

Haamevasser

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P'TACH at Yeshiva: Quiet Success

When looking at the P'TACH programs at the YU high schools, it is hard to believe that they are only entering their third year. In this short span of time, this innovative experience in education has grown into a thriving educational system for many youngsters with special learning disabilities. The programs are run jointly by the P'TACH organization and the YU high schools, and their extraordinary success may lead to the implementation of similar programs at other yeshiva high schools in the near future.

P'TACH (Parents for Torah for All Children) was founded in 1976 by parents and educators of learning disabled children. This parents' group is committed to promoting special education in a yeshiva setting. P'TACH does not limit itself in the scope of disabilities that it tries to overcome, but at the YU high schools it has been limited to mild disabilities. A learning disability is physiological disorder which manifests itself in an inability to function normally in one or more classroom subjects. This inability may be caused by problems in visual perception, motor ability, or in dealing with numbers or language. Generally, these problems cannot be cured, but it is essential to help the student to develop his available skills to their fullest potential.

At the YU high schools, Marsha Stern Talmudical Academy for Boys and Tonya Soloveitchik High School for Girls, the theories of special education have blossomed into very successful programs. The specific disabilities faced by each of the youngsters in the program vary greatly, but they all have mild disabilities which can be dealt with wholly within the context of the program itself. For this reason, the range of students must be limited so that help outside of the classroom can be held to a minimum.

Some of the students in the program attend regular shiurim while others are in special shiurim within the program. This fact points to the philosophy of the program, that each student can, to some extent, be integrated into regular classes. The policy of "mainstreaming" was pursued with vigor in the first year of the program, but some students found the burden too great. Since then, mainstreaming is approached more cautiously and the students always have a tutor available. Thus, the students range from those who attend regular classes almost all the time to others who attend special classes exclusively, with many at intermediate levels.

The P'TACH program is also unique in its administration. While the P'TACH organization controls funding, Yeshiva administers the program with input from P'TACH. In addition, all the teachers are YU faculty members who have special training. Fundraising for this program is problematic since it is ineligible for federal funds, so the tuition is higher than

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Sample of computer printout.

Yeshiva May Lose Responsa Project

From the summer of 1980 until the spring of 1981, a computer in the Belfer Science Building at Yeshiva University was printing Responsa for researchers from a databank containing 35 million words. The databank is the heart of the Responsa Project and the computer at Yeshiva was the only access to the project in America. Today, the computer sits silently, yet costs YU \$1,000 a month even unused. Soon the computer may be removed and YU's involvement in the Responsa Project will end.

Yeshiva was the logical choice for the American base of the project, as the greatest center of Torah learning in the country. However, when the project lost its original intellectual emphasis and became a financial liability, YU began to lose interest.

The National Endowment for the Humanities gave the University a 5-year grant to set up the Responsa Project in the U.S. Recently, the grant expired and the financial responsibility fell upon YU. New grants have been applied for, but in these times of fiscal austerity the prospects for renewal are dim. Bar-Ilan, which seems to be more interested in raising money and prestige through the project than aiding research, began offering the project to other universities and Torah centers in New York and the midwest. Yeshiva had insisted that if it were involved in the project, it would have to be the sole operator in the U.S. The situation now is unclear and there seems to be no movement on either side. If this impasse continues, YU is in danger of losing this innovative project as Bar-Ilan attempts to restart it elsewhere.

THE PROJECT THAT WAS

The Responsa Project is the ultimate merger between the ancient world of Torah and Halacha and the modern world of technology. Conceived by Professor Aviezer S. Fraenkel in 1967, and begun in 1975, the project is run by the Institute for Information Retrieval and Computational Linguistics at Bar Ilan University in Ramat Gan, Israel.

The data base for the project now consists of 163 responsa works, containing over 35,000 responsa—over 35 million words. Eventually, it will contain about 230 volumes. The authors whose works are in the data base at present range from Rishonim (Rif, Rambam, Rashba, etc.) through the earlier and later Aharonim (Radvaz, Maharshdam, Rama, Noda B'Yehuda, etc.) to the present (Igros Moshe, Yabba Omer). Computer searches have been carried out in the fields of halakha, history, linguistics, literature, political-science, medicine, etc.

The databank serves as the "library" (Continued on Page 6)

RIETS Plans Ambitious Programs

In order to meet the ever-changing needs of the dynamic modern Jewish community, the RIETS and Yeshiva programs are undergoing constant expansion and revision to provide the necessary educational background for both smicha students and all the talmidim of the Yeshiva. Just as last year marked a landmark when the first Yadin-Yadin smichas were given out, this year will see added changes in many of the RIETS programs,

a new Rebbe in Y.P. and the continued growth of learning in the Yeshiva.

The Chaver Program which enables Y.U. graduates to learn about their field in relation to Torah and halachah is now in its fourth year and has expanded to many students. In the past the program has given medical students the opportunity to learn of medicine and halachah for a year after graduation and each summer of graduate school, with special assignments during the year. The ultimate goal is the title of Chaver bestowed upon students successfully completing their graduate studies and the Chaver Program. This year the program, supervised by Rabbi J. David Bleich, will include business and law students under the instruction of Dr. Aaron Levine. For the first time a participant in the Chaver Program will be learning in Eretz Yisroel. Jay Lerman, a medical student, will be learning in the Gruss Center in Jerusalem.

At last year's Chag Hasmicha, RIETS gave out its first Yadin-Yadin smichas. This year four more students in their second year of the program should be completing the course of study.

The Yeshiva Program has taken on a new freshman Rebbe, Rabbi Solomon Drillman, of Flatbush. Rabbi Drillman, who taught in B.T.A. for the better part of three decades, will be giving a shiur with the distinctive goal of assisting students who have been in Yeshiva but have yet to make a breakthrough in learning. The shiur pays special attention to methodology in learning and the actual reading of the texts of the Gemara and Rishonim. This unique shiur is limited in size to about fifteen students in order to

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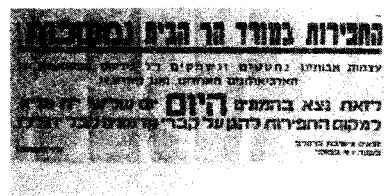
Friction In Israel Has World-Wide Implications

Recent developments in Israel are creating dangerous tensions between various religious and political factions. Many Jewish community leaders, both in Israel and the United States, have expressed a growing concern about the explosive situation.

The recent Israeli election, which re-elected Prime Minister Begin as head of the Likud coalition, put the Aguda in a unique position. In contrast to the Labor

Party's pre-election promises to decrease religious intervention in the private sector, the four Knesset members from Aguda used their new-found leverage in the Likud coalition to try to force the government to back an inordinate number of religious legislative measures. The critical points include restrictions on autopsies, abortions, and industry and bus service on Shabbat.

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Anti-Religious Posters in Jerusalem.

In This Issue

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A Tragic Loss

As this new scholastic year begins, the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Judaic Studies has no dean. Dr. Sid Leiman has left to become the director of the new programs in Judaic Studies at Brooklyn College. Since Dr. Leiman gave relatively little notice of his departure, YU didn't have enough time to replace him. It is hard to find fault with Dr. Leiman for his decision, however, since the opportunities at Brooklyn, financially and academically, were too great to turn down.

Far from being an isolated incident, this situation is indicative of a tremendous problem facing Yeshiva. Many of our best administrators and faculty members leave after a very short tenure. YC has had four deans in the last six years. Harav Chaim Soloveitchik was dean of BRGS for only three years, as was Dr. Leiman himself. Many other eminent professors in BRGS have either left the school or cut back their schedules. No school, no matter how strong, can absorb such losses over a long period of time.

The answer to this problem is for the University to ensure that its most qualified people stay at Yeshiva. This includes all aspects of the University system, from the secretaries to the faculty and administrators. Even in this time of fiscal austerity it is essential to provide financial incentives. Just as a University cannot exist without students, the students cannot function in a vacuum. How many more of our best faculty can we lose without replacement, before we lose our reputation? We can hardly blame Dr. Leiman for returning to his alma mater, but it need not have happened.

Election Results

Although Hamevaser has a policy of not getting involved in election campaigns, we feel it is of the utmost importance to comment on a recent event.

A news bulletin distributed by James Lawson, a writer and president of the Harlem Council for Economic Development introduced blatant anti-Semitism into the current city elections. The bulletin contained many phrases which were critical of the alleged "unfair Jewish domination" of New York City Government. The release proclaimed "New York City needs David Dinkins and Mr. Betancourt on the Board of Estimate; Jews cannot run New York without ethnic balance." Many more atrocious statements were made and several city officials were attacked by name.

It is truly regrettable that anyone sees fit to promote prejudice and bigotry, especially in a political election. The racial overtones that have been introduced into the municipal elections are dangerously inflammatory and wholly unacceptable.

While Dinkins and Betancourt disassociated themselves from Lawson, Dinkins did introduce certain racial issues into his campaign for Manhattan Borough President.

Such anti-Semitism is deplorable, despicable and intolerable. We sincerely hope that the voters of New York recognize the fallacy of such remarks and vote, not for the Black candidate, nor for the Jewish candidate but simply for the best candidate.

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**Hamevaser would like to
wish all our readers
a K'tiva V'chatima Tova**

Shana Chadasha

Every Fall, as we return to welcome a new group of students to our University, our minds look forward to the months ahead with renewed expectations. Far from being an exception, this coming year has the potential to be the best any of us has ever had. For new students, Yeshiva University is in the midst of an impressive upswing; the incoming freshman class is not only the biggest ever, but its quality is higher as well.

For the general student body, each of the Judaic Studies programs has added faculty members and is at its highest academic level in recent memory. EMC has introduced its new curriculum which provides more hours of Talmud per week. Though it is too early to evaluate this change, most students feel the extra learning is a positive step. The Mazer Yeshiva Program also has more to offer this year with the newly instituted Mechina shiur and the optional shiurim.

It is up to the students, however, to take advantage of the opportunities set before them. It is quite sad that there are few more people in the Beit Midrash during the mornings, when all students are required to attend, than there are in the evening hours. The time set aside for preparation is not optional, nor is it based on need. In fact, it is the better students who take advantage of this time anyway.

We call on all students of Yeshiva to make the most of their stay at YU, especially those people in MYP. It has been our experience that those students who don't take advantage of their preparation time do not use this time to study or better themselves in any way. They sleep, do crossword puzzles, or just sit around wasting their lives. In any shiur, the students with the best GPA's are usually those who take their learning seriously, too. The lesson to be learned is that if you use your time wisely, you'll learn a lot more and still be able to get enough sleep.

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The Wall Street Institute on Business Ethics is an ongoing program exploring the relationship of Jewish law to ethical issues confronting the world of contemporary business.

Letters to the Editor

A Thinking Woman

To the Editor,

Perhaps I become uneasy when I see articles by men lamenting the condition of Jewish women. But when I find myself being compared with the Stepford wives (I'm a member of American Mizrahi Women, you see) I know that my fears are justified. And while the principle of ishto k'gofo may give Dov Fisch the right to speak for his wife, I prefer to speak for myself.

First - two words in defense of American Mizrahi Women. 1. It is unfair to equate the apolitical nature of the organization (true) with the inability of its members to comprehend sensitive political issues (untrue). 2. Supporting nurseries in Israel is not a Mary-Poppins affair. It is a political

statement of the most fundamental nature. For the State of Israel to be imbued with the tenets of religious Zionism, there must be religious Jews there. AMW's nurseries were established so that from a very young and impressionable age the future citizens of Israel would be immersed in Torah-true Judaism. I don't "think...in between supporting nurseries." Rabbi Fisch. I support them because I think.

Now to the main issue. Rabbi Fisch attaches great importance to political activism while seemingly ignoring communal involvement. It's true that the latter will accord you neither hero status nor headlines but it will insure that Jewish institutions, necessary ones (yeshivot, synagogues, mikvaot, etc.) survive.

I sincerely believe that the focus of the problem lies not with the Torah community. They have recognized my talents and those of my peers and have called upon them again and again. It is the failure of

the women's lib movement to recognize my limitations that disturbs me.

An unjust myth has been perpetrated and my generation is the victim. We were taught that we could be all we wanted to be - simultaneously - successful career women, patient and creative mothers, loving wives, showplace homemakers, communal volunteers, and perpetual students. But life doesn't work that way. There have to be priorities (though these can change with time) and there has to be compromise.

Sure your daughter goes to work with your wife. Mine did too, but wait until she's no longer four months but four years old and wants to go to the park instead of the office, and thinks, very rightfully, that listening to her "Torah Avenue" record or playing Candy Land is more important than your meetings and phone calls. What then?

I have no answers (except to get up occa-

sionally at 5 am and stretch the number of hours in a day) but I know that I will continue to be a teacher, fund raiser, secretary, administrator, speaker, or errand girl if necessary.

I know that my efforts are usually worthwhile, I think they're appreciated, I just wish that there wasn't so much that had to be done.

Sincerely,
Tova Rhein

P.S. For purposes of identification - I'm the daughter, wife, and sister of Y.U. mumschamim.

Limited number of plots available in the YU alumni section Eretz Hachaim Cemetery in Israel available.

Those interested please contact
Rabbi Avrech, Rabbinic Alumni Office
960-5289.

From the Editor— The Politics of Religion

Nachum J Stone

In recent months we have seen the moral sensibilities of the citizens of this country swing sharply to the right. This swing has manifested itself in the election of Ronald Reagan and the Republican majority in the Senate. At the same time, minority groups such as those of Rev. Jerry Falwell have called themselves the majority while gaining disproportionate media attention. Single-issue groups such as the "moral majority" are generally unable to achieve their goals; rather, they tend to unite the opposition by separating themselves from the general population. However, the opposition to these right wing groups (the immoral majority?) has thus far remained fragmented and slightly overwhelmed so that the pressure from the Right has been able to maintain its influence.

In Israel the seemingly parallel situation has been strikingly different. The opposition to Right-thinking, single-issue groups has caused a polarization of Israeli society. The correctness of the fundamentalists is not in question; it is very hard to be incorrect when one is accurately quoting halakha. The problem is that religion and politics mix about as well as water and oil (anybody's). From its very first years as a State, Israel has had a secular constitution and officially been a secular state. Nevertheless, it has always been referred to as the "Jewish State," and the leaders of the State, though not necessarily shomrei mitzvot themselves, recognized the importance of Halakhic Judaism to Israel and acted accordingly.

Against this background of respect for religious Jews, we know that the religious parties played important roles in the Labor party coalitions since Israel's inception. In recent elections, the religious parties held even more influence within Prime Minister Begin's government, and in the most recent election they provided Begin with his very narrow majority. The narrowness of the majority and Begin's strong drive to remain in office enabled the Agudah Party to extract major promises from Begin on such issues as kiyum Shabbat, autopsies, and the status of non-halakhic conversions. The effect of these demands by the Agudah Party has been to polarize the Israeli community. Though it has always been agreed de facto that only halakha is accepted in matters of conversions, the new measures sought to make it the law (de jure). This largely symbolic attempt to change Israeli life, as well as the other demands, angered the secular Jews in Israel to the point of challenging this action. Clearly the religious parties were correct in their convictions, but this move indicated the Party's lack of confidence in their own future political strength.

In another act of political recklessness, religious groups led protests against archeological exploration in the City of David, claiming that the digging was in an area of ancient Jewish cemeteries and thus violated halakha. Besides the inaccuracy of the claim that there are cemeteries in that area, any graves that might have been there would have been desecrated long ago and their discovery could only lead to a more honorable placement. After much prodding from Minister of Education Zevulun Hammer to end the dispute by approving the dig, Rav Shlomo Goren, the Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi, forbade the excavation. Why he did so is still nebulous, but it is sad when religious institutions become political weapons.

The main disagreement between the Orthodox and irreligious communities (is there an ultra-irreligious body?) is over the validity of the action of non-orthodox clergy. The issue is much too complicated for this forum but the whole problem could have been avoided. Judaism has no concept of clergy, and its introduction implies a weakness in relying on halakha alone as our guide. This reliance on individual responsibility for Judaism allows for the politicizing of halakha. The insidious effect of this is evidenced in the situation of Rav Goren. His constituency is limited to ashkenazic, orthodox, zionist, non-hasidic, non-Agudah sections of the Israeli population. That really only leaves the Mizrahi constituency, but in the recent disputes one of their leaders said that in some matters he need not take the teshuva seriously. What has happened to halakha being the framework of our lives?

Judaism is a unified religion. We cannot have five or six "factions" and five or six sets of halakha. When an individual begins to pick which motzot he is to observe, he is no longer worshipping Hashem — rather, he is worshipping himself. What are the nations of the world to think of television news reports showing Jews on horseback beating other Jews in Yerushalayim? Only when the religious bodies in Israel disassociate themselves from the realm of politics will they receive the respect they need in the eyes of the Israeli public. The religious population will then be able to involve itself with the pressing problems of halakha and the unity of Klal Yisrael so that someday soon the Geulah can conclude.

Midnight Rambler— Why the AWACS

Joshua A. Teplow

While the AWAC diatribe reeks its noxious fumes around all who encounter it, now is probably as good a time as any for Zionists, Jew or otherwise to take account of what he considers holy and profane, factual and opinionated.

The furor which has taken hold of Congress has been termed a no-win proposition. For reasons unbeknownst to me, Ronald Reagan has staked his powerful position as president as well as his integrity on this \$5.8 billion attempt to assuage Saudi distaste for the U.S. of A. What frightens Israeli officials is not the actual sale of hi-tech equipment to Saudi Arabia but the flippancy with which Reagan offered aircraft and munitions to an ailing monarchy. The AWACS are vociferously prepotent as weapons but invariably ineffectual in the hands of the Saudis. But while the Israeli lobby combats this affected evil let them consider the final outcome: a probable curtailing of U.S. aid to Israel and worse, bitter animosity which will pine away at endeavors to ameliorate acrid American-Israeli relations.

But the current Congressional fight is merely a cloudy digression from politics as usual. The most heated subject, momentarily jettisoned into the background in the West Bank. Discussion inexorably begins with the assumption that the Palestinian people has some right that in some way has been transgressed and should be restored. They are the Palestinians a privileged people, deserving of nationhood or a homeland? Their innate rights are no greater than the Italian in the North End of Boston or the Blacks in Harlem. If the Italians feel that the civil amenities are being compromised as ethnic Italian they would no more expect the United States to set up a sovereign nation for them than for any other ethnicity. They understandably would return to Italy and think no more of the incident. Why then do the Palestinians require a state? Let them rather voluntarily leave Israel and venture to Jordan, originally set up as a Palestinian state. It pains me to see all the Jewish liberal, bleeding hearts who shriek in behalf of the degraded Palestinian refugees who have been trampled upon by imperialist Israel. Let their liberalism rather be spent on Israel and their own people. It is time the Jew stopped being the watchtower for the downcast minorities at-large and selfishly started to defend himself.

Convention 1981

Towards Greater Unity

November 4 - 8

For the first time, five leadership organizations in the Torah community will gather in separate and joint convention on the same dates, including a Shabbat, and in the same site.

With this joint convention, the cooperating organizations intend to set in motion a change in the Torah community towards greater communication and cooperation.

In joint convention, Torah leaders will learn from each other and share ideas and concerns. They will project leadership strength to the Torah community. They will develop a common agenda of action for the Torah community, for outreach, and for participating in the Jewish community at large.

The joint convention is planned as an historic step in the growth and development of the Torah community towards greater cohesiveness.

Special Guest: Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm
Honoree: Rabbi Dr. Moshe Tendler

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Op Ed Camp Jedel

Larry Domnitch

The summer of '81, for the majority of those Jews who made their annual rendezvous to the Catskills, meant vacation. To the Borsch Belt and its plush hotels, bungalow colonies and summer camps to which many of us ascend to relax, breathe in the country air, soak in the country sun and temporarily abandon the city life. Yet, amidst this vacationland in the exile, there existed another camp distinct in its program, its training and purpose. Without any further introduction, the camp I am alluding to was named Jedel tor, suitably, the initials J.D.L.

Originally named the Pleasure Hills Bungalow Colony, the J.D.L. upon its occupation of the premises quickly eliminated any notions connected with "Pleasure Hill." Pleasure was something of the past for the dozens of youths who spent their summer at Jedel. From sunrise until the late hours of the night, six days a week, Jedel was brutal, both physically and mentally. The daily agenda at Jedel covered Torah study, ideology, Jewish history, karate, physical training, and weaponry. All of this was done under the guidance of competent Rabbis and instructors, both from Israel and the United States. The trainees, all between the ages of 13 and 18, responded to the rigorous program with an energy and zeal that remained a constant source of amazement to anyone privileged enough to witness the camp in operation.

Training Jews in self-defense is a necessary precaution to take when living in a world where history has often been hostile and cruel to Jews. It is the contention of the J.D.L. that if Ku Klux Klan camps in Alabama and other states are filled with eager youths, then there is no reason why we shouldn't have a camp to teach ours how to fight back if need be. Not to have such a camp, then, would be self-destructive. There is no evil in teaching young Jews to defend themselves; the only evil would be if we had to defend ourselves but couldn't. That would be a sin.

It is to such camps as those owned by the Klan that Jedel is dedicated and its administrators and followers that the J.D.L. attributes its existence, for without the Jew-hater the J.D.L. would not be necessary.

But Jedel must not merely be viewed as a training camp. More importantly, Jedel should remain a perpetual reminder that wherever there is Jewish pain and wherever Jewish rights are being trampled upon, all Jews in the community at large must reach and take a firm stand. Vigilance is necessary. For those youths who graduated Jedel, Never Again is not an empty slogan, but it is a commitment to act positively and constructively when a fellow Jew is in need, thus insuring that we Never Again will be silent.

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Rosh Hashanah Thoughts

Moshe Orenbuch

Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzato said in his introduction to Messilat Yesarim, "I have written this work not to teach men what they do not know, but to remind them of what they already know and what is very evident to them." So too, this article will discuss many of the basic ideas behind Rosh Hashanah and the thoughts we should be thinking at this time of the year.

Rosh Hashanah—the Day of Judgement—is the time when all the people of the world are judged according to their actions of the previous year. Chazal in Rosh Hashanah (16a) say that on Rosh Hashanah all the people pass before Hashem individually, like sheep who are counted for the giving of the tithe. Hashem gives each person his own chance to stand up to a fair trial. Furthermore, at this trial three books are open before G-d in his process of judgment. All of humanity is placed in one of these three books. Those whose merits are greater than their sins are immediately placed in the book of the righteous. The names of those whose sins are greater than their merits are placed in the book of sinners. Those who are on the borderline have their names placed in the book of "borderline cases." This topic will be discussed at greater length later in this article.

The question has been raised: Why are we judged on Rosh Hashanah? Firstly, on Rosh Hashanah the creation of the world was completed. This creation was originally done through the name of Elokim—G-d's attribute of judgement. Later, Hashem saw that the world could not exist solely on the Middat Haddin, but at this time the world was created with justice.

Secondly, it was on this day Adam stood trial for his sin, repented, and was forgiven. When this happened G-d declared that just as on this day Adam was judged and forgiven, so, too, will all His children be judged on this day and forgiven.

How does Hashem judge us? We are all categorized into one of three categories. However, merits and sins are not counted numerically. They are all of differing importance. This importance is determined by Hashem. One righteous deed can cancel many wrong deeds and conversely one bad deed can cancel many good ones. We see this in the mitzvah of Shiluach hachan—the sending away of the mother bird before removing the eggs from the nest. This is one of the easiest commandments to perform, yet its reward, longevity, is the same as that for

honoring parents, one of the most difficult commandments to perform.

Therefore the Rambam tells us that each person must always see himself on the borderline. He must feel that if he does the right thing he will save himself, but if he does the wrong thing he will jeopardize his very existence.

Rav Dessler in his Mikhtav Me'Eliyahu writes that through the three books of judgement G-d determines a person's spiritual level in Olam Habbah, the world to come. He goes on to say that included in this determination is a person's material and physical level since these are only given as a means to achieve a high spiritual level.

After we are judged we have until Yom Kippur to do T'shuva repent and return to Hashem. This period of time is when G-d is most open to our prayers. We see the contrast between the judgement of Hashem and a corporeal king. A king would judge those that he loves in a time when he is pleased and those whom he doesn't like at a time when he is angry. Not so with Hashem Yitbarakh. He judges all people at a time when he is open to repentance, to give them all an equal chance. No situation is hopeless.

How does one repent? There are three basic steps to T'shuva. The first is regret; the person must truly regret his sins. Then he must confess his sins through the appropriate prayers. The third step is resolving never to repeat the same sin. Our sages tell us that one who says "I will sin, then later I will repent" will never be granted the chance to repent.

Rav Dessler brings down the midrash on Parshat Nitsavim which discusses the difference between Jews and non-Jews. The midrash asks, "Why is it that all cultures of the world have died out, whereas Judaism has remained?" The midrash answers that when Hashem punishes other nations, they get angry, rebel, and thereby make matters worse for themselves. However, the Jews humble themselves and pray to Hashem for forgiveness. This repentance has kept the Jewish people alive throughout the millennia.

Rav Dessler continues, "The whole content of Rosh Hashanah is directed towards turning our hearts back to Hashem." He warns us not to have any illusions about ourselves. Only through the realization of the gravity of our situation can we approach the coming Rosh Hashanah with the proper attitude and state of mind. Let us all hope that our T'shuva is accepted and all are awarded a place in the book of the righteous.

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From David to Goliath:

Israel in the American Press

By JUDY ROSENFELD

Readers of American newspapers have become used to seeing more and more criticism of Israeli policies. Whether it appears in editorial columns, in coverage of U.S. government reactions to events like the Israeli raid at Baghdad or the bombing of Beirut, or whether it comes in what appears to be biased reporting, such criticism is no longer exceptional.

Prominent American journalists agree that Israel's image in the press has declined considerably since the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Some contend that the basic American sympathy toward Israel has not changed, but that this sympathy is no longer the sole ingredient in Mid-East coverage. They attribute this shift to various factors: Arab tactics in diplomacy and in public relations have become more effective. The complexity of the issues has only lately been fully appreciated, where once they seemed black and white. Also, some observers feel Prime Minister Begin has not been sensitive to world opinion. His public manner has been described by some reporters as "arrogant" and "abrasive."

From its establishment as a state in 1948 until the early '70s, Israel enjoyed an overwhelmingly flattering press. Israel was depicted as a tiny nation of heroes who survived Hitler's death camps and built a model society in a desert wasteland. Its military prowess in battle against hostile neighbors earned Israel the reputation of a David, surviving by its wits despite the superior might of the Arab Goliath.

When the press abandoned such idealized images—and it was bound to as its treatment of Middle East affairs matured—Israel stood to lose the most.

ACCESS AND CREDIBILITY

Journalists point out that balanced reporting on the Middle East had long been inhibited by lack of media access to Arab countries, particularly in wartime. G. Jefferson Price III, editorial writer for the Baltimore Sun-papers and Mid-East correspondent from 1973 to 1975, recalls that "when a war broke out in the Middle East, the only place to go to cover it was Israel." Reporters were always given reliable, first-hand information, and were even ferried to the front lines. The veracity of Israel's press statements was rarely questioned. In contrast, getting reliable information from Arab capitals was nearly impossible.

The trust between Western journalists and Israel was breached for the first time in the early days of the Yom Kippur War. Price explains that Israel withheld information, and even misinformed correspondents about the extent of its losses. Although this was clearly done in order not to damage morale in the country, Israel's credibility was hurt.

Until 1973, most major newspapers did not even station correspondents in Arab countries. Between 1967 and 1973, says Price, American attention was riveted on Viet Nam, and the Middle East's potential as an international hot-spot went unrecognized. It was only with the Yom Kippur War that the Middle East emerged as a critical focus of attention for the American news media.

As the war ended, droves of reporters followed Henry Kissinger into the Arab "confrontation states," opening up what had virtually been a media vacuum. The OPEC oil embargo gave added weight to Arab demands for world attention. Abruptly and by default, Americans became sensitized to Arab viewpoints. Americans' resentment of their utter dependence on

Arab oil was mixed with the realization that the Arab bloc was a power to be reckoned with, no longer a collection of stereotypical backward despotisms.

At the same time, Israel's cautiousness during the cease-fire negotiations was viewed by some observers as intransigence. Doyle McManus, New York correspondent for the Los Angeles Times and Beirut correspondent from 1979 to 1981, states that during these negotiations, Americans saw "the first signs of diplomatic responsibility on the part of Arabs...especially Sadat." "Sadat," McManus adds, "has singlehandedly altered the image of the Arabs. He caused us to reexamine our perceptions." Jerusalem Post Washington correspondent Wolf Blitzer concurs: he feels that Sadat's charisma and willingness to work out a peace treaty with Israel helped raise the Arab's stature enormously. It was his moderation that dispelled the old "bad guy" image of the Arab bully intent on pushing Israel into the sea.

Concurrently, the Arabs seemed to become more aware of the importance of public relations. They vastly improved their propaganda techniques and were particularly successful in popularizing the Palestinian issue. Jim Feron of The New York Times notes that a new openness was evident to Western journalists in Arab countries, enabling reporters to see the Arab side of the story in more "human" terms.

Not all agree that increased exposure has helped the Arabs. Diplomatic correspondent for the Baltimore Sun-papers Henry Trehwhitt maintains that though Arab propaganda has influenced American opinions on Middle-East issues to an extent, a wider exposure to Arab society has not led to a greater sympathy for the Palestinian and Arab agendas. "I've talked to many Arabs and Palestinians," states Trehwhitt, "and below the elite, you find a high degree of intolerance for Israel. I don't think I would come out more sympathetic towards the Arabs had I been stationed there."

While Israel's liberal press policy has always served in its favor by inviting reporters to record Israeli achievements, as well as covering wars from Israel's position, it has also made the country more vulnerable to criticism. Not only are there several Israeli newspapers critical of the Begin government, but there is also a vocal opposition ready to denounce government policy to reporters standing by with open notebooks and tape recorders. Blitzer of the Jerusalem Post feels that the vast amount of information on internal dissent in Israel encourages the international press to look more closely, and critically, at Israel's policies.

This is in direct contrast to the majority of Arab states, where censorship and repressive regimes prohibit in-depth views of government and society. Although L.A. Times correspondent McManus feels that today Israel's military censorship is even tighter than that of the Arab countries, it remains true that American reading audiences are exposed to far more information on Israeli life than on life in Arab countries.

"IT'S ALL IN THE DELIVERY"

Some journalists see the turning point in press coverage of Israel not in 1973 but in 1977, the year that Menachem Begin was first elected Prime Minister. Mike Berlin took office, "Israel seems not aggrieved, rather intransigent, because Begin states his goals in a less than tactful way." According to Henry Trehwhitt of the

Baltimore Sun-papers, Begin has damaged Israel's image in the American press to an "almost incalculable degree." Trehwhitt believes that although the Labor Party might not differ very much in policy from the Likud party now in power, Labor "has a far keener sense of press relations." Reporters say that Begin's manner of addressing the press, at least as much as the content of what he is saying, hurts Israel. "He has created an image of near inflexibility," says Trehwhitt.

The reporters, who are closely attuned to U.S. government reaction to Israeli policies and actions, agree almost unanimously that Prime Minister Begin has badly undermined support for Israel in this country.

Shmuel Moyal, Press Officer at the Israeli Consulate in New York, responds that Begin's "first priority is to Israel and the Israeli people and not to the international press. Our safety and survival are at stake."

It is clear that reporting on the Middle East is much more sympathetic to the Arabs today than it was ten years ago. Many reporters feel that the experience of covering Viet Nam, where many were stationed before being sent to the Middle East, has made them more sensitive to the need to cover both sides fairly.

Being fair to both sides can be a daunting task in the Middle East, with its set of delicate and ambiguous issues. L.A. Times correspondent McManus notes that "there is no single policy statement you can take out of a Palestinian congress or an Israeli party platform and say 'this is what they stand for.'" He explains that good foreign reporters should be to a certain degree sympathetic to the people and the cause they are covering, for the simple reason that the journalist is there to explain why people act as they do. "To do that, you must present their reasons in their terms. This doesn't mean he is sympathetic himself," he adds.

The question seems to be, then, not whether or not Israel has a critical press, but whether it has a fair press. Most correspondents who have covered the Middle East for any length of time feel that the press has been fair to Israel. Though they acknowledge that Israel has a critical press today, they feel it is tempered with understanding. There are some harsh critics of the American press, however, to point to what they perceive as severe inequities in editorial representation in such major publications as the New York Times and Time Magazine, both of which have been accused of presenting pro-Arab positions without adequate balance.

Press Officer Moyal feels that, on the whole, Israel still enjoys a fair press, but he concedes that "we do have some problems with the editorial page of The New York Times."

To concerned supporters of Israel, the American press will seem more hostile than it does to the reporters who write for it. The correspondents maintain that not all criticism is undeserved. They note that reporting critical U.S. reactions to Israeli policy statements is not unfair; it merely reflects the ambivalence of the U.S. toward some of Israel's positions.

Effective monitoring of Israel's standing in the American press demands a consideration of the conflicting elements in Mid-East coverage. Yet Israel's supporters have good reason to be concerned about its ailing media image.

JSPS 1981

Kolbo: Jewish Discovery Through Art

By C.J. COHEN

The Kolbo gallery of Jewish art in Boston is not your typical arts and crafts store. To be sure, Kolbo sells beautiful graphics, photographs, sculpture and pottery. But Kolbo offers significantly more: its works of art reflect the appreciation of Jewish culture and tradition of its owner, Billy Mencow. Mencow, a 27 year old former graduate student in ancient Semitic languages, tries to make sure that every one of his patrons understands the tradition and history behind each piece of artwork he sells.

This unique approach has attracted the attention of many in the Boston Jewish community. "Since Kolbo, there is a place for artists and craftspeople to show American Judaism," Mencow says. "The store serves a spiritual, economic and communal need. It's also a place where graphic artists and craftspeople can display their work for the first time."

Because much of the artwork in Kolbo is so beautiful, people occasionally miss the religious significance of the pieces they buy. "People come to the store who would never buy a Jewish menorah. They see something that looks like it fits with someone they know and they want to buy it." This does not bother Mencow. To him, these people are continuing a Jewish tradition.

"What else do people of the Book have in common aside from being Jews and having a mezuzah on their door? They have a common history as practicing Jews or non-practicing Jews; they can see Joseph and his coat of many colors, or Sarah and Isaac, or something having to do with creation and identify with it without talking about it."

Since Jewish art is his love as well as his living, Mencow also sees himself as an educator. For example, when a soon-to-be married couple comes to Kolbo for a kid-

dush cup, he will explain to them the significance of drinking wine during the wedding ceremony. He said that many of his customers rarely go to a synagogue and have no way of learning the religious significance and historical tradition behind the high quality art.

In addition to displaying photographs, calligraphy, sculpture, and graphics, Kolbo regularly houses one-person art shows. This year, Kolbo will have a pottery show from California, a sculpture show from Boston, and a graphics show from New York. Year-round, the store is filled with a sprinkling of photographs from the Soviet Union and many pictures with Biblical or Israeli themes.

Kolbo's wares incorporate a mixture of traditional and modern elements. Instead of the traditional picture of the mother lighting the Sabbath candles by herself, one print shows male and female family members lighting them together. A brightly painted sculpture depicts a Hassid on a moped. A more traditional bronze sculpture captures scenes from life in Jerusalem. Another artist interprets the Holocaust—orange flames enclosing a family photograph.

Mencow has discovered that working with artists is not easy. He finds they frequently miss deadlines, but points out that such problems are a necessary component in an artist's creative process. He is a very patient man. "You have to tailor your business to a lot of miscommunication and get a hold on it. Otherwise you'd go out of business real quick."

When future generations look at contemporary Jewish art, what will they remember? The burning bush enclosing the family photograph. The Hassid on the moped. The bronze sculpture of a young boy asking the four questions during Passover. Perhaps all of these speak about the Jewish experience at Kolbo, a Hebrew word meaning a little bit of everything.

JSPS 1981

Community Leader Dies

By JOSH TEPLY

On August 20, 1981, Fay Rotenberg, 69, died in Boston after a brief illness. During her lifetime, Mrs. Rotenberg distinguished herself as a community leader who had the fortitude and sensitivity, unique to but a few, to rally a number of Jewish causes worthy of her attention.

Assiduously active in the Greater Boston Jewish community, Mrs. Rotenberg was formerly advisor to the B'nai Brith Youth Organization as well as a life time member of Hadassah and of Beth Israel Hospital in Boston, where she held the position of Evening Supervisor of Nurses. As a nurse, her excellence was duly noted when she was chosen as a recipient of the Kaufman Award from Beth Israel Hospital as that institution's outstanding nurse. Mrs. Rotenberg was also recently named "Woman of the Year" by the Business and Professional Group of Boston's Hadassah, which glowingly summed up her sanguine attitude as "selfless devotion and zealous service."

Mrs. Rotenberg, a reknown interior decorator and winner of many prestigious

regional as well as national awards for her decorating finesse, was owner and proprietor of The Rug Gallery on Newbury Street in Boston.

Not limiting her myriad activities to the Boston locality, Mrs. Rotenberg assumed the national vice-presidency of Yeshiva University Women's Organization (YUWO). Attuned to her vibrance and keen resourcefulness, Yeshiva University honored Fay Rotenberg with a Distinguished Service Award. Mrs. Rotenberg's successes as vice-president of YUWO are many and noted, but she will, in all probability, be remembered by the student body as the individual who not only donated money for three student social lounges but personally decorated all three as well. Her decorating proficiency created three lounges striking in their beauty as well as in their versatility.

Mrs. Fay Rotenberg's unaffected sensitivity characterized all she accomplished and will be inspiration for the many that worked with her and were helped by her.

Hamakon who yinachem etchem b'toch shaar avlai tzion y'rushaliyim.

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Book Review

The Journeys of David Toback, by Carole Malkin. 216 pp. New York: Shoken Books, 1981.

By NEIL REISNER

Those of us not fortunate enough to have grandparents to regale us with stories of Jewish life in the Old Country often feel a void in our Jewish identities. It is as if our past only begins in America; there is little to connect us with our ancestors except for history books and words of Sholom Aleichem, I.B. Singer, and other storytellers. But folktales and history are not the same as direct links. Nothing compares to firsthand knowledge about the lives and times of our forebears.

Carole Malkin is more fortunate than most of us. Her grandfather, David Toback, not only told stories, but he sat down on Armistice Day, 1933 and wrote his memoirs, filling five notebooks with neat Yiddish script.

Malkin discovered the notebooks some 40 years later, had them translated and after extensive research and a bit of fictionalizing, mostly to flesh out certain characters—published the result as a book that chronicles David Toback's life from his birth in 1875 to 1898, when he arrived in New York from Russia.

The Journeys of David Toback is, first, a record of the experiences of one man during a particular time in Jewish history. But, more important, despite the fact that David Toback was exceptionally intelligent and adventuresome, it is the chronicle of a life similar to the lives of many of our own relatives. As a result, the book provides a unique connection to the past, especially for those whose family connections may be few.

The book is simply written, after the fashion, one hopes, of the actual memoir. (Upon completing the book, Malkin donated the five notebooks to the Jewish National Library at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.) Even the chapter headings give a sense of the book's simplicity: "I begin to write my memoirs," "I learn to be independent," "The military and the matchmaker try to draft me," etc.

The reader travels with David Toback from his birth in the village of Shumsk, near Dunbow, where David's family were the only Jewish residents, to the yeshiva to which he is sent after impressing a group of Hassidic notables attending his bar mitzvah.

As David travels to Kishinev to pursue his studies, there are interfamily squabbles and the continuous struggle to make a living as well as insights into life under the czar and the roles of men and women in daily life.

Leaving the yeshiva, David works on a farm belonging to a wealthy Jewish landowner, marries, becomes a forester, loses his livelihood when a forest he owns burns down, and ultimately leaves for America.

David Toback was no ordinary grandfather. The innate intelligence and perceptiveness that impressed the Hassidic rebbe who arranged for his education shine through the entire book. It is indeed fortunate that Toback had a grand-daughter who was able to recognize the importance of the document he left and who was able to fashion it into a coherent whole without unnecessarily injecting her own persona.

The Journeys of David Toback would stand on its own even as fiction; for the American Jew searching for first-hand knowledge about life in the shtetl, the book is even more valuable.

The Journeys of David Toback is, quite simply, wonderful.
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Responsa Project

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for the literature-searching by the computer. These texts are converted to computer tape and/or disk, word by word. Research topics, phrases, or single words are referred to the computer, the texts are scanned word by word, and a source list of the relevant source material is printed out. Almost any research topic can be documented in this manner. An additional service offered by the computer is a printout of the text of any relevant responsa needed by the scholar.

The entire storehouse of information in Bar Ilan's computer has been copied verbatim and transferred to another data base in Manhattan. A telephone hook-up to YU would have enabled the group here to do the same type of topic-searching as the Israeli group.

Rabbi Yitzhak Ginsburg, Rosh Yeshiva in MYP and Professor of Mathematics in YC, who has been Director of the Responsa Project at YU, points out that the most difficult part of the programming involved the Hebrew grammar, not

the alphabet. Since the computer needed to be able to pick out words and phrases containing the key word, the computer had to "learn" every type of prefix, suffix, and conjugation that might conceivably mask the root of the word.

It should be noted that there are other groups involved in promoting technological advances in all aspects of Jewish life. The Siman Umesorah Institute in Brooklyn has a Torah Law Reference Service in progress. The Institute for Computers in Jewish Life in Chicago has developed computer programs in many areas of Jewish education and is involved in other related areas. The Rudman Foundation of Far Rockaway, New York, has made available a Torah Microfiche library. One 4-inch file case contains the entire Shas, Mishne Torah, Shulchan Arukh, and Mishna B'rura, and many more texts are being prepared.

The response to these projects has been minimal, but like anything else, new things take time to catch on. The day of the one-shelf library is not far off.

P'TACH at Yeshiva

(Continued from Page 1)

regular high school tuition so the program relies heavily on private donations. Nevertheless, no student has ever been turned away from the program for financial reasons.

At first it may be difficult to explain the rapid growth in the number of students in the program since there has not been an increase in learning disabled students in the New York area. But now, with the greater availability of information and programs such as this one, an increasing number of parents are willing to bring their children forward. Learning disabilities are hard to recognize and even harder for some parents to accept. Several steps are involved, the first of which is to understand the problem. Then, parents must face the problem, to admit to themselves that it does exist. Finally, they must determine what to do about the problem, such as applying for the program at the Yeshiva High schools. Unfortunately, however, many parents stop at this point and do not pursue any options, thinking they have already done their part. This is why the counselling service, which is part of the program, is so important.

Today, the program provides parallel classes in all the regular high school courses as well as alternative classes. These classes teach vocational skills, such as computer programming, industrial arts, such as electric and wood shops, and basic life skills to help the individual cope in today's diverse world. The students participate fully in all student organizations and extra-curricular activities. Soon the program will have a staff psychologist and will offer speech and language therapy. The students have been fully accepted by their peers in the high schools, and the faculty in both high schools have been extraordinarily cooperative with the program directors in helping those students from the program who are attending regular classes.

Thus, the goals of the P'TACH program remain to provide instruction based on individual needs while maintaining regular curriculum requirements, enabling students to graduate with N.Y. State diplomas, as a few of them will this year. While recognizing that there is no cure for these problems, the students can prepare for a normal life despite their mild disabilities. As the demand for such programming increases, more yeshivot will institute similar programs based on, and assisted by, the model set by YU's high schools.

RIETS Plan

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promote close Rebbe-talmid contact.

This past year the first cycle of the restructured Supplementary Rabbinics Program was completed. Presently, all incoming smicha students are required to take a Survey Course in their first year which introduces them to various smicha opportunities and challenges. This year the survey includes courses in halachah l'maaseh of ishut v'agunah, pastoral psychology, outreach, organizational fund-raising, service for the aged, musical service of the synagogue, and army, civilian and campus chaplaincy. Second year students are asked to make a decision as to what track he wishes to pursue. The tracks he may choose from are pulpit, chinuch and chaplaincy, with the course of study directed along the particular track. Third year students will enter the very successful shumush phase of the program. Shimush participants have been placed in various congregations and institutions including M.T.A., Manhattan Day School and Shaarei Torah-Iti.

Several students will continue learning in the voluntary fourth year of smicha initiated last year. Rabbi J. David Bleich serves as the coordinator of the fourth year program which combines in-depth learning essentially in problems of halachah l'maaseh, with the valuable experience to be gained through shimush. Many musmachim continue into a fourth year of learning in Kollel, and in general there is a tremendous amount of learning taking place as is evident in the establishment of these expanded programs.

Another Yom Iyun will take place for RIETS students November 2 and 3. Talmidim will be hearing about career opportunities from several Roshei Yeshiva including Rabbi Lamm. The Yom Iyun provides students with the opportunity to meet the faculty over meals and in an informal atmosphere for the two days.

The Yeshiva Program continues to offer its weekly optional shiurim. As in the past, Rav Alpert will give shiurim in Chumash and in Bekius, Rav Bronspegel in Minchas Chinuch and Rave Shachter in Hilchot Avelut.

Beis Yitzchok, the journal of S.O.Y. will be coming out soon with its collection of Chidushim from talmidim and rabbeim of the Yeshiva.

Hopefully, in the new year of 5742, we will continue to witness the growing ambience of Torah in the many divisions of Yeshiva.

(Continued from Page 1)

A manufacturing consultant in Israel has been running a program which demonstrates to Israeli companies and industries how to become Shomer Shabbat while still maintaining the same levels of productivity. The "Shabbat laws" promoted by the Aguda would set this program back several years. Said one official, "No one can be forced to be Shomer Shabbat. All this will accomplish is make an 'Apikores' out of an 'Am-Haaretz!'"

This increasing intervention of religious laws into their private lifestyle has infuriated many anti-religious groups, and has spilled over into the general public as a lingering distrust of, and disdain for, the Orthodox Jew—be he a follower of Aguda or not. A popular bumper sticker in Israel reads "Ani B'd M'dinat Chok V'lo M'dinat Aguda (I support a nation run by law, not a nation run by Aguda)."

Unfortunately, it is not just bumper stickers which are speaking out. Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek, speaking of his own city, said he lived in a place where religious Jews take government money for schools where they teach their children to be anti-Zionist.

President Yitzchak Navon, popularly labeled as a "religious" president, publicly ridiculed the Orthodox concept of the Mashiach. He also negated the existence of religious Zionism. In a position strangely resembling that of the ultra-orthodox right wing, he said that modern Zionism and the hope for the arrival of the Mashiach are contradictory philosophies.

The anti-Orthodox backlash has also appeared in other places. On July 28, the National Council of Young Israel reached an agreement with the president of Haifa University to establish a Young Israel branch on the university's campus. On August 18, when NYCI representatives met with him again, he said the deal was off. He proceeded to lash out at the religious community as a whole, saying that it was "hardly the time" for such an endeavor. The university's board was afraid that given a springboard like a shul, the members of the shul would begin to force their ideas on the campus. The Young Israel officials were shocked and appalled by this unexpected reaction. Only after adding an amendment to the original contract (that the Young Israel and its members would not "interfere or disturb with any activities being carried out in any other part of the campus...") was the agreement reconfirmed.

The protests at the City of David excavations have been a major factor in the latest wave of controversy. When the "N'turei Karta" began to protest the

excavation site, and Rabbi Goren came out against the digging, the "chilonim" again felt an infringement by the religious group into a purely secular matter. Leaders of the "N'turei Karta" have gone so far as to propose a joint memorandum to the United Nations, together with Sheikh Sa'ad Eddin Alami, the mufti of Jerusalem, to remove holy sites from government hands. Minister of Education Zevulun Hammer was almost forced to resign when he was politically trapped between the two groups. He subsequently issued a temporary ban on further digging, but that order was overturned by the Israeli High Court, and the excavations—and protests—continue.

The anti-religious groups continued to scream about the religious tyranny, while the "N'turei Karta" protestors yelled "police brutality" when their protest-ranks were broken by police on horseback.

Within governmental offices, small-scale battles were being fought. A program for urban renewal in slum areas around the country ran into trouble when religious officials complained that there was no religious component to the project. And conversely, sixty scholarships for Americans coming to learn for a year in Israel were cancelled at the last minute—after the students had arrived in Israel—because of a missed deadline. An American official involved with the program says that it was probably just one lone civil servant in the Ministry of Finance who wanted to "get back" at the religious community. Deadlines in Israel are always ignored, he claims, and the group already had permission to skip the deadline anyway.

Meanwhile, another religious controversy is brewing. The Conservative Jewish movement is pushing for recognition by world Jewry. Orthodox groups have largely ignored such movements toward religious pluralism in the past, but the pressure is increasing dramatically.

The growing rifts between the Conservative, Reform and Orthodox movements are causing great concern in many circles within the Jewish community. Conservative and Reform conversions and "gittin" are creating some very controversial questions of religious status in Orthodox circles. The Mizrahi Party has threatened to walk out of the World Zionist Organization's 18th convention if that body accepts religious pluralism, but some Orthodox rabbis have indicated some willingness to recognize the Conservative "get."

The constant religious turmoil will no doubt damage world-wide public support for Israel, but the full extent of that damage remains to be seen.

Thoughts on Who Is A Jew

(Continued from Page 7)

mourning the passing of Josef Stalin. Maybe Reform can survive the memory of Abraham Geiger, Isaac Mayer Wise, and Maurice Eisendrath. Why do they not run their own slate of candidates? Do they dare? Why not? Surely their well-paid press spokesmen will be able to rationalize to interested reporters why the voters rejected them at the polls.

Whether or not the Synagogue and State are to be separated in Israel is something for the voters of Israel to decide. And it is about time that we all realized that religious issues are not inherently devoid of deep political significance. Consider all the money spent on making "shlichim" out of miserably incompetent political lackeys. (Mizrachi and Mapam shlichim being notable exceptions). Consider the hours of haggling behind closed doors in

smoke-filled rooms as Israeli politicians bewail yerida and neshira.

The religious parties, alone, have a fool-proof solution. Add together all the yordim and noshim, and it means nothing in demographic terms when compared with the abortion holocaust that has exterminated so many defenseless, unborn Israelis. Increase religious education, provide draft deferments for ba'alei teshuva, finance yeshivot, stop abortion—and yerida will stop. The demographic tragedy will turn around. The army will have more soldiers because religious families have more children. Are these merely "religious" issues? Hardly. They penetrate the heart of Israel's political future. We have every right to raise them in the political arena.

And we must. With all due respect to Elizabeth Taylor and to Sammy Davis, Jr.

Some Thoughts On Who Is A Jew and What Is a Smokescreen

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thodox are dividing the Jewish people. This is wanton hate. The Temple was destroyed because of wanton hate."

Yes. And the temple was destroyed because the Sabbath was desecrated. Who is dividing the Jewish people? I love Alex Schindler. I publicly extend an invitation to him to eat in my house. I cannot eat in his. I cannot eat in the house of someone not kosher, though he can eat in mine. Who is dividing the Jewish people?

Our sons and daughters cannot marry "Reform" and "Conservative" converts — this is not a question of preference; there is no choice for us — but their sons and daughters may marry our converts. Who is dividing the Jewish people?

A young girl could not marry the kohen with whom she fell in love because of a "Reform rabbi" non-conversion. Who is dividing the Jewish people?

If a woman divorces "Reform" or "Conservative" style, without an halakhic Get, her future offspring are forbidden to marry in to the Jewish mainstream. We can play games with people's lives, but what can we tell the manzer who is a ba'al teshuva and is the first one to recognize the curse he faces? How easy everything could have been had the mother divorced according to halakha! But she did not, and now it is too late. So, tell me, who is dividing the Jewish people?

Who is a Jew? The child of a Jewish mother, or someone converted according to the laws of Judaism. Any other definition brings us closer to the day when all Jews will need to show pedigree papers before going out on their first date. If false conversions are not curbed, then two generations from now, everyone will be a "Jew," and we won't know who is really a Jew. Which girls are "kosher" and will bear Jewish children, and which girls are "non-halakhically converted" (i.e., non-Jewish) and will therefore bear non-Jewish children for our sons?

Yes, who is dividing the Jewish people? Let us finally touch on some minor, but relevant, points. I am a rebbe at Rogosin Yeshiva High School. I have Russian and Iranian students who are not yet American citizens. They won't become citizens for some time. American citizenship is precious. It is not presented to everyone like a massage-parlor handbill. It is precious. It takes time to earn American citizenship.

But is that fair? Why should a fine, upright Russian or Iranian Jew have to go to so much trouble to get American citizenship papers, when there are so many native-born Americans who have their citizenship intact despite lives of crime, long jail sentences, and continued unproductive and deleterious public behavior? Why? The answer is so obvious that no one asks the question.

And why is it so hard, according to halakha, to become a full-fledged Jew despite outstanding personal characteristics. The standards are high, and outsiders—though welcome—must meet the standards and show patience. The pursuit of the title "Jew"—if that title is to mean anything—cannot be less challenging than the pursuit of the title "American."

Point number two: American citizenship law, for 200 years, has denied incoming homosexuals the right to become American citizens. The implications are awesome, and they transcend the question of homosexuality per se.

Point number three: Israel is a surprisingly free society (as long as you are not a Jewish religious-nationalist, in which case you may be summarily swept off the streets—as were hundreds of Gush Emunim members when Jimmy Carter traveled to Jerusalem—or you may be held for weeks in jail without ever being charged with committing a crime, as happened last year to Rabbi Meir Kahane). Israel provides religious freedom,

and then some. If anything, Israel leans over backwards. Jews are kept away from the Temple Mount—including those places permitted by the Chief Rabbinate—while Arabs defile the sacred soil. Jews are, to this day, denied basic religious rights at M'arat Ha-Machpela to keep the Moslems happy. Christian missionaries run around Israel like vultures hovering over carcasses in the desert sun.

In such a Jewish state, non-observant Jews have plenty of rights. They continue to murder fetuses. They may leave their bodies to be cut up after the souls have departed therefrom. They drive their cars on Shabbat. They go to the beaches on Shabbat. "Basar Lavan" is sold and eaten by Jews. There are prostitutes. Soccer stadiums fill up on Saturdays. They may build "temples," and they have even begun to build "kibbutzim."

There is no greater lie, no more egregious canard, than to say that Israel discriminates against "Reform and Conservative Jews." It is a lie even bigger than Hitler's.

If Israel discriminates, it discriminates against "Reform rabbis" and "Conservative rabbis." These charlatans are treated as such. Their divorces are not recognized. Hopefully, their conversions will not be recognized. Their authority as expounders of the Torah is not recognized. So, yes, they face discrimination. Just as priests, ministers, and imams would face if they were to claim that they deserve recognition as rabbis and that their conversions should be accepted as Jewish.

But non-observant Jews face no discrimination. And if the "ultra-Orthodox" (is Khomeini "ultra-Moslem," Kadafi "ultra-crazy," Arafat "ultra-terrorist," or Brezhnev "ultra-Communist?") have their way, nothing will change. Only the pseudo-rabbis and their non-Jewish non-converts will be affected.

And, finally, point number four: the question of religious parties' rightful role in the Israeli democratic process. The "Reform" and "Conservative" "rabbis" have raised yet another smokescreen, which Orthodoxy has not yet adequately addressed. They say it is unfair for the religious parties, whose numbers constitute such a small and insignificant percentage of the total Knesset, to "force their views on the majority."

Indeed! And what about the fairness of American democracy, where a small minority (Jews, comprising 3 percent of the American population) have worked the democratic process to win American financial and military support for Israel—even when it came at the expense of other American interests? Is that wrong? Is that unfair? What do they respond when hostile journalists launch editorial tirades against the "small but overly influential American Zionist lobby?"

They respond firmly and clearly: we have the right as citizens in a free country to lobby for legislation which we believe is in our national interest. There is nothing wrong with fighting for our beliefs within the proper legislative channels, despite our numerical insignificance.

Good. Fine. Wonderful. And the religious parties have that same right in Israel. They are doing no more. They are entitled to no less.

And who says that only 13/120 of the Israeli electorate want stronger religious expression in the country? How many Likud voters chose the Begin line specifically to prevent a Labor victory because of a fear that Shimon Peres would keep his promise to weaken the Torah community of Israel if elected? How many reasoned that Peres' promises to "Conservative" and "Reform" demanded that they vote Likud, regardless of the cost to Mafdal?

And how many Sephardic voters of Likud would sympathize with policies aimed at institutionalizing "Reform" and "Conservatism" in Israel? The Sephardim, who comprise 55 percent of the

voters, never even heard of these deviationist movements back in North Africa.

And did not the votes for the seats won by the Tcheiya party come from an overwhelmingly Orthodox constituency? And how many additional Orthodox residents of Israel simply did not vote, for one foolish political reason or another?

The fact is that Orthodoxy is a potent force in Israel not because of political deals but because of sheer numbers and communal cohesion. They are at least as significant a population as Blacks are in America—and they vote in larger numbers. They assuredly have every right to lobby for Affirmative Torah Action.

Is abortion a religious issue? Then so is murder. If the state can outlaw one act against G-d, it can outlaw the other. Are autopsies a religious issue? Then so is property vandalism. If the state can forbid one, it can forbid the other.

El al workers, notorious for their myriad strikes and slow-downs which turned the Israeli airline into an un dependable, debt-ridden enterprise suddenly turn patriotic and ask, "How can El Al afford to remain closed on Shabbat?" Israeli dock workers, who strike more often than El Al workers, suddenly worry about Israel's economic future if the docks will remain closed in observance of Shabbat.

Hypocrisy is everywhere.

Has anyone stopped a moment to consider just what would happen in Israel if the secularists had their dream and there were no religious parties? Imagine a two-party system: Likud and Labor. Polls would show them running neck-and-neck. Each would out-do the other to make promises to special-interest groups, just as Democrats and Republicans do in the United States. And, just as Jews often have substantial political leverage in America because of our concentration in large electoral-vote states, so would the Orthodox community in Israel have extraordinary leverage. The Orthodox special-interest group, controlling a solid cohesive bloc of some 20% of the total vote, would wring concessions before election day from both parties on all the issues of the day. And they would be taken ever-more-seriously than are American Jewish voters as an interest group. (Republicans have learned to treat Jewish voters with skepticism because of American Jewry's insane compulsion: the driving need to vote liberal Democratic, regardless of Jewish self-interest. Orthodox Israelis, by way of contrast, are politically mature, responsive to both Labor and to Likud, swayed more by the issues than by the parties or by political personalities.) In the end, just as Carter and Reagan both adopted strongly pro-Israel platforms, so would Israel's political leaders—Begin and Peres/Rabin—adopt pro-religious platforms. The two parties would, furthermore, have a few token Orthodox MK's, just as the Republicans and Democrats each have their mandatory House and Senate Jews. The leverage of Orthodoxy would, thus, be increased by having inside forces pressuring Israel's two parties from within the leadership ranks. Such a prospect should disabuse secularists, for once and for all, of the notion that Orthodoxy is influential in Israel solely because of its political parties' abusing the rules of multi-party coalition politics.

To the degree that Orthodoxy finds itself more successfully established in Israel than is Reform, the reason is clear—and it has nothing to do with politics. While the Mizrahi movement—and, in their own way, Aguda—were laying the foundations for Torah in Israel, the Reform movement was still wrestling with anti-Zionism. The 1885 Pittsburgh Platform had renounced the dream of 2,000 years—to return to Zion. In Germany, Abraham Geiger—Reform's spiritual founder—had written that Jerusa-

lem's day had passed and that it was now a meaningless relic mourned over by fools. Reform took all references to Zion and Jerusalem out of the prayerbook; they castrated L'cha Dodi, erasing six of its nine paragraphs on the grounds that it was too "Zionistic." The 1899 convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations resolved: "We are unalterably opposed to political Zionism. The Jews are not a nation...Zion was a precious possession of the past...but it is not our hope of the future. America is our Zion..."

These Reformers prided themselves on being "progressive visionaries." They would make the daring leap out of medievalism and obscurantism into the twentieth century. The Torah and Zion had served their purposes; now it was time for a new day, a new vision, the vision of "Reform Judaism."

History has judged, as they had warned Orthodoxy it one day would. Only—and this is the poetry of G-d—it has judged Orthodoxy to have been the visionaries and "Reform" to have been acutely near-sighted. What poetry, what justice history has recorded: it was "Reform" who had lost touch with modernity, who had fallen victim to the obscurantism of German liberal Protestantism circa 1815. Orthodoxy, all the while, had forged ahead, boldly advocating Zionism under the Mizrahi banner into the twentieth century. Nothing better sums up the dichotomy than the words written by Moses Hess, a socialist of the 1800's who was far removed from Torah observance: "The threatening danger to Judaism comes only from those religious reformers who, with their newly invented ceremonies and empty eloquence, have sucked the marrow out of Judaism and have left only a shadowy skeleton...Their reforms have only a negative purpose—if they have any aim at all—to proclaim unbelief in our nationality as the foundation of the Jewish religion...They are at great pains to erase every echo and memory of it from their creed and worship. They imagine that a recently manufactured prayer book or a hymnal which contains a philosophical theme put into rhyme and accompanied by music, is more elevating and soul-stirring than the moving prayers in the Hebrew language which express the pain of our people at the loss of its fatherland—these prayers which created and preserved the unity of our religion and which are still the tie that binds all Jews all over the world."

So the Orthodox community owes no apologies to "Reform" for keeping the faith and building Torah institutions in Zion while recognized leaders of "Reform" were building the American Council for Judaism in the editorial offices of the New York Times. The visionaries have prospered at the expense of the myopic scoffers of yesteryear. That is why the Torah community can point to Mafdal and to Aguda and to Poalei Aguda and to B'nei Akiva and Yeshivot Hesder and to Chinchuk Atzma'i—while the entire world "Reform" movement can take pride in...one solitary kibbutz. (Orthodoxy's influence was graphically underscored when Alex Schindler flew to the Holy Land to participate in the kibbutz's Torah dedication ceremony. He was photographed wearing a yarmulka and a tallit, either of which providing ample cause for expulsion from twentieth-century services at Manhattan's glorious Temple Emanuel.)

Israel is a democracy. Its voters choose representatives based on debates conducted in public, shopping in the free market-place of ideas. Let "Reform" run a political party in the next Knesset elections. Let them challenge the religious parties. Mapam has survived the memory of the 1940's when it openly dreamed of Marxism and of the 1950's when it purchased full-page ads in Israeli dailies

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Contributing Editor

Who Is A Jew and What is a Smokescreen

Rabbi Dov Fisch

I am writing about "Who is a Jew" because I am not satisfied that, of the thousands of words that have been printed on the subject in the last three months, anyone has written what I am about to write in the tone that I will write it. So, I apologize for raising the issue again, and I pray that it will contribute to the discussion.

First, I begin with the following premise: Yisrael, af al pi she-khata, Yisrael hu. A Jew who sins - regardless of the sin - is still a Jew. Henry Kissinger is a Jew. I am a Jew. Alex Schindler is a Jew. Rav Moshe Feinstein is a Jew. Seymour Siegel is a Jew. The Rov is a Jew. Abbie Hoffman is a Jew.

I will fight to the last in defense of that paragraph. I have stood on cold, wintry nights in front of Reform temples ready to fight to the death against any Jew-hating vandal who would attack the building. I have lost hours of sleep as a synagogue rabbi helping Jews in need, despite their lack of observance. I have saved a non-observant woman from an estranged husband ready to kill her. I visit non-observant Jews in the hospital and pray for them. I am currently working with an intermarried Jewish girl who found out, only after it was too late, that Judaism opposes intermarriage. I have conducted bris milah ceremonies for non-observant Jews; I have eulogized their departed; I have named their children; I have seen to the redemption of their first-born sons.

And I have only just begun.

But, while I love my brother and sister Jew with all my heart, I do not, will not, and cannot countenance non-observance. I can recognize its existence, and in the cases of young people raised in the homes of hypocritical, non-observant families, I can even accept the reality. But I cannot accept it as the ideal Jewish expression.

And it is for that reason that I oppose "Reform Judaism" as I oppose Nazism. I oppose "Conservative Judaism" as I oppose Marxism. There is no compromise on one, and there is no compromise on the other. They are expressions of the evil which the Torah demands be extirpated from the heart of our nation.

But, while I hate "Reform Judaism," I love - dearly, with all my heart - Reform Jews. Or, at least, those who describe their non-observance in those terms. Is that irrational? Hardly. "The lovers of G-d hate evil." We chant those words every Friday night. And, yet, while I hate the evil, who am I to judge people? Who am I? I fear how I will be judged; who am I to judge others?

But I can judge "Reform" and "Conservative" because those are not individuals; they are institutions. Yes, but how do I know what is right and what is wrong? Has G-d spoken to me? Am I His prophet?

The answers are clear: No, I am not His prophet. Yes, He certainly has spoken to me. In His Torah.

Now, let us be clear. It is very unacceptable in the rational world to claim that "G-d spoke to me; He told me what He wants." But, what can I say? He has spoken to me! He has spoken to Seymour Siegel and Alex Schindler and to Henry Kissinger. In His Torah.

If someone rejects the Torah, that is his personal affair. He is rejecting G-d's word, but that is his own business. But let that person not seek to legitimize his trespass by saying the Word does not exist.

First and foremost, my problem with "Reform" - and "Conservative" is the same thing, for all intents and purposes - is not that "Reform Jews" sin. So do Orthodox Jews. So do I. My problem is that "Reform" and "Conservative" have legitimized sin; they have elevated non-

observance to a new plateau. It is an ideal. You can go to mikvah, or you can never to mikvah - either is an ideal of observance depending on which congregational body sends your synagogue its annual bill for dues.

Anyone has the right to sin; fear of Heaven is in no one's hands but those of the individual. But one one - repeat, no one - has the right to institutionalize non-observance as a legitimate expression of Judaism.

The Nazarene was a Jew who decided to create a new religion; others attribute the institutionalization of Christianity to Paul - also Jewish. Good, all is in the hands of Heaven with the exception of the fear of Heaven. If they want to form a new religion, that is between them and G-d. But let them be fair. Let them get their own pa-

"If someone rejects the Torah, that is his personal affair...But let that person not seek to legitimize his trespass by saying the Word does not exist."

tent, make their own name. Don't call it "Hebrew Christianity" or "Jewish Christianity" or "Christianized Judaism." It is a different religion with many similarities to Judaism - reverence for the Tanakh, priests, Palm Sunday/Sukkot, Halloween/Purim, Xmas/Chanukah, Church/Synagogue, Sunday/Shabbat, monotheism, etc. Yes, the similarities to Judaism are enormous. And the founders were all Jews who lived in Israel.

But don't call it "Christian Judaism" and don't call the clergymen "rabbi's." Call the religion "Christianity" and call the clergymen by their appropriate names.

I believe that "Reform Judaism" and "Conservative Judaism" have got to make up their minds whether they seek to remain in the Jewish fold or not. If a Jew eats pork on Yom Kippur while engaging in a homosexual act, that is his business. But let us stop this game of legitimizing such activity by saying that "this is no sin because I am a Conservative/Reform Jew, and my rabbi allows it."

If you are a Jew, it is a sin. If your religion and clergyman permits eating pork on Yom Kippur - or driving to synagogue on Shabbat - then your religion is not the Jewish faith, and your clergyman is not a rabbi.

And, if he is a rabbi, then the Rov is not a rabbi, and Rav Moshe is not a rabbi, and no one in the RCA is a rabbi because we are something else, participants in a different religion, the religion of Judaism.

Now, this is step one to any discussion of "Who is a Jew." It is about time that the Orthodox rabbinate stopped playing games in America and called spades what they are - spades. And, if that means that Orthodox rabbis should give up membership in the New York Board of "Rabbis" and in the "Synagogue" Council of America - well, so what else is new?

I have nothing against fifty Jews getting together, buying an organ, building a church (temple), and worshipping their "God" every Saturday. They can recite Psalms in Hebrew, in English, in French, in Spanish. They can hire someone to wear black robes and a white collar to pontificate sonorously on the latest New York Times book list. They can take out an ancient scroll of the Pentateuch and have women read from it. They can do whatever they please. They can do it on Christopher Street and West Street, or they can do it on Fifth Avenue. That is their business.

But it is not Judaism.

That is the bottom line. When Nancy Alcott, the professional golfer, tells the

Jewish Post & Opinion that she plays professionally on Yom Kippur because "I am a Reform Jew, so it is all right," who does she think she is kidding? I am not judging her. But I know that that is not Judaism.

When a homosexual "rabbi" goes around the country defending his lifestyle and cites his congregation's membership in the (Reform) Union of American Hebrew Congregations as proof of homosexuality's compatibility with Judaism, who is he kidding? Himself? Yes. Balfour Brickner? Always. But is he fooling the author of the Torah, the Creator of the Universe, who describes homosexuality as an "abomination?"

I am not judging homosexuals. Theirs is a serious problem, and it deserves compassion. But let us recognize that Judaism abhors it; it is an illegitimate act. When

someone seeks to legitimize homosexuality as being a mainstream Jewish expression, it is mendacity - and let us call it that.

The homosexual has two options, as does the violator of the Shabbat: he can accept Judaism and its Torah, and then deal with his problem starting from the perspective that there is a problem - or, he can choose to call his act a legitimate act, even an ideal act...and understand that his redefined system is not a Jewish system. On Saturday, he can form his homosexual congregation or his Temple Mehallei Shabbat, and he can worship. He can rejoice in his homosexuality and call up seven homosexuals to read from the writings of Plato. He can call up seven Sabbath violators to read from the constitution of the AFL-CIO or from the New York Post horsereading results or from the funnies. He can have a fellow dress up and make a sermon about the glory of playing the "Exacta" every Saturday at OTB. But let him not call it Judaism, and let us not call the clergyman a "rabbi."

This is the fundamental issue underlying the debate in Israel over "Who is a Jew." It is a misnomer. The issue is really "Who is a Rabbi?" And "What is Judaism?"

I was in the office of John Krug two years ago, and I will never forget the tragic phone call he received. A girl was engaged to marry a kohen. Her mother, years earlier - before she was born - had converted to Judaism, but there was no problem. A converted woman may not marry a kohen; her children are absolutely permitted to marry a kohen. But here is the problem: The daughter, while talking to her mother, found out after the engage-

ment that the mother had been converted not by a clergyman of the Jewish faith but by a "Reform rabbi." Clergymen of that religion do not use a mikvah as part of the conversion. The woman told her daughter that she had never immersed in a mikvah in her life. So the woman remains a non-Jew.

Now, of course, the daughter can still convert on her own to Judaism through a rav. But, as a convert, that girl could not marry a kohen. Because of one charlatan thirty years ago, this girl's life was ruined.

I once told the story talking to a group of non-observant Jews, and someone in the group had the audacity to compound the arrogance by saying that "Orthodoxy is to blame for its rigidity; you should let the girl marry the guy." What this ignoramus did not consider - I cleared up the matter - was that the girl herself, having studied Judaism and having become observant, refused to go ahead with the marriage. Her heart was broken, but she was the first one to call off the wedding.

Case number two: A young fellow who became a member of a Jewish activist group found out, after four years of mesirut nefesh, that his mother was converted by a "Reform rabbi" without a mikvah. So he, an emerging leader in the group, was not Jewish. He was the first one to acknowledge the tragedy. It took him four more years until he could find a rabbi to convert him according to halakha. He went through four years of hell. It did not have to be.

Recently, a letter writer to the Jersey Journal, eulogizing a deceased "Conservative rabbi," noted that he respected the "rabbi" so much that, when the rabbi's congregation began to dwindle, he - a Christian - would help out by being the tenth man in the minyan.

Better than 40% of "Reform" rabbi's perform intermarriages. Balfour Brickner, a leading example, once said he would refuse to read a homosexual out of the "Reform rabbinate" and would even refuse to ban a "Jew for Jesus" Reform rabbi. A "Reform rabbi" in Brooklyn once wrote in his temple bulletin that Chanukah comes out in December because that is when the pagans observed the winter solstice. While Michlala girls attend Bible classes at JTS (due to its proximity to Barnard, where their proud frum parents sent them), the "Conservative" movement has created a theology totally at odds with Judaism. G-d did not give Moses the Torah; he merely inspired it. It is a mitzva to drive a car on Shabbat. Husbands and wives can have relations without the benefit of mikvah. It is nice to have two sets of dishes, but outside is another story.

These are the issues.

And when we observant Jews raise the issues, our "Reform" and "Conservative" friends raise the smokescreen: "You Or-

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