Yeshiva

It is interesting to note that very little difference exists between the average scores of students registered in the Yeshiva and those who attend the Teachers Institute. The slight difference that does exist must, through statistical calculations, be attributed to chance.

In December of 1960, two sociology students undertook a comprehensive survey to determine the behavior of Yeshiva College students with respect to cheating on examinations, dating and religious beliefs. Of the 269 students approached, 148 were in RIETS, 91 in TI (now EMC) and 30 in the Jewish Studies Program (now JSS). Great care was exercised to insure that all answers would remain anonymous and confidential. The results were horrifying.

In an attempt to deal with the problem, THE COMMENTATOR printed a page-long editorial calling for massive upheaval in the structure and curriculum of RIETS and TI. In response, Dean Isaac Bacon demanded the resignation of the Editor-in-Chief and Dr. Belkin z"l called the editorial "a piece of filth."

The actual results of the survey were never printed because of the fear of the damage it would cause to Yeshiva. Now, eighteen years later, we hope the printing of the results is of historical interest only.

## RESULTS OF THE 1960 SURVEY

- 19.3 percent of all students in TI stated that they do not cheat.
- 19.4 percent of the seniors in RIETS stated that they do not cheat.
- 14.5 percent of all seniors denied that they cheat, compared to 23.8 percent on the schoolwide basis.
- 46 percent of all RIETS students stated that they participate in mixed social dancing.
- 78.3 percent of all TI students stated that they participate in mixed social dancing.
- 40.4 percent of all TI students said that they go further than kissing a girl.
- 61.5 percent of the seniors in TI said that they go further than kissing a girl.
- 18.5 percent of all RIETS students said that they go further than kissing a girl.
- 19.1 percent of all students in TI denied that they had any physical contact with girls.
- 51.9 percent of the sophomores in TI stated that they considered themselves to be Orthodox Jews.
- 45.2 percent of all students in TI stated that they either turn on lights on Saturday, ride on Saturday, eat non-kosher food, or shave with a razor.

# A Free Press

April 2, 1958

The right of THE COMMENTATOR to print articles, news stories and or editorials on any problems which are not limited to the College has been denied by Dr. Simeon L. Guterman, Dean of Yeshiva College and concurred in by Dr. Samuel Belkin, President of the University. A memorandum to this effect printed on page two of this issue specifically denies the right of this newspaper to mention a University problem which has caused much comment and many letters to the editor.

The Governing Board has voted unanimously to suspend publication of THE COMMENTATOR under this ruling. If the ruling is not rescinded there will be no COMMENTATOR.

It is the feeling of the Governing Board that THE COMMENTATOR is more than just a newspaper put out by a few individuals to print only college affairs. Rather, THE COMMENTATOR, the only student newspaper in the University above the high school level, represents the student body of the University. College students attend RIETS, TI, or JSP and also live in the dormitory. The board is obligated to print editorials reflecting the viewpoint of student government and also to print the opposing viewpoints expressed by students.

This is the responsibility of our newspaper; it cannot be questioned, nor will we evade it.

# Rav Discusses Missions

December 4, 1963

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik addressed the students and faculty of the three Hebrew divisions in a special assembly convoked "to meet one of the most awesome challenges in the millenia of our history."

Rabbi Soloveitchik discussed and analyzed the evangelical missions of the Christian Church in Israel and the Diaspora and the Ecumenical Council schema on anti-Semitism. This was the first time that Rabbi Soloveitchik has lectured before the student bodies on modern problems facing Jewry. He spoke at Nathan Lamport Auditorium on Thursday, November 21.

## Eternal Problems

The problems facing Jewry today, stated Rabbi Soloveitchik, are the same that faced Jacob. Esau asked Jacob's scouts, "Whose are you—and where are you going?" These two questions are now being asked by another Esau in a "new guise"—the Church, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. They ask "to whom do you belong as a spiritual personality and what is your ultimate goal and way of life? Who is after God?"

Our answers now, declared Rabbi Soloveitchik, are no different from those in the time of Jacob. Jacob and what he represented are highly relevant in 1963. "We are committed to Jacob and the God of Israel . . . This is our only answer . . . No compromise and no retreat . . . We follow our destiny, we defy even our own common sense . . . we have our commitment."

Rabbi Soloveitchik's address was fervid and emotional, but he spoke clearly and lucidly. "The Church suggests to us directly and indirectly a revision of our 2000 year old decision against Christianity and its founder. The Church has decided to approach us again. The aim of the Church



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is to convert the Jews in Israel to Christianity and they are approaching us with these [Esau's] questions.

## Church Dogma

"The evangelical mission of the Church is unequivocally a part of its dogma. Both Protestants and Roman Catholics concur on this mission, although they may differ slightly. While in the past the baptism of the single Jew—one, ten, or one thousand—was the goal, today the Church is out to evangelize the whole Jewish community as such."

The rise of the State of Israel is a prime reason for the new evangelical interests. The Church has taught that Jews can never return to Zion because they rejected Jesus, yet, they see that the State of Israel is established.

They are thus faced with a contradiction between theory and reality. According to Rabbi Soloveitchik, the Church's solution is baptism. Since the Jewish State is now secular, the Church sees a secular Jew, one who abandoned his identity as a "member of a metaphysical, Masoretic group."

# YU Washington Delegation Presents Vietnam Petition

February 18, 1966

Military Aide to Vice President Humphrey, US Marine Corps Colonel H. L. Beckington and Deputy Secretary of State William Jordan received a delegation of 27 Yeshiva College students Tuesday, February 1, in the Old Treat Room of the Executive Office of the

White House. The delegation, headed by Yeshiva College Student Council President Joseph Isaiah Berlin and Political Science Club President Robert L. Mark, presented a petition of 800 signatures supporting the administration's policy in Vietnam.

Prior to and following a debate on Vietnam sponsored by Student Council, some 700 Yeshiva College students and 100 Stern College students signed the petition reading as follows: "We the undersigned students, members of the academic community, do hereby affix our names to this petition to record our position in support of the policy of the President of the US regarding the war in Vietnam."

Despite snowed-out roads, the Yeshiva delegation filled three cars Tuesday morning in front of the New Dorm.

In presenting the petition, the delegates read the following statement:

"The history of this nation has recorded many crises from its very inception to date in its struggle to attain freedom and liberty for itself and the people of the world.

"Jewish History, too, reflects a similar vein in its quest for freedom and abolition of oppression, except that too often we were the personal victims of the said oppression.

"We as Jews are aware of the murder of 6,000,000 of our people by the Hitlerian aggressors and totalitarians and are also conscious of the present day Com-

munist aggression throughout the world. We are also sympathetic to any group of people who want to preserve their freedom, their independence, and their own way of life. As loyal Americans and loyal Jews steeped in the traditions of Orthodox Jewry we feel duty bound to express support for the policy of the administration in Vietnam.

"It is essential that the President be backed by national unity so that all aggressors or would-be aggressors, be they the Communist North Vietnamese, the Red Chinese, or the Nasserites of Egypt will be duly warned that the US can make their 'wars of liberation' extremely unprofitable.

"President Johnson no doubt wants a negotiated settlement which would guarantee the South Vietnamese freedom from Communist bondage and a chance to develop their own institutions of government. We feel that no loyal American can be opposed to this policy. . . . It is our considered opinion that under the present circumstances the withdrawal of our troops can only lead to a Communist takeover in South Vietnam, followed by the Red Chinese subversion of other Asian countries. If such a course is followed, neither India, nor Israel, nor any other nation struggling for the preservation of its culture and the freedom of its citizens will be safe."

Colonel Beckington received the petition and called the delegation part of an "informed public." He

stressed the Vice President's firm belief that the more informed the public becomes, the more they understand the policy of the US in Vietnam, and the more they side with it. Deputy Secretary of State William Jordan termed the petition an "important . . . first step" but added that much more can and should be done now. The delegation, interpreting his statement as a suggestion for a cultural exchange, felt gratified in knowing that David Rubin, a delegate, will join the Peace Corps next year to teach English in Thailand.

# YCSC Announces Contest To Find A School Song

November 6, 1947

The Yeshiva College Student Council has authorized a contest for the composition of a school song, an official alma mater. The contest is being staged under the auspices of the Yeshiva College orchestra. The prize will be twenty-five dollars, presented to the student whose song is officially adopted by the school, and which will be played by the orchestra at all important student functions.

The music of the song may be original or that of any known composer. All entries may be submitted to a member of the executive body of the orchestra, in room 439. The entries must be in by February 1, 1949.

(Editor's note: In order to capture the spirit of Yeshiva's past THE COMMENTATOR mailed a questionnaire to all YC alumni asking them to describe their years here and what YU meant to them. What follows are selected excerpts from the many responses received.)

**ABRAHAM AVRUTICK**  
1934

I remember 1929 as a bitter-sweet year. I remember arriving in New York City from Montreal and travelling to Washington Heights by subway. Tired from an all night train ride, exhausted from the push and pull of the early morning subway crowds, frustrated from the misdirections how to reach Amsterdam Avenue and 186th Street, a stranger arrived at RIETS-YC. The most pleasant sight was the imposing Byzantine structure overlooking Harlem River. It was impressive. Not so impressive was the gruff shalom aleichem with which the administrator greeted me, the registration procedure, the dormitory room that was not available, and the night spent in a bed sans sheet and sans pillows. A month or so later came the great economic depression. It was harsh; harsh for parents and harsh for the YC administration. But somehow I recall that the student body did not suffer as much as the world outside the "ivory tower."

Once school started, things did fall into the proper place and procedure. The morning minyan was good, but not good enough. Too many absentees, and too

excellent teachers who gave me an approach to the subject. I owe YU much. I feel I grew in the subject matters that interested me, and gained a prospective that I was seeking. It sustains me till this day.

**ABE WEISS**  
1935

Perhaps I have no right writing this memoir. I never graduated Yeshiva College. I attended from 1933-1935 and was not quite eighteen during my adolescent revolt.

I am writing as a baal teshuva. But it goes without saying that once I saw the error of my impulse, my YC education was the foundation of my "Returning."

What was my most lasting memory of those two years in the early Thirties? I was seventeen, when I walked one June morning in 1935 into Dr. Bernard Revel's office. It was in the northern corner of the second floor next to the Mendel Gottesman Library. And I made the following (prepared) declaration: (As closely as I can recall it after 42 years).

"I have outgrown Judaism. . . . I no longer need ritual to become a moral person. . . . I can be decent without a dogma. . . . I want to transfer to City College."

Dr. Revel's sad eyes turned sadder. How many times before had he heard variations of this Manifesto? Instead of alarm, he spoke as a father to a misguided son. (As closely as I can recall it after 42 years.)

"Stay here with us longer. Study more. There is so much

years — at Yeshiva I can see more clearly than anything else the picture of Mr. Purvis — I suppose he is alav hashalom by now — with a bunch of keys walking up the stairs to turn off the lights on each floor by 11:30 at night.

This 11:30 at night business was so ingrained that I remember when I used to come home to Baltimore on short visits while a student at Yeshiva I would, as

**Letters  
From  
Alumni**

a matter of reflex, go to my room and check the time first before trying any light switches. I wonder, how is it now? Are students still not permitted any lights in their dorm rooms after 11:30 pm? Perhaps with the energy shortage it's earlier now!

How lucky were those students next to the cloak room who had lights! I remember — in my eighth year — that once I had a room next to the room which was next to the cloak room. As a result I heard about Pearl Harbor (Dec. 7, 1941) as soon as it was announced on the radio. The boys in the next room were listening to a football game when the bulletin came through on the radio.

The dorm life came alive after 11:30 when the lights went out. Hallways and bathrooms still had lights, so the boys brought out the chairs and sometimes desks, and their books to complete their assignments or letters. There would be social gatherings and you got to know everyone whose room opened up on the common hallway.

I remember it was a bit unsettling for me as a youngster of fourteen — naive and raw from the boondocks of Baltimore — to be thrust in close contact with older students of, maybe, twenty-two to twenty-four who were preparing for the rabbinate. Some didn't at all conform to my preconceived notions of Yeshiva Bochrin or would-be orthodox rabbis.

There were great teachers, entertaining lecturers, and exciting fellow students. Certainly, Yeshiva opened up for me the world of both Jewish and secular training.

**DR. MOSHE ARON REGUER**  
1942

. . . the one evening I had free was Saturday night, and being the music buff that I am and was, I would rush down to Carnegie Hall. One Saturday night, Toscanini was conducting and the concert ended later than usual so I missed the 11 pm curfew at the dorm. The gurad reluctantly opened the door a crack and I pushed past him and went to my room. Next day, Dr. Revel called me in to ask what happened and I told him the truth, adding, "Dr. Revel, don't you have season opera tickets? You should understand someone else's love for music." And that was the end of the incident. This incident reflects for

me the merging of Jewish studies with cultural interests — in Eastern Europe this would have been impossible.

**DAVID J. SUSSKIND**  
1944

The one incident that comes to mind that for me reflects those years was the occasion when I suggested and prompted some discussion that we ought to start a fraternity at YU for whatever social value it may have had at the time. Evidently Dr. Belkin got wind of it. Consequently, I and perhaps one or two others, were asked to come to his office. It was in the early part of our senior year and I remember being confronted with the question from Dr. Belkin, "Mr. Susskind, do you wish to graduate?" I'm certain that my reply was in the affirmative, having survived seven years at Yeshiva, including TA and TI. For a moment I thought that my graduation may have been conditional due to perhaps my grades. However, I was soon to learn that Dr. Belkin did not favor the idea of a fraternity and in consideration of graduation we best give up the thought and the effort of any hellionism at YC.

Acceding to the decree of the President, the idea was aborted then and there.

That meeting with Dr. Belkin was not without its redeeming feature. It provided me and those of us present, to inquire whether it was then permissible for YC to have a college ring. No official objection was registered and permission was granted.

The Class of 1944 initiated the YC ring, which I have subsequently seen my nephew, a 70's graduate, proudly wear.

**MIKE GARMISE**  
1963

Some of my strongest memories of Yeshiva College revolve around basketball. Three hours a night, three nights a week, eight months a year (for a mere one credit a year), not including hour-long train rides to and from the Gymnasium of the Month: FIT on 23rd Street or Power Memorial on 61st Street.

Coach Red Saracheck always provided an interesting program for us. From warm up calisthenics, through jumping and running exercises, sundry basketball drills, the play-off atmosphere scrimmage game and the coup de grace, the sprint races to determine who went first to the showers. We raced through it all to the coach's invigorating (censored) comments.

He would stand on the sidelines chomping on a soggy cigar butt (dutifully relit every now and again by one of his omnipresent cohorts), waiting for some shmegegee to make a mis-

take. Usually he didn't have long to wait. Then he would come charging out on court, grab the ball, pushing the player away, show the proper maneuver and with a sneer of supreme contempt, fire the ball back to the offender's midriff, telling him to do it right. That was the standard procedure for first mistakes.

While I made more than my share of mistakes, which earned me pushes, punches and an occasional flying chair, the prize for biggest mistake ever made at a practice goes to Lou (Red) Korngold.

We were at FIT that year. Lou was, I think, a pre-med student. Like most of us, he came to practice dead tired after a full day of classes, and one night he just couldn't hold out. He curled up in a corner of the stands, back to the wall, and fell asleep. The disembodied shouts, invectives and bouncing balls evidently had a lulling effect, as he slept with a smile on his face.

Practice went on without him, until Saracheck was apprised of the situation. His eyes lit up. In broad vaudeville motions he shushed us all, tip-toed over to the corner and observed the oblivious player from all angles. Giving us a final lips-sealed motion, he brought his hand down on Lou's hip and shouted "Get your ass off the bench and get to work, you (censored)" in his ear. He also gave him a flying start. No one else ever slept at practice.

Sleeping at the wrong time was also a problem at TI classes on Sunday mornings. One Sunday, a teacher noticed one of his charges asleep and told another student to wake him up. That student replied, "You put him to sleep, you wake him up."

The trips back from practice were much more trying than the trips there. For one thing a tired body could not find a comfortable position to sit in. Then there was The Thirst. Some players would hurry back for a sneak into the Greek's on 181 or to Bloody Joe's for a pastrami, but my obsession was with liquid. On the downtown train station I was always tempted by the soda machines with crushed ice (though for thirst intensifiers there's nothing like sweet soda).

I usually held out until the local grocery store, where I got two quarts of milk and a box of donuts or cupcakes. Then hobble-hobble back to the dorm, quickly gulp the first quart, gobble up the donuts, slowly down the second quart. Then down to the coffee machine, the soda machine, the water fountain — until there was no strength to swallow. And still the thirst went on.

Ridiculously enough I still follow the same schedule in Israel. (Continued on Page 12, Col. 1)



— YUPR

many students reprimanded for sleeping late. The food in the cafeteria left much to be desired. The SOY was in frequent conflict with the caterer, and there was more than one confrontation with the administration. A very serious incident did take place when THE COMMENTATOR accused a certain administrator with negligence and fumbling. Personally I had no complaints about the administration.

Rumors had it, and facts later proved it, that some students were not observant, and did not belong in an orthodox institution. We were always on our own in the dormitory. Supervision was lackadaisical. We came and went without reporting to anyone. Nevertheless there was much self discipline and much camaraderie among the serious students. The student body was small, and the desire to study was great among those who came to YC with a purpose. The teachers I gained most from were Professor Horn of the English Department, and Professor Litman of the Philo department. My favorite teacher was Horav Poleyoff. History was a subject I enjoyed most, because I happened to have had

more you still have to learn. . . ."

I was astounded by his unexpected answer. I wanted out. He pleaded for me to stay. Over the decades, I have re-lived that "confrontation" countless times. Each instance, I have marvelled at Dr. Revel's insight into the embattled mind of the probing Jewish youth.

Had I heeded Dr. Revel's advice, my life would have taken an entirely different course. The wasted years of twisting and turning would have been evaded. But, God works out His own will in His own ways.

Today, mine is one of the 2,000 YU families who have returned to our Homeland. For the past five years, I have been in charge of the Junior High School Reference Room in the Jerusalem Public Library. I enjoy each day immensely working with my bright, spirited Sabras. To recount how my YC background aided my return to our People and my Aliyah to Israel would require a full-length book.

**NORMAN SAMPSON**  
1940

As I look back forty years and more to my years — all of eight



— YUPR

Coach Saracheck, with his varsity ball players on the move.

# No Purim Commentator

March 28, 1957

"There will be no Purim COMMENTATOR this year," announced Mr. Jacob M. Lebowitz, Editor-in-Chief of THE COMMENTATOR. Mr. Lebowitz stated that the reason for the departure from tradition is due to the complications in the publication of the Purim issue, brought about by mishandling and delays on the part of THE COMMENTATOR's adviser, Mr. Marvin Hershkowitz, and Assistant Dean Rabbi Moses D. Tendler. Mr. Lebowitz traced the events of the conflict.

The copy for the Purim COMMENTATOR was submitted to Mr. Hershkowitz on Tuesday, March 12. Mr. Hershkowitz, in accordance with his usual duties, was to comment on matters of taste and propriety only. When he was spoken to on Thursday, March 14, Mr. Hershkowitz objected to, in addition to several minor words and phrases, an article on the Yeshoula University Athletic Association and Basketball Team. At the conclusion of the phone conversation, Mr. Hershkowitz stated that he would, within a half hour, telephone Mr. Lebowitz with some additional comment. This phone call was never received.

On Friday, March 15, the Assistant Dean telephoned Mr. Lebowitz, stating that Mr. Hershkowitz had found several objectionable passages and that an attempt should be made to reach him and settle the matter. This attempt was made, but Mr. Hershkowitz was not available.

On Monday, March 18, in a conversation between Mr. Hershkowitz and Mr. Lebowitz, Mr. Hershkowitz suddenly declined to approve any part of the issue. At this point, Mr. Hershkowitz removed himself from the picture.

During the course of the day, the Assistant Dean spoke to Mr. Lebowitz requesting that he be consulted before further action was taken. When he was reached at his home Monday evening, an appointment was made between the Assistant Dean and Mr. Lebowitz to discuss the matter the following morning.

During the discussion on Tuesday morning, March 19, several objections were made by the Assistant Dean which were duly taken care of, and the matter was thought to be settled. As a matter of fact, the Assistant Dean did not object to the story on the Yeshoula University Athletic Association.

At this point, the Assistant Dean suggested that Mr. Hershkowitz again be consulted, despite his own reading of all the copy for the issue. When he was informed of Mr. Hershkowitz's removing himself from the position of adviser, he decided to reread the copy.

By Tuesday evening, a memorandum had been sent from the office of the Assistant Dean to THE COMMENTATOR, stating that "I have decided that it [the Purim Issue] is not in keeping with Yeshiva standards." When spoken to on Wednesday, March 20, the Assistant Dean negated the whole principle of the Purim COMMENTATOR.

By Wednesday, March 20, a large segment of the administration members had read the copy, given in strict confidence, first to Mr. Hershkowitz, and then to the Assistant Dean.

Because the issue had grown to such enormous proportions, with so many administrators having read the copy for the Purim issue, and the last chances for compromise were lost, Dr. Belkin, in the hope of preventing further dispute and bitterness requested that the Purim COMMENTATOR not be issued. It was decided by the Governing Board to honor his request and withhold publication of the Purim COMMENTATOR.

At the same time, however, Dr. Belkin gave assurances that he was not opposed in principle to a Purim issue of THE COMMENTATOR, and that he personally would aid in preventing a repetition of this year's affairs, in which delays and breaches of confidence were common.

# Yeshiva College, 1963-1978

(Continued from Page 6, Col. 4) spect, such civility — or was it excessive deference to authority? — was only to be expected. But at that time, no one could be quite sure. The late President Belkin, asked what he would do if a group of students perpetrated a takeover of administrative offices a la Mark Rudd & Co. at Columbia, replied puckishly that he would open the good book and do a blat gemorah with the demonstrators.

Perhaps; but, at the same time, the administration took no chances. The presidential suite was locked, and to gain access one had to knock, wait a few minutes, and confess to a suspicious secretary the nature of one's business. As in Kafka's stories, one could not be sure if even that rite would gain one ingress. The chronicler also might recall the night that a group of faculty members, thought to have leverage with the students, spent in Dean Bacon's office while at the dorms a long and heated student assembly was grinding on. If the students decided to march, the chosen faculty members were apparently to form a thin line of defense for administration or building, no doubt by pacifying the local Lenins with Shakespearean tales of the death of kings.

Luckily, the extent of the faculty's alleged influence was not put to the test. As the periodic phone calls received by the Dean from his man at the rally indicated, student energies were being expended on speeches, amendments to motions, and personality clashes — how did those wily young ones learn to imitate faculty assemblies so punctiliously? — and the needs of nature finally took precedence over such imponderables as student dignity. YC never had been successful at imitating Columbia, but then why should it? It has not aspired to be the Athens of New York State, only the Jerusalem of America.

Still, such student restiveness, however mild by national standards, was not in vain. Out of it came the YC Faculty-Administration-Student Senate, which, one

is given to understand, still meets in the catacombs under Amsterdam Avenue on those occasions when the members can remember the password for the day. The Senate, complain grizzled student politicians and columnists, never does anything substantive. Poor souls — they have not learned yet that one of the secrets of governance is to give the restless natives whatever institutional forms and reforms that they want, while moving the bags of money and power to a different vault. And, in any case, if the Senate did do all the things that students want it to do, would there still be a College left?

The turnabout on Vietnam, at YC as in America at large, was duplicated on the matter of the thirty-seventh president. One can hardly find anyone nowadays who claims to have ever had a kind word for Tricky Dick. But the grim candor of dispassionate Clio, the muse of history, requires the admission that in the fall of 1972, he swept the YC election precinct. That was, to be sure, mainly by default, for poor McGovern seemed like a left-wing improbable mixture of Goldwater and Ford. That a Democrat ordered a glass of milk at Nathan's was probably worse than his belated discovery that a non-Arabic country existed at the eastern end of the Mediterranean.

With the unprecedented resignation of our Emperor Diocletian in 1974 and the —to Americans at least — merciful fall of South Vietnam in early 1975, America rediscovered boredom as a blessing. YC for its part returned exclusively to Jewish interests, helped along by the ethnocentrism of the last decade. Just as Zionism was in part a manifestation of nineteenth-century European nationalism, so were the JDL and the SSSJ in part offshoots of the Black Panthers and CORE.

These activist groups engage only a minority of students. The majority evinces, as never before, a rather curious passion for learning the chemical and biological workings of the human body,

while the rest betray an equally curious fondness for the scintillating prose to be found in torts, laws, regulations, contracts, and rulings. Altruism and idealism have never been so rampant.

One may rest assured that the health and the legal rights of one's children and grandchildren will be cared for with great expertise — if they can ever amass the astronomical sums needed to pay for such services — but where will one ever find the persons to minister to the minds of the next generation? Please, Diogenes, may I borrow your lantern?

## Jose Feliciano Performs At YC

October 24, 1963

At the first of a series of Dramatics Society programs, Jose Feliciano, a young folk singer, entertained a capacity crowd of Yeshiva students at Rubin Residence Hall, Tuesday, October 15.

Mr. Feliciano performed in English, Spanish, French, and Hebrew. In "6/8 Blues," a personal composition, he was able to make his six-string guitar sound like a twelve stringer.

The 18-year old singer has received rave notices in the New York Times for his appearance in Chicago, St. Louis, and San Francisco. He will soon appear for a limited return engagement at Folk City in Greenwich Village.

Charles Sheer '64 and Leonard Kaufman '65 performed on accordion and guitar, respectively, to set the tone for the evening.

Leonard Glass '64, president of the Dramatics Society and MC for the evening said, "The Dean's support for the future programs is entirely dependent on student participation."

## WGDR Airborne On Dorm Radios

March 6, 1962

WGDR, Golden Dome Radio, a carrier current radio station, will begin broadcasting nightly exclusively to the Rubin Residence Hall on a regular AM frequency, beginning March 20.

For the first few weeks, the station will offer only music and news reports. Eventually, more elaborate programs will be produced.

According to Richard Weisman '62 and Lenny Brandwein '64, the founders of WGDR, the exact time and frequency have not been decided upon. However, these items will be made known before the initial broadcasting date.

The technical advisor for the project is Mr. Joshua Schuchatowitz.

This radio station is under the auspices of the Yeshiva College Dramatics Society.

## Alumni Letters . . .

(Continued from Page 11, Col. 5) Playing on a team in the third league, I go to practice three nights a week to run, jump, drill, calisthenize and play ball, then crawl home to an assortment of cold, warm, and/or hot drinks that still fail to refresh. There are, however, differences. At YU I got experience benchwarming. Here I play. At YU I was pummeled, yelled at and generally castigated for my two left feet, lack of coordination and general inability to resemble a reasonable facsimile of a basketball player. Here, I receive the dignified respect due a venerable 35 year old from America, who somehow keeps up, most of the time, with his teammates who are mostly half his age.

My wife can understand (grudgingly) my present selfish indulgence in masochistic practices. After all, I do play in the games. My YU basketball days, however, are an enigma to her:

Wife: You practiced three times a week?

Me: Uh-huh.

Wife: Three hours a night?

Me: Or more.

Wife: And traveled another

two hours?

Me: Right.

Wife: Just so you could sit on the bench.

Me: Unless we were 50 points behind or ahead with two minutes left.

Wife: But now that you should be retiring you're getting better. Enlighten me.

Me: I guess I'm just a slow learner.

Wife: Oh.

**BENNY LEBOVITS**  
1967

I would like to recount a small portion of the life style of the swashbuckling senior class that preceded mine, the senior class of 1966. Every year, it seemed Doc Hurvitz gave the key to the gym to favored members of the senior class. The life style that certain group evolved was such that between one and three in the morning they went to the gym and played full court basketball. After that they went to Ratner's for a healthy meal. About five in the morning they would get back to the dorm and sleep till one o'clock in the afternoon. Then some lunch, a couple

of classes (maybe), and then in the early evening it was off to nearby Yonkers racetrack. Of course, after the races it was back to the gym for some basketball, followed by Ratner's and so on. For variation, they might decide to drive to Philly to catch Koufax pitching. Or how about the time a certain member of the crowd dared to throw a cream pie into the face of the regular waiter at Ratner's.

Or how about the music workshop in CTI. One guy would grab a seat next to the window and open it in the middle of class. Well, it would take about thirty milliseconds for one of the chazanim to spot the open window. Since an open window is worse to a chazan than the plague, inevitably someone from the other side of the room would jump up and run across to close the window. Just as he was returning to his seat, the guy would open it again. As you can imagine, Cantor Nulman, not fully aware of the situation up at the front of the room, would finally lose patience and ask the fellow who was running back and forth to leave the room. The guy would open

the window once again and the remaining chazanim would start whipping their scarves around their necks in the month of May.

I loved Yeshiva. The students were great, unfortunately, their efforts were not all directed at obtaining an education. The teachers and administration managed to cope quite well with the unruly and undisciplined Yeshiva students.

May the next fifty years be as successful as the first.

## Registrar Talks Too Much

September 22, 1955

*Editor's Note: Having received the following letter to the Editor from a member of the faculty, THE COMMENTATOR feels that it is its duty to present it to the faculty and student body.*

To the Editor:

The Registrar of Yeshiva College, while in his official capacity in the office of the College, made several statements which I believe merit the attention of the faculty and the student body.

Those statements were:

1. That the College office may dictate to the faculty members how many A's, B's, C's, etc. they

may give, and to whom they may give them.

2. That there is a group of faculty members who are incompetent and are being pushed out by the College.

I feel that the above statements should be taken in their fullest significance.

Sincerely,  
Alexander Freed, M.D.  
Professor of Hygiene