

THE OBSERVER

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May 11, 1990

3000 Join In March Of The Living

by Shoshana Levine

More than three thousand Jewish teenagers from thirty seven countries arrived in Warsaw on Wednesday, April eighteenth. This marked the first day of the second bi-annual March of the Living. The students had come to spend the week of Yom Hashoah touring various historical sites throughout Poland.

The climax of the trip, the "march of the living", took place on Sunday, Yom Hashoah. Three thousand students with their arms linked, wearing identical blue jackets with "March of the Living" inscribed on the backs, walked in rows in total silence from Auschwitz to Birkenau. During the hour long march, complete silence prevailed and continued into the lengthy memorial service that followed. Renowned survivor and Nobel laureate, Elie Wiesel, was introduced as the keynote speaker during the memorial at Birkenau. He began to speak and then abruptly stopped and stepped down from the podium, feeling that it was too emotionally painful to continue. The entire ceremony concluded with a communal singing of Ani Maamin followed by Hatikva.

The group, which included a United States' delegation of six hundred, visited concentration camps, cemeteries, and old deserted cities that were once thriving Jewish centers of learning. The program ended with a pilgrimage to Israel. The students toured the country and celebrated Israel's independence on Yom Haatzmaut by dancing in the streets of Yerushalayim. The purpose of the program was to heighten the Jewish identity of future community leaders

ranging from nonobservant to Orthodox Jews.

The itinerary for the Polish part of the program was brief. Thursday: a Jewish cemetery in Lublin, and Majdanek concentration camp. Friday: Treblinka and a Jewish cemetery in Warsaw. Saturday: the remains of the Warsaw Ghetto. Sunday: Auschwitz and Birkenau death camps.

Before visiting the first concentration camp, the students were given a history lesson that included background about some of the largest yeshivot in Poland, and the thriving Polish Jewish communities that existed only fifty five years ago. The group was scheduled to visit some of these places, including Lublin and Krakow, later that week. The students' first destination was Majdanek. Unlike some camps which had been completely destroyed by the Nazis at the end of the war, Majdanek had been left partially intact. "Barracks, smokestacks, and electrical fences were still standing," described Shanna Blaustein, a Stern College freshman who participated in the program. "The most eerie things to see, though, were the warehouses filled with thousands of shoes, eyeglasses, pieces of hair, and other personal belongings of the death camp victims. These were visual aides for what I had learned in history but always had trouble comprehending. Every shoe represents a person, and still six million is impossible to comprehend."

Treblinka, which was next on the agenda, was completely destroyed by the Nazis at the end of the war. Huge stone monuments engraved with the names

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SCW Valedictorian Chosen

by Rachel Mohl

On May 24th, 1990 Yeshiva University will hold its 59th Annual Commencement Exercises at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall. Degree recipients include graduates of Yeshiva College, Stern College for Women and Sy Syms School of Business, as well as those graduating from YU's various schools of higher education. In all, some 1,500 diplomas will be issued this spring.

The keynote address will be delivered by Ambassador Max M. Kampelman, a former United States arms negotiator. Ambassador Kampelman is a YU alumnus and will be a recipient of a Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

This year's SCW undergraduate valedictorians include Shira Hirshaut and Batsheva Levine. Shira, valedictorian of Stern College, majored in math and computers and plans to pursue a career in the latter. After a year at Michlalah, she completed her studies in Stern

in two years. Batsheva, valedictorian of the Rebecca Ivy Department of Jewish Studies, majored in Jewish Studies and Biology and has been accepted to Harvard Medical School. She has spent four years at Stern.



Batsheva Levine, Judaic Studies valedictorian.

Sara Weiss, a graduating senior, commented, "It is a pleasure to see Batsheva, a student who throughout the last four years always chose challenging Judaic Studies courses, receive one of the highest honors of SCW." Ariella Halpert, also an SCW senior, commented that she would have preferred to have had more input in the choice of SCW valedictorians.

Valedictorians are chosen on the basis of their grade point average over three and a half years. Dean Karen Bacon explained that all valedictorians must have at least 94 credits in residence and must be eligible for the highest honors. The Rebecca Ivy valedictorian is required to major in Judaic Studies.

The qualifications for valedictorian were changed three years ago. Previously, students were given the opportunity to choose the valedictorian from among the women with the top three grade point averages. Many SCW seniors felt this system turned the process into a popularity contest. After a number of senate meetings, the administration decided to select future valedictorians on the basis of grade point average exclusively.

Valedictorians of Sy Syms are Miriam Rotenberg of Cedarhurst and Michael Ehrenreich of Brooklyn. Both students will be working in business firms next year. Other valedictorians are Alan Rothman of YC, Gad Dish of Isaac Breuer College of Hebraic Studies and Martin Bluth of the James Striar School.



Miriam Rotenberg, Sy Syms valedictorian.

Student valedictorians do not address the audience at commencement exercises. Instead, both YC and SCW valedictorians speak at Senior Cont. p. 12 col 4

Business And Accounting Societies Held Premiere Dinner At Hilton

by Batya B. Levin

The Sy Syms School of Business held a premiere dinner on Tuesday night, May 8. This record event was unique in that it was the first year that the accounting and business societies joined forces to sponsor one combined dinner. The event was held at the Trianon Ballroom in the New York Hilton Hotel, and approximately three hundred people attended. The participants included Sy Syms students from both Stern and Yeshiva Colleges, YU business school alumni, and recruiters from many of the top business firms in the Metropolitan area.

The evening began with a reception during which students had the opportunity to mingle with recruiters and alumni from various firms, and informally inquire about their respective

jobs. Color coordinated name tags were distributed to every recruiter, according to his or her area of work, so that the students interested in specific fields would know whom to approach. In addition, preference sheets were distributed among the students before the dinner, to enable them to choose the firm with which they desired to be seated. In total, there were representatives from over thirty accounting firms, and over twenty businesses, including many from the "Big Eight."

The hour long shmorgasboard was followed by a speech given by the valedictorian of the Sy Syms School at SCW, Miriam Rotenberg. Following the valedictory address, the president of the Sy Syms Corporation, Marcy Syms, welcomed everyone to the gala

event. Dean Schiff, one of the Deans of Sy Syms, then addressed an often asked question concerning the rigor and intensity of the SSSB curriculum at YU. "The coursework must be demanding, since Jews have certain restrictions due to religious beliefs, such as leaving the office early or taking off from work for Jewish holidays. Therefore, it is essential that they be the best in their field. The Sy Syms curriculum must be superior in order to prepare students to achieve that level of excellence required of the religious Jew." The Dean ended his address with a word of encouragement for all of the students: "You can achieve and still be a mensch."

The keynote speaker for the night was Burton Resnick, the Cont. p. 5 col 3

The marchers entering Auschwitz.

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Editorial

Key Clubs Overlooked

The end of the year dinner, co-sponsored by TAC, Sy Syms and Student Council, was to say farewell to the old boards and acknowledge those who contributed this year to improve the school. The idea behind award ceremonies is to allow students to recognize what has been accomplished by the various clubs and by individual students. After all, it is us, the students of the college who are going to change the school, and perhaps the world.

Therefore, the outcome of the ceremony was surprising and disturbing. Awards were given to various committees such as the Blood Drive, the Food Committee, and the Sephardic Club. The Observer and editor were also recognized. However, certain key clubs were ignored or overlooked, specifically the Dramatics Society, the Speech Arts Forum and SSSJ.

The Observer wishes to acknowledge the hard work and devotion of the students involved with these clubs and looks forward to their continued activity next year.

Pogrom Date Passes Peacefully

The recent Soviet policies of Glasnost have allowed for freedom of speech, including the right to publicly criticize Soviet society. Anti-semitic groups took advantage of this new "openness" to spread propaganda and incite violence against the Jews. "Pamyat," the most dangerous antisemitic nationalistic movement in Russia, called for a pogrom against the Jews in June 1988. The initial call for a pogrom was repeated during the summer of 1989. A demonstration was scheduled to take place on May 5, 1990, to coincide with the celebration of the millennium of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Upon hearing the rumors about this planned pogrom, Jewish organizations, leaders, and activists were up in arms. They began pressing our government to pressure the Soviet government to enforce prohibitions against antisemitism and to ensure the safety of the Soviet Jewish community. The students of Yeshiva University were among those who expressed their concern and focused much attention on this issue. At the lobby in Washington on Taanit 'Esther, one of the main issues that was addressed was that of prevalent anti-semitism, and specifically the anticipated May pogrom. A letter requesting intervention in this matter was circulated among the members of Congress, and by the end of the day, all one hundred Senators had signed it.

Saturday, May fifth, passed peacefully and uneventfully, and no pogrom took place. Though this was probably largely due to the action taken and involvement of Jews worldwide, the time has not yet come to abandon the world's third largest Jewish community. The road ahead is still paved with uncertainty. While we must remain optimistic, we must keep aware of the constant changes and adjust our focus to meet new challenges.

Absence Of Student Leaders Noted

A recent event at Yeshiva University celebrated both Yom HaZikaron and Yom Haatzmaut. Despite the large turnout from Stern and Yeshiva College, as well as from students attending other colleges in conjunction with Bnei Akiva, AZYF and Yavneh Olami, it was noticed that several of Stern College's student leaders and various board members were not in attendance. Not only did students note their absence but in the next few days questions were asked and complaints were voiced.

In acknowledgement of the fact that it was the Omer and some people are extremely careful with the custom of not listening to music, it would have been understandable had the leaders shown up only for the memorial ceremony. There was no music during the "tekess" and the solemnness of the occasion was certainly appropriate. Although the event took place uptown and Stern College was not actively involved, it was advertised as a TAC and Student Council event. Student leaders have a responsibility that goes beyond putting their names on fliers.

Perhaps student leaders do not realize how noted their actions are. There is no doubt that the board members of SCW have worked hard this year. In light of their positive efforts, it is perhaps important to note that when you win an election or are appointed to a leadership position, you are on display for the year, when you want to be and when you don't. If student leaders, especially those representing the Torah side of the school, do not participate in school sponsored events, no matter how unenjoyable or inconvenient they may be, they are tacitly sending out the message that the event is inappropriate or not worth attending.

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Letters

Claudine Complains

Dear Editor,
With the end of the year, as well as the end of my college career, I could not leave without voicing an opinion on a certain subject. Last term I took Intro to Computers to fulfill my last requirement for graduation. Unfortunately, after the mid-term I had to withdraw from the class and receive a 'W' on my transcript. The reason I am writing this letter is because I believe there was a great injustice done last term to myself and the over twenty other students who dropped that class.

From the very first class one could sense something was wrong. When the professor entered the classroom and saw over 45 students, he asked why so many people had registered for the class. I replied that not only were computers the wave of the future but they also fulfilled a requirement. He callously stated, "Over half of you will drop this immediately." I sought to prove this man wrong. During the course of the first seven weeks we worked very hard. Our lab instructor saw us nearly each day in the computer room. But it seemed the more we studied, the less we knew. Each new class became an ordeal. The professor started each class with a flawed program and expected us to tell him what was wrong. I could deal with that save for the fact he had never taught the program to us. There were always girls who knew the answers, of course they all admitted to having taken computers the year before in high school.

By the time the professor announced the midterm, I knew I was in trouble. I went for help. I asked Dean Orlian to recommend a tutor for me. At first I met with my lab teacher, paying her for a private tutorial. Then I and some other students

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Student Activism Praised

To The Editor

Looking back on this year's school events, one cannot help but notice the tremendous amount that was accomplished by the collective student body, especially for the cause of Soviet Jewry. An issue that was at first unclear has become a focal point of our lives. This increased consciousness and heightened awareness is significantly due to the active Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry clubs at both Yeshiva and Stern Colleges. The letter drive and Rosh Hashana cards started off the year with a bang and paved the way for events that were to come. The Freedom Fund which raised a whopping twenty thousand dollars for Soviet Jewish resettlement was a tremendous feat, and the massive Taanit Esther lobby in Washington was a record achievement. And none of this could have been accomplished without the cooperation of the entire student body, faculty, and administration. The power of the Tzibor, unparalleled, has the potential to impact Klal Yisroel tremendously, and is the means for Jewish existence worldwide. This year's student body demonstrated an overwhelming love for their Soviet Jewish brethren in a way that made me proud to be a part of Yeshiva University.

Though the YU community at large deserves recognition, special acknowledgement must be attributed to those individuals student leaders who put tremendous time and effort into coordinating and implementing these memorable record-breaking events. On behalf of the board of SSSJ, I'd like to thank every person who contributed in some way to this very special cause. Yasher Kochachem!

Shoshana Levine
SSSJ President, SCW '91

Kahana Controversy Continues

To the Editor,

I would like to express my gratitude to TAC of SCW for hosting Rabbi Meir Kahane (2/28). I would also like to compliment the OBSERVER (3/9) for its recognition of the right of the rabbi to express his views, although I differ on the rationale.

The primary criterion which a speaker must satisfy is that his views be within the purview of Torah and reason. The fact that this determination requires discernment by no means warrants its omission. Rabbi Kahane, I believe, is more than willing to entertain respectful questions in an intellectual manner and in accordance with Torah and reason.

The following points further demonstrate the necessity of hosting Rabbi Kahane at Y.U. Firstly, both the topics of his talk and his particular opinions are highly relevant to every Jew today. If what he says is true, then it must be heard. Hence, the open, intellectual dialogue over the correctness of his assertions should most definitely be fostered.

In regard to qualms people may have with respect to the aforementioned primary criterion, in reference to the alleged "racism" of Rabbi Kahane's views, I do not believe that they go beyond those of Maimonides at the end of his "Epistle to Yemen," to which I refer the reader. A comprehensive list of relevant supporting sources is available from the rabbi himself.

In closing, I would like to ask HAMEVASER, who criticized the invitation of Rabbi Kahane, "Where is your denunciation of those Jews who dare compare the actions and opinions of other Jews in Israel to those of the Nazis?" Is your fury not misplaced?

Name Withheld
SSSB, '91

Timeliness of an Old Message

by Sharona Cumín

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times", so stated Charles Dickens in *A Tale of Two Cities*. He may not have realized though how prophetic his words would be many decades after the French Revolution. This year has been one of enormous change in virtually every corner of the world; it has been a time of certain gains in human freedom but has also seen tremendous injustices, strife and terror taking place. An event such as the Yeshiva University lobby to Washington on Taanit Esther is an example of the dedication and caring of many people for the situation of the Jews in the Soviet Union; the other numerous lobbies to Washington indicates the concern of a number of people for those in Israel and Ethiopia. It is easy, however, to become complacent, forgetful and apathetic. This is human nature; when one is not in close and frequent contact with a crucial situation, one does not feel as much intensity for the victims' plight.

The following paragraphs are an excerpt of a selection from the mussar discourses of Rabbi Chaim Shmulevitz, the renown Rosh Yeshiva of the Mirrer Yeshiva, which were delivered following various periods of military threat to the State of Israel. The shiurim were translated by Rabbi Alter B. Metzger, a Judaic Studies faculty member at SCW.

In the past, Rabbi Shmulevitz has cited two proofs to demonstrate that when someone is accustomed to an occurrence, the emotional impact upon him is diminished. First, from the Rashbam's comment on the fact that, although Moshe Rabbeinu had been told on the first day of the week that there would be a double portion of manna on Friday in preparation for the Sabbath when no manna would fall; he did not convey this information to the Jewish people in advance, but rather waited until they saw the twofold

portion of manna actually fall on Friday. Although a prophet is prohibited from suppressing his prophecy, (see Sanhedrin 89) he nevertheless waited until Friday so that the experience would not be dulled by their anticipation.

Another proof is from Chushim, the son of Dan. He was told that Esau was delaying the burial of Jacob until Naphtali would bring the deed corroborating Jacob's ownership of the Machpelah cave burial site. Chushim the said "And until Naphtali returns from Egypt, my father shall be accorded this disrespect of delay in burial." He took hold of a whip, struck Esau on the head and slew him. We are thus confronted with the problem of the passivity and tolerance of the other brothers. Why were they not provoked by the disrespect to their father, and why was it that Chushim, the grandson of Jacob was the only one to find the situation unbearable?

Rabbi Shmulevitz suggested the following explanation: The other brothers had concluded a protracted argument with Esau thinking that at any moment he would concede and agree to the burial of their father, Jacob. They thus became accustomed to the situation to the extent that they could tolerate what was occurring. This was not so in the case of Chushim, the son of Dan, who had difficulty in hearing and did not participate in the entire exchange. Merely seeing that his grandfather was subject to such a lack of respect, he found the situation completely intolerable and acted accordingly.

This is our own situation, stated Rabbi Shmulevitz. From the beginning of the war on Yom Kippur until the present time we have become accustomed to the situation of the current war and are capable of enduring what is taking place so that the events do not have their former intense impact upon us.

Similarly, Moshe Rabbeinu cont. on page 4, col 1

Yellin's Final Note

by Deena Yellin

Thirty years ago, there were 298 all-female colleges in the United States. Today, that figure has dwindled to a mere 94 in the nation. Burdened by financial constraints and perhaps armed with the rationalization that women's colleges are out of date, the administrations of many of these all-female colleges have opened their doors to men.

While some may feel that co-ed institutions are preferable, the women at Mills College in Oakland, California do not seem to think so. When earlier this month, the administration of Mills announced that the women's institution will be going co-ed, it brought protest and cries of "No! No!" from hundreds of angry students. The students at Mills realize that the decision to admit men to the women's college will change the nature of their college experience and may even violate the ideals the college has come to stand for.

Women's colleges first opened during a time when women were not admitted to co-ed institutions. The colleges encouraged women to learn and to satisfy themselves intellectually and creatively. Today, however, women have the opportunity to choose from a wide selection of institutions open to them. Some women choose all-female colleges because such places are more attune to women's issues and allow for expression often hindered in a co-ed environment. In the same way that the courses at YU ideally include the Torah aspect, courses at women's colleges can be geared toward women and this can eliminate some of the biases which are part of traditional thought.

This applies even more so to Jewish women, who in addition to being restricted from secular institutions, have been restricted from yeshivot and advanced

Jewish learning. If one chooses to think about it, SCW represents an important idea. It is an institution that will retain its uniqueness as a woman's college long after other women's colleges have opened their doors to men. For religious reasons and reasons of principle, SCW will not go co-ed (perhaps to the chagrin of some).

When I made my decision to transfer to SCW from the University of Chicago, many of my friends were puzzled. They felt that by coming to SCW I would be compromising academics as well as overall college life. At risk of sounding clichéd, today, I am convinced that my decision was one of the best I've ever made and one that I am proud of. The Judaic Studies courses at SCW have facilitated my growth in Jewish knowledge and encouraged me to pursue my Jewish education beyond the walls of the classroom.

I am grateful to instructors like Rabbi Kanarfogel and Rabbi Berman for encouraging women to advance in their learning and to take their learning seriously and to Rabbi Weiss whose introductory Gemara shiur opened doors to me which had been closed during my high school years. Women at SCW receive support and stimulation in their Judaic Studies and are encouraged to explore a variety of areas, in contrast to many other women's yeshivot.

This kind of support is one that women can only get more of. Students should be encouraged to broaden their horizons by taking Judaic courses with the variety of instructors SCW offers, since each teacher can offer new perspectives.

SCW students should receive more advice and encouragement in terms of their careers. More academic and career advisement could be very beneficial to the students. Although many of the faculty members are helpful to individual students, there should

be advisors who are available to speak with students on a regular basis.

In the extra curricular area, many women at SCW are motivated to be vocal and active in issues of concern to the Jewish community. Since many SCW students are concerned with Jewish issues, the atmosphere is one which not only encourages women to be involved in causes such as Israel, Soviet Jewry and kiruv, but to be leaders of such causes. This past year has seen more student activism than in years past. This involvement undoubtedly contributes to a richer college experience. SCW activists have given the OBSERVER a lot to write about, be it the "Zionist Hotheads" who posterized Manhattan, the Pesach seder for Jonathan Pollard or the University sponsored rally which drew over a thousand YU students. I hope that the University will continue to promote student participation in causes of importance to the Jewish community.

Student concern for Jewish issues is reflected in the pages of the OBSERVER, a student publication which has enjoyed greater student involvement this year than ever before. The publication makes an important contribution to SCW life by serving as an outlet of creativity, forum for opinion and new ideas and in addition, plays a role in determining school policy. Many of the suggestions and ideas expressed in the paper this year were explored and implemented at SCW. I hope that students will continue to use the newspaper as a medium through which to express their opinions and suggestions in the pages of the OBSERVER.

During my years at SCW, I have devoted much of my time to working on the newspaper in various capacities and have learned a great deal. Most college newspapers take a con-
Cont. to p.5 col. 1

Letter to the Editor In Defense of Roshei Yeshiva

To the Editor,

I think you were on the mark when you suggested in your April 13th column, "Opinion: An Editor's Note", that the Washington Soviet Jewry rally was questionably a University event. In fact, it was not intended to be a University event but a Yeshiva event. When the rally was proposed to the students at YU, it was presented as a "yeshiva" event. This included shiurim on the buses, with separate buses for men and women and finally, peaceful demonstrations worthy of our institution. The "yeshiva" at the Yeshiva clearly refers to RIETS

and its rebbeim who are the Roshei Yeshiva. Thus, if they felt that the Yeshiva could not support such an event with Rabbi Weiss present, then to whom were they to turn for a second opinion? This is not meant to slight the eminence or scholarship of the faculty at SCW. However, the term "Roshei Yeshiva" has very distinct connotations as it reflects a special caliber of talmidei chachamim whose job is not only to say a shiur but to guide the Yeshiva and its talmidim.

Even Herbsman, YC 91

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Students Commemorate Yom-HaShoah

by Sarita Rosenbaum

Students of Yeshiva University assembled at Belfer Hall on April 23 to commemorate Yom HaShoah. The program, chaired by Danit Elioovson, consisted of a slide presentation, two guest speakers, and a candle-lighting ceremony.

"The Holocaust isn't just history," stressed Elioovson. "It's part of our lives." After the ten minute audio-visual presentation depicting concentration camp scenes, Dr. Haham Gaon, the chairman of Sephardic studies at YU, spoke about his experiences during and after WWII and the current task of Jews worldwide. "Friends," he began, "this is the time when all of us have to identify ourselves not merely with the living, but also with the dead."

Listening to the "prophetic" advice of a rabbi, Gaon left his family and teaching position in Yugoslavia, his native country, to study in England. Although he survived, he never saw his parents again. At the end of the war, he returned to Yugoslavia to search for the traces of his family. He wanted to apologize for leaving them "to die alone." All that he found was his mother's grave.

Haham Gaon remarked that it was only after he had experienced Yom Ha'atzmaut in Israel that he realized that his parents were soldiers who enabled Am Israel to "arise and create a Jewish state." He added that 6,000,000 Jews perished so that we would comprehend the realities of exile. He concluded by explaining that we should not harbor feelings of hatred or revenge, but instead, must remember the past and sustain a love for the Land of Israel and a loyalty to the Torah.

The second speaker, Mark Weitzman, who is involved in Nazi hunting activities at the Simon Wiesenthal Center, also referred to "a sense of personal responsibility that has to be

applied," but not only by remembering. In his speech, Weitzman described the three types of perpetrators held accountable for the war. The first kind was the high-ranking hierarchy of the Third Reich. These prominent Nazis were usually highly educated men and even members of the clergy. The second included those people who transformed Nazi ideology into a reality. The third category of criminal was comprised of the local population who collaborated with the Nazi's. They assisted in and facilitated crimes such as running the trains, rounding up the Jews, and serving as guards.

Even though the Nuremberg trials punished some of these criminals, many of them escaped justice. Accepting the responsibility of ferretting out these ex-

Nazis, Simon Wiesenthal established an organization dedicated to capturing those who evaded punishment for their crimes.

According to Weitzman, we have a duty to demonstrate to others "that societies in the West cannot condone the presence of people who strip minorities of the most basic civil liberty of existence.... Beyond a lesson for us as individuals, it is a lesson of responsibility." Weitzman concluded that everyone must take that initiative.

The Yom HaShoah program closed with a candle-lighting ceremony by the students who organized the memorial service. Danit Elioovson, Lisa Horowitz, Adrienne Goldfeder, Shawna Bergel, Daniel Deutsch, and Benson Stone each lit a candle in memory of the annihilated Jews.



Rachel Mohl dancing with Israeli flag.

TIMELINESS

Continued from page 3 col 2

had to go out to his brothers and share in their oppressive condition (Exodus 2:11) and only then was it possible for him to "dedicate his eyes and heart" to their plight and to emphatically endure their anguish.

Moreover, the task of each tribe whose task it was to pray, corresponding to the thousand who actually went to war, were also obligated to go to the battlefield, for when one is at a distance it is difficult to identify and to actually envision what is taking place. Their prayer cannot be wholehearted unless they are in the area of conflict. Therefore we should be thankful to G-d that we can learn undisturbed in the yeshiva. However, it is difficult to participate from a distance in the critical war events. We are obligated to intensify our efforts

and to the best of our ability unite ourselves with those at the front and to sincerely pray for them. May G-d have mercy on them and improve their lot and ours as well ["Chavrusa" Vol. 21, No. 1, Sept. 1986].

Rabbi Shmulevitz's words were directed towards people at the time of the Yom Kippur war, but his message remains equally as pertinent and crucial during the complex and crisis-filled days that we are living in today. We are now observing the days of Sefirah, when we commemorate the death of Rabbi Akiva's students by refraining from certain symbolically joyous activities. Rabbi Akiva's students died because they did not accord the proper respect towards each other, and it is therefore especially fitting at this time to work on the Mitzvah

(commandment) of "V'ohavta Le'reicha Kamocha." to personally feel for others and care for their welfare. Maimonides said (see Hichot Ta'anit) that when any Jew is in peril, it is our responsibility to feel personal concern, and to do whatever we can to assist him or her.

Today the Jews in the Soviet Union and Israel are in great peril, in the midst of military and political crisis. They need our help, both religiously and spiritually, as well as practically, and as Rabbi Shmulevitz said to all Jews during the time of the Yom Kippur war, it is our duty to personally feel for their situation as best as we can. We have to then take this concern and translate it into action; G-d speaks to us through the challenges of history, and we must then respond accordingly.

Students Unite For Yom Ha'atzmaut

by Tamar Schwell

A memorial ceremony for Yom HaZikaron, followed by a celebration for Yom Ha'atzmaut, was sponsored by Bnei Akiva, AZYF, Yavneh Olami and the Y.U. Israel Club on April 29.

At approximately 6:30 PM, students, faculty members, and guests filed into Belfer Hall. Most of the audience dressed in the Israeli colors, blue and white. In all, over three hundred people attended. The ceremony began with a processional of Israeli flags and the sounding of a siren. Standing in silence, with heads bowed, the somber mood was set for the first part of the evening.

The program continued with the lighting of Yahrzeit lamps and the recitation of Kel Maley Rachamim in memory of those killed in the defense of the State of Israel. The names of Yeshiva University alumni who perished while fighting in wars for Israel were read. This was followed by a speech by Rabbi Dr. Israel Miller, who spoke of his own son, who, on the day before finals left America to fight in the

Six Day War.

Poems and readings about Yom HaZikaron in both Hebrew and English were recited, in addition to a few words delivered by Brigadier General David Hermesh. The ceremony included the prayer of Kaddish for those who lost their lives, and the singing of Mah Avarech and Ani Ma'amin. The program for Yom HaZikaron concluded with Hatikva.

A shiur by Rav Meir Goldvicht eased the transition between the sadness of Yom HaZikaron and the joy of Yom Ha'atzmaut. Rav Goldvicht spoke of the beginning of the Redemption, and the importance of the State of Israel in this redemption process.

After the shiur, everyone was given a choice for Ma'ariv. There was the option to daven either with or without Hallel. A chagiga followed equipped with a band, food (compliments of Bernstein's), and tremendous singing and dancing. The evening ended with high spirits and Hatikva, once again, in celebration of Israel's forty-second year.

MARCH

Continued from page 1 col 2

of Jewish towns that were completely wiped out stand in the place where the gas chambers and crematoria once stood. At the entrance of this memorial, representing the mass grave of Treblinka's victims, a wooden plaque reads, "Here lies the remains of 800,000 victims of Nazi atrocities." For many students, this monument was emotionally easier to view than the actual buildings of death they had seen in Majdanek. Others, however, were critical of this abstract memorial. "The pile of stones could have been representing anything," one student said. "No one would ever know what really went on here."

Poland's concentration camps have today been transformed into museums displaying records, photographs, and films designed to teach history. Many students felt that the information was distorted to minimize the Jewish suffering and destruction. "All over the camps there were plaques and memorials listing all the groups of people who were victimized," Adina Braun, a senior from Central explained. "The Jews were only one group in a long list of other nationalities of people killed in the camps. An ignorant person who visits would not understand that the Holocaust was a mass destruction of the Jews."

The students experienced blatant antisemitism throughout Poland, many for the first time in their lives. They described how they were cursed and spit upon, and how spectators watching the march laughed on the sidelines as the group silently made its way to Birkenau. Students noticed a drawing of

a Jewish star hanging from a gallows on a wall where the Warsaw Ghetto once stood. One group leader who understands Polish, overheard a bystander say, "We should've wiped them all out." "As we walked by them," said Adina Braun, "we held our heads up high, as if to say, you tried to destroy us completely, but we're still here," and began to sing Am Yisroel Chai."

In Auschwitz, some students gathered up dirt and ashes that they found covering the ground, intending to take them to Israel and bury them. Many erected small markers on the lawn of Auschwitz, on which they'd written the names of victims. The markers, however, were subsequently removed by a caretaker to "keep the place neat," according to Israeli media.

Travelling to Israel after the week in Poland, served as a release for many of the students. "Standing at the Kotel after having witnessed the Polish concentration camps and the prevalent antisemitism was so emotional," said Blaustein. "I was glad to be where I belong."

The trip had both short term and long term effects on the students who participated. Many indicated an increased interest in student activism especially in relation to the Holocaust. "I saw so much life and then so much death," Blaustein said. "For the first time I actually realized the strong relationship between the Holocaust and the birth of the State of Israel, and saw all the blood and sacrifice that goes into building a Jewish homeland."

Editor's Farewell

Cont. from p.3 col. 5

frontational approach towards the University establishment, uninhibited by any constraints. The editors of these publications tend to pay little attention to the ethical injunction against gossip for the sake of a good scoop. As an editor at a religious institution, I know firsthand that journalistic responsibility often conflicts with religious ethical standards. A college newspaper editor, who's motivating credo is to "write whatever the readers want to read", has few dilemmas in contrast to an editor of a publication at SCW, where standards are expected to be higher.

The OBSERVER has come a long way in content, quality and overall presentation and as a result has won two national awards—a first in SCW history. The success is due to the efforts of this year's staff. I will miss the board members, whose creativity, long hours of work and sense of humor contributed to an outstanding year. Nechama Goldman in particular, has demonstrated great ability and talent during her tenure as Executive Editor and I am confident that under her leadership as Editor-in-Chief the OBSERVER will be an even stronger and more professional

newspaper.

The faculty, for the most part, has been very cooperative and I am grateful for their comments and suggestions. I owe many thanks to Dean Bacon for all of her advice and assistance and Dean Nulman for his encouragement. I am particularly grateful to Mrs. Zeldia Braun for her constructive criticism, support and warmth.

Some of the problems of SCW have come and gone and others have come and lingered on. The lack of facilities at SCW continues to be a major drawback and is a factor which may prevent potential SCW students from attending. Several interviews with the administration published by the OBSERVER this year revealed that SCW lacks the funds and space necessary for the building of new facilities. However, if SCW is unable to build a theater or athletic facility, to name just two examples, the students should be able to have access to such facilities in the area.

And who knows? Maybe I will return to SCW one day to dedicate the "Deena Yellin Athletic Complex and Pool." I can only hope that the YU administration doesn't choose to wait until then.

PICTURE OF THE MONTH

REPRINTED FROM THE NEW YORK POST, 5/4/90



OH NO, NOT MEN! A lot of weeping and angry protests by students at all-women Mills College in Oakland, Calif., greeted the news yesterday that the school's trustees will allow men to enroll for the first time since it was established in 1852.

Drisha Opens A Doorway

by Chani Hook

In 1979, Rabbi David Silber began a program called Drisha. This program was designed to provide women with the opportunity to study Judaic subjects on a higher intellectual level than normally found. Silber had always wanted to establish a program in the United States but found it difficult to do so because women who wanted to continue learning full time, went to Israel to pursue their studies. However, since its inception, Drisha has grown and designed several programs to meet the variety of needs women of today have.

In 1984, a one year full time fellowship program was established. The women in the fellowship program receive \$7500. The budget allows for twelve fellowships a year. On average, there are about ten or eleven women participating in the program at any given time. The women learn full time four days a week, with Friday being a half day. In the morning there are two hours of chavruta in order to prepare for the Gemara shiur which follows. Afternoons are allotted for independent study and other classes. This past year, courses were offered in Aramaic and the

philosophy of Tefillah.

Another one of Drisha's programs is part time and is targeted at women interested in continuing their Judaic education while in a secular college or post-college setting. In general, the five basic subjects that are stressed are Tanach, Halacha, Mishna and Gemara, Philosophy and Rabbimica. The semester schedule of the part time program basically follows the fall and spring semesters at Barnard because many Barnard women are enrolled in it.

The programs grew gradually and as they did, more courses were added. In 1981, a six week summer program was started for women in college and graduate school who had little time for structured learning during the year. It exists as a full time program over the summer, going from nine to five each day. There are also a variety of programs both full and part time to allow for the variety of needs women have today.

Rabbi Silber elaborates that the goals of Drisha are to identify committed and talented women and help them integrate what they have learned. Drisha desires to combine the Yeshiva setting with the openness of the

academic world which Silber believes is already happening.

Dara Kanefsky, head dorm counselor at SCW, is in Drisha's fellowship program. She was a Judaic Studies and Psychology double major at Stern. She wanted time, however, to devote herself solely to the intensive study of Judaic Studies. She feels that the program improves one's learning skills and enables one to learn independently. She felt that she needed to learn more and especially know how to learn Gemara. "Women are not obligated to learn Gemara but they definitely have the prerogative to do so and this is halachically based."

In addition, Dara commented that there is no lecturing or spoon feeding of material and everyone who attends the program takes their Judaic learning seriously. "If you have that attitude, then you can come away with a lot." She feels that Drisha has established a place for women to learn on all levels and "they have done a remarkable job."

In addition to women's learning as an academic and religious skill, another major focus of Silber's is to identify young

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Hilton Hosts Joint Dinner

Cont. from p.1 col. 3

President of Jack Resnick and Sons, Inc. He spoke on various aspects of the American economy, and described the tremendous changes in the business world over the past decade.

Dinner was served at the conclusion of the speeches and awards were distributed. The awards and honors were given for excellence in both accounting and in business studies. Service awards were presented to those deserving individuals

who contributed to the growth of the Sy Syns society during this academic year.

Dina Friedman, the president of SSSB at Stern College, was extremely pleased with the entire event. "The dinner was not only an elegant awards reception, but it also served an important purpose. For sophomores and especially juniors the dinner served as a golden opportunity for them to find out about the different firms that are out there

and to meet the different recruiters in a very relaxed setting." Some undergraduates were offered summer internships after speaking to recruiters.

In addition to the positive student feedback, the guests expressed similar reactions to the event. "I spoke to many recruiters as they were leaving," Friedman said. "They were all very impressed and are greatly anticipating next year's recruits. The dinner was a huge success."

From Shoah To Yeshuah—

ASHES TO ASHES

by N. Goldman

I want to go to Auschwitz. Strange as that may sound, I am haunted, possessed with the need to see the hellhole where three million Jews were butchered; where Kapos with whips and whistles tormented starving wraiths with only the smallest shreds of humanity left in their shivering bodies. I want to walk where they walked, my feet crunching the ground in silence, tracing the footsteps of yesterday, thousands of feet marching to slave labor. I try to recreate the anguish, the feeling of hopelessness and never ending suffering, of children ripped from their parents, lovers separated, brother watching brother die. I want to see the room of hair clipped from the heads of the living and the dead, the mountain of eyeglasses and piles of shoes - leather boots, ballet shoes, slippers adorning feet, little and big, delicate and clumsy.

In my mind I see endless faces and eyes, huge eyes staring back at me from the stark black and white photos at Yad Vashem. These ghosts of yesterday torment me. Sweet faces contorted with fear or indifference, resigned to surrender to the death of the God they worshipped and the life they once knew. What did they think, these children of the era of Night, with dogs barking and the cruel sadism of a blue eyed man pointing them to their doom? What went through their minds, the six million marching to music they didn't write. The Death March was not written by Bach or Beethoven but by Hitler and Eichman and maybe all of Germany, note by note until the masterpiece was complete.

Eched in my mind is the photo of a little girl sitting in the gutter in ragged clothing next to a little boy who is crying. She is not crying, this diminutive heroine but instead stares straight at me. Big liquid eyes and a grimy face take up the whole photograph. She reminds me of my little sister, my Yedida. There is a strong resemblance between the two. She doesn't let me sleep at night and I cry out in fear because she is my little sister and all the little sister who died, smoke in the sky, charred bones, little bodies, cold, no life.

Obsessed by something I never lived through, gripped by a guilt for my lack of understanding, for my life in America, I torture myself, reading book after book on Holocaust literature: graphic descriptions, stomach turning pictures, forcing myself to recreate something I can't possibly hope to feel or empathize with. I make myself go on, taking Holocaust courses, watching Genocide, going to Yad Vashem, writing philosophy papers about God and the Holocaust. Where was God

when six million burned? Divine Providence and Auschwitz—what a paradox. I can't even confront the anger, the burning questions of blame, in light of the faith my life revolves around. I leave it up to Fackenheim and Wiesel, Maybaum and Rubenstein to battle out God's presence at Auschwitz but the image of God hanging on the gallows in the blue face of a sweet child, little body dangling in soul wrenching. The weight of the dead, so many dead, can crush the living.

I am aware of the passing time. Soon the Elie Wiesel's will be gone. No longer will we have eyewitness survivors to remember and remind us of the madness of Auschwitz. A chilling conversation in the park with an old woman reminds me that soon she and her whole generation will be gone. Her broken English tells me that she is a foreigner. We talk. Afraid, she looks around before mentioning the word Jew. I too am suddenly frightened. A shadow falls over the sunny playground entrapping the old woman and me. Her face, wrinkled and worn, reminds me of a map. The long journey her life has been is etched in permanent lines across her cheeks and forehead. She tells me that she was from Poland. When the Germans came she tried to hide with her family. She shows me how the Polish neighbors condemned their fellow countrymen to the Nazis, pointing out the Jews, running to expose hiding places, "they were worse than Nazis...subhuman...they delighted in our pain so that they could take the things they wanted...I come back after the war and they took everything, even Mama's picture with the gold frame." A shiver goes through me, a cold knot in my stomach on a warm day. I can see her mother's portrait, a proud Jewess in a gold frame hanging in a Polish peasant's living room, its dignity desecrated by its new owners profanity.

Underneath the beauty of German culture rotted a hatred so vile that it consumed Europe, leaving a destruction so vast that today 20th century man wants to forget that it ever happened. Tattooed numbers on forearms are embarrassments to a country trying to regain its supremacy in the civilized world. But poisonous hate is fed to children at the breast. It courses through their brains and it is a legacy that does not die at the cemetery where Nazis are buried. A hatred so deep that six million Jews and five million others were consumed in death camps is not to be easily disregarded in less than half a century. It is an indication of decadence deeply rooted in a society that allowed it emerge in its fullest power. The little boy, his hands raised in surrender, his eyes wide with fright, where is he now? He never had the time to play with trucks or join a baseball team or grow into manhood. His

identity is as unmarked as the grave he lies in.

The depths to which mankind can sink is terrifying. Such inbred hatred cannot be extinguished without tremendous effort and conscious struggling. Sometimes I wake up drenched in sweat, scared that the Nazis march again. Who will defend us, the Jews no one wants? Who will save us from extinction? No one saved the Jews from Hitler.

1992 will bring to the world a united Europe. This is hailed as an exciting event, the emergence of a new economy, a new world power but I do not rejoice. I shudder at the prospect. The Berlin Wall came down, a triumph of sorts but with it came the wall of guilt and inhibition. People are quickly willing to forgive and forget past sins. East and West Germany are coming together, uniting in government and ideas. Will they also rekindle the flame that consumed 11 million? Anti-Semitism is again pervading Europe. Claude Landsman's movie *Shoah* was powerful in the message it conveyed. There was no graphic footage of naked bodies or the uncovering of mass graves. What was horrifying was the simple way the film went about uncovering human nature even post-Auschwitz. The indifference of the Polish farmers who lived next door to the concentration camps was terrifyingly realistic and honest as they shrugged off regret or guilt.

What do the Polish teach their children in history class? When they take class trips to Auschwitz are they told that their grandfathers manufactured the most efficient camps for mass genocide? That on their hands lies the blood reflecting an indulgence of pure animal instincts? Or are they told that their ancestors only followed orders? Who can blame anyone for following orders?

So Poland is a backward country but the backward country has not yet learned the art of a polished facade concealing raw animal spirits. The backward peasant may be crude but he is easily identified as the enemy, in contrast to the elusive German with his culture and art. Who wants to believe the sleek snake is poisonous?

Cont. to p.10 col 5

by Shoshana Levine

It was our third day in Moscow, and I was scheduled to meet with Yuri and Sylvia Fiskin at their home that afternoon. After spending three hours fruitlessly searching for their remote street, I called them up out of desperation and Yuri came to meet me. Once the initial acknowledgement of "shalom" was completed, we walked in silence to his home which was only three blocks away. As we entered the tiny two room apartment, I noticed that every wall was plastered with pictures of Israel: photographs, posters, and postcards. Yuri introduced me to his wife, Sylvia, and we sat down and began to talk in the common language that we shared.

Hebrew. Yuri explained how he had spent the last twelve years secretly teaching Hebrew to his fellow Jews. He and his wife were waiting to receive the visas that would enable them to fulfill their lifelong dream of living in Israel. They spoke of their daughter, Galina, who had received a visa nine years earlier and was now living in Haifa with her Russian husband and two Israeli born children, neither of whom had ever met their maternal grandparents. The talking evolved into song, and as we sang the concluding refrain of "Kol Ha-olam Kulo" Yuri turned to me and asked about my future plans and if I wished to build my home in Israel. Never having put any serious thought into the matter, I shrugged and answered, "I hope to some day." Yuri then asked me how an American could make Aliyah. I answered that the process involved selling your home and purchasing a one way El Al ticket to Israel. With a very perplexed look on his face, Yuri asked dumbfoundedly, "You mean anyone who wants to can simply walk into an airline office, buy a ticket, and move to Israel?" I nodded. He asked me softly, "Well, why don't you?" I had found true Zionism in the dark streets of Moscow. Now I began the search within myself.

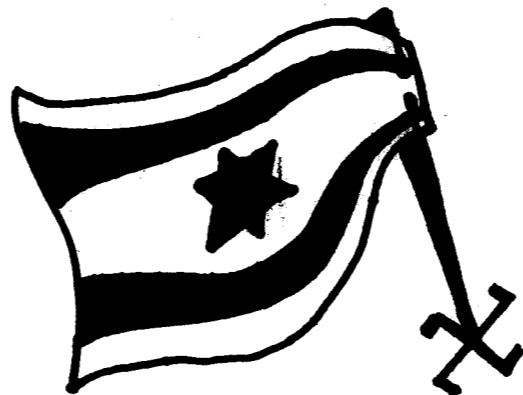
I chose to spend the upcoming summer in Israel, and applied for a madricha position on ACHY. We were based in Givat Ha-moreh, a suburb of Afula. As I was wandering aimlessly

around the town, a beautiful little Ethiopian girl approached me, stuck out her hand, and said in a thick Ethiopian accent, "Brucha Habaah. My name is Ofira. What's your name?" I told her my name, and we began speaking, both of us in our broken Hebrew. She told me that she had just arrived in Israel three weeks earlier. She asked me about my home in America, and I in turn inquired about her life in Ethiopia. "How do you speak Hebrew so well after being in Israel for only three weeks?" I asked. "I spent my whole life dreaming about Israel. My one goal was to someday live here. When I was finally permitted to leave my birthplace, and arrived in this country, I made an effort to learn the language immediately and to acclimate as quickly as possible. I had lived as a foreigner for all twelve years of my life. Now I have finally come home."

A year later, I returned to Israel for a year of study. I returned first to Afula, re-acquainting myself with my chanichim from ACHY. As I walked through the streets becoming reunited with each child, I wondered where Ofira was. To my dismay, I was informed that Ofira's family had moved away. Although her whereabouts were unknown, someone suggested that she may have moved to Haifa. As I returned to Yerushalayim on Saturday night, I wondered if I would ever see her again. I realized sadly that the chances were slim. In December of that year, my father travelled to Russia to meet with Refuseniks and offer them medical assistance. Among the people he met were Yuri and Sylvia Fiskin who excitedly informed him that they had recently received their visa and would be leaving for Israel in a matter of days. Upon hearing this exciting news from my father, I contacted the emigration office to inquire as to their whereabouts. I was informed that they were somewhere in Haifa but that their specific address was unknown. Unfortunately, I could not recall

the name of the Fiskin's daughter who was living in Haifa, so I had no way of contacting them. The day after Yom Yerushalayim I had no classes. I found myself at the Central Bus Station in Jerusalem and aimlessly, I decided to board a bus to Haifa. I figured that I'd call information there with the slight chance that perhaps the Fiskins would be listed or I'd recognize the daughter's name. If neither of these occurred, I would spend the day wandering around Haifa. In the very back of my mind I thought about finding Ofira but then abandoned that thought after envisioning myself at Haifa's busy Hadar Street calling out Ophira! to no one in particular.

I arrived at the Haifa Bus Station and found a phonebook. No Fiskin. Suddenly the name "Kellner" popped into my head. It was the daughter's married name! I quickly looked it up and noticed several Kellners in Haifa. The first name was Boris and I guessed that such a Russian name had to be a lead. Upon calling the number, I discovered that Boris Kellner was the Galena Fiskin's father in law. They informed me that Yuri and Sylvia were living in Haifa. My hands were shaking as I dialed the number that Mr. Kellner had given me. When Galina answered, I explained to her who I was and that I was looking for her parents. She gave me their address but informed that they were probably not home. I had already come so I decided I would take my chances.



In Gathering of the Exiles

Both Yuri and Sylvia Fiskin were home and the reunion was tremendous. We could not get over the fact that one and a half years ago we had parted in Moscow and now we were reunited in Israel. We spent a wonderful afternoon talking and singing.

The time flew by and as I got up to leave, Sylvia Fiskin jumped up and offered to escort me to the bus stop. Because it was late, I had missed the regular bus that stops directly outside their apartment so we exited out

the side door and cut through the back yard to reach the less convenient Tachana. As we walked across the yard, I noticed several Ethiopian children playing on the grass. Impulsively I approached one little boy and asked in Hebrew "Do you know Ophira?" "Yes, he answered pointing to the next building. "She lives here." I stopped in my tracks and stared at him with awe, until I realized the stupidity of my assumptions. Ofira, one of the most popular Israeli and Ethiopian Hebrew names could be anyone. Laughing at myself, I asked him, "This Ophira, is she perchance from Afula?" "Yes," he answered. "From Givat Hamorah."

Numbly, I followed the little boy up the stairs of the Fiskin's next door building with Sylvia trailing behind me. The look of surprise and ecstasy on Ophira's face when she saw me was enough to bring tears to my eyes. As we hugged and cried, she whispered in Hebrew, "Shoshana, I never thought I'd see you again—its truly a miracle."

Sylvia, though unsure about what exactly had occurred also had tears in her eyes as she stood by the door witnessing this emotional reunion. I introduced her to Ofira and explained how we were acquainted. I then gently explained to Ofira that I had to leave to catch the last bus back to Yerushalayim, but I took down her address and phone number and promised to return as quickly as possible. Ophira, too, insisted on escorting me to the bus stop; I walked toward the Tachana with Sylvia hanging onto my right arm and Ofira's hand in my left one. As I listened to Sylvia and Ofira jabbering away in Hebrew, each in their native accents, sharing experiences and trading stories as if they were old friends, I became immersed in my thoughts. I stood there between the 65 year old Russian woman and the 13 year old Ethiopian girl and I could not help thinking: "This is Kibbutz Galuyot, the gathering of Jews from all corners of the world to their national homeland. This is what Israel is all about."

As the bus pulled into the Tachana and we prepared to part, they turned to me and said in unison, "Shalom." "Not Shalom." I answered. "Lehitraot-Il be back."

In the beginning it was a graduation party like any other. Greeted effusively by those who remembered me and introduced to those I had never met, I was gradually forgotten in the gaiety of the evening. As I watched my former classmates interacting, laughing, eating and trading favorite memories, I slowly became aware of an underlying tension that was not present at any party I had ever attended. After all, a party generally signifies a cause for celebration. As the night wore on, I became increasingly puzzled by the unspoken current that I had accurately identified as a strange combination of sadness, pride

and an intense, unexplainable fear. Slowly the laughter ceased, and the faces of the seventeen and eighteen year olds became sadder as Elinor began to sob. "So", one girl broke the silence, "you are going to the army tomorrow". She turned slowly before answering, and then, seeing the faces of her classmates, removed her coat and sat back down. What followed was a discussion that lasted into the early hours of the morning, creating bonds stronger than any I had ever seen, and exploring ideas that I had never confronted. Regardless of the fact that I was an outsider, that conversation changed my life.

A year before this incident, upon entering Stern as an early admission freshman, I was convinced that I had embarked on one of the most important years of my life. This was the year I was to enter the "adult world". After all, now I was to be independent, free to make decisions, contemplate life, explore ideological issues and change the world. It was at that moment, sitting in the two bedroom apartment of a girl who had grown up so differently than I, that I realized how little I had contemplated life, how insignificantly I had changed the world. Right there, sitting in Rechovot among the eighteen year old graduates of Tachikmoni, where children were preparing to sling a gun over their shoulders to defend their sacred borders, was the true potential to change the world.

Stranger in a Strange Land

by Yael Zeiger

I remember the day I realized how vastly different American and Israeli societies are. Having returned to Rechovot eight years after my father took his first sabbatical, I was invited to a graduation party of my former fourth grade classmates. It was the summer of 1987. Although I was eagerly anticipating a year of intensive Jewish learning, I must admit to a somewhat childish resentment at having to go to Israel three months before school started. After all, I could have been spending the summer in Camp Hillel with my friends. Instead, I found myself in the unbearable Rechovot heat, helping my parents unpack and trying to renew fourth grade friendships. I fully expected communication gaps, due to the distinctly different cultures that had formulated our respective attitudes in the last eight years. Apprehensively, I arrived at the graduation party. What I encountered, allowed me to better comprehend the fundamental differences that distinguish Israelis from Americans. In retrospect, I recognize that that night, my third evening in Israel after eight years of adapting myself to American values and culture, was a crucial turning point in my life. I began to understand why people endure economic hardships, prevalent physical danger and the psychological trauma of eighteen year olds sacrificing their lives for their country.

Over a year later, sitting in my dorm room at Stern, in October 1988, I had recourse to again think about this conversation. At this point, I was slowly receding from the lofty "spiritual heights" I had attained in Israel, and my life was evolving into a normal everyday existence at Stern. School, family and volunteer activities had taken over and I was quite satisfied that I could significantly wile away my time in America before returning to Israel. Although attempts to speak Hebrew in the room failed miserably, Israel was not forgotten. Never did a day go by, when I did not scan the New York Times for news. Nothing had prepared me, however, for what I saw the morning of October 20, 1988. The headlines seemed to jump off the page and sear through my head with the words, "Seven Israeli Soldiers Killed And Eight Wounded in Lebanon". Frantically, I skimmed the article, searching for names and details as I simultaneously calculated my former classmates whereabouts. In the midst of my turmoil, a thought struck me. It was a line quoted from Tirza Porat's mother soon after Tirza had been killed on a hike in the Shomron. Upon being subjected to one reporter's insensitive query regarding her initial reactions to Tirza's death, Mrs. Porat replied, "My first reaction as a mother was, Oh God, let

it not be Tirza," my second, as an Israeli, was, let it not be the other kids". It struck me then, that it did not matter which seven Israelis had been killed. Everyone in some way was affected by these deaths. Whether it was a cousin, a neighbor, or an immediate family member, it was a brutal reminder to everyone of the precarious position of life in Israel. These deaths must result in a nationwide mourning. Determined to share my grief, as no doubt all Israelis were doing, I slowly walked to school

Cont. to p.10 col. 5

by Nechama Goldman

The soldier's eyes are haunted by ghosts of friends long dead. Twisted pieces of metal line the road to Jerusalem. In the forest a bird's chirp echoes sounds of gun shots and screams for help. A child goes for a walk. "Look out for unmarked objects," the mother shouts out the window because "don't talk to stranger and be careful crossing the street" are irrelevant in a country where bombs are planted in baby carriages and terrorist daily vow revenge.

News is broadcast every hour—a sudden hush on the noisy bus, "this is Kol Yisrael, the Voice of Israel," tension under the surface as everyone strains to listen to what new obstacles confront a country the size of New Jersey. Boys and girls in uniform with huge rifles smoke cigarettes and laugh, eyes watchful and faces wary.

Sabras, tired of war, journey to America. Where else can you find "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness" as rights entitled by the Constitution. Lured by shiny cars and pavements of gold, pizza shops called Jerusalem II spring up. A year becomes a lifetime enforced by the wish to escape the pain of Jewish History.

You can't escape a heritage that has survived untold persecutions, holocausts of six million and vicious hatred from all corners of the world. But who can blame, these children of today, in a land thousands of years old, for trying to lay down a load so heavy to carry that even the walls of Jerusalem crumbled under the strain?

Sepharad '92 Commemorates 500 Years Since Spanish Expulsion

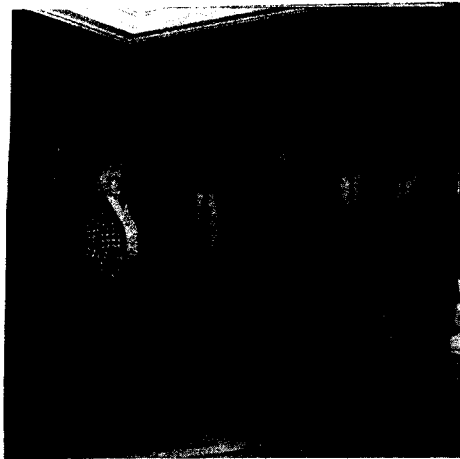
by Yonina Gold

Elie Wiesel met with King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sofia of Spain on April 25, in Madrid, to discuss plans for the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. Wiesel was acting in his capacity as honorary chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Sepharad '92. Sepharad '92 is a branch of the World Sephardi Federation and it was formed to commemorate and celebrate Spanish Jewry both before and after the expulsion.

In 1492 the world watched while Columbus sailed off and founded America. Ironically, or perhaps not, a decree was issued that year ordering the Jewish community to leave Spain. Jews had lived in Spain since the 3rd Century C.E. Until 711 C.E. the Jews had a difficult time practicing their religion in Spain. They vacillated between conversion and exile with only brief respite periods that allowed them to practice Judaism. This was mostly due to the growth of power within the Catholic Church which was intent on converting everyone within their reign of influence to their religion. Jews welcomed the Moslem conquest in 711. The Moslems considered the Jews to be Dhimmies, or people of the book, and because of their monotheistic beliefs Jews were afforded extra protection under Islamic law. The Umayyad rule which began in 755 established Muslim Spain as a refuge for Jews from other countries. It was during this era that Jewish scholarship and culture flourished. Jews were well represented in the medical, agricultural and commercial fields. A Gaonic academy in Lucena, one of the first schools of the Talmud, which was headed by the Rif and Rimigash, existed until the 12th century.

Cordoba became the center of both Arab and Jewish culture and many Jews attained high positions in the ruler's courts. Hasdai Ibn Shaprut, for example, was the chief of customs and trade in addition to being a diplomat. The Jewish upper class was distinguished by several features: the desire and attainment of political power, the harmony between religion and secular culture, the study of Gemara along with poetry, grammar, and philosophy, as well as a proficiency in Arabic and Hebrew. Shmuel HaNagid represented the fulfillment of these ideals. He was an eminent poet and halakhist, as well as a vizier and army commander.

In Christian Spain, during the 11th and 12th centuries, Jewish communities were securely established. Jews became scientists, translators, writers, poets, mathematicians, and physicians. The period between 1050 and 1150 became known as the "Golden Age of Spanish Jewry." It produced one of the most important figures in Judaic history, Maimonides, whose commentaries are today the basis for Jewish philosophic



MADRID, SPAIN, APRIL 23—His Royal Majesty, King Juan Carlos of Spain (far left) and Queen Sofia (third from right), met with leaders of the International Jewish Committee for Sepharad '92, including Elie Wiesel (third from left), to discuss plans for the 1992 commemoration of the quinquennial of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492.

thought. Among the other notables from this period were the philosopher and poet Salomon ibn Gabirol and Yehudah HaLevi, whose poetry speaks passionately about the return to Jerusalem. Jews shared the same advantages as Christians. In Barcelona, Jews were important landowners. The fall of the Jews in Christian Spain began early in the 13th century, when the kingdom of Aragon began a campaign to convert Jews. Antisemitism began to run rampant in the form of blood libels and violent anti-Jewish sermons and riots. Massacres took place in Valencia and the Balaric Islands. Many Jews converted as a result. On Jan 12, 1412, anti-Jewish regulations in Castile demanded separate quarters. Jews could no longer hold public office and had to grow their hair and beards. Jewish doctors couldn't treat Christians, and Jews could not lend money with interest. In 1415 Ferdinand I ordered all copies of Gemara to be submitted so that all anti-Christian passages could be censored. In 1476 Ferdinand and Isabella invited the Inquisition to Spain. On March 31, 1492, Jews were officially expelled from Spain. The Edict of Expulsion demanded that the country's 400,000 Jews convert to Christianity or leave. Many Jews ostensibly converted to Christianity while secretly continuing to practice Judaism. However, these "New Christians" were labeled as Marranos, pigs, and if discovered by the Inquisition to be practicing Judaism they were often condemned to death by public burning.

The exiles settled primarily in countries on both sides of the Mediterranean Sea: in the Ottoman Empire which welcomed them with opened arms, in North Africa, in the Balkans, and in the Middle East, including Israel. Others found new homes in Portugal, in the Low Countries, Italy and Brazil. Eventually Marranos and

Sephardim also made their way to America.

Five centuries later, a committee has been formed to remember both the glorious age and the subsequent persecution that led to the exile and scattering of Spanish Jewry. "It is a Jewish message we are trying to convey, not a Sephardic message," said Jerry Goodman, the Committee's Executive Director. The planned commemoration is also intended to touch non-Jewish communities as well. The tradition of tolerance the community of Spain maintained with Jews, Christians and Moslems living in harmony prior to the Inquisition is emphasized.

In 1992, the King of Spain has promised that on the 500th anniversary of the expulsion he will meet with the Jews in the Synagogue of Madrid in order to repeal the decree of expulsion saying, "If I am alive I'll join you."

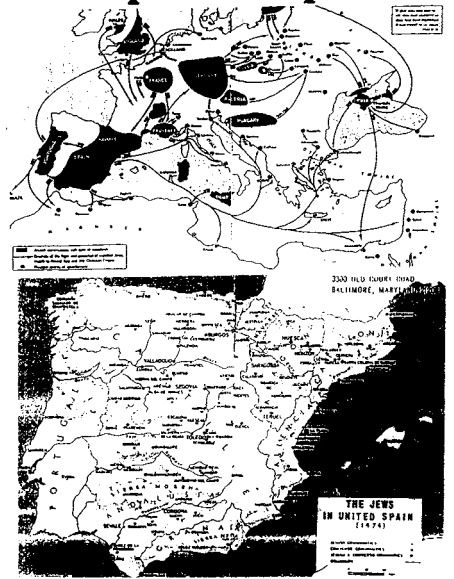
Projects being planned include a Sephardi exhibition at the Smithsonian Institute, restoration programs in Spain, educational symposia, films, publications and tours to countries with Sephardic origins. Symposia will be held in Barcelona during the Olympic Games in conjunction with the University of Tel-Aviv. Districts will be restored in Toledo and a monument will be erected in memory of Tolerance. A museum in Sevilla will host an exhibition about the Jewish contribution to the discovery of America. For example, the Crescas family from Majorca was responsible for maps Columbus used on his journeys and a Jewish astronomer, Abraham Zacuto, constructed astronomical tables that helped save Columbus' life. Zacuto also taught navigation to the Spanish-Portuguese. Furthermore, a museum will also be set up in a synagogue to commemorate Spanish-Christians who endangered their lives to help the Jews. One city went as far as closing its gates on the Inqui-

sion and was severely punished.

In 1492, the Jews had few places to go. The expulsion was as disastrous for Jewish life and civilization as if the entire Jewish community of the United States were expelled. "We went where we could go," said Mauricio Hatchwell Toledano, President of the International Jewish Committee for Sepharad '92 "Portugal, Morocco and Northern Europe."

Toledano stressed that though a commemoration is being planned, "we are forgiving

no one - we are not entitled to forgive" those who murdered, robbed and torment countless Jews. They suffered a Holocaust where two thirds of the population was decimated between 1490-1492. Five centuries later, the Jewish community is working towards the rebuilding of the tolerance that once bound together the three great faiths of the world and are celebrating the triumphant re-emergence of the Sephardi community despite tremendous odds.



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Earth Day: A Halachic Perspective

by Aliza Levin and Mali Adler

Earth Day 1990, held on April 22, represented a reawakening of American consciousness to environmental concerns. Ecological issues have once again become popular. Problems such as acid rain, the greenhouse effect, ozone depletion, deforestation, pending species extinction, and air and water pollution have spurred the organization of another Earth Day, twenty years after the first. In celebration of Earth Day, 200 million people in 140 nations cleaned up trash around the world. A concert was held for 750,000 in Central Park, recycling drives went on around neighborhood and world wide festivals and street fairs took place.

Earth Day was not intended as merely a day of lip service to our planet; its purpose was rather to inspire the public to make these concerns a part of their daily lives. In this context, the halachic Jew may wonder what principles govern his relationship to the environment.

The Torah injunction that comes to mind regarding this issue is (Deut. 20:19): "When you besiege a city for many days to wage war against it to capture it, do not destroy its trees by swinging an axe against them, for you shall eat from them..." This commandment does not

only apply in times of war. We can assume that this is a case of the Torah speaking of the most common occurrence, and wartime is the most common context for destructive acts. It is clear a value is given to nature and a certain respect is mandated by man for the land he lives in.

The Talmudic sources stipulate that a wild tree is to be cut down before a fruit tree, and a tree producing even one kav of fruit is protected by this law (B.K. 91b). R. Chanina posited that the death of his son was caused by the violation of this prohibition after he cut down a fig tree before it's time. (ibid). The issuer of bal tashchit is implicitly extended beyond trees to include any form of wanton destruction; for example, the above Talmudic passage admonishes the mourner not to tear his clothing too many times. Further, in a discussion about filial obedience, a father tears up a purse in an effort to anger his son. The Gemara clarifies that he did so specifically on the seam so as not to transgress the injunction of bal tashchit (Kidd. 32a).

Rambam includes bal tashchit in his Sefer HaMitzvot (negative commandment #57), and in the Mishna Torah (Hil. Melachim 6:10) he sums up the



Talmudic sources and extends the prohibition to indirect forms of destruction as well (such as diverting the water supply from the trees).

Sifrei, Semak, Ramban, and Sefer HaChinuch also discuss the prohibition against cutting down trees. The latter states that "it is certainly permitted to cut them down if any useful benefit will be found in the matter," and indicates that the reason for the injunction is to curb man's destructive nature. Man should not feel that his dominion over the foliage allows him to abuse it. It is clear however, that bal tashchit does not apply when the "destructive" act is done for constructive human use. This point is illustrated by an incident related in Shabbat 129a, where

Rabbah was admonished by Abbaye for breaking up a footstool to burn it and warm himself. Rabbah replied, "bal tashchit, in respect of my own body, is more important to me," meaning human needs supercede the issue of bal tashchit.

The delicate balance between human needs and global concerns may be seen in Rav Soloveichik's discussion of the Adam of the first creation narrative, in The Lonely Man of Faith. Adam I is commanded to "fill the earth and subdue it." His primary occupation is to gain knowledge of the cosmos and with his increasing mastery of the environment, he acquires greater dignity. With this dignity comes responsibility. The acceptance of this responsibility leads

to mastery.

Dr. Norman Lamm reinforces the notion that the commandment in Genesis to "subdue the earth" give man full flexibility to wreak havoc on his environment. He asserts that it is just the opposite, "man is responsible to God for nature and its bounty." He is a caretaker of his surroundings. This idea is expressed through many mitzvot, such as those prohibiting the cross-breeding of plants and animals, shmitta, and even Shabbat, which Dr. Lamm posits "point[s] primarily to the relationships between man, world and God."

Jonathan I. Helfand, in his article that deals with ecology and Judaism, believes that ecological concerns are expressed through the principles of yishuv ha-aretz and yishuv ha-olam. Man is required to use and protect his environment for the betterment of society. Bal tashchit prohibits man from any type of destruction, direct or indirect, that may potentially benefit humans.

Clearly, there is a religious placement of man in his environment as master, beneficiary, and protector. The Torah would support general current ecological concerns, like those manifested on Earth Day.

20,000 Attend Siyum HaShas

by Ricki Lieber

Madison Square Garden witnessed a strange sight on April 26. The usual sports fans were replaced by a sea of Orthodox Jews, the majority wearing black hats and coats, as 20,000 participated in the Siyum HaShas. On Rosh Chodesh Iyar, the seven year cycle of Daf Yomi was completed for the ninth time in history. The participation in the siyum had quadrupled in size since the last completion, in 1982. This significant increase is a reflection of the growth of traditional Orthodoxy in America and the more serious emphasis that has been given to learning on a daily basis.

Daf Yomi is a system in which Jews all over the world learn a page of Gemara each day for seven and a half years. It was begun in 1923 by HaRav Meir Schapiro of Lublin. After the completion of every cycle, a celebration, called a siyum marks the momentous occasion. Significantly, this particular year, a group of approximately four thousand people were in Poland on the "March of the Living." This group celebrated the Siyum HaShas in Yeshivat Chachmei Lublin where the idea of Daf Yomi originated.

The program at the Garden began with Mincha. A single voice boomed over the loud-

speakers and twenty-thousand voices answered as one. Sarita Rosenhaus, a sophomore in SCW, claimed, "It was an unforgettable experience, twenty-thousand people, all davening Mincha together."

Following Mincha, a number of prestigious Talmidei Chachamim spoke. Many of the speeches were in Yiddish. Those who did not understand could purchase headphones to hear the English translation. Rabbi Elya Svei of the Philadelphia Yeshiva spoke of the significance Talmud study plays in a Jew's life, "When you pray, you talk to God. When you study Talmud, God talks to you."

Many may recall the parade of elephants, camels, llamas, and horses that marched down 34 St. in the middle of the night on March 27. Although the circus was in town, it was dismantled for one night to accommodate the Siyum HaShas. Kosher snacks were sold at concession stands. At the celebration, the final words of Niddah were read, "anyone who studies Jewish law every day is guaranteed a place in the World to Come." the text concludes. Before the evening ended, the first book of the Talmud, Brachot was pulled out and the cycle of Daf Yomi was started over.

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SCW Holds Second Blood Drive

by Mindy Spear

On Monday April 23, at 10:30 a.m. the doors to Koch Auditorium opened for the second SCW blood drive. The blood drive was organized by Stern College student Sharon Fischer, in conjunction with the Greater New York Blood Program, a division of the Red Cross. Floor captains volunteered to approach every resident of Brookdale Hall and posters were hung on every floor of the dormitory and school building.

Despite the efforts of SCW students to publicize the drive, only sixty-seven students donated blood. Seven students were turned away. This was in contrast to the 100 donors who

participated in the December 25 blood drive. The difference in numbers was felt to be due to the lack of publicity resulting from Passover vacation. The blood drive took place the Monday after Passover just as students were beginning to return from their spring break.

Sharon Fischer recalled, "The head nurse was very impressed with the orderly conduct of the girls. She said that they were patient and friendly in dealing with the techniques and the nurses." Fischer also expressed a hope that next year "more people would try to find time in their day to come and participate in this important act of kindness."

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Sephardim Sum Up Successful Year

by Susan Behn

The Yeshiva University Sephardic Club held their last event of the year on April 30, Yom Ha-atzmaut (Israel Independence Day). The event entitled, "Flash Back" featured an address by Rabbi Mitchell Serels, Director of the Safra Institute of Sephardic Studies, a Yom Haatzmaut program, an award ceremony, slide presentation and an election of next year's presidents.

Rabbi Serels gave a short speech relating Yom Haatzmaut to Sephardic Jewry. He then thanked the members of the club for a wonderful year and complimented them on their valuable contribution to YU life. In honor of Yom Ha-atzmaut the members participated in an Israeli trivia contest which was accompanied by Israeli food provided by SCW Food Services.

The award ceremony began with presentations to those who dedicated time and effort to the club even though they were not members of the board. "It's very important to recognize those who devoted themselves to the club by organizing creative

programs and working out the very important details," commented Debby Aharon, this year's SCW, Sephardic Club president. The members of both the SCW and YC board then received awards for their services. "This year's board was tremendous," added Miss Aharon.

The event then ended with a slide show featuring pictures of all the club's events this year. According to Miss Aharon, "The purpose of the end of the year event was not simply to end with a bang but to reaffirm feelings of unity among YU Sephardim."

Before everyone left for the evening, they had the opportunity to cast their ballots for next year's presidents. The final results were tallied and announced the next day. Neeli Souli was elected as the SCW president and Avram Benhamu as the YC president.

Aviva Arzouan, this year's vice president, expressed nostalgia over the past year and remarked, "We anticipate an exciting and successful upcoming year."

Cont. from p.7 col 5

with a heavy heart. I knew that in Israel there was an unspoken support system, expressed in an understanding glance between strangers at a bus stop, a feeling of shared responsibility, or a moment of silence on the evening news. Throughout the day, I searched the faces of the students in my class, hoping for a glimpse of understanding, a commiserate word, a sympathetic mention. I, too, wanted to mention it to the students sitting next to me. I wanted to shout it to the rooftops but I could not. For while I had no doubt that other individuals in America were mourning this loss of seven Jewish lives, I felt alone in my sadness. I had no community to hold my hand, no country on whose shoulder I could cry.

The pain of being an outsider became my struggle throughout the past few years that I have spent in America. For living in Israel is not being a member of a shul or joining a Jewish youth group or club. It is not necessarily even liking your neighbor. Living in Israel is belonging. It is belonging to a country of heroes, a country whose children are raised valuing their lives in a way that no American can ever understand. It is a country where one man's loss is understood from one end of the country to the other. Each loss reflects a prevailing grief felt by a young nation born out of destruction and despair. This is a collective loss that I will be excluded from until the day that I dedicate my life to serve my country. On the day I cast my lot with my Jewish brethren, I can share in their pain and their triumph. Only then will I feel the pride of belonging.

Cont. from p.6 col 3

George Segal's sculpture *Holocaust* stands in the Jewish Museum. It is a plaster sculpture with barbed wire and a life size inmate holding onto it. Behind the wire is a mound of lifesize plaster bodies, of men, women and children. I walk behind the barbed wire and am standing amid sculpted bodies. Closing my eyes, a recurring dream I have comes to my mind. I see a little girl holding tightly to her father's hand. The stars shine in the black night but it is not a friendly darkness. Men in boots are yelling, cold metal and guns are clicking, confusion sets in as helpless Jews in nightgowns pack into trains. I open my eyes and feel trapped in a camp, behind Segal's barbed wire.

But these moments of empathy are fleeting. They are nothing next to Auschwitz. I can't hope to feel hell in America. And so I want to go to the sacrificial ground-Auschwitz. I want to cry and scream and yell at the injustice. I will turn numb and nauseous with the impact of what happened there but mostly I will store it all inside; the pain, the meaning, the anguish. It will become part of me, coursing through my bloodstream so that this is what my children shall be nursed on, even from infancy, that they too will never forget the sacrifice and pain of being a Jew.

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Student Leaders Bid Farewell

by Liz Botterman

The annual end of the year award and dessert reception was held on May 7 at 7:30 in Koch Auditorium. The night was jointly sponsored by the Stern College Student Councils, SCWSC, TAC and SSSB. The purpose of the evening was to single out and commend those women who had given their time and energy to the many different activities and causes at Stern.

Students who entered Koch discovered that the auditorium had been transformed into a beautiful and elegant hall. Red, yellow, blue and green helium balloons could be seen hovering above each table. A lavish dessert buffet was set up featuring apple pie, cheesecake, fruit, chocolate mousse and make your own sundaes. Each student received a water bottle with the SCW emblem on it as

a token.

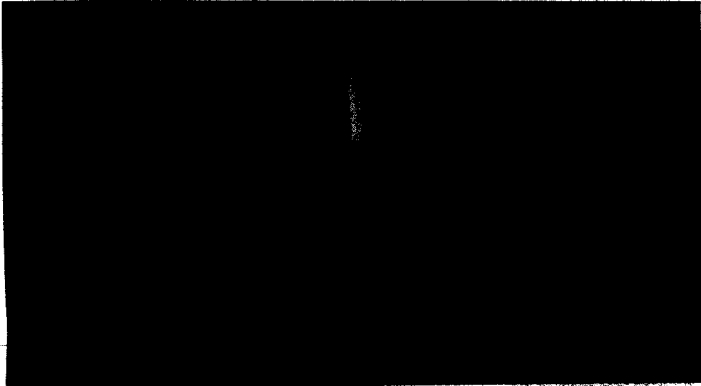
Cindy Schlanger, President of Student Council opened the evening by welcoming everyone to the reception. Dean Orlian announced this year's inductees to the Aishel Honor Society: Heather Rush, Deena Freidman, Sarah Weiss and Claudine Sokol. Orlian commented that recipients of this award were women who combined an excellent academic record along with many important contributions to the college.

Dina Friedman, President of the Sy Syms Business School and Chayale Weissman, President of TAC, thanked their respective boards for their help this past year. They also wished their new boards much success in the future. Sharona Cunin, Weissman's roommate commented that the year was filled with fun, excitement and a lot

of boxes. "We lived with the remains of TAC events surrounding us in the form of papers, tzedakah boxes and even dates from Tu B'shvat which we found while Pesach cleaning."

Schlanger presented her executive board members with plaques of appreciation. In return, Chayale Gottesman, Chani Ruttner, Shira Friedman and Heather Rush presented Schlanger with sentimental gifts of thanks. Schlanger added that "even though being Student Council President has it's problems, I would do it again." She hopes that next year will promote more student activity and interest in the school.

Schlanger concluded the evening by passing the gavel to the newly elected president, Lisa Horowitz.



Zeida Braun, Director of Student Services with Executive Board Presidents Cindy Schlanger, Dina Friedman and Chayale Weissman.

Women's Learning at Drisha

Cont. from p.5 col. 5

women as potential leaders in the education field. He feels that a major obstacle in this process is that these women are usually in college or already out of school before they take their learning seriously and so have not had the same opportunities as a man to acquire the background needed to contribute fully to the teaching profession. Trying to overcome this obstacle, in 1988 Silber set up a five week high school summer program. The young women accepted learn Torah intensively all day. The idea is to help these teenagers channel their abilities, recognize the great potential they possess and possibly guide them to think of becoming the teachers of tomorrow.

The first summer in existence, only four students and five faculty members participated. Last summer there were eighteen students, including the original four and this summer acceptances have been numbered at twenty. The high school students come from all over the United States to learn at Drisha. "These are the best kids," says Silber, "we're looking to the future and it's important to start from the ground up and identify

these kids early on."

There are two other programs which have begun recently at Drisha. One is a seminar for teachers. The main focus is not to tell teachers how to teach, but rather to educate them in how to use textual material. A second program is a co-ed one. This program deals with halachic issues, such as conceptions of God, the Haggadah, the High Holidays and women's issues. Rabbi Silber hopes to raise the consciousness of the men and women in the Jewish community via this program.

Dina Najman, a graduating senior at SCW, is planning to attend the fellowship program next year. She feels that a daily structured shiur is very important and is very excited that Rabbi Silber will be teaching next year. Dina feels that it is important to stress the necessity of this kind of learning for women. She wants to work on sharpening her textual and analytical skills in Gemara. She feels that most people "go straight to stage two, Gemara analysis, before having the foundation of looking at a text. The key to understanding a piece of Gemara is time, patience

and a lot of reviewing learned material."

Further, Najman feels that it is important today for people to recognize the synthesis of Tanach and Gemara. Her personal goals are to gain a deeper, more meaningful and intellectual understanding of what it is to be a practicing Jew. "All thinking individuals should be given the opportunity to learn and Drisha revolves around that statement." She also feels that women should not be stifled and restricted in actively gaining a closeness to their Judaism. "Drisha," she adds, "provides this doorway."

Rabbi Silber feels that it is important for the Jewish community to provide the opportunity for every one of its members to develop. He feels that there is a real need for Drisha's program. While there is still work to be done, Silber feels that the program gives a positive attitude to it's students, a key feature to have in academic and personal life. He concludes that "at Drisha the women want to be there and it's an exciting place to be."

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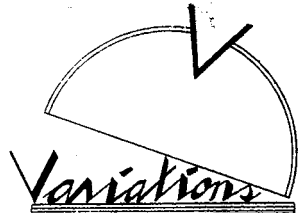
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Letters

CLAUDINE COMPLAINS

Cont. from p.2 col. 3

paid the graduate student that had been recommended to us. We studied each day for over two and a half weeks. The class prior to the midterm, the professor made an interesting announcement; "I expect only three of you to pass the midterm." We were a bit put off at first, but then became more determined than ever before. When we walked into that midterm we knew everything the professor taught us. The midterm was four questions and I had no idea how to answer any of them. Some girls just tore up the test and left crying. I suffered for forty minutes before I handed in my test. I immediately went down to Dean Orlian's office, where I found over ten students from the class crying there. I sat down and over the course of ten minutes, over 25 students came in expressing

their frustration. Dean Orlian was sympathetic and helpful, however, as a senior I could not afford to fail. So I withdrew from the class.

The reason I am writing this letter is because I feel cheated. I accept the idea that when I walk into a classroom, I have a certain responsibility. I have an unwritten contract with the professor; he is there to teach and I am there to learn. In this instance, my contract was violated. One does not simply know how to teach because one has a doctorate. This professor did not teach, he simply stated programs. I am angry not only for myself but the other twenty or more students who have the same frustration I have. Perhaps in the future this professor will change. I certainly hope so. Sincerely yours, Claudine J. Sokol

YU Students Hold Freedom Seder At Federal Penitentiary

by Deena Yellin

Yeshiva University students recently organized a symbolic Passover seder at the Federal Penitentiary in Marion, Illinois. The seder was held on behalf of U.S. convicted spy Jonathan Pollard. Pollard, a naval intelligence officer who is now serving his fifth year in solitary confinement, was sentenced to life imprisonment for passing classified information to Israel.

soned or suffering was read aloud at the seder. In addition, he thanked the students for demonstrating that he has not been forgotten by the Jewish Community.

The students played a substantial role in the event, reading various passages pertaining to freedom, making statements to the press about the Pollard case, and singing songs. They displayed signs which called Pol-

"Jonathan Pollard's harsh sentence is a direct result of his religion, not the crime," he said.

Two YU student leaders requested that Pollard be able to join them for the conclusion of the seder. Although their request was immediately denied by prison officials, several YU student leaders were permitted to go to the prison to discuss Pollard's treatment. Pollard is allowed outside only one hour



Rabbi Avi Weiss leads students in Seder for Jonathan Pollard.

The "Freedom Seder", comprised of 15 YU students and a group of seniors from Block Yeshiva High School in St. Louis, was led by Rabbi Avi Weiss, an SCW Judaic Studies instructor and a renowned activist. The purpose of the seder, according to Weiss, who is Pollard's chaplain, was to raise a voice of moral conscience on Pollard's behalf. SCW junior Angelica Fernandez commented, "I just hope that our message will be heard by those who are in a position to do something about this injustice."

Conducted outside the prison gate, and observed by a media crew and several prison officials, the seder included traditional Passover rituals and passages which related to Pollard. During kiddush hope was expressed for Pollard's freedom. The four questions referred to the injustice of the Pollard case. A statement from Pollard encouraging the students to remember Jews everywhere who are impris-

oned or suffering was read aloud at the seder. In addition, he thanked the students for demonstrating that he has not been forgotten by the Jewish Community.

Throughout the seder it was emphasized that, while Pollard should be punished for the crime he committed, the life sentence he received was not commensurate with his crime. The students pointed out that other spies who committed similar or more serious crimes than Pollard did not receive as harsh a sentence. In addition the need for an open trial was expressed since Pollard was forced to sign a plea bargain and never received a fair trial.

The point of the demonstration, which was sponsored by SCWSC, TAC, YCSC and SOY, was to bring the Pollard affair back into the news. According to Josef Bensimihen, a YU junior who organized the entire event and is Director of Canadian Affairs of Justice for the Pollards, the Pollard case is clearly one of anti-Semitism.

day, spending the rest of his day in solitary confinement. All incoming mail is censored, visits are observed and phone calls are monitored. However, officials tried to minimize Pollard's condition, by explaining that he has a color television, a shower and a cell which is bigger than some of the others.

Bensimihen was very pleased with the outcome of the seder, which was planned in a minimal amount of time. He felt that the activists at the seder made a "great impact" and Pollard's plight was publicized. The event was covered by many of the major midwest newspapers and news stations.

In the beginning of this semester, Ann Pollard, (Jon Pollard's wife) spoke at SCW. Many students signed petitions in support of the Freedom Seder. YU students have become increasingly involved in the Pollard affair, inviting many speakers on the topic to the campus.

\$20,500 Goes To Student Projects

by Elisheva Berezin

As of February 6, 1990, the President's Circle has committed \$20,500 to certain University student projects. The projects were selected by the Circle's Executive Committee in large part as a response to suggestions presented by student leaders when the Circle met in December, 1989.

The allotted funds will be used towards obtaining \$5,000 worth of computer equipment for the OBSERVER, as well as two laser printers, one for each the main and midtown campuses. The laser printers are to be used by the student organizations. They were purchased in response to student leaders' complaints that, presently, only limited access to high quality printing equipment is available. In light of the numerous flyers and publications, the various

organizations put out, the printing equipment is crucial in carrying out activities. The Circle also approved the funding of \$5,000 to be entrusted to the Dean of Students for the Gemilas Chesed Fund which disperses monies to students in need of food and clothing.

In accordance with SOY's recommendation, the Circle will be allotting \$2,500 for the purpose of rebinding and replacing many of the volumes of sefarim in the Beit Medrash. In addition, a subsidy has been approved to provide students at YC with a T'lilin check, at a lower cost than in previous years. Finally, the Circle will be absorbing this year's \$3,500 budget shortfall of Hamevaser.

The Executive Committee is currently preparing proposals for more significant long term projects.

The Observer would like to wish its readers good luck

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Valedictorians

Cont. from p. 1 col 5

Dinner, with the valedictorians of the Judaic Studies Divisions alternating every year. This year, the valedictorian of the Yeshiva Program, Gedalia Hochberg, along with Shira and Alan will address the graduating class.

Six notable personalities will be granted honorary degrees at the commencement exercises. Dr. Hillel Furstenberg, a YU alumnus, and currently a professor of mathematics at Hebrew University will receive a Doctor of Science Degree.

Hon. Madeleine M. Kunin, the Governor of Vermont and George Mandel-Mantello, a former diplomat who saved more than 30,000 Jews during World War II will receive Doctor of Humane Degrees. Another Yeshiva alumnus, Rabbi Gedalia Dov Schwartz, head of the rabbinical court of the Chicago Rabbinical Council, will be presented a Doctor of Divinity degree. A federal judge in Brooklyn, Jack B. Weinstein, will receive a Doctor of Laws degree.

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