Chaotic Condition Of Placement System Offers Immediate Challenge To Yeshiva

By PAUL ORENTZEN

The Yeshiva placement system has just begun. After some study of the situation and personal interviews with undergraduates, ordained rab­bis and officials, the facts comply with one generally expected statement: the placement system must be revised or, if necessary, completely shaken up—and fast. This is only being done with its retinue of indifference, apathy and confusion leaves the newly-minted graduate in a sea of uncertainty as to his future. If the position and dignity of the rabbi is to be preserved, his confidence restored, immediate action is necessary.

Here are the facts:

There are approximately 20 graduating rabbis who are unemployed at the present moment and a new class is soon to be graduated. In addition, several employed rabbis desire a change because of dissatisfaction with their present positions or for other reasons. All of these make up a starting number of rabbis who are seeking positions.

A year and a half ago, in May 1940, Dr. Bernard Revel, of blessed memory, realizing the deplorable situation, suggested the creation of a placement committee to concern itself exclusively with the welfare of the new graduates. A committee was formed with Rabbi Al­bert R. Mandelbaum as chairman and Rabbi Samuel L. Bar as Placement Director. The latter soon re­signed because of his many duties at Yeshiva. Rabbi Hyman Cohen was appointed in his place. Under the circumstances, the Committee of the Temporary Placement Committee when it published a memo­

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A Suggestion To The Board of Directors

Rabbincal Placement at Yeshiva is a mess. The facts and figures on the front page of today's "Commentator" should serve to prove that statement. But figures cannot show how the "unemployed rabbi" is psychologically distorted; how his early idealistic enthusiasm is curtailed into disgust, and cynical defeatism. Statistics cannot show the ultimate weakening of school morale which the situation produces.

Nor can the chaos in Orthodox American Jewish life resulting from lack of leadership be adequately depicted by facts.

We agree with the writer of the aforementioned article that the most annoying part of a capable full-time Director of Placement is the first necessary step to solving the problem. What is more, we think that the proper man for the position is Mr. Samuel L. Sar.

Until now Mr. Sar has borne many duties in addition to that of Placement. He was so burdened that it was humanly impossible for him to organize an efficient Placement System. Fortunately, his burden has now been lightened and he would be able to devote himself entirely to this essential enterprise, were it not for his sole function.

For this reason, we respectfully suggest to the Board of Directors that at any future meeting held, to apportion duties to the newly appointed school officials, Placement be made Mr. Sar's full-time post.

It would be naive to believe that the appointment of any one man can entirely relieve the complicated Placement situation. A wider scope of rabbincal training, an effective field bureau and raising the prestige of the entire Orthodox rabbinic status in America are steps which must be taken before we can ever approach a complete solution.

We do believe that all of these advances must be directed by a capable person. We believe that Mr. Sar is that capable person. He is experienced. He has contacts. He is available. Put him in the job.

"Selfish Wisdom" and Club Leadership

Wise old King Solomon is not known to have been interested in the Club Leadership Course inaugurated for this season by Mr. Levitan's 1941 lecture series. Whether the sage was interested or not, he might well have been thinking of attendance at this course when he uttered the proverb: "If you have been wise, then your wisdom has benefited yourself.

No matter what profession one enters, leadership is an important quality to possess. The ability to handle youth groups is essential for rabbis, Hebrew teachers and social workers. The wise student will take advantage of the opportunity to learn this theory and receive practical training in it, through Mr. Levitan's course.

A Great Teacher Leaves Yeshiva

The departure of Dr. Nathan S. Suaelt, former chairman of the Department of Rabbinical Placement and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Yeshiva College, is the news of the week. Dr. Suaelt was a capable person. We believe that Mr. Sar is that capable person.

In the future, Yeshiva Will be able to judge Mr. Suaelt's course solely on his head mark upon his personality.

Undoubtedly many occasions will arise in the future when I shall have to apply those principles of speech which I have studied in college.

Poet's Corner

PANNING THE PUNSTERS

No form of humor's lower than the pun.

Yet frequently in daily talk are heard:

Remarks which are, to say the least, absurd.

"That undertracks the brightly shining sun."

And if he quotes his little pun pun

And you don't laugh—then you're the lousy one.

MRYON L. REH '42.

Students On The Griddle

"Question: What course (or courses) should I take here at Yeshiva, if I would like to receive a rabbinical position in America?" To this query, Mr. Ethan is my choice. The newly-ordained rabbi leaving the Yeshiva, is able to discuss intelligently the laymen's questions regarding religion, hence have tested his "beneficial rabbinic." Hoping some day to enter the rabbinate, I believe that Ethan offers much to advance the achievement of this end.

MEL ROOSMAN '48, Denver, Colo.: Speech! I feel that the Speech course takes here at Yeshiva have been of great benefit to me in all of my every day activities. I do quite a bit of speaking and feel that I am able to speak well to any number of people. I feel that a great reflection on one as an individual and also on the school attaches to it.

JOSEPH SOKLOW '42, Connecticut: My vote for the "most valuable course" would go to the one which helps the student to "do" to all the other courses. In "Political Philosophy" I found the approach to understanding of history and philosophy, without which all of my philo, histro and government courses seems unrelated and without meaning. Then again, maybe it just took me two years to begin to understand Plato.

P. B. I do not take any courses with Prof. Levine.

--Martin Zin '43, Reading, Pa.: Offhand I would say that my Public Speaking has had its strongest and most direct effect upon me.

This is true both from a cultural as well as a personal point of view. It is perhaps one of the important courses which has made its lasting mark upon my personality. Undoubtedly many occasions will arise in the future when I shall have to apply these principles of speech which I have studied in college.

By JOSEPH SOKLOW

"Vocational guidance has long been recognised as one of the most important problems which confront the college student. So in trying to save a student's time and talents during his study in an area which it merits. Yeshiva, too, may be of help in this realization, and, with the establishment of the Vocational Guidance Bureau may well be on its way towards concrete achievements in this field in the very near future. The very nature of the work involved in Vocational Guidance require deep thought, much planning, moral work, and expert ad vice. Added to this, we have to shake off the attitude of con demning and discrediting the occupation with which many of us are clothed. Before we can begin to offer our services and facilities we have to remove the matter of guidance, their lies before us the complicated task of making the student conscious of their general need of the need for such guidance. If the guidance office is to be a success, the freshmen this year and the seniors of next, week should not only make the student body aware that everyone has some serious vocational, personal, or even curricular problems they will have accomplished their purpose.

In one specific instance, the Vocational Guidance Bureau has succeeded in penetrating through the tough wall of indifference which surrounds the extra-curricular preparation of the future leader in Orthdox Judaism, the Yeshiva student. I am referring to the establishment of a series of lectures on "Group Leadership," which are to be followed by actual experience in field work. As Yeshiva students, we have an added responsibility which no other college student can shoulder. The very fact that we are Rabbincal students justifies it in our duty to continue its teaching when we leave Yeshiva. Many will go into the Rabbinate, a profession, or any vocation the Yeshiva graduate must realize that it is up to him not only to be a scholar in the Jewish community, but to be aware and policy, and a leader of men.

Under the present set-up, Yeshiva men are given no opportunity worth mentioning to familiarize themselves with group work. Consequently, the graduate who enters the Rabbinate is "stuck" as soon as he has to start his organizational work (and which Yeshiva today is not expected to do just this sort of work?!) The graduate who goes into teaching finds himself as helplessly "stuck" as a boy who becomes a doctor and wants to do some Jewish communal work but doesn't know how to go about doing it. The difference between these two is, that the latter shrinks back into obscurity, while the former takes up his job. The Rabbi? He's probably written a letter to Rabbi Levitan asking him to telegraph directions on how to form a club of a sort or another.

Thus, a group organization, we can but hope to sacrifice the surface. We can at least show that we are willing to sacrifice the surface for what they are, and do not confuse with them what we would like to accomplish. We have no reason to believe that Yeshiva will not be judged solely on its accomplishments. It will be judged on the basis of what it has accomplished all that which it is potentially capable of accomplishing. Potentially, we can do all—and more—that other rival institutions are accomplishing. We need but to face the facts, and bear in mind the axiom that "you may ignore the facts, but you cannot ignore the consequences."

By BENJAMIN WEBBER

"This space, devoted to Mathematical Recreations, is a recent addition to "Commentator," and we urge our readers to submit any material they may have on the mathematical problems, and solutions to the various problems appearing here. Suggestions for the improvement of this column will be most welcome.

As a starter, we offer some mind brain teasers with which to exercise your gray matter. Solve them and send them in.
Henry Margolis

Throughout the country there is a feeling pervading the campuses that there is too much emphasis placed on sports. Some wealthy alumni pull strings and make the best athletes available, and Alma Mater doesn't show up enough in the winning column. But several schools are doing it, and it is finding enough to demand the discretion of overzealous alumni.

Let's take a look at the record. Since Chicago stopped getting men like Jay Berwanger it found itself forced to give up the intercollegiate football ghost completely and content itself with six-man Intra-collegiate football. We hope and trust that this will be the case for future years also.

Schools De-emphasizing

Those colleges who have cut out substantial numbers of activities in deference to de-emphasis are finding the going rather tough. But they do not give up. They know that they have an ideal in mind. And it seems that more and more people are beginning to realize the importance of diversification and pressure tactics. College sports may not do much from a standpoint of revenue but they certainly do from a standpoint of education. At Chicago, the students have found that they must utilize this convenience, continued Mr. Plotnick.

Dorm Social Lounge

Open from 5 to 12

The Dormitory Social Lounge will be open daily from 5 to 12 p.m. and Saturday afternoon, it was announced by B. Wolstein '44, dormitory supervisor, following a meeting of the Joint Dormitory Committee composed of two Student Council members and two members of the Student Organization of Yechezkiele.

“...it was an order of the chairman of the Social Committee.

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The first of a series of such games has been arranged for the convenience of the student body. It was decided by the Student Organization of Yechezkiele and the student council to arrange for the first of a series of such games at the proposed Inter-Allied Conference.

To assure everyone of an opportunity to take part in the game we intend seeing to it that you are utilized to the convenience. In the future, var-

d рай will be presented as the crammed line up of the college.

Three classes which are planning post-College affairs are requested to notify the Social Committee of their decisions as soon as possible. All holders of the Student Organization booklets will be admitted free to the performance while a 10-cent box will be drawn from a box ticket marked with a nominal fee. This will result in the sale of the price of admission for its holder.

will be welcomed by the Joint Dormitory Committee, composed of A. Cohen '44, H. Bolandry '43, J. Sebo '44, and B. Wolstein '44.

Empress Theatre

Fri., Sat., Sun., Oct. 31, Nov. 1-2

The Emperor In The Flesh

Gore Canton, Walter Pagden

"Whistlin' In The Dark" with Ed Skilton

Monday, Tues., November 3-4

Bob Hope, Joan Blondell

"Caught In The Draft"

Wednesday, the 5, Thursday, the 6, 8

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"UP IN THE AIR" with Franklin Steele

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Placement Problems Discussed

(Continued from page 1)

Landisian attitude and chaotic conditions which now obtain in the "placement division" of the Yeshiva, throws up his hands in hopeless despair and seeks a position by his own efforts.

Out of this state of affairs grew a condition of bitter competition by the individual rabbi for a given position and "the lowest bidder wins." Occasionally, the rabbi, in desperation, gives his chance profession completely, as a very recent case illustrates. These incidents are anything but beneficial to the best interests of the Institution.

A direct consequence of this situation can be seen in the increasing complaints and dissatisfaction of some of the employed rabbis. During the last year an approximate main total of 20 rabbis asked for a change of position. Under the present placement system—these projects are expected to continue.

Well, what's to be done?

To anyone who has considered even the most casual investigation, the answer is clear and simple. The administration must assume itself the responsibility of placement and appoint one individual responsible with authority to work in conjunction with his problem, to assume the post of Placement Director. He would have no other duties but that of assuming the graduated rabbi a position. If it is firmly believed to have a field man to select him to be as it is, and this is the most important thing—of course the Placement Director must be a permanent one and must be given adequate powers to deal with the situation. Only in this manner can the problem of placement be progressively solved.

The present condition of place-

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Yeshiva Library

Augmented

The steadily increasing collection of books in the Yeshiva Library has recently been augmented by a three hundred dollar purchase of volumes made through the Mendel Gottesman Endowment Fund, Mr. Jacob Dienst, assistant librarian, disclosed. The books cover a wide variety of subjects in the fields of bibliography, Jewish philosophy, Jewish history, and Jewish education, including such works as: "The Hebrew Scientific of the Apocalypse and Psalms," by Kline; in 4 volumes; "The Complete Works of Rabbi I. Kook." In 4 volumes; "The Mishna Compendium," by G. Kasowky; "The Philosophical Dictionary," by Kloskien; and many others.

Through the Gottesman Endowment Fund, over $150 worth of books have also been rebound, re-purchasing the Reference department with many rare and valuable volumes.

Announcing library regulations, Mr. Dienst stated that the Library will now be open daily from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m., and during exams week until 12 p.m. Yeshiva Library members are now also able to draw books from the Teachers' Institute Library.

There will be a Senior-Junior theatre party and entertainment on Saturday evening, December 11, at the Astor Theatre, 13th Street and Grand Concourse, Sidney Reisz, Senior class president, announced.

The price of admission will be 10 cents.

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