

The Yeshiva University Commentator



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ISRAEL AT 50



In recognition of 50 years
of Israeli statehood,
THE COMMENTATOR presents
a tribute to the Jewish State's
history and accomplishments.

Special Pullout Section
Pages 7 through 18

BARBER ELECTED YCSC PRESIDENT

Voter Turnout Exceeds Expectations

BY JESSE MENDELSON

The Yeshiva College General Elections for the 1998-1999 academic year were held on Thursday April 5, after a week of furious campaigning. With over fifty people running for just fourteen spots, the races were tight and had the candidates scurrying across campus with signs touting their accomplishments and plans for the future. Mark Posner, Chairman of the Canvassing Committee, said, "Even though there were many candidates, I believe everything went smoothly. I was very pleased with the turnout of the student body and I am sure next year's board will do a wonderful job."

Once of the tightest races was that for the position of Yeshiva College Student Council President. Dror Barber bested Chanan Hoschander for the post. After his victory, Barber commented, "I am happy that the students chose me to be their voice to the administration and faculty. I hope to work with them as well as the student body to improve life on campus in addition to helping to further student life in general."

The rest of the 1998-99 YCSC board is made up of Vice President Howie Mazin, Secretary Shlomo Troodler, and Treasurer Hadar Weiss, who

after scoring a surprising write-in victory in last year's junior class elections, took the more conventional approach this year.

The most hotly contested race of all was for the post of Sy Syms School of Business President. Junior David Neiss garnered this post. After his successful campaign Neiss said, "It was a hard-fought election and I am happy to be given the opportunity to do what I can to assist the students of Sy Syms."

Junior Joe Dyckman will serve as Vice President, Sophomore Josh Swedarsky will be Secretary, and due to an election-day mistake, Treasurer has yet to be decided.

The Senior Class board will be headed by Aton Holzer, who said, "I am very happy with the outcome of the campaign. I met a lot of people and heard their concerns and I hope to help implement many of their suggestions along with some of my own." The position of Vice President was won by Eric Schubert with Secretary/Treasurer going to Ari Wiesen.

The Junior Class presidency went to Sophomore class President Dov Brandstatter. Regarding his win Brandstatter remarked, "I hope to continue making changes that will affect

continued on page 3

MOSES, FISHMAN NAMED EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

For the fifth time in six years, two people will share the helm of this newspaper. Late Monday night, the governing board of *The Commentator* elected Adam Moses and Mordechai Fishman, the current News Editors, Co-Editors-in-Chief for Volume 63. Akiva Herzfeld, the current Features Editor will assume the responsibilities of the Executive Editor.

Adam Moses is a YC junior with a double major in political science and English. He is an aspiring politician who is interested in alternative music and theological innovation. Moses hails from Silver Spring, Maryland, a town regarded by some as quaint. He attended Yeshiva High School of Greater Washington and then went on to attend Yeshivat Ohr Yerushalayim in Israel. After making a fateful decision to decline Johns Hopkins for another first tier school, Moses arrived at YU.

Moses is a Yeshiva College Student Court Justice as well as co-founder and former president of the Yeshiva University Debate Society. Moses joined *The Commentator* staff during the fall of 1996, his first semester on campus. During an initial tour of

duty with the features department, Moses distinguished himself with a series of memorable pieces examining aspects of Yeshiva University campus culture. One of these stories garnered the prestigious *Commentator Best Features Story Award*, an award to which not a single Pulitzer Prize recipient can lay claim.

Later that semester, Moses



shifted his talents to the news department. He quickly ascended to an assistant editorship by that semester's conclusion. As Associate News Editor, Moses continued to produce myriad quality stories of consequence as he assumed a full range of editorial responsibilities. Moses was anointed News Editor with the close of the 1996-1997 academic year. In this post, Moses has contributed countless articles and hours to *The Commentator's* news department. Moses also scripted a number of keenly insightful

opinion columns during the course of the previous two academic years. His widely read *Deconstructing Haredi* inspired constructive discourse on a matter of import to the whole of the Orthodox Jewish community.

Moses intends to "shepherd *The Commentator* to its rightful position among the premier English language news publications. We wish to be the dominant force on the scene of contemporary American journalism. We wish our presence to be ubiquitous. Toward that end, we will embark upon an unprecedented initiative to enhance the quality and scope of this venerable publication. Catalyzing student participation is an indispensable component of this undertaking. Let not the unmitigated ambitiousness of our aim impede its execution. I am fully confident that our goals are attainable."

Moses continued, "I welcome the opportunity to work with and guide the remarkably talented staff of this paper. I also wish to take this opportunity to express my unequivocal conviction that *The Commentator* must be a publication devoted to the interests of students. We, as *Commentator* staff members, do not, nor do we wish to, dwell in an ivory tower hermetically sealed off from the

continued on page 5

Celebration and Support

Out of the ashes of a decimated Europe, and through the sweat, tears, blood and prayers of a historically obstinate nation, rose the State of Israel.

Surrounded by enemies, the young country battled for survival against those who refused to let it live past the day of its birth. Fifty years later, Israel has not only survived, but with some *siyatah d'shamayah*, thrived, becoming a military and economic power in the region. Even Israel's enemies admit to some ambiguous feelings; deploring its very existence while at the same time admiring its accomplishments and using it as a model for establishing new policy in the region.

Israel is significant to all of us in different ways. To some, Israel stands as a place of refuge for Jews around the world, to others, Israel is the *reishit smichat gulatainu*, the beginning of the final redemption. Whatever its personal meaning, this is a time for both celebration of a half-century's accomplishments, and reflection on what Israel's future must include to enable its growth through its next half-century.

At this important historical juncture, we present the student body and our readership with a section dedicated to exploring the fifty years of Israel's existence. We hope this will be an opportunity to learn and discover aspects of the State previously unexplored.

There is no way to minimize the impact Israel had, has, and will continue to have on all of us. The Israel club should be the largest and most active club on campus. It is lamentable that this is not the case and the responsibility for this failure rests on all its members from top to bottom. Hopefully, the Fiftieth anniversary of Israel's independence will be a time when the students of YU rededicate their commitment towards actively supporting Israel, and whether they express this commitment by making aliyah or by insisting on continued American support of the Jewish State, they should realize that to the outside world, their support must remain unwavering.

Student Government, Not Games

Student elections have taken place yet again, and once more they have left the usual accusations, counter-accusations, recriminations and ambiguities in their wake. In a process administered and judged solely by the students and their student body leaders, the official debates were a pathetic farce, allegations of fraud and ballot stuffing were bandied about, various candidates were mistakenly left off the ballots, finger pointing and shouting matches took place between candidates, and investigations into campaign abuses and underhanded electioneering abounded.

All of these problems are interrelated and stem from the same underlying cause. It is impossible to play any game without a definitive rulebook and officials enforcing the regulations and dispensing penalties for infractions. Yet the election process here on our little playing field is akin to a tackle football game being played by a horde of drunken radical anarchists, each making up his own rules as the game goes on. The election regulations are ambiguous at best, and in some instances utterly nonexistent. The "official" YCSC constitution (depending on whom you talk to there are a couple of versions extant) is confusing and leaves great leeway in the hands of the canvassing committee. The SOY constitution resembles a Tinkertoy sculpture in process, with various amendments creating positions and changing the rules being currently added at will. And that's the good news. The majority of the other councils don't even have constitutions. The general situation leaves candidates and students befuddled and bewildered, with little guidance and even less oversight.

Notwithstanding the valiant efforts of this year's canvassing committee, the system's flaws are apparent and demand rectification. Simple clear-cut rules must be instituted, and more importantly, they must be enforced. No longer can the referee's responsibilities be passed from the canvassing committee to the student court, then to the senate, back to the student councils, and so forth, until the process resembles a grotesque game of musical chairs. When infractions are committed, there must be an official mechanism in place to deal with the problems, issue warnings, and if need be, disqualify candidates. Debates should be held earlier than the night before elections, with a format that ensures they don't degenerate into the usual moronic spectacle involving every two-bit campus jester heckling at will.

The newly-elected crop of student leaders have a moral and personal obligation to take the steps necessary to change the situation and level the playing field for all future elections. If the current student council takes concrete action and institutes the requisite changes, they will bestow a legacy upon the student body whose effects will positively impact all future campaigns and ensure smooth elections for years to come.

The Commentator

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MESSAGE FROM THE YCSC PRESIDENT

Welcome back from Pesach Vacation. I hope everyone had an enjoyable vacation. The end is not quite upon us so I will not regale you with all of YCSC's accomplishments yet. I congratulate the winners of the YCSC elections: Dror Barber as president, Howie Mazin as vice president, Shlomo Troodler as Secretary and Hadar Weiss as Treasurer. I wish them luck in the coming year.

Don't miss the Yom Ha'atzmaut events here on campus. Come join YC and SCW as we celebrate on Wednesday night with a Yom Hazikaron Tekes and Chagiga, followed by a Thursday event with music and free Falafel. A special thank you to Daniel Berkowitz, the

president of the YCSC Israel Club, for his efforts in arranging the events.

I'd like to congratulate the Yeshiva College Dramatics Society on yet another superb show.

I hope that everyone enjoyed the Nerf Footballs that we gave out. If anybody did not receive one please give me a call or stop by Morg 214, there are a limited number left.

Keep watch for more YCSC events like the Yankees game this past Tuesday. A special thanks to Joseph Glass for his work on the event.

Sruli Tannenbaum

LIBRARY SCHEDULE Reading Period - Final Exams

Spring 1998	
May 6, 7 (W, Th)	9:00AM - 2:00AM
8 (F)	9:00AM - 12:30PM
10-14 (S-Th)	9:00AM - 2:00AM
15 (F)	9:00AM - 12:30PM
16 (Sat. nite)	10:30PM - 2:00AM
17-19 (S-T)	9:00AM - 2:00AM
20, 21 (W, Th)	9:00AM - 5:30PM
22 (F)	9:00AM - 12:30PM
24, 25 (S, M)	CLOSED - MEMORIAL DAY
26-28 (T, Th)	9:00AM - 5:30PM
29 (F)	9:00AM - 12:30PM
31, Jun 1 (S, M)	CLOSED - SHAVUOT



FROM THE EDITOR: NOAH STREIT

I've spent almost two semesters now as Editor-In-Chief, and the more familiar I have become with Yeshiva University the more I see its problems and benefits. We at *The Commentator*, and I personally, have cast blame in many directions, sometimes resulting in rectification and sometimes resulting in silence. However there are larger problems that permeate the undergraduate campuses and for those, my dear esteemed president, I blame you.

There have been many polemics written as to the problems of having one individual serve both in the capacity of president and in the capacity of rosh yeshiva, and I will only say that if you choose to serve in both capacities then you are obligated to fulfill the requirements of both.

As president of Yeshiva University, you have a particular obligation to your undergraduates. They are the future, they are the untapped potential, they are the destiny of Modern Orthodoxy. The graduate schools are important as well; however, students at the graduate level have chosen their path in

life and are less open to influence. As rosh yeshiva, your primary obligation is to your undergraduates and to RIETS. Most of the graduate schools, although affiliated in name and run by the same upper administration, are non-religious institutions whose students may not heed your edicts, declarations and ideas.

So when an undergraduate student hears statements like, "did you know that Rabbi Lamm was obscenely attacked by Rabbi Svei?" or "did you know that Rabbi Lamm supports the Ne'eman commission?" and they look for answers to these questions on campus and find no one that can properly answer their queries, the fault lies with you Rabbi Lamm, and no one else.

When students on campus are apathetic, a problem that has plagued the undergraduates of Yeshiva University for several years, and proof of this epidemic can be found in the lack of active clubs and perhaps an even greater testament, the abysmal lack of caring displayed towards tragedies that occur in Israel and, most

recently, apathy displayed toward Yom HaShoah, whose fault is it? *The Commentator* has written several editorials and articles in reference to this problem and yet the question seems unrectifiable. I say that the answer lies with you dear president.

Thus I turn to you Rabbi Lamm and make a simple request. Get to know your student leaders, get to know your student body. I understand that you are a busy man. I understand that you spend much of your valuable time fundraising and acting as a public relations figure for your university and its many subsidiaries. Nevertheless, it seems that you have forgotten the most integral part of your university - the students at the undergraduate divisions of Yeshiva University.

The philosophy of Torah U'Madda is dying, and while your book on the topic is a fascinating exploration of ideas, it is abstract and difficult to read. Discuss these issues with your students, discuss your stands on the myriad issues that plague Modern Orthodoxy. If you decide that there will be no

reading of the megillah by women at Stern, then, instead of firing off a letter, come down to the students and discuss it with them face to face. Take an hour a week out of your hectic schedule and walk the campus, approach your students and find out what they are thinking, what is on their mind.

You must stimulate both the deeds and the minds of your students. When you see that students become desensitized to killings in Israel and desensitized to the general events that transpire in Israel; when you see that students practically ignore Yom HaShoah, it is your responsibility to speak to the students, to make them understand the importance of the past, the importance of what occurs in Israel and the importance of human life.

I beseech you President Lamm, to come down from your lofty perch on the fifth floor of Furst Hall. Your name is intimidating, your office is daunting, so you must be the one to approach your students. Speak to them, teach them, and only then will you have truly fulfilled your duty as President of Yeshiva University.

Cowboy Scientist:

"So why's New York a better place to study the environment than the Rocky Mountains?

"Pace University, that's the answer. I should know. I'm from Colorado — I grew up on a farm — but I'm here in New York for the new Master's in Environmental Science program at Pace University's Dyson College of Arts and Sciences.

"I double-majored in Genetics and Microbiology, expecting to go on to a doctorate, but the formidable enthusiasm of the Pace Environmental Science professors changed all that.

"Plus, the environmental curriculum lets me get outdoors. I love that! Most science is all indoor work.

"I'm thinking about consulting when I graduate. Where? I could go anywhere. Environmental issues are global issues."

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CAMPUS NEWS

Close Vote for Professor of the Year

Dr. Sam Schneider to Receive Honor

BY ANDREW HARARY

Each year the seniors of Yeshiva University are given the opportunity to voice their opinions over who they think deserves the title "Professor of the Year." With every professor eligible for the award, the job of picking the "best of the best" is not an easy task. Being awarded Professor of the Year is perhaps the greatest way that the students of YU can thank a member of the faculty, a sort of standing ovation for bestowing their scholarship and wisdom upon us.

This year the "Professor of the Year" award drew a close race between two faculty members whose teaching styles and positive influences were so outstanding that determining the winner came down to only a few votes. The two professors were Dr. Sam Schneider of the Hebrew Department and Dr. Kenneth Danishefsky from the Department of Biology. Dr. Schneider is one of the most popular and respected teachers at YU due to the manner in which he imparts his mastery of the Hebrew language to the students. His current and former pupils have remarked that he makes the Hebrew language come alive in such a way that you end up thirsting for more. Merely mention his name to a student who has taken his class and their eyes light up from the admiration and respect they feel towards a man who has taught them so much in such a short amount of time.

The other professor who generates

the same kind of enthusiasm and respect from his students is Dr. Kenneth Danishefsky. A former YU student who is currently in his first year at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine said, "Dr. Danishefsky's Molecular Biology course prepared me extremely well for the science courses I am currently taking, and I even felt as though I had a head start on most of the other students in my class. He took a difficult subject matter and taught it in such a way that not only do you understand it clearly, but you also remember it long after you have finished the course." Dr. Danishefsky has also begun a new class this year, entitled Advanced Biotechnology, that gives students an opportunity to conduct biomedical research in the school's new state of the art laboratory. This new course gives students the chance to accomplish things that are not possible at many other institutions around the country through their work on actual research projects during the school year.

When the final votes were tallied, Dr. Schneider won the award - a testament to his teaching skills and academic excellence. However, the vote was so close that the ballots had to be counted twice before it became official. In fact, Sruli Tannenbaum, President of YCSC, noted "the mere fact that voter turnout was so strong for these two individuals is proof that the students notice when a professor conveys over his/her information in an excellent manner."

YCSC Elections

Continued from page 1

the quality of student life in a positive way. Although my focus is on the junior class, I strive to help the entire student body." Alex Teichman won the position of Vice President and Jeff Misher will serve as Secretary/Treasurer.

The Stone Beit Midrash Program elections did not run as smoothly as they did those of the College. First, President Daniel Burg postponed the elections, electing to hold them April 7 as opposed to April 5. Second, the race for President ran into some slight problems and will probably be held again. Brian Goldwasser ran unopposed while current SBMP Vice President David Perl ran a write-in campaign. Although Perl won, he did not really want to be President. For this reason, the election may be held again with both names on the ballot. The other board positions were decided in the conventional fashion as

Sophomore Scott Nadel won Vice President and Eric Rose came away with the position of Secretary/Treasurer.

The Isaac Breuer College board will feature Junior Mattithyohu Balas as President, Sophomore Aaron Klein as Vice President, Junior Adam Bensley as Secretary, and Junior Levi Goldberg as Treasurer. Balas had this to say: "I feel the campaign went very well but either way, the IBC tradition of excellence will be upheld and we are already looking forward to next year."

Surprisingly, the board of the James Striar School Student Council will feature no Sephardic members, who have dominated it in recent years. The 1998-99 board will be comprised of Junior Abraham Lieberman as President, Junior Yitzchak Weinstock as Vice President, and Sophomore Steven Weiss as Secretary/Treasurer.

JSS Student Council Elections Mired In Controversy

Campaign Violations and Questionable Council Spending Create Concern

BY AARON KLEIN

Not unlike its YCSC counterpart, the Thursday April 2 JSS election had its share of controversy. JSS does not have an official constitution, therefore campaign regulations were set forth during an impromptu meeting. One of the candidates, JSS Sophomore Class Representative Ben Shamsian who ran for Vice President, took certain actions that the YCSC Student Court later deemed "immoral and unethical campaign conduct."

During the course of his campaign, Ben Shamsian went door-to-door speaking to JSS students. He learned that many of them had not yet received their annual JSS gifts. JSS Vice President Alan Epstein and Treasurer Ben Ahdut were responsible for distributing the gifts, bags bearing the JSS emblem. Shamsian went to Ahdut's room to inform him of this discovery, but Ahdut was at the YCDS Spring production Sleuth at the time. Ahdut left behind an unlocked dorm room, an unsuspecting roommate, and a corner filled with JSS bags.

Shamsian entered the room, took the bags in question and proceeded to his own room where he filled the bags with papers that said "Vote Ben Shamsian for JSS Vice President." Using a JSS student list, Shamsian then proceeded to rooms of students, handing out the slogan filled bags. He allegedly told them to look in the bag for his sign, and to vote for him. This implied that the bags, which were

purchased with JSS funds, were part of his campaign.

Shamsian maintained that as the Sophomore Class Representative, he was taking initiative and doing the students a great service by distributing their gifts. He said, "Had I not been running for Vice President, I would have been just doing my job, but since I was, it was considered unethical."

Unsure how to handle the situation, Ofer Melamed, JSS President consulted with the YCSC Student Court which informed Melamed that the matter lay completely in his jurisdiction. As a friend of Shamsian, Melamed felt that it would be difficult to make an impartial decision on his own. He therefore convened a committee of four judges, whose names have been withheld, to make a ruling on the situation.

Shamsian was not present when the judges met, however, his opponent Eton Wienstock was. Shamsian said, "I was upset that I wasn't at the meeting but couldn't do anything about it because I had family engagements at the time."

The final decision was not to disqualify Shamsian from the elections, rather to publicize his actions in the form of a letter presented to and read by all JSS students who voted. Melamed remarked, "Personally I felt that Mr. Shamsian's actions were unethical...I was expecting a more severe punishment than the one placed on him, but it was done in a fair way."

Ultimately Shamsian lost the election.

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SBMP MOVES TO SCHOTTENSTEIN FACILITY

Move Marks First Consistent Use of Shenk Shul Since its Restoration

BY JESSE MENDELSON

The Stone Beit Midrash Program has been given a new home, albeit temporarily. While air conditioning is installed in the Morgenstern Basement, where morning seder was held until now, SBMP has moved to the Shenk Shul, located in Schottenstein Center.

Rabbi Yosef Blau, *Mashgiach Ruchani* of MYP and RIETS, in addition to being in charge of all daily minyanim on campus, commented on the move, "The Yeshiva has always wanted to use Shenk shul, but it was too far; the students do not want to walk that far on a regular basis."

Andrew Goldberg, SSSB '99, echoed a similar sentiment saying, "The learning is the same, although everyone gets there ten minutes later than before because going to the bodega and then all the way to Shenk takes time!"

"I believe that even though the shul is beautiful, the travel time disrupts my learning a little," added Avi Popack, SSSB '00, "I prefer Morg."

Brian Goldwasser, YC '00, minimized the travel time involved. "Shenk shul is a beautiful room which is also very conducive to learning. It is spacious and comfortable, and although the walk through the innards of Washington Heights can be trying at times, it is well worth it."

Overall, the student body has been receptive to the move, although in the past, Rabbi Blau said, the negative student response was the primary reason for Shenk being underused. "The world is still standing even though BMP is in Shenk."

In the recent past, Shenk shul has been used primarily for storage and was last utilized for a lecture series and a Parent's Day

Program in 1989. In the May 11, 1993 edition of *The Commentator*, it was reported that Shenk shul was "unused due to an accident...a section of the ceiling plaster in the synagogue de-laminated" and fell into the women's balcony. At that time, it was reported that the University would repair the shul during the summer of 1993 with a plan to reopen the shul that fall. At the time, the University planned to possibly use the shul for Torah lectures, becoming an auxiliary beit midrash, or accommodating the minyan now held across the street (the "Soloveitchik minyan").

The November 15, 1994 issue of *The Commentator*, reported that the Shenk shul remained closed to the students and utilized as a room for storage. Eventually, after a grant from the board of trustees, the University gave the shul an entire renovation, seemingly readying it for consistent use. And even though there is ample space to accommodate student learning, as proven by SBMP now, it still remained untouched.

Last year, the Committee to Reopen Shenk Shul was established and they petitioned both then YCSC President Jason Buskin and Dean of Students Efreim Nulman to reopen the shul. The Dean answered that the University must formulate an official policy on the issue before being able to use Shenk Shul on a regular basis. The shul, however, remained unused for the remainder of the year.

Upon being asked whether SBMP's usage now is a sign of further use for Shenk, Rabbi Blau answered, "The bottom line is, we moved there out of necessity and convenience. If air conditioning would not have been installed in Morg, Shenk would still be used for storage."

New Editors-In-Chief Continued from Page 1

student populace. If we so act, we fail our charge and corrupt an honorable institution. It is my intention to restore this paper to the students of the University in the broadest possible sense."

Mordechai Fishman is a political philosophy major with a side interest in Hassidic/Kabbalistic literature, and probably the only YU student with a pet boa constrictor. A native of sunny Southern California, he began his YU academic career in Fall '94 after spending two years learning in Israel. After intensely experiencing YU life for the duration of a solitary semester he fled back to Israel and promptly enlisted in the IDF, serving in the Givati infantry brigade. Six days after leaving the war zone of the Gaza Strip he found himself in the academic minefield of Belfer Hall ready to do battle with the Spring '96 semester.

He lost. Leaving YU once more, he took a leave of absence to "escape Washington Heights and clear the bodega music from my head." Upon returning to his studies he heeded the advice of Roth Scholar and preeminent Persian Hazan on campus Hezi Jacobi, and joined the venerable student publication, *The Commentator*. Quickly developing a taste for the arcane intricacies and ancient blood feuds of the YU administration, Fishman dove into various academic and administrative issues and was promoted to Associate News Editor.

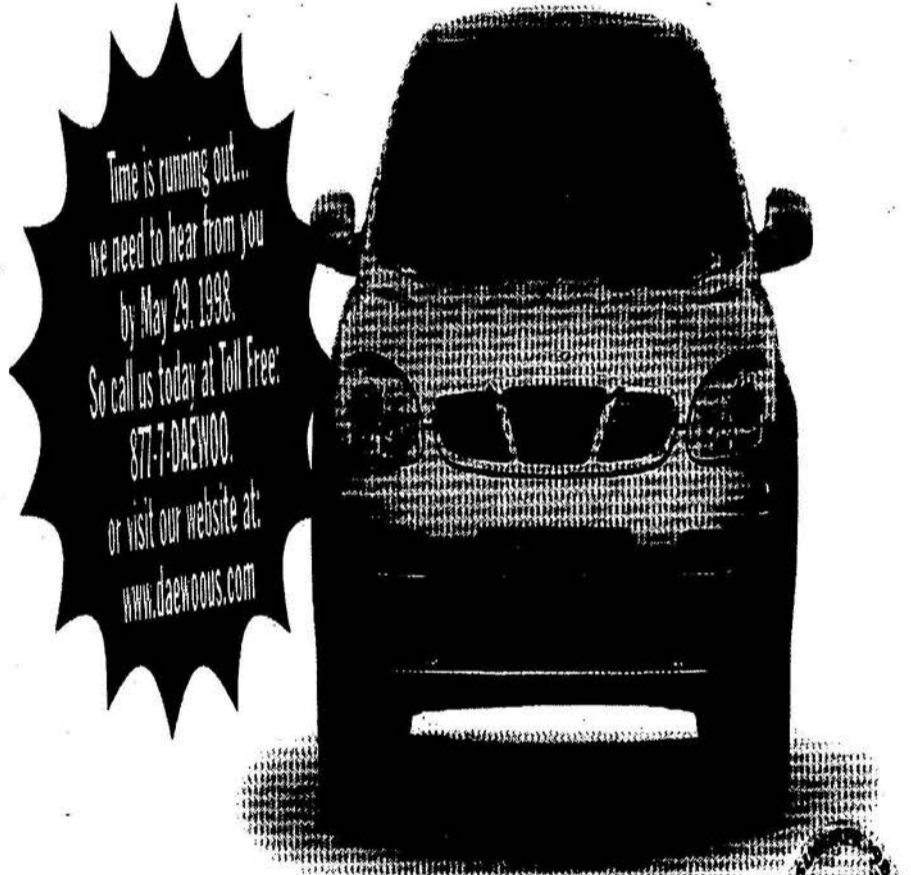
Upon assuming the duties of News Editor the following year he continued in his efforts to foster good relations between all levels of the administration, faculty and students. A highlight of his

journalistic career was writing an obituary-style article concerning the resignation of David Rosen, Director of Yeshiva University Public Relations. Fishman's efforts became especially poignant when Rosen returned to his position three weeks later.

"I have been blessed to work with an exceptional group of individuals who have taught me the value of patience, fortitude, and a couple of really cool things about life," said Fishman. "YU is a uniquely endowed university with resources and advantages unavailable anywhere else in the world. It also possesses some of the most infuriating and frustrating deficiencies found on the planet, which only serve to make this place more interesting. I hope to be able to guide *The Commentator* through the latter while making it a student publication in the fullest sense possible. I look forward to working with Adam and the rest of our dedicated staff in publishing a quality paper, improving student life on campus, and having a truly boot-stomping good time."

Noah Streit, one of the current co-editors explained that both "myslef and my co-editor, Ari Kahn are confident that *The Commentator* will be in capable hands for the next year. Fishman, Moses, and Herzfeld are fully dedicated to both the newspaper and the student body. They understand how the paper is run and appreciate the time and effort necessary to maintain its success and credibility. Ari and I are certain that all three will dedicate themselves fully to the demanding responsibility."

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There is a social services job directory available at the OPCS available for BA and MSW candidates.

YUSSR

is looking for an overseas director to be housed in Minsk, Belarus. Run all activities in their Youth Center as well as numerous other Jewish youth and family activities.

Learn to swim before you take the plunge!

Brooklyn Legal Services Corp. is looking for a paralegal in matrimonial law.

New York Medical College

Positions are available for clinical research assistants. Excellent opportunity for those pursuing a career in health sciences.

Rockefeller University

has a number of scientific and technical positions. Great employment opportunities as research assistants.

Victim Services

is looking to fill a positions for Research associate.

JCC

JCC's all over the country are looking for people to work in Jewish communal service.

Job Path

A transitional employment program for developmentally disabled individuals is looking for a Job Developer.

Jewish Schools

Beit Rabban, Westchester Day, Park East, JEC and Moriah are looking for a variety of teachers.

Shearim

Fellowship for those who love Jewish learning and serving the Jewish community.

The Osborne Association

Client Advocate, Counselor/Court Advocate and Research Analyst Consultant positions open for criminal justice org.

City of NY Parks & Recreation

There are a plethora of jobs available with the Parks Department.

U.S. Attorney's Office, Duval & Stachenfeld, LLP

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Diamonds & Jewelry

JDM Import Co. and Namdar both have various office positions available.

Oren Tours

is looking for tour guides who speak fluent Hebrew to lead tours for Israeli groups visiting the U.S.

CompUSA

is looking for individuals to service existing corporate accounts.

SUMMER POSITIONS

Market Research

Schulman, Ronca & Bucuvalas, Inc. is hiring telephone interviewers. No experience necessary.

The Everett Public Interest Internship Program

has a number of positions available in non-profit center.

Proskauer Rose LLP

is offering paid summer internships in their Marketing Department.

Research Associate

Tenant Data Corp., Inc. has a positions available for someone to collect general information from companies.

Thieme

Medical and scientific publisher looking for people in editorial, production, marketing depts.

Arnold Public Relations

There are paid summer internships available with their client, Fleet Bank.

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American Committee for the Weizmann Institute of Science

Media relations needs someone interested in publicity.

Warner Brothers

Summer internship available in marketing & sales.

Wenner Media, Inc.

The publisher of Rolling Stone and other popular magazines is looking for someone to assist in the promotion department.

Stern's

Learn the day to day operations of managing a retail business.

Sales & Marketing

Turner Broadcasting Sales needs someone in the support areas of the sales office.

Prudential Preferred Financial Services

is looking for a human resources intern.

WLIR

Learn programming, promotion, production, marketing and sales at this radio station.

New York Legal Assistance Group

Intern at this not-for-profit legal services organization.

Science Research Booklet

is now available at the OPCS for those interested in doing research this summer at AECOM & elsewhere.

Jewish Communal Services

JCRC and American Joint Distribution Committee have non-paid internships available.

Mt. Sinai & YAI

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has great internship opportunities available. Must be able to gain college credits.

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International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans

Get paid experience in the employee benefits industry by joining the I.F. Interns Program.

Entertainment Employment Journal

The 1998 Spring and Summer Entertainment Employment Journal is available at the OPCS.

Young & Rubicam, Ogilvy & Mather

Ad agencies have summer internships available in many areas. See OPCS for more details.

Political, Governmental and Legal Internships

The OPCS has a pamphlet of internships in the above fields, compiled by the Poli Sci faculty.

The Cloisters

Eight paid internships are offered. Conduct gallery workshops and develop public gallery talk.

Cornell Medical Center in Westchester

An eight-week program which combines clinical and administrative assignments with seminars and lectures.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO VISIT THE OFFICE OF PLACEMENT AND CAREER SERVICES AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

MAIN CAMPUS: BELFER HALL, ROOM 415; 212-960-0845

MIDTOWN CENTER: STERN COLLEGE BUILDING, 9TH FLOOR; 212-340-7763

ISRAEL AT 50



YU, The Commentator and Israel: Through the Years

BY YEHUDA BURNS

The close connection that Yeshiva University and its students maintain with Israel is undeniable. Love for Eretz Yisrael and a deep rooted tendency towards Zionism characterize nearly every student on campus. As the premier modern Jewish institution in America, YU has always maintained a close relationship with the State of Israel, and its students have always shown a keen interest in Israeli Affairs. Now, as the fiftieth anniversary of the State of Israel approaches, *The Commentator* looks back at its coverage of Israeli affairs throughout the years.

If there is one overriding trend to point out, it is how the news coverage increased as the years went by. While the amount of Israeli news varied with succeeding volumes, initially sparse reporting evolved into a constant stream of news and views on all aspects of Israeli life. The tone of student responses changed as well. Whereas earlier cries from the State of Israel sounded somewhat distant, time brought with it a more emotional attachment to the Jewish state and its people. The link to Israel and its people adopted a more personal tone.

Culled from more than sixty years of *Commentator* reporting, we present a brief compendium of stories that demonstrate the historical link between YU and Israel. Special features like the "Israel War Issue" in 1973, as well as forums on issues such as Aliyah and "The Religious State," have peppered the *Commentator* over the years. In addition, many outspoken editorials rang true to the changing sentiments of students. The history and connection between YU's students and Israel, which is undeniable, is truly one of dedication and sincerity, one that continues to grow even today.

The Early Years

The first mention of a Jewish state came on March 4, 1943, when *The Commentator* printed a series of essays and editorials under the heading, "Palestine - A Temporary Haven and Permanent Home." Articles examined issues ranging from the continuum of Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisrael and whether the current Palestine could realistically support a Jewish homeland. In an essay titled "Cry of the Jew," the author bemoaned the plight of the Jews throughout history. A powerful voice

decried that while the Holocaust ravaged European Jewry, Jews themselves were being denied their right to fight back. The conclusion was that Jewish state would surely become a reality in the near future.

Those last words rang true only four years later. The December 11, 1947 headline proclaimed that "Yeshiva Hails Birth of Jewish State" and told of the celebrations that accompanied the UN decision to partition Palestine. Rabbi Samuel Brodt, a pre-war leader of the Polish Mizrachi, spoke to a cheering, packed Beit Midrash, proclaiming that, "We can [now] allow ourselves the hope that the favorable prophecies are now unfolding." Accompanying editorials offered simultaneous challenges to both the UN- to enforce its decision, and to the Jewish people- to maintain unity. "Every Yeshiva boy," it proclaimed, "should join in a Zionist organization. There is much work to be done . . . Perhaps this time our age-old cry of 'next year in Jerusalem' will be fulfilled."

Later headlines addressed the personal relationship between Israel and Yeshiva University. *The Commentator* of April 15, 1948 told of the heroics of Moshe Pearlstein, a student who "best epitomized the ideals of the Yeshiva," and who died fighting in the battle for Palestine. This same issue dealt with the issue of the apparent "lack of any active role by Yeshiva University with respect to the crisis." While students at other New York City colleges and universities have held mass meetings to involve themselves in the issues, students lamented that "we, as a school, have done nothing." Students also expressed serious concerns over the increase in anti-Semitism that would accompany any forceful response from America.

Following Ben-Gurion's declaration of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, Yeshiva students began taking a more active role in cultivating a united orthodox Jewish front. Nearly one year later, on May 2, Rabbi Dr. Isaac Herzog, Israel's chief Rabbi, spoke to an overflow crowd of 2,000 in Lamport Auditorium. There, he assured the possibility of religious fulfillment in Israel, saying, "a state of Israel according to Torah is dependent on a united orthodox Jewry. The spirit...is derived directly from the Torah," he said. "It is not correct to divide the Jews in Israel into two groups. Even the unorthodox have managed to attain a high ethical Torah

standing." Another prominent visitor to YU following Israel's nascent independence was Menachem Begin, then head of the Herut party. He proudly proclaimed, in a harbinger of things to come, that "there are no two Jerusalems, only one."

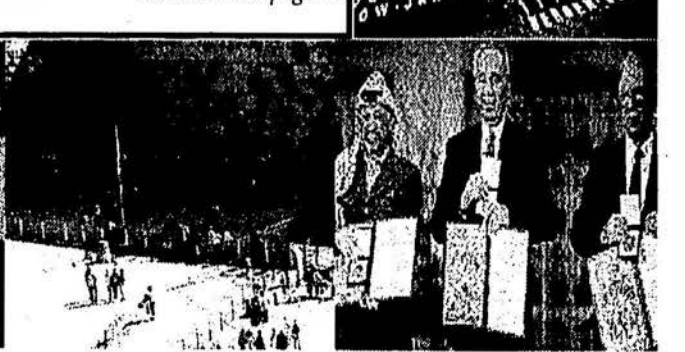
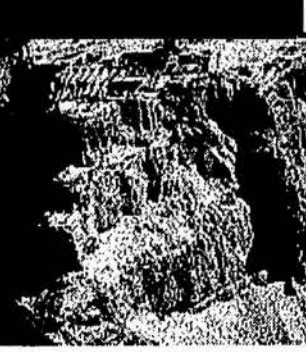
Subsequent to Israel's independence, students began to travel to Israel. The first sights of Yerushalayim inspired Leonard Mogilner to write an effusive memoir of his trip. On March 10, 1954, he wrote, "The feeling has been described so often that it has become trite, and yet it is indescribable. The flag was that of the Jewish State and yet it flying majestically over the heads of scores of Jewish officials...scurrying about below, welcoming a Jewish flagship home into a Jewish harbor. And I was a Jew."

An interest in Israeli affairs and a concern for their Jewish brethren was the catalyst for the strong student response to the Sinai Campaign of 1956. Unyielding sentiments motivated *The Commentator* to castigate the US government regarding its Middle East policies in an editorial dated November 11. They saw the use of force as unavoidable in the attempt to remove Nasser from power. "It is indeed a sorry spectacle to see the Western Democracies split over the matter of deposing a tyrant. It is time for the United States to...wake up to the true significance of Nasser."

A Growing Sentiment

The years following Israel's return of the Sinai Peninsula saw a growing sentiment in favor of Aliyah and visiting Israel. Following pressure from editorials and mounting student sentiment, the administration presented a program that would allow students to learn in Israel. "They must realize," wrote an editorial on February 11, 1959, "that counter to their prevailing trends in de-emphasizing Israel, only by sponsoring such study trips to our homeland can the interests of Yeshiva University and Judaism be best served." In response, Dr. Belkin announced a plan of study at *Machon Gold* that allowed students to attend classes in Tanach and Gemara, as well as modern Hebrew composition and speech. For the supervised program, students could even receive up to half a year's credit towards college. Later plans came to include study at Yeshivat Merkaz HaRav and Kerem B'Yavneh.

continued on page 10



Reflections on Israel in its Jubilee Year

BY DR. NORMAN LAMM

Only one who was born before the 1948 declaration of the State of Israel and was old enough to remember those bitter years of the Holocaust, can truly appreciate the meaning of the Jewish state in its most immediate and elementary sense. For those under the age of 60 or 70, the evaluation of the State and its significance will always and of necessity be somewhat incomplete. History learned is not the same as history lived.

This does not mean that the Holocaust exhausts the importance of Israel either as a divine gift and intercession in history or as a new political entity. Nor does it mean that those born after statehood was established cannot understand or are not permitted to expound on its ideological or theological place in the hierarchy of Jewish values. It does mean that beyond all religious, political, or social views on

Israel, there is a deep, visceral, gut feeling that is existential and experiential and that cannot be successfully transmitted in the idioms of speech or any ordinary



communication. Once cannot appreciate the renewal of life unless and until he has stared the Angel of Death in the eye or, at least, felt on his face the wind of the passing Destroyer as he was abroad in the land.

This introduction is necessary if these impressions are to be, as has been requested of me, "personal reflections." My views of Israel, then, come against a background of one who as a youngster heard over the radio the depraved ranting of Hitler announcing the *Anschluss* of Austria and the anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi sermons of Father Coughlin; who read Ford's obscene attacks against Jews; who met the first refugees from the European genocide and could not believe that the horror stories they told were possible; who recalls the NY Post headline, when returning from high school, announcing the number of martyrs as 6 million, and so on. I therefore grew up with a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach that we American Jews were next on Hitler's list of extinction, that I and my parents and brother and sisters were candidates for the concentration camps and for a premature death. I even remember, with cruel clarity, the serious discussions in my family as to whether suicide should be seriously entertained if the Nazis invaded and conquered America.

For me, all the theoretical discussions about Israel pale beside this elementary fact that had we Jews had a state we might well have escaped the unspeakable tragedy of the Holocaust. That is why, when in May 1948 a few classmates from Yeshiva College and I went to work in a clandestine laboratory in upstate New York developing a rocket bullet for the young state's as yet non-existent armament industry, we felt it was the only way we could respond to the exterminations and the threats in a helpful and dignified manner. We didn't sing patriotic songs,

we didn't debate theological issues, we didn't ask if our Israeli scientist supervisors were *Datiim* or Socialists; we were, all of us, Jews who might well have been one of the statistics but now could express ourselves as Jews -- any kind of Jews.

This historical fact itself has religious significance. If an individual is saved from death he is required to offer a *birkat hagomel*, and if his salvation was miraculous he must celebrate the anniversary of his deliverance thereafter as his personal "Purim." Certainly and halakhically a whole people that has emerged from the depths of despair to new hope must express thanks to the Almighty -- without caviling about any necessary Messianic dimensions. We have no precise information as to what if any links exist between the *yeshuat am yisrael* we experienced with the creation of the State of Israel and the coming of Mashiach. I, therefore, am skeptical as to the appropriateness of the

whole *atkhalta d'geulah* school and I do not recite the *worlds rayshitzemikhat geulataynu* in the "official" Prayer for the State of Israel. I neither confirm nor deny the Messianic nature of our redemption. That is for God to say and for Him to reveal when He will so will it. It is enough for me that this was the state founded for the broken shards of our people, and that had we only had it earlier...

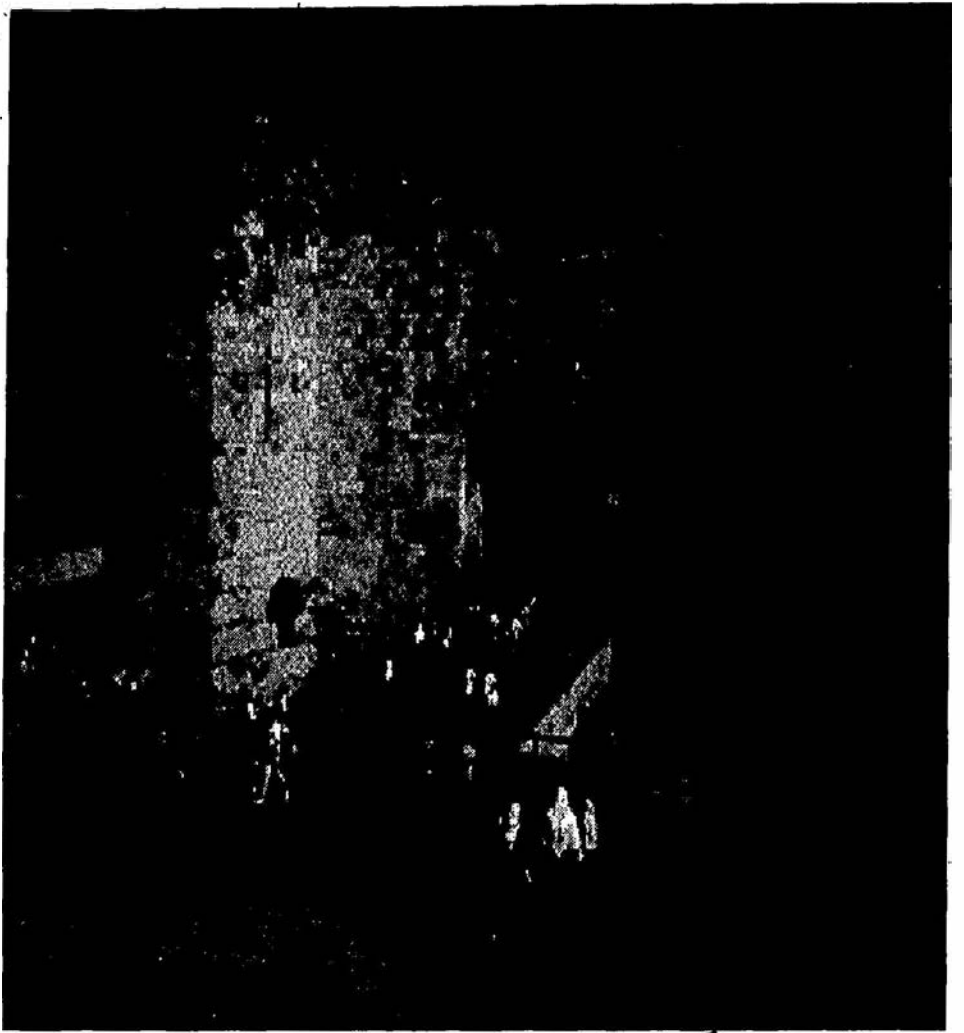
Of course I regret the secular domination of public life in Israel. I would much prefer that its Jewish character be more pronounced -- provided that could be done voluntarily. I am against "coercion" except for the most basic elements of national cohesiveness, such as a single standard for entry into Jewish peoplehood. Other than that, political-legal coercion has brought us more grief than joy.

I do not believe that nationalism -- Zionism, in our case -- exhausts the content of Judaism or is even the chief guarantee of Jewish continuity. I equally reject the thesis that it is "treif," that is somehow antithetical to the values of Torah. It is enough for me that it was instrumental in establishing the state founded for the broken shards of our people, and that had we only had it earlier...

I am not blind to some of the uglier aspects of Israeli life which have surfaced this past half century in various sectors of the country whether in the secularist circles or, as well, in Orthodox life, including Religious Zionism with which I identify as a movement, although not as a political party. I am troubled by the directions taken by various groups in Israel. But no matter -- they are all my family and I will stand by them through thick and thin, and I will celebrate with them, drink a *lechayim* to them on this "golden wedding" occasion, and reaffirm to them openly and joyously my love and my fealty and my undiminished gratitude.

Why? Because, to repeat: It is enough for me that this was the state founded for the broken shards of our people, and that had we only had it earlier...

Oh, if only we had had it earlier!



One Eye on Jerusalem

BY NORMAN ADLER

I had thought I would be there by now -- Israel, that is. My adolescent and early adult vision was that I would be a professor in Israel, having raised an American-Israeli family. It didn't work out that way; but on Israel's modern half-century mark, I see that the dream formed a lot of my generation's consciousness.

I was seven years old when Israel was established as a State, so it was always a fact of my group's American Jewish consciousness, like it is for most of you students. However, Israel was new for us, not a given; and in even more peril perhaps than it is now. It was always there for us as Jewish teenagers; like a dream, every so often, it would pop into consciousness.

The Jewish high school intellectuals were forever justifying the Jews' right to the land, telling our non-Jewish counterparts that the Arabs left during the war, and always offering apologies. It was always a half-assumption that we would ourselves settle the land; and about a quarter of my Chevr made Aliyah early -- in the 60's.

The rest of us continued through the proper schools (Ivies if we could get in), keeping one eye on Jerusalem. The 1960's were a critical time in American history, and it had deep effects on the American Jewish youth as well. The liberal, intellectual Jewish community was split -- not so much along religious lines (the Conservative movement was already cutting itself in half; and the shift to left and right was already beginning on campuses) -- but along Zionist lines. I remember marching for Black Civil Rights in Boston (after hearing Martin Luther King on my

campus) -- but not being able to raise support for Israeli causes. (Why was our nationalism less significant than theirs was?) After graduating college, I was going to study in Israel for a year -- having hoped to work on Jewish mysticism with Gershom Scholem's group. I didn't make that either -- having won a quirky fellowship that allowed me to travel around the world, a significant part in Israel, but not associated with any university.

I began my doctoral studies at Berkeley in the 60's (Rabbi Saul Berman was the Rov; and Rav Shlomo Carlebach was Berkeley's Chazan). We all began to petition for the rights of Soviet Jewry to

migrate to Israel, and after the outbreak of the Six-Day War, it became increasingly apparent that Jews in the universities of the Galut were needed to fight on many fronts. We began organizations like American Professors for Peace in the Middle-East. When I arrived in Philadelphia for my first academic job, I began a group called the Jewish Free University which tried to re-capture (mekarev?) Jewish student allegiance to Judaism and Zionism which were eroding.

Three decades later, I am still here. Academic careers were easier in America, we all said. My daughter tried

Aliyah but returned; some of my stepchildren will make it. We used to talk about a brain-drain from Asia and Europe to American academies of learning. I wonder if we are watching a neshama-drain from galut back to Israel. After all, most Olim these days are religious; and the vision of secular Zionism seems to be ending here, if not there. Maybe it was inevitable. Happy birthday, Israel. I hope for the best, G-d willing.



A Cynic Trumped; but Skepticism Triumphant

BY RABBI SHALOM CARMY

What was denied our ancestors for two thousand years was granted to our generation! No amount of clever skepticism, disappointment, fault-finding or obdurate ennui can obscure this fundamental fact.

Strangely, my sense of grateful wonder has increased with the passage of time. It was all too easy for the precocious child to see through the cultural contradictions of Israel in the early 1960's. The gravelly optimism and unfiltered cliches simply invited parody. To think that in the heady days of 1967 eminent Israeli statesmen waited phoneside for King Hussein to initiate peace negotiations. And that other hard-headed notables, who today espouse the most ambitious concessions, were then convinced that the Arab lived by bread alone, and that economic improvements would reconcile the Palestinian populace to permanent Jewish domination. Nor could the gruff secularism, ever weaving for itself a new robe of civic Jewishness, conceal the nakedness of identity that increasingly plagues Israeli *intelligenza*, or their condescension towards those not as "European" as the self-appointed elite.

So the founding generation of Israel, on closer inspection, was not as wise, and certainly not as cute, as the Hadassah ladies fancied. Yet this flawed, internecine generation, against enormous odds, made a Jewish state, and has kept it going. Notwithstanding all the unresolved threats without and tensions within, they can look back at the half-century of statehood as if it was a dream. Therefore the adult, one who has outlived his youthful cynicism, is compelled to recognize with awe that, despite persistent spiritual confusion and social turmoil, G-d has not withdrawn His blessing. Indeed this was the day made by G-d, which we must celebrate and rejoice in!

Beyond thanksgiving, what does the *Ribono shel Olam* require of us, here and now? We have been spared the burdens and boons of army service. We have not risked our lives in Israel's wars, or even delayed our careers in her cause. Whatever the current Israeli standard of living, we Americans prosper materially above all the inhabitants of the earth. There is no glory in our comforts; like all circumstances in life, however, there is a divine challenge.

How are we using our advantages? To advance in *limmud Torah* and *yirat Shamayim*? Do we strive for the intellectu-

al skills that will help our brethren in Israel (and in the United States, for that matter) to sustain, and spread, a staunch Torah commitment in the face of a hostile culture? Do we cultivate the *middot* of civility, of dignity and humility, more elusive in the Israeli atmosphere of perpetual political and social crisis than under our less trying conditions?

Many Israelis are weary of war and its sacrifices. The cumulative impatience no doubt weakens Israel's international and national position, and this should be recognized; whether one rejects land for peace or, like the Rav z"l and his unrevised followers (including me) supports realistic territorial compromise. Much of this weariness is due to endless bloodshed, the cost of which we bystanders cannot pretend to assess. Some derives from revulsion at the demoralizing effects of the prolonged occupation. But much of it reflects anxiety at having reached a spiritual dead end.

Is land really worth dying for? Only if it's worth living for. So far organized religion has not shown the average Israeli that Torah is worth living for, and hence suffering for. And so the great secular hope is for normality at any price, and the form normality takes is a dolce vita Med-American materialistic heaven. How will the alternative offered by the Torah community be perceived? Are we condemned to be represented by the proclamations and *gematriot* of American rabbis, willing to fight to the last Israeli? By politicians who pursue their self-interest as shamelessly as their secular counterparts?

A middle-aged Sefardi craftsman is at Ben-Gurion, waiting for his daughter's return from her European tour. He detests Haredim, who are good at having privileges without accepting responsibilities, but he values religious tradition. Are his children like him, I ask, awaiting my flight to New York. No, they have education, and so they cannot believe as he does. Is education then incompatible with traditional values? Sadly so, he responds: it's either faith or science. He refuses to believe that I study philosophy, let alone that I teach it to bnei Torah. Even when I unzip a suitcase and produce the Nietzsche, he cannot accept the evidence before his eyes. Skepticism triumphant. Another failure.

We, those of us who accomplish Aliya and even those who make their lives here, will have to do better. With G-d's help we shall.



Yemenite Jewry United

Dr. Hayim Tawil (right) and a recent Yemenite Oleh share an intimate moment.

The Love of Zion:

Operation Magic Carpet

BY DR. HAYIM TAWIL

niche.

(EDITED BY MY STUDENT,

ARI MERMELSTEIN)

My grandparents came to *Eretz Hakodesh* in 1888 from the village of A-Tawila, northwest of Sanaa, the capital of Yemen. They settled in *Ir Hakodesh*.

The first forty families that emigrated from Yemen had come six years earlier, in 1881 and 1882, arriving in Israel even before the thirteen Biluim from Russia. The sole desire of these people was to live and die in *Eretz Hakodesh*. Subsequent minor *aliyot* from Yemen continued until the first major Yemenite aliyah to Israel in 1948-9, which effectively transplanted this ancient community. It is referred to as "On Eagles Wings" (popularly known as Operation Magic Carpet), a name that underscores the Divine influence on the events to be described. Forty years later, I was privileged for some unknown reasons to close the circle and to help the last remnant of 1500 Jews go to *Eretz Hakodesh* starting in 1988 in a rescue operation known as Operation Esther.

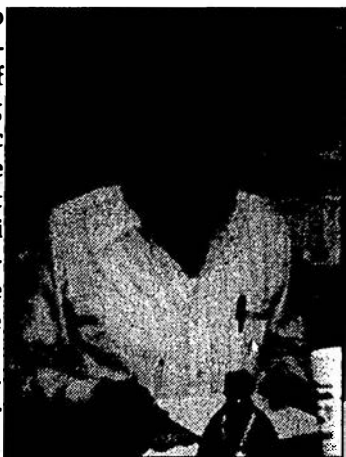
The first large group of Yemenite Jews came to a community in Palestine known as E'e'leh Be'tamar in 1882 motivated by a Yemenite belief that *mashiach* would arrive in that year. Nonetheless, life for these early Yemenite pioneers was not easy. Housing facilities were scarce, as were *chalukah* money and jobs. To exacerbate matters, the existing Jewish community gave the Yemenites a cool reception, and tried to discourage a further influx of Yemenite Jews. Apparently, the Palestinian Jewish community was afraid that the Yemenites would further deplete the already scant availability of resources and only worsen the already abject conditions.

The Yemenite lot did not improve until the dissemination of the Zionist doctrine. In an attempt to build the country through agriculture; the Zionists required manual labor, and the prospect of using Arabs to help forge the Jewish State was anathema. The Yemenite Jews, already accustomed to the rigors of manual labor to which the European Jews were not, were the obvious choice. They had finally found their

The number of Yemenite Jews in Israel continued to climb until there were 40,000 of them living in *Eretz Hakodesh* prior to World War II. Despite the growing presence of Yemenite Jewry in Israel, the majority of this community remained in Yemen, prevented from coming by the anti-Semitic regime then in power. However, following the demise of the Yemenite Imam Yahya in 1948, his son, the Imam Ahmad, ascended the throne. Although the Imam adopted an antagonistic stance towards the existence of the State of Israel to the extent that he included himself in the coalition of seven Arab nations united in opposition against the creation of the State, he nonetheless relaxed existing restrictions barring Yemenite Jews from immigrating to Israel. At a time in which Arab solidarity demanded a uniformly anti-Semitic posture, the change in Yemenite policy should be considered a genuine miracle. The prevailing explanation for his actions is that the Imam could not divert the will of G-D from its intended course. Within two years, 50,000 Yemenite Jews, the entire community, made their way to Israel.

Although the Yemenite Jewish community, secluded from the amenities of modern life for thousands of years, was obviously out of place in the civilization into which they were thrust, they nonetheless made significant contributions in several realms. First, the relatively amorphous Israeli culture, searching for roots in ancient culture, relied heavily upon a Yemenite culture that had been developing over the course of thousands of years. Thus, Israelis integrated many features of Yemenite dance, song, and folklore into their own fledgling culture. Yemenite Jewry made contributions in other ways as well. For instance, Professor Shaul Lieberman z"l noted that the Yemenite community preserved for us a wealth of old manuscripts and other ancient spiritual works otherwise not known or available to us.

Operation Magic Carpet made accessible to us a singular culture and managed to liberate nearly an entire community. Fifty years later, this is no less of a miracle, and we should surely consider it one of *chasdei shamayim*.



Through the Years

Continued from page 7

The increased interest in Israeli life led to a series of *Commentator* articles exploring the cultural makeup of the then, "modern" Israeli state. Articles contrasted the religious ideals of the initial settlers and the values of the more modern *olim*. Other articles addressed, for the first time, Israeli politics, again reflecting students growing interest in all areas of life in the Jewish state. A furious debate arose at the start of the Fall 1959 semester over the proposed introduction of a chapter of the Student Zionist Organization to Yeshiva University. Many, though supportive of Zionist affiliation, questioned the acceptability of joining a secular Zionist organization. A December 2 editorial brought to a close, weeks of bickering. "Rabbi Soloveitchik advocated the re-establishment of a religious Zionist organization and advised against an S.Z.O. chapter at Yeshiva. The issue is now dead. We have heard the advice of the Gadol HaDor and we must abide by it."

With Israeli politics and culture on everyone's minds, Israeli visitors were open to warm welcomes from the YU student body. December 6, 1962 brought the arrival of Rabbi Shlomo Goren, Chief Rabbi of the Israeli army. He spoke of the difficulties that then faced the establishment of a religious state, noting that "the establishment of the State of Israel came at a bad time, when there were very few Gedolim left after the destruction." Still, Rabbi Goren added that "it is difficult to say that Israel is actually still in exile, since it is now a sovereign state." November 1965 also brought another distinguished guest. Golda Meir, then the foreign minister, spoke to a "overflow crowd" concerning the issues of Israeli foreign policy.

Despite the growing Zionist sentiment and fervor of Yeshiva University students and the American Jewish populace at large toward Israel, the YU administration had yet to allow for a formal celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut. Articles and editorials in *The Commentator* dealt with the issue and demonstrated student disappointment. On behalf of the university, there is a "seeming indifference to the significance of the day," stated an opinion on May 25, 1967. This was viewed as "indicative of [the university's] incoherent policy towards the State of Israel." Also noted was the fact that the Israeli flag had disappeared from Main Center flagpoles. Even after the Six Day War, a May 2, 1968 letter to the editor noted, the extent of official celebration included only a "day of meditation," with no meditation, and only "a pseudo-celebration." Norman Bertram wrote, "We, the Yeshiva community, have slept through the Holocaust, the establishment of the State of Israel and the recapturing of Jerusalem. The Six Day War has given us one last opportunity to lead a proud new generation in America. Let us begin this Independence Day with celebrations the like of which New York has never seen."

With the only official university celebrations limited to the Erna Michael College, many students took matters into their own hands. Headlines describe "Dancing, Singing, Speeches and Spontaneity" as marking Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations by students. EMC students poured out of classes on May 2 to dance on the Danciger campus. RIETS and JSS students quickly got caught up in the fervor as well, and they too joined the celebration. Recognizing the enthusiastic outpouring would interfere with the general studies, Yeshiva College canceled classes that mid-afternoon. "Israeli flags waved triumphantly from the Rubin and Morgenstern dorm rooms and from... a makeshift flagpole planted in the center of the dancing."

The Six Day War itself received sparse *Commentator* coverage, its rapidity hampering efforts at reporting. Instead, however,

the editors presented the accounts of five YU students who were either studying in Israel for the year or who went especially during the crisis to lend a hand. They described their experiences in getting past roadblocks: "We said 'mitnadvim michutz la'aretz' and were waved through. They said that by the end of the week something would happen. It turned out that by the end of the week it was all over." Howard Bodner and Milton Sonnenberg, two *mitnadvim*, described their experiences digging trenches. Morris Berger, who went with them, was especially close to the action. "We could see the fighting; it was like fireworks." The interviews closed with an emphasis on the student's desires to make Aliyah. "I have a moral obligation," stressed Berger, "I see how necessary aliyah is for the long term survival of Israel."

While news of the war itself did not make headlines, the editors had to find something to satisfy student's calls for more Israeli-oriented news. The war issue itself closed off with an editorial promise to expand coverage of Israeli affairs, a promise they kept, the next issue inaugurating a special new section titled "Israeli News Briefs." Among the more notable events recorded during that time was the January 1968 visit of PM Levi Eshkol. He spoke to a joint YC/SCW crowd, emphasizing the role young leadership would play in Israel's future. His predictions, now, seem somewhat unheard, as prophetic.

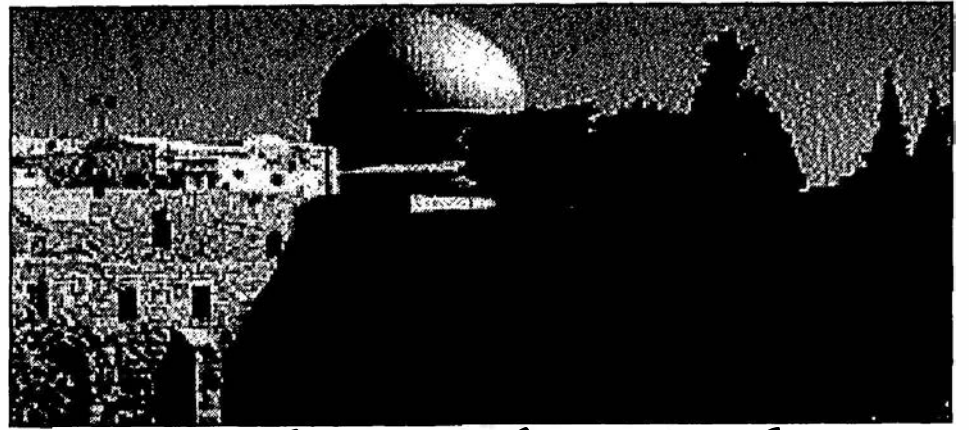
The Era of Activism

The 1970's ushered in an era of student protests on behalf of Soviet Judaism that echoed through the halls of the college daily. The same connection to those Jews behind the iron curtain was demonstrated towards Israeli concerns as well. A flow of Israeli visitors and speakers, as well as a greater number of Israel-oriented forums on campus, were recorded in growing frequency by *The Commentator*. Initiating a steady stream of guest speakers was Prime Minister Golda Meir, who was awarded an honorary doctorate on March 8, 1973. Speakers addressed "the university's link with Israel," citing "the large number of students who have studied there," as well as the recently constructed Gruss Center in Yerushalayim. Mrs. Meir, speaking in both Hebrew and English, "congratulated Dr. Belkin and praised the university" for its pro-Israel positions.

Student's emotional attachment to Israel was brought to the forefront after Egypt and Syria's surprise attack in the '73 Yom Kippur War. Student sentiments inspired a "Special Israeli War Issue" on October 25. Headlines told of the 75,000 who gathered in Manhattan to protest, including scores of YU students, in which the Egyptian mission to the UN was "pelted" by angry protesters, the efforts "disturbed by violence." The sheer manpower required to wage a war was supplemented when Yeshiva undergrads and alumni volunteered to go and help in non-military work. The issue also included photographs of students involved in demonstrations, preparations and a special all-night mishmar learning program on behalf of the war effort.

Following the war, Shlomo Levin, Israeli Consul for Religious Affairs, came to YU to make a "strong appeal for immediate student immigration to Israel." He emphasized the low Israeli morale and how those lost in the conflict included many Yeshiva students, "the cream of the crop of Israel's cultural reserve." He argued the need for a new wave of immigrants was essential or else Israel "will not be able to exist physically and spiritually." Together with Mr. Levin's presentation, a trio of social scientists presented their findings on the "Yom Kippur War Impact Upon US Jews." The speakers were all enthusiastically received, attracting overflow crowds.

continued on page 12



Israeli Attitude YU Style

BY MATTITYAHU BALLAS

In an April 20, 1998 IDF radio interview of Israel's Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, Hanegbi stated, "Our wish has always been to have direct negotiations without any outside intervention and with minimum outside pressure... [However] we are willing to accept some form of intervention by other elements, as long as they're objective and do not adopt a one-sided position."

The sentiment expressed by Hanegbi strongly embodies the Israeli attitudes of defiance and independence; yet, at the same time, Hanegbi's comments illustrate the recognition by the leaders of Israel that, at times, outside assistance is needed. With a sizable population of Israelis on the college campus, YU students are in a good position to understand Israeli feelings concerning the feasibility of the Oslo Accords, and other matters related to the peace process, such as how extensively the American government should involve itself in the Arab-Israeli peace process. What YU students might fail to see is how the Israeli student views the YU student and the American Jew, who raise their voices, voice their opinions, and attempt in all manners to influence Israeli politics.

Ze'ev Neumeier, a YC senior, commented on the frequent instances in which Americans insist that the Israelis make peace. "Peace is a good thing," he exclaimed. "Make love not war! Oh yeah, what we need right now is an Israeli version of the 60's hippie movement: Young, soon-to-be yuppies crammed into Volkswagens, marching in to Yerushalaim with peace symbols, having unprotected sex, and smoking pot. That would demonstrate the spirit of peace and bring the country together."

Nathan Tzur, a YC sophomore, asserted, less sarcastically, that it is difficult to understand the Israeli position. "We have no process today. First of all, when we make peace and sign contracts, they don't stop the terrorism. When you live in it every day, everywhere in Israel is dangerous. Today the Palestinians are in Kfar Sava, right by the border. You're evicted from your house, and it's very difficult; you leave your house - it's your country. There is a religious war between the Arabs and the Jews; they want to kill the Jewish people."

Regardless of their political viewpoints toward the peace process, many of the non-Israeli students interviewed, like SSSB student Alex Rzhavinsky, seemed to agree with each other. Rzhavinsky said, "The opinions of the Americans should be heard. Nevertheless, it shouldn't be taken as seriously as a poll of Israeli public opinion to determine the future of Israeli policy. Furthermore, the Americans are generally less emotional and share a 'colder and only rational' opinion about Israeli politics, since they don't experience the everyday life that an Israeli experiences."

Israeli students, however, had varying opinions on the American perspective of the peace process. Nir Salomon, for example, did not object to hear Americans voicing their opinions and even encouraged them to speak out. On the other hand, many Israeli students felt that Americans do not have an accurate understanding of Israeli life, and like Rzhavinsky, they said that Americans should not influence Israeli politics.

"Americans don't have the full picture of Israeli politics or Middle Eastern politics for that matter," said Neumeier. "The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a complex problem based on history, tradition, and a whole lot of other things. Heck, the Israeli politicians don't know anything about their own politics. If America can't figure out what to do with Iraq, which is nothing in comparison to the Israel problem, how can it intervene in Israeli politics, which are much more complicated?"

Neumeier added, "The Conflict is not a matter to be taken lightly and to be speculated about overseas. Let the Israelis who are supposed to know what they are doing take care of their own politics, and let America worry about Bill Gates instead."

"I understand even the Israeli leftists," Tzur continued. "There is a feeling of desperation. People are being killed, and they want it to stop. They feel that when we gave Sinai to Egypt, a land about two-thirds the size of Israel, it worked because we got rid of our worst enemy, Egypt. America's involvement spoils the way the government runs the country. Whatever they [Arabs] don't take with the sword, they take with the pen. They want to ruin the Jewish presence so that *Medinat Yisrael* will lose its identity as a Jewish nation."

Other Israeli students, who asked that their names not be printed, agreed with Neumeier and Tzur that America and certain European countries try to influence the countries involved to do what they want. America has a history of putting pressure on Israel to appease Arab demands. These students pointed out that even though some argue that the United States has the right to influence Israel because it gives Israel foreign aid, they fail to note that America doesn't pressure other countries it supports in the way it influences Israel. Israel, they said, is often expected to put America's interests ahead of its own. One displeased Israeli student said, "It is a double standard from the American government."

Whether they think that American Jews have the right and responsibility to voice their opinions on Israeli politics or take the side of "They don't live there, they don't have the right to influence," as SSSB Sophomore Aviad Goldwicht claimed, most agreed that all Jews should get involved in Israeli causes. The general feeling seems to be that although they now live there, Israel is the homeland for all Jews, and all have a right to secure it.



Achievement in Israel: YU Alumni Creating the Future

BY CHAIM WOOLF

In Israel today, Mizrachi, the religious Zionist party, is one of the largest political movements. It follows suit that Yeshiva University, standing at the center of modern Orthodoxy in America, should have strong ties to Israel. The Rav, Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, was a big supporter of Israel, he himself was a member of the Mizrachi movement. With this in mind, one would expect to hear of YU alumni who make aliyah and strongly impact Israeli life.



Dr. Arthur Eidelman

For Americans, probably the most famous YU alumnus who has influenced Israeli politics and life is Baruch Goldstein. When Baruch Goldstein attended YU, he was elected class president and he had an excellent scholastic record. After graduating, he went on to Einstein Medical school. In Israel, Goldstein was an exemplary soldier in the IDF, serving three years, instead of the required 18 months. Goldstein, however, is not famous for his scholastic achievements at YU. On 25 February 1994 he left his mark on Israeli society, gunning down 29 Arabs who were praying in the Mearat Ha'machpela on Purim morning.

Baruch Goldstein, however, is the exception, not the rule. Numerous YU alumni with position in the rabbinate, sciences, education, and government, strongly impact YU society in a positive manner. The following names of a few important alumni are proof to YU's positive impact on Israeli society:

Dr. Arthur Isaac Eidelman graduated YU in 1959, Magna cum Laude. He then went on to Albert Einstein where he graduated in 1963. Since moving to Israel, Dr. Eidelman has established himself as one of the country's leading medical thinkers. Director of the Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem, Eidelman also occupies a position on the National Commission on Prenatal Care for the Israel Ministry of Health. Eidelman also sits on the La Leche League International Medical Advisory Board, and is the associate editor of the Israeli Journal of Medical Sciences. Aside from his other responsibilities, Eidelman has also twice been a visiting research scholar at Yale University Child Study Center.

Efraim Zuroff received his BA in from YU in history. Before moving to Israel, he was the first director of the Simon Wiesenthal in Los Angeles, where he won an Academy award for his Holocaust documentary, *Genocide*. In Israel, Zuroff has worked for the US Department of Justice as a researcher for their Office of Special investigations where he prepares cases to indict Nazi war criminals. His book, *Occupation: Nazi Hunter*, has increased general and governmental awareness about the work needed to be done in capturing Nazi war criminals. Zuroff is cur-

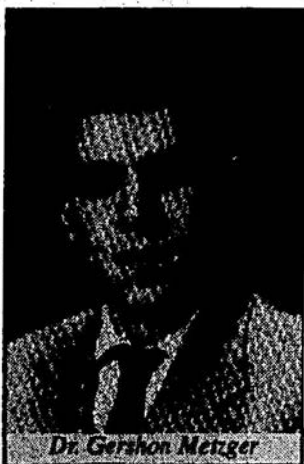
rently completing his doctorate in Holocaust Studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Professor Emanuel Rackman received his rabbinical ordination from RIETS in 1934. Currently, Rabbi Rackman is the chancellor of Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, a position he has held since 1986. Rabbi Rackman had moved to Israel in 1977 to serve as president of the university. While he served as president, the university achieved great strides in the fields of Torah and science, but Rabbi Rackman is noted for his attempts to create an atmosphere of understanding between the religious and secular students. Aside from holding this position, Rabbi Rackman has published two books: *Israel's Emerging Constitution* and *One Man's Judaism*.

Malke Bina received her MA from Bernard Revel Graduate School in 1970. Her thesis compared the commentaries of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and the Ramban on the Torah. In 1971, she immigrated to Israel in 1971 and has many contributions to higher learning for women in Judaic studies. Aside from having taught at both Machon Gold and Michlala, Bina co-founded Michlelet Bruria, Brovenders, and was the director there for ten years.

Her most recent project is Matan, the women's institute for Torah study. At Matan, women have the opportunity to learn Talmud in a Beit Midrash in *chavruta* style, a privilege, once only allowed for men. Despite her most exceptional accomplishments, Bina's name might be more recognized to YU students for another reason: she is the wife of Rav Aharon Bina, Rosh Yeshiva of the foreign students division of Yeshivat Hakotel.

Dr. Gershon Metzger graduated from YU in 1955 with honors in Chemistry. In Israel he has had many high ranking posts in the science fields. Starting in the 70's and continuing on till today, Metzger has held positions with the Israel National Council for Research and



Dr. Gershon Metzger

Development and the Ministry of Science and Technology, MOST. As the director general of MOST, he is the highest ranking government official on the M i x e d Commission which is in charge of the cooperative agreements in science between the former Soviet Union and Israel.

Rabbi Chaim Brovender received his BA, MA and rabbinical ordination from YU, Revel, and RIETS respectively. Rabbi Brovender has exerted much influence in higher Jewish education facilities in Israel. He has had a hand in founding or heading many yeshivas; for example, Yeshivat Hamivtar, Brovenders, Ohr Torah of Efrat, and Hartman college.

This is merely a fraction of YU's alumni influence in Israeli society. There are many more graduates out there who are actively putting their mark on Israel today, and for generations to come.



A Different Type of Education: Undergraduates Speak of Israel and the IDF

BY ROBERT GUTTMANN

In an institution where the majority of the students describe themselves as religious Zionists, it should come as no surprise that there over a dozen individuals on our undergraduate campus are estimated to have served, in one capacity or another, in the Israeli Defense Forces. In a report written to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel, *The Commentator* interviewed a number of these students/soldiers in an effort to see how these young men view their school's commitment to the Israeli nation, as well as how these students have adjusted to a school whose student body has little knowledge of what it means to be a warrior in the Middle East.

When first approached, most of those interviewed were apprehensive about being profiled. For these student/soldiers, the time spent in the Israeli Army was not about receiving respect or even about receiving acknowledgment for their efforts toward defending the *Medinah*. Instead, they feel that their service was something that they owed to the Jewish people and to Israel, and, in a way, their actions came almost naturally to them. This sense of wanting to keep their army service out of the spotlight was even more evident among the American soldiers, who joined the IDF not through any sort of compulsion, but due to their belief that defending the State was a civic if not a religious responsibility.

Nonetheless, a number of soldiers ultimately agreed to be interviewed. Yishai Fleisher, a Yeshiva College junior, was in the Hesder program of Yeshivat Ma'ale Adumim in the West Bank. A paratrooper stationed on the Israeli-Lebanon border, Yishai was wounded toward the end of his army service and was given an honorable discharge. He views his time in the army as his way of repaying the *Medinah* for providing him with a sanctuary, and most importantly, a country of his own. When asked whether he was terrified at being stationed on the Lebanese border, so far from his native New Jersey suburban town, Yishai shrugged off the notion of fear almost instinctively: "It wasn't about fear when I was stationed at the border," he said. "For me the happiest time of my life was when I was in the army. And do you know why? It was because for once in my life I had the sense of fulfillment that comes from knowing that you are doing what you are supposed to be doing, from being where you know you are destined to be."

While Yishai described his army experience as a wholly positive one, he did readily admit that in many ways it altered his views on a number of political issues, most noticeably on the necessity for peace in the region. "The Army definitely pushed my thinking more towards the Left," he said. "When people talk about how brute force should be generously used in crushing the

enemies of the State of Israel, they fail to realize that inside that soldier's uniform administering force is a human being, who wasn't raised with the notion that violence should be used indiscriminately. Very few people know what it means to hold a gun against a child." Thus, Yishai is often bewildered with the gung-ho attitude of many student in YU. For him the views expressed by those in the extreme right fail to realize that the overwhelming desire of typical Israeli is to lead a normal life in a normal country.

Another soldier echoing Fleisher's call for normalcy is Raphi Schorr. A graduate of the Hebrew Academy of Greater Washington, Raphi learned for two years in Yeshivat Har Etzion (Gush) and then enlisted in the elite Givati infantry brigade. "It was something I wanted to do from a young age," said Schorr, concerning his service. "Because I plan on living in Israel, it is a duty incumbent upon me to serve just like the Israelis."

"Serving in Lebanon," said Schorr, "did not radically alter my personal political viewpoint, but it gave me a new appreciation for left wing politics. I totally empathize with the everyday grunt who gets sick and tired of trying to control another population. People who have served do not want their children to undergo the same experience, if it can be avoided." As to the level of Israel awareness at YU, he said "I've been here two years and haven't heard one important Israeli political issue seriously addressed. For an institution that claims to be the leader of the American Modern Orthodox movement it is astonishing how little of a role they [YU] take in exposing their students to important issues in Israeli society such as the secular-religious divide, or the Arab-Jewish conflict." Schorr cited "concerted opposition from many members of the faculty" to R' Yehudah Amital coming to speak, and "several senior members of the upper level administration" who stopped the president of the American Arab Institute, James Zogby from addressing the students, as examples of the official YU policy. "They don't want students to hear other viewpoints."

This dissatisfaction with the general ignorance among YU students in regards to issues concerning the peace process is echoed by another student who served in Givati, Mordechai Fishman. He described the average YU student as "extremely vocal" about Israeli politics and social issues, notwithstanding the respective opinions they espouse. Nonetheless, Fishman did feel that the majority of YU students have "absolutely no idea of what the facts are on the ground." In addition, he was emphatic about his disappointment regarding the Zionist commitment of the student body and the institution in general. In particular, he faults the school in its lack of Israel-centered activities and lec-

continued on page 12

Through the Years

Continued from page 10

Mr. Levin's presentation did not go unheard. The Spring semester found 32 YU students going to Israel to volunteer on kibbutzim. The plan was coordinated by YCSC and SCWSC and was even approved by the university to give the students 6-8 credits for their work. In describing the motivation for the trip students emphasized "the economic problems of the kibbutzim." Because kibbutz members are mobilized or serving in the reserves, the kibbutzim have been lacking the power necessary to maintain production." In addition to their work, the students were given supplementary lectures by Bar-Ilan University professors, allowing them to receive the credit. The hectic semester culminated in a special Yom Ha'atzmaut visit by Sephardic Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef. Rabbi Yosef "expressed hope that the students of Yeshiva University would not only increase their own knowledge and commitment to Torah but also expose others to Torah in order to strengthen them."

Following terrorist attacks in Ma'alot and a UN invitation to the PLO, student protests reawakened the strong pro-Israel sentiments on campus. A crowd of "two to three hundred students marched up and down the sidewalks of the UN mission, chanting and protesting in both Hebrew and in English." Rabbi Benjamin Blech compared the United Nations to the "Dor Haflagah, after the flood, who united all people, including murderers, against G-d." Adding fuel to the fire was former Israeli Minister of Finance, Pinchas Sapir, who proclaimed before an EMC crowd on November 20 that "only a cruel world would receive Arafat."

Two weeks later, on December 4, Mr. Abba Eban was received by an enthusiastic crowd as he delivered a lecture titled, "The Future of Israeli Society." In it, Mr. Eban contrasted the Arab view that "anything which is non-Arab is artificial and is...destined to be covered by the shifting desert sands." The Israelis, on the other hand, see the Middle East as a "mosaic composed of the multiplicity of lands, ideas and cultures. Thus Israel is an integral part of the Middle East."

A year of prestigious visitors was capped off by the March '75 visit of the Israeli president, Dr. Ephraim Katzir. A crowd of thousands greeted the Israeli head of state. At the ceremony, YCSC President Larry Eisenberg, greeted Dr. Katzir, noting the growing relationship between YU and Israel. "Here at Yeshiva University the students are dedicated to Israel, who can look for numbers now at rallies and in the future for economic aid and students who...would help save Israel." Student responses showed support for Dr. Katzir's strong policy statements on behalf of a religious Israel. Dr. Katzir returned the favor by praising the "learning and tradition" as the "moral foundations and necessities for civilization as presented by Yeshiva University."

The Spring 1975 term concluded with Commentator coverage of the AIPAC policy conference in Washington. For the first time, a Commentator representative participated in a national event of significance to the Jewish community and Israel. Research Editor Jeff Strashun told of the cries for a "mutuality of interests" in Congress's dealing with Israel. Of particular interest was the changing Soviet policy with regards to Persian Gulf oil nations and its implications for both American and Israeli interests. The significance of this news coverage as the first of its kind in reporting Israeli-American relationships underscores the student interests that had been building on campus over the last decade.

With all the prominent visitors that came to YU in the 70's, the May 4, 1978 ceremony honoring Menachem Begin was, perhaps, the most dramatic. At a solemn Yom Ha'shoah convocation, Rabbi Lamm recalled Mr. Begin's earlier visit. He noted that "Today

Jerusalem is a united city once again," recalling Begin's remarks thirty years earlier. "Menachem Begin is an extremist in his love of his people and the desire to implement the dreams of Theodore Herzl and Zev Jabotinsky." The visit was a fitting end to a decade that saw the relationship between YU, its students and the people of Israel grow to new level of personal concern.

In Recent Years

The last several years, have seen a dramatic increase in the number of students studying for a year or two in Israel. This trend began in earnest in the early 80's. A May 14, 1980 news article described the active recruiting role that YU has played in the Israeli Yeshivot. Rabbi Yosef Blau accompanied various recruiting officers on a trip geared towards "projecting an awareness to students of the high priority which Yeshiva and Stern place on a student who learns in Israeli Yeshivot." A year later, the March 4 issue noted the initiation of the YU Joint Israel Program which gave students an opportunity to learn in Eretz Yisrael, while maintaining college status the entire time.

Many noted guests visited YU in the early 80's as well. In February of 1981, Brigadier General Yitzhak Segev spoke to students in the Rubin Shul about the conflict in southern Lebanon. Two years later, Israeli President Yitzhak Navon spoke to a crowd of 1200, urging the crowd to "determine their own destiny and not let the State of Israel become the playing tool of other nations." He stressed that sometimes "we are too busy to think about the historic times we live in and appreciate the existence of the state of Israel." In November '83, President Chaim Herzog visited, urging a capacity crowd in Lampport Auditorium to "Rise and meet the challenges of the future with the strength of the past, and come join us in the State of Israel." He spoke of the many opportunities available and the advancement that Israel had made in recent years, urging all to make Aliyah in the near future.

In the 1980's, *The Commentator* devoted full page coverage to Israel nearly every issue and Israel news often eclipsed any news that took place on campus. Lectures by Rav Meir Kahane, zt"l, on the territories received front page coverage, and debates concerning Arafat resounded throughout the paper.

In the February 17, 1988 edition of *The Commentator*, a two page spread was dedicated to the 40th anniversary of Israel's independence. With the focus of the spread on the Palestinian right for autonomy versus Israel's right to the land, students debated the various issues of Israel's security.

1990 marked the death of Rabbi Meir Kahane and articles of agreement and disagreement with the deceased abounded.

Since the 1990's *The Commentator* has covered the Oslo Accords and Rabin's memorable visit and address to the students of YU. Covering the early demise of Prime Minister Rabin, *The Commentator* wrote a controversial article about those who seemingly supported his assassination.

Events in Israel continue to impact on the students of this campus. When the streets of Tel Aviv and Yerushalayim, are torn apart by bombs, or when Israeli citizens celebrate their independence, these are not events that are distant from Yeshiva University students: we are attached emotionally and spiritually to Israel. Throughout the years, at each national crisis students have gathered to say tehillim or learn at special mishmars. When Israel celebrates, the students of Yeshiva University rejoice with her. Israel has been and will always be foremost on the minds of students and faculty. Nowhere is there a greater indication of the strong link between Yeshiva University and Israel than through the pages of Yeshiva University's official undergraduate newspaper, *The Commentator*.

Israel and the IDF

Continued from page 11

tures. He said, "The school's efforts are an abject, miserable failure. Efforts of the school in instilling devotion to Israel are pathetic and paltry. The biggest pro-Israel change touted by the administration is the Israeli flag on campus. Whoopee. The average student cares more about his accounting prospects . . . than about the land of Israel. They have no connection with the Land and are more concerned with plans to move to the Five Towns or Teaneck than in making Aliyah."

Y.C. Senior Oren Shimoni, who as an enlistee in Machal served in the elite Golani Brigade, took a more positive tone. While Oren applauded YU's sponsoring of such events as the Yom Ha'atzmaut Chagigah, he said that there is room for more events focused on Israel, particularly due to the reality that "most students here have spent a year or more in Israeli yeshivas and therefore have a concrete connection to the Land." Unlike the other soldiers interviewed, Oren adopted a more restrained tone in regards to how he viewed the peace process. "I'm a strong believer in the importance of

peace," he said. "In regards to 'Land for Peace,' we have to take a step back to see how much this approach has really accomplished and whether its realistic to say that its future results will prove to be any more fruitful."

While the views expressed by those interviewed may seem at times to be at odds with the views expressed by the majority of YU students, it is important to recognize that the aspect that pervaded the remarks of all those profiled was their belief that the continued strength of the Israeli state would prove to have positive ramifications for Jews throughout both Eretz Yisrael and the Diaspora. As Oren Shimoni succinctly noted, "When you're in full military gear and davening Ma'ariv, or when it's Friday night and you're singing *Yedid Nefesh* and *Lecha Dodi* at an isolated army post with guys from all different types of backgrounds, you realize that in the end we're all Jews, and that ultimately is what's most important."

Expectations and Reality, Fifty Years Later

BY RABBI YOSEF BLAU

Israel has become such an integral part of every Jew's consciousness that its existence is taken for granted. The intractable conflict between Jew and Arab, and the internal disagreements between religious and secularists, right and left, can cause us to forget what an incredible change has taken place in Jewish history. Fifty years ago, a disheartened community of Jews reduced by a third through the atrocities of the Holocaust and additional millions lost behind the iron curtain seriously questioned the value of continuing. The creation of the state of Israel brought with it renewed hope and a sense of pride in being Jewish.

Though the leaders of the state were not religious and some Orthodox thinkers opposed its creation before messianic times, Israel has been a major factor in the revitalization of religious life. The day school movement began to flourish in the United States at this time, with the subsequent impact of study in Israel becoming an automatic part of yeshiva education. Assimilation was delayed, and silent Jews of the Soviet Union regained their identity.

It is true that anti-Semitism did not

disappear and Jewish unity is not any closer. Perhaps those who saw a panacea are disappointed, but the parameters of Jewish existence have been transformed. A gathering of the exiles has included Jews from all parts of the world including some whose very existence was not well known. With all its crises, Israel is fundamentally secure and rapidly becoming the largest Jewish community in the world.

For close to two thousand years Jews dreamt about a return to Zion. You live at a time where this is a reality. Unrealistic expectation leads to becoming disillusioned. In secular circles this is expressed in post-Zionism and has led some religious Zionists to a dangerous thwarted messianism. An appreciation of the historic change introduced to Jewish history in 1948 and a sense of gratitude to Hashem for his saving his people must coexist with our resolve to face the challenges that remain.

The term "olam," which literally means forever, sometimes in the Bible actually refers to a "Yovel," - a period of fifty years. The same word also means the world. Fifty years ago with the reestablishment of a Jewish state in Israel the Jewish world was permanently transformed and this we celebrate.

Perspectives on 50

"ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR HOMELAND!"

The birth of the State of Israel represented the birth of a Jewish nation and a homeland for all Jews around the world. Whether they feel that Israel is the holy land of the Jewish soul, just a safe haven, or a lovely place by the equator to visit and learn about our heritage, the majority of Jews, irregardless of their religious denomination, feel a link to Israel.

With the 50th anniversary of Israel's Independence just around the corner, we must ask ourselves: what role do we American Jews play in Israel? Do we take a passive role since we view Israel only from a distance and say "que sera sera"? Or should we perhaps all migrate to the Jewish homeland (make Aliyah) and voice our opinions there? Do we treat Israel as just a vacation spot and every so often donate some money to the Keren Kayemet? Should we be involved in the political arena, stand up against anyone whom we feel does Israel wrong and stage protests if need be? Should we be physically active, economically active, politically active, all of the above, or none of the above?

Ideally most Jews would probably say all of the above. We should do anything and everything, in and beyond our power, to assist Israel. For most Jews, however, all of the above would be similar to a new year's resolution, one that is based on an ideal situation and simply remains an ideal, never a reality. We must then analyze the situation realistically.

Most American Jews, in my opinion, are either not in a position to make Aliyah, or simply for various reasons choose not to. The reasons stated could include economic benefits, convenience of already being settled, and putting their lives at risk due to the potential of war or terrorist attacks. Although moving to Israel would not be an answer for many, neither would sitting back and doing nothing. After all, Jews for centuries have dreamt of regaining Palestine and countless number of Jews gave their blood to see Israel become a reality. Now that we have a homeland we should not take it for granted.

Perhaps the answer is simply that we must do whatever we can, no matter how little, to support Israel and help it flourish. If you are involved with politics, then perhaps assist Israel from that aspect; if you are a financial wizard, then perhaps you can assist Israel with financial donations. I do not think that we can be expected to go above and beyond the call of duty, but rather, each of us must examine ourselves and determine, in what way Israel could benefit from what I have to offer.

Ofer Melamed
YC '98
JSS President



ANI IPARON

In a disheartening pre-Pesach conversation, an Israeli friend revealed to me that English is now the de facto official language in many an Israeli neighborhood. This can, of course, be attributed to some positive recent developments: the number of English-speaking tourists in Israel have increased, and more Americans are making aliyah. These new olim, however, should be speaking Hebrew. Furthermore, those who may only be in Israel for a year or two should at least make an effort to learn the Hebrew language.

When my mother studied in Israel many moons ago, she broke her teeth attempting to learn Hebrew. Today she speaks it fluently. Now, my sister, studying in my mother's alma mater, could go a week without even having to say "Shalom!"

The Rambam cites (Pirkei Avot, 2:1), as an example of a mitzvah kala, "Lemidat Lashon Hakodesh" – learning Lashon Hakodesh. While Modern Hebrew is certainly not the holy tongue, thousands of its words are the same or share the same root as words in Lashon Hakodesh. I'm not saying that you shouldn't learn English comp; I'm just saying that you should learn Hebrew too. It simply takes a willingness and a little effort.

Here are just a few suggestions to develop and maintain your competence in Hebrew. If you visit Israel and stay with relatives who speak both English and Hebrew, why not try speaking the latter? Even if you can get away with English at the makolet, try speaking Hebrew. And while you reside in America, seize opportunities to practice your Hebrew so that it doesn't rust from disuse. When R' Marcus (the director of Tevilah America) lectured at Y.U., he suggested a weekly get-together where only Hebrew is spoken. Following up on his suggestion, a small group of Yeshiva College guys gather for supper every Sunday in the cafeteria. All are invited to join with one small requirement: you must speak in Hebrew. As we get further away from Pesach, let us not forget one of the things that kept us together and ultimately resulted in the Jews' exodus from Egypt: "Lo shinu et leshonam" – the Jews did not change their language.

Yitz Motzen
YC '00

A NEW APPRECIATION

It is hard to put my feelings towards Israel into words; I am not sure that they are feelings that can be described. I am certain that this is a sentiment shared by many. In its own way the State of Israel has had an impact on each and every one of us. I wish to share the impact that Israel has had on my family and me.

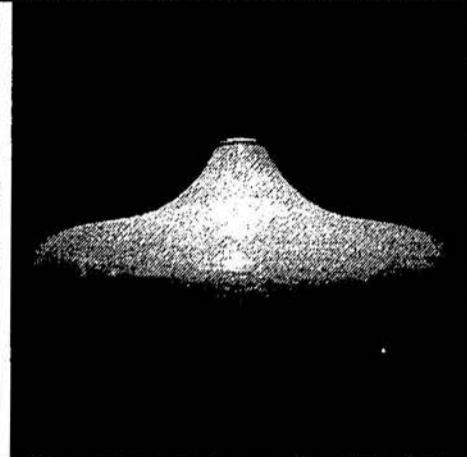
The year was 1946 and a boat embarking from a port in Italy carried a young man and his pregnant wife. The man showed the wear of his years in Mathausen, and the worry that everyday might be his turn to take that dreaded shower. The woman's fingers showed the scars of countless pin pricks inflicted upon her during the fast pace work regimen in Oskar Schindler's factory. Yet now a smile crossed both their faces as they sailed to Palestine, to begin a new life for themselves, and the child she held in her womb. This is the story of Yehoshua and Malka Barber. My grandfather described to me the site of their boat docking on the shore of Haifa. Thousands of Jews were kissing the ground as they returned to their only true homeland. It would take two more years for the UN to ratify the bill making Israel a new state, but for the people newly arriving it was just a formality, just a piece of paper. Israel was their Homeland.

My father was born April 3rd, 1948, as my grandfather was off fighting the War of Independence. Finally, Israel was declared the official Jewish State, on May 5th, 1948. However, the Jewish people knew Israel was not complete without our capital of Jerusalem. In June of 1967, as the entire world held their breath to see the outcome of a new war, a young soldier wept as his lips kissed the stones of the Western Wall. That soldier was my father, Shlomo Barber.

However, it always bothered me that I did not feel the same passion or appreciate Israel the way my parents and grandparents had. That was until I went upon the March of the Living. It was only after I traveled to the true *Galut*, visited the death camps, and looked upon the graves of my ancestors, that I understood the meaning and importance of a Jewish homeland. The day the plane left Poland and arrived in Israel was the proudest day of my life. As I descended the steps of the plane I too kissed the ground, just as my grandparents had, almost 5 decades ago. I understood on a microcosmic level what they had gone through and what having their own State meant to them. Israel is our nation, a place where we have fought to victory and suffered many defeats; it is OURS. Israel is a place built of Jewish blood, sweat, and tears and to relinquish it would be an insult, not only towards Israel, but to those Israeli soldiers who never got to kiss the stones of the Wall, and to the millions who perished in the gas chambers singing "Leshana Habbah B'Yerushalayim."

What I have written here is only a fraction of what I feel in my heart. I am sure that you feel it too. May we spend the next 50 years remembering those who died for Israel, so that we may live there. Let us not forget the special gift G-d has given us and instill these feelings in our children and grandchildren. Finally, may we all be *Zocheh* to see the final step in our redemption, the coming of Moshiach in our time.

Dror Barber
YC '99
YCSC President Elect



SINS OF THE PAST

Avinu Malkeinu, Chatanu L'Fanecha. As Religious Zionists we have been embarrassingly remiss and have committed a grave error.

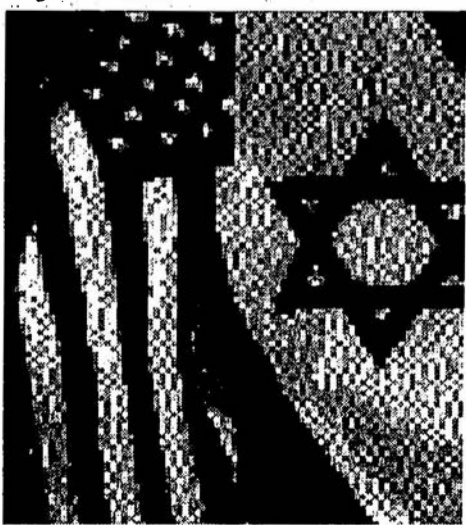
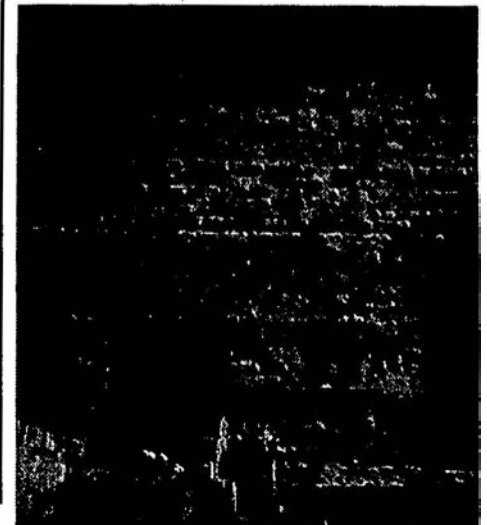
For the hulk of its history, the Religious Zionist community has directed its resources, almost exclusively, to the settlement and retention of lands in Israel. Proponents of Religious Zionism—invariably suffering through harrowing circumstances—have cultivated rocky fields, populated dangerous frontiers, and have vehemently protested the Israeli withdrawal from contested lands. Answering a Divine mandate to settle the Land of Israel, Religious Zionists have proven to be intrepid pioneers and continue to advance this holy cause. But in primarily channeling their energies to this end, Religious Zionists have shunned a greater and, dare I say, more sacred responsibility.

As more Jews moved to Judea and Samaria, and as more *yeshivot* began to spring up in new settlements and outposts, adherence to Judaism in Israel's heartland continued to atrophy. Major Israeli cities, such as Haifa and Tel Aviv, still remain bastions of religious ignorance. Today, to make matters worse, Israeli secularism is being slowly supplanted by deeply rooted resentment and anti-religious fomentation. In contrast to their efforts in settling the land, Religious Zionists have invested little in promulgating Judaism to Israeli society.

Anti-religious sentiment is the bane of modern Israeli culture, and as the government continues to give land to the PA, Religious Zionists are losing their voice in Israeli society and are becoming increasingly marginalized and vilified. This need not have been the case. Religious Zionism has failed. Religious Zionists have been more Zionist than religious.

We have squandered our historic opportunity and have neglected our brethren. We have valued barren hills over barren souls. O' Father, our King, we have been iniquitous. Please forgive us.

Joshua Abraham
YC '99



Perspectives on 50

THE OTHER SIDE

After 50 long, hard, bitter years of constant struggle against the same few opponents, it is hard to imagine why now, when finally we seem to be reasonably secure and prosperous, we would give away land in a deal with terrorists. As I see it, barring historical/moral reasons, there are two highly compelling reasons for us to at least open negotiations with terrorists. I'll be blunt; how long can we prevent terrorists from obtaining weapons of mass destruction? 10 years? 20? maybe more, but ultimately it is a question of time. Second, population statistics show that the Palestinian birthrate is outrageously disproportionate to the Israeli birthrate. It is speculated that within 20-30 years we can expect an Arab majority in the Jewish Homeland. This problem alone has 2 very troubling possible outcomes. First, it has the possibility of placing Israel in the same tenuous position as South Africa during apartheid. The second and indeed more frightening possibility is that there is nothing to prevent these native born Palestinians from becoming citizens and simply voting themselves a Palestinian Prime Minister.

So how do we combat these problems? The peace plan orchestrated by the Rabin government, was based, in part, on economics. The theory went that people who have jobs, working plumbing, television, air conditioning, and a higher secular education would be less likely to blow themselves up on Israeli buses. Furthermore, a large educational system would have the further benefit of fostering feminism, which will, in all probability, slow their skyrocketing birthrate.

We also live under rather unique world conditions which are favorable towards Israel; conditions which give us the ability to control Arafat. In truth, at this point his back is against the wall. With multiple competing organizations, Arafat's PLO was near collapse, and therefore this is Arafat's last opportunity to accomplish anything. As long as Arafat is assured that he will be getting what he needs, he will "behave" so to speak. I have no illusions, I am certain that Arafat would get rid of Israel if he could, but he is also a realist and he will do what he must to survive.

However, Netanyahu's strong arm tactics have not done Israel any good. From the very outset, Netanyahu let Arafat know that he was not interested in working with Arafat except for mechanically and grudgingly carrying out the Oslo accords. Letting Arafat know that there is nothing to be gained from doing what Netanyahu wants, essentially forced Arafat to try to show Bibi that he cannot be ignored. So there was a battle in front of the Kotel, ostensibly about the opening of the gate, but in reality it was a very harsh warning. It seems that Netanyahu did not learn this lesson and Israel has paid dearly for it. Since then there have been many terrorist attacks and somehow Israel manages to come out looking bad, mainly because Bibi refuses to speak to Arafat under any circumstances. Truth be told, immediately after a terrorist attack, (like the one at Machaneh Yehuda) is the perfect time to "negotiate". This may seem odd, after all how do you negotiate with the people who are ultimately responsible for the killing of hundreds of Jews. Yet the truth is, if Netanyahu demanded that Arafat come to the negotiation table immediately after a terrorist attack, he would have to. Netanyahu would be able to demand almost anything and Arafat would have no choice but to comply. If he didn't, the weight of world opinion against the PA and Arafat would be strong enough to seriously threaten the very existence of the PA.

To conclude I would say that the goal of the Peace process is ultimately to save lives, Jewish or not. Those who are in favor feel that we can peacefully resolve these pressing problems through economics and by politically outmaneuvering Arafat.

Yossi Mandelbaum
YC '99



JUST ANOTHER OPINION

There is an old Jewish stereotype that lays the idea, "Give me two Jews and I will give you three opinions." Unfortunately, not all stereotypes are untrue.

As I surveyed the possible topics that I could possibly take a stance on concerning Israel and Jewish people, I realized something that frightened me. There was no single topic that I could choose, which has not already been spoken for. There have been newspaper articles, editorials, special editions, and books written on everything from Prime Minister Netanyahu's extra marital affairs, to sympathy for the families of suicide bombers to the factionalism found within small sects of Judaism. In fact there has been something said about everything that the Jewish nation has faced (and even some events that never even occurred) from the time its inception until the present day. Some of these opinions have been barren and futile while others have been insightful and important. As I thought about this phenomena, I stumbled upon the one topic that no one, I believe, has written about. The topic that I speak of is opinions. Let me explain.

For some reason many students in our institution have found that expressing their opinions with regard to anything from the peace process, to conversions, to caves, is not only an important part of their otherwise destitute lives, but some have taken the task far enough and have made a religion out of it. Has any one of these people ever sat and assessed the possible results and fallout of their comments? Has anybody realized that all of the talking has only served to fuel a fire that we as students can do absolutely nothing to stop? We are a people who for some inexplicable reason love argument, the step that leads to unnecessary conflict. Is that not a sin? I dare anyone to convince me that the bickering that has permeated the walls of this institution and the pages of this paper, are on the same level as those that were heard in the time of *Shami* and *Hillel*. How can we ever hope to come to some peace with the Arabs and others in this cruel world if we cannot put our own nonexistent differences aside. In going about your daily lives we need not step on the ways of others. What is right for one may not be right for another. May this be the last piece ever written on Jewish factionalism in our time. We must all learn to live together and serve G-d in the best way we can.

Pinchas Shapiro
YC '01
Freshman Class President

THE TABLE IS TURNED

The Jewish national leader is fooled by his gentle neighbors into forging a treaty with them. He believes they only want peace, but instead, their ulterior motive becomes clear. They only care about autonomy in the Jewish homeland. What is the Yeshiva student's response?

Surely, there is no argument for those who are versed in biblical studies: look in the Book of Joshua, chapter nine. Yes, this was not a description of a modern dilemma but of an ancestral predicament. The Jewish national leader is our great leader Joshua, and the gentle neighbors are the ancient Canaanite tribe of the Gibeonites. Did Joshua fulfill the terms of the peace treaty? Yes, and with the added bonus of having divine consent.

Are we in the same predicament with our Arab neighbors? What is the modern Jewish Zionist's response?

Unfortunately, there is no clear answer to this extremely intricate problem. And yet, the complexity of the answer would still be overshadowed by the nuances the question poses. It changes the players of the political game encircling the famed Oslo Accords, with each side's entrenched position no longer viable as an immutable given. Religious doctrine is turned against the no-land-for-peace's traditional religious stronghold. The land-for-peace's now may stand by religious precedent for their hawkish defense of the Oslo Accords; an idea considered absurd to even contemptuous among many of these liberals.

And here is where the question's unconventional view on the debate actually provides it with an unexpected resolution. Mathematical law dictates that if two objects are to start at different ends of a line and end up at their respective opposite positions, they must cross paths somewhere in between. Such is occurring in the Oslo Accord debates, and, alas, this point of commonality gives the modern Jewish Zionist a foundation from where to look for his response. Do not be fooled - religion is not being taken out of the political equations. But, now, religion is not a constant in the formulas, but a variable; when both variables equate, they will find their paths intersecting at a common point.

In a religion as marvelous as Judaism and as vastly concerned with unity as Judaism is, this point of commonality may not only initiate a resolution for the Oslo Accord debates, but may even uncover a religious truth our leaders have so far missed. What an unbelievable birthday present that would be for Israel at 50!

Jeffrey Kohn
YC '99



RETURNING HOME

She patiently waited for us for 2000 years. After so much waiting, Eretz Yisrael was finally reunited with her children. She did not forget us; she refused to produce fruits for the foreign nations who attempted to cultivate her soil. Fifty years ago, when we finally returned, she began to blossom. Deserts miraculously turned green as the land rejoiced in our return.

Throughout the bitter exile, we kept her in our minds, in our prayers and in our dreams. We prayed for her renewal after every meal, and three times a day we faced her in silent meditation. We longed to actualize our potential as a nation in our national homeland. Fifty years ago, we rejoiced. Our once long-distance relationship with Eretz Yisrael was transformed into a renewed love.

Over the last fifty years, many of us were fortunate enough to hear the call of the land and to leave the Diaspora. Tragically, so many of us today are deaf to the call of the land. We do not fathom the importance of every square inch of her holy soil. We do not understand the connection between the nation, the Torah and the land. We wait in our exile, expecting miracles to return us to the land, but we do not realize that the very existence of the State of Israel is a miracle.

As I climb her mountains, cross her deserts and travel her cities, I feel at home. In Eretz Yisrael, I am no longer a foreigner on foreign soil; at last, I am where I belong. I am reunited with my land, and together we wait for all of her children to return.

Avi Herman
YC '99



Perspectives on 50

TORAH U'TZAVA

When I was a senior in high school, I was bewildered to learn that the visiting *bochain* of a certain Yeshiva was not allowed to visit my school; outside arrangements had to be made if I wanted a test and interview. When I asked a faculty member why the Yeshiva's Representative (who is a well respected Rosh HaYeshiva) was unable to come to our school, he answered, "because we have certain ideological differences with that Yeshiva."

"Ideological differences?" I promptly asked. "Because its a Hesder Yeshiva?"

"Yes."

I will always remember this conversation, only because it will always bewilder me. To the best of my knowledge the "Modern State of Israel" as we currently know it, was born as the result of a war fought by human soldiers, just like every other war fought in Jewish history. I could not understand why a Yeshiva where young Israeli men could learn Torah and train in the military could actually be considered "ideological different." Israel owes its existence to the over eighteen and a half thousand soldiers who have given their lives to sustain it.

I do not in any way mean to talk down upon people who consider Learning Torah and serving in the army ideologically incorrect, I simply fail to understand the reasoning behind such a drastic stance against fellow Jews. It escapes me how as a human being people can be blind to the fact that these soldiers are making Israel possible for them. They will talk of "going to Israel for the year" and then for seemingly unfounded reasons, condemn the people who made it all possible.

Young men who are given the opportunity to learn torah nine months of a year split this time with military training. They learn in Beis Medrash all day, they train in the army, and they wear Yarmulkas and Tzitzit.

And this is a problem? Kol hakavod, Kain Yirbul.

Ephraim Shapiro
YC '99

A STATE OR A DISASTER

Israel's 50th anniversary is truly a cause for celebration. Zionism as a whole has been a huge success. Israel's cities have flourished, its economy has blossomed, and its people enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the entire region. From her daunting victory in 1948 to her daring raid on Entebbe, Israel has time and again proven her ability to accomplish the impossible. It is quite befitting that on this occasion, Israel once again must do the impossible: make a just and lasting peace with her Arab neighbors.

There are currently 2,500,000 Arabs living in the West Bank and the Gaza strip, not including Israel proper. While the average Jewish birthrate is approximately 3 children per female, that of the general Palestinian population is six. Within one generation the Palestinians will significantly outnumber the Jews. There is no possibility of persuading the Arabs to leave, and it is not politically viable to forcefully transfer them. To grant them Israeli citizenship would be to create a binational state, where slowly but surely all traces of Jewishness would disappear.

The only solution possible is to have two different states, one for Jews and one for Arabs. For Israel to remain a solely a Jewish State, as we know it, she must foster the creation of Palestine. Otherwise there will be a binational state or a binational disaster.

Jeff Bander
YC '99

ISRAEL: A STATE OF SUCCESS

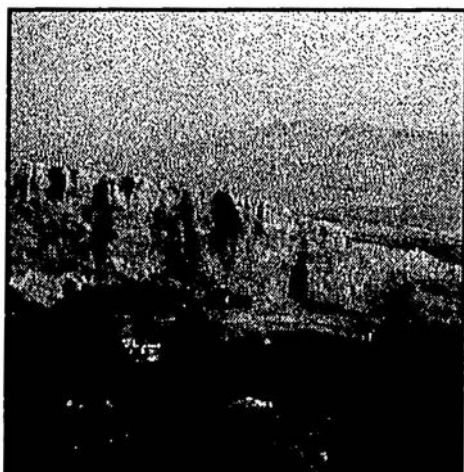
Perhaps it can be said that from nearly every perspective, the State of Israel is a success. In the short span of 50 years, Israel has succeeded in unifying an extremely diverse, multiracial and multilingual group of coreligionists from nearly every continent under a common language, society and culture. The divine guidance that was palpably felt in 1948 ought to be clearly evident in 1998.

Yet some still choose to recite half-Hallel on Yom Ha'Atzma'ut. Religiously speaking, Israel has yet to meet many of our goals and aspirations. Israel still needs to find a balance between taking every measure to ensure its self-preservation and creating a society that may be a 'light unto the nations,' a bastion of morality which will set an example for the world to follow. Nationalism is valid only when it is accompanied by *V'Ahavtem Et HaGer*. Israel must maintain its Jewish identity, but at the same time, it must not neglect the rights of its non-Jewish residents; even the slightest infraction regarding human rights tarnishes our moral luster vis-a-vis the international community.

If equity and equality in Israeli law and society must be extended to its non-Jewish denizens, it must certainly extend to all its Jewish citizens. The pathological but pervasive racism that infected the Ashkenazic elite at the time of Israel's founding has not as yet been fully addressed, and it still resonates in some quarters of Israeli society. The Judaic ideals of social justice and equality, *Tzedek U'Mishpat*, dictate that the evils inflicted upon the downtrodden Sephardic immigrants during the state's early years and the class distinctions that these actions created be resolved in full; also must we strive to ensure that Ethiopian and Russian immigrants never need encounter the baseless discrimination and xenophobia which has ruined countless lives in the United States, Israel's economic and cultural model.

From a distance, Israeli society appears to be polarized; there seem to be only the 'ultraorthodox,' ultranationalist, messianic, 'militant settlers' whose sole wish is to expand their territory and control, and the radically antireligious, amoral, lecherous secularists who wish only to breach all boundaries in their pursuit of pleasure. Real life is much more complex; neither profile is prevalent, but the extremes are always the most vocal. Israel's challenge today is to allow the existing center to come forward, to give a mouthpiece to the underrepresented moderates in both politics and religious application. The majority of American Jews, who fail to discern the existence of this center, seek to transplant one by importing misguided movements which dilute Jewish thought and practice. Israelis would do well to fill its media and political positions with individuals who reflect more centrist and nuanced views so that they may better collaborate as a unified people to achieve their common goal of becoming a model nation both economically and agriculturally, militarily and morally.

Aton Holzer
YC '99



RELIGIOUS POST-ZIONISM

One hundred years after the birth of Zionism, and fifty years after the creation of the Jewish State, it seems wholly appropriate that we reflect on and assess the present state of the Zionist dream.

Certainly, the very miracle of a renewed Jewish homeland, Israel's amazing pace of modernization, the stunning accomplishments of its military and industrial prowess, and its arousal of Jewish identity, all attest to the fantastic success of Zionism.

In the arena of ideas, however, Zionism appears increasingly embattled and even moribund. In this country, evangelical Christians often demonstrate stauncher support for Israel than do their liberal American Jewish counterparts, for whom the spirit of '67 has long since worn off.

The Israeli academic and opinion elite seems characterized by a secularist, self-loathing post-Zionism which sanctifies Jewish disempowerment, equates Zionism with colonialist racism and IDF soldiers with "Judeo-Nazis," which debunks Zionism

to heroes, and regards religious Judaism as the corrupt enemy of Israeli democracy. Variations on these themes are perpetuated in much of Israel's literature (e.g. sometimes evidenced in the fiction of A.B. Yehoshua and Amos Oz), political writing (Shimon Peres' *The New Middle East*, denounces "particularist nationalism"), and newspapers (Ma'ariv feels compelled to report that Herzl once had a Christmas tree and was wont to visit the brothels of Vienna). The idealism of the chalutzim fades further into the oblivion of a no longer inspirational history. We are witness to the collapse of the Jewish nationalism which built the state, and to the emergence of a new ideology which regards Zionism as at best passé (one academic blithely announces that Herzl "doesn't speak to us anymore"), and at worst evil.

The Israeli secular right, such as it is, suffers meanwhile from a general intellectual anesthesia, and religious Zionism, "whose standard of achievement [is] an additional house built, an additional Jew moved out to the settlements," as Yoram Hazony puts it, does not fare much better in articulating a viable and relevant vision. Settlers are perceived in an editorial in Ha'aretz to "command no real presence in the cultural mainstream;" they seem both culturally and intellectually marginalized, and religious Zionism, when it is not pontificating on theological abstractions or engaged in synagogue speechmaking, busily proves its woeful impotence in affecting general public opinion.

We might well imagine Nietzsche's madman running through the streets of Jerusalem yelling: "Where is Zionism? Where has it gone? We have killed it! Do you not smell its putrefying corpse? For even ideologies putrefy, you know! What are Israel's cultural centers if not the tombs of Zionism?"

What accounts for such disintegration? I don't know. Perhaps it is due to the brazen confidence of a Leon Wieseltier, for example, who on the pages of the *New Republic* declares Israel to be "fundamentally indestructible."

But whatever the cause, the effect is pernicious. A nation's strength depends not so much on the size of its army as on its inner

unity, on the vibrancy and virility of its national *raison d'être*, on the depth of its historical consciousness, and on the degree to which it preserves its heritage and texts. Ideological disintegration, an absence of positive ideals, threatens the Jewish State far more profoundly than material or military weakness.

The critical void, the ideological emptiness that appears so indigenous to today's Israeli political and cultural geography calls for a new idea capable of replacing Israeli ennui with a fresh sense of meaningful purpose. This idea, what may be called religious post-Zionism, affirms the fundamental applicability and relevance of Torah to all issues of the modern state. Not content with an escape into eschatological speculation, nor satisfied to proclaim itself in prayers but not in actions, this Zionism of the future represents not a departure from tradition, but a return to the Halachic dynamism and ambition of the pre-exilic tradition.

**Benjamin
Balint
Columnist**

Religious post-Zionism declares that Israel is holy and the beginning of redemption, because it demands our national initiative and responsibility, because it challenges us to

concretely implement Halacha as a total way of life on every level, and hence allows us, in the words of R. Aharon Lichtenstein, to become "maximally Jewish." It is holy because it demands that Halacha not withdraw into a separate, autonomous "holy sphere," that it acquire a kind of this-worldly presentness. Israel is holy, in short, because it confronts us with a daunting challenge: To coax our biblical and talmudic texts to speak to and genuinely address the modern society of our own making.

As Emmanuel Levinas writes, "The thing that is special about the State of Israel is not that it fulfills an ancient promise, or heralds a new age of material security, but that it finally offers the opportunity to carry out the social law of Judaism." Through Israel, we may put an end to the uniquely horrible predicament of the galut; namely, that Jews were the only people to simultaneously define itself by a doctrine of social justice, and yet be totally incapable of applying it.

Religious post-Zionism announces that Israel should be not primarily the attainment of abstract independence, not an answer to the Holocaust, not a refuge from persecution, and not a guard against assimilation, but rather the fullest realization of Torah; an actualization which widens the range of Halacha, thus intensifying the ways in which God can be made present in daily communal and national life. The fullest realization of Torah is enabled not by freedom from the burdens of daily existence, but precisely by the shouldering of these very burdens of shared responsibility for the fate of the nation; by participating and engaging in the mundane functioning of our own society. This is how I understand the Talmudic lesson (Chagiga 5b) that "since Israel was exiled from its place - there is no greater negation of Torah than this."

If, after an eventful one hundred-year lifetime, Zionism has died, its ideological progeny and spiritual heirs should eulogize it in gratitude, should build on the foundations it has with great toil laid, and should surpass it in restoring Jewish national purpose

50 Years of Milestones

Milestones of Israel's history (this was taken from an AIPAC Israel at 50 website):

1948

David Ben-Gurion declares the establishment of the State of Israel (May 14). Israel is immediately formally recognized by the US and the USSR, followed by other countries. War of Independence begins (15 May) as the armies of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon and a contingent from Iraq invade the new state. Jordan captures Jewish settlements in Gush Etzion, the northern Dead Sea area, and north of Jerusalem, as well as the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City; in 15 months of intermittent fighting, all invaders are repulsed. Israel Defense Forces (IDF) is founded, incorporating all the pre-state defense organizations. First census finds a population of 872,700 - 716,700 Jews and 156,000 non-Jews. Israeli lira replaces British pound as official currency, with identical value. Mass immigration from post-war Europe and Arab countries begins. Count Bernadotte, UN-appointed mediator, is assassinated in Jerusalem.

1949

First Knesset (parliament) elections (25 January); David Ben-Gurion heads a Labor-led coalition government; until 1977 all governments will be headed by the Labor Party. Chaim Weizmann is elected Israel's first president by the Knesset. Umm Rashrash, today Eilat, is captured by the IDF; a makeshift flag, drawn with ink, is raised. Jerusalem is declared capital of Israel. Israel admitted to the United Nations as its 59th member. Armistice agreements are signed with Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Jerusalem is divided between Israel and Jordan, with Jordan controlling the Old City and east Jerusalem, and Israel controlling the western and southern parts of the city. First ulpan - special classes for intensive teaching of Hebrew - is opened. Operation Magic Carpet - aliya of Jews from Yemen - begins. Theodor Herzl, the father of Zionism, who was buried in Vienna, is reinterred in Jerusalem. Israel's population exceeds one million.

1950

The Knesset and most government ministries move to Jerusalem. Operation Ezra and Nehemiah, bringing Jews to Israel from Iraq, begins. The Law of Return, granting Jews the right to come to Israel as olim (immigrants) and become citizens, is passed by the Knesset. Great Britain recognizes the State of Israel. The Eilat port is opened. The Nazis and Nazi Collaborators (Punishment) Law is passed by the Knesset.

1951

A seamen's strike paralyzes Israel's ports for many months. The Hula valley reclamation project, turning swampland into arable land, begins. An incident in El-Hama starts a series of clashes with Syria. Elections to the Second Knesset. The Zionist Congress convenes in Jerusalem for the first time. Egged bus transport cooperative is formed.

1952

Reparations agreement with Germany is signed, despite protest demonstrations. Yitzhak Ben-Zvi is elected Israel's second president, after the death of President Chaim Weizmann. Israel participates in the Olympic Games (in Helsinki) for the first time. Operation Coresh - immigration of Iranian Jewry.

1953

Yad Vashem (Israel's Holocaust memorial) is established in Jerusalem. Ministry of Foreign Affairs is moved to Jerusalem. Security situation on border with Jordan worsens; many infiltration incidents. Diplomatic relations between Israel and the USSR are broken off.

1954

Moshe Sharett becomes prime minister. Egypt stops Israeli freighter, Bat Galim, from passing through the Suez Canal, in contravention of the armistice agreement. Israeli intelligence fiasco in Egypt causes a scandal (Esek Bish)

which continues for nearly a decade and forces Israel's Minister of Defense, Pinchas Lavon, to resign. Immigration from North Africa accelerates amid growing anti-Semitism in these countries. Infiltrates from across the Jordanian border attack a bus at Ma'ale Akrabim in the northern Negev and murder 11 passengers.

1955

The four remaining Dead Sea Scrolls, acquired for Israel by Prof. Yigael Yadin, arrive in Israel. Elections for Third Knesset; David Ben-Gurion again becomes prime minister. Prime Minister of Burma pays an official visit to Israel - the first by any state leader.

1956

Incursions of armed infiltrators across the border with Egypt increase, many casualties. The Mafdal - National Religious Party - is established. Golda Meir becomes minister of foreign affairs, replacing Moshe Sharett. Nasser nationalizes the Suez Canal. France gives Israel military aid. Sinai Campaign is launched by Israel, parallel to a British and French operation, following an Egyptian blockade of the Straits of Tiran; in the course of the fighting, Israel captures the Gaza Strip and the entire Sinai peninsula. Tel Aviv



University is opened.

1957

Israel withdraws from the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula, with assurances of free passage for its shipping through the Suez Canal. The draining of the Hula swamp is completed, providing arable land and preventing malaria.

1958

MASHAV Center for International Cooperation is established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to share development know-how. The cornerstone for the Knesset building is laid in Jerusalem. Egypt and Syria unite to form the United Arab Republic. The Hebrew University campus at Givat Ram is inaugurated. Israel's population exceeds two million.

1959

Heichal Shlomo - seat of the Chief Rabbinate - is inaugurated. Elections for the Fourth Knesset. The Navy's first submarine, the Tanin (crocodile), arrives in Haifa.

1960

Hadassah Hospital and Hebrew University Medical School is inaugurated at Ein Karem in Jerusalem. Israel Lands Authority is established to manage state and JNF lands. Letters from the Bar Kochba archive (second century) are discovered in a dig in the Judean desert. The National Commission for Space Research is founded

1961

Operation Yachin, bringing immigrants from Morocco to Israel, commences. Adolf Eichmann, organizer of the Nazi extermination program, stands trial in Jerusalem; he is found guilty and sentenced to death for crimes against humanity and the Jewish people; hanged in 1962.

Elections for the Fifth Knesset.

1962

Yerid Hamizrach, an international commercial fair opens in Tel Aviv; 33 countries participate. An economic program which includes a large devaluation of the lira and the cancellation of subsidies on basic commodities lead to inflation and a rise of the deficit in the balance of trade.

1963

President Ben-Zvi dies in office; Zalman Shazar elected Israel's third president. Levi Eshkol becomes prime minister after the resignation of David Ben-Gurion. Haifa University is opened.

1964

Pope Paul VI visits Israel; President Shazar receives him in Megiddo. The Palestine Liberation Organization is founded. The National Water Carrier, bringing water from the north and center of the country to the semi-arid south, is completed. Yitzhak Rabin is chosen as Chief of General Staff.

1965

The PLO's first terror attack - an attack on the National Water Carrier - takes place. The Israel

er to form the Israel Labor Party. Jews return to Gush Etzion, abandoned after its capture by the Jordanians in 1948. Jews return to Hebron, abandoned in 1929 when more than 60 Jews were massacred and the rest of the Jewish community evacuated to Jerusalem. Israel television broadcasts begin. The PLO formulates its covenant, which negates the existence of Israel. Palestinian terror attacks intensify, including the hijacking of an El Al plane from Rome to Algeria. War of Attrition is initiated by Egypt and Jordan, causing heavy casualties on both sides. A car bomb in the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem kills 12, injures 70

1969

Prime Minister Levi Eshkol dies in office; Golda Meir becomes prime minister. Five French-built torpedo boats, purchased and paid for by Israel, are successfully brought from Cherbourg port to Haifa, despite French arms embargo. Elections for Seventh Knesset; Golda Meir remains prime minister. War of Attrition, sporadic military actions by Egypt along the Suez Canal, escalates until a renewed cease-fire is achieved. Phantom planes acquired from the United States arrive in Israel.

1970

Twelve children from moshav Avivim are killed in a terrorist attack. Refuseniks in the USSR are sentenced to death for hijacking an airplane. Black September: clashes between Jordanian forces and the PLO, in an attempt by the PLO to take control of the country, end in Jordanian victory; the PLO regroups in Lebanon. A series of hijackings of international airliners is perpetrated by Palestinian terrorists. Israel's population exceeds three million.

1971

Intensive American efforts to reach a settlement between Israel and Egypt bear no fruit. Israel's consul-general in Istanbul killed by terrorists

1972

The IDF frees the hostages on a hijacked Sabena plane at Lod airport. Eleven Israeli athletes are murdered by PLO terrorists at the Munich Olympic Games. Immigration from the USSR increases, totaling some 100,000 Jews in the 1970s. Several letter bombs sent to Israeli embassies abroad; Israel's agricultural attache, in London is killed.

1973

Ephraim Katzir becomes Israel's fourth president. The Herut Movement and the Liberal Party join to form the Likud. Israel's military attach, in Washington killed by terrorists. Yom Kippur War - on the Day of Atonement, the holiest day of the Jewish year, Egypt and Syria launch a coordinated surprise attack, repulsed by Israel after fierce fighting and heavy losses. UN General Assembly passes Resolution 338, calling for a settlement of the Arab-Israel conflict on the basis of Resolution 242 of 1967. Elections for the Eighth Knesset

1974

Golda Meir forms new government. Agranat Commission, appointed to investigate the causes of the unreadiness and thus the initial losses of the IDF during the Yom Kippur War; the commission concluded that the senior military officers, not the political leadership, was responsible. Anti-government protest demonstrations take place. Prime Minister Golda Meir resigns; Yitzhak Rabin becomes prime minister. Twenty-one youths are killed in terrorist attack in Ma'alot. Separation-of-forces agreement signed with Egypt. Disengagement agreement is signed with Syria. Gush Emunim, a movement claiming Jewish rights over historical Israel becomes active.

1975

UN General Assembly Resolution 3375 equates Zionism with racism. Israel signs treaty with EC, instituting a free trade area for industrial products and leading to a significant increase in trade. Terrorists landing by sea attack Savoy

1968

Mapai, Ahdut Ha'avoda and Rafi join together

50 Years of Milestones

Hotel in Tel Aviv; 3 IDF soldiers are killed in clash. Suez Canal is reopened by Egypt after eight years. Israel exhibits the Kfir, an aircraft designed and produced in Israel. The Knesset passes law mandating direct elections of mayors and heads of local councils. HIPPY - a home-based program for the educational enrichment of disadvantaged preschool children, starts operation, used later in the United States.

1976

The IDF frees hostages held captive in Entebbe, Uganda, who had been captured by terrorists during the hijacking of an airliner en route to Paris; the action is named Operation Jonathan, after Jonathan Netanyahu, an officer killed during the action. Prime Minister Rabin resigns over domestic scandal. Good Fence policy instituted between Israel and Lebanon Land Day is marked by Israeli Arabs for the first time; demonstrations and clashes with police, in protest over confiscation of Arab land, leave 6 dead. Yigael Yadin establishes the Democratic Movement for Change.

1977

Elections for the Ninth Knesset - Likud party wins elections, ending 29 years of Labor party rule; Menachem Begin becomes prime minister. Egyptian President Sadat visits Jerusalem, breaking the cycle of Arab rejection of Israel. Prime Minister Begin permits a group of Vietnamese boat refugees to enter Israel

1978

A bus is hijacked by terrorists on the coastal road; 35 passengers are killed. Operation Litani - action against terrorist strongholds in southern Lebanon in response to attacks in civilians in northern Israel. Peace Now movement is founded. Diaspora Museum is opened in Tel Aviv. Yitzhak Navon becomes Israel's fifth president. Camp David Accords, constituting a basis for peace between Israel and Egypt, as well as a basis for comprehensive peace in the Middle East, are signed by Israel and Egypt. Prime Minister Begin and Egyptian President Sadat awarded Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to bring peace to the Middle East.

1979

Peace Treaty is signed with Egypt, ending a 30-year cycle of war. El-Arish is returned to Egypt, in accordance with the peace treaty. The United Kibbutz Movement is founded.

1980

Embassy of Israel is opened in Cairo. Basic Law: 'Jerusalem, Capital of Israel' is passed by Knesset. Inflation continues to soar; lira is replaced by shekel (1 shekel = 10 liras). Israel continues its withdrawal from Sinai - including the Refidim air base. The number of tourists arriving annually exceeds one million for the first time. Israel's exports surpass \$10 billion.

1981

Iraqi nuclear reactor is destroyed by the Israel Air Force, weeks before it is due to become operative. Elections for the Tenth Knesset; Menachem Begin remains prime minister. Memorandum of Understanding is signed with the United States, forming the basis for civilian and military cooperation.

1982

Attack, at Israel's embassy in Paris killed by terrorists. Israel completes withdrawal from Sinai in accordance with the Israel-Egypt peace treaty, despite widespread protest. Israel's ambassador in London severely wounded by terrorists. Operation Peace for Galilee is launched against PLO terrorist strongholds in Lebanon used for attacks against northern Israel; the IDF withdraws from Lebanon in 1985, retaining a presence in a security zone in southern Lebanon. Hundreds of thousands of Israelis demonstrate against the war in Lebanon. Christian Phalangist forces massacre Muslim refugees in Sabra and Shatilla in southern Lebanon. The IDF headquarters building in Tyre, Lebanon is destroyed by a massive bomb; 75 killed. Sha'are Tzedek Hospital, founded in 1902, inaugurates its mod-

ern new building in Jerusalem. Israel's population exceeds four million

1983

Chaim Herzog is elected sixth president. Prime Minister Begin resigns; a new government headed by Yitzhak Shamir is formed. A major stock exchange crisis threatens the economy as a whole. A truck loaded with explosives in Tyre, Lebanon kills 60, Israelis and Arabs, and wounds dozens.

1984

Terrorists take over a bus on its way from Tel Aviv to Ashkelon, killing one passenger. Jewish underground in Judea and Samaria is uncovered and its members given prison sentences ranging from 8 years to life; most are pardoned by the President after several years in prison. Elections for the Eleventh Knesset; a national unity government is formed, with the rotation of prime ministers; Shimon Peres becomes prime minister. Operation Moses brings some 7,000 Jews from the ancient Jewish community of Ethiopia to Israel.

1985

Free trade agreement is signed with the United States. Terrorists imprisoned in Israel are

exchanged for three Israeli POWs from the war in Lebanon. Israel withdraws from Lebanon, retaining a narrow security zone to protect northern Israel. An emergency stabilization program put into effect by the government, succeeds in lowering annual inflation from 445% to 20%.

1986

Administrative attache, at Israel embassy in Cairo killed by terrorists. The New Israeli Shekel replaces the shekel. An Egyptian soldier opens fire on a group of Israeli tourists and kills seven. Eilat becomes a free trade zone. Jonathan Pollard is tried for spying for Israel in the US and sentenced to life imprisonment. Tefen industrial park, a launching pad for start-up export industries with surroundings planned environmental awareness, opens its gates.

1987

Diplomatic relations established with Spain. Anatoly (Natan) Sharansky, well-known refusenik in the USSR, arrives in Israel as a new immigrant. Israel embassy employee in Cairo killed by terrorists. Prime Minister Peres meets with King Hassan II in Morocco. Ron Arad, Israeli Air Force navigator, is captured in Lebanon; his fate is still unknown. Yitzhak Shamir becomes prime minister, as part of the rotation agreement signed in 1984. An Israel interest office is opened in Warsaw, reestablishing limited diplomatic ties between Israel and Eastern Europe. The first liver transplant in Israel takes place.

1988

Memorandum of Understanding is signed with the US, expanding cooperation between them. Israel and the U.S. begin cooperation on the production of the Arrow missile. Elections for 12th Knesset; Yitzhak Shamir remains prime minister. Hundreds of dunams of forest are destroyed by fires set by intifada activists. An Israeli Consulate is opened in Moscow.

1989

Taba is returned to Egypt after international arbitration. Sixteen bus passengers are killed on the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway as a terrorist gains control of a bus and drives it over a cliff. A Syrian pilot defects to Israel, landing a MIG-23 at Megiddo.

1990

Mass immigration of Jews from the Soviet Union begins; within several years, more than 700,000 immigrants arrive. The national unity government falls after a no-confidence vote; immediately thereafter, Labor party ministers resign; a new government of right-wing and reli-

gious elements is formed. First successful test of the Arrow missile. Diplomatic relations with the USSR and other Eastern European countries are reestablished. A terror attack on Israeli tourists in Egypt kills 10. Israel's GDP growth rises to some 6%; this will continue throughout the early 1990s.

1991

Israel is attacked by Iraqi Scud missiles during Gulf War. Operation Solomon - most Jews left in Ethiopia (15,000) are brought to Israel in a massive airlift. Middle East Peace Conference convenes in Madrid, bringing together representatives of Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians. UN General Assembly rescinds the resolution equating Zionism with racism. Israel's population exceeds five million.

1992

Israel and China establish diplomatic relations. Knesset passes law providing for direct election of the prime minister, to go into effect from the elections for the 14th Knesset (1996). An attack on Israel's embassy in Buenos Aires leaves 29 dead and dozens wounded. Elections for 13th Knesset; Yitzhak Rabin of the Labor party becomes prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu is elected chairman of the Likud party. Israel wins its first Olympic medals, silver and bronze in judo. The new Supreme Court building is opened.

1993

Ezer Weizman is elected Israel's seventh president. Operation Din Veheshbon - after continued Katyusha attacks on northern Israel, IDF attacks Hizbullah bases in southern Lebanon. Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements is signed by Israel

and the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. Diplomatic relations are established between Israel and the Holy See.

1994

A Jewish extremist kills 29 Muslim worshippers in Hebron. A Palestinian suicide bomber blows up a bus in Tel Aviv, killing 24 and wounding dozens. Gaza-Jericho Agreement between Israel and the PLO is signed in Cairo. Israel-Jordan peace treaty is signed, establishing full diplomatic relations between the two states. Morocco and Tunisia interest offices are opened. Rabin, Peres and Arafat are awarded Nobel Peace Prize.

1995

Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is signed by Israel and the PLO, providing for broadened self-government by the Palestinians. Treaty of Association is signed with EU, broadening trade relations. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated by a Jewish extremist at a peace rally; Shimon Peres becomes prime minister. The number of tourists arriving annually exceeds two million for the first time.

1996

A series of suicide attacks in Jerusalem, Ashkelon and Tel Aviv kills more than 60 Israelis. Operation Grapes of Wrath against terrorist bases in Lebanon is launched. IDF rede-

loys in Judea and Samaria, including redeployment from six cities. Trade representation offices are established in Oman and Qatar. Elections for 14th Knesset and first direct elections for prime minister; Benjamin Netanyahu of the Likud party is elected prime minister. Omani trade representation office opened in Tel Aviv. The Western Wall Tunnel is opened to the public; violent Palestinian riots follow. Israel's per-capita GDP - over \$16,000 - places it 21st among 200 nations in the world; exports of goods and services top \$31 billion; gross investment - from Israel and abroad - totals \$23.8 billion

Protocol Concerning the Redeployment in Hebron signed between Israel and the PA. Seven schoolgirls are murdered by a Jordanian soldier, on the border between Israel and Jordan. Palestinian suicide bombers in Jerusalem kill 21 in two separate attacks. Industry continues to make international-level strides, making Israel a leader in industry.

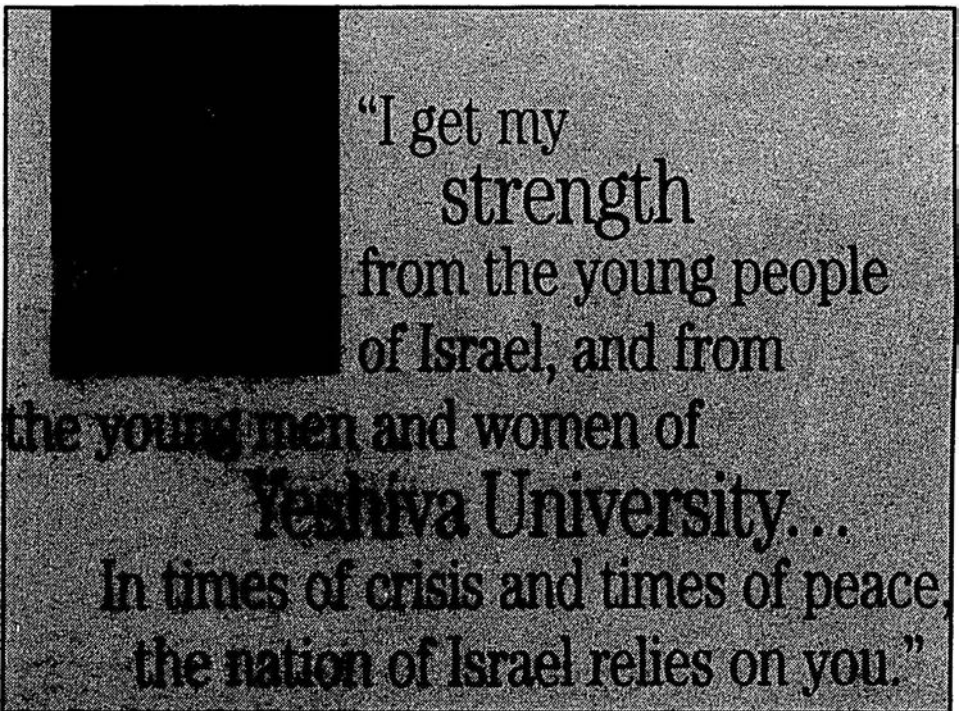
Israel celebrates its 50th anniversary.

Source: Israeli Foreign Ministry

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CULTURE

The Bitter End

Rocking in the Village

BY SENYA MALER

In the vintage heart of Bleeker Street, crowded between the younger, louder usurpers to the throne, stands the club that started it all, the stage Greenwich Village was built around. A classic and a legend; The Bitter End.

The same heavy wooden doors that were first opened in 1962 by original owner Fred Weintraub now wear a small brass tablet bestowed upon them by the City of New York in July of '92 proclaiming The Bitter End as an official historic landmark. Since the club's inception, the red brick walls and hallowed stage have launched the careers of countless rock legends. The names of the young amateur musicians and comedians that were once penciled into the Bitter End's Tuesday night showcases include Frank Zappa, Neil Diamond, Woody Allen, Carly Simon, Pete Seeger, Bill Cosby, Nina Simone, George Carlin, Joni Mitchell, Peter Paul and Mary, and Janis Joplin, only to name a few. Two projects are currently in the works to commemorate the history of the Bitter End. The first, a major book, will be on the market by mid-summer, and the other a television program with live footage of these early concerts will air on VH-1's Story Tellers next winter.

In 1968, Paul Colby became the manager and booking agent of the Bitter End before succeeding Fred Weintraub as owner in 1974. However, Paul's name was noted on the music scene long before he took the reins of the club. Emerging onto the scene as a song plugger for Benny Goodman, Colby went onto work with Frank Sinatra and Duke Ellington. Aside from his musical talents, Paul was also known as a prolif-

ic painter and designer, and is the founder of the renowned award-winning, Colby Furniture Co. There Colby produced acclaimed original pieces for such clientele as Miles Davis and Tony Bennet. During his 24 years of ownership, Paul piloted his club through every contemporary musical and social wave in America, establishing a hip basement bistro into a mainstay in the cultural lifestyle of Greenwich Village and New York City.

My last visit to The Bitter End featured a five-man funk cover band that called themselves Man Made Band. Their use of two bass guitarists gave some funk classics by artists like George Clinton and ELO a kind of raw edge, that when coupled with the atmosphere produced a pretty solid effect. The crowd consisting of many tourists seemed a little cold at first, but became mellower as the set went on. The bar is well stocked, albeit with a fairly weak beer menu, but the service seemed to be unstable at best. Reservations are not necessary even for large parties and there usually isn't a cover charge or drink minimum.

In a '95 interview when Paul Colby was asked to defend his quote "The best play at the best" he answered, "while it is true that some, like Bob Dylan, will probably not come again; and some, like Harry Chapin and Tim Hardin tragically can never come again, the Bitter End is still in Greenwich Village, waiting for that next star to light up the sky."

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Israel Cameratta

Performs at 92nd Street Y

BY JAKE SOLOMON

It would be difficult to spend a night in a more enjoyable way. The Israeli Cameratta, one of the leading chamber orchestras in Israel, performed a variety of pieces, beginning with Haydn's Symphony No. 89. Accompanying the orchestra for Shostakovich's Concerto No. 1 for Piano, Solo Trumpet and Strings was the distinguished pianist, Alexander Korsantiya. After the intermission, the audience was privileged to hear the premiere of "Behind All This...", composed in 1997 by Mark Kopytman, followed by Mozart's Symphony No. 40. The refinement of the Israeli Cameratta combined with the fire of Alexander Korsantiya and the balance of the program made this a concert not to miss.

The Israeli Cameratta is most remarkable for its blend and synchronization and the quality of its tone. The impression given to the listener is one of extreme cultivation. The group has been invited to many music festivals throughout Europe and has toured Spain, Germany, Belgium and France. A CD recording of the Israeli Cameratta has recently been produced by the Jerusalem Music Centre, and the orchestra will continue this season with five more CD's in cooperation with a Canadian recording company. The permanent conductor and musical director, Avner Biron, is also a distinguished flutist and the head of the Jerusalem Rubin Academy of Music and Arts.

Haydn's Symphony No. 89 fits well as a paradigm for the classical symphony. It has a very calm, well-structured style, quite fitting for the private orchestra of the Hungarian Prince Esterhazy of the late 18th century for whom it was composed. Contrasting the tranquil feeling induced by Haydn was the hair-raising Shostakovich Piano Concerto No. 1, typical of this early 20th century Russian composer. The program's author noted that this piece should be referred to as a "Concerto for Piano and Orchestra of Strings Only, Plus One Crazy Trumpet." Actually, the trumpet is less

prominent than this might imply. Not until the last movement does the trumpet truly receive a "crazed" solo. Then when the trumpet embarks on its wild solo, the whole orchestra lapses into a folk music mode, effecting a comical sound making it hard not to lapse into laughter.

The truly crazed instrument, however, is the piano, and this is all the more pronounced when the pianist is Alexander Korsantiya. Any observer must be impressed with the tremendous feat of merely playing all the notes, but the impassioned performance of Alexander Korsantiya quivering with energy and intensity is a sight to behold. Without question, the Shostakovich was the high point of the night.

Mark Kopytman, a doctor of medicine as well as a composer, whose works have received numerous international awards, composed "Behind all this..." especially for the Israeli Cameratta's tour of the United States. In the words of the composer, "Behind all this is..." is written as a sequence of musical episodes which freely follow each other, as layers of imaginative space." The piece creates a misty mood, and gradually develops through a variety of different themes. "This way one can recognize the different edges of images--from sorrow to joy, from prayer-like cantillation to dance-like fragments and finally, at the end of the composition, to the hope that reclines behind our dreams," writes the composer. A solo for the principal violinist highlights the conclusion of the piece.

Concluding the program, Mozart's Symphony No. 40 rounded off the performance with a return to the classical 18th century style. The extremely serious tone of this symphony gives the listener an image of the grandeur of a royal court and the gravity of its proceedings. Though from the same time period of time, the differing moods of the Haydn and the Mozart made created a nice balance. As a whole, this concert made for a very enjoyable night of music.

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CULTURE

MOVIE REVIEWS

Reflection and Review:
"A Price Above Rubies"

BY MORDECHAI LEVOVITZ:

"Look at them, they all had *Bris Milah*, and they turned out completely normal!"

A more apropos line to introduce us to the mysterious yet comic world of modern day Chasidism cannot be found. It exemplifies the point of view of which Boaz Yakhin is coming from, in his newest film, "A Price Above Rubies." Unlike other recent films that made a practice of looking at the Ultra-Orthodox from the outside in, Boaz turns the tables on us and treats the black hat, human hair *sheitel*, *shteeble* hopping society as the accepted norm. Instead of seeming shocking, the eccentric religious customs are viewed as routine. In fact, after spending the first forty-five minutes of the film in Borough Park, it is Manhattan that



seems strange and mysterious. This is a breath of fresh air after seeing so many films that rely on the shock value of religious customs, such as "A Stranger Among Us." Certainly, Yeshiva students will not be shocked with Jewish customs. Yakhin, a former yeshiva student himself, tries to tell the story of his characters, characters who just happen to use the words *mammesh* or *takeh* three times in every sentence. He wants us to view their culture as they see it. It is not a movie about Chasidism; it is a movie about a troubled young woman who grew up Chasidic.

Renee Zellweger (of Jerry Maguire fame) stars as Sonja Horowitz. Sonja is a Chasidic girl who became extremely shaken up after her brother, who was also her best friend, died as a child. The memory of her brother seems to constantly haunt her throughout the film. He symbolizes a passionate loving relationship that God has taken away from her. After being married off to an aloof torah scholar, she tries to rekindle the loving fire ignited by her brother, naming her newborn child after her dead brother. However, her husband insists that the child be named after the Rebbe. At this point she realizes that in her situation, the passion that her brother symbolized is out of her reach. She begins feeling very claustrophobic. There is a fire inside of her and there is no vent; so it grows larger and larger. The repression that has accompanied her life from day one, both sexual and otherwise, consumes her. This yearning at first makes Sonja very vulnerable; she succumbs to the seduction of her evil brother-in-law, and privately gives in to her desire for non-kosher food. Ultimately, after introspection, when she

realizes that she is free to accept only what she believes in, Sonja's fire becomes her strength.

Zellweger makes an appealing heroine. She seems to be discovering her character even as she plays her. This itself gives the film a tension that might not have been expected. Her accent however, is a bit forced, which makes her less convincing. She also seems to be using too much of her signature face pouting, which limits the diversity of her character's expressed emotions and makes her less interesting to watch.

Sonja is portrayed as the typical Chasidic woman, but Boaz's style is to create a balance between the characters so that each character has an opposite. Contrasting characters are always interesting from an

artistic point of view, because they help us understand each character more intimately, and help us accentuate the symbolic aspects of each character. The contrast to Sonja in this film is Sonja's sister-in-law, played by E.R.'s Julianna Margulies. Margulies gives a bravura performance as the average, strong willed, all-too-righteous Chasidic housewife. She is even more convincing as a Jew here than she is an Italian on E.R. She is the only character in this film that you would expect to meet a hundred like her shopping on 13th Ave. in Borough Park. Her character exemplifies the massive weight a Chasidic woman carries in her house. She is the strength, the backbone, and the ultimate caretaker of the family. By philosophically accepting man's superiority via religion she practically gains control of everything, including her man. By letting him think that he's in charge, she assumes control. This is a phenomenon that is so common within the Jewish communities and yet so seldomly portrayed in the media. Personally I found her character most intriguing, and I highly recommend that Julianna play more Jewish roles; she certainly has a knack for it.

Christopher Eccleston plays Sender, Sonja's husband's, sly brother-in-law. Sender is a bad Jew. He runs a cash-only business, does not pay taxes, has an apartment in the city just for extra-marital sex, and sleeps with his brother-in-law's wife Sonja. The catch is that he does all this, wearing a black hat, jacket and *payes* behind his ears. He knows what he does is wrong, he just doesn't give a damn. The most disturbing part is how he is still accepted in the community. For some reason the male sinner can be more comfortable in the Chasidic world than the female

Just Call Me The Dude:
"The Big Lebowski"

BY YEKUTIEL SANDMAN

"We all know the Dude. We all have a friend or relative that is the Dude (in my case it is my cousin Zalman and everyone in the family acknowledges that - including Zalmy). However, my cousin cannot bring the same joy to my life that the Coen brothers' *The Big Lebowski* does. That is probably because the rest of the cast of characters that the Coens have thought up are absent from my family gatherings. Joel and Ethan Coen have once again concocted a sublimely, ridiculously perfect, yet disparate cast of characters.

The Dude is played by Jeff Bridges, and his occupation seems to be drinking White Russians, smoking pot and bowling. He is a man who lets nothing phase him, be it getting his head shoved into a toilet or traveling to the supermarket in a bathrobe, shorts, t-shirt and sunglasses. He hangs out with John Goodman's character Walter, who hilariously uses the excuse of being "Shomer Shabbos" and is a self-acclaimed Vietnam Veteran who may or may not have actually been to Vietnam. To Walter, the many ignominies that he goes through in life (e.g. being doubted when he claims that a fellow bowler stepped over the line) just add insult to the injury done his buddies and himself when they came home after the war. His answer to all of these affronts is to react with unmitigated violence. Rounding out their bowling threesome is Donny, a feeble and timid neurotic, brought to life by Steve Buscemi. (John Turturro is also brilliant as their arch rival Jesus, a known pederast who has an interesting relationship with



sinner can. This is the only feminist thesis in the movie. The film never implies that the Chasidic community treat men better than they treat women, however, the film does imply that it is easier to be a male sinner in the Chasidic world, than it is to be a female sinner. This isn't necessarily an attack on the Chasidic community, it is merely a sociological observation that I think anyone involved with either the Chasidic world or even the right wing Yeshiva world would concede to. I know for a fact that in my community a yeshiva boy could smoke, fail high school, not learn, get drunk weekly, run around with girls, and experiment with God knows what, but if a year before he's ready to get married, he puts on a black hat and wears his *tzitzis* out, the community deems him a great guy, and he will get many good *shidduchim*. If, however, a girl from my community is found once, running around with guys, smoking, wearing pants, at a bar, or at a rock concert, her

his bowling ball.)

These characters come together in the most unlikely circumstances. The Dude's real name is Jeff Lebowski, one of two living in LA, the second being a multimillionaire. Unfortunately, several thugs confuse him for the rich, or Big Lebowski, and attempt to get money they feel they are owed by the Big Lebowski from the Dude. As part of the intimidation process they

urinate on the Dude's rug causing him to seek reparation from the second Lebowski. As a result (in the typically twisted Coen style), he meets Lebowski's daughter and a group of German Nihilists, one of whom is played by Flea of Red Hot Chili Pepper fame. Not only are they kidnapers, they also moonlight as a rock group called the German Nihilists.

What makes this movie so wonderful is not a complex plot, nor an outstandingly told "whodunit." There is some brilliant direction (such as the shot of a bowling ball approaching the pins from the perspective of inside the ball) and some wonderful cinematography (the Dude's narcotic induced dream, for instance), however neither of these aspects are the movie's main attraction. It is the suspended sense of reality the Coen's cause one to enter when watching this amazing amalgamation of characters interact that makes it so great. The hilarity of some of the situations cause one to laugh out loud or, even days later grin when recalling them. I highly recommend anyone that enjoyed either *Fargo*, *Barton Fink*, or both to catch this great movie while it is still in theaters. I know that I'm going back to see it.

reputation is smeared for life, no matter how long her skirts are now. This double standard adds to Sonja's suffering.

In contrast to Sender the *Rasha*, the film has Sonja's husband, the *Tsaddik*. Glenn Fitzgerald, who demonically cooked chicken a-la LSD in the film "Flirting with Disaster," is now the gentle idealistic torah scholar who sincerely believes in what he does. This is such a cute character, because from the beginning of the movie, he has all the right character traits to make him a wonderful person, but he just does not understand his wife. He never means her harm; even in the scene where he refuses to make passionate love to her, it was only because he has learned that the intentions during sex should be *L'sheim Shomayim*, and not for carnal pleasure. Religion to him is a reality, and he is unable to see anything else. This is diametrically opposed to Sender, whose reli-

continued on page 14

CULTURE

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BOOK REVIEWS

All Good Things Must End: Towards the End of Time

BY YITZCHAK INSELMANN

John Updike's latest novel begins in a setting traditionally limited to the science fiction genre, the future. A worn out old man living in the worn out world of the not so distant future, where an apocalyptic war between the United States and China has wrecked the traditional institutions of government and power, ponders the past and the future as he struggles with his decaying body and his decaying world. Unlike the dust and rust Technicolor fantasies that we usually picture as the post-apocalyptic embodied in movies like Mad Max, The Postman and Waterworld, the world of *Towards the End of Time* has not so much exploded outwards as collapsed inwards.

The protagonist, a retired bond broker living in an out of the way house with his aging wife is at once a representative of the standards and artifacts of our time and a bridge into a post-apocalyptic world where the government is run by Federal Express and gangsters collect protection money door to door in suburban America. This new alien world into which he has been thrust "towards the end of time" is shifting and decaying as much as his body is. People vanish and reappear in odd ways, important changes occur unseen off-stage and everything is moving downwards as if time is running out for the world as well as the

character.

As the protagonist contracts cancer and experiences the infestation of his body by disease, the body politic experiences a simi-

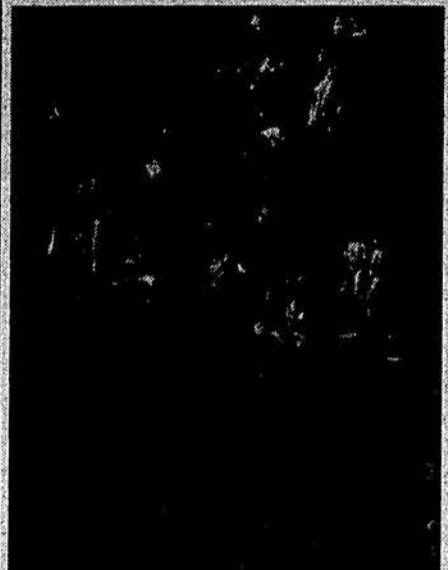
lar infestation, as the package delivery services like UPS and Federal Express take control of the government and begin providing basic services and collecting taxes. Neither the world nor the protagonist expect any explosive change to occur because their youth and their time has been lived power-

fully and violently and is now over. All that is left is the gradual degenerative descent into death. Towards the end of time, the protagonist takes mental voyages into past times as a grave robber invading the sacred tombs of Pharaohs, a Nazi guard in a concentration camp and an exile from Jerusalem. The world itself is degenerating to the more primitive forms of power and society even as the latest technology is used to attack his cancer and the predatory youth gangs on his lawn.

The future, as portrayed by Updike, is still a time in which the Christian Science Monitor and the New York Times are still home delivered and bonds are still traded in brokerage houses. Thus Updike's vision of future Earth is less of an overthrow of our values and institutions, which the traditional post-apocalyptic narratives emphasized, than a portrait of the subtle corruption and infirmity and past events which have outlived the days of their strength and youth and remain as Ozymandian markers in the great chaotic desert that serves as the geographical landscape of this novel.

This is what makes *Towards the End of Time* so unlike the popular science fiction worlds of Star Trek or Star Wars which portray a future beyond the ends of our times. This novel portrays not a beginning or an end, but rather the tombstones of the shattered remains of our present.

The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision

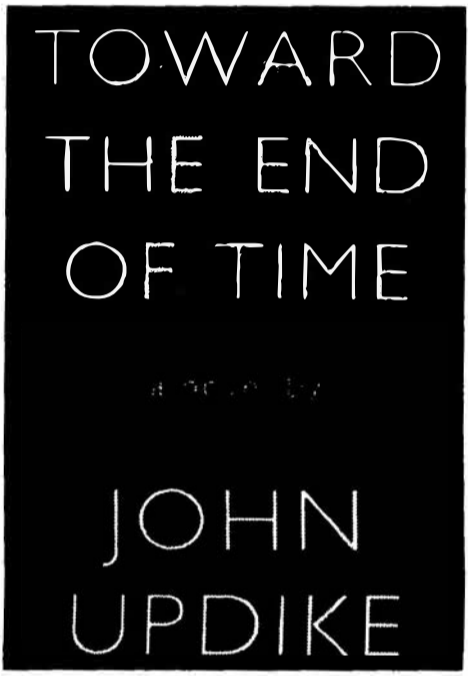


BY YITZCHAK INSELMANN

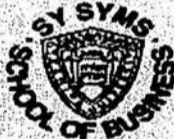
As "venerable" institutions and organizations from the KGB to the horrors of Nazi Germany get their facelifts and smiley faces are pasted over their horrors, another ancient horror is certainly long overdue for some "revisions" as well. Once the object of a special terror and dread by the masses under its control and holding a special place of dread for Jews, the Spanish Inquisition as we discover in "The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision" by Henry Arthur Francis Kamen, was never really that bad. While Kamen's well researched work comes far too late to tell the Inquisition's victims that they had nothing to really worry about in the first place, it returns at a time when the national skepticism over all things official opens up the public to accepting historical revisionism far more than they might have been prepared to do so when Kamen first advanced this thesis as a graduate student in the 60's.

In "The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision" we learn that people weren't burned at the stake nearly as often as one might have thought, and that as an institution the Inquisition was a bumbling corrupt and inefficient group which really wasn't responsible for most of things history blames it for. The Conversos, the group of converted Jews who were known for suffering some of the most nightmarish fates the Inquisition was capable of inflicting were apparently responsible for most of their own problems by attempting to separate themselves from the Christianity they had accepted in the first place. Most Conversos, however, lived happy and peaceful lives under the mostly benign watch of the Inquisition and generally had nothing at all to fear from it.

Most of "The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision" is mainly dedicated to portraying the Inquisition as something other than the malignant evil which is its historical face. In the end it succeeds more in confusing matters than clarifying, as Kamen is clearly carefully selecting sources and materials that support this viewpoint. This revisionist history has little to add to what we already know, but merely attempts to use an edited viewpoint to rewrite history. Whether it will succeed in continuing the spread of the "work" that Kamen has already begun... remains to be seen.



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CULTURE

Books, Music, Theatre, Restaurants, Cinema

Where The Strange Things Live: Hoboken and the Music it Produces

BY ELI GUROCK

Hoboken is considered by some to be a yuppie suburb of New York City. Others see it as the birthplace of Frank Sinatra. Still others see it as nothing more than a scummy city in a scummy state. Few, however, view Hoboken as it should be viewed, from the perspective of its music scene. This vital scene is different from its neighbor in the big city and plays an active role in defining the city, which averages more than two bars for every block. At the heart of this music scene is Bar/None Records, a small record company located a block away from Hoboken's real claim to fame, its train station.

In the eleven years Bar/None has existed, it has put out albums by Hoboken natives and those New Yorkers who the New York music scene thought was too "out there". They broke such bands as They Might Be Giants, Freedy Johnston, and Epic Soundtracks. Each new season for Bar/None is a new adventure into the music world and a chance to taste the fresh crop of what Hoboken has to offer. This spring, Bar/None has three new albums out, one by Hoboken native Kate Jacobs, one by They Might Be Giants side project Mono Puff, and one by Brazilian/New Yorker Arto Lindsay.

Hydrangea - Kate Jacobs

On her new album *Hydrangea*, Kate Jacobs plays with the trademark guitar stroke of folk music, the twang exclusive to country music, and the energy that forms power-punk bands. That odd combination of sounds makes her album interesting, to say the least. This combination is even stranger when one realizes that each of these music elements stems from different generations and different people. That is exactly what Kate sings about. On *Hydrangea*, Kate combines her beautiful song writing skills with her gift for storytelling. Each song on the album is a story, some about her Russian roots, some about her family history on a farm in the Hudson Valley, and some just about plain old love.

The beauty of the album, though, is the grace with which she whirls the music around the beautiful stories. On the wonderful "Eddy Went To Spain," Kate sings about an Uncle who traveled to Spain to paint in the 1930's and wound up fighting in the Spanish civil war. This quirky story is coupled with a choppy (almost ska-like) rhythm and Kate's calm singing and guitar playing. This gives the song its pleasant, funny nature, which most people like in a story. The grace Kate displays on *Hydrangea*, over-powers the strange combinations of sounds, and makes this wind-

ing journey of an album truly special.

It's Fun To Steal - Mono Puff

On Mono Puff's second full length album, *It's Fun To Steal*, the band's lead singer, founder, main and really only permanent member, John Flansburgh decides to follow his own advice. He named his album *It's Fun To Steal*, and obviously has fun stealing the musical sound from the 1970's. The entire album is John's take on the 'shag' era, from the title track's New Orleans soul feel, to a very dark and gothic funk rhythm on the song "Dedicated." This album could be a very cool tribute to the disco-decade, but there is one problem: John's voice sounds more like it belongs with the funny, nerd rock he plays with They Might Be Giants then as the soundtrack for "Shaft." Thus, the album has a kind of 'lets pretend we are in the 70's, but act like we are the coolest people in the 90's' feel to it. Though a good and different kind of album, it sounds too much like the band hasn't decided which decade to play in.

Noon Chill - Arto Lindsay

Arto Lindsay's music could be compared to the picture that is found on the back of his new album, *Noon Chill*. The picture is a crude charcoal drawing of a starved skinny naked man. The only obvious features of the man are his bent over head and his genitalia. The picture is a sad, slightly sensuous, dark image, and this is exactly the way Arto's music sounds. The beat in each song is slow and monotonous and even the fast-paced songs sound slow. Arto's voice sounds too soft; at times it is almost drowned out by the bass beats. But his voice is what makes this album so inviting. His voice has a sensual tone in it that suggests something very sick and sensuous, something very avant-garde. Along with gothic tones Arto mixes Brazilian bossa nova music into it. The result is a sort of Brazilian Lou Reed with an industrial beat. If ever anyone is in the mood for a combination of diametrically opposed sounds, then I can not think of a better album to listen to.

Hoboken may not be the yuppie paradise that its residents think it is, nor is it really a scum hole in the armpit of America. What it very well might be is the home of one of the best little-known record companies, and the home of the oddest mix of music as far as the ear can hear.

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Above Rubies

Continued from page 12

gious practice is based solely on sociological pressures, and can therefore live in another reality that exists independently from religion. Because Sender grasps reality as independent from Chasidism, he understands Sonja right away. Sonja's husband isn't able to understand her because he doesn't know of a world separate from his practice. We are finally able to see the husband's true greatness when he begs Sonja's forgiveness for not remembering her birthday. He finally understands her and her reality. At the same time, Sonja understands that it was never his idealism that enslaved her, it was Sender's sociological religion. Jewelry in this movie symbolizes the sociological aspects of religion. Idealism has a price above rubies.

The most disturbing part of this motion picture is not the film itself, but the reaction of mainstream orthodox representatives to this movie. Before the film's release, Assemblyman Dov Hikind, who is currently facing Federal charges of corruption and misappropriation of funds, demanded that this film not be released because it portrayed Chassidim using negative stereotypes. As if that wasn't enough, when Miramax said that they were going to release the film, Hikind called for protest outside Miramax's offices. Why is Assemblyman Hikind getting all revved up about a low budget film, when the probability is such that if he will call attention to the film, it will just do better at the box office? What possibly could be so bad about this film that it warrants protest? A few weeks later I read in the *Jewish Press* that the film is a massive *Chillul Hashem*. I later read in Hikind's article in *Country Yossi Magazine* calling the movie discriminatory, claiming that no character in the movie is even remotely similar to that of an actual modern day Chassid, and that things like this don't go on in that community.

Don't be fooled by shameless political

strategies and alarmist cackling. Obviously this is a harmless film, intended to hurt no one. It seems that the latest trend within the Jewish community is to accuse one another of being the "self-hating Jew." I can't tell you how many times I hear about a court case where a Jew is the defendant and the "self-hating Jew" is the prosecutor, or accusations that it's the "self-hating Jews" that are closing down our shteeble. Especially here at YU, we are sensitive to Jews calling other Jews "sonai Hashem," the Hebrew equivalent of "self-hating Jew." Boaz Yakhin is in no way a self-hating Jew. This movie in no way created a *Chillul Hashem*. The proof is in the reviews. E! channel and magazine hailed the example of a Chassidic husband in the film as "dignified, proud, loving, and thoroughly bewildered; he stands out as a gentle symbol of religious and spiritual truth."

Yeah, the movie must have portrayed Chassidism horrifically to get that kind of review.

Regarding Hikind's criticism - that none of the characters could be real people - well, the two characters that are supposed to represent average Chassidim, Sonja's husband and Sonja's sister-in-law, both remind me very much of people in my own family and circle of friends... (and I'm assuming that they are real people). The character Sonja is a fictional character. She doesn't represent you're average anything. Unless Mr. Hikind thinks that there never was a Chassidic girl, who because of any number of problems, decided to abandon observance, I don't see why Sonja's character is implausible. Lastly, regarding the assemblyman's assertion that there is no plausibility of a low life Chassid like Sender, or a story as vulgar as this one, I have a story to tell you Mr. Hikind, and it concerns a couple of Pupa chassidim on a plane!

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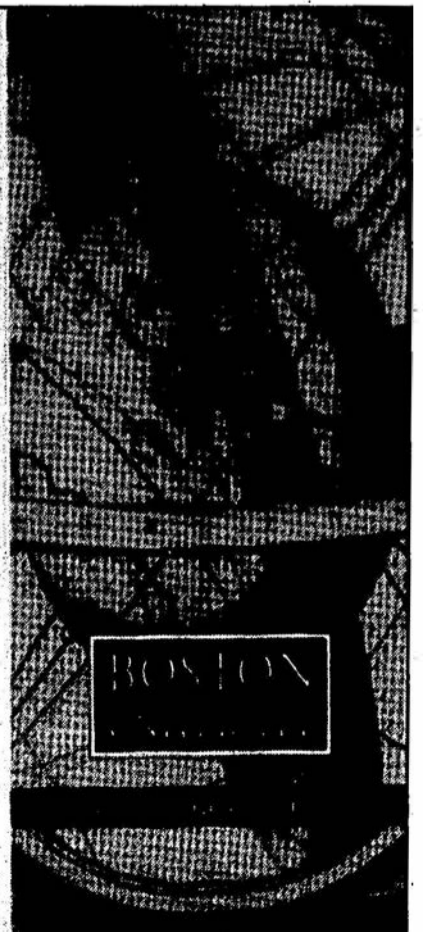
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LETTERS

To the Editor

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

To the Editor:

On Thursday March 26th, the first round of the seventh annual Red Sarachek high school basketball tournament took place in our very own Mac Stern Athletic Center. Overall, the tournament was a huge success thanks to the endless efforts of Michael Kranzler and Ryan Hyman from admissions, and many dedicated others.

However, we should be ashamed of a particular game that was played that day between Yeshiva University of Los Angeles (YULA) vs. Block Yeshiva of St. Louis. Considering that YULA was ranked #1 and Block #16 out of a total of 16 high schools, no one expected anything less than a blowout to transpire. Yet what did occur was a travesty.

YULA opened up the game with a full-court press, their favorite style of play and a style that is perfectly understandable as long as the game is somewhere within the range of "close" or "competitive." Truth be told, it was anything but that. After attaining a sizable 20 point lead ten minutes into the first half, YULA still had the full-court press on. Okay. So they wanted to get some insurance points to secure their comfortable lead. That's acceptable. Five minutes later, YULA was on top by more than 35 points, and still, the YULA coach deemed it appropriate to continue the full-court press or shall we call it full-court "slaughter," up until half-time at which point the score was 51-2. Hard to believe, huh?

Allow me to quote what the YULA coach said he was thinking (or not thinking for that matter) in a discussion that we had after the game. "I don't think it would have been fair to my guys off the bench, who finally got some quality playing time due to the lower caliber opponent, to have to play a style other than the one they were use to playing, that of the full-court press. If we did so all year long, there is no reason we should have refrained from continuing to do so [in the tournament] as well, despite what the scoreboard read during the game."

I was shocked and angered when hearing this. I retaliated saying, "I'll give you one good reason to stop the press. You guys made Block look foolish and idiotic out there. What happened to having respect for the reputation of another Jewish team, or, if that's too much to handle, just having plain *menschlichkeit*?"

The YULA coach then responded, "I agree with your philosophy of not making another team look worse than they already are, but I disagree with you on the degree of technicality. We could have beaten them by 100 points if we wanted, but we had mercy on them and kept it to around 40 points instead. If anything, we did them a favor because, by pressing, we gave them a better chance to score."

Gee, how nice of him. By the way, the final score of 85-20 wasn't that far off from 100. Plus, the only 2 points that Block scored in the first half, which happened to be the first basket of the game, was practically the only shot they got off in that half. Wow - what a "favor."

I think it's pretty obvious, therefore, why I vehemently disagreed with the YULA coach. Even with a 30 point lead, YULA was doing a pretty good job of frustrating the Block team. Block looked miserable out there. Why? Not because Block stinks, but because the YULA coach wanted to give his 10th, 11th, and 12th men off the bench some quality defensive practice. If I were a red shirt (bench warmer) all year long, and was finally put in the game, I would want to relax on defense so I could play aggressively on offense. Likewise, the YULA bench warmers, who entered early in the game, would have been just as content with playing a more passive defense instead of a tiring full-court press.

In summation, it seems, according to the YULA coach, that good full-court practice for his team comes before any ethical considerations. In my book, however, being a *mensch* is a bit more important, and if you don't agree, maybe your priorities ought to be straightened out too.

Toward the end of our conversation, the YULA coach tried defending himself by adding, "after the game, the Block coach told me he enjoyed the challenge of breaking our press anyway, and wasn't upset at all," to which I said back, "Well, the Block coach wasn't on the court suffering the embarrassment; his team was." As we parted, the YULA coach reminded me that I made my point pretty clear. But that doesn't mean that he won't try the same stunt next year.

YULA demonstrated the same lack of sportsmanship in last year's tournament against another team, which caused a player from the opposing team to shed tears as he walked off the court. I wouldn't call such a player a sore loser, rather, a normal human being who has emotions that apparently the YULA coach is not sensitive to. Where's our sensitivity for those Block players who returned to the hotel feeling worthless and regretful for ever taking up the sport of basketball?

Sadly enough, no real sensitivity came from Jon Bandler, who coordinates the team rankings for the tournament every year. He remarked, "[what YULA did] makes sense because it gave the bench players some good practice, but I wouldn't do the same thing because it is not a nice thing to do." So it's all right if someone else gets away with doing a nasty thing, right? Now that makes a lot of sense too.

Jon Halpert, who also helps run the tournament, agreed with Bandler and added that nothing official can be done to prevent a coach from carrying out his game plan with the exception of quietly approaching him and kindly asking him to drop the press.

In years past, this technique hasn't worked with the YULA coach, and therefore allow me to suggest a simple and more effective solution - it's called a "slaughter rule." No, it's not a novel idea. In fact, such a rule already exists in the Jewish junior high school league of New York. It states that if either team has a lead of more than twenty points, it's "unsportsmanlike" to apply a press.

Failure to adhere to this rule is grounds for a technical and possible forfeit.

Myself and many other students present at the game were disgusted to see such an appalling event take place on our home court - and rightfully so. On behalf of many, I pressured Bandler and Halpert to create a rule, similar to that of the junior high league, that would disqualify from the tournament any team that full-court presses with a 30 point lead. This type of rule is not even that strict being that it would be limited to only a full-court press and a 30 point lead. But I'm sure it would be enough to guarantee that such an atrocity doesn't recur on our campus. Unfortunately, although Michael Kranzler was not totally against instituting such a rule, Bandler and Halpert were not immediately convinced.

In 1996 and 1997, whether he meant it or not, the YULA coach, through his talented team, successfully destroyed the self-esteem of his first round opponents. In 1998, even a 46-2 lead before half time was not enough of an indication to him to drop the press. Nor were the continuous "boos" coming from the crowd, which included YULA alumni who came to cheer their alma mater but after a while

didn't have the heart to stay and watch the torture of another Jewish high school basketball team.

By next year it is our duty to make sure that a rule of the sort aforementioned be implemented. What's the big deal anyway? It's not like we have to appeal to the NCAA for approval. It's our tournament. Plus, the rule would not hurt the tournament structure or competition in any way. It can only help.

We, as a Yeshiva, cannot tolerate one Jewish high school treating another in such a fashion at our facilities. If the tournament is meant for admissions to recruit potential students, and upon coming to YU for the tournament these high school students are forced to suffer or watch a beating from another team, then just imagine what kind of message we're sending out to them by permitting such behavior in our gym: "here at YU, we don't mind if students show no honor or sensitivity toward their fellow Jews and colleagues." Doesn't sound too appealing to me - how about you?

Shai Samet
YC 1/98

Jewish Paranoia

To the Editor:

In Mr. Kahn's recent editorial about designer plagues, he comes off sounding as paranoid and pessimistic as the editors of The Jewish Press. If Einstein is studying Jewish genes, whose genes are being studied at NYU? Or Cornell? Just because a study is being conducted, that doesn't automatically lead to malicious ramifications like custom-designed anti-Jew weapons.

Insurance companies already 'discriminate' based on where you live, what your family history looks like, whether you smoke, and the content of your blood. That will never change. As long as actu-

arial science can put a number to the risk, rates will rise. Our grandchildren will be paying more based on the deteriorating ozone layer. That's not the insurance company's fault. Employers are enjoined from discriminating against anyone for medical reasons. Orthodox Jews are behind the 8-ball anyway because of Shabbat and Yom Tov observance. So I don't think this genetic study will in any significant way impact Jewish life in this country.

Find a conspiracy theory elsewhere, Mr. Kahn.

Michael Stone

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YU Tennis Team Defeats CUNY Powerhouse to Remain Undefeated

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

The tennis Macs raised their record to 6-0 Sunday with an impressive victory over previously unbeaten College of Staten Island (CSI), who defeated NYU and this year's CUNY champion.

The 6-3 victory was the 35th consecutive win for the Macs, who have not lost since 1994.

The stars for Yeshiva were Edon Hirt, Jeff Taub and David Schwartz, each winning in singles and doubles. Hirt won in straight sets; Schwartz needed three sets to prevail; and Taub dropped the first set before rallying back to triumph in three sets. Hirt and Taub paired up for #3 doubles, while Schwartz teamed up with Tsvi Zilbershteyn for #2 doubles. In both matches, the Macs came up on top.

The CSI Dolphins got strong performances from their top two seeds, David Ng (no, it's not a typo, but pronounced "eng") and Mark Wantowsley, who beat Josh Hasten and Zilbershteyn, respectively. Ng and Wantowsley also doubled up to beat Hasten and Shai Samet in an exciting, three-set doubles match. But Samet was victorious for the Macs in #3 singles.

"On a day when our top players struggled in singles, Hirt, Taub and Schwartz really stepped it up," Coach Jon Bandler said. "Especially a first year player like Taub - He lost that first set but turned around and played like a veteran the last two sets."

Last week, the Macs beat City College 7-2. Singles winners included Hasten, Samet, Hirt, Taub, and Oren Koslowe. Hasten and Samet also defeated their opponents in doubles, as did Hirt and Micha Porat.

On Sunday April 5th, for the second straight year, the Macs won the Valiant Invitational Tournament held at Manhattanville College, beating the host school, Stevens Tech and Baruch. Shai Samet took home the Tier II singles championship and Zilbershteyn and Koslowe were awarded with Tier II doubles plaques. Unfortunately, Hasten lost in a tough Tier I Singles final to Manhattanville's #1 player.

The closest match of the year occurred back in March versus Brooklyn College. After 5 of the singles matches were complete, the Macs were down 2-3 (overall score) with the last singles match, the #2 spot, heading toward a third set. It was all in the hands of the Macs' #2 seed, Tsvi Zilbershteyn. Although he lost the second set, Tsvi came through in crunch time and dominated the third set thereby tying up the team score at 3-3. In doubles to follow, the Macs took 2 out of 3, and hence won by the final score of 5-4.

The final 3 matches of the tennis season, York, St. Joseph's and Bard, promise to be competitive as well, but the tennis Macs are determined to carry on their tradition.



Mulligans Hole Out on Their Season

BY KENNY SICKLICK

The season has finally come to an end. This year's team, while not always victorious will definitely pave the way for an excellent future team. The Mulligans are eagerly awaiting next year's season.


The first match of the year was played against NYU on YU's home course in Van Cortlandt Park. Coming out of the gate, the YU players looked good. YU was, in fact, leading through the first five holes. Unfortunately, the NYU players came alive on the back nine and barely squeaked by YU.

YU's next match was in New Jersey, at the Essex Fells Country Club. Caldwell College hosted YU, Holy Family College, and Dominican College. There was tight competition from the start. No one was sure who would prove victorious until all of the scores were in. In the end, Holy Family College came through with the victory. The last match before Pesach vacation was played in Van Cortlandt, again hosted by YU. This time YU convincingly defeated Centenary College.

The players felt confident going into the last match of the season. The team was coming off a big victory, and many of the golfers played numerous rounds during vacation. The final match was played in New Jersey, this time at Blue Hill C.C. The landscape was truly breathtaking. Apparently, it distracted the YU players, as only one player broke 100.

The scoring system in the league is fairly simple. Each coach selects five players from his team whose scores will "count" towards the match. At the completion of the round, the best four scores of the five players are added up to get a team score. The team with the lowest score wins the match.

Though the team was unable to put together too many victories, each player proved, at different points in the season, that he has the potential to consistently shoot in the 90's. Fortunately, virtually the entire team is returning next season. With their experience from this year, the team should chalk up many victories next year.


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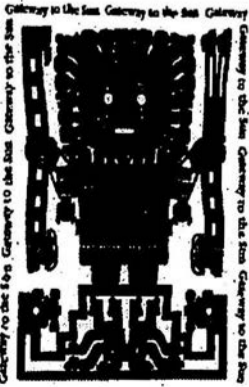
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