

HAMEVASER

Official Student Publication of RIETS and JSS

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Volume IX

Coalition Continues Protest

by NEIL S. LEIST

Student movements at Yeshiva rarely last long. They are all too often the victims of student apathy. It therefore came as a surprise to many that the Concerned Students Coalition was still alive when, on May 18, a large body of students marched into the Office of the President with petitions demanding the reinstatement of RIETS into the Yeshiva University corporate structure.

The Coalition has been successful in achieving some of its objectives since their demonstration at the Semicha Convocation. Agreement between the Coalition and the Administration has been reached in three areas: self-autonomy for RIETS, a search for a new *mashgiach*, and a reorganization of the Torah studies program at Stern College. However, the major demand—inclusion of RIETS in the Yeshiva University corporate structure—has not been met.

The problem with the corporate status of RIETS began in October 1969 when the Board of Trustees of Yeshiva petitioned the Board of Regents to grant RIETS a separate charter. Until that time RIETS was the original and primary corporation of Yeshiva University. The Board of Regents approved the petition on January 21, 1970, and on February 27, 1970, the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary became a separate corporate entity, totally divorced from Yeshiva's corporation. Members of the Coalition believe that this move threatens the continued existence of the Seminary as well as the future of Torah education at Yeshiva.

The administration agreed to discuss the charter revision and other demands with the coalition. A committee consisting of Drs. Levin, Miller, and Rackman was appointed by Dr. Belkin to act as an advisory body and to meet with the students. The committee met with Coalition members four times—on May 4, 12, 13, 19. On May 9, the Coalition was informed that Dr. Rackman could no longer serve on the committee due to other commitments.

In another development, Dr. Belkin met with Ray Soloveitchik, who supports the Coalition, in an attempt to reach an agreement on the charter issue. The two agreed at the time that a team of distinguished lawyers to whom all the University files and records would be made readily accessible would investigate the legal issues. Mr. Julius Berman, a member of the Jewish Committee on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA), agreed to head the investigation.

When Mr. Berman's efforts to investigate the Yeshiva files were obstructed and delayed by Mr. Shutz' office, the Coalition decided to consult its own lawyer. A meeting took place between this reporter, Mr. Judah Dick, and Mr. Leon Wien, both of whom are members of the Corporation Counsel for the City of New York. Mr. Wien, who is an expert on educational law, confirmed that RIETS was the primary corporation of Yeshiva University. He also asserted that since RIETS was the

(Continued on page 6)

Yeshiva Students Introspect; Form Y'mei Iyun Committee

by JEFFREY FEINSTEIN

In recognition of Yeshiva's vital and unique role on the American scene, a group of JSS and RIETS students felt that the response of Yeshiva to recent national and world crises should be a uniquely Jewish one. Upon approval of referendums throughout the nation's campuses, many students, in an upsurge of moral consciousness, have caused their voices to ring throughout the nation. All too often, however, this direction and conviction have been overshadowed by an atmosphere of turmoil, anxiety and bewilderment. Unwittingly, many students have become ensnared in mass-movements without thoroughly investigating moral problems involved.

Therefore, under the banner of *talmeidei chachamin marbim shalom b'olam* (Torah scholars increase peace in the world), several JSS and RIETS students have formulated the Y'mei Iyun Committee. Rather than outwardly expressing sentiments of approval or disapproval of the recent U.S. involvement in Cambodia, this group have declared these days a dedication to introspection. The committee felt that our uniqueness as Jewish students calls



Rabbi Besdin Delivers Yom Iyun Lecture

for a proper Jewish response in this period of rash violence. Therefore, the group maintained that our reaction as Yeshiva students should be manifested in *v'shuva*, *t'sila*, and *tsedaka*, (repentance, prayer, and charity), for *Chazal* have taught us that learning is more than a static academic exercise; it is a real and most valid means of action. With this as their rationale, the com-

mittee made their voices heard in the Rubin Hall *Beit Medrash*. Commencing on Tuesday, May 12, and continuing for the duration of the spring semester, the program has been developed into a full afternoon and evening of *limud hatorah*. Through the admirable cooperation of the JSS, RIETS, and EMC *robbeim*, many *shiurim* and lectures have been delivered on issues that call for Jewish involvement and require Halachic clarification and direction. Students from all three religious divisions have participated in discussions of such topics as "The Need to Communicate" and "Morality and Protest". These *shiurim* and lectures have been held on weekdays during the late afternoon and evening. In addition, the *Beit Medrash* has remained open for the recitation of *l'filot* and *T'hilim* as well as for preparation and review of the *shiurim* delivered.

Of course, many boys have spent their days in the pursuit of learning additional *Chumash*, *Mishnayot*, *Gemara* and *Halacha* as well as *Sifrei Mussar*. In this manner, many endeavor to channel their moral indignation through Jewish forms of protest.

Herman Wouk Addresses Yom HaShoah Assembly

by ELIEZER DIAMOND

Memorial services tend to be uncomfortable experiences for the youthful participant. More often than not he commemorates events which took place before he was ever born. Thus it is difficult for him to properly appreciate the historical and emotional significance of the event.

Fortunately the memorial service held



Wouk Speaks at Memorial

May 3 for the six million Jews left most of the participants imbued with an appreciation of, and empathy with, the six million martyrs. Few attempts were made to rationally explain the *Shoah* phenomenon and its socio-historical roots. The emphasis was, rather, on creating emotional responses to the Holocaust which would in turn provoke serious contemplation of the catastrophe, its

lessons for Jewry and mankind generally.

The guest speaker, Herman Wouk, set the tone for the evening by stating that the evening should not be used for breast-beating and simplistic speculation about the Holocaust. He called for a greater understanding of both the victims and the oppressors so that the *Shoah* will never be repeated. Specifically, he cited a lack of unity as a factor which led to European Jewry's demise. Until the Enlightenment, when the Jew gained civil rights approximately commensurate to his non-Jewish counterpart, the Jew was treated as a subhuman and was almost totally ghettoized. Oppressed so completely and intensively, the Jew had to learn the art of survival. One of the basic rules which he learned was that of cooperation and interdependence. The Jew realized that he could only counter the extreme irrational hatred of the non-Jewish world by cultivating deep and binding friendship and brotherhood among his Jewish neighbors.

The Enlightenment, however, brought partial freedom from the physical and psychological bonds of the ghetto. This freedom led the Jew to believe that unity was no longer necessary since the individual Jew was as powerful as the non-Jew—or so he thought. The Jewish community subsequently fragmented into a confusing plethora of groups, parties, and counter-parties. In Mr. Wouk's words, "There were leaders but no leader; there were communities, but no community." This total negation of a united Jewish front was, in Mr. Wouk's

(Continued on page 3)

Protest — Yeshiva Style

by STEVEN DYM

Amidst the nationwide student protest against the expanding war in Southeast Asia, Y.U. students will be participating in their own type of expression.

Since there is a *halacha* that any person has the right to tell the *isbur* something he feels is important, one group at Yeshiva will try to obtain permission from synagogues to have students speak on the war. These students will attempt to explain the moral issues involved in the war, and to suggest certain courses of action. While protesting the immorality of the war (houses, farms, and civilians are being destroyed), these students will endeavor to differentiate between the cases of Vietnam and Israel. Their other function will be to visit areas of high Jewish concentration, obtaining signatures on anti-war petitions, and gathering support for Israel.

Another committee will be concerned with organizing educational activities of the Yeshiva students. Faculty members will be asked to convey to the students the dangers of the present situation of polarization and suppression. The committee will attempt to involve the moderates, so that people will not believe that the protestors are all radical activists.

Since many citizens believe the demonstrators favor a policy of complete isolation, and not just a protest against the war in Vietnam, the committee's most important task will be to recruit influential Jewish politicians to speak publicly on the vast differences between Vietnam and Israel. Opposition to American military activity in the Far East

(Continued on page 6)

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YU And World Events

In assessing the various student responses to the recent crisis on campus (following the slaying of four students at Kent State in Ohio) it would seem that the JSS Student Council formulated the most enlightened response. Their schedule of *Y'mei Iyun* during which the medium of learning would be used as a vehicle for introspection, represents the kind of unique Yeshiva response of which only a YU is capable of. While we do not *a priori* reject the validity of demonstrations, a demonstration such as that conducted in front of Furst Hall did not reflect a specifically Jewish concern. The impression that emerged was that many students used the occasion as an opportunity for social fraternization, and not for expression of anguish and concern. Into this vacuum the JSS proposal represented a positive and healthy step forward.

In addition to formulating their opinions on these complex issues we urge all students to seriously consider the implications for Israel, of whatever policy they support.

Student Coalition

The current national student protests have somewhat overshadowed the recently popular cause of anti-secularization. *Hamevaser* wishes to commend the Concerned Students Coalition, along with those students who have actively supported its goals, for its effort in bringing the crucial problem of secularization to the fore.

We urge the Coalition and its supporters to continue to press these issues in the coming year, so that they may be properly negotiated. We also implore the Administration to display more good faith in its negotiations so that Yeshiva may grow from this experience and achieve its full potential.

Semicha Committee

Recently, a new committee composed solely of *roshei yeshiva* was empowered to restructure the *Semicha* program. As a result of an agreement reached between Dr. Belkin and Rav Soloveitchik, this committee replaced the existing Administration-Student-*Roshei Yeshiva* committee which had almost completed its recommendations for a revised program.

Despite our general support for the Concerned Students Coalition, which pressed for this change, we feel that they took a step backwards by eliminating the student voice and vote which had previously existed in this crucial area. We do not see how this decision meshes with the overall goal of the Coalition to increase not only the role of the *roshei yeshiva* but also that of the students in the decision making processes of the University. We therefore request that Dr. Belkin and

the *roshei yeshiva* allow the *Semicha* student representatives to rejoin the deliberations in an official capacity with voting privileges.

We also urge the new committee to work speedily so that present and incoming *Semicha* students can be informed soon about their programs and options for next year.

In Appreciation

We gratefully acknowledge the interest of the Rav in the recent secularization controversy. His leadership and advice was greatly needed, and we look forward to his continued participation in Yeshiva affairs.

Similarly, *Hamevaser* is pleased that the *roshei yeshiva* have closed ranks in the *chever roshei yeshiva* to form a united body with clear authority in the formulation of RIETS policy. Together with the Rav and the *roshei yeshiva*, we, the *talmidim*, look forward to a partnership which will lead Yeshiva from "strength to strength."

New Beit Medrash?

As a result of recent evaluations of the religious complexion of yeshiva, some cogent suggestions have been advanced for the strengthening of religious observance amongst the *b'nai ha-yeshiva*.

The recommendation that a *mashgiach* be appointed for each of the dormitories deserves immediate implementation. In addition, the overwhelming response to the establishment of the *Y'mei Iyun beit medrash* and Thursday night *mishmar* moves us strongly to encourage the continuation of these practices. *Hamevaser* also urges the *Y'mei Iyun* Committee to speak to Rabbi Cheifetz and Mr. Blazer about the possibility of converting RABin *bedai* Hall into a permanent *beit medrash*. We strongly believe that this would encourage more boys to take advantage of the new *beit medrash*, a development which might lead to a sorely needed improvement in the religious atmosphere of the dormitories.

Yom Hatzmaut

In the past few years there has been a vast improvement in the *Yom Hatzmaut* celebration at YU. There was a good turnout for the day's activities, and the singing and dancing was held in a manner befitting a *Yeshiva Simcha*. There was, however, one glaring omission. YU was not represented at the annual Israel Day Parade. Many YU students did march with other groups, and an even larger number participated as spectators. But due to a lack of anyone willing to organize and arrange for a YU contingent, we did not participate in the program. As the Israel Day Parade has become a major forum for the expression of American Jewish solidarity with Israel, our absence from this program was particularly unfortunate. We trust it will not happen again.

Rav Parnes, Rosh Yeshiva-RIETS, will give shiurim on masechet Makkot during the summer. Shiurim will be held on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 1:30 to 3:30, for a six week period beginning on July 6. Regular shiurim will be followed by a forty minute shiur on Devarim with Ramban. Hamevaser urges all those who have the opportunity to attend.

All those interested in joining the Hamevaser staff should contact Mendel Shapiro, Ru 224.

From the Editor's Desk

Whither RIETS?



by MENDEL SHAPIRO

As the controversy continues to rage about the issue of RIETS' legal status, it might be worthwhile to consider for a moment what actually is RIETS' function within the YU undergraduate structure. Without in any way detracting from the seriousness of the charter issue, I think that RIETS faces an equally vexing problem—one that becomes increasingly evident as time goes on—in defining its religious and educational goals, and its relationship to Yeshiva College.

We at Yeshiva take pride in our worldliness; unlike *talmidim* of other *yeshivot* we affirm that the secular is not intrinsically profane, and that it can be made holy if used for the proper ends. With this rationale, the Yeshiva encourages its *talmidim* to pursue their secular academic interests at Yeshiva College, with the aim of sanctifying what would otherwise be a non-religious, if not anti-religious, experience.

Unfortunately, however, the real situation does not at all reflect the hoped for ideal. Instead of being a vehicle for the introduction of *daat Torah* into the secular realm, YC has gone into direct competition with the Yeshiva for the energies of YU students. As YC has improved its academic standing with attractive new course offerings and extra-curricular opportunities, RIETS, as a place of serious learning, has been abandoned by many of its brightest *talmidim*. True, if asked which institution holds claim to their intellectual allegiances, most *talmidim* will produce the "right" answer. But this is not the most telling criteria. During moments of candor, I think that the *roshei yeshiva* will admit that an unsettling proportion of their *talmidim*—possibly even a majority—are not learning at even close to a satisfactory level. I doubt if the same situation exists in many YC classes.

This is my diagnosis of the situation after three years at YU. I can present no concrete solutions to the problem. Yet I would like to advance some tentative, provisional ideas which might aid the Yeshiva in regaining the interest of its *talmidim*.

I think that serious consideration should be given to the possibility of expanding the RIETS program to include *tyanadim* other than Gemarah. Now, many object to this on the grounds that it will destroy the traditional nature of the Yeshiva. Yet it is precisely such an expansion which will make RIETS the truly traditional *yeshiva* it claims to be. I know of no traditional *yeshiva* where the *tyanadim* are totally restricted to Gemarah; all other *yeshivot* maintain *sefarim in sifrei musar, halacha, parshat hashavua, and hashkafa*. Similarly, traditional *yeshivot* have more than one *seder* in Gemarah, so that their *talmidim* have the opportunity to study *seygat* that are not discussed in *shiur*. Isn't it ironic that YU, which has been a pioneering force in so many areas of Jewish life, should maintain a *yeshiva* which could rightfully be called "narrow minded" by the so called "right-wing" *yeshivot*?

Of course, RIETS' program is circumscribed by the limited amount of time YU students have to devote to *limudei kodesh*. But if RIETS must tailor its program to conform to time limitations, why not consider incorporating as many elements of the traditional *yeshiva* curriculum as possible, instead of devoting full time to the study of twenty or thirty *daf* in a specific *masechet*? Possibly in this way the Yeshiva will be able to offer a *sefer halimud* which, by reflecting the full richness of our *mesorah*, will capture the attention of its *talmidim*.

Fortunately, the last few weeks have seen the creation of a *chever roshei ha-yeshiva* (see editorial). I can think of no group better suited than that to consider and evaluate the situation.

GOVERNING BOARD 1970-71



Seated left to right: Michael Grossman, David E. Miller, Jeffrey Feinstein, Editor-in-Chief Mendel Shapiro, Michael Shmidman, Philip Solomon. Standing from left to right: Leon Karp, Steven Silverman, Israel D. Benedek, Harold Horowitz, Elyakim Krumbein, Joseph Telushkin.

JSS President Outlines Future Plans

by PHILIP SOLOMON

Because of the rapid pace of events a few weeks ago, revolving mainly around the formation of the Coalition and their activities, candidates in the JSS election found relatively little time in which to campaign and express their positions. In this interview with Robert Miller, the new president of JSSSC, an attempt was made to find out his views and aims in regard to the immediate future, and also his long-range plans for the coming year.

While the excitement stirred up by the Coalition may have subsided, Mr. Miller still believes that the primary issue now confronting the university is the threat of secularization. He stated that while it was unfortunate that such severe measures as the picket had to be employed, he felt that they were necessary and he commended the seriousness of purpose and sense of responsibility with which the students conducted themselves. Though he praised the work of the Coalition, in which he took an active part, and pointed to their concrete achievements, including aiding in the creation of a separate religious studies division at Stern College and the promise of hiring an additional *mashgiach*, he still expressed fears with regard to the charter and personally favored the reorganization of all the undergraduate schools as an inde-

pendent sectarian division with a separate charter.

Aside from these activities however, Bob felt there was much to be done within JSS itself. Following up on several proposals that were suggested by this year's Student-Faculty committee, Bob said that he would work for the restructuring of the junior and senior schedule so that it would include a little more practical *halachah* in addition to the standard program of study which places emphasis on the textual analysis of source material. He stressed the fact that since most of these students aren't going on for *Semicha*, it is as important for them to gain a somewhat broader perspective of *Yahadut* and a knowledge of the Jewish approach to contemporary issues and practical problems as to be able to learn a *daf gemarah*. Also, Bob said that he would work for still more electives and the implementation of the new guidance program suggested by the Student-Faculty committee, whereby students will be able to select the counselor of their choice. Further, he stated that he desires an increase in both the number of *Haskkafa* lectures and the frequency of Shabbatons, as well as an extension of the final exam option for seniors to all students with A's and B's.

With regard to the AA degrees, Bob

said that he would not hesitate to do away with it, if in turn the students benefited concretely (i.e., if JSS were to separate out as a sectarian school). While he felt that most students in JSS do not come for the AA, Bob still maintained that under the present system



A. LITTMAN

there was no reason why they should not receive one, and that it should not be abolished in return for vague and nebulous promises.

When asked whether he thought that JSS was succeeding and whether most of the students were satisfied, he replied positively. While noting that many students feel that Rabbi Besdin's approach as director is a bit too paternal, Bob did point out that "if JSS is meant to teach Torah, it is getting things done." He did feel however that a slight liber-

alization in cuts was needed, as well as a modification of the deductions for late fees. As far as the success of JSS in reaching students, Bob said that in general it did succeed and that those who wanted to learn did, but he stressed the fact that this was not enough, and that the students who are gaining have an *achrayut* to extend themselves to their fellow students with regard to both *haskkafa* and actual learning.

When asked why he ran for office, Bob said, "Judaism means a great deal to me and I give JSS most of the credit, and so I'd like to help it as much as I can." Realizing that there might be views other than his own, Bob has already asked Mr. Singer to join him in working with Rabbi Besdin, and he urges all students to take an interest in JSS and to feel free to bring any and all suggestions to his attention. Together with the other members of his executive board, Vice-President Marvin Metzger and Secretary-Treasurer Brian Frohlinger, Bob looks forward to a productive year during which innovations will be able to be introduced and incorporated into the JSS program, without compromising or diminishing the traditional values and goals which the school seeks to convey to its students and with which it itself has become synonymous.

Editor Emeritus

In Retrospect: Revolution Sans Resolution

by MICHAEL SHMIDMAN

Standing foremost in a review of the events of the past year are, of course, the recent student involvements in the questions of secularization of Yeshiva and the expansion of the war in Indochina.

The Concerned Students' Coalition—the inevitable culmination of year-long meetings and confrontations, and the overdue response to an unfortunate communications gap—apparently has achieved, to the point, limited but positive success. Certain tangible accomplishments are already evident (e.g. granting of more decision-making powers to the *roshei hayeshiva*, progress toward obtaining a "religious advisor," and a fuller program of Torah studies for Stern College). More significant is the newly demonstrated ability of the student body to rally around the cause of preserving the religious integrity of this institution.

The actual realization of the primary goals of the Coalition, however, remains only a hopeful possibility; the Charter issue, presently in the hands of lawyers, must be clarified and resolved before any substantive action can be taken on guaranteeing the uniqueness of Yeshiva in the face of government pressure, generally improving the religious atmosphere, and establishing RIETS in its proper primary position in the University. Attaining these objectives will require increased participation of students, as well as *roshei hayeshiva*, in policy making (see editorial), a swift, active, truthful and more sensitive Administration response to valid student complaints, and most importantly, a concerted effort in the coming year on the part of *roshei hayeshiva* and students to maintain the necessary pressure and work together to preserve perhaps the greatest hope of American Jewry.

More recently student interest has

turned to the broader U.S. involvement in Indochina. The present furor over this issue, somewhat clouded and dramatized by the senseless Kent State slayings, begs a rational, detached second look in place of the original hurried, emotionally-influenced statements of moral conscience that marked the days subsequent to President Nixon's decision and the tragedy at Kent State. Specifically, committed Jewish students must weigh their natural reaction to an abhorrent situation—along with whatever moral imperatives may result—against the very pragmatic considerations of Israel's political situation and the future of the Jewish community in America.

History has tragically proved that every Jew must be part politician, as well as the "conscience and light of the nations," in order to survive. Were we a strong, united, self-sufficient nation, we could and should act primarily on the basis of religious and moral concerns. But right now we are not, and so we must ask compromising questions: To what extent are policies in Indochina and the Middle East bound together in the minds of American and Soviet government leaders? How can one who does protest disassociate himself completely from the radical calls of New Left and Black Panther militants whose programs of domestic revolution would destroy the fabric and stability of American society, thus jeopardizing the very existence of the American Jewish Community?

It is not enough for one to logically separate the Indochina war from the problems of Israel and the Jewish community, without considering the probability of how the action and its leaders will view the situation. This is not to say that one who is convinced of the immorality of the war should under no circumstances act upon his concern; one may indeed decide to act after having considered both the moral and pragmatic conse-

quences. I simply am asserting that to act without proper regard to the political questions involved would be a potentially disastrous disregard of a specifically Jewish imperative concerning the well-being of Israel and of the world-wide Jewish community. And if we don't act on this imperative, who will?

A review of the past year would be incomplete without the traditional comments upon the efforts, accomplishments and potential of this newspaper.

Though limited, for various reasons, in quantity, I believe that *Hamevaser* once again provided an adequate forum for creative ideas and articles on a broad variety of subjects, from *dvarei torah* and theology to student power and Vietnam. Equally important, *Hamevaser*, through editorials, articles and meetings with administrators, helped to convey the opinions and feelings of the students it represents and, in some cases, to directly influence administrative action (e.g., our articles on secularization, Jan. issue, precipitated an immediate meeting between Dr. Belkin and student leaders).

It is to be hoped that *Hamevaser* will continue and expand its valuable functions in the coming year, hopefully working with SOY and JSS (both of whom recently revealed their potential to unify the student body) in the battle against secularization. I personally would like to see *Hamevaser* lead an effort to provoke the Administration into more active, public support for causes such as Soviet Jewry, the reallocation of Federation funds, and for all issues concerning Israel which could benefit from our backing (which reminds me, when—ever—will there be a YU "presence" in Israel?). And, as long as I am criticizing the Administration (construc-

tively, I believe), I would like to see that so plagues this institution and which, more than anything else, led to the confrontations of the past year, as well as re-evaluation of the present—often insufferable—four year program (perhaps to be modified by one compulsory year in Israel with more credit extended to those students).

Finally, I must thank all those whose work made publication of this paper possible, all those who offered invaluable suggestions and criticisms, and those administrators (particularly Rabbi Israel Miller) who sincerely tried to understand, while not always agreeing with, the complaints of a well-meaning student body.

Yom HaShoah

(Continued from page 1)

opinion, the beginning of the end of the European Jewish community. On the practical level, disunity facilitated the use of the "divide and conquer" principle by anti-Semitic groups. On the spiritual level, the European community could never reach an optimal level of religious commitment while it was plagued internally by disension—much of it *sinat chinam*.

Mr. Wouk noted that unfortunately, the American Jewish community has not yet learned the tragic lesson of Europe; disunity is rampant among all Jewish sects and groups. Mr. Wouk, expressed the hope, however, that in remembering the six million martyrs, American Jews would rediscover the potential and beauty of unity.

The first step to *v'haya hashem l'melech al haaretz*, after all, is *me k'amcha yisrael goi echad baarets*.

Executive Editor

Reflections on Recent Demonstrations

by HAROLD HOROWITZ



There is a basic question which comes to mind when one reflects on the recent occurrences and reactions on many campuses to the latest U.S. actions in Cambodia and the tragic killings at Kent State—how should Yeshiva College students express their moral indignation and bitterness over recent events in the country? How should Yeshiva students conduct a demonstration against certain actions of the President and policies of the country? This article will not examine the moral and political attitude that one should assume on this issue, but will discuss the instances when students are outraged and morally indignant and seek to channel their feelings and demonstrate their convictions in the most fruitful and dignified manner possible. Let us then proceed to examine this problem from two perspectives—first, let us look back at the demonstrations which took place at Yeshiva, and secondly, let us try to understand the manner of protest befitting college students who are *b'nei torah*, committed to a Jewish sense of values and dedicated to the principles of the Torah.

The initial reactions to the move into Cambodia by President Nixon was a resurgence of the peace movement on many campuses. Some institutions of higher learning, notably Columbia, initially closed down for a day or two to strike in protest against the new policy. The movement was building up to a mild crescendo but reached a sudden climax after the tragic affairs at Kent State, which brought the situation to a boiling point. At the peak, 410 colleges and universities were closed in the United States. Yeshiva College naturally was caught up in the ground swell protest movement sweeping the campuses, and the first reaction of many students was a desire to close down the school in strike against the President's policies. There was a meeting of the students on Tuesday Night, May 5th, 1970 to determine future courses of action. One could immediately sense at the meeting that there was nothing uniquely Jewish about the gathering. Although the issue at stake was Cambodia and Kent State one could detect that for the time being many boys forgot that they were *b'nei yeshiva* and *b'nei torah*. Many preferred to look upon themselves exclusively as college students and human beings during this period of crisis and place their religious commitment in the background. After all, many argued, we are human beings first and Jews second. Our first debt, they said, and our first concern

must be for all humanity! This particular lack of Jewish sensitivity marked the discussion when questions of *chilul hashem* and Israel were raised. Rather than beginning the meeting by reciting Psalms and praying fervently, there was an objection raised to interrupting the meeting to "*Daven Maariv!*" It was argued that those present at the meeting should have discussed the more pressing issue at the time, which was Cambodia, and

by Jews dealing with crises in the world. Following the simple prescription of the High Holy Day Liturgy we find that penitence, prayer, and charity avert the evil decree. This should have been taken to heart by the demonstrators at Yeshiva. There is a Jewish way of reacting to a terrible crisis which threatens our country, our lives, and our sense of justice.

There is another aspect of the demon-

stration which should be noted in analyzing the reaction of Yeshiva students. Who were the moral leaders of the Yeshiva students during this time of crisis? Who set the tone and created the atmosphere during the period of protests? Who guided and directed the course of action taken by most Yeshiva students? One who observed the occurrences during the protests would have to say that there was a group of concerned faculty of Yeshiva and Belfer who had a profound influence on the Yeshiva boys and who led the movement. Surely we must pause and evaluate this aspect of the demonstration. While it is true that the Rav was involved in a later stage of action involving the referendum, the tone of the actions were molded initially and spontaneously by students and professors who preached their ideas in a convincing manner, and indeed affected and influenced many Yeshiva students. Their actions cannot be condemned as such (although there were many statements made which affronted our basic sensitivity as Jews), but we should bear in mind that rather than approaching our true moral leaders in the Yeshiva for guidance in our actions, many were ready to accept the word of teachers who admitted that they knew nothing about a Jewish approach



YUPR

let *Minyan* and Prayer be suspended during this night of crisis!

The demonstration which took place the next day in front of Furst Hall was a reasonable facsimile of actions at Columbia and N.Y.U., but it was a poor demonstration for Yeshiva College students. Aside from the many Halachic violations which took place, one was simply hard put to hear or see the Jewish content of the protest. The songs were the songs they sing on all campuses; the dress was the dress everyone else wears; the shouts were the shouts everyone shouts; the armbands were the armbands everyone else wears—*nihivei K'chal hagoyim*, 'Let us be like the rest of the college students and prove that we're real men!'

The readers should not jump to the conclusion that this writer is invoking the 'Chilul Hashem Clause' in reference to all demonstrations and protest, but is merely pointing out that the manner of the protest lacked any Torah sensitivity or Jewish sensitivity. It did not have the solemnity of a sorrowful occasion, nor did one hear fervent prayers to God which Jews offer in times of crisis, nor was there a reminder of the plight of Israel and other Jews throughout the world which should be part of a gathering

invited. Second, advice on choice of courses will be available. A suggested course of study is being formulated. Third, study material will be available through the Community Service Division. Finally, personal relationships will be instituted between successful rabbis in the New York area and members of the Society so that they can begin "learning the ropes."

Full activity will begin in September. Any freshman, sophomore, or junior who is interested in joining the Pre-rabbinic Society is asked to bring his name, home address, dorm address, present class, and major written on a slip of paper to Israel D. Benedek in Room 513 Morgenstern Hall by Monday, June 1st.

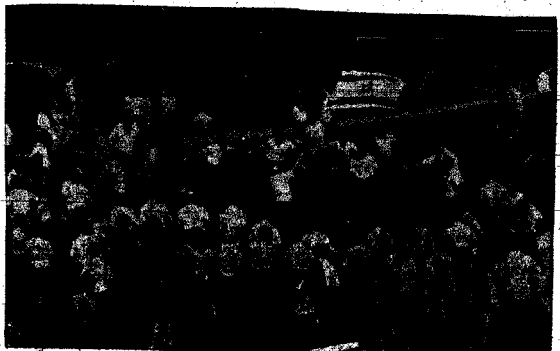
Pre-Rabbinic Society Planned

A new extra-curricular activity will soon be available on the Yeshiva campus. Plans are being formulated for a Pre-rabbinic Society to be sponsored by both the Student Organization of Yeshiva and the Yeshiva College Student Council. Its primary purpose will be to aid students who are considering entering the practicing rabbinate in fully preparing for such a career, and to attract potential future rabbis who have not truly considered the practicing rabbinate.

Acting in an advisory position will be Rabbis Herbert C. Dobrinsky and Robert S. Hirt of the Community Service Division. Several activities will be offered. First, speakers on the various aspects of the active rabbinate will be

invited. Second, advice on choice of courses will be available. A suggested course of study is being formulated. Third, study material will be available through the Community Service Division. Finally, personal relationships will be instituted between successful rabbis in the New York area and members of the Society so that they can begin "learning the ropes."

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Yom Haatzmaut at YU

YUPR

Committee Plans Restructuring of RIETS Semicha Program

by DAVID MILLER

Last year, the Semicha I student representatives decided once again to attempt restructure of the Semicha Program. Detailed questionnaires were distributed to the members of their class, and 80% of the students responded. The overwhelming majority requested specific and substantial changes in the learning, "MHL, and Supplementary Rabbinics Programs. These results were discussed with the administrators involved (there is as yet no one administrator in charge of the Semicha program), who sympathized with the problems presented and agreed with many of the new proposals, but stated that they weren't empowered to make any changes at the present time.

During the fall term of this year, because of the necessity of removing the MHL from BRGS in order for the University to qualify for the Bundy money and the desire to upgrade the Semicha Program by changing the RIETS charter to allow RIETS to grant the MHL degree, a new "Semicha committee" was convened. Its purpose was not merely to set up the new MHL Program in RIETS, but to reorganize and reform the entire Semicha Program. Its membership consisted of Administrators (most of whom had been pulpit rabbis and were very aware of the needs of the American Jewish community), roshai yeshiva, and student representatives. Meetings were held regularly for nearly six months on the subcommittee and committee levels, and by April 14, the last meeting before Pesach, the committee had reached a consensus as to the following guidelines (which conform remarkably to student opinion as expressed on the questionnaires last year) for the new RIETS Semicha Program. These plans were to have been submitted to Dr. Belkin for his approval. The suggestions dealing with shiurim were to have been presented to the Semicha roshai yeshiva.

I. Rabbinics—The following curriculum, which was outlined by a subcommittee headed by Rav Lichtenstein in conjunction with the Rav, is designed to help Rabbis cope more effectively than they have heretofore with the problems of applying Halacha to contemporary situations. It differs from the existing program in several respects: broader scope; increased emphasis upon personal study; and greater attention to practically relevant areas. The new program would consist of three components:

- A. Shiurim—The following three-year cycle (alternative cycles weren't excluded) would be followed:
 1. (a) Pesachim or (b) Shabbath
 2. (a) Gittin (25-30 daf), Kiddushin (58b-66b); Yebamoth (45b-48a) or (b) the sugyot dealing with charity (tsedaka), with fraudulent sales (onaa and mekach tauv) and with hiring laborers (schirat poalim).
 3. Yoreh Deah: laws of salting (melacha), milk and meat (basar b'chalav), mixtures (ta'arovet), nidah, and mourning (availlut).

The options cited under (1) and (2) would be learned alternatively so that, from the point of view of the Roshai Yeshiva, there would be (excluding Yoreh Deah), a four-year cycle. This would also alleviate the

problem of students who enter a Semicha Shiur while still in college.

B. Examinations on Halacha—written covering, in some measure, all the areas cited under (1) and (2) [both (a) and (b)] would be given annually. For some, the student will of course have been prepared by shiurim. For others, he would be expected to prepare on his own, although it might be possible to arrange optional shiurim, in which general principles would be elucidated. In any case, the examinations would be geared to psak and would be independent of ones which the roshai yeshiva, whose emphasis would naturally be on lomdut rather than psak, might give. As regards (3), however, inasmuch as the learning proper is more directly keyed to psak, only one set of examinations would be given. The option of taking the exams without attending the Yoreh Deah shiur might be considered here, too.

C. A supplementary three-year course in Practical Halacha which would round out the program by: (1) bridging the gap between Shulchan Aruch and the contemporary scene by detailing how at least the most common questions are generally decided; (2) dealing somewhat with other important areas not included in the foregoing; (3) giving some guidance, be it bibliographic or philosophic, concerning the procedure of psak.

While this would be a regular course, taught by a specific individual, it is highly recommended that a measure of Shimush be integrated with it and that experts be invited occasionally for guest shiurim.

A student shall be able to obtain Semicha by successful completion of the foregoing plus the passing of exemption examinations covering the areas of study hereinafter to be described. However, the completion of a minimum program of professional studies would also be required.

II. Graduate Degrees—students who want a graduate degree in addition to Semicha, will have several options available to them:

- A. They can elect the course of study at Ferkauf Graduate School for the MS-degree and take only three out of six required courses in the RIETS program of professional studies.
- B. They can obtain an MA degree from Bernard Revel Graduate School which must include courses in the six areas of study hereinafter to be described.
- C. They can elect to receive an MHL from RIETS which will include a course of study in the six areas of study hereinafter to be described. The six areas of study are:
 - (a) Hebrew Ulpán (spoken and written)—6 credits
 - (b) Jewish History (esp. intellectual; esp. modern)—6 credits
 - (c) Jewish Thought (survey and analysis)—6 credits
 - (d) Liturgy (development and philosophy)—3 credits
 - (e) Bible (Chumash and Nach—topical analysis)—6 credits
 - (f) Midrash (survey and analysis)—3 credits

Shortly after Pesach a meeting was held between Dr. Belkin and Rav Soloveichik at which Dr. Belkin agreed to implement a number of the requests

(Continued on page 6)

"My People! My People!..."

by EDWARD LEVIN

The Jew sits in his cave. He's been there for three thousand years, sitting and watching his people. His hair and beard are long and white, his clothes are gray and tattered, and still he watches. He watches in light, and he watches in darkness.

... Darkness is everywhere. His eyes are becoming used to the blackness, when he sees glowing sparks, which turn red, and burst into flames—Dachau, Auschwitz, Babi Yar—his people are on fire,

sees Jews crying out for their brothers in Russia, and he nods, for he has always seen Jews helping each other. But why so few? Where are all the rest? Why are they so quiet? He looks back at Russia, and he sees a great and holy light: "Let the Jewish People go to the Homeland." "Listen to the voice of reason—Let me out!" "I declare herewith that I consider myself as a citizen of the Jewish State of Israel." But there is much darkness. It comes from two places, from Russia and from America, and the two



Exodus March

burning, burning. He cries out, "My people! My people!" The tears stream down, and his tears carve out a huge hole in the ground of his cave. In his agony, nothing exists except the flames and his tears. One by one, the flames subside, and then the glowing embers die out.

He sees a great rejoicing. Thousands of Jews are looking at a man with a piece of paper, in a city called Tel-Aviv. They are sinking a song, Hatikvah. The old man smiles, and has to blink, for bright sunlight is pouring into the cave, for the first time in many years.

The sunlight has faded, and once again it is difficult to see. The old Jew can barely see the Jews in Russia. He's watched them for a long time, under the Czars, under the darkness of Stalin, and under that other darkness. The Jews cannot move, they cannot breathe. Everything is dark and hazy. The old man starts crying, once again. Suddenly—a great light—and singing, and dancing, and shouting—their Simchat Torah in Moscow and Kiev and Leningrad. It's a Jew saying to a tourist, "Are there still Jews in America? Tell them about us!", and the Jew goes back to the madness on Arkhipova Street, in front of the Great Synagogue. And the old man doesn't know whether to cry or to smile. (He felt this way before—at the second Seder in Warsaw, with the fighters in a camp called Treblinka...) He watches now, and he has to see everything, for events are happening with blinding speed, and he knows he cannot, dare not, miss anything. There is a fire in Leningrad—the police have started choking young Jews. The old man's body shakes as he sobs. The Jews shout, "Ich bin a Yid! Ich bin a Yid!" And the old man has to smile a little, with the tears falling on the ground. Two young Jews from America shout at the police, the choking stops, and the old man's tears fall more slowly.

The old man turns away for an instant, to see his people in America. He

darknesses are uniting, and the one darkness is threatening the light.

The darkness comes from—No! Not from Dachau. The old man tries to turn his head away, to see only the light, but the darkness remains with him. It says, "Shh, be quiet, Shh! Don't cause trouble! Don't we know best? Look at all the good things we do, we build hospitals, and old age homes, and basketball courts. Shh, shh!" The old man is stricken: he cannot cry, he cannot move, he can only stare in silence. He sees a Jew, Zev Yaroslavsky. He sees him at UCLA, organizing activities for Soviet Jewry, he sees him in Leningrad, shouting and swearing at the police (yes, he's the same one), he sees demonstrations in Los Angeles against the Soviet track team, and against Russian journalists, he sees a Pesach greeting-card campaign to Russian shuls, he sees Zev bring the California Students for Soviet Jewry into the Union of Councils for Soviet Jewry (an attempt to provide co-ordination for some of the Soviet Jewry groups in America), and he sees the darkness, the Jewish organizations in New York, and their-American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry, and the darkness tells the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles to fire Zev Yaroslavsky, and Zev is fired from his job with the Federation.

And the old Jew can't watch these Jews who say to be quiet, and who try to silence others, and he doesn't know any longer who are really Jews, and he can't bear his pain any longer, and he runs out of his cave, he stumbles on the hole where the floor of his cave was washed away by his tears, but he feels nothing, he sees nothing, he runs, he tears his clothes, his hair and he cries, he cries...

All those who have articles to contribute to Geshet are asked to contact Shatz, new Beit Medrash, or David Miller, M 214.

Contributing Editor

Israel Stirred By Loss Of Great Writers

by ELYAKIM KRUMBEIN



The passing of Shmuel Yosef Agnon a few weeks ago was only one of several blows recently suffered by Hebrew literature. At least for the sake of the historical memories which they tried to preserve and which we are too quick to forget, each of the deceased writers deserves mention in his own right.

Yehudah Burla who died in the fall at eighty-one, was a man of the East. Born in Jerusalem to a family which had resided in the Holy Land for over 150 years, he spent most of his years as a teacher in Damascus, Tel-Aviv and Haifa.

It was Burla who first introduced Sefardic life into modern Hebrew literature. For his fiction, he drew on a variety of themes: familial tensions, acceptance of fate, joy in the midst of suffering, holiness in the midst of profanity. With his impressive power of description, Burla was able to capture both the richness and the monotony of Eastern life, both the multicolored Oriental immigrants' costumes and the plodding of camels in the desert.

A good deal of Burla's writing pertains to the building of Eretz Yisrael and to the early Sefardic community there. In fictionalized accounts, he tells of Chaim Parchi, the Jewish vizier who masterminded Acre's defense against Napoleon; of Rav Yehudah Chai Alkali, one of the first rabbis to agitate for massive aliyah; and of the tribulations of Jews who were forced to serve with the Turks during World War I. In these areas Burla collected an enormous amount of material, thus celebrating an otherwise neglected phase of Jewish history.

Never did Avigdor Hameiri practice

art for its own sake. His purpose was to excite and to arouse to action. His trademark was a fierce expressionism, prophecy-like in its scalding rebuke as well as in its paradoxical undercut of forgiveness.

He was born Avigdor Feuerstien, in



S. Y. Agnon

Hungary in 1890, and became known early in life as a Zionist firebrand. World War I, in which he served and in which he was captured by the Russians, was a major event in his life. If the war was terrible to the common infantryman, it was a compounded horror for the Jewish soldier, who frequently had to shoot at fellow Jews in the enemy line, and who was persecuted by his comrades no matter how valiant he was in battle. Hameiri's war stories portray the unbreakable Jewish spirit, which regards its oppressors with disdain rather than fear.

In 1921 Avigdor Feuerstien arrived in Palestine and changed his name to

Contributing Editor

Observations on Dissent

by LEON KARP



At the present time, irrespective of one's political leanings, it is important to realize that not only are objectives important but also in whose company one essays to achieve them. Even if one were to grant that: a) the present course of American foreign policy in South-East Asia should be reversed, and b) the best means of achieving the desired reversal is vigorously to protest the Government's actions, care and consideration must be given to the problems raised by the identity of those involved in the protest movement. The Yeshiva community will no doubt grant that there are various elements among the nation's "protestors" who should be categorized as "undesirable." The percentage of these "undesirable" elements probably changes from place to place. However it does exist and it is significant.

When Chazal tell us: "*Harchaik mishchain ra, val titchaber vrasha,*" we should not consider the parallelism redundant. Two distinct thoughts are therein expressed. We are enjoined from mere association with the *rasha* as well as from acclimation to him. Even if one lives not in an *ohel hamait*, but rather in the *dalet amot shel halacha*, one must still remain alert to the gravity of the possibility that one will be *noceah bamait* (cf. *Sforno, Bamidbar 19:1*). This point has immediate rele-

vance to the question of aligning oneself with "undesirable" elements — even though this association is to be of short duration.

Further, it should be recalled that the Gemara (Sanhedrin 23a) records that the *n'kiai hadaat shel yerushalayim* were very careful: (a) together with whom they signed a document, (b) together with whom they "ate" (i.e. fraternized) and (c) together with whom they sat in judgment. In these days when one is inundated with petitions to be signed, and besieged with demands to ally oneself with heterogeneous masses who sit in judgment, the telling scrupulousness of the *n'kiai hadaat* cannot be overemphasized and their principles beg for emulation.

The point that should be made is that the problem is very real and demands due consideration from all men of conscience. The ultimate arbiter here must be the individual. The issues and the personalities involved are not so perfectly defined that they admit of an absolute determination of the proper course of action. Yet, to avoid an appraisal of the applicability of the principles considered above is to shirk one's responsibilities.

On the basis of the marginal note in *Nejesh Hachaim* (1, 6) it is tempting to interpret *daat* here as referring to their habits of association.

Hameiri (after one of his ancestors, the author of the *Beit Habechirah*). His first songs were songs of rebirth and struggle, songs of the *chalutzim*. It was not long, however, before he found social evils in the new Jewish society, and he put his pen, mightier than any sword, to work. *Sinai Roteiach*, the title of one of his poems, aptly illustrates his role as the one who demanded, heatedly and insistently, perfect faithfulness to ancient Jewish values.

Leah Goldberg had a wide personal following. Young people adored her children's stories, their parents read the foreign plays she had translated, but most were captivated by the elegant, aristocratic personality which glimmered in the lines of her poetry.

Miss Goldberg was highly intellectual and well-versed in many literatures. Her education was received largely at the University of Bonn, where she received her doctorate. Yet so overwhelmed was she by the Holocaust, that her extensive learning only made her despondent: "But we, sick with knowledge, undeniably wise, How can the joy of the brilliant world burst into our hearts?" She acquired a dark, bitter-sweet melancholy, delicate and restrained. In a muffled goodby to the world of her youth, she exclaimed: "How the trains are gone, never to return!"

Perhaps as a consequence, even her love poetry always lacks consummation. There is an ever-present sense of unfulfilled love, of a sorrowful parting.

Leah Goldberg has also written several prose works, one of them autobiographical. Her varied activities ranged from heading a department at the Hebrew University to advising the Habimah Theater. Her loss left a noticeable gap on the Israeli literary horizon.

Natan Alterman's first major work was *Kochavim Buchutz*, a collection of imagist poems. Beautiful though these were, Alterman's career was not in full swing until he devoted his pen to his people, who eventually rewarded him with a mass popularity of unusual proportions.

The turning point was a seven-cycled work entitled *Simchat Anim*, a reaction to the destruction of European Jewry. The volume combines many moods. Alterman's initial feelings of adoration for the grandeur which his nation displayed on the altar are deliberately carried to absurd lengths: "Beautiful is my daughter with her knives . . . they have adorned her with the sword." He takes the European Jewish leaders to task for not foreseeing the tragedy. And he swears that the land of Israel will wipe away the shame of the Holocaust. Alterman had become the people's poet, and he would see them through to national rebirth.

Alterman began writing a weekly column in *Davar*, consisting of a poem on some topical issue. Many of these were later collected under the title *Hatar Hushevi*, and together they comprise a unique view of one of the fateful periods of our history—the Holocaust and the founding of the State. The poems are variously subtle, sarcastic, or exhilarating. Alterman immortalizes the small heroes of those trying times—the Jewish child emerging from hiding after the war, asking if it is all right to cry; the Italian sea captain congratulating himself after having evaded the British blockade and run ashore a bandon of refugees. The blood of the Jewish people flowed in Alterman's veins, and in his writings are preserved the excited heartbeats of an era.

Coalition Remains Vigilant

(Continued from page 1)

founding corporation, and since until October 1969 there were no changes in the Yeshiva corporate structure, RIETS in fact owned as of October, 1969 all the Yeshiva University property. Mr. Wien also believes that legal action can be taken against the University to force it to reinstitute RIETS by nullifying the recent charter. This can be done by filing claim against Yeshiva University asserting that the recent move to separate RIETS was taken to defraud RIETS of its property, by giving it to a corporation that does not include RIETS. Under New York State Law, Article 78, the Board of Regents can be required to review its decision to grant RIETS a charter. Revocation of the charter would make RIETS once again part of the Yeshiva corporate structure.

Messrs. Wien and Dick are unclear, however, as to who may bring such a suit. Mr. Wien believes that any contributor can do so insofar as the corporation to whom the gift was made has been defrauded of its money and property.

While none of the members of the Coalition believe that RIETS was actually removed to defraud it of its property, some members do feel that such legal action should be taken if it can accomplish the reinstatement of RIETS.

There are those, however, who feel that such an action is too extreme.

At the present moment, the Coalition is waiting for Mr. Berman's report on his investigation—which is finally nearing completion.

Semicha

(Continued from page 5)

of the Concerned Students Coalition. Among those was a request that the new Semicha Program be determined by a committee of five *roshei yeshiva* along with Dr. Belkin. The functioning "Semicha Committee" was thus disbanded, and its papers and proposals were handed over to the new committee for their consideration.

The new committee is now beginning to meet . . .

Moratorium

(Continued from page 1)

does not logically imply opposition to American aid to Israel. The general isolationism of such opponents of the war as Senator Fulbright is dangerous and must be strenuously opposed by all who are concerned for the safety of Israel.