

# HAMEVASER

A Student Publication of Traditional Thought and Ideas  
Published by The Jewish Studies Divisions of Yeshiva University

VOL. 20, NO. 6

1982 HAMEVASER

NEW YORK CITY

15 ADAR, 5742 MARCH 10, 1982

## New EMC Curriculum Evaluated



DEAN JACOB RABINOWITZ

This past semester was the first under which EMC operated under its new curriculum. The changes were initiated beginning in the Fall term and the new format has had its share of successes and failures.

The most evident change in the schedule was the introduction of new time slots to replace the traditional 9:00 a.m. - 10:40 a.m. and 11:00 - 12:40 periods which both EMC and JSS had been using. For a number of reasons the new system included the division of the morning into three class periods, 9:00-10:15, 10:20-11:15, and 11:20-12:50. This change was, in theory, meant to allow more personal expression in course choice. For those students who felt that studying Talmud until 10:40 was excessive, there was an option of attending shiur only until 10:15, since the class was divided into two parts: shiur until 10:15 and chazara until 11:10. The student who wanted more of a yeshiva-type curriculum could have shiur/chazara until 11:10 - an increase in study time over the previous Talmud format. One who did not want to have any course in Talmud was allowed to develop a "Talmudless schedule," in keeping with the intellectual freedom of the curriculum in EMC. The theory behind this change was well-received by the student body in a meeting with Dean Jacob Rabinowitz, who genuinely seemed not only to want to make EMC more palatable to prospective students, but also to genuinely deal with the needs of the students.

The shiur/chazara format was quite well observed by most instructors; however, there were some exceptions. One particular teacher made a point of having chazara until 10:00 and then beginning shiur. The fifteen minutes of shiur the student (who only registered until 10:15) heard could hardly be considered

worthwhile. One student failed this course as a consequence of his leaving class every day at 10:15 in order to attend another course. His teacher told him in the middle of the term he would fail the course for this "improper conduct." This problem was "remedied" in Spring '82 by the recommendation in a memorandum from Rabbi Rabinowitz that this Talmud course be taken for the full schedule, and that those who decided to register only part-time would be at a considerable disadvantage. Indeed, this is the case, but why offer this course part-time? It is evident that the instructor is not willing to deal with the problem at all. This problem leaves a student who possesses a strong ability in Talmudic study but who wants to have a more well-rounded education somewhat homeless. His only option is to attend a slightly lower shiur in which the instructor conforms to the new format. The problem here is that the rabbi who teaches this course is reputed among students to be exceedingly critical in evaluating student performance.

Below the level of this shiur, there is no Talmud class above the yeshiva high school level, according to student sentiment. This situation has allowed students with greater ability the opportunity to "take it easy" by attending a shiur well below his ability level.

The introduction of a two year elective cycle was an additional modification in the EMC course structure. Through this plan, students would be able to plan their schedules on a two-year basis, thereby taking full advantage of courses offered. This innovation has proven to be quite helpful and seems to be achieving its goal.

Other changes have been instituted in EMC which cannot yet be judged. These include the

possibility of obtaining an A.A. degree upon graduation in place of the previously offered H.S.D. The Hebrew Teacher's Diploma is still being offered and credit requirements for all degrees are being reduced in an effort to alleviate pressure during finals and midterms. In contrast to this, a "D" is no longer considered a passing grade in the P/F system according to a recent decision by Dean Rabinowitz. This is apparently an effort to reduce student apathy toward their P/F courses.

In evaluating the new face of EMC, one must conclude that the changes are primarily cosmetic rather than of a substantial nature.

More important than the changes that were made are the changes that have been requested on numerous occasions and are of an even more important nature. The serious EMC student who wishes to study Bible on an advanced undergraduate level is completely at a loss. With few notable exceptions, Bible is taught basically on a pre-collegiate level, according to student polls. If EMC is to serve its students as intended, it must offer the opportunity for the study of Tanach on a high intellectual plane. At this point, it does not. As previously mentioned, the available lower Talmud shiurim are not for the most part regarded to be serious college courses. The ramifications of this problem are obvious.

An additional problem is the use of Hebrew as the primary language of instruction. The debate over the value of using Hebrew for this purpose is an old one, and is no less pertinent today than ever before. Students who identify with the tenets of EMC but who have a deficiency in Hebrew language ability are regrettably prevented from pursuing this type of education. In addition, many teachers seem somewhat uncomfortable lecturing in Hebrew. This is reflected

[Continued on Page 7]

## Curriculum Committee to Evaluate Israeli Credits

By MORDECHAI TWERSKY

The Judaic Studies faculty of YC is becoming increasingly concerned with the amount of credit being awarded for Hebrew courses being given in Israel. They are particularly concerned about the quality of the courses taken, and even of the accuracy of the transcript reports.

### Evaluation of Yeshivot

The YC Hebrew faculty, in order to deal with these issues, has established committees which are currently evaluating the curricula of the Yeshivot to determine if they meet the academic standards of YC. Members of the faculty currently in Israel are personally checking into the courses concerned. These transferred courses are used to exempt students from the basic Hebrew requirement of YC. However, faculty members have questioned the academic level of these courses.

"Many of the Hebrew courses taught in Israeli Yeshivot do not meet the academic standards we have set," said Dr. Samuel Schneider, Assistant Professor of Hebrew at YC. "Students are simply not equipped with the proper knowledge of Hebrew grammar." He added that this affects the students' ability to analyze texts in both Bible and Talmud.

Dr. Michael Orlian, Associate Professor of Bible, said "students should not be automatically exempt from Hebrew 1-2 unless they have demonstrated competence in Hebrew grammar."

Although many faculty members of the Judaic Studies division of YC are quick to applaud the growing number of students learning in Israel—according to a faculty member, approximately 55 per cent of this year's entering class—they are concerned about these students' remaining deficient in knowledge of Hebrew grammar.

### Credit Squeeze

Students generally return from Israel with a year of credit and thus wish to graduate in three years while still taking a large number of required courses in addition to courses in their major field. Exemption from the basic Hebrew courses of the College has, in the past, helped alleviate this credit squeeze. Many, particularly the Office of Admissions, have expressed concern that elimination of these exemptions will discourage prospective students from attending YC. One faculty member acknowledged that a student having spent two years in Israel can graduate from various colleges in a year and a half. YC still generally requires three.

### YC Hebrew Revisions

The newly established curriculum committee of YC is currently re-evaluating the College's general Hebrew requirements. It has been revealed to Hamevaser that the elimination of the Hebrew 3.1 course is being seriously considered. Although no concrete proposal has yet been submitted, this idea is popular among the Hebrew faculty. Hebrew 3.1 is one of the most popular courses in YC but this may be due to the very factors that are leading to its elimination. Hebrew 3.1 is "Conversational Hebrew" which is not a very demanding course for those with even a moderate familiarity with Hebrew. Thus the course has become known as something of a joke according to one administrator, and the faculty has become greatly disturbed by this attitude.

Another proposal under consideration is the creation of a course for those who have returned from Israel. This course would be a short, intensive study of Hebrew grammar and literature. The course would have special admissions requirements and limited registration.

## Yeshiva Repays Debt

Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm with Gov. Hugh Carey, Herbert Tenzer (left) and Ludwig Jesselson (right) after YU completed payment of its \$5 million dollar debt. The payment was made to a consortium of banks as arranged by the Chemical Credit Policy Committee with the help of Gov. Carey.



# Disgrace

The recent violent incidents perpetrated against Yeshiva students have caused a wave of fear among our students. A few weeks ago a smaller crime wave darkened our campus and Yeshiva's top administrators promised prompt action to assure the security of the campus. Certain cosmetic changes were effected, such as laughable bilingual signs, and a guard booth, which allows limited peripheral vision, was installed. Half of the promised lighting system was also installed and many students were placated. However, the important addition of more guards, who would be patrolling the street in front of our buildings have not been seen, administration claims to the contrary notwithstanding.

Now that students on the way to a Yeshiva College class at George Washington High School were attacked, high administration officials have indicated that although they are concerned, they do not feel that Yeshiva must assume responsibility for allowing this situation to arise since the incidents occurred off-campus. Would they have the courage to tell the mother of an injured student that they don't feel any responsibility?

A possible solution would be to place a guard near each building while it is in use, especially near Tannenbaum and the library. The Administration claims that we can't afford this kind of protection. Can Yeshiva afford an injured student?

The University has often indicated that it has certain priorities in regard to student life. However, it was assumed that the protection of the student body need not be mentioned, since it was of the very highest priority. If this assumption is wrong then we are all in danger.

In shirking its responsibility to protect the students, the administration is, in effect, damaging several aspects of student life. The swimming class at George Washington High School will have to be cancelled, and due to students' fear of leaving the campus, attendance at YU basketball games will be severely diminished. The pride of the University in its basketball team and social atmosphere will be shattered.

Yeshiva security problems will soon become common knowledge and eventually student enrollment will decline. Students, alumni and benefactors will lose respect for and interest in the institution. By the time that happens, YU's reputation will be irreparably harmed. We would like to suggest to the administration that if they cannot assure student safety they will have to bear the responsibility for the consequences.

# HAMEVASER

500 West 185th Street, 927-1562, New York, N.Y. 10033.  
Editorial and Advertising Office. Published monthly during the academic year by the Student Organization of Yeshiva, James Striar School Student Council, and Erna Michael College Student Council. The views of signed articles are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of HAMEVASER or Yeshiva University. Editorial policy is determined by majority vote of the members of the Governing Board. Advertising rates are available upon request. Subscription rate: \$7.50 per year.

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# Message To Begin

From its signing in 1977, the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty seemed little more than an illusive device designed to return the whole of Sinai to Egypt. This deluded mentality has seemingly been perpetuated by both parties. The Israelis are entrenched in the shibboleth of a worthless treaty, which offered them nothing from its inception but, nevertheless, was still upheld by the rest of the world as a viable understanding. The Egyptians have ignored the few tenuous concessions that they made and have deliberately violated both the spirit of the treaty in general, and its accords in particular. Among their profuse violations are the following: the fortification of the crossing sectors of the Mitla and Giddi passes, which includes troop buildups and the construction of trenches and fences; the digging of three tunnels under the Suez Canal; the undertaking of a program of venomous attacks, anti-Semitic in nature, by the state-controlled media, both visual and in print; and the shirking of its responsibility to normalize its relations with Israel.

It would seem a benevolent recommendation that Israel cease this perilous political game, and invoke the principal of rebus stantibus, whereby if the situation is altered, the treaty is no longer valid. Egypt has made its intentions clear—Israel should recognize the reality of Egyptian perfidy and respond in kind.

# Out of Sight

Nachum J Stone

Harry S. Truman had a sign on his desk which read, "The buck stops here." What was implied was that when an important decision had to be made, ultimately he would see that it was made; for him there were no excuses. Yeshiva administrators have an interesting variation on Truman's theme: "The buck is gone," meaning, "don't do today what you can put off forever." It was this short-sighted attitude that allowed Yeshiva to amass its great debt, and saddle itself with facilities that are in constant need of repair. Had the University understood the weight of a tremendous debt it would never have let the debt grow unchecked. Also, had the University spent money early for preventive maintenance it could have saved huge sums of money that is now being spent to repair the fourth floor of Tannenbaum Hall, the face of the Library, the back of Belfer and for many other capital expenses. Now, Yeshiva will never again fall so far into debt, and the buildings are being painted and repaired, early, as never before.

Unfortunately, where the University administration has

[Continued on Page 3]

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## To the Editor:

I recently read an article, "Public Kashruth and the Local Rabbi" by Dov Fisch which appeared in your December 31, 1981 edition. Having worked with Rabbi Fisch and having assumed the responsibility of administering the Jersey City Kashruth Council, I feel I must comment upon his article.

To begin, inaccuracies, misquotes and misinformation abound in the article. In terms of public policy we of the Kashruth Council never agreed to grant "hashgacha" to a non-Shomer Shabbat bakery. All we would do would be to certify that only kosher ingredients were being used. While admittedly this situa-

tion is far from ideal it is the best that could be accomplished.

In terms of professional ethics Rabbi Fisch transgressed our unanimous understanding that, "No longer would there be public pronouncements regarding the problems of Jersey City kashruth or of our (Kashruth Council) deliberations." His Hamevaser article runs directly counter.

At our meetings it was noted that if we were to certify a bakery it would be necessary for us to eat its products. This is a far cry from Fisch's declaration, "I will stick with Kinneret Kosher/O.U./Chof-Kay/ New England Vaad Ho'Rabbanim/etc. The only bakeries Linda and I ever patronize are Shomrei

Shabbat anyway."

If Rabbi Fisch notes attacks from the right and left make the job impossible he should also note the reason. His public pronouncements have antagonized the right and the left. As he stated in his article, "In my case, my original position was to keep my mouth shut. Frankly—and those who know me may smirk—I just did not want to get involved."

Perhaps if Rabbi Fisch had remained silent he would not be working alone. Perhaps if he had remained silent "centrist" rabbis would be willing to work with him. Perhaps, if Rabbi Fisch had remained silent there would be a reliably kosher bakery in Jersey City today. Perhaps Rabbi Fisch

should have taken his own advice and kept his "mouth" shut. The failure to certify a bakery as using only kosher ingredients rests on his shoulders.

Sincerely Yours,  
Rabbi Mark E. Urkowitz

## Rabbi Fisch Responds

Having been under the presumption that our disagreement ought not appear in Hamevaser, I already communicated my views to Rabbi Urkowitz privately. Now that he wishes to continue this nonsense here, I must again respond, though I really do not

think this a proper forum.

Perhaps. Perhaps. And perhaps. The facts are that: (1) Jersey City had no reliable bakery before I spoke out, and the community was sinning in error, (2) Jersey City had no kashruth council before I spoke out, (3) I am on delightfully good terms with my other two colleagues on the "council," (4) I work quite well with rabbeim on the right, center, and left, and (5) I do not beat my wife. Andy Kane, a member of our council, is in the halls of RIETS daily; he can easily confirm my first four assertions.

As for "public policy," we most certainly were prepared to [Continued on Page 6]

# What Modern Orthodoxy Is Not

David Harbater

In his book *Conservative Judaism*, Marshall Sklare attempts to establish a uniform definition of the thus labeled sect of contemporary world Jewry. He draws many of his conclusions empirically as a result of a survey he did of members of the Conservative movement. A typical response was, "I wouldn't say I am religious, and I wouldn't say that I am Reformed, because if I were Orthodox I would have to follow all the laws...which I don't—and Reform I don't like. I don't believe in going into the temple and coming out and riding in a car on our High Holy Days." Essentially, Sklare points out that Conservatism is a type of half-way house between Reform and Orthodox Jewry. In effect, Conservative Judaism is an instrument used to satisfy the Jew's inherent drive to identify with tradition, without a concomitant withdrawal or abstention from any of the modern conveniences or pursuits typically forbidden or frowned upon by Orthodoxy. In other words, tradition, as it were, is subservient to temporal man and to the existing conditions of the environment in which he happens to live. The contradiction between this approach and that advocated by Orthodox philosophy is obviously radical.

In Orthodoxy, one's acceptance of G-d's revelation in delivering the Torah automatically endowed it with eternity. The eternal character of Torah became what is known as Jewish tradition. The Orthodox Jew is required to subvert his will to that of G-d, as determined by the words of Torah, despite the fact that man may often find himself confined and circumscribed by the rapid changes and trends of contemporary society. What true Orthodoxy ultimately requires is a devotion of the entire self to conform with every aspect of Torah. To contend that Judaism's concept of practical observance is applicable only when it does not interfere with convenient adaptation to one's society is in complete opposition to all that Orthodoxy represents.

With the introduction of the descriptive term "Modern Orthodoxy," and its widespread ambiguous use in the American Jewish community, the truly Orthodox mind must determine whether "Modern Orthodoxy" is merely a newly-coined term for traditional Orthodoxy in a more modern environment, or an entirely new entity, making changes that amount to severing its ties with the parent sect. In the latter case, are the changes as harmless as the cultural shaping evident of the Conservative movement? In an attempt to clarify this ambiguity, I undertook the task of discovering how people comprehend the term "Modern Orthodoxy," much in the same manner Sklare conducted his own investigation.

Presented with the circumstance of conducting a session for fifteen-year-old boys and girls in an Orthodox summer camp, I capitalized on the opportunity and addressed them with the following question: "How do you define the term, 'Modern Orthodoxy'?" The responses were amazingly similar and the consensus was that a Modern Orthodox Jew is one who is scrupulous in observing the laws of Shabbat and kashrut. Before I was able to question them about the significance of the remainder of the taryag mitzvot, one boy was quick to point out, "and you don't have to take negiah and mixed swimming seriously." To a certain extent, I'd anticipated a response of this nature, because this type of attitude was very deeply rooted in the day-to-day activities of the camp.

The message of Modern Orthodoxy seems to be that Judaism consists of several major principles, requiring the strictest adherence, while the rest are of secondary concern. Man has chosen to distinguish between major and minor precepts according to his own judgements. Each person has the option of differentiating between the mitzvot on the basis of what he deems most unfavorable and intolerable. This makes Judaism a unique religion in which man can reach into his conscience as he would into a voting booth and choose the "most important" commandments to obey, as he would pick the best candidate. This is, in effect, in direct concurrence with the Conservative approach as presented by Sklare, with differences in name being larger than any other dissimilarity.

If this analysis is correct, then Orthodox Jews are confronted with a very major problem. Even if the existence of such attitudes is regarded as merely a transient motivational phenomenon and not a reflection of the guise of the elders, the essential problem is still one which must be dealt with. I believe that the ideas espoused by these youngsters are reiterations of an overriding societal attitude challenging the entire Jewish community.

Whether or not I succeed in offering an acceptable interpretation of Modern Orthodoxy is irrelevant, my objective is to illustrate the point that the popular connotation of this term, "Modern Orthodoxy," is flawed, and entails significant implicit contradictions. In short, the objective here is to determine exactly what Modern Orthodoxy is not. The error of these youths, and those whose ideas they parroted, lies in the unfamiliarity with a mishnah in Pirkei Avot, one which is often read, yet seldom appreciated: "and be careful of a light precept even as a grave one, for you do not know the reward for the commandments." The implications of this mishnah is very

[Continued from Page 7]

# Out of Sight

[Continued from Page 2]

not previously been faced with disaster, they refuse to act intelligently to avoid later problems. Specifically, the administration refuses to address the security problem maturely. They claim that they are "big boys," yet they come up with the most childish excuses for their inaction. When our students are in serious danger in and around our campus, does it really matter under whose jurisdiction it falls? When informed that high school students were venting their anger in a violent manner, the administration correctly identified the action as an immature reflex action, and, inexplicably, used that as an excuse to ignore the threat from outside.

Security is not the only problem that the administration has tried to ignore. When faculty members have caused problems they have been dealt with in one of two ways. When competent and popular faculty members reach the point where a tenure decision has to be made, these teachers often disappear quickly. Also, faculty members who have shown an active interest in student affairs have been harassed into silence. On the other hand, certain faculty members have shown gross incompetence, inadequacy, and unsuitability for classroom assignments. Rather than deal with this academic dilemma, the administrators, involved have chosen to hide these problems. They limit these professors to an area such as EMC or Bible, or assign them fewer, or more specialized, sections. In extreme cases, these professors have been banished to Stern College or another section of the University where their damage might not be as noticeable, and where they would be "someone else's headache."

Financial problems on a smaller scale than the huge University debt also get "dumped" by administrators. For example, the cafeteria incurs an annual debt of \$10,000, which is acceptable considering the population that it serves. The cafeteria at Stern College, however, has a much larger debt with a smaller population, caused mostly by smaller volume and irregular eating patterns. The Administration felt that a voluntary meal plan would help solve the problem so they asked student leaders to assist in the organization of this plan. When informed of weak student response to this plan, the administration acted swiftly to remove student input and promptly planned to dump the problem of the Stern College Cafeteria debt on next year's freshman class in the form of a mandatory meal plan. The causes of the debt, whatever they are, have not been addressed, but the problem will disappear, as within four years the entire student body of Stern College will be captives of their own cafeteria.

The Administration was not happy with the game-room which occupied the student lounge in the basement of Furst Hall. High School students spent too much time there, it annoyed Rebbeim, and the cash income generated by the games gave YCSC a certain freedom which administrators did not want to allow them. So, when the game-room was vandalized a few weeks ago, it was closed, presumably never to open again. Watch a problem disappear.

As I have been writing this column over the past two hours I have been looking out of my dormitory window. In these hours, from 10:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m., I have not seen a single YU security guard, even in front of Tannenbaum Hall where administrators have insisted that a guard is stationed all night, every night. Yet I have not seen even one guard except for the one in the van. Tonight is not different from any other, though; usually I cannot find a guard when I look for one.

Also, as I sit here I know that tomorrow morning at Stern College, a pathetic excuse for a professor will take a stab at teaching a basic course. This professor was banished to Stern years ago in an attempt to bring about his retirement. This attempt failed, but since the problem is now at Stern, where academic excellence is obviously not important, no one Uptown need worry about it.

I also know that when the administration sees that a mandatory meal plan brings in a lot of money, they will try to impose the same plan Uptown. Freezers will be allowed to fall into disrepair before the problem is addressed and inefficiency will continue to be subsidized by the students.

A friend told me an interesting story. When he was taking a calculus course as a freshman, a student asked the professor to solve a problem from the book. The professor asked the class if any of them knew how to solve the problem. One bright student suggested throwing out the book. The professor answered that it would temporarily remove the problem but it would never solve it. The YU administration should take a lesson from this. Their policy that "we'll do whatever we can get away with," meaning, "It's OK as long as the students don't yell too loudly," will ultimately lead to ruin. "Out of sight, out of mind" is the easiest way to lose a school.

limited number of plots available in the J ulian section Eretz Machaim Cemetery in Israel available.

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

# A Challenge

Marc Gopin

There are philosophical problems to which Halacha does not directly speak, such as some of the metaphysical questions raised by the famous medieval Jewish philosophers. Besides those, however, there are social, moral and existential philosophic problems to which Halacha responds in its very essence. Halachic action is philosophically charged because with every action that man takes, he makes a statement about the world, and every directive imposed by Halacha indicates a certain perspective on man and society. The fact that the prime directives of Torah involve action demonstrates that ultimate truth in this world lies in meaningful action. This is the essence of Halachic action.

By contrast, the West, ever since Aristotle, has made the mistake of paying less intellectual attention to Ethics. Speculation, science, and culture are fine endeavors of the mind, but without a guide to action that is based on truth this world is doomed. If man does not soon put his mind to a philosophy of action, this world will have no future.

As far as the Jew is concerned, the situation is reversed. A guide to proper action is in our possession. But if we do not perceive its philosophic significance, it will soon cease to be meaningful action. This eventually is responsible for the existence of corrupt Orthodox businessmen and the like. It is, of course, commonly referred to as "naval birshut haTorah." It is because of it, and despite the gift of Torah, that we, no less than others, stand in danger of confounding the essential messages of Torah. It is true that we have perceived the centrality of action. But if the meaning of the action is lost to onlookers, and even to ourselves, then how are we to be a light to the nations who stand at the crossroads of modern history nervously glancing skyward awaiting the most horrible action that man has ever conceived?

We as traditional Jews must be responsible to that which G-d has bequeathed to us. We must unfold its secrets and articulate its truth. We must take out some time from Kodeshim to talk a little about the profound im-

plications of Korban, rest a little from Gemara Shabbat to reflect on Creation, creativity and rest, put down the Gemara Sota for just a few minutes in the day to think about trust in marriage and the deeper significance of family as a religious institution.

Of course, the best of our people already do this. But few engage in this reflection as a serious religious pursuit, and, I dare say, even the righteous who, more than any of us, truly understand Halachic life in all its beauty and depth, have retreated to their own world, unable or afraid to share the golden treasure in their possession. Was this not the challenge put to Yonah? In full possession of the sublime, prophetic life he was asked to enter the G-d-forsaken city as a madman with an outlandish message. Rather traumatic, I would think. But G-d never said that it would be easy to be Jewish...

I challenge all of you who possess even a modicum of the truth of Torah to teach it to others, to demonstrate that Halacha is the only avenue to truth by articulating its truth. We must teach while teaching can still help, and teach those who know the least for it is they who have been most short-changed by the tragic mistakes of their predecessors. And it is we, the possessors of Torah, who bear the burden of restoring to them their rightful inheritance.

Don't retreat into the safe world! Take what you have and scream it from the rooftops because you would be amazed at how ready people of this generation are to listen to the sane even as they sink deeper into insane lifestyles, perhaps because they know that they are sinking...

Anyone who retreats from this challenge in our day will have to answer for it some day. He will be asked, "Where were you while 4,000,000 died a slow spiritual death?" For G-d's sake, find the inner strength to face reality as did Yonah, Elijah and all the others, and restore to Halacha its proper role in our history, and, perhaps, the history of the world.

## Biblical Big Bang

Shalom Stone

By NEIL FUTERFUS

The Arkansas Supreme Court has recently been presented with an interesting problem: to determine if the Biblical creation is a valid scientific theory, and whether it therefore should be taught in the Arkansas public school system, alongside other scientific theories on the creation of the world. However, upon closer examination, it becomes startlingly apparent that the creation in B'reshit is not contradictory to the classical scientific theories, but that the latter is a possible interpretation of the former.

"B'esser Maamarot Nivra Ha'olam"; With ten utterances the world was created. That is how we explain Hashem's creation of our world. Yet this really does not explain what happened at the moment the creations appeared. In fact, "the sky and the earth" appear without even the Divine Word, by the literal translation; they are simply "created." But what happened at the instant of creation? Was there a flash of lightning and a clap of thunder? A cloud of smoke? There is certainly no way to know for certain. However, there is no reason to assume that the actual appearance of the earth was not preceded by, or coincident with, the infamous Big Bang. It certainly doesn't say in B'reshit when He created methane, nitrogen, oxygen, and lightning. Water, which is important to all scientific theories of this type, appears from nowhere, without even a mention of creation. The explosion of gases may have been the means God chose to create heaven and earth.

There is an alternative explanation. The Ramban (B'reshit 1:1) asks why Rashi questions the inclusion of creation in the Torah. Isn't it there simply to teach us how the world was created? And the Ramban answers his own question: The literal text of creation is symbolism and allegory, hints and secrets, and we cannot possibly learn from the text how God created the world. Only the Kabbala explains the creation correctly.

If this is true then we need not justify the p'sukim in the face of science, but we can accept any such theory as a Biblical possibility. Rav Avraham Yitzchak Ha-Kohen Kook says simply that if we take B'reshit literally as the true story of creation, what mystery is there to the creation? And there certainly must be some mystery to it because the Mishna Hagiga (11:2) states that one who knows the mysteries of creation may not teach it to others.

It is reasonable then to apply the same idea to other scientific theories that seem to contradict our tradition. The evolutionary theory of Darwin was subject to severe criticism from the Jewish Orthodox. Yet Rav Kook states that the evolutionary theory fits the Kabbalistic interpretation of creation more than any other philosophical approach (Orot Ha-Kodesh 2:537). He considers evolution conceptually similar to the deeper insights of Jewish mysticism which has always viewed the world as continuously evolving upward, to the ultimate goal of

perfection.

There are, in fact, several midrashim which appear in Gemarot and elsewhere which indicate some sort of evolutionary process. For example, B'reshit Rabba (23:6) states that in the time of Enosh, man's face began to resemble that of an ape. Assuming that this process was reversed later on, we would see an evolutionary process. Tanchuma (B'reshit 5:29) says that man had webbed hands until the time of Noah. B'rakhot 61a mentioned an opinion that Adam was born with a tail!

There is another important fact to consider here. Many scientists who agree with the evolutionary theory have said that while they believe in the mutation-hybridization-natural selection process, they cannot explain how the complex process is brought about. It is not inconceivable that the process is directed by Hashem Himself. Many Gemarot and halachot refer to strange organisms including half-plat/half-human creatures and mermaids. The same idea is applicable to ontogeny, the development of the fetus, which seems to follow an evolutionary process, yet scientists cannot explain the force which induces the process. In addition, the Rishonim say that the medicines prescribed for various ailments in various Gemarot should not be used. It seems obvious that they worked at the time they were recorded. If they do not work now, but rather are considered potentially harmful, the logical conclusion is that man's internal mechanisms have changed by his evolving a different set of bodily responses.

Another touchy point is the age of the earth. While geologists and astronomers argue about the number of billions of years, we cling steadfast to 5742. Not an insignificant difference. The answer which is usually given is in the Gemara Sanhedrin (97b) which mentions the creation and destruction of other worlds before ours. If the earth, plants, etc. belong to these worlds, they could be millions of years old. (Even the specific mention of 6 worlds each of 7,000 years' duration, does not preclude this because the 7,000 years is not necessarily to be measured by our time units.) Man, on the other hand, exists on this world for five thousand, seven hundred and forty two years. B'reshit Rabba (9:16) specifically says that there is a new reckoning of time starting after the sixth day of creation.

The Rambam (Guide to the Perplexed 2:25) says that we do not reject the eternity of the universe, and that were this theory proven, he could explain certain passages to agree with it. Yehuda HaLevi (Kuzari 1:45) discussed a similar theme.

Rav Kook (Orot HaReia 91) gives the final word in the matter: "Nothing in the Torah is contradicted by any knowledge in the world that emerges from research. But we must not accept hypotheses as certainties, even if there is a wide agreement about them."

ISRAEL BUREAU—For the past 19 years between the '48 War for Independence and the '67 Six-Day War, Hebrew University on Mt. Scopus was an Israeli-held enclave surrounded by what was then Jordanian-held territory. The university never renounced its claim to Mt. Scopus and following the Six-Day War began to rebuild the campus. This year, in a move which some have hailed as a strengthening of the Israeli presence in East Jerusalem, and others have derided as an expensive folly, the major administrative offices and some academic departments have been moved to Mt. Scopus from the West Jerusalem Givat Ram campus.

Criticism of the move came to a head as the students and faculty viewed their new home for the first time. Last November the Israeli daily Ma'ariv published an article entitled "The Students Say 'no' to Mt. Scopus." Moving from the "wide-openness, simplicity and greenery" of Givat Ram to the "depressing, fortress-like atmosphere of Mt. Scopus," said the article entitled "The Students Say 'no' to loop." The caption under the picture of a nearly empty pavilion at the site of the opening day dedication ceremonies stated that the poor turnout was either due to a "silent protest" against the new facility, or the fact that the students had simply

By DAVID CESARANI

Tottenham Hotspurs is one of the great London soccer clubs. Based in the East End of the city, where Jewish immigrants first settled in the 1880's, the Club has a large following among London's Jews. Today, Jews drive in from the suburbs to watch their team play, and never more so than on the occasion of the yearly ritual contest with the Arsenal, a rival local team. But over the last two years, Tottenham's Jewish supporters have had their enjoyment of the game soured by a new chant floating across the Arsenal stands:

"He's only a poor little Yiddo,  
His face is all battered and torn,  
He makes me feel so sick  
So I hit him with a brick  
Now he doesn't sing anymore."

This isn't the good-natured banter of football fans, but the growing voice of Britain's new Nazis.

Two years ago, it looked as though the menace of a neo-Nazi revival in Britain had been smashed at the polls. Between 1977 and 1979, the Jewish Board of Deputies, the churches, the Labour Movement and the main political parties waged a massive campaign against the neo-Nazi National Front Party. Millions of leaflets were distributed and even pop groups were enrolled in the fight under the banner of Rock Against Racism. In 1977, the Front had won 119,000 votes in London alone, but a year later its support had been reduced to a quarter of that. Frustrated at the polls, the leaders of the Front fell out and the party split.

What has emerged, however, offers little comfort to the Jewish community or non-white immigrants. Most disturbing is the newly formed British Movement. The BM has a hard core membership of 4,000 which takes part in regular weapons training sessions on remote country farms. It is avowedly racist, openly anti-Semitic and dedicated to eliminating "international communism." This year, two of its members were convicted to 8 years imprisonment for illegally stock-

"lost their way in the corridors and cellars."

More serious charges were brought forth by the Jerusalem weekly Kol Ha-Ir. In an article entitled "The Hill of Evil Council," Kol Ha-Ir asserted that Mt. Scopus was "born amidst the great craziness that grabbed the State just after the Six-Day War and that when people regained their senses, tens of millions of dollars had already been invested and there was no choice but to complete the construction with its considerable dimension, brutal style, with a maze of Kafkaesque corridors inside a huge stone fortress."

Underneath the picture of a barren Givat Ram campus the caption reads: "The University doesn't admit it, but the truth is that no one knows what to do with Givat Ram, the university will suffer most beautiful campuses in the world."

Other critics, such as Professor Yeshayahu Liebowitz complained that by moving the social sciences to Mt. Scopus, and leaving the natural sciences behind in Givat Ram, the University will suffer educationally.

Further criticism has been voiced by architects and professors who feel that for aesthetic reasons, and because of an acute housing shortage, the move was ill-advised. Gila Huit, a Jerusalem architect lamented that the Mt. Scopus students will reside on the outskirts of the

city where "Jerusalem doesn't influence them and they don't influence Jerusalem."

University spokespeople have defended the move by saying it was necessary to accommodate the 15,000 students needing facilities. Ben Mushkin, spokesperson for the university, explained that the campus at Givat Ram was meant to accommodate 6-8,000 students. Because of zoning regulations, Mushkin said, the university could not add floors to the Givat Ram building.

Mushkin rejected the claim that Givat Ram has been "left empty," noting that the "university facilities presently scattered throughout the city will soon be relocated to Givat Ram." By then, Mushkin said, only 2,000 square meters of building space will not be in use.

He also said that the separation of the natural science and social science buildings will be "only physical" and that "there will be a lot of cooperation between the two, and many combined programs."

While the move to Scopus has not been a "cause celebre" on the scale of the Golan Heights annexation, it has rankled enough people to cause Hebrew University Vice President Bernard Cherrick to enter the fray. Cherrick explained that the move was part of a plan to bring Hebrew University "toward the 21st century." He added that on Mount Scopus traffic on campus is limited, most of the cars can be

## Britain's New Nazi's

assault a group of blacks, and that "Strength Through Oil!" sounded remarkably similar to the Nazi slogan "Strength Through Joy," the record was quickly withdrawn.

This story is repeated on the soccer terraces. The racist following of many clubs has become so large that some club managers choose to ignore the Nazi salutes and "Sieg Heils" that punctuate matches. At Chelsea Football Club, there is a regular body of about 1,500 Nazi youths dominating the stands. When fans at the Arsenal ground objected to the "Rights for Whites" posters which had appeared on the stadium walls, the management turned a blind eye. Other clubs, however, are cooperating with the Police and doing all they can to prevent neo-Nazis infiltrating the crowds.

The Jewish Board of Deputies and race relations workers are trying to impress on the providers of youth culture, the football clubs and the rock industry, how vital it is to prevent these powerful influences from being contaminated with hatred and racism. The result has been some awareness that Britain's tolerant society is going to need vigilance and strength if it is to survive economic crisis and political uncertainty.

The Jewish Board of Deputies and race relations workers are trying to impress on the providers of youth culture, the football clubs and the rock industry, how vital it is to prevent these powerful influences from being contaminated with hatred and racism. The result has been some awareness that Britain's tolerant society is going to need vigilance and strength if it is to survive economic crisis and political uncertainty.

Jewish MP Seeks Ban On Fascist Marches  
The British Home Secretary is under strong pressure to curb the activities of fascist organizations in this country. Demands for the extension of existing laws against fascist parties come in the midst of a major debate on the future of Britain's multi-racial society.

The police, the press and the main political parties are weighing the implications of the report on Britain's "long, hot summer" prepared by Chief Justice Lord Scarman. One of Scarman's conclusions was the need to halt inflammatory, racist processions through areas of immigrant settlement. But only last month 1,000 "skinheads" paraded their defiance of Scarman in a march through Central London organized by the neo-Nazi British Movement.

The leader of Britain's Jewish Community, MP Greville Janner, protested against just such abuses in the House of Commons debate on the Scarman Report. He demanded that the Home Secretary impose selective bans on fascist marches wherever and whenever they occur. He echoed another MP who is close to the Jewish Community, Ivan Lawrence, who urged the Home Secretary to stop fascist groups from using the Union Jack, Britain's national flag, for their demonstrations.

## One Nation Under God

By AVI SCHNIEDER

Atheism per se was very uncommon when the First Amendment was drafted in the eighteenth century, because at that period in American history our society so completely embraced religious worship, with various ideological practices, that there was no practical connotation or application of the concept. As a consequence, the foundation and framework of our cherished American value, freedom of worship, and its unofficial clause, the First Amendment, providing for the separation of church and state, as developed by our founding fathers two centuries ago, had a far different context from that which we perceive today.

As an elementary school child, I remember always being confused by the apparently inherent contradiction between the Pledge of Allegiance recited devoutly before class every morning and the Bill of Rights we discussed as part of our social studies class. As I understood freedom of worship, it implied that I could daven, that Hindus could revere cows, that the kids

parked underground and the new computer-based library is one of the best in the world.

Cherrick noted that where one stands on the issue will depend on one's taste. "In two years' time," he predicted, "people will not be complaining." (JS PS 1982)

down the street could go to whichever church their parent chose to patronize, and so forth. The Pledge of Allegiance, however, seemed incongruous with this understanding of the Bill of Rights, particularly the phrase, "and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God..." If the tenets of Americanism are anti-theistic, if our national pride is to a large extent contingent upon a definite distinction between patriotism and religious loyalties, then why are these words found in the Pledge of Allegiance? It's probable that in the creation of this pledge, the text was very carefully written, very prudently edited and revised; yet, these words still remain, and their implication is obvious.

The atmosphere in this country during its founding years was one which we'd have great difficulty translating to contemporary society. Though the idea of religious freedom was generally endorsed by our leaders (despite the fact that there were large factions within the Christian Church which attempted to appropriate governing powers and authority), there was a concomitant implicit acceptance of deity and incorporation of a ubiquitous concept of religion into the country's foundation. Thus, the appearance of this expression in the Pledge of Allegiance was, if anything, a minimal manifestation of the sentiment at the time. A further and more conclusive proof of this claim occurs in the Declaration of Independence itself. If our "inalienable rights" are conferred by God, then how can we have the possibility of a legitimately secular state guaranteeing church-state separation?

This self-contradiction is to a large extent responsible for two hundred years of uncertainty and controversy. Laws ratified throughout the existence of the U.S., as well as current pieces of legislation, have often been centered about this inherent contradiction of purpose and ideals. Tax exemption laws are still being tried in the courts as the dubiousness of whose god is included or excluded in the opaque understanding of "one nation under God" prevails. The recently well-publicized case of the Reverend Sun Myung Moon proves this point. Additionally, there remains a continuous state of revision of laws dealing with religious holiday vacations from places of employment, while students across the nation are still incurring difficulties with regard to university schedules conflicting with the Sabbath and other holidays. The controversial battle with regard to school prayer and government-affiliated displays of religion have again emerged, a definite indication of the reversal of progress which has been made away from church-state ties implicitly established by our founding fathers.

As Jews, the maintenance of a separation of church and state has always been considered permanent in all social, political, cultural, and educational arenas. At the cost of tangible gains to itself, the National Jewish community has consistently rejected economically beneficial associations with state and federal governments, for the sake of preserving the schism of governmental and religious powers that we consider so vital. As such, it is frightening to find that despite the legislative security we have at present, the theme of increasing Christian influence within the governmental machinery of our country has aroused even the most passive and reticent of Jewish leaders and sympathizers. It would potentially be a disastrous mistake for the Jewish population to assuage their fears with the placation of polished politicians attempting to mitigate the appearance of the much acclaimed Moral Majority. Would this appearance be just a phase, a fleeting ripple of alarm on the otherwise calm and un-

troubled waters of our national attitude, then perhaps ignoring them would be the most effective way of restoring stability. Unfortunately, this is far from being the case. The sentiment that America is actually "the land of the free and the home of the brave Christians" has been brewing in the heart of this country all along, surfacing occasionally when the atmosphere was favorable and resubmerging when it was not. In 1931 Supreme Court Justice George Sutherland, remarking on a court decision, state, "We are a Christian people." Justice William O. Douglas in 1952 said, "we are a religious people, whose institutions presuppose a supreme being." It is significant that individuals of the highest-ranking judicial forum in the land were of the conviction that it is a matter of fact that our country's principal status is realistically subject to the religious inclination of its people and in a glorious democracy as our own it would be that of the majority, Christianity.

The black and white formality of Reagan conservatism indicated that the climate of today is more appropriate than at any other period of modern American history for the growth of Christian influence. As champions of all liberal causes at times more to our detriment than advantage, the Jews enjoy a period of incomparable comfort and success during the revolution and anti-establishment movement that rocked the sixties and reverberated into the seventies. But now there exists a reversal of trends and the narrow ties and short cropped hair are reminiscent of exclusive WASPish parties and clubs, and the Republican elephant is reminiscent of denominational prejudice and closet anti-Semitism. The evangelical movements across America, many of which are as powerful as they are wealthy, have pressed the opportunity of the moment and have been both overtly and covertly securing strongholds in the political latticework and other influential areas. An unfortunate and often catastrophic lesson of Jewish history is that the rise and strengthening of the Church is usually paralleled by a dramatic increase in trouble for our people.

Government policies and influences in this country are generally no more than a representation of those propagated by the countries internal guiding powers. If the Reagan administration's foreign policies shunt Israel's priorities to the back burner then this reflects the influential forces of this country as a whole and not just those behind closed doors on Pennsylvania Avenue. For several decades the Jews of America have been deluded into an overestimation of their own values and capabilities with regard to the direction of the country. Granted that our reach is still disproportionately awesome, but not quite to the extent we would like it to be. The stunning blow of the AWACs despite our concerned efforts to prevent it, was evidence of this. American Jewry savored the idea that they were the saviors of Israel shaping and directing pro-Israel policies made on Capitol Hill. In reality, the favoritism that Israel received stemmed from the Western World's post-Holocaust conscience. It continued as a manifestation of the liberalism and idealism which permeated our society for two decades making America the champion of underdogs and democracies all over the world. Israel just happened to be qualified in both categories.

It is incumbent upon the American Jewish community to cull its vast resources in a united effort to thwart the evolving transformation of America as we know it. Too often in our history have we watched the transition of philosophy and power turn against us. Now again, as we are no more disjoined from history than were the Spanish Jews of the thirteenth

(Continued on Page 6)

## SOY: A Busy Council

The next few weeks will be very busy ones for the Student Organization of Yeshiva, the student council of MYP and RIETS. Under the leadership of David Sherman, SOY has been the most active of the student councils at Yeshiva College. Currently, SOY is conducting its annual sefarim sale. This sale is being conducted by Label Schapiro and Shlomo

Hutler. The profits of the sale are used to buy sefarim for the Bet Medrash. The prices for the sefarim are so low that many people wait all year for this sale. In the next month SOY will be conducting a tziitsit sale and the Pesach Products sale. Many Yeshiva students avail themselves of the PPC for their Pesach needs.



## On Mezuzot, Egg Matzohs and Caskets

[Continued from Page 8]

single case, the matzohs were intended as alternatives to regular matzohs; usually, the elders of the family were davka the only ones not eating the egg matzohs—they preferred the more traditional type! In many cases, the consumers returned those boxes to the shelves and exchanged them for regular matzohs after we explained to them the secret behind the cryptic Yiddish message. They were truly shocked to learn that such labeling policies were permissible in our community.

So should we be! Can you imagine what would happen if, tomorrow, Marlboro would start printing the following statement on its cigarette packages, in place of the government-required warning that the Surgeon General has determined that smoking can lead to cancer: "While these cigarettes have been produced according to our nation's highest standards, we do urge you to read the 1971 report of the Surgeon General of the United States. Or you might consult the Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 42, No. 3, pp.8-10; see, especially, footnote 4."

And, imagine—that the suggestion above were printed in...Latin! How long would it take the United States Government to drag Marlboro into court, to fine them heavily, and to put an end to such nonsense?

And how long will it take us? Or must we first wait for the appearance on food shelves of kosher-for-Passover beans, with a Yiddish inscription directing us to Orach Chayim?

This again, reflects a more fundamental problem in our community: we do not police ourselves and our institutions adequately. We are doing a fine job in the field of public kashrut; in many ways, that should be a model. Perhaps every sofer should have to be licensed by a recognized community agency—the Va'ad Mishmeres STaM comes to mind—and should be expected to display a certificate of kashrut-reliability in his window, just as butchers are expected to be approved by local rabbinical councils. Perhaps mashgichim who

certify Passover matzohs should insist that the Raina clause be printed in plain, simple English—and be reduced to easy-to-comprehend layman's terms, in the process.

And, finally, let us keep an eye on the funeral homes. And let us ask of them what they publicly commit themselves to do anyway. In my community, I work through a funeral home named "Wien and Wien." I name them because I have found them to be of excellent character. When someone comes to them and says, "Please contact Rabbi Fisch," they immediately inform the family that arrangements must be made for kosher shrouds, a proper taharah, a shomer, an inexpensive plain wood coffin, and a proper underground burial. They even know to hide the black ribbons when I come in to do the k'riah.

What a far cry from the tragedy I encountered on one occasion I did a funeral at an Upper West Side "Jewish" funeral home! The deceased's daughter called me at someone's suggestion, only hours after she had made arrangements with the particular home. In those few hours, she had been talked into: buying a coffin costing many thousands of dollars, having her mother embalmed and made up to look her very best, etc. I was shocked that she had been so directed by the home. On the phone, I tried to salvage what could be salvaged: arrangements for proper k'riah, for proper burial, for proper shiva, etc. Everything was all set; she would inform the funeral home that, for the rest of the way, everything would be done "Orthodox."

So, I arrived at the "Jewish" funeral home at the appropriate time, met with the family, supervised the k'riah, talked with the children, and then entered the chapel to deliver the eulogy.

Nu, so I walk into the room. And, what do I see? The coffin is opened! Now, na'ar hayiti, gam zakanti, but I never expected to see that in a "Jewish" funeral home. I turned to the daughter of the deceased, and I asked her, softly, to instruct the

directors to lower the coffin's lid. She replied: "Really, Rabbi, after our talk on the phone I was going to have it kept shut the whole time, but one of the funeral directors said to me, 'Look, you have already paid for the embalming and cosmetic preparations anyway; you may as well get your money's worth.'"

Yes, it is really time that we started an activist program of policing our community's religious institutions. Because, as the nursing-home experience taught us a few years ago, the natural policing authority for such institutions is the Jewish community and leadership.

And because it is right.

## One Nation Under God

[Continued from Page 5]

century, the indicators are flashing us a warning. We dare not close our eyes as has been done before. We cannot permit the attitudes and actions perpetrated by conservatism, Republicanism and evangelism masking the renewed acquaintance of Christian influences with the idealy neutral American institution. For as long as we remain American Jews it is

essential that we preserve the integrity of the principals governing this country in all respects. Secularly determined independence of Church and State as stipulated in the First Amendment is integral to the Jewish people, and, as such, it's obligatory for us to form the will to block the presently developing bridgehead of Church-State interdependence.

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## Rabbi Fisch Responds

[Continued from Page 2]

certify non-Shomer-Shabbat bakeries; Rabbi Urkowitz himself co-signed such a public pronouncement in September. Then, the intolerant right, represented by an individual whose congregation attracts barely a minyan on Shabbat, blasted away. I was prepared to publish a response because, gevalt!, we are dealing here with hundreds of Jewish neshamot who really want to eat a kosher product, and they need our help. Rabbi Urkowitz pleaded with me not to publish the response; as a courtesy to him, though with grave misgivings, I suppressed my reply. I regret that decision to this day, but I stick to my commitments.

It was not Mark's only effort to censor me. At council meetings in my home, he would tell me not to write this and not to say that. I had said something in my shul on Yom Kippur about kashrut, and the word reached him in Hoboken that some intermarried couples were insulted. I wrote a letter to the Jersey Journal criticizing a judge who gave a mere wrist-slapping to three thugs who had mugged a

90-year-old man; Mark did not like the letter. For weeks Mark told me what not to write and what not to say. I told him politely that I would not tolerate his efforts to censor me. But I did agree not to publish anything in the popular media which would name bakeries or bakers or Jersey City rabbis. To that agreement I have adhered, extending it even to my Hamevaser column—though I frankly consider Hamevaser to be something deeper than the "popular media." Thus, when a "Harold Green"—someone who is not listed in the Jersey City phone book, the Jersey City electoral rolls, or anywhere else—wrote a vitriolic and deceitful letter attacking me in the Jewish Press (and, I stress, no one in the city's Jewish community knows who this person is or how to communicate with him), I allowed my reputation to go undefended, because Rabbi Urkowitz pleaded with me not to write a reply.

So, honestly, I do not know what in the world he is complaining about now. In my Hamevaser piece, I merely

presented a view of public kashrut as seen from the perspective of a local rabbi. Judging from responses I have received from my rabbinical colleagues regarding that column, I am proud to have had the zechut to write it. I do not know where in the world Mark found that quote he cites in his letter's third paragraph. If I read it correctly, he thinks that he had succeeded in censoring me to the point that I would not even discuss local kashrat problems altogether.

When it became evident to us that on the council a colleague and I teach all day in yeshiva, while our other member is at RIETS all day, we asked Mark to handle any paperwork involved in our council's efforts. He graciously agreed to administer it, having the extra time. From that time till the publication of these letters today, nothing progressed and no bakery moved closer to an agreement. I remained silent all along. No, I am not blaming Rabbi Urkowitz. We were all, each in our own way, intimidated by forces external to the objective question

of kashrut.

Still, the one bakery we did pronounce acceptable did sell me a cake. I ate it, sharing it with Linda and Andy Kane. We had an agreement: if we can declare it kosher for others, we have a moral obligation to eat it ourselves. I did. But does that mean I must regularly patronize a Mechalel Shabbat? To buy once, I agree, is an important symbolic statement. But my ultimate goal is to raise my community's standards, to teach them that, even though I recognize the ingredients as kosher, I still prefer to patronize Shomer Shabbat bakeries for reasons too numerous to discuss here.

Thus, my final point: despite Mark's tone, something beautiful has happened here. The students of the yeshiva where I teach has always patronized a Jewish-owned bakery which was unreliable (the one whose owner "sold his chometz" last year to someone who had already died). They no longer do; now, they obtain baked goods through the principal who brings it in from Crown Heights. At the Conserva-

tive B'nai Jacob congregation, baked goods are not purchased from any of the objectionable bakeries. At least two Orthodox shuls in the city have changed their policies to conform to that pronounced by our council; likewise, the city's United Jewish Appeal and its Israel Bonds campaign have purchased all baked goods only from the one local bakery whose ingredients we approved. (Again, to make a symbolic point, I publicly ate a danish at the recent U.J.A. installation of officers, despite what Rabbi Urkowitz writes.) And talks have just begun with a major supermarket in the city, exploring the possibility of expanding their Empire and Kineret Kosher selections to include frozen baked goods.

So, I have been compelled herein to reply to a letter I really do not understand. It is a sad case of "B'mumo Posel"—for the letter abounds with inaccuracies, misquotes, and misinformation. And a measure of wanton vitriol betraying the professional ethics which one would expect from a member of the Rabbinical Council of America.

# AN EMERGENCY PLEA TO AMERICAN JEWS FROM THE RESIDENTS OF SINAI



"Don't let Israel be pressured into a disaster. Even while doubting the integrity of Egypt, the government of Israel feels compelled by world opinion and United States pressure to carry out the terribly one-sided withdrawal from Sinai.

U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig has revealed that directly after the April 25th withdrawal from Sinai, Egypt will probably break off talks with Israel. Mubarak is returning Egypt to the rejectionist front.

This coupled with Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger's professed hostility to Israel's security needs is cause for grave concern.

Act now. Help support us. Don't let us down as we fight for a safe Israel. We call upon you to be counted in this struggle."

## DEMONSTRATE!

Sunday, 12 p.m., March 14, 1982  
at the Isaiah Wall Across from the U.N. Building (1st Avenue, 42 Street)

We will declare to the government of Israel:  
*"Don't be afraid to stop the withdrawal while World Jewry is mobilizing behind you."*

NOAM / 25 West 26th St., New York, N.Y., 10010

## Modern Orthodoxy

definite. All mitzvot are to be observed with an equivalent degree of commitment, despite the fact that God rewards and, conversely, punishes according to a mystical weighted scale. To intentionally neglect and disqualify certain mitzvot is clearly a negation of this message. To assert that the modern Orthodox Jew is limited to observing Shabbat and kosher and is permitted to disregard other precepts in an obvious contradiction to this Mishnah. Moreover, if we, Orthodox Jewry, believe in the divinity of Torah, that the entire content was prescribed to us by God, then to whimsically pick and choose among the taryag in accordance with our personal values is an act of affront, presumption, and hypocrisy. However, if we wish, we can ignore the fallacies, misconceptions, and empty rationalizations, and justify our actions — claiming that we are Modern Orthodox Jews.



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EMC President

# Soviet Jewry

Doni Israeli

This past week several hundred collegians from dozens of campuses converged on our nation's capital for the sixth annual Soviet Jewry lobbying trip. The students, a large portion of them from Yeshiva, protested the closing of the Iron Gate on Jewish emigration from Russia, now at its lowest point in a decade. The incarceration of Anatoly Sharansky, Ida Nudel, and many other Prisoners of Conscience, as well as many other Russo-Jewish problems, were stressed. For example, Soviet Jews must now overcome a quilt of Catch-22 regulations and other discouragingly menacing obstacles if they hope to succeed in leaving their homeland for Israel. This was made clear recently in a guide written anonymously by a Jew who remains in the Soviet Union and published by the International Council of B'nai Brith. The students suggested concrete actions to Congressmen and Senators, spoke with White House and State Department officials, and stood vigil at the Soviet Embassy.

In Poland where martial law has severely curtailed all religious movements, anti-Semitism has again raised its ugly head. In a nation which was once the home of three million Jews, more than ten per cent of the world's Jewish population, only six thousand remain. Yet recent pamphlets distributed on the streets of Warsaw have blamed the Jews for the country's economic woes and political strife. The London-based research arm of the World Jewish Congress, The Institute of Jewish Affairs has indicated that veiled Anti-Semitic references continue to surface in segments of the general Polish press. The IJA monitoring sources, reported on published attacks accus-

ing KOR and Solidarity as being "Cosmopolitus..." a term identified in Eastern Europe with Jews. They were charged with having Zionist-Trotskyist connections. Clearly the already-poor Jewish situation throughout Eastern Europe is deteriorating and something must be done for our brethren abroad.

We here at Erna Michael College have had a heart-warming experience this year that adds just a glimmer of hope to those subjected to the horrendous conditions that exist behind the Iron Curtain. At the beginning of the fall term, our student council received an unusual request from Karel Vodicka of the Council of Jewish Religious Communities in Czechoslovakia. Unlike most requests which are for money, Mr. Vodicka requested that I send him a Hebrew-English dictionary and a Hebrew Tanach, because they are unavailable inside his country. After purchasing these books along with two other elementary Hebrew volumes, we received clearance from the Post Office and mailed them off. Two weeks ago EMCSC received a response from Karel Vodicka, thanking us for the books and requesting additional Hebrew books. He wrote about his family life and the adverse conditions that he had to face daily. Karel, a thirty nine year old artisan, also told of his study group with a few of his Jewish friends held whenever possible.

We recently send our second shipment of Hebrew books to Czechoslovakia and six to eight weeks from now a small measure of happiness will come to a handful of Jews living behind the Iron Curtain. Mr. Vodicka also requested an American pen-pal; if anyone is interested in this worthwhile correspondence, please feel free to contact me.

# Kosher wine needn't be sweet just special



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## EMC Curriculum Evaluated

[Continued from Page 1]

by an uneasiness in speech — a certain detriment to a well-ordered lecture. Also, because the mother tongue of the majority of students is English, material may be lost in the process of translation. It is evident that this problem will remain a matter of debate for some time by faculty and stu-

dents alike.

The curriculum change, although not the success it was hoped to be, is a strongly positive indication of administrative concern for the problems facing EMC. Through such concern it is evident that conditions must improve through a gradual and patient process.

# On Mezuzot, Egg Matzohs & Open Caskets

By Dov Fisch

I never checked a mezuzah before I became a pulpit rabbi. Not being specially trained in safrut, I certainly knew better than to meddle into such a delicate halakhic sphere. While all of us in Yeshiva know that you can't judge a mezuzah by its cover, that knowledge was to become dramatically illustrated in the weeks ahead.

A member of my congregation approached me only weeks after I had begun working in Jersey City, and she explained that she would like to have fourteen mezuzot looked over. Since she was

prepared to replace any invalid ones, she asked whether or not I might be able to give her a quick estimate of the situation.

I explained to her that I do not feel that I am qualified to paskan on mezuzot, but I would be glad to look them over and give her an educated guess. That afternoon my education began. I knew enough about halakha to see, right away, that eight of them were undoubtedly posul. And, because of the requirement of K'sidran, their P'sul was irreversible. As for the other six, there seemed to be a number of problems. I had a softer look at them; he

declared three invalid. The remaining three could be used b'dee-eved, he said, but he would not use them since they all lacked tagin.

I was fascinated by the experience. Imagine! Out of fourteen mezuzot, not one was kosher l'chatchila, and eleven was hopelessly invalid!

I spoke about the incident at the yeshiva where I teach, and a few brave students brought into class their mezuzot for inspection, upon my urging. Each and every single mezuzah that I saw was posul! How could be untrained eye make such sweeping generalizations? It was simple. Some were clearly photocopies of kosher mezuzot. Others were printed on cardboard. Some had misspelled words. Many were marred by the lack of any discernible spacing between words. A precious few may once have been kosher, but letters were clearly rubbed out.

The halachot of mezuzah are quite complex, and sofrim should be the final arbiters on all questions, but it is safe to say that there is a lucrative racket out there which is swindling the Jewish public. It is a scandal!

that requires determination. Are we prepared to undertake that challenge?

Ultimately, the mezuzah problem reflects a much more fundamental tragedy: the fact that we do not really police our own community the way we should. Consider the widespread deception in the Egg Matzoh industry.

Every March, the supermarkets begin to display the annual Passover food selection. Featured prominently are the egg matzohs. Now, we know very well that egg matzohs are not permitted on Passover. Oh, yes, there is the famous heter of the Rama in Orach Chayim 462:4, which permits egg matzohs "in pressing circumstances for the needs of the ill or an elderly person who needs it." But no one else may use it. The Rama himself forbids it clearly in the very same s'm'e'if, and the contemporary Mishna Berura leaves no room for misinterpretation.

So, what are those egg matzohs doing on the same shelf as the borscht and schav?

The answer is simple. The egg matzohs are not for everybody. They are merely for sale to the ill and the elderly who need it. And now we get to the deceitful part.

## The Jew, His Means His End

By Josh Teplow

Humanity's fascination for the occult, the sacred, the divine, has manifested itself throughout man's short historical existence. And even before his mind became bogged down with the philosophical question of whether God truly exists, man was defiantly appeasing the powers that made his life seem very precarious. Offering his food, his handiwork and, when necessary, his own children, ancient man sacrificed with great deliberation all that was dear to him, all in the name of God or what he interpreted as omnipotence. So strong was this tendency that it was actually reflected in all his actions. Nothing, from that point on, was attempted without duly consulting the gods. Society itself changed as this concept caught on. Arose the priesthood whose sole job it was to cater to all sprites, heavenly and earth-bound. This furtive order incorporated, along with secretive prayers, a mystical ritualism which by some convoluted logic added validity to religion. Concurrently, the idea that certain things were reserved for the gods, that articles could possess the abstract ideal of "kedushah" meandered its way into man's living habits and coerced the separation of society into the holy and profane, the pure and impure.

These then are the foundations of religion, archaic as they may be; they have haunted man's heart from time immemorial. Later he would set up a system of logic and rationalize or explain everything in his world according to his own physical perceptions. Those ideas that could not be assimilated because of their inexplicability or lack of logic would be shunned and open to belittling question.

Now, religion could in no way enter into this sensibility as something rational. But man lived by religion. And like a moth's affinity for light, man drew close to the God idea. It delighted him when his needs were fulfilled and it frightened him when he grew introspective and realized his worth.

So, we can accept, even limitedly, the faith mentality. The idea is fascinating. Philosophers will protest about it, but in spite of this the gut reaction remains attractive. If we had no use for it otherwise or if it did not have even a scintilla of man-made truth, it would have been eschewed long ago.

"Committed to the idea." This frightens many because it seems to concretize the abstract and allows too much finality for such an ethereal subject matter. The Jew is peculiar and unique in his proclivity for commitment. The statement "na'aseh v'nishma" made this partiality very plain. It proclaimed the Jews' astute worship of God, but more important, it made clear God's expectations, the notion that He did expect something more than service to him: devotion to his ways! Now if we remember the aggadic literature, we'll recall that God approached many other nations, and for different reasons,

Hashem's yoke was unacceptable to them. Yet when he approached Israel, they accepted all with a jubilation that defies description. To say that the Jews are invested with a genetic commitment to God would probably not be strong enough a statement. This commitment, to be sure, was so powerful that it became environmental in reflection.

And now a digression:

When asked about Judaism in general, the one all-important factor that comes to mind is that the mainstay of Yiddishkeit is its sense of justice, its sense of morality. But more than a sense of morality, it is the notion of intolerance, of abhorrence for everything immoral and certainly amoral. It is this dictate that has kept the Jews a separate group not subject to the weaknesses of assimilation and the influence of grand external forces which would negate the Jews' identity. Thus, stern observation of the Torah's moral rules forces a certain alienation. But as we observed before, it wasn't Torah that differentiated the Jews but their own peculiar mentality made manifest by their response "na'aseh v'nishma" long before they received the Torah. And so, the Torah influence on the Jews' "differentness" is subordinated by a self-assuming preconception of their moral superiority. The Jew now becomes a sort of moralistic superman. Less so in the religious Jew because of his insulated life, more so in his liberally-oriented, worldly co-religionist, this superiority is manifested in the way he dictates profound moral panaceas to the world. Ostensibly viewing himself as possessing the ultimate moralistic standards, the Jew must champion every cause, civil, social and religious, that suffers from any ethical injustice. But while the Jew involves himself in others' battles, he simultaneously suffers martyrdom by not considering the injustices that seek to destroy him. And it is probably these pointed attitudes that shape the general outlook on the Jew and his place within society.

A friend of mine once told me, half in jest, that there is no such thing as constructive criticism; it is always destructive and never appreciated. This statement probably best sums up the world's view of the Jew's condescending attitude of its ethical imperatives. The Jew historically has acted as a worldly conscience, not allowing it to forget its sine and lax proprieties. The secular world has at least, in part, satiated its feel for decorum by adopting Judaic scruples; after all, isn't Occidental law based on Judaic ethics? But like his response to God when asked if he would accept the Torah, man cannot be plagued by an active conscience which avidly judges him at every action or decision. So the Jew has been shunned from society, persecuted, oppressed. And when man felt unmercifully molested by his conscience, the Jew was eliminated.

## There is a lucrative racket out there which is swindling the Jewish public. It is a scandal!

We b'nai yeshiva, though few of us are trained sofrim, have all learned the basic halakhot of mezuzah. But the Jewish public lacks this knowledge, and we ought to be out there teaching it. Consider the basics: a mezuzah must be handwritten, not photocopied. It must be written on parchment which was processed lishma, not on cardboard or paper. Shirtut is required; K'sidran makes it nearly impossible to save those with errors. Now, of course, we know these halakhot, just as so many of us have learned hilkhos shechita, though we are not necessarily trained shoetim. But the tragedy is that we have not adequately shared this knowledge with the masses of K'lal Yisrael.

I was deeply moved when I read of the wonderful efforts made in Brooklyn—I think it was at the Young Israel of Flatbush—where hundreds of people were encouraged to bring in their mezuzot for inspection. Other shuls have made similar efforts. But they have been too few and too far between.

The mezuzah issue, I believe is a keg of dynamite. And we are sitting on it, content to leave the onus of responsibility on the consciences of a very few: the Lubavitcher Rebbe and the Va'ad Mishmeres STAM.

There are now laws on the books in New York State which make it a crime to sell as kosher a mezuzah which is not so. But now we must move towards enforcement. And

No sympathetic Jew—rachmanim b'nai rachmanim, we are called—can truly be offended by the presence of a special product made for the elderly and the infirm. (Though, as Rav Tendler, shita, once said in shiur: it is rare, indeed, that someone whose digestive system cannot tolerate regular matzoh will be able to tolerate egg matzoh any better.) The problem is this: while the manufacturer's name is printed in English, and the ingredients are in English, and the company's slogan is in English, and fifty other things are in English—the warning that the product may be consumed on Passover only by the sick and aged is never in English. On some boxes, the warning is in Hebrew, and on others it is printed in Yiddish. My favorite one is the company which does not even print the warning in Yiddish; rather, they become lamdisch and simply write in Hebrew: "For full information, please refer to Orach Chayim 462:4, and see the Rama's comments ad loc." Brilliant! Egg Matzohs for b'nai Torah!

I once took a few students with me to a supermarket, and we meandered around the Passover food section for forty minutes. During that time, we went to each person who took a box, or more, of egg matzohs and asked: "Could you please tell us, for our survey, who will be using these matzohs this Passover?" In every

[Continued on Page 6]

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