

HAMEVASER

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NUMBER 3

Prager Views Jewish Identity Among Soviet Youth As Miracle

by IRA SCHNALL

On November 9th, Mr. Dennis Prager, who had spent four weeks, including the past *Kosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Succoth, and Simhat Torah*, in the Soviet Union, addressed students of Yeshiva College and Stern College on the topic of the condition of Jewry in the Soviet Union. In a personal interview before the address, Mr. Prager answered questions, making the following points, some of which were made in the speech to the students:



Mr. Dennis Prager

In answer to the question of what the state of religious observance is in the Soviet Union among Jews, Mr. Prager distinguished

three groups—the very old, the middle-aged, and the youth. The old people, who had grown up before the Communist Revolution, still try to maintain a level of observance, although often in the face of outright pogroms. The middle-aged group seems practically lost to Judaism. This is due, not to a lack of Jewish feeling or identity, but to a deeprooted fear, implanted in them during the Stalin era when no one was safe from the ruthless purges, and no man could be trusted. Because of this fear, they try to be what the Communist Party wants them to be—they dissuade their children from being religious, and in general try to assimilate. As a result of this, and also as a result of Communist education, the Jewish youth in Russia are totally ignorant of anything Jewish.

However, though they know nothing about Judaism, the Jewish youth of the Soviet Union identify "phenomenally" with the Jewish people. And there is no logical reason for this identification—it is a miracle, "and the miracle of the Six-Day War pales in comparison with that of Russia's Jewish youth's identification with the Jewish people." Young Jews who, by all accounts, should have assimilated—people with good positions in universities, with good jobs, earn-

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Initial SOY Meeting Forms Committees, Discusses Problems And New Projects

The first meeting of the Student Organization of Yeshiva for this year was held Thursday night, November 6. The first point discussed, following the announcement of various committees, was a request that a bulletin be published regarding ingredients used in Parker's food, so that information could be provided regarding the *berakhot* made on the various foods.

A point was raised regarding the Mashgiach at Tov M'od. It seems that the YU administration had been providing Tov M'od with a Mashgiach, but because of the "tight financial squeeze," the necessary money would no longer be available. The Council voted that a letter be sent to the administration asking them to clarify the problem involved.

Plans for the renovation of the old Pollack Library garage were presented to the Council by Mr. Zahavy of the University Space Committee. These include office space for student-run activities, student union facilities, and a new Bet Medrash accommodating 150 students. Plans to convert all of Riets Hall into dormitory space were also revealed.

The financial problem of the JSS Kollel held each summer at Camp Morasha was discussed. President Bick reported that Rab-

bi Besdin asked SOY to help alleviate the deficit of the program. After a rough estimate of SOY's budget, a motion was passed that money be allotted, with explicit stipulations that no precedent be

formed to suggest to all Roshei Hayeshiva that they include in their Haskafah Shiurim the topic of Kavod Bet Hamedrash, and to look into the possibility of appointing a Bait Medrash supervisor.



President Bick Chairs Meeting

Bob Miller

set, and that EMCSC also be asked to help SOY and JSSSC alleviate the Kollel's deficit.

Problems pertaining to the Batei Medrash, such as the condition of Seforim, cleanliness, and im-

proper conduct were brought up by the President. A committee will be formed to suggest to all Roshei Hayeshiva that they include in their Haskafah Shiurim the topic of Kavod Bet Hamedrash, and to look into the possibility of appointing a Bait Medrash supervisor.

Rabbi J. Grunblatt Speaks On Roots Of Student Unrest

by PHILIP SOLOMON

The second season of the JSS Hashkafah Lecture Series, designed both to discuss basic areas in Judaism and also to present the Jewish view on current problems, got under way on Thursday night, October 23 when Rabbi Joseph Grunblatt discussed "The Jewish View of Student Unrest."

Acknowledging the fact that young people today are in a state of cultural rebellion, Rabbi Grunblatt began by attempting to trace the causes for this general breakdown of trust in society—a trust so necessary for allegiance and commitment. He outlined two main reasons: 1) our involvement in Vietnam—which has led to a loss of both patriotism and respect for authority; and 2) the extensive degree of corruption which exists in the governing classes. These, he felt, were only the immediate manifestations of a more serious problem—a deeper need which was not being met. In an attempt to find and define this need, Rabbi Grunblatt turned his attention to the Jewish view of man and its expectations of him.

Judaism has always seen and accepted man in his totality—recognizing the *yetzer harah* as well as the *yetzer hatov*. Rabbi Grunblatt went on to say that he desired to view these two entities not as "inclinations" but rather as sources of energy which require

direction. The *yetzer harah* then becomes the bio-instinctual drive, similar to Freud's libidinal energy, and it is not in itself intrinsically bad. Indeed it can and does serve a productive and necessary functions if properly used. Also, since it is merely a source of energy, with no inherent qualities, it is convertible and can be directed to serve God. This idea of *kiddush hayetzer* may be precisely what is



Bob Miller

Rabbi Grunblatt

at the basis of many *mitzvot*. Conversely, if this energy is misused or treated in a perverted manner or is repressed, neuroses can develop.

(Continued on page 7)

Anthology Presentation to Dr. Belkin Marks Ten Years of Studies In Torah Judaism

by DONIEL KRAMER

Last Spring a double anniversary was celebrated at a luncheon here at Yeshiva. It marked the tenth year of the Studies in Torah Judaism—a Yeshiva University series of scholarly monographs for the layman, and the twenty-fifth year of Dr. Samuel Belkin's presidency of Yeshiva University.

On this occasion, Dr. Leon D. Stitskin, author, professor of Jewish Philosophy at the Bernard Revel Graduate School, and director of the Department of Special Publications which issues the series, presented the just-published *Studies in Torah Judaism Anthology* to Dr. Belkin, noting that, "the anthology has been dedicated to Dr. Samuel Belkin for his devoted efforts to intellectualize Judaism and moralize our technological skills and secular wisdom—which are the aims of the studies. It is most significant that the first monograph of the series, 'The Philosophy of Purpose,' was written by Dr. Belkin."

"In his study *The Philosophy of Purpose*, which constitutes the keynote of the entire series, Dr. Belkin points out that the dis-

tingent note in the Jewish intellectual discourse is its theological orientation. He writes: "For in Judaism if a philosophy of reason is to be spiritually meaningful even for the rational, it must always be

the objectivity of analysis and investigation are divine endowments by which the Torah becomes mine as a natural religious possession of my own. "In fact," says Dr. Belkin in his book *In His*



YUPR

accompanied by a philosophy of purpose. . . The 'purposeful' philosopher is concerned not with the origins and causes of creation, but with its meaning for man."

"The rational process and judgment in so far as they determine

Image, "only by properly understanding the Jewish concept of divine Kingship and human worth, can we fully understand many legal and spiritual institutions in Judaism."

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HAMEVASER

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The "Yeshiva Atmosphere"

The problem of the "Yeshiva atmosphere" is one which has certainly confronted every student at one time or another. What is it? Where is it? How do we achieve it? What are the symptoms of the problem and what are the causes? Most important, what are the solutions? Two articles in this issue discuss some aspects of it, but this is only a beginning, as was last year's JSS Evaluation. In future editions we shall advance our own proposals, but it must be a unified effort. We ask everyone, students, faculty, and administration to submit for publication their own opinions, criticisms, and possible solutions, since it is one of the most serious problems facing Yeshiva today, and cannot be left unanswered. With the opening of the new Belfer building, our unique character may be at stake.

Sunday Finals

For years, HAMEVASER has criticized the practice of finals on Sunday as an obstacle to proper observance of *shabbat*, and as a possible transgression of *lifnei iver*. This term, as a result of meetings between the Finals Committee and representatives of student organizations and publications, some alleviation of the situation has been achieved. Though some compromise was necessary to appease every position, the result was a change from the full Sunday schedules of the past to a schedule of Bible and some minor college finals. While being grateful for present progress, we hope that the administration will, in the future, adopt a permanent policy of free Sundays during final week.

From the Editor's Desk

A Question of Time

by MICHAEL SHMIDMAN

Recently, within the context of an informal discussion, a point was raised concerning the feasibility of a compulsory five-year program at YU. The idea, at first thought, immediately repels. Certainly four years—in terms of pure physical and mental strain—are enough for all, and too much for many. There are, of course, a number of students, particularly in JSS where the greatest transition takes place, who utilize the five-year program to considerable benefit. In general, however, few would see an extra year as a practical solution to the morass of difficulties engendered by the YU experience.

What are these difficulties? Without meaning to be too simplistic, I do believe that most of the more complex problems ultimately may be traced to one basic source—that is, time, or rather the lack of it.

Proper college work entails extensive research and thought, more than is available to the average student on a double program. Learning requires even more time, both for itself and to acquire the "feeling" for learning that can come only by way of almost total immersion in Torah. Instead, the serious student faces interminable class schedules and subsequent backlogs of work which combine to produce rushed papers, inevitable cramming, tension, exhaustion, and concurrently, a general way of and perspective on life not in strict accordance with a proper Torah *derech*. Such a *derech*—resulting from proper synthesis—can only be developed through serious study and reflection, both of which require the time and energy that we so lamentably lack.

In the light of the preceding, the five-year program does not—at second thought and at least theoretically—seem so repulsive a solution after all. But as a solution, it could only be effective on a compulsory basis. As it presently stands—an optional alternative—only few venture to remain the extra year. These few are invariably influenced by the climate and standards set by the majority, while being themselves too feeble a mass to exert much influence of their own.

We arrive, therefore, at the familiar impasse of relative merits. In other words, which outweighs the other in benefits—the possibilities of transforming YU through a compulsory five-year plan, or the practicalities that demand retention of a four-year system?

There is no easy, practical answer. Yet one theoretical, not so practical possibility does command interest. What if an experimental, separate Yeshiva College could somehow be established, run totally on a five-year basis? The result could conceivably be less rush, less pressure, more time for serious study and thought, and a drastic change in general atmosphere and attitude, for only those seriously intent on pursuing a double program would prefer five years to the competing four year school. The final result: a significant difference in the character of the two schools, and in the perspectives and actions of the individual students of each institution. Then could an attempt be launched to resolve the impasse, and evaluate the relative merits of the two programs.

I tend to believe that such an experiment (obviously far-fetched in practice, but certainly relevant in theory), would prove to favor the five-year school. Yet even if this were so, one possible objection will linger. That is, once the program is officially spread over five years, why not simply revert to the system—frequently utilized in Israel—of learning full time for two years, and then completing a three-year college program at a university? Again, the question is one of relative merit. Which is preferable—two separate, more intensive but shorter programs, covering a span of five years, or one long double program over the same span, presumably capable of accomplishing its purpose?

This, too, presents a veritable impasse. Perhaps two years of a total learning experience instill a "feel" for Torah that could never be grasped by the YU student even in five years. Or perhaps, the reverse holds true. Perhaps, too, one full year of learning (in Israel, possibly, with ample transference of credit) plus four years of YU, might be an even more formidable equation. Unfortunately however, the best solution is not easily discovered.

I assembled the preceding thoughts not to reach a definite conclusion (as may readily be seen), but rather to encourage further thought on very real, and increasingly disturbing questions. The present system obviously has its faults; the big question is: how can we alleviate them?

Jewish Studies

Currently, a number of proposals regarding changes in the Jewish studies requirements for RIETS students are being discussed in the University Senate. Having heard and analyzed these propositions, HAMEVASER would like to present its own proposal for the perusal of the senators and the rest of the student body, administrators, and faculty:

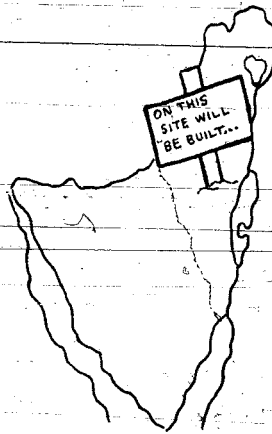
a) Jewish History—6 credits minimum—no change.

b) Bible—8 credits minimum—a student must take at least 4 terms of courses which study texts (i.e., similar to current Bible courses), while during his final 4 terms, the student has the option of continuing the text courses, taking courses which study Bible on a thematic plane; (which may be 2 or 3 credit courses), or taking an "Honors Bible" course which would consist of writing a paper, similar to courses in other fields. We also encourage the development of 3-credit courses in Bible designed for Jewish studies majors.

c) Hebrew—an exemption test should be given when a student enters the school. Those who pass the test must take a new course, Hebrew 5-6 (6 credits) covering areas of Hebrew literature which are generally not covered during one's High School education. Those who fail the exemption test, must take 8 credits of Hebrew—1 year of Hebrew grammar (4 credits) and one year of literature (4 credits).

This new plan would maintain the present system of Bible being required every term of college, as well as two years of Hebrew for many students and a year of Jewish History. On the other hand, it would reduce the credit requirement in Jewish studies to either 22 or 24, enabling students to more easily take optional courses such as Jewish philosophy, History, etc.

We feel this proposal incorporates the best qualities of those currently before the Senate, and yet does not dilute the current requirements, as those proposals do. We feel these requirements are necessary to instill a basic knowledge of Jewish studies, besides Talmud, in a RIETS student.



YU's "Presence" in Israel

Happy Chanukah

All B'nei Ha-Yeshiva are invited to the
37th ANNUAL

CHANUKAH CHAGIGAH

to be held (God willing) on Wednesday
evening, December 10th, at 7:30 P.M.
in Rubin Hall Cafeteria

Rabbi Dr. Samson R. Weiss will speak
on "The Torah Concept of Courage."

Entertainment and refreshments will
be provided.

Sponsored by the Religious Divisions

ADMISSION 50 cents

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

College And The Yeshiva Man



by JACK WOLFISH

(ED. NOTE: This article is the second of a series.)

In the previous discussion it was demonstrated that the forty-year desert experience of the Hebrew tribes represented a temporary suspension of the normal social, economic, and political life of the Jewish nation, designed to instill within them the reality of their personal relationship to God before the beginning of na-

goes changes of mind and personality which remain with him long after he has left the confines of the yeshiva and entered the "normal" world. His detachment has afforded him a view of the world from a distance, from the perspective of truth, in the light of Torah. He has in his view a higher reality free from false values—the false gods which others unwittingly and unknowingly come to worship. He thus enters the

a certain plane of intellectual perfection) the college student is expected to participate—to campaign for a political candidate, demonstrate for or against the war, work for civil rights and against social injustice, make his presence felt in the vital issues of the day—in short, to begin changing the world in his own as yet incomplete mental image. I do not wish at this point to judge on the merits or demerits of this outlook but only to demonstrate that this aspect of college education is clearly totally antithetical to the yeshiva concept.

Despite this incompatibility between the present day university and the traditional yeshiva, YU—students, faculty, administration—is nonetheless attempting to synthesize the two. The attempt is indeed valiant but to a large extent futile. The most obvious development has been the polarization of the student body in two major groups—those who are basically yeshiva students (in the traditional sense) obtaining a college education and those who are primarily college students (in the modern sense) taking Jewish studies in the morning. A more unfortunate result of this ill-fated combination has been the inevitable development of an indiscriminate YU value system in which Torah, secular studies, Vietnam protest, Broadway plays, the Mets, and everything else necessary for the "total college experience," are all given equal priority in their own right under the all encompassing rubric of synthesis. Any examination of YUPR releases will attest to the above statement.⁶

It is not within the scope of this article to propose a solution to the problem if indeed there exists one. It is rather my intent to clarify two serious misconceptions of some within our institution. Firstly, a yeshiva is not merely an institution of higher Jewish studies (as is our oldest and largest Conservative counterpart) but rather an optimum locality for the learning and observance of Torah and all the ramifications which that entails. Secondly, detachment does not necessarily imply indifference. It should be made clear that those who attend YU for the "yeshiva experience" have strong feelings towards civil rights, the Vietnam War, politics, and social problems, and their spectrum is as broad as any other. Nevertheless, while at Yeshiva they make a conscious effort to stay clear of "active college life" in order to maximize their personal development as *b'nei Torah*. Hence the charges of indifference made by our college activists, both students and teachers, reveal a total lack of understanding of the nature of a yeshiva. For those who are interested in neither Torah nor society while at YU, I do not attempt a justification.⁷

In conclusion, I wish to refer back to my original discussion of the desert experience of the tribes of Israel. It now becomes clear why almost no mention is made of the activities of the Jews during

the thirty-eight years, for those were years of total withdrawal during which they themselves had to become totally transfixed before making their presence felt in the world. But our analogy must be drawn to completion. For necessary as were those years, they were only temporary. After their conclusion there was a *lanit* to be conquered, normal life to be resumed, and a mission to be fulfilled. It is no different with the yeshiva man. After a clear delineation of his values and with a firm purpose and direction in mind, the yeshiva man can no longer remain in isolation, for the yeshiva is not a monastery where one spends his life in recluse. On the contrary, once he enters society as a rebbi, pulpit Rabbi, businessman, teacher, doctor, or other professional, "*tzar'ai tziibur*"—the needs of society—become a direct obligation to which he must fully respond. Through the firmness of his convictions and values, he must make a powerful and permanent imprint, to last long after the sound of those over eager to act and speak has faded away.

1. *Pirkei Avot* 6:6. They are as follows: Study, attentive listening, ordered speech (audible rehearsing), mental alertness, intuitive insight, awe (in the student's attitude towards his master), reverence (for God), humility, cheerfulness, attendance on scholars, close association with colleagues, discussion with students, sedateness, knowledge of Scriptures and Mishnah, moderation in business, moderation in worldly interests, moderation in pleasure, moderation in sleep, moderation in conversation, moderation in movement, patience, a good heart (unselfishness), intellectual honesty, uncomplaining acceptance of chastisement, knowing one's place, being content with one's lot, setting a limit to one's words, claiming no credit for oneself, being beloved, loving God, loving mankind, loving righteousness, loving equity, loving reproof, shunning honors, taking no pride in one's learning, not delighting in dictating decisions, bearing the yoke with one's colleague, judging him favorably, directing him to truth and peace, being composed in one's study, asking and answering, listening and adding to one's knowledge, learning in order to teach, learning in order to practise, making his teacher wiser, noting with precision what one has learnt, and reporting a thing in the name of the person who said it.

2. *Ibid.* 3:6.

3. *Ibid.* 3:9.

4. *Ibid.* 4:18.

5. GESHER, vol. 13 no. 1, p. 37 as cited by Rabbi Lamm.

6. YUPR technically only reflects YU policy. Indirectly however, it also sets policy through the students and faculty it attracts.

7. There are two areas which have not been touched in this discussion—that of undergraduate extracurricular activities which may be classified as educational (that is, as resulting in the improvement of the individual) and those causes of Jewish concern which rely solely on the yeshiva community. These will be discussed in my next article.



The Yeshiva Experience

tional life. This imposition of "unnatural" restraints or conditions intended to produce an appreciation of higher realities may be seen as underlying much of *Yahadut*. Thus, on the Sabbath, man interrupts his natural role as a creator and becomes more fully aware of the Divine Creator. On *Yom Kippur* man suspends his daily physical existence and becomes more cognizant of his spiritual being. There are numerous other such parallels which may be drawn, but in this article one particular institution will be dealt with in this context—the yeshiva.

The optimum conditions for *limud Torah* are exceedingly demanding and *chasal* were careful to emphasize this fact. In *Pirkei Avot* they set forth forty-eight prerequisites for the acquisition of Torah.¹ The *mishna* goes so far as to relieve the student of Torah from his obligations to society:

Whoever takes upon himself the yoke of Torah is relieved from the yoke of the government and the yoke of worldly affairs.²

Even man's innate inclination to rejoice in natural beauty, in God's own creations, must be confined when one pursues the study of Torah.

He who is walking by the way reviewing his learning and interrupts, his study to say: "How beautiful is that tree, how fair is that field," him the scripture regards as if he committed a grave sin.³

Such rigid requirements can be realized in only one way—*hevei goleh limkom Torah*⁴—one must go as a voluntary exile to a place of Torah. The Yeshiva is this place of exile.

There is actually no need to deduce from *chasal* that such is the nature of the yeshiva for anyone familiar with a traditional yeshiva in Europe, Israel, or the United States knows that this is the ideal and that such an artificial (or real, depending on where one stands) "Torah Atmosphere" can be created. What some fail to realize, however, is that the withdrawal from worldly affairs and sole devotion to Torah results in something even beyond great scholarship and a vast accumulation of knowledge. During his period of learning and isolation, the yeshiva student under-

goes with a crystallized value system true to *Yahadut*. These changes may not even be noticeable to an outsider, but they are real. They set the *ben yeshiva* apart and give him direction long after he has entered the mainstream of life.

In light of this conception of the yeshiva the question arises: Is the yeshiva-college fusion feasible? On the theoretical level the answer is yes. This is to say that if college were purely an institution of learning and intellectual pursuit, the insularity of the yeshiva could conceivably encompass the college.

Moreover, despite the admitted quantitative difference with regard to the amount of Torah learning, the yeshiva-college experience offers a distinct advantage over the traditional yeshiva. For in forming his attitudes towards the outside world, the traditional yeshiva student, totally isolated from the secular realm, is exceedingly vulnerable to mental distortion and hence erroneous evaluation of the everyday world. If this does occur and he then chooses to live the rest of his life in a ghetto-like seclusion the harm is minimal, but if he ventures to confront the world and its true reality there is no limit to the grave consequences which can ensue. The yeshiva-college combination on the contrary, offers a direct, careful, and total evaluation of almost every aspect of human experience and thought while within the confines of yeshiva. It allows one, in the words of Rav Kook, *l'hashkif al hachol metukh aspaklariah shel hodesh*—to view the secular from the vantage of the sacred.⁵ It must be emphasized that this type of synthesis can have its foundation only in the strict Torah environment which characterizes the traditional yeshiva.

The true situation, however, is far from the above ideal. The source of the problem lies in the fact that the nature of the present day college is directly contrary to that of the yeshiva. There is nothing which raises the ire of today's college students and professors more than the "ivory tower" conception of the university. Everywhere there are cries for involvement and action. Even before he has totally developed himself as an individual (unless it is assumed that the high school graduate has achieved

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Calendar For Soviet Jewry

by EDWARD LEVIN

"The Bible is more concerned with time than with space . . . To understand the teaching of the Bible, one must accept its premise that . . . time has a significance and sovereignty of its own."

—A. J. Heschel, *The Sabbath*

Time is not a uniform entity in Judaism. Shabbat has a *Kedusha* all its own; Yom Kippur has a special quality of atonement. For Soviet Jews, time has a very special significance, and an awesome sovereignty . . .

Pesach

" . . . holy days are appointed for rejoicing and for such pleasant gatherings as people generally need. They also promote the good feeling that men should have to each other in their social and political relations."

—Rambam, *Morch Neuvchim*, III, 43.

you're a Jew, and you don't accept the laws of the Russians, and you bake *matsot* secretly. "Next year in Jerusalem!" . . . or, perhaps, in Siberia.

April 1, 1969

In a totalitarian state, there are no protests, no opposition literature, no deviations from the norm. If you harbor any "subversive" thoughts, you bury them, deep in your soul, so deep that they can never emerge to point you out to the secret police. But, sometimes, you can't bury your thoughts, and you must cry out. No matter that your cries will send you to prison, no matter that the labor camps did not die with Stalin, no matter that your cries will bring the secret police to destroy you. For if you do not cry out, your anguish will destroy you. In ever increasing numbers, Soviet Jews are writing letters of protest to

teen years without work in my profession, nineteen years without an assured piece of bread, nineteen years of jeering and insults and the joyless childhood of my children.

"Don't prevent me from departing the borders of the Soviet Union, and don't drive me to madness by another refusal."

—Dora Isaakovna Zak.

My address is: Riga 39, Unias Street 17, Apt. 1, Latvian SSR."

June 5, 1967

The Israeli war was the *Rosh Hashanah* of Soviet Jewry. The Six-Day War started a new period for Jews under Communism; with the writing of new decrees, and with the stiffening of Jewish pride, and with the awareness of a final *Yom HaDin*. Before the war, the Soviet government had made some small concessions to Jews. All of these were abruptly halted with the outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East. The Communists combined their attacks on the Jewish "aggressor" state of Israel with internal repression of members of "the international Zionist conspiracy." *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, source book for anti-Semitism, has reappeared in modern form as *Beware: Zionism!* by Yuri Ivanov: The claim is made that "the ruling circles of Israel enter the International Jewish Concern with the rights of junior partners (this is one of the main conditions of their existence as ruling circles). The Zionist concern itself represents simultaneously one of the largest amalgamations of capital and a self-styled world 'Ministry' on the affairs of 'World Jewry,' as well as an international intelligence centre and a well-organized service for misinformation and propaganda. The main aim of the Concern's departments, all acting under a single management is profit and enrichment safeguarding, within the framework of the capitalist system, its power and parasitical prosperity." 75,000 copies of *Beware: Zionism!* were printed; it received many reviews, all favorable, in the Russian press and on Radio Moscow. The Zionist Jew (the two terms are used interchangeably)

"The critical moments of our lives will soon be before us. It is possible that we shall be parted and scattered. We must be prepared for that. But up to the last moment our aim must be to be human beings, to be shomrim. We must not sink in the mire of this degenerate, contaminated life; we must not defile our ideals. We must hold our flag high—the flag of our strivings and our belief in free man and in Jews free in their own homeland as brothers to all men. We shall not bow, and we shall not humiliate ourselves before our enemies."

This was spoken in the Warsaw Ghetto, by Mira Fuchrer, a leader of Hashomer Hatzair. It could well have been spoken by Drabkin or by Kochubiyevsky.

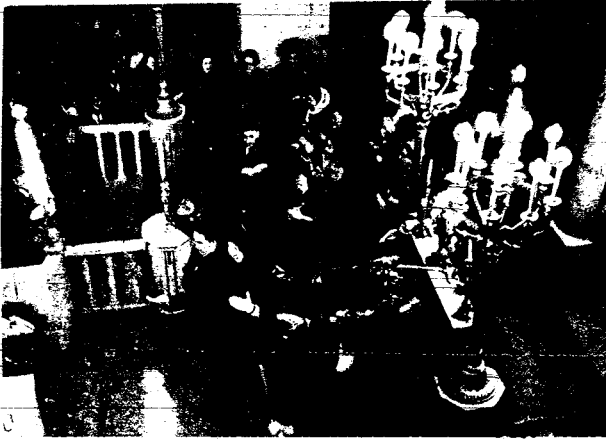
August 12, 1952

After the second World War, Stalin was seized by an intense Judophobia. Jews were the bourgeoisie, Jews were counter-revolutionaries, Jews were The Enemy. And The Enemy must be destroyed. 1948 to 1953 were the "Black Years" of Soviet Jewry. An intensive campaign was mounted against any manifestation of Jewish culture. Yiddish writers were imprisoned and tortured. A Russian Jew described to Gershon Jacobson the fate of some of the imprisoned intellectuals: "I remember that David Bergelson had been beaten to a pulp; he was lamed and his mouth was mutilated. He had been beaten several nights in succession in order to make him confess (to imaginary crimes).

"Peretz Markish could no longer walk and was reduced to crawling on all fours. On one occasion, I was unable to recognize him—he looked like a mangled piece of liver, swollen, bloody, his clothing hanging on him in tatters. Despite the frost of December 1949, he had no shoes. He was so mutilated, however, that he was unable to feel the cold of his cell. A young Jewish boy who shared the cell with him fed him and tended his wounds."

September, 1941

When the German army invaded Russia in 1941, it was accompanied by the *Einsatz-*



Simchat Torah in Moscow

Hightstown Magazine

You are a Russian Jew. You aren't religious—the atheistic propaganda has done its job well. Even if you are religious, you don't go to a synagogue—you want to keep your job, or you want to go to a university, and you're afraid of the informers in the synagogue. But you're a Jew, and you want to celebrate. It's your Festival of Freedom, when the Jews left their oppressors behind. It's the anniversary of *Bnei Yisrael* becoming *Am Yisrael*, the start of the Jewish nation. So you want to have some *matsah*, to bind yourself to the rest of *Klal Yisrael*, to "thank, praise, laud, glorify, and exalt, to honor, bless, extol, and adore Him who performed all these wonders for our fathers and for us." But you can't. You haven't left your oppressors. The Soviet government doesn't want any Jewish nation, nor any criminal members of "the Zionist conspiracy."

In 1957, Kharkov, with a Jewish population of 70,000 was denied *matsot*. Each year, more cities were denied their *lechem oni*. In 1962 and 1963, even Moscow was denied *matsot*. In July 1963, four Jews were tried for black market production and sale of *matsot*. Today, some *matsot* are produced. But all registration for *matsah* is done through the synagogues. And the synagogue is a place of "fear, naked fear" ("Visit to Russia," Michael Kaufman, *Jewish Life*). But you're religious. And you overcome your fear. And you go to the synagogue to get some *matsah*. And it's very poor *lechem oni*, indeed; "Said one Jew to me in Kiev: 'The authorities have placed nonobservant Jews and, in some cases non-Jews, in charge of many of the operations of the *matsot* baking, with no care being given to proper supervision of the baking. Not only are the *matsot* not Kosher for *Pesach*," he said, "they are just not kosher. Period.'" (ibid.) But

Communist authorities. The letter writers are invariably jailed.

On April 18, 1969, D. S. Drabkin, a Moscow Jew, sent a letter to Nikolai Podgorny, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet:

"On December 17, 1968, I applied to OVIR at the MVD, asking for a permit for myself and my family (wife and a twelve year-old daughter) to leave in order to join my family in Israel.

"On April 15, 1969, I received a postcard without any indication of the sender but containing a handwritten sentence stating 'please telephone OVIR 297-8571.' There was no signature. I telephoned that number on the same day about 10:30 a.m. I gave the name of my wife and myself. A woman who replied asked me to repeat my address and said that we had been refused exit permits. In reply to my expressions of disappointment that person added: *There are too many of you Jews. We shall not let you out. We shall finish you off here.*

"That person was most probably Catherine Pavlovna Archipova, an officer of the Ministry of the Interior of the USSR.

" . . . we, myself, my wife and my child, are kept by force in the USSR and threatened with destruction. In such circumstances, I can no longer consider myself a citizen of the USSR.

"I DECLARE HEREWITH THAT I CONSIDER MYSELF A CITIZEN OF THE JEWISH STATE OF ISRAEL.

"I hereby request to be deprived legally and as soon as possible of Soviet citizenship because it is no longer possible to continue remaining here."

April 24, 1969

To: L. I. Brezhnev, Podgorny, Kosygin . . . In March, 1969, I was again refused permission to emigrate to Israel.

"My cup of sorrow has overflowed. Nine-



is blamed for all evils, from liberalization in Czechoslovakia, to the adoption of Nazi tactics in Israel. The import is clear: All of the processes of state, the entire totalitarian bureaucracy, are being turned against the Jews, the scapegoats. One cannot ignore the comparison to be made with Nazi Germany. The possibility of physical repression cannot be eliminated: A letter sent to the head of the Lithuanian Communist Party, written by twenty-six Jewish intellectuals in Lithuania, claims that in 1958 there was a pogrom in Lithuania, and, since World War II ended, "at least twenty pogroms occurred in the Ukraine."

Since the war, Jewish nationalism, or, at the very least, Jewish consciousness, has greatly increased in the Soviet Union. Tens of thousands of Jewish youth dance in the streets on Simchat Torah; Jews openly defend Israel; more Jews apply for exit permits to Israel.

gruppen, mechanized units of the SS and Police, whose purpose was to kill Jews. The Jews of Kiev were massacred in late September, 1941, in the ravine of Babi Yar. No one knows how many Jews were killed at Babi Yar; estimates range as high as 150,000 Jews.

The Soviet government refuses to acknowledge the Jewish nature of the tragedy, and the Communists erected no memorial to the Jews who died there. In 1961 Yevgeny Yevtushenko, a non-Jew, wrote a poem, *Babi Yar*, declaring to the world that "No monument stands over Babi Yar," denouncing anti-Semitism as being anti-Communist and anti-Russian. As a result of protest, a (temporary) monument does stand over Babi Yar today—but it says only that "Here will be placed a monument to the Soviet people, victims of fascism in the year of the temporary occupa-

(Continued on page 5)

Too Much Of Aguda Thing: Schnur Replies

by CHAIM SCHNUR

Have you ever been accused in print of: 1) being a new Leftist; 2) considering the *Gedolim* with *chutzpah*; 3) writing loosely; 4) making a "monster" out of Halakhhah; 5) preferring to quote Kierkegaard as a source rather than a Beis Yosef; 6) glorifying Leroi Jones; and 7) being drunk with revolution—all this in two short paragraphs? And all in Yiddish? Well, I have. In an article that could have been named "Haig 'Em High" the Journal of the Aguda's *Yisroel, Dos Yiddishe Vort*, has seen fit to condemn a past issue of *Commentator* including an article by Alan Zaitchik and myself entitled (presumptuously by we know not whom), "Revolution: Social and Religious."

The pseudonymous author, Mr. Ahi Shimshon Raphael (will the real Rav Hirsch please stand up!), never quoted directly from the article. Instead, he preferred to set up a virtual straw-Jew which could easily have been knocked down—even by someone less aware of his role as an unrelenting guardian of the Torah than the righteous Mr. Raphael. (Strangely enough, he kept on reminding me of John Henry Newman in "Tracts for our Times.")

I believe it is profitable to examine the implication of his critique simply as a guideline to the present feeling of the articulate Orthodox right, and to see whether this movement measured up to my wariness of it. I expect the person or persons responsible for showing him the original subversive article to present him with this humble reply and analysis.

To begin with, I am not at all distressed that Mr. Raphael was shocked by our article: "My face very simply blushed for shame when I read the newspaper of Jewish youth who also learn Torah, (Thanks, Ahi, C.S.) packed full of so much hysterical revolutionary material." (Rough translation, C.S.) Indeed, it was our purpose in writing this article to stimulate readers to re-evaluate their own positions in view of our rather outspoken opinion. And for this reason also, perhaps, some of the language seems flamboyant and surprising. But at no time were we openly arrogant or insulting. On the contrary, in the opening paragraph we clearly delineated our roles as concerned observers of a tragic situation rather than authoritative decision-makers. We were interested in the phenomenology of a "frumkeit milieu" and our reaction to it. The article deals with both. Admittedly, the view was not flattering in many instances. Does this establish us as Jewish mandarins of the new Left? Where in our history does it say that one may not criticize the Orthodox status quo, especially among the Orthodox? Would the Aguda have accepted Rambam's critique of French Jews, or Amos' bitter denunciation of the "Parot Habashan"? Even in disagreement there is the recognition that one has the right to speak up. But even this is denied us by Mr. Raphael.

In a paragraph which reeks of nothingness—and a virtual denial of the ability of Orthodox youth to reason, Mr. Raphael asks bitterly what relation Yeshiva Bochrin have at all with words like "re-

volution." "Jewish boys should fist of all learn and listen to their Rebbeim . . . and then one first understands that one knows nothing." Is the notion of human frailty to be taken as an excuse for seclusion and indecisiveness? On the contrary: "B'mokom she'eyn sham ish, hishtadel l'hiros ish." We are aware of our youth and our lack of experience. But we also understand and accept the words of our Rebbeim, and then eventually we come to the disillusioning conclusion that the world, both Jewish and non-Jewish, couldn't care less about the halakhhic ideal. Should the questions of brushing teeth on Shabbat affect us so much more than questions of Hilchot Milchama, Tz'daka, and all their social implications? How do we relate *Lo Sachmod* to a capitalistic society? Can one kill in an unjustified war? What does the halakhhic mean when it talks about coercing people to give charity? These questions aren't contrived; neither are they scholastic. They are Halakhhah. *L'Maaseh* for thousands of Jews, especially the young. We ask for direction, and the Aguda tells us to shut up and learn but never let our learning bear practical fruition in certain sensitive areas. Is this the Aguda version of "Render unto Caesar, etc."? (Good grief, it comes from Luke!)

Mr. Raphael asserts that we told the *Gedolim* too much to do, and if they had listened they also would be New Leftists. This is not true. All we requested is that the aforementioned questions be just as halakhhically relevant as problems concerning *chometz* or *gittin*. All these issues affect us

as Jews, and if *Gedolim* cannot handle them with their usual breadth and mental perspicacity, then to whom can we turn? Are we to be condemned for insisting that social issues are usually halakhhic issues? Are we making a "monster" out of halakhhah by widening its sweep and returning it to its formerly widespread domain of concern? But nowhere did we hint which position the *Gedolim* should advocate. We merely asserted that since the subject matter is Jewish life in America, its criteria should be halakhhic.

In a Buckleyesque admission, Mr. Raphael complains that our writing style is complex and difficult to understand. We admit this sin (after all, we are both philosophy majors). Perhaps that explains why he never quoted us, and why our views were so distorted. (Will our Aguda informer please present Mr. Raphael with a simplified version of this rejoinder so that he may better understand what he distorted?)

But Mr. Raphael's list of sins has not ended. Worst of all, we quoted from Protestant theologians rather than halakhhic sources. Perhaps his shock at reading our article caused him to forget our quoting a Gemora in Berachot, a Sifri, a Hirsch, a Rambam, and even a Zohar, besides various *psukim*. These, rather than Kierkegaard and Dylan (funny that Mr. Raphael never complained about his voice or his blatant anti-Orthodox approach, in "The Times, They are a Changing"), were used as proof and sources. The other quotes were simply "Parparot Lachorkhma." I believe that the greatest and perhaps the only lesson that YU has to teach the Orthodox Community is that of using secular knowledge to enhance one's development as a Jew. It is my conviction that the Torah is not simply a content of Truth to be accepted, but also a methodology for recognizing truth whenever one sees it. And on that basis, I thought the sources quoted were relevant and valuable. Perhaps if the Beis-Yosef had spoken on the issues we had written about, I would have quoted him as well. (Indeed Mr. Raphael himself deemed it necessary to quote Walter Lacer to his own advantage, and who is to say that Professor Lacer is more godly than Soren Kierkegaard.)

Just one more point. We, the writers, had no knowledge of the editor's insert of a quote by Leroi Jones. I personally don't understand it, and would not have used it. Mr. Raphael's condemnation of it, however, did not deal with its content, but merely with its author, who is not known for his love of whites, especially Jews. This criterion alone is, in my opinion, insufficient for disqualifying a man's thoughts *a priori*, and on this basis I defend its inclusion.

Finally, at no time, did we attempt to remove ourselves from the Jewish community with which we found fault. Indeed our article was in response to a Ramban in *Ve-eschanan* which speaks of a "lav" of forgetting the receiving of the Torah at Sinai, even though we might guard zealously every one of its mitzvot. In our view this means that one cannot forget the momentous role that Sinai, rather than holiday or convention, played in our religious growth. We are all guilty of religious complacency, cowardice, and conniving. To accuse those who recognize this lack of being revolutionaries and sympathizers of black militants is no mature answer. If Mr. Raphael's critique is indeed indicative of the Aguda position, then there is much more than a generation gap which divides us. Self-awareness does not come cheaply, neither does it come through a polemic such as this. We assert our right as committed Jews to be heard and we hope that our elders do not forget to listen. The Aguda has had an amazingly rich past. Was Mr. Raphael's article its epitaph?

The Plight Of Soviet Jewry

(Continued from page 3)

tion of Kiev in 1941-43." In attempting to destroy all Jewish identity in the Soviet Union, the Communists do not even permit Jews to retain the memory of their dead.

Simchat Torah

"The Rejoicing of the Law." A day to sing and dance. A day to get an *aliyah*. A day to celebrate a year of *limud Torah*. A day to be happy! Simchat Torah for Soviet Jews is an entirely different kind of day. For the past six or seven years, Simchat Torah has been the one day of the year when the barriers were down, when Jews could be Jews, without shame, and without fear. Tens of thousands of Jews singing and dancing in the streets of Moscow, Kiev, Riga, Leningrad—every city with a large Jewish population. A day to get an *aliyah*? Hardly. Could thirty thousand Jews get an *aliyah* in the Great Synagogue of Moscow? A day to celebrate a year of *limud Torah*? Not likely. *Limud Torah*, with no *yeshivot*, when teaching the Aleph-Bet is a crime? No, they celebrate Simchat Torah as it has never been celebrated before:

"A dark-haired and vivacious girl stood in the middle of a circle, leading a chorus of voices in a series of questions and answers.

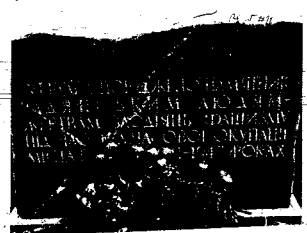
- 'Who are we?'
- 'Jews!'
- 'What are we?'
- 'Jews!'
- 'What shall we remain?'
- 'Jews!'

"I am a communist!" a young student shouted. I asked him what he was doing here. 'I am also a Jew.'" (*The Jews of Silence, Elie Wiesel*).

"Domail! Domail! Domail!" (Homeward! Homeward! Homeward!) i.e., to Israel.)

A day to be happy? A day to be Jewish. This year, Jews in most Russian cities were denied even their one day. Barricades were up at the synagogues in all the major cities of Russia. In Moscow alone Jews were permitted to gather, to take over

Arkhipova Street, in front of the Great Synagogue. In Leningrad, Jewish youths were clubbed all night by the police. *Yom HaDin* is approaching. In the calendar of Soviet Jewry, *Yom HaDin* does not have to be the tenth day of Tisbri. It may come on any day.



J. Kassner

Temporary Babi Yar Monument, Omits Reference to Jews

November 28, 1969

Boris Kochubiyevsky is a Russian Jew. He defended Israel at an anti-Zionist lecture at his factory. He was fired. His wife was expelled from her university. They applied for exit permits to Israel. Their apartment was raided on the day they were to get their papers. Boris Kochubiyevsky then wrote a letter to the Soviet officials. He was arrested one week later. On May 16, 1969, Boris Kochubiyevsky was sentenced to three years in a labor camp.

The calendar of Soviet Jewry is not 365 days long. It is 438 words long:

I am a Jew. I want to live in a Jewish State. This is my right, as it is the right of a Ukrainian to live in the Ukraine, the right of a Russian to live in Russia, the right of a Georgian to live in Georgia. I want to live in Israel.

This is my dream, this is the goal not

only of my life but also of the lives of hundreds of generations preceding me that were expelled from the land of their ancestors.

I want my children to study in a school in Yiddish. I want to read Yiddish newspapers. I want to attend a Yiddish theater. What's wrong with that? What is my crime? Most of my relatives were shot by the Fascists. My father perished, and his parents were killed. If they were alive today, they would be standing next to me. LET ME GO!

With this request, I turned repeatedly to various departments and achieved only dismissal from work, my wife's expulsion from her institute and, to top it all—prosecution, accusing me of slandering Soviet reality. What is this slander? Is it really a slander that in the multinational Soviet state only the Jewish people cannot educate their children in schools in their own language? Is it really a slander that there isn't a Yiddish theater in the USSR? Is it not a slander that there aren't any Yiddish newspapers in the USSR? By the way, nobody denies it. Perhaps it is a slander that for more than a year I haven't been able to leave for Israel? Or a slander that nobody wants to speak to me, that there is nobody to complain to? Nobody reacts. But that is not even the point. I don't want to interfere in the ethnic affairs of a state in which I consider myself an outsider. I want to leave. I want to live in Israel. My wish does not contradict Soviet legislation. I have an invitation from my relatives; all formalities have been observed. Is that why you are instituting a criminal case against me? Is that why my home was searched?

I am not asking for mercy. Listen to the voice of reason: LET ME OUT!

As long as I live, as long as I am capable of feeling, I will do all I can to be able to leave for Israel. And if you find it possible to sentence me for it, then all the same. If I live till my release, I will be prepared to go to the homeland of my ancestors, even if it means going on foot,

Karasick Reports On Meetings With Shazar, Goldman

by MARK KARASICK

Ever since I was young, I've had a great desire for personally meeting famous people. As president of The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, my father has occasion to meet with many famous secular and Jewish leaders. I was able to induce my father to let me join him at several of these parlor meetings, and I think that the information that I am allowed to disclose will prove most interesting and informative.

On June 17, 1969 I was privileged to go to Washington, D.C., to meet with His Excellency, President Zalman Shazar of Israel, who met with a small group of representatives of the Presidents Conference of America. His purpose was to meet some of the Jewish leaders of the United States. The President is a white-haired, amiable man who is very pleasant and gracious and speaks a very literary Hebrew.

His opening statement was a simple one: "American Jewry is the backbone of Israel." We know this—but it was nice to hear it from the President of Israel.

The President discussed the occupied territories of the "Six-Day War." About Jerusalem he said, "We are willing to give back their holy places—but not to make a split." The Golan Heights is the key to the whole Galil, according to President Shazar. Although the Sinai was never ours, even in the time of Abraham, David and Solomon, there is still a feeling that one has for the area—that it is ours. Mr. Shazar related that on a bus tour he saw soldiers arranging for a Passover Seder near the Red Sea—which is right opposite Egypt. Here is the one place in the world where the seder is most meaningful. We must keep these soldiers in mind at our own Sedot.

About Russian Jewry, the President emphasized three major points:

1. The Russians are more pliant to the needs of the world.
 2. The Russo-Chinese confrontation causes Russia to be more open to us.
 3. There is a strong clamor for a Russian "Aliyah."
- Mr. Shazar said that there was a small "Aliyah" from Russia going on even then but we would like a much larger number to come. We must not have *yush*—for if we do, the "Aliyah" can never be fulfilled.



President Shazar

We need much tact in planning for this "Aliyah." We must work on two fronts. First, to get Russia to let the Jews go and second to help Israel to be able to absorb them. Is there the worry of antagonizing Russia? No! We must encourage "Aliyah." His concluding remark was a reminder to his opening one. "A Resolution must be a feeling of the total Jewish people. We must be solid behind Israel."

There was a chance to meet the President and ask questions after his remarks. We spent a very pleasant morning in Washington and then shuttled home to relay his message.

DR. GOLDMAN

On September 23, 1969, the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America tendered a Cocktail Party in honor of Dr.

Nachum Goldman, the President of The World Jewish Congress and unofficial President—the spokesman—of world Jewry for the past thirty years.

Dr. Goldman, whom I've met several times before, is a sapient, clear-thinking man. He has the ability to approach a problem head-on and to view the problem in its totality. I always enjoy hearing what he has to say—this time was no exception. Dr. Goldman said the UOJCA, as the first American orthodox organization to join the Congress, broke the ice and created a precedent for the heretofore wary Conservative and Reform movement which now show interest. Although he himself is not orthodox, Dr. Goldman defends Orthodoxy because of his fear of the disappearance of the Jews in the Diaspora. He reminded us of one of his favorite sayings: "The Jews are in their fortresses—we must come out of the fortresses and fight for Judaism."

When Cardinal Bayer, who was sent by the Pope, contacted Dr. Goldman as the head of world Judaism on a certain issue, Dr. Goldman met with Rabbi Dr. J.B. Soloveitchik to discuss it, with him as the leader of Orthodox Judaism.

About the Congress itself, Dr. Goldman had this to say: "The basic idea is to realize the unity of our people—which is in great danger." Why is it more of a danger now than ever before? Because for hundreds of years, the Torah and Shulhan Aruch guided our people and acted as a "portable" land in Galut. Now this is not the case. We are faced with the problems of assimilation, separation and isolation. It is, therefore, very important that the Jews have address to which they can turn to and belong to. The "Iron Curtain" separates the world and the Jews. One of the purposes of the Congress is to bring the Jews behind the "Iron Curtain" back into the fold of Jewish life. Except for Russia, we have an ongoing relation." This, in effect,—to unite

Judaism throughout the world—is the "raison d'etre" of the World Jewish Congress.

The one major problem Dr. Goldman chose to discuss was understandably the same one President Shazar spoke of: the problems of Soviet Jewry. "Next to Israel, this is the problem." The World Jewish Congress is in contact with Soviet Union. "They are a wonderful Jewish community. . . . But I'm afraid we've lost a large part of them spiritually." The Congress has achieved certain things but it is difficult because the Jewish situation in the USSR is unique in that they have no territorial concentration. The three religions, because of their territorial concentration, are able to obtain religious facilities, but we are forced to ask for schools everywhere. The following dialogue shows the difficulty. "So let us have Synagogues everywhere." "If we give you, we must give others everywhere." "Very well—give them as well." "That's fine for you to say."

The President of the World Jewish Congress thinks that if and when the problem of the Middle East is solved, two things will happen: (1) Russia will allow a larger emigration; (2) Russia will allow involvement of Soviet Jews with their Jewish organizations.

Turning to a more recent problem, Dr. Goldman discussed the new government in Germany. He feels that there will not be much of a change from the Jewish point of view. Things could possibly get a little worse for Israel—hopefully not. The new government will probably be more cautious than the old one was.

Dr. Goldman was available for questions after his talk. His commitment to the Orthodox cause is very reassuring and I feel comfortable knowing that he, as the President of the World Jewish Congress, represents the only real Jewish Congress and this is the Orthodox, Torah-true Congress.

Israel Mourns Passing Of Roshei Yeshiva

by ELYAKIM KRUMBEIN

Over the past few months, the Israeli religious community suffered the loss of three of its greatest human assets. In the often lazy machinery of the Torah establishment in Israel, each of the *gedolim* performed vitally and vigorously.

Rav Aryeh Levin, for example, was considered by many to be Jerusalem's *tsadik*-in-residence. People would stream to his home to have him visit a sick person or bring peace between a separated man and wife. Rav Aryeh, as he was simply known, would never tire of these callers, and he invariably responded to them all. His impassioned pleas could melt any heart; his warm handclasp conquered all.

Rav Aryeh's warmth acquired its momentous reputation during the Mandate days, when he was a frequent visitor at British prison camps which held captured Irgunists. For the captives, each visit was an emotional experience. They loved and revered this rabbi, who prayed with them, brought messages from their families, and told them how much he envied them who were divinely "chosen to sanctify His name."

His passing came a few days before Pesach. During his life, he had been the friend of literally everyone, and it was therefore understandable that his funeral brought together the heads of the rival religious political parties. It was said that the occasion would be used to start negotiations among them, perhaps to form the long-awaited "United Religious Front." Nothing came of this; but perhaps the rumor itself was the most fitting tribute Rav Aryeh could have wished.

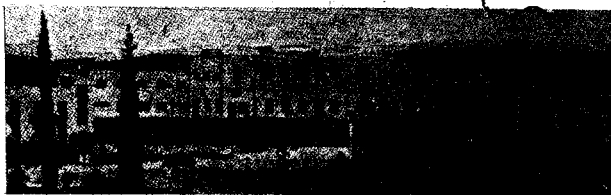
RAV SARNA

The story goes that a rosh yeshiva once

came to the Chazon Ish, z.t.l., asking if he were right in devoting some of his time to community affairs. "We have plenty of communal workers," was the reply, "but only a handful of good roshai yeshiva."

The rosh yeshiva, whose name was Rav Yechezkel Sarna, devoted himself thereafter to his Yeshivat Chevron. It was patent from the mutual successes of Rav Sarna and the yeshiva that each was the other's soul. It was the guiding spirit of the Chevron Yeshiva who passed away on the sixth of Elul.

Rav Sarna entered the prominent *musar* yeshiva of Slobodka as a youth, and soon displayed unique promise in his studies and middot. He married the daughter of the rosh yeshiva, Rav Moshe Mordechai



Ponovitcher Yeshiva

Epstein, z.t.l., and began to figure prominently in yeshiva affairs.

Rav Epstein had been a *chalutz* for a while, and strongly favored moving the yeshiva to Israel. The move was clinched, however, when the government decreed that the yeshiva offer secular studies. Rav Sarna was put in charge of the operation, which included the choice of site.

The list of possibilities was headed by Jerusalem, but the city was prone to quar-

rels. Rav Sarna was also afraid that Jerusalemites would not be receptive towards smooth-shaven *bnai yeshiva*—beards were not the style in Slobodka. At Rav Kook's suggestion, Rav Sarna opted for Chevron.

In 1929, however, the bloodiest of a century-wide wave of Arab riots hit Chevron. Over 50 students were slaughtered and the yeshiva was forced to move to Jerusalem. It was here that newly-named Yeshivat Chevron rose to its prestigious position among Israeli religious institutions. Rav Sarna's commanding personality and his power to inspire attracted myriads of students. Chevron boasts of having educated over a third of Israel's practicing rabbinate.

While in the throes of his final sickness, Rav Sarna would often rise lion-like from

his bed, oblivious of physical pain, to deliver a *sicha* at the yeshiva. Some who knew his earlier days found this difficult to watch; others thought it his finest hour.

RAV KAHANAMAN

The passing of Rav Yosef Shlomo Kahanaman was the year's greatest single loss to *harbatat Torah*, according to Chief Rabbi Unterman. A *misnagid* with more "chasidim" than many a rebbe, the colorful Ponovitzer Rav compiled an impressive

record of achievement in the strengthening of Torah Judaism in Israel.

Rav Kahanaman grew up in pre-war Lithuania in a thriving Jewish atmosphere. In 1939, he migrated to Israel, only to watch in horror as the flourishing community he left behind was engulfed by the Holocaust. From then on, he lived in the flaming shadow of his native land.

In order to memorialize it, he built a monument called "Ohel Kedoshim." Yet he knew that to memorialize Lithuanian Jewry in lifeless monuments alone would be an insult to the once-vivacious community. He therefore determined to fan those members of Lithuanian "*neshamá*" which still glowed in his heart into a practical, full-blown program of *harbatat Torah*. One telling report has it that his goal was a yeshiva in Israel in memory of each one destroyed in Europe.

Rav Kahanaman was constantly on the move. A journalist who followed him for just one week found it to be an exhausting one, involving trips to various cities both in Israel and America, and discussions with mayors, lawyers, and contractors. Despite all this, Rav Kahanaman was accessible. His personal acquaintances ran to several thousand, each of whom claimed to be on the most intimate terms with him.

Besides his own yeshiva in Bnei-Brak, scores of other yeshivas throughout Israel owe him their existence. He enjoyed few things more than to relate the saga of how he founded one of them. The plot rarely changed: no means available, and none in sight, until at the very last moment—salvation! That recurring pattern in Jewish life was so integral to his own, that he will certainly live on as a model of resiliency and resourcefulness.

Prager Optimistic On Soviet Youth: Sees Need For Protest

(Continued from page 1)

ing a relatively good living—nevertheless clinging tenaciously to any religious observance they may know of, although all this must be done in secret. At the now famous *Simhat Torah* rally in front of the Moscow Synagogue, when any youth was asked, "Why are you here?" the answer was always the same: "to show my Jewish solidarity." These feelings among Jewish youth in the Soviet Union constitute "one of the great *nissim*."

To the question of exactly what attracts all these young people, what binds them together, the answer is definitely the State of Israel. In the absence of any knowledge of religious observance, the Jewish youth in the Soviet Union identify with Israel. The Six-Day War had a tremendous effect on the Jewish youth of Russia, intensifying and deepening their interest in Israel and bringing many more Russian Jews to an identification with the Jewish state. Countless numbers of them listen to *Kol Yisroel*, and any Western Jew in Russia is besieged by a group of young Russian Jews greeting him with a barrage of questions about Israel.

As Mr. Prager made clear in his formal speech, the answer to the question, "Should we protest?" is a definite "yes." The Jewish youth in Russia need and want protest—

"noise," as they call it. And when it is objected that protest might only make the situation worse, they answer that it can't get any worse. Ads should be placed in the New York Times and in other major newspapers, huge rallies should be held, and influential public figures, famous personalities, should participate. As to the hesitancy and the silence of many, including many *gedolai Yisroel*, on the issue, Mr. Prager considers this "a disgrace."

As to the theme of the protests, their goal, it should be free emigration—that the Soviet Union should allow the Jews to leave the country. Should we only do things like sending *matzot* for Pesach? Many don't even know what *matzah* is. Our goal should be what the goal of Russian Jewry is, as they express it in one of their songs: that the Soviet government should "let my people go home"—and "home" means Israel. If free to leave, Mr. Prager believes, at least 75% of the Jewish youth in the Soviet Union would go to Israel. And if the fear could be removed from the middle-aged Jews, 50% of them also would leave.

Once in Israel, these Russian Jews could be introduced for the first time to real Jewish religious observance. To quote Mr. Prager, "Russian Jewish youth is the most heroic and dynamic Jewish youth in the world." Judaism has a lot to gain if we act now—and a lot to lose if we remain silent.

American Jewish Congress Seeks End To Church Voting

If you voted in a church this week, it may be the last time you find the ballot box in a house of worship.

The American Jewish Congress, a leader in the field of church-state separation, believes that voting in churches is unconstitutional and will seek to end the practice across the country.

Last month the New York City Board of Elections ruled that any person who objected to casting his ballot in a church could vote by absentee ballot or in an alternate polling place. The board acted after the American Jewish Congress had filed a "friend-of-the-court" brief in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in support of an Orthodox Jewish engineer, Morris Berman, who brought suit on the ground that his religious faith prohibited him from entering a Christian church.

The law brief, prepared by Leo Pfeffer, special counsel for the Congress, argued that requiring voters to cast their ballots in churches "effectively disenfranchises Orthodox Jews whose religious conscience does not permit them to enter a Christian house of worship." The brief also said that the use of sectarian premises for government elections violated the principle of religious

freedom and separation of church and state as guaranteed by the State and Federal Constitutions.

The lawsuit aroused considerable public interest, including two editorials broadcast by radio station WMCA in New York calling on the Board of Elections to act. A news release issued by the Congress, which said that New York was the only state in which the practice was authorized by law, evoked responses from readers and editors in a number of states indicating that voting in churches was widespread.

Mr. Pfeffer expressed satisfaction at the Board of Election's action in permitting absentee voting in another place. He said, however, that "churches or other houses of worship should not be used in any case for registering or voting in any election. The law should be taken off the books in New York and the practice should be discontinued elsewhere so that exemptions to the law or custom need not be made."

Toward this end, he said, the American Jewish Congress was calling on its branches across the country "to seek information concerning the use of churches as polling places with a view toward ending the practice by legislation or litigation."

Rabbi Grunblatt On Campus Unrest

(Continued from page 1)

While Freud, however, recognized only this one drive and explained all human behavior in terms of it, Judaism sees in man, along with the *yetzer harah*, a natural drive for the spiritual and transcendental. This is the *yetzer hatov*. Assuming that the *yetzer hatov* is a bundle of energy like the *yetzer harah*, it should presumably function in the same way, and it is subject to the same misuse and maltreatment. This misuse of the *yetzer hatov* is what *chazal* called the *yetzer harah of avodah zarah*. It is a rerouting of this spiritual and transcendental *yetzer hatov* energy—this desire for meaning and value—to serve the bio-instinctual needs; and so sex becomes a religion. It is not sex for sex's sake, but sex is turned into an attempt to find this higher meaning and value for which man strives. This suppression of the urge for the transcendental is as unusual as is the sublimation of the *yetzer harah* and will have equally neurotic effects.

Rabbi Grunblatt went on to say that he felt that it was from precisely such a malady that present-day society was suffering. The scientific and empiricist tradition which was so popular on campus for the past century and a half, encouraged observation and analysis but destroyed belief. To be true something had to be scientific, and something of humanistic value was at best "interesting" but never true or important. What this amounted to was a cruel repression and sublimation of the *yetzer hatov*, and student unrest is one of the first signs of a concern for and protest against this sickness.

But what is our role as Jews in all this? Rabbi Grunblatt stated that if Judaism would only recognize the situation, it could make great strides on the campus because it has much to offer to solve the problem. This is so because traditional Judaism combines our transcendental yearning for the ultimate with a down-to-earth worldliness and the concern for contentment that we all possess. Even more important is that in the Jewish conception of revelation, concrete laws are set forth to help us translate these high-sounding principles into practical reality. In other words there is in Judaism a real concern for social justice

as well as a statement of lofty principles. The problem is that there has been an internal split in our ranks which has resulted in a severing of our transcendental basis and our concern for social justice; and Jews today tend to be interested in either one aspect or the other. Orthodoxy, because of its own insecurity, has been afraid to take a strong stand with regard to social concerns and has retreated into a sort of shell. Yet it is most necessary that we revitalize our Judaism if we are to cure the disease because the Jewish solution, Rabbi Grunblatt contended, is a unique one and the only true solution. All of the recent attempts to grasp the transcendental—this search for meaning—be it sex, or drugs, or whatever, have been only temporary; in the end the individual is left as alone and forlorn as before. When one has the real thing however, he needs no substitutes. When the Jew meets his God, it is a totally transforming and enduring experience—an experience with a lasting effect that can provide him with a basis to work from and a goal to strive for.

When asked during the lively discussion session that followed the lecture as to what positive measures YU students could take in this revitalization process, Rabbi Grunblatt stressed the need for increased and improved Jewish education. Calling the old system archaic, he stated that the prime goal of present-day education should not be to make someone a *talmid chacham*, but rather to instill religious commitment. He praised the great concern at YU for additional *Haskafah* and Jewish philosophy courses, emphasizing their extreme importance in the development of this new spirit.

Along these lines the Haskafah Lecture Series Committee most cordially invites everyone to join us at future sessions. If anyone would like more information about the series, or has suggestions with regard to future speakers or topics, please contact Phil Solomon (Md 324) or Bob Sacknovitz (Md 225).

Rav Herschel Schacter Teaches Orach Chayyim Thursday nights at 8:30 p.m. in F807.



Michael Fried

IS THERE HOPE FOR SYNTHESIS?

Leo Brandstatter, Captain of the fencing team, and Harry Bajnon, Captain of the wrestling team, learning in chavrutah. Both are in the shivur of R. Chaim Soloveitchik.

Dr. Belkin's "Philosophy Of Purpose" Provides Theme For Anthology Volume

(Continued from page 1)

"The probing for the purpose of creation developed in *The Philosophy of Purpose* establishes the prevailing theme of the erudite essays included in the series, which consists of eight monographs dealing with the many aspects of Torah Judaism in a modern environment, each written by an authority on the subject. These eight works were each individually well-received and acclaimed, and all are learned studies on important aspects of Judaism, analytic discussions of the problems of faith and reason." These monographs are being reissued in one volume in this *Anthology*, and they are divided into four separate categories: The Philosophic Foundation of Judaism featuring Rabbi Belkin's *The Philosophy of Purpose*; The Religious Perspectives of Judaism containing Dr. Emanuel Rackman's *Sabbath and Festival in the Modern Age*; *Prayer* by Dr. Eliezer Berkovits; and *The Kaddish: Man's Reply to the Problem of Evil* by Rabbi Marvin Luban; *The Halakhic Structures of Juda-*

ism including *The Nature and History of Jewish Law* by Rabbi Mendell Lewittes, Dr. Immanuel Jacobovits' *Jewish Law Faces Modern Problems, Knowledge and Love in Rabbinic Lore* by Dr. Leo Jung; and the Scientific Formulations of Judaism with *Science and Religion* by Dr. Sol Roth.

This volume is truly a fitting tribute to Dr. Samuel Belkin, the architect of American Traditional Judaism, and also marks a tremendous milestone for the studies in Torah Judaism series which enters its second decade under the most able editorship of Rabbi Leon Sittskin.

This exceptional volume, as well as the publications of the individual monographs and the few new works which will soon be published as part of the series, are available to Yeshiva University students, at a great savings, and may be purchased from the Department of Special Publications in the Community Service Division, Furst Hall, 185th Street and Amsterdam Avenue, Room 433.

Lightman Reviews Megillot Translation

by EZRA LIGHTMAN

The Jewish Publication Society of America recently published in one volume *The Five Megillot* and *The Book of Jonah*, with historical introductions to each book by Professor H. L. Ginsberg of the Jewish Theological Seminary. While the introductions are scholarly and well-written, the conclusions they reach, especially about authorship and interpretations, are quite disturbing. Professor Ginsberg manages not only to offend many traditions about the books (which, by the way, he readily quotes), but also to substitute interpretations which border on the absurd.

Professor Ginsberg begins by quoting Baba Bathra 14b *in toto*, on the authorship of the Hagiographa. He even calls that section of Baba Bathra "a very ancient tradition." Nonetheless, he rejects the talmud's statement that Jeremiah wrote *Lamentations*, and that King Solomon wrote *Ecclesiastes* and *The Song of Songs*. He instead attributes the books to later authors and then proceeds to challenge the tradition in Baba Bathra on two major points.

Of *The Song of Songs*, Professor Ginsberg writes, "The book is entirely profane. God is never invoked or alluded to." As if to give tradition equal time, Professor Ginsberg mentions the Mishna in *Yadayim* (III, 5) where Rabbi Akiva's famous statement

on *The Song of Songs* is written. Rabbi Akiva claimed, that the book was pure allegory and of course belonged among the Holy Scriptures; for it deals not with the erotic love of a man for a woman, but the transcendental love between man and God. Professor Ginsberg, in arbitrating between his view and the statement of Rabbi Akiva concludes, "A modern Jew can be the richer for cherishing both the obvious, profane meaning which the author(s) of the Song intended it to convey, and the spiritual one which our Rabbis have, it should candidly be admitted, read into it." Why, according to Professor Ginsberg, was Rabbi Akiva so anxious to support *The Song of Songs* if it is a totally profane book? Rabbi Akiva was a giant in Torah scholarship. He understood *The Song of Songs* and saw fit to call it holy. One can only marvel at Professor Ginsberg's boldness in concluding that "the book is entirely profane."

Apparently, challenging Rabbi Akiva did not faze Professor Ginsberg; in his introduction to *The Book of Esther*, he challenges all of the Sages. In describing the book, he says, "According to this work, the feast of Purim originated in the escape of the Jewish people from a threat of total annihilation. From the way the story is told, however, it is fairly evident that though its core may well be some such peril and deliverance, they cannot have happened exactly in the manner related. For *The Book of Esther* may be described, if one

stretches a point or two, as a mock-learned disquisition to be read as the opening of a carnival-like celebration." His main proof is that no serious writer of a book of the Bible could write ten chapters without mentioning God's name at least once. Surely, he claims, there is ample opportunity to do so. Mordecai, for example, rather than merely crying when hearing of Haman's decree, should have cried "to the Lord." And Esther, besides fasting, should have "prayed to the Lord." Professor Ginsberg's conclusion is that, "the holiday whose cause he (the author of the Megillah) was pleading was, in his time no less than ours, not of solemnity but one of licit levity, and its story could hardly be told otherwise than in a mock-serious vein, and for this very reason he felt that just to intersperse notes of piety would be irreverent." And what of the interpretation developed by the Sages that God, as the drama unfolds "watches from behind the lattice" (*Maitzits bain ha'charakim*)? Is this too far-right for Professor Ginsberg? Surely *The Book of Esther* is more than just a tongue-in-cheek piece of literature. Judaism has its moments of levity and its share of humorous writers, but not incorporated into the Holy Scriptures. What reason would there be to offset the seriousness of the Holy scriptures with a comedy? Yet Professor Ginsberg insists that *The Book of Esther* is "the original Purim Torah." Does he really think that our Sages would legitimize *The Book of Esther* if it were merely Purim Torah, and furthermore devote almost an entire tractate to it? Would Chagai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the leaders of the Sanhedrin at the time *The Book of Esther* was incorporated into the Holy Scriptures, sanction as a part of our tradition a secular carnival? Professor Ginsberg's lack of respect for the wisdom of our Sages is very dismaying, to say the least.

The book-jacket stresses Professor Ginsberg's desire "to produce a translation for the modern reader of English literature." Of course Professor Ginsberg wrote what he thought was the true background of each of the books. But, somehow, the results are that the Bible critic's search for truth only takes him further away from it.

Participant Evaluates 5-Year Plan; Finds Increase In Time Beneficial

by JEFFREY FEINSTEIN

Steeped in a dual program of Jewish learning and secular studies, a YU student has many opportunities to broaden his academic horizons. Yet this same unique program poses a very real and inevitable problem—a shortage of time. Many who are burdened with forty classroom hours weekly are also confronted by research papers, labs, continual tests, and daily assignments or recitations. As a consequence, a student at Yeshiva learns to tailor his studies by expertly cutting corners that very often manifest themselves in semi- or unprepared reading assignments and test cramming. Some students lastly resort to perpetual class cutting.

Thus, the evils that evolve from the YU hour shortage hamper some lofty, noble purposes of the college experience—reflection, creation, imagination, criticism; but more important, the *mitsvah* of *Limud Ha-Torah* becomes neglected and oft times eliminated from the student's hectic schedule. Obviously, the YU student has to transform himself into a highly integrated "mechanical man," so that he may satisfactorily complete most assignments grounded in thought, analysis and criticism.

However, for those who are only human, an antidote to alleviate the YU "mechanical man" sickness has been discovered several years ago through the conflict of the YU student and the consent of the administration. The cure is known as "The Five-Year Program."

The antibody lies within the title, an additional (fifth) year until graduation. The "Five-Year Program" was instituted for the specific purpose of permitting a student to realize as first attends a Yeshiva and then a University and to spend increased hours in learning, an area of

study that unfortunately falls to the side, under pressured conditions. Under this plan, a YU student can utilize the maximum allotment of *Beit Medrash* and *shul* time, and still have time for outside preparation or *chazarah*.

How is this possible? The "Five-Year Program" was designed for the student to carry less credits per semester (12½ or 13). Thus he can postpone a college course, or two each semester and properly readjust his hours to a less secular burdensome schedule. His new emphasis on the program of study will allow more time for learning as well as his secular endeavors.

The "Five-Year Program" proves particularly beneficial for the JSS student who aspires entrance into RIETS, for he now has more time to concentrate on mastering textual basics as well as developing a vibrant and respectful attitude toward his newly acquired Jewish studies. The presence of added time will enable him to view his five JSS courses as *Limudim* that lay a foundation for future Torah learning rather than five additional burdens to his present heavy schedule. The benefits of the "Five-Year Program" may very well allow a YU student to accomplish that which may never be achieved in four years.

The requirements for this plan of study are not overly demanding. A student must first profess a desire to place a greater concentration on his religious studies. Upon recommendation from the director of his religious division, he should then make an appointment with Dean Bacon to discuss the various particular rules such as: who is eligible, when is one eligible, what index must be maintained, and what maximum or minimum credits may be carried each semester. As an inducement for a fifth year of study, the student may attend his fifth year tuition free if the prescribed index is maintained.

Telushkin Recounts Israel Experience

by JOSEPH TELUSHKIN

In trying to assess Kerem B'Yavneh I might occasionally revert to cliché or hyperbole. For Yavneh was so significant an experience in my life that it somewhat defies an attempt at objective analysis. In any case forewarned you are forearmed.

Kerem B'Yavneh represents the core of things totally Jewish. The orientation one would develop there is totally devoid of secular influences. Besides for *davening*, eating, and a rest period, after lunch, the day, from 7 A.M. to 10:45 P.M. (minimum) is spent in the *Beit Midrash* learning. The morning *Seder* is devoted to the *Gr-marah* the Yeshiva is learning, and from 11:15 to 12:45 is the shiur. As for the afternoon and evening *sederim*, each student decides what he wishes to learn, and finds a *Chavrutah*. During this period also, most students learn Talmud, though it is common to devote some time to a *seder* in something in the Tanach. From 6:30 to 7:00 P.M., before *Ma'ariv*, is *Mussar*. This too is done with a fellow student, and the works that were popular this past year were the *Chofetz Chaim*, *Mesilat Yesharim*, and the more recent work of *hashkafah Michtav Me'Eliyahu* by Rav Eliyahu Dessler zl. These works are characterized by an attempt to imbue one with a feeling of constant and total spirituality (the word in Hebrew *Ruchniyut* was often used in Yavneh in contrast to its despised antonym *Gashmiyut*—materialism) and try to channel this spirituality into concrete manifestations, so that one is wholly consecrated to the service of God, and not a performer of "sacred physics." Perhaps what I am saying is not new, for in it are the essence of *hashkafah* lectures we heard our whole lives. But in the crucible of YU programs, in the midst of a city more noted for its sensual, rather than spiritual temptations, there are few students who attain or even glimpse this idea of shlemut (wholeness). What characterized Yavneh was that Torah and its attendant values were not peripheral, but that they formed the total dimensions of one's existence.

New Revel Governing Board Deliberates On Policies



L. to R.: Dr. Meyer Feldblum, Dr. Sidney Hoening, Dr. Irving Agus, Dr. Leo Landman

Another step in the revitalization of YU's academic structure was the formation of a new governing group at the BERNARD REVEL GRADUATE SCHOOL. The school is being led by a faculty executive committee whose chairman is Dr. SIDNEY HOENIG, Dean Pinkhos Churgin professor of Jewish history, and includes Dr. IRVING AGUS, professor of Jewish history, and Dr. MEYER FELDBLUM, associate professor of rabbinic literature. Dr. LEO LANDMAN,

former assistant to the president of Dropsie University and a significant figure in the spiritual and communal life of Philadelphia, has been named secretary to the committee. He has also been appointed assistant professor of Jewish history. As secretary, Dr. LANDMAN will function as executive arm of the group, which is engaged in the recommendation and implementation of academic decisions affecting BRGS' direction and policy.