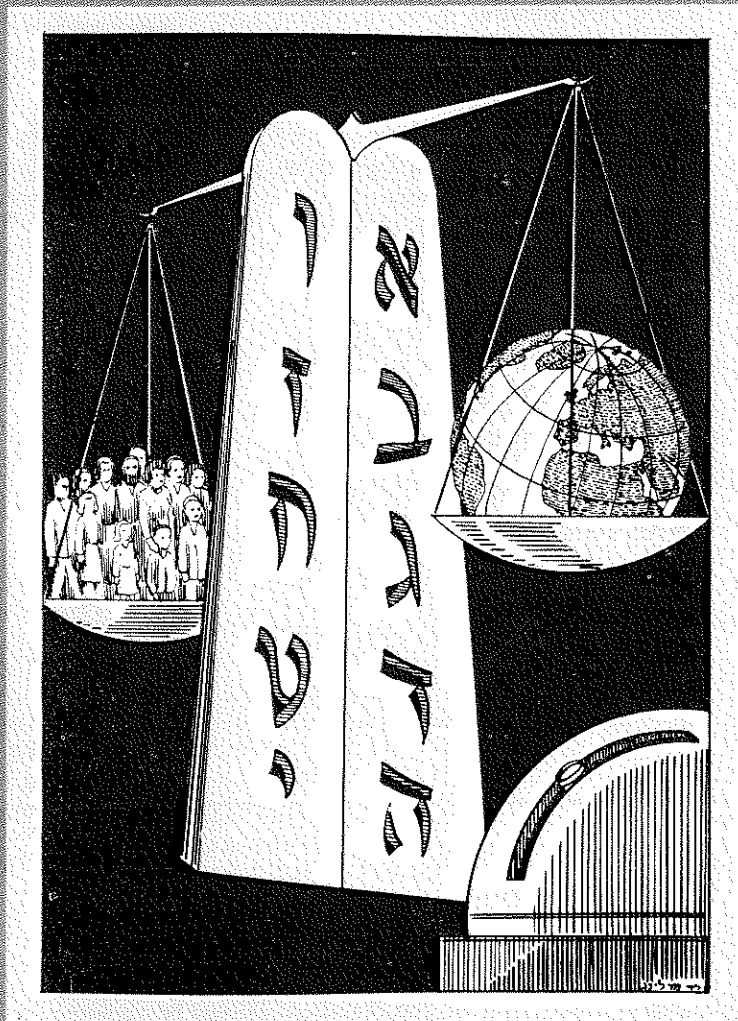


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THE JEWISH OBSERVER



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WHAT PRICE UNITY?

•
**FEDERAL AID:
BOON OR BURDEN?**

•
**JUDAISM OR
JEWISHNESS**

•
**THE CASE FOR
"OUT-OF-TOWN"**

•

The editors of
**THE JEWISH
 OBSERVER**

extend to its readers
 and K'lal Yisroel
 heartfelt greetings for a

**נתיבה
 וחתונה
 טובה**

May the new year herald a new
 era of dynamic Orthodox
 action on all world fronts,
 under the leadership of the
 Torah authorities of our generation.

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**"LETTERS TO THE EDITOR"
 DEPARTMENT**

Readers are cordially invited to address
 correspondence to the "Letters to the Edi-
 tor Department" which will be included,
 please G-d, in future issues of The Jewish
 Observer.

THE COVER

The cover drawing is a sym-
 bolic expression of the concept
 that everything—man and
 world—that the Jew observes
 should be weighed on the scales
 of Torah.

A NEW VOICE

Our reason for existence

IN recent years one chronic ailment in American orthodox life has been considerably relieved—the lamented shortage of Torah-true literature in English. A series of books whether originally written in English or adequately translated; a growing number of periodicals written on various intellectual levels, and reflecting *almost* the entire spectrum of American orthodox opinion, are now available for those who seek the edification of Torah-true literature in English.

The Unfulfilled Need

What need does *The Jewish Observer* hope to fulfill, which has not yet been met?

One segment of American Orthodoxy—to our mind its most vital segment—has to date “spoken” its mind and heart, to the remainder of American Jewry, almost entirely through the literary “mouths” of its critics and detractors. For those whom it encompasses, others have spoken. Is it any wonder that the vast majority of American Jewry has only the haziest notion of what they think and feel, to what they aspire and what their values are, over what they grieve and over what they rejoice?

Of whom do we speak?

We speak of Jews whose point of view is not monolithic. Some are *Chassidim*, others are *Misnagdim*, while some espouse the Hirschian principle of *Torah Im Derech Eretz*. And they often react differently to the events of contemporary Jewish history.

Unifying Principles in the “Camp of Torah”

What then unites them?

Firstly, the temper of their orthodoxy is not subject to expediency. They view Judaism’s standards, its dictates and norms as objective. If they fail individually or collectively to adhere to those standards, they ascribe failing to themselves but they do not seek to make the Torah’s values conform to their thinking and doing.

When they seek to define those values they do so either by reference to the written legacy of the Sages of Torah of all the ages, or by addressing their inquiries to the living repositories of Torah, to the great Torah scholars of the age. But they do not force the living collective conscience of Torah into a Sodomite bed to whose specifications that conscience is to be made to conform. They do not view institutional growth and aggrandizement as a mark of Jewish greatness, and if their principles are otherwise imperilled, they

are prepared to remain a minority, and to entrust to the G-d of Israel the vindication of His Torah.

More specifically, the segment of American Orthodoxy of whom we speak consists of the decisive majority of the acknowledged Torah Sages of our time, of the decisive majority of the students of the great Mesivtos; of the decisive majority of laymen who are scholars of Torah. It comprises the remnants of East and West European “independent” Orthodoxy (or as its detractors have stigmatized it—of “separatist” Orthodoxy); which, in Eastern Europe before the ineffable tragedy of the war, was the quantitative as well as qualitative majority of the orthodox community.

Independent Orthodoxy

The crucial term has been uttered—Independent Orthodoxy. The concept which stands behind the term is today identified with the ideology of Agudath Israel. Historically, however, it antedated the Agudah, and has had several lines of development: one in Central and Western Europe, another in Eastern Europe and a third in the State of Israel. (Each of these “lines of development,” will receive fuller treatment in future issues of *The Jewish Observer*, please G-d—Ed.)

In America, the Jews of whom we speak are united in espousing its elemental principle, though they have not yet articulated its concrete lines of application.

What is the fundamental principle of Independent Orthodoxy?

It consists of an utter refusal to acknowledge the possible legitimacy of any organizing principle in the collective life of the people of Israel other than that of Torah—Torah as understood through all the ages of Jewish history. It responds with an unqualified and unyielding, “No” to any manner of Reform of Judaism’s religious aspects on one hand; to any secularization of Judaism’s national aspects on the other. The manner of expression of that “No” may vary; its inner content remains constant.

As a corollary to the above, the Jews of whom we speak do not entrust the interests of their institutions to the tender mercies of Jewish organizations or agencies whose fundamental life-principle is not that of Torah. They insist on absolute independence of decision and action for their institutions, and their historic experience of the last 150 years has utterly convinced them that wherever they have failed to insist on such independence, either their strength of principle has been diluted and transformed beyond recognition of former self, or they have been paralyzed and crushed by the brutal force of their adversaries (who seemed constantly to sense that unless they would manage to completely uproot the Torah from their midst, it would forever threaten to reconquer their souls).

(page 12, please)

WHAT PRICE UNITY?

Reflections on the course of American Orthodoxy

by Nathan Bulman

EVER SINCE THE EUROPEAN EMANCIPATION period upwards of a century and a half ago, the previously prevalent *fundamental* unity of Jewish spiritual experience came to an end. There remained a unified sense of Jewish destiny—a destiny imposed from without by historic circumstance. But never since the Emancipation has it been possible to retrieve our once basically unified insight into the character of that destiny and that experience. Since then we are—on the surface—one people *by what happens to us*, rather than *by what we are*; by what *others do to us* rather than by what *we think and feel and do*. To be sure, those of us who have not lost our ancestral, millennial, Jewish *Emunah*, in *Torah Min Hashamayim*, know better of course. We know on the one hand, of an immutable Bris (covenant) between G-d and Israel which operates through the historic process to impose a felt unity of destiny upon us, even when we seek to forsake our unity of inner experience. We know also of an inner, unseen, “rockbottom,” Divinely implanted sanctity of the collective Jewish soul—through which at least a “thread” of Jewish inner unity persists in the presence of utmost outer disintegration of that unity. What “consolation” however is all that to those who deny *Torah Min Hashamayim*? To what objective frame of definition can they point as the ground of the *inner* unity of Jewish experience? A shared world-view? Can there be a shared world-view in a spectrum which ranges from *Torah Min Hashamayim* through, *lehavdil*, progressive revelation, all the way to Mapam Marxist determinism, and “Canaanite” paganism (the Israeli extremes), or to secular Yiddishism, “naturalist” Reconstructionism, and the Council For Judaism variant of Reform ideology (the American extremes)?

Shared values?

Can divergencies as profound as are those which fragment this Jewish generation, produce a core of values whose inner unity could enduringly survive the breakdown of shared experience which served as their matrix?

Common folkways?

Are not common folkways the function, the product of the life of a society? Can folkways survive, in

other than residual form, the disintegration of the society which formed and nurtured them?

And yet there are some strange paradoxes to be observed in the matter. An endless literary outpouring purports to ascertain the character of what unites us. It is as if some unutterably deep, elemental, visceral need were thereby served. And again, those of us who retain intact the faith of our fathers know its meaning; what is irreducibly sacred in the soul of our people irresistably presses there for expression, for definition. Others see the matter as the play of an instinctive survivalist urge contending against an assimilatory drive; a survivalist urge entirely dependent on natural causes, and one which might therefore in time disappear. In any event, our non-traditionalist “definers” of Jewish unity insist on the existence of that unity with a *mystic* fervor which is inversely proportional to their *rationalistic* dismemberment of the classical grounds of Jewish unity. The most heinous of sins to them—indeed, perhaps the only act they acknowledge as an *absolute* sin against Judaism, is the denial of their mystique. By strange contrast, amongst those who are most fervently rooted in the classical Jewish view—that of *Torah Min Hashamayim*, and the Divinely implanted sanctity of the Jewish soul—there are many who willingly bear the brand of “separatists,” of “breakers of Jewish unity.” And these “separatists” exhibit a “rationalist divisiveness” in the matter whose extent is in inverse proportion to the “mystic” fervor with which they maintain the truth of the classical grounds of Jewish unity.

In our pragmatic, non-mystic, America, the “unity mystique” of the “rationalists” has almost—but not quite—captured the field. Even within the Orthodox camp, the *quantitative* majority, the *seemingly representative* segment of its institutionalism, exhibits an emotional attachment to that mystique which is inversely proportional to the fervor of its Orthodoxy in *faith and practice*.

It is the intention of this article to probe this “swapping of roles,” in which “mystic” believers in the hidden sanctity of the Jewish soul, seem driven to deny that sanctity in the *practical concerns* of intra-Jewish *institutional* relationships; while the non-orthodox “rationalists,” and the “liberal” Orthodox, so zealously affirm their belief in “Jewish unity,” “the sanctity of the Jewish soul,” and “ahavas Yisroel.” In post-Emancipation Jewish history, this matter has been

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—and remains—one of the central problems of Jewish life. In Europe before the war, in Israel and America today, fundamental attitudes held in this matter were and are, determinant of the character of educational and communal endeavor, of relationships to the Zionist movement, and even, in America, of the functioning of the *quantitative* majority of American Orthodox Rabbis, Synagogues, and their national movements. In this article, our main concern will be the operation of the “unity mystique” in the American “liberal” Orthodox camp, while its function in the non-Orthodox camp will have to await subsequent discussion.

Unity Above All

AS HAS BEEN NOTED, the dominant mood in American Orthodox institutionalism is that of “unity mindedness.” Let us then subject to critical scrutiny, some of the details of both the ideological underpinning and the practical results of that mood.

What are its ideological postulates? In brief they are as follows: Jewish unity is a primary value of Judaism. Orthodoxy ought always to remain “within the community.” In its relationships, Orthodoxy ought to exhibit love and not antipathy; a cooperative spirit rather than a combative one. Its criticism of the majority view and behavior ought to be temperate and “constructive” rather than zealous and “destructive.” It ought to explain and persuade rather than reject and excoriate. Where violence is done to its principles and interests, Orthodoxy ought not to be rigidly unyielding in matters of “secondary importance,” in order to maintain “community unity.” Its Rabbis ought not to be “inflexible zealots” in their manner and attitudes. Its Synagogues ought to draw all Jews into their confines with “bands of love,” irrespective of the character of their conscious commitment or even sympathy for Orthodoxy. *Tactically*, Orthodoxy ought to willingly and graciously acknowledge the legitimacy of pluralism in Judaism. It ought to avoid “divisiveness” and the fostering of an atmosphere of contention, by excessive intransigence. In argumentation and debate, its posture must be restrained and moderate. Its educational institutions should be “community based” rather than “branded” as “orthodox sponsored.” It must not prefer the “simon-pure,” “intense,” orthodoxy of the few to the “saving of the many” for at least a “minimum of orthodoxy.” In the long run, the subterranean holiness of the Jewish soul will be more effectively awakened by the above approach than by a “fanatic” one, thus leading to the return to Torah-true Judaism of the whole of Israel, rather than to the sorry survival of a “narrow,” “obscurantist,” “holier than thou sect,” “living a constricted ghetto-like existence,” “separated from the mainstream of Jewish life.”

Now obviously the pretty picture thus drawn, can be set in a frame of imposing support from an array

of Rabbinic dicta on Israel's unity and the holiness of the Jewish soul; and from the absence of “separatist” Orthodox *Kehillos* in Eastern Europe. The famous Teshuva of the Netziv ז”ר in the matter, is triumphantly cited as definitive proof that the policy of “separatism” is “alien to authentic Judaism,” while the views of the Chasam Sofer and R. S. R. Hirsch are dismissed as the “parochialism of minority elements.”

Is the picture at least substantially a true one? What is the history of East and West European Orthodoxy's relations with non-Orthodoxy? Is it true that East European Orthodoxy was basically “anti-separatist?” Is the Teshuva of the Netziv truthfully applicable to our situation?

What of the view of the Chasam Sofer and R. S. R. Hirsch? What are we to learn in the matter from the history of Hungarian and German “separatism?” What are the results, in America, of the near prevalence of the “integrationist” approach?

East European “Communal Unity” And West European “Separatism”

THERE IS A VITAL DISTINCTION to be made, at the outset of any discussion on the matter, between the character of East European Orthodox confrontation with its opposition (first the Haskalah, and later, secular Zionism and Bundism), and that of Central and West European Orthodoxy's struggle against Reform. Through the nineteenth century, the Torah-true camp remained the dominant majority of East European Jewry. In the West, Orthodoxy had by mid century, become a steadily shrinking minority in all the large communities. In the case of East European Orthodoxy, no clear menace existed to its very existence. Millions lived the life of Torah. A very few did not. There were no *two or more* Judaisms. There was no diversity of Rabbinate, each claiming legitimacy for its particular Judaism. Even in the twentieth century, when the non-Orthodox proportion of the community had grown to the point of *organized rebellion* against the dominion of Torah, there still remained *one* Jewish religion, and *one* Rabbinate. (As for the bare handful of “enlightened” Synagogues in the large cities—a comparison of their character to very many American Orthodox Synagogues would shame the latter.) Practically then, the maintenance of *communal* unity did not, in Eastern Europe, threaten the very life of Orthodoxy. And, in the twentieth century, while Polish Orthodoxy continued to maintain communal unity, its dominant majority, organized in Agudath Israel, *zealously guarded* its prerogatives and ideology, its absolute independence and freedom of action, against any encroachment as a possible result of any cooperative endeavor with the non-religious segment of the community.

On the other hand, it is a historically incontrovertible

fact, that the choice of Hungarian and German Orthodoxy was either *absolute communal independence* or *obliteration by the forces of Reform*. Indeed, it was the very force of the achievement of German "separatist" Orthodoxy which in time (and indirectly), led to the capacity of German "gemeinde orthodoxie" to acquire the strength to endure.

It should of course be understood that the choice of "separatist" Orthodoxy was motivated not by need alone, but rather, and primarily so, by the principle that the granting of legitimacy to a community whose *Judaism is pluralistic* is a denial of the life-principle of classical Judaism. All the same its principle coincided, and necessarily so, with its life interest. (The above assertions will be given fuller individual treatment in future issues of *The Jewish Observer*, please G-d—Ed.)

Does it not then speak poorly of us that in the midst of our struggle for life against Reform and Conservatism, in this country, we dismiss as inconsequential the heroic achievements of the Chasam Sofer and R.S.R. Hirsch when they had to wage their version of our present struggle? When we look for examples that we might hold up to our congregations as shining instances of Orthodox victory against the onslaught of Reform, do any of us know of names more noble symbolic of such victory than Pressburg and Frankfort? For no other men fought the battle of the Torah against Reform as did the Chasam Sofer R.S.R. Hirsch. And if they taught us that without absolute independence of action, Orthodoxy cannot survive in a Jewish world which has become *religiously pluralistic*, should we slurringly refer to the point of view of those who follow in their footsteps as "the parochialism of minority elements within Orthodoxy"? Before Hitler cut down the flower of the Torah world, who was the minority and who the majority in this matter? Does any one doubt for a minute—if Reform had become really powerful in pre-world war II Lithuanian or Polish Jewry—whether Telz or Radin and Ger and Lublin and Krakow would have taken the path of the Chasam Sofer and Hirsch, or that of American "liberal" Orthodoxy? A brief twenty years ago the decisive majority of world Orthodoxy stood opposed to the "integrationist" approach. Hitler has cut down that majority, and it has become a minority. Should those who only a brief two decades ago were an insignificant minority qualitatively and quantitatively vis-a-vis the "separatists"—should they dismiss the "separatist" view with so much smug self-satisfaction?

The Netziv's Teshuva

In discussions on the matter, one of the key arguments cited by the "liberals" is a Teshuva of the great Netziv (ר"י) of Volozhin. It happens, however, that he is not really "usable" as support for the "anti-separatist" cause. Anyone examining his Teshuva

(שו"ת משיב דבר, חלק א' סימן מ"ד) will find that those who quote him either completely fail to understand him or they falsify his meaning.

The Teshuva begins by citing an article in an Orthodox periodical of the day (*Machzikei Hadas*) which had probed the possibility of dividing Jewry into wings—right, center and left; the right to consist of those who are total Tzaddikim, the center, of those who observe the Torah with simple piety, and the left, of those who rebel against the Torah in faith and practice. To which suggestion, the Netziv responds in the negative. No such division is possible, says he. And gleefully, our "anti-separatists" quote him to that effect (cf. Rabbi Howard Levine's article, "The Non-Observant Orthodox" in the Fall, 1959 issue of *Tradition*). They fail, however, to cite his reason. Says the Netziv ל"י:

" - - - for this one (one who rebels against the Torah) is not within (our) religion—neither can one understand the expression (in the *Machzikei Hadas* article) 'perhaps three sects such as these, are found within Israel?'—what sort of question is this concerning three sects—Tzaddikim, Beinonim (those who follow the median path) and R'shaim? Rather should one ask: 'Are there found, among those who do observe (our) religion, and do not break its fences, three sects who could be designated as right, left and center?'"

Of course, this far, our "anti-separatists" do not quote. It turns out that, in the Netziv's great understanding, there are three such designations within Judaism. The right consists of those who live a life of *total d'veikus* (cleavage to G-d) and who completely divorce themselves from all worldly concerns. The left consists of those "who observe the Torah in all its details, but who never experience love (of G-d) and (the sense of) cleaving (to Him). Nor do they strive for the attainment of such love. The center consists of those who observe the *Mitzvos* of the Torah in entirety, but who *experience love of G-d* and the sense of *d'veikus* only at times.

These are the three wings which the Netziv acknowledges as possible within Judaism. He recognizes no others. The Teshuva continues to dispute the contention of the *Machzikei Hadas* article that people of average piety are more susceptible in our generations to anti-Torah influences, than in previous generations.

As for the suggestion that separation from the irreligious is a proper protective device to safeguard the faith of the pious—it is true that the Netziv sharply disapproves of such a policy. But the context in which he does so, the very alternative he suggests, indicates indisputably that his remarks have no relation to an Orthodox minority struggling for sheer survival in the midst of a dominant majority which espouses the legitimacy of pluralism within Judaism. The Netziv speaks of the dangers involved in doubting the piety of others who *do not abide by every last possible* (page 26, please)

FEDERAL AID: Boon or Burden?

by Morris Sherer

A disturbing aspect of the debate raging in Jewish circles over federal aid to religiously-oriented schools, is that many Orthodox Jews, caught in a whirlpool of conflicting statements, have lost sight of the fact that there is a specific *Orthodox* approach to this issue, as is true of *all* issues. Furthermore, in the smoke of current controversy, basic facts in the overall issue have been obscured and confused.

In order to help clear the air of prevailing fallacies and misconceptions in the matter, we here assert a series of premises: (a) to place into proper focus the distinctive Orthodox point of view; and (b) to set the record straight on the merits of federal aid legislation.

PREMISE: The greatest source of alarm for American Jews is not the spectre of a dubious breaching of the "wall of separation between Church and State," but the appalling disintegration of the "wall of separation" between Judaism and *Phavdil* Christianity. Only Torah education can reinforce this wall, and solidify its strength.

The absolutist Jewish doctrinaire patriots of "Church-State separation," who are beating the panic drums against federal aid to Yeshivos, are attempting to foster the fear that inclusion of religiously-oriented schools in federal aid programs would endanger the Jewish position in this country. What they seem not to comprehend is that the most formidable single threat to the American Jewish community is not creeping federal controls, but creeping assimilation.

We dare not be deluded by the "upsurge of religion" that manifests itself in various areas. The old saying that "the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer" is most applicable, in a spiritual sense, to the American Jewish community. While we are blessed with pockets of intensive Jewish religious observance, which are increasingly attaining higher standards, the general picture is that of a vast wasteland where the lines of demarcation between classical Jewish living and gentile behavior patterns are continuously crumbling.

Many of the fervent votaries of "Church-State separation"

Rabbi Morris Sherer is the executive vice-president of Agudath Israel of America. He has testified several times before committees of the United States Congress in favor of federal aid to religiously-oriented schools.

ration" who so zealously hold the fort in its behalf are prime movers in this very process of internal spiritual disintegration.

The rich experience of history, and the Divine exhortations of our Torah and Talmud, all point to the one effective "anti-missile missile" we possess for safeguarding and perpetuating Judaism: Torah education. Even if some of the fears of the anti-federal aid group were well founded—and they are not—the *overriding* concern of the American Jewish community must be to grasp at every possibility to provide a Torah *chinuch* to more children. Each additional child admitted to a Jewish day-school as a result of federal aid benefits *makes Jewish life more secure*.

PREMISE: Torah study was not ordained only for the elite few; it is the birthright and indispensable soul-food of every Jewish child. Without federal aid, the doors of Torah are open primarily to the committed few.

Without a Torah *chinuch*, the Jewish soul withers and dies a slow death. The study of Torah is not merely the process of amassing information; it is the *sine qua non* for the transformation of a purely material existence to a G-dlike, spiritual one. This concept obligates us to strive to provide a full-bodied Torah education to the *broad masses* of Jewish children, and not to level off, as the present barometer indicates, at some 50,000 children in our *Yeshivos K'tanos*.

Unfortunately, despite broad scholarship programs and the loftiest intentions, the present day school system tends to limit enrollment to the children of parents who are either ready to make sacrifices because of personal commitment to the Yeshiva idea, or who "can afford the price." The noble men and women who lead these schools are so overburdened with constant financial crises, due to the skyrocketing costs of maintaining dual budgets for religious and general studies programs, that they have no alternative but to carefully screen all applicants.

How many parents "on the periphery" are dissuaded from registering their children in a day-school because their interest is not sufficiently compelling for them to "swallow their pride" and to present their income-tax report to a Tuition Committee, as proof of their eligibility for a scholarship? How many children each year, as a result, are denied their G-d-given right to drink of the life-saving waters of Torah, and are doomed to an empty life, bereft of every vestige of Judaism?

Of course, a well-known Orthodox Rabbi who heads a day-school in the Silk-Stocking district of New York City may cavalierly proclaim in the *New York Times* that his school would refuse federal aid. However, a study made by this writer over the past years leads him to the conviction that if our crisis-ridden Yeshivos were reimbursed by the government for their outlays

in their general studies budgets, they could open their doors wide to admit thousands of additional children.

Only federal aid can radically broaden the horizons of the Yeshiva movement, and help turn it into a mass movement. Federation aid, which the opponents propose as an alternative, is a will-o'-the-wisp solution, as the firm negative stand adopted by most Federations towards such aid abundantly indicates. And even if such aid were forthcoming, Reform and Conservative domination of the Federations poses a far greater danger of undesirable controls as the price for aid, than does federal aid. Realism dictates that government rectification of the injustice suffered by the day-schools is the only answer.

PREMISE: Orthodoxy must manifest its sovereign freedom of action by formulating an independent Torah position on this issue, and not spin in the orbit of the secularist groups. Every Halacha authority favors federal aid.

One of the most depressing phenomena has for many years been the apparent willingness of certain Orthodox groups to hang on to the coat-tails of the secularist groups in the entire area of Church-State relations. Instead of following an autonomous course which the enlightened self-interest of Orthodoxy dictates, we have had to gape in amazement at the sorry spectacle of Orthodox groups co-signing proclamations of the banned Synagogue Council of America and the National Community Relations Advisory Council opposing the use of public funds for bus transportation by the Yeshivos (which even the U.S. Supreme Court rendered *kosher!*).

During the past year some of these Orthodox organizations have begun to have second thoughts about these alliances. Perhaps they were rudely jarred to their senses when the most articulate spokesman of the secularist groups went to the extreme of advocating the removal of the tax-exemption benefits that Yeshivos enjoy.

The day has come for Orthodox groups, in order to merit recognition as Torah-true in character, to base their policy decisions *exclusively* upon Torah considerations and *Halacha*. In light of the indisputable fact that *every* Torah authority in this country has gone on record in favor of federal aid, it is high time for *all* of Orthodoxy to unite behind the struggle for this program.

PREMISE: Federal aid will not bring in its wake new regulatory controls. History disproves this canard, and the proposed bills specifically outlaw any such action. The states do regulate, why should they not funnel support?

Opponents of federal aid have been dangling before the public eye the frightening apparition of a power-hungry "Big Brother" government in Washington which

will impose new strangling controls on the day-schools once they accept federal assistance. For religious schools, which are zealous in guarding their freedom from outside interference, this would be ground for rejecting such aid—if it were true. But it is not.

Any study of assistance provided to schools by the federal government under various programs proves beyond doubt that the government has not requested any institution to barter away its freedom for "cash received." A survey made by this writer of Yeshivos that benefited in recent years from federal aid, such as that extended under the provisions of the National Defense Education Act, clearly demonstrates this fact. Historic experience should speak louder than ill-founded speculation.

Furthermore, if those who spread this bogus would only take the trouble to read the various legislative proposals fostering federal aid to education, they would find that their sponsors have gone to great lengths to allay these fears. In the current bill before Congress (*H.R. 3000, introduced January 29, 1963*), Section 713 specifically spells out:

Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed to authorize any department, agency, officer, or employee of the United States to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration, or personnel of any educational institution or school system.

On the state level, by contrast, local departments of education already exercise supervisory control over the general studies programs of the day-schools. And this without contributing one cent of support. In this area, the vociferous doctrinaire adherents of Church-State separation are strangely silent.

The gnawing question therefore arises: if subjecting the secular studies of religious schools to state governmental regulations is not considered a violation of Church-State separation, why is it a cardinal sin to accept funds from this very same source for the very subjects which it supervises?

It would seem that our doctrinaire opponents of federal aid have coined a new slogan: "*Supervision yes, Money no!*"

Let us put an end to the sophistry. Since federal aid would ultimately be funneled through the state, simple justice and logic demand that the religiously-oriented schools receive their due share of public assistance from the agency to which they are bound. Let us by no means befuddle the issue by casting the federal government in the role of an ogre raring to "dig its claws" into our religious schools. Nothing could be further from the truth.

* * *

In the next article we shall, please G-d, probe such questions as:

- ☐ Is American education monolithic?
- ☐ The bugaboo re "increased Catholic power."
- ☐ How federal aid limited to public schools would imperil the religious schools.

WHY DIDN'T THEY FIGHT BACK?

**ON JEWISH COURAGE
IN THE GHETTOS AND THE
CONCENTRATION CAMPS —
BY ONE WHO WAS THERE**

by Joseph Friedenson

TIME and again the cruel taunts are hurled. "Those Jews in the ghettos and camps were galuth Jews, without fighting courage." "Why didn't they fight back?" "Why did they go to the camps and the ovens like sheep to the slaughter?"

The taunts are repeated often. The alienated American Jew and the Sabra estranged from Jewish tradition in Israel, are at one in insisting: "It could never happen to us." "We are proud Jews, not servile ones, like those in the ghettos were." And even religious Jews, who should know better, became uneasy and apologetic when thus challenged. From the Eichmann trial through the appearance of Hannah Arendt's recent controversial book, the question has resounded repeatedly in books, periodicals, newspapers, in private and public discussion: "Why didn't they fight back?" Surely the challenge requires an answer.

Let it be said clearly. The question is asked either by non-Jews or by Jews who have taken over, lock stock and barrel, the values of the gentile world.

Resistance, revolt—what meaning does it have? If resistance and revolt could have saved Jews, the challenge would have meaning. But the question is not posed in this sense. Those who pose the question know full well, that such a possibility never arose; that during those years, even mighty armies were unable to resist the Nazis.

If the question seeks to ascertain why at the least, some of the German murderers were not slain to "redem" the Jewish blood they spilled—it would still be a meaningful question. But this too is not its intent. All too often the "militants" who pose the questions have no qualms over studying at the feet of Hitler's professors in German universities, or over spending their vacations in Germany in fascinated enjoyment of German music and art. Surely such as these do not experience the blazing desire for vengeance which might properly fill a Jewish heart.

Heroism and Jewish Honor

The question concerning resistance and revolt is asked in a different sense: "Why did they not die with dignity and arms in hand?" "Why did they desecrate our Jewish honor, and allow themselves to be led to the slaughter like sheep?"

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Behind *that* question there stands a false, pagan conception of what is meant by Jewish honor, Jewish dignity and Jewish heroism; an unJewish conception which presently is desecrating an entire generation of sainted martyrs.

Certainly those who redeemed the blood of their murdered brothers and sisters were heroes. However, it is a horrible desecration of the memories of the millions of heroes—heroes of another sort—who were holy and pure, to say that those who rebelled alone saved the honor of our people. Or, as a Jewish writer recently put it: "Without them (those who rebelled—Ed.) we would have no right for further life as a people."

Certainly the uprisings in Warsaw and in Bialystok were glorious chapters in the martyrology of our people. No one, however, is presently capable of judging in whose resistance there was greater heroism—that of the Jew who fell with gun in hand, or that of the Jew in the Budzin concentration camp who, tranquilly and unresistingly walking to his death, called out to the terrified Jews all about him: "If only I could be an atonement for all of you."

Jewish Resistance at Every Step

The simple Jew in Budzin, who went to his death "without resistance," (of whom the Revisionist leader



— Joseph Friedenson —

Dr. Wdowinsky spoke at the Eichmann trial,) was not the only hero of his kind. Those who were *there*, came upon numberless instances of Jewish resistance—though without arms, of Jewish courage without grenades, of incomparable Jewish heroism without guns.

They—the Germans—strove to transform their Jewish victims into animals even before they began their mass murders. But despite all, the Jews remained human beings who did not lose their Divine Image, at the very edges of their mass graves. The Germans wanted to transform Jews into cannibals who would devour each other, but as if for spite, Jews mutually helped one another, strengthened each other, often shared their last bite of bread with others. The Germans wanted to force Jews to forget their names, to forget the time, but thousands did not forget. They *davened*, and observed *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*. They baked *matzos*, they sounded the *Shofar*, even when to do so endangered their very lives.

One Who Symbolizes Many

Volumes could be filled with similar experiences, to which the camp survivors bear witness. For the moment, let an account be heard of only one of those many unsung sanctifiers of the Divine Name. What heroism was imbedded in that Hungarian Jew who slept near my cot in bloc 22 in Auschwitz, Birkenau, and who would rise early each morning for prayer! I do not speak of his *Tephillin*, which he somehow wondrously managed to hide in his straw-sack, thereby endangering himself at the hands of both the Germans and the Polish Kapos. I remember something different. In the morning, when saying the morning *Berachos* which precede the *Shacharis* service, he was wont to repeat—perhaps ten times—with devout concentration: "*Ashreinu*—Happy are we, how good is our portion, and how pleasant is our lot."

He would utter each Hebrew phrase and lovingly translate the words into Yiddish again and again. How happy—how good—how sweet. Imagine it if you can. A Jew stands in the Auschwitz camp: Roundabout the chimneys burn, the air in the barracks is stultifying, the stomach is empty and tortured by hunger. The best that awaits him is another day of hard labor under whips and wild, ranting insults. And here the same Jew—stands in the morning, upright and unafraid. Despite everything he still takes pride and rejoices in his being a Jew capable of saying *Shema Yisroel*. . . . Was that Jew a coward?

I do not know whether Reb Binyomin knew how to handle a gun. I am not even quite certain whether he would have joined an uprising. But in my eyes he remained to this day a symbol of heroism.

A Piece of Bread and Jewish Honor

Another episode is recalled to memory.

In great haste, or better said, while being chased,

I once forgot my portion of bread on the cot on the way to the inspection and daily count. I need not, nor can I, describe that day in my life. If you were there, you know its meaning. If you were not there, you will in any event never understand. I had nothing to eat all day, and knew that that night I would go to sleep hungry. But when I returned to the barracks, Reb Binyomin came towards me with the bread. He had that day remained in the barracks. He had found the bread and hidden it.

"Believe me, it was a difficult test," Reb Binyomin told me—"you understand, after I finished eating my own portion, I was still hungry, and suddenly, another portion of bread. I had already held it near my mouth. But quickly, I remembered that here in the camp such miracles as extra portions of bread do not occur. I thought it must either be yours, or Yanek's (Yanek was a Polish gentile boy who shared our cot). If yours, how could I eat it? And if Yanek's—I could accomplish a double purpose. Firstly, I could give him new life, and secondly, I could sanctify the Divine Name. Let the non-Jews in the barrack know, what it means to be a Jew who wears *Tephillin*. A whole day I wrestled with myself. It is good that the day has passed, and I am now done with the test."

What heroism there was imbedded in that Jew!

When Reb Binyomin Collapsed

Only once I saw him shattered and without hope. It came suddenly. A day earlier he still appeared healthy and fresh. But in one day he collapsed. It happened after another kind of "selection" had taken place. Candidates were chosen for work in the crematorium. When he heard that such a "selection" was to be made, his whole body suddenly shrank. The thought alone, that there was a possibility that he would have to be one of those who drive other Jews into the oven, crushed him instantly.

I remember what he looked like at that "call." He seemed to have become a mixture of two colors, black and white. Black as the earth and white as chalk. He stood near me and shuddered convulsively. When the "call" ended with his not having been selected, he hardly managed to drag himself back to the barrack, and then fainted.

Reb Binyomin never recuperated. From that day he was never again the same. In a few days he shrank till he became a "mussulman" (the term used for those who had become thin as skeletons). Not long afterwards he fell a victim in a "selection." One of the Jewish Kapos related that on taking Reb Binyomin out of the bloc, the latter said to him: "It is better for me to go today than it would have been then. It is easier to depart for the true world with clean hands."

I related this episode, because Reb Binyomin came to mind. But his heroism was only one of countless such instances which await recounting.

JUDAISM OR JEWISHNESS?

*Reflections on
Justice Cohen's
address*

by Moshe Weitman

THE American Jewish Congress recently convened its much publicized "Dialogue" in Jerusalem. Ostensibly, one of the purposes of the "Dialogue" was to help the modern Jew gain a better understanding and insight into himself and his Jewishness and his relationship to his fellow Israeli Jews. One of the featured speakers, whose purpose it was to help foster this understanding, was Mr. Justice Chaim Cohen, a member of the highest juridical tribunal of the State of Israel. He proceeded to clarify for his audience his understanding of what Jewishness is and who is a Jew. It was during the course of this talk that he informed his listeners that the Torah and Halachah use the same racist approach which was propagated by the Nazis and characterized the infamous Nuremberg laws. This was the pearl of wisdom which Mr. Justice Cohen bestowed upon the delegates who travelled half-way round the world and came to Jerusalem to seek a better understanding of themselves as Jews. A pity. They could have saved themselves the trouble and expense of the trip. There are countless rabble-rousers and anti-semites right here in America who would have gladly bestowed upon them similar epithets in their own backyards.

It is not however my purpose here to refute the contentions of Justice Cohen. Nor is it my purpose to castigate him for his bitter attack upon religious Jewry. To these aims others have amply addressed themselves, both in Israel and America. Furthermore, Justice Cohen must be fully aware that his gratuitous attack is not based upon fact. It is no secret that sincere and wholehearted conversion is acceptable in Jewish life. It is noteworthy that the *ger* has never really been hampered by social barriers and in the course of our history many *gerim* have attained greatness and admiration, not to speak of complete integration and acceptance into the very fabric of the Jewish community. My purpose is, rather, to understand the reason for Justice Cohen's distortion of the traditional Jewish attitude in the matter, and his repeated attacks upon the religious community in Israel. Such an understanding might in turn help us to understand the animosity to religion and religious Jews which so often is expressed by many of the secularists in Israel, in contrast to the moderation

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which characterizes the American Jewish secularist attitude in the matter.

Justice Cohen himself provided a large part of the answer in his talk at the Dialogue. At the very outset, he asserted his unwillingness to use the very term, Judaism. He could only use the term, Jewishness. For, *the very existence of a definable Jewish religion* was, in his view, to be denied. He therefore devoted his entire lecture to his problem of what makes one Jewish. He distinguishes among several "types" of Orthodox "Judaisms" (without acknowledging that all Orthodox Jews share belief in *Torah Min Hashamayim*) which implies for him, that the claim of each is "cancelled out" by the claim of the other. He then takes great pains to enumerate just about every claim to "Jewishness," whether it be based upon ideological, political, cultural or emotional grounds. He even includes the so-called Canaanites as a legitimate expression of "Jewishness." (Why not the American Council of Judaism?—M.W.) And, since he claims that everything and anything, whatever one wishes to use as his own yardstick, is a legitimate and a bona fide claim to "Jewishness," he therefore rejects them all as far as he is personally concerned. Justice Cohen feels that his own "Jewishness" does not depend on religion (he rejects the notion of a Jewish religion); it does not depend on the fact of his mother's "Jewishness" (that would be racist); and he rejects it on the grounds of *any* ideological or emotional basis.

What then, in Justice Cohen's view, is a "rock bottom" test of the claim to "Jewishness?"

For that Mr. Cohen has a ready answer. It is expressed in one word—suffering. He finds that this is the great common denominator which unites all Jews. For him, nothing has the validity of martyrdom and suffering. He therefore comes to the strange conclusion that everyone who has suffered for being a Jew, or even for having been mistaken for a Jew, may be considered a bona fide Jew. No wonder, then, that he considers converts *away from* Judaism, even if they have become catholic monks as "Jewish."

Now, at last, the audience which attended the Dialogue knows what it means to be a Jew. Religion is not important. Jewish parentage is not relevant. Heritage is incidental. It is *suffering* which is held aloft as the criterion of Jewish identity. A pity then, that so many Jewish organizations dedicated to the alleviation of Jewish suffering, are devoting themselves

to the destruction of the only unanswerable claim to Jewishness, which Justice Cohen can find. Listen to his words:

"Personally speaking, I cannot conceive of a more unanswerable claim to Jewishness than this Jewish suffering . . . for, whereas in all other concepts of Jewishness you base yourself on beliefs and on ideas and doctrines, here you have a claim—amply supported by physical evidence and manifestly enforceable on the Jewish nation as a whole."

No more is Jewishness a personal commitment. It is the antisemite who will henceforth in effect decide who is a Jew and who is not a Jew. By his decision to either cause suffering or to allow a Jew to live peacefully, the anti-semite becomes the determinant of, "Who is a Jew?"

What drives Mr. Cohen to this ludicrous position? What makes him set up the anti-semite as the arbiter of Jewish identity? How can a person who occupies so exalted a position in the State of Israel demean himself and his people in such a vile manner?

Again, one can sense the answer in Mr. Cohen's speech. Mr. Cohen rejects the very existence of Judaism. He does accept "Jewishness." But what is "Jewishness?" Here Mr. Cohen answers quite forcefully. Each individual has the freedom to formulate his own concepts and ideas of "Jewishness"—there is no real gauge or standard of "Jewishness." One may reject every principle of Judaism and still lay claim to "Jewishness." You may turn Catholic or Buddhist, you may be an avowed atheist, you may even create a new religion of your own. Justice Cohen considers any one of these beliefs, or disbeliefs, as of equal merit in determining one's "Jewishness." Thus, *there really is no "Jewishness."* For, *whatever can be everything, is in reality nothing.* What Justice Cohen has done was to skillfully maneuver his audience into accepting Jewishness as a non-entity. It cannot be described, it has no definitive concept nor purpose. *It is really nothing.*

Perhaps Justice Cohen has shown his hand in this description of "Jewishness." One can discern his own yearning for escape from this "Jewishness." By giving it such a broad, amorphous, all inclusive definition, he has actually destroyed "Jewishness" as an entity unto itself. Perhaps this is what he would like to do. Two things, however, stand in his way: Torah-true Judaism, whose very existence gives the lie to everything he stands for, and secondly, *le'havdil*, the anti-semite. Justice Cohen might very well have found for himself an exit, however uncomfortable, from his "Jewishness." For, to the claim of Torah, he responds with hate. He is fully aware, however, that the anti-semite will in any event not allow it. He therefore finds in his suffering at the hands of the anti-semite, the basis of his claim to "Jewishness."

For us, Torah-true Jews, as well as for all Jews, several things remain to be pondered, as the lessons of the episode—lessons which affect our very continued life as people.

(1) The ultimate result of the denial of Torah-true Judaism is the *total negation* of everything Jewish. The adoption of the principle of pluralism in Judaism, is a one way bridge to the ultimate absurdity of Judaism or "Jewishness" being denied *any objective character*. How long can the people of Israel live, with *that* as the ultimate ground of its being?

(2) Justice Cohen's response to his critics, was that he had perhaps used excessively sharp terms, but that he had done so only to "emphasize what needed emphasis." That statement was considered by the *majority of the Knesset as sufficient apology on Mr. Cohen's part. Such is one of the inexorable results of a secular Zionism.* That lesson we need to absorb—in all its implications—into the very marrow of our bones.

A New Voice

(continued from page 3)

In a word: our "right wing" does not believe in the "unity of the community at all costs."

Those of whom we speak, may grieve over and deplore, strife in our midst. When however, they see what is holiest to them trampled; when they see the very life of Israel's collective soul threatened, they react with passion and zeal. And they have nothing but contempt for the treacherous advice which imposes on them the bland, bloodless, "pareve" Anglo-Saxon restraint which has become the hallmark of American Jewish discussion. A heart which beats with agony is incapable of crying out that agony in harmoniously modulated pianissimo tones.

That segment of American orthodoxy, has in recent years acquired tens of thousands of new adherents—unknown to themselves. It has built a proud and strong Torah world despite its sad lack of organization and articulation.

Self-Knowledge and Communication

The time has come for that Torah world to know itself, to align itself more consciously with its brothers in the land of Israel and in the whole world, who share its ideals.

The time has come for that Torah world to engage the world of American Jewish (as well as orthodox) institutionalism in a new dialogue, in the coming chapter of struggle for the soul of American Israel.

These *purposes* "The Jewish Observer" is intended to serve. May it be the will of *HuShem Yisborach* that "The Jewish Observer" shall *serve* those *purposes* with dignity and honor; that its pages shall *serve* to sanctify the Divine Name in the midst of the people of Israel.

—The Board of Editors

THE CASE FOR 'OUT-OF-TOWN'

by Emanuel Feldman

EVEN to a cursory observer, it is apparent that Orthodox Judaism in New York City has in the past decade made dramatic forward strides. There seems to be an air of intensity in the Orthodox community, a zeal in Torah living, a pride in observance of Mitzvos, a dedication to learning. This is undoubtedly a reflection of the newly developed sense of sureness and confidence which has been injected into the mainstream of New York Orthodoxy by the maturing graduates of the many Yeshivos and day schools, and by the increased influence of the dynamic Chassidic communities. Where once observant Jewish living was the exception, today in many areas of New York it is the norm. Glatt Kosher signs abound, Yeshivos proliferate, beards and *peios* are common, and *sheitlach* have become big business.

New York Orthodoxy takes all of this luxury for granted. It also takes for granted that outside of New York City no Jews and no Judaism exist.

For New York Jews there are only two cities in the United States: New York is one; the others is that vast area stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Maine to Texas, known as "out of town." New York is Jerusalem; out of town-New Yorkers like to call it "the hinterlands"—is *chutz laaretz*. And the unspoken implication is that New York Jews are Jews, and out-of-town Jews are *goyim*.

For all of its vaunted sophistication, New York Orthodoxy lives in a vast, provincial insularity. Its *glatt* becomes *glatter*, its *kanaw-us* more intense, its *chalav* more Yisrael: an admirable state of affairs when taken by itself. But when it implies a repudiation of the millions of Jews who live in the rest of the country this is unfortunate, for by so doing New York Orthodoxy is neglecting the opportunity to be an inspirational force and influence on American Jewish life.

This rejection of "out of town" is partly the result of the fact that the New York Jew and the American Jew do not speak the same language. They use the same words, the same phrases, but they do not mean the same thing. For example: "I'm very strict with my daughter." In the orthodoxy of New York this means that the daughter must wear modest clothes, must *daven*, and must attend the most pious of girls' yeshivos. But in a typical southern town, this proud statement by a Jewish mother means that the daughter is not permitted to go to a dance until she is twelve.

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nor date until she is thirteen, and that she must be home by 1:00 a.m.

Hopes and dreams take on a different character. In New York, observant parents hope that their daughter will marry a *Talmid Chacham* who will continue to learn and study, and that their sons will marry girls who are pious and learned. Out of town parents who have some commitment to Judaism have one hope: that their child will marry a Jew. For this they pray, of this they dream.

Even the word "religious" bears different meanings. A religious Jew in New York is one who keeps the *Mitzvos*. A religious Jew out of town is one who attends the late Friday services in English at least once in two weeks.

"I sacrifice for my child's Jewish education" means, in New York, that the child is sent to an intensive Yeshiva at which he will study from eight to four daily, six days a week, and for which the father must pay a high tuition; out of town, the same words mean that a Jewish father in a tiny hamlet will get up at 5:00 a.m. every Sunday in order to drive his child to a Sunday School sixty miles away. The sacrifice of the out of townner is perhaps no less than the New Yorker's—it is certainly more poignant—but do the two fathers speak the same language?

Although we live in an age where we can know instantaneously what is happening in the Congo or in China or in outer space, New York Orthodoxy knows little of what is happening in the Jewish communities a few hundred miles away. This is a form of the curse of the *Dor Haflagah*, for what else but lack of communication is *bilbul haleshonos*?

The New York Jew, for example, finds it hard to believe that there are Jewish communities out of town in which a Sabbath observer is a rarity and in which a *minyan* for Shabbos morning cannot always be expected. And out of townners find it hard to believe that it is not uncommon for 150 Jews to come to *Minchah* on a Shabbos afternoon in New York or that there are entire districts where every shop is closed on Shabbos.

Similarly, New Yorkers are not fully aware of the great and crucial battle which is being waged out of town by a small handful of committed Jews, against overwhelming odds, for the preservation of Torah and *Mitzvos*—a battle which is the more heroic because it is a lonely one.

There is, for example, the young father living in a town which has a total of three Jewish families in a population of 10,000, who teaches his five-year-old

child and the children of the other families three nights a week; they learn to read Hebrew, to *daven*, to make *brachos*.

There is the young couple who, after much soul searching, decide to observe *Kashruth*, *Shabbos* and *Taharas Hamishpachah*; they do this despite the raised eyebrows of their friends and the open mockery of their acquaintances. They persist, they study, they begin to shake the smugness of their friends and to win them over.

There is the college freshman who defies campus opinion and convinces his Jewish fraternity brothers to have a Kosher banquet for the first time in twenty years. He is subject to obloquy and scorn and charges of hypocrisy. But he prevails.

There is the heroic ongoing struggle throughout the United States to establish and maintain day schools. The daily chapters of dedication and sacrifice in maintaining a network of hundreds of such schools in this country are an untold story.

These are not isolated cases. They are repeated constantly in one hundred different forms by individuals in whom there still burns the "*pintele Yid*." But New York Orthodoxy knows nothing of this, and it apparently cares nothing.

For New Yorkers do not have to fight a hostile environment. Even if an immediate neighborhood should be non-observant and antagonistic to Torah, there is within reach a Yeshiva for one's children, there are friends, there are rabbis, there are monumental Torah institutions, there are Gedolei Yisrael who can be seen and heard, and there is the concomitant sense of a certain security in one's spiritual life. The Torah Jew in New York is not alone.

He is not alone and so he remains in New York. He looks with horror at the suggestion that he live and his children be raised in any other city. And when such opportunities arise he rejects them out of hand.

So pervasive is this mood of unconcern that even those traditional bulwarks of Jewish idealism, our major Yeshivos and Mesivtos, find themselves inadvertently fostering it. Numerous are the students who express a disdain about entering the active rabbinate. Better to remain in New York, they say, as a teacher or as an accountant or as a businessman, than to enter a rabbinate which entails living out of town and which may tarnish one's pure pristine piety.

And this is true: one's piety can become tarnished; but it may also be purified. It depends how we translate the Rashi of "*Im Lavan Garti V'taryag Mitzvos Shamarti*": did Yaakov Avinu keep the Mitzvos *despite* the fact that he lived with the evil Lavan, or did he keep them *because* he lived with Lavan?

In any case, the result is that our finest *Musmachim* and our ablest and most talented minds do not enter the lists to do battle with the forces of anti-Torah and are content to make *Shabbos* for themselves in a secure

environment. Is not New York City filled with young and competent Orthodox rabbis and teachers who might have had an impact on American religious life if they were to live elsewhere? Similarly, we must confess, is not "out of town" replete with rabbis and teachers whose greatest desire is to live in New York?

The opportunities for productive and influential work for Torah have never been greater; we have unlimited and untapped resources; and yet we do not utilize them, ironically, because of a misguided piety. It was Rabbi Yisrael Salanter who said of the young men of his day who were learning in order to become rabbis, that "there is no greater *lishmah* than this." But today, instead of vigorous and idealistic rabbis and educators who might save Torah in America we have Rabbi X, the accountant, Rabbi Y, the insurance agent, Rabbi Z, the Mutual Fund salesman.

II

CERTAIN things should be said about New York Orthodoxy that have not been said before. One occasionally gets the impression that in certain circles Orthodoxy has become a kind of status symbol. Piety has apparently become a commodity in the marketplace of acceptance. Many seem to be concerned not with the state of their relationship to G-d and Torah, but with the state of their personal *frumkeit* in relation to that of their neighbors. Competitive piety abounds. Out of towners may boast, My car is bigger than yours, my house better, my lawn greener; New Yorkers seem to be saying, My piety is deeper than yours, my Shul is more kosher, my praying more intense. Torah living, which is designed in part to develop man's concern for his neighbor has, in New York, turned inward unto itself. There is a certain smugness, a satisfaction with self, a lethargy and a contentment which are disturbing. Disturbing, because the religious personality, by definition, cannot be self-satisfied, and is rarely at peace. His soul aches at injustice and at cupidity, and his mind and heart cry out against selfishness and greed. He is in constant struggle against his own self, against his baser instincts and drives and appetites; and he is ever striving to improve his dealings with his fellow man. Smugness and self-satisfaction are farthest removed from the truly pious. G-d, Torah, one's own personal observance of *Mitzvos*—these are never taken for granted.

In some respects it is the non-New York Orthodox who most characterizes these aspects of the religious personality. Contentment and smugness are luxuries which he can ill afford. He has no spurious peace of mind; his is a constant struggle against the environment; his is the honest commitment to a way of life for its own sake; his the decision to uphold Torah and *Mitzvos* though it means no status and no honor for him and at

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THE CHALLENGE

by S. B. Unsorfer

The growing and expanding modern new Jewish State has brought with it a challenge unprecedented in the life of religious Jewry: "Prove yourselves capable of positive action and creative building — or take a back-seat in public affairs!"

Has religious Jewry managed to answer this challenge successfully, or is it withdrawing to the ranks of second-grade citizenship? Upon my return from a third visit to Israel in nine years, may I suggest the following answer to this vital question:

ASHDOD is a new city in Israel. It stands on land which just over a year ago was nothing but brown desert sand drenched in the hot Negev sun. Today it is a fully-fledged city with shops, houses, streets and institutions inhabited by thousands of newly settled Ashdodians.

Hidden amongst the vast highly modern new blocks of flats is a small building comprising two small rooms. That building is called "Agudath Israel Kindergarten," and in it over 70 young children spend the best part of their day. Facing the Kindergarten is a large new two-story building comprising spacious rooms plus a dining hall and all the rest. This is the city's Kindergarten. It has the most modern equipment and the most up-to-date furniture. In it are 26 small children.

"But why should you send your child to be crammed into these two small rooms when he could enjoy himself much better in the modern building across the road?", my friend asked an Ashdodian who had just fetched his boy from the Aguda Nursery.

The stranger, rather hurt, responded: "True, I am not as *frum* as you and I do not even wear a *yarmulka* —but I want my child to grow up to be able to recite the *Shema Yisroel!*"

This little incident typifies the story of Israel 1963, and the role which organized orthodoxy is trying to play in it. In a year or two Ashdod will have its first Chinuch Atzmai and Beth Jacob classes—by then it will also have a Yeshiva and Kotel which is currently being built by none other than the untiring pioneer of Torah learning, Rabbi J. Kahaneman, the Ponevezher Rav.

But Ashdod is only the latest and smallest foothold of Torah in the Jewish State. For never in its history has orthodox Jewry proved itself to be so versatile, quick-acting and capable of positive and practical work. Perhaps one may suggest that whilst hitherto orthodox Jewry was engaged in a battle of words, in a clash of ideas and thought, they are today successfully campaigning in a battle of deeds, in a clash of action and achievements.

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Not that there has been a truce on the ideological battlefield. Far from it! Day in day out the rabbinic and lay spokesmen of the orthodox Yishuv in Israel repel the attacks of the secular leaders and defend the interests of Torah and religion. In the Knesset, the press, on the radio and public platforms the word of traditional Judaism is pronounced clearly and firmly. But words alone would not suffice. The Israel of today is a land that builds and creates, a country that turns rock into houses and desert into fields, a nation that converts slums into cities and swamps into vineyards. The war of words would have been futile and aimless if it were not backed by deeds and action. It is this "Second-Front" that proved to be the more important. A question of challenge and counter-challenge of attack and counter-attack.

It is nearly five years since my last visit to Israel. At that time, too, one could see new orthodox establishments and institutions which gladdened the heart of every Shomer Shabbos and Ohev Torah. But they were few and far apart, small in size and modest in numbers. Today the picture is different altogether. Go where you please and turn where you wish and you will see great new castles of Torah and huge palaces of learning that stand up easily and proudly against anything that the others have produced. The vast empires of Ger, Vishnitz, Sanz, Belz and Lubavitch, not to speak of the giant Ponevezh undertakings. The mighty fortresses of Beth Jacob, Chinuch Atzmai, or Or Hachaim; plus the new bridgeheads of Bobov or Pressburg; the Yeshivoth, Kiryoth and Shikunim—all these bear witness to a vibrant and expanding new religious Yishuv which discharges its duties valiantly and courageously.

Naturally, others have built more, bigger or more expensive strongholds of their own. Mapai, Histadruth or Mizrachi possess fortunes in land, buildings, co-operatives, kibbutzim and banking houses. But, after all, they are the people who for the past 15 years have been holding the key to World Jewry's safe. They are the men who rule over well-budgeted government departments and who administer the fortunes of U.J.A., J.P.A., Bond Drives and all the rest, while every single Belz Cheder or Gerer Shtieble, every single Zeirim club room or Komemiuth tractor was built or bought from pennies collected the world over. None of the J.P.A. millions go towards the Yeshivoth, none of the J.N.F. trusts or legacies benefit the Talmud Torahs.

It is this knowledge that makes every new Torah Institution so important and every new Kiryah so

valuable. The small beginnings, such as the one at Ashdod, expand miraculously almost overnight into influential and powerful fountains of Torah whose mere existence makes the man in the street conscious of his past and causes him to want to bring up his children in the spirit of the *Shema Yisroel*.

II

IN the great Yeshivoth in Israel to which I referred, there are today over 12,000 students, young *Bnei Torah*, who in their adult life will cement the ranks of the orthodox Yishuv into an even stronger fortress. Immediately behind the Yeshivoth, in the rear guard, follow the thousands of boys of Chinuch Atzmai, of the Talmud Torahs and the Yeshivoth Ketanot, whilst alongside them we have an equally large number of girls in Beth Jacob, Or Hachayim. Bnos Yerushalayim, etc. Their expansion and growth in recent years has made its impact on the other religious sections in Israel. The religious state schools, for instance, the Mamlachti-Dati, have recently introduced extra *Limudei Kodesh* hours in some of their schools. Again a sign of the growing religious consciousness in Israel today. Naturally, every additional *posuk Chumash* and every extra *blatt Gemorro*, wherever it is learnt, helps to tip the balance.

If we add to the above the many Kollelim in which married men, *Talmidei Chachomim* of the highest grade, spend their whole day in diligent study; the vast number of *Chevrot Shass*; the large number of adult Torah study groups organized by Agudath Israel in the *Reshet Shiurei Torah*; the countless official daily *Shiurim* that take place in Synagogues, *Batei Midrashim*, *Shiteblech* and private homes all over the country, we find that Eretz Israel has today a mighty power station of Torah which beams its rays of light and warmth into every single home all over the country, into every Jewish household which is ready to admit it and make use of it.

Certainly, there are plenty of the die-hards, the obstinate *Apikorsim* organized within the League Against Religious Coercion; the reformed intelligentsia; the atheistic secular socialists of the leftist parties and the vast uneducated masses which oppose by instinct, ignorance or design every attempt which would give Torah a say in public life. But even they cannot deny the fact that the people whom they have challenged into action some years ago are now throwing a powerful challenge back at them—a challenge which they cannot ignore. And even if they, in their obstinacy, refuse to take note of it there is little doubt that their children or grandchildren will take it up. No Jewish soul, no matter how long it had been on the ice of secular nationalism, can remain unaffected by the volcanic heat which the new *kol Torah* in Israel is throwing out today.

A few years ago one could tour Israel's *Mosdoth*

Hatorah within 24 hours, spending most of the time in travel rather than inspection. Today one needs more than a week to visit just the larger places of the newly-built Torah centers: Ger, its Yeshivah and Kolel, developed into an immensely large and impressive center; two doors away the brand new Porat Yosef Yeshivah; further along two of the newest and most modern school buildings I have ever seen—one of the Beth Jacob, the other of Chinuch Atzmai. A short ride away, the phenomenal sight of the new Belz Yeshivah building situated in the rear of the old Etz Chaim Yeshivah. The old and the new, side by side. One stands out by its ancient architecture the other by its up-to-date contemporary design. Then there is Chevron, Mir, Kol-Torah, Dushinski, and all the countless other large and small Yeshivoth and Talmud Torahs which preserve Jerusalem as the Yerushalayim of old, in spite of the fact that the secular citizenship represents alas the majority of the inhabitants.

But Jerusalem builds on! Kiryat Chassam Sofer, with its Pressburg Yeshivah, the project not yet complete, the bulldozers and stone masons still hard at work, but the *Kol Torah* is already going forth in full strength from that new center, adjoining the famous Diskin Orphanage. Or, for instance, the new project of the "Kochav Miyaacov" Tshibiner Yeshivah. I attended the ceremony of the foundation stone laying and saw the architects' plans for the building. These are no dreams, no meaningless appeal brochure drawings. These are hard facts. Plans are complete, approved and contracted. At the ceremony I saw a huge hall packed with *Talmidei Chachomim*, *Baalei Batim* and *Bnei Yeshivah*. On the platform sat the *Gaon Hador*, the Tshibiner Rav Sh'litah. An appeal was made. People were invited to write their pledges on specially printed donation cards. Then I heard the unbelievable: a half-million Israeli pounds were pledged in less than 30 minutes! A fortune in money gladly donated by the average orthodox Israeli without a magnate or tycoon to rocket the appeal figures.

Or take distant and faraway Komemiuth, basking in the blazing Negev sun. You can no longer walk through Komemiuth leisurely in 10 minutes as you did eight years ago. You either ride in your car or borrow a donkey-drawn cart, as I did. An attempt to stroll through Komemiuth will result in blistered feet giving you a sleepless night. Over 600 souls live, eat, learn, work, or play in that large village of Torah-true *Yishuv Eretz Yisroel*.

No brief periodical article could pay adequate tribute to what is being done for Torah in Israel today. I have shown you but a few brief snaps. I have tried to explain that whilst secular Zionism saw in the establishment of the Jewish State the completion and end of its aim and ideology, the religious Yishuv saw in it a challenge for the establishment of Torah as a living and ruling factor in it.

MY SON, THE YESHIVA BOCHUR

A new
status symbol

by Bernard Merling

YOU'VE probably already heard the old chestnut about the mother running along the beach shouting, "Help, help! My son the doctor is drowning!" (If you haven't, you're out of touch. Find something else to read.) It may not be much of a joke, but it does indicate what was, and still is, a source of pride and esteem to our *Yiddishe mames*. "My son the doctor . . ." — "My son the lawyer . . ." — "My son the engineer . . ." With the changing times, as values shift and status is determined by success in different fields of endeavor, "My son . . ." changes jobs. Today, I suppose, he is "My son the astronaut . . ." Or, in a different milieu, "My son the folk singer . . .!"

As an Orthodox Jew, I am certainly gratified to see another status position coming to the fore as a source of pride and esteem. The growth of Yeshivos and Hebrew Day Schools in the last two decades, a real and significant growth, has made it more and more acceptable, even commendable, at least in certain circles, to point with pride to "My son the Yeshiva bochur . . ." Whether he attends a Yeshiva in his own city, or goes out-of-town to some larger "citadel of Torah," he is the apple of his parents' eyes, the boy of distinction in his immediate environment and peer group. I'm all for it, of course, and thank G-d that it has finally come to this in America, where not so long ago even the stones in the street were considered *treifa!* Indeed, G-d help us if it were otherwise.

I suppose that I too have the same "weakness," if it can be called that. My two sons are only five-and-a-half and four right now, but, in those rare moments when I can sit back, feet figuratively propped on some crystal-ballish hassock, and day-dream of their coming years, I already see them as fine, up-standing Yeshiva *bochurim*, the cynosure of all eyes, the darlings of their *Roshei Yeshiva*, the envy of their fellow students. In my mind's eye, they certainly know more than their father, and I am not jealous, confirming the Talmudic adage that a man is jealous of all except his son and his pupil. They are devout, also more than their father, and they are dedicated to the pursuit of more and more Torah knowledge.

This is a Yeshiva Bochur?

And while I eagerly await the realization of my day-dream, I go about watching others already en-

joying theirs. And it is precisely then that I am confused. For, I suddenly become aware that the term Yeshiva *bochur* reflects a variety of images.

"My son the Yeshiva *bochur*," a proud father points out to me—and I look at him in amazement! This is a Yeshiva *bochur*?! In his dress, he is Ivier than the League, his hair is slicked back (or forward) in the latest "duck-tail" or whatever-you-call-it, his bearing is as arrogant and assertive as that of his no-account or delinquent counterpart, and he is presently rushing to pick up his date for the Yeshiva "prom"! This is a Yeshiva *bochur*?!

I overhear a group of them talking. They have graded their teachers (they have no "*rebbe*s," they have only teachers) according to their abilities: Such-and-such (only last names are used, titles are demographically dropped) knows his stuff but can't teach; So-and-so is a phony; This-one is a creep and That-one is a square. *Gedolei haTorah* and their opinions are dismissed with a So-what or What-does-he-know-of-the-world remark. Their main concern is to be able to enter the "college of their choice." Mention a "*mishmor*" (learning Thursday nights till past midnight) and you are rewarded with a blank, uncomprehending stare. Quiz one of them on baseball, football or basketball and he will spray you with statistics as if he had just swallowed entire the latest official handbooks of each sport; indeed, their *b'kius* (breadth of knowledge) in these matters would put to shame a Vilna Gaon! These are Yeshiva *bochurim*?

Yes, they may understand, and perhaps even enjoy, the intellectual exercise of a good *kashya* and *terutz* in the *Gemorra* (Talmud)—but does it ever worry them that they don't really know the *p'shat* (basic meaning) of a certain passage? They may know and appreciate the beautiful language and concepts of the *Tanach*—but do they ever *relate* the Prophets' messages to their own lives and attitudes? They may occasionally hear, and even listen attentively to a *mussar* (ethics) lecture from an earnest *mashgiach* (supervisor)—but does it ever really *penetrate* and color their *weltanschauung*?

Where is the burning desire, with respect to Torah scholarship, to cover as much ground as possible? Where is the intense concentration on a difficult passage of *Gemorra* which reflects a soul that really cares? Where is the overwhelming desire to acquire a "*derech*" in Torah learning, a way and a method to make possible the meaningful continuation of such learning even after one's departure from the Yeshiva walls? Where is

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the piety and dedication that would compel at least a respectful silence in the synagogue, if not the flaming devotion evident in prayer when it is truly "the service that is in the heart"?

My Yeshiva *bochur*, the one I see in my day-dreams, the one I recall from my own days in a Yeshiva, the one I still see in the flesh in most Yeshivos today, the one who still remains, thank G-d, the more representative of his kind, looks completely different. My Yeshiva *bochur* is assuredly no twin to that other, perhaps not even a brother, perhaps only a distantly related cousin. My Yeshiva *bochur* dresses simply and modestly, with little concern for the latest styles and fashions—for he recognizes the vanity and vacuity of mere outward show. Clothes do not make *my* man! Cleanliness, propriety—yes! Dazzle and flash—no!

My Yeshiva *bochur*, outside the Beth Hamidrash, is reserved and somewhat shy, for he feels ill at ease in and would rather minimize his contact with a society that might entice him or distract him from his overriding goal. Dancing? How could such a thing enter his mind, when it stands for so much that is diametrically opposed to the Torah way of life?

My Yeshiva *bochur* speaks with respect and reverence for his *rebbe*s and the *Gedolei haTorah*, for he equates awe before them with awe before the Almighty Himself. Preparation for earning a livelihood, advanced general education, training for entry into a profession, are areas of concern to him—but in an entirely different frame of reference. He will first seek to root his faith as deeply as possible. He will strive for sufficient knowledge to enable him to respond to any challenge addressed to him by the detractors of Torah. He will strive to acquire as much Torah knowledge as his circumstances allow him to. He will view all other possible pursuits as auxiliary to that of Torah, and he will judge them by its values. He will certainly not view his Yeshiva years as mere *preparation* for the ultimate goal of entering "the college of his choice!"

My Yeshiva *bochur* "lives" Torah learning. He breathes it, he eats it, he sleeps it—he cannot, for the moment, be without it. Every verse in *Tanach*, every passage in the Talmud, every phrase of even the remotest commentary or recent acknowledged Torah scholar, is a delight to him, for it deals with the Word of G-d. Every word of his *rebbe* is true and meaningful to him, for his *rebbe* helps him understand that for which he longs so ardently. Indeed, the portrait of *my* Yeshiva *bochur* is etched in every line of both the Written and Oral Torah, so there is no sense in my going through all the details again.

Am I hopelessly old-fashioned? Am I living in the here and now, with my head and heart in the middle ages? I honestly don't think so. My mental picture of the Yeshiva *bochur* was formed not more than two decades ago, in an *American Yeshiva*—and an en-

during large segment of the American Yeshiva student world continues to reflect that picture to this very day!

Well, then, you may ask, if that is the case, what am I complaining about? I am complaining about the ever-increasing numbers of the *others* who are also called, or call themselves, Yeshiva *bochurim*. If the appellation is so easily bestowed upon such as are not worthy of the name, we are headed for an extension of the confusion that already plagues American Jewish life. Orthodoxy, along with all other Jewish groups, suffers from an intellectual disease called "befuddlement," a pathological lack of clarity as to what is and what isn't Torah Judaism. This is a rabbi and that is a rabbi; this is a *shul* and that is also a *shul*; this is a Yeshiva and that is also a Yeshiva—they all differ only in minor details. Who says they are "minor" details? The very self-same befuddled observers!

It would not hurt so much, it would not be so dangerous, if that "other" Yeshiva *bochur* were called by some other name. Call him what you will, the fanciest, most impressive-sounding name you can think of. Just leave the term "Yeshiva *bochur*" alone. Let it remain sacred, as it always was. Let it represent the genuine article, while we coin some nice chemical-sounding acronym for his synthetic counterpart.

Is He Real?

And what about my Yeshiva *bochur*? Is he real? *Can* he be real, today, here and now? The answer to that would require a separate, longer discussion, beyond the scope of this present piece. But briefly I would say, yes, he is real, very real. He may not remain the way I picture him throughout his life. If he can, and does, G-d bless him. But even if he can't and doesn't, he will have swallowed, to use a crude example, such a potent dosage of vitamins that it will take a long, long time to wear off—even when he is exposed to the germ-laden, chilling winds of the non-Yeshiva world, the so-called "real world." On the other hand, if the original dosage is weak, diluted, taken half-heartedly, then its protective powers are sure to be dissipated after the very first virus attacks.

Henceforth, unfortunately, I shall never again be able to sit back and enjoy my day-dream of my two sons, the Yeshiva *bochurim*. They are young, we grow older, the world is big, the allure of conformity is powerful. Who knows which Yeshiva *bochur* they will be like, ten-fifteen years from now. I know that I am determined to do my part to realize *my* vision for them. Apparently, however, that is not assurance enough. What did Rovoh say (*Moed Katan* 28a)? "Children, life and provender are not dependent on (one's) merit but on *mazal*." The best we can do is to wish ourselves, and each other, "*Mazal tov*"—a good *mazal*!

WHAT IS OUR HISTORICAL IMPERATIVE?

On the function of Torah-true literature in our times

by Murray I. Friedman

ARE we to be still? Are we to remain mute while multitudes of our own brethren—children of Avrohom, Yitzchok, and Ya'akov—are swept away into spiritual oblivion by the devastating winds that blast us from near and far? Are we to be utterly silent while each passing day brings another tally of wasted souls torn from their roots by the perilous currents of our age which converge and combine into a massive sweep of renascent paganism?

Let us identify these infamous winds and examine the disastrous consequences which they have effected. We begin with the peripheral influences which afflict not only ourselves but the whole of mankind. Materialism! Not since the inglorious days of the Roman Empire has the world evinced such an unfettered passion for material gain and the pursuit of luxurious indulgence. In the quest for wealth and leisure, Man has bartered his Divine and immortal soul for the evanescent substance of this earth. His adoration of the twin gods of greed and self-gratification has induced him to sacrifice on the altar of these deities the full index of human qualities which are the absolute testimony to Man's creation in the image of G-d.

Immorality! in government, in law, in business, in social relations, in religion. . . Concepts of loyalty, integrity, honesty, chastity, sanctity—time-honored virtues which have been established as the hallmarks of culture and refinement—have overnight been rendered archaic and inutile. A blend of pragmatism and unscrupulousness has superseded the dignity and respect which were so highly valued by the predecessors of our own generation. In a flash of moral retreat, Man has toppled from his lofty estate and welters in a vast mire of ignoble passion which threatens to submerge the very last trace of honor and esteem which Man has earned for himself in his expedition through the corridors of time.

Science—and technology, its handmaiden! Granted that a truce—although quite tenuous—has been drawn between the opposing camps of science and religion; granted that the initial onslaughts of scientific skepticism have been resisted by the massing of the forces of the faithful—yet can there be any doubt that the vast expansion of technology and the successive invasions of scientific method into new areas of human

thought and behavior have severely enfeebled the sway of belief among the ranks of mankind? Can we readily dismiss the ideological depredations of assorted biologists, evolutionists, paleontologists, astronomers and astrophysicists who build an Everest of hollow hypotheses concerning the origins of the earth and its life forms out of a jaded molehill of dubious evidence?

Apathy!—an ominous symptom of a malignant decadence. When the ears are deaf, the eyes blind, the heart insensate, the mind numb—what hope is there for a race of men sunk in a fathomless torpor beyond the reach of the harshest invective or tenderest endearment? What a horrendous contrast between the great leaps that carry Man forward to new frontiers of technical knowledge and the vile stagnation which corrupts his soul beyond absolution. All the world's tears multiplied a thousandfold would not suffice to bewail the death of mankind's conscience, the loss of his innermost light which makes him responsive to the sting of shame or the balm of love.

How greatly are these woes from without compounded and reinforced by the foul winds that arise from our own camp. Our sacred name as a people of G-d is sullied by venomous defectors who audaciously seek to usurp the crown of our glory and speak in our name in the marketplaces and congresses of the world. In this country, abroad, in the Holy Land, the image of our eternal nation has been modified and transmuted into a fraudulent shape that is a veritable denial of its original form. And wherein lies the power of these internal adversaries? in deceit, in spite, in vilification, in the corruption of the eternal truths of our heritage; in compromise, in cowardice, in retreat, in the ignominious fawning at the feet of alien gods and the fatuous imitation of their cultures. Unabashed by their vile subversion, these malefactors of Israel insolently lay their claim to the titles of leadership and prestige.

Hard on the heels of these vain charlatans rumbles a corps of literary maggots who use the explosive power of the printed word to disseminate the falsehoods and distortions of the deluded turncoats. A massive outpouring of turbid writings springs from their pens and muddies the once glorious stream of luminous, sacred literature which flowed from the noblest minds which our people possessed. These tainted volumes, the manifest evidence of festering imagination and intellectual malaise, have spread the diseased products of sundry muddled minds to multitudes of naive readers

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who have become impaled by the beguiling phrases and charming passages which they encountered. Our very own language, known as *lashon hakodesh*—the holy tongue, has been impressed into the service of these reckless traducers and so basely profaned that it has been forcibly twisted into a vehicle for the generation of base novels that reek with wanton lewdness.

Can we be still? *May* we be still? May our tongues remain tied while the glory of Israel which hoisted us to the summit of universal acclaim as a nation of G-d is besmirched with the soil of countless words of malice? We have been seized by a *dibbuk*—a demon that speaks from our mouth with a hoarse jargon in a voice that is not our own. A voice! A voice! We must retrieve this Divine gift, the voice of Ya'akov which taught justice and righteousness for millennia. The evil spirit that resides in our midst must be exorcised, and the limpid tones of our true speech must be permitted to sound once more. We must speak—by the written word, perforce—to the millions of our brothers on the continents of the earth and shake them from the monstrous deception which has been perpetrated upon them. The original voice of eternal Torah must dispel with its irresistible breath the disease-bearing drafts that have infected vast multitudes of our kinsmen.

Only a flowering of the best literary minds in our loyal camp can meet the colossal challenge of our time. It is our historical imperative to fashion a literary force of such magnitude and compass that it shall serve as a mighty countercurrent to the storm winds of this distressed era. By medium of the printed word, by a constant stream of incandescent inspiration, our own people may be restored to its exalted pedestal of old and resume its honored position as a kingdom of priests—keepers of holiness to the nations of the world. From this lofty position, an offensive against the external ravages that beset us and all of mankind may be launched and executed. Apathy shall then be banished, the dreamy speculations of scientism utterly refuted, epidemic immorality scoured from the populace, and the scourge of materialism obliterated from human affairs. Then shall the chill winds of distemper yield to the heaven-sent breezes of bliss.

Does the goal seem distant and Messianic? Perhaps. Yet it may be that the object of our quest marches closer to us with every step that we move in its direction. But let us take our first step . . . regain our lost power of speech. Let us seek a voice that is clear, distinct, and genuinely our own; a voice that will not suffer imitation or distortion but will ring out with the inflections of truth at all times and in all places.

Do we hear it now?

Remember the financial plight of the Yeshivos. Contribute to the cause of Torah during the Yamim Noraim.

The Case for "Out-of-Town"

(continued from page 14)

times the very opposite. Here at least Torah and *Mitzvos* are not taken for granted.

One cannot help but speculate that more contact with the non-New York Orthodox would be of great benefit to New Yorkers. It would strengthen their own way of life and perhaps stretch their religious horizons. And, since the bridge has two lanes, the presence of new observers would be of untold moral and spiritual support to the embattled few out of town, as well as a step towards creating a true community of Orthodox Jews in the rest of America.

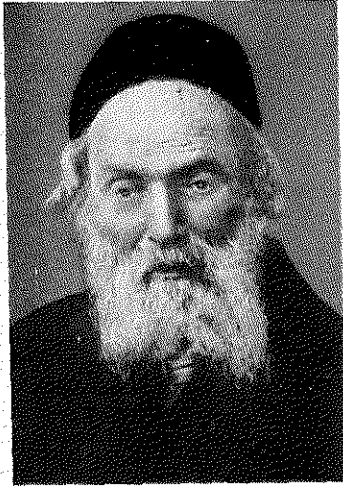
Although it is not the purpose here to present definitive solutions—sometimes an understanding of the problem is part of the solution—certain tentative suggestions can be made.

We must begin with the greatest source of our strength, the major Yeshivos. These institutions are the citadel of Torah devotion and idealism. Is it a whim to hope that these Yeshivos might systematically encourage senior students to give six months a year to a given hinterland community—as rabbis or teachers? The benefits accruing to Torah would be staggering to behold: the communities would begin to realize that the centers of Torah are concerned with them and care about them; they would have the benefit of zeal, enthusiasm and dedication; and for the student this could be an invaluable experience, a kind of internship which is otherwise not available today.

Is it an idle speculation to anticipate a period in which our ever growing Orthodox intelligentsia—the Association of Orthodox Scientists is an example—will set the pace in their willingness to accept posts away from New York, and that, once they are out of town, they will curb their natural disinclination to become involved in Jewish communal matters? They have the potential of teaching a profound lesson by their very presence; let them enter the strife.

Is it visionary to contemplate a time when our Orthodox national rabbinic and lay organizations will concern themselves with a full and ongoing program for American Jewry which goes beyond the sponsoring of conventions, and that the genius, talent, and vast apparatus which is manifest in the leadership of these groups be directed towards the specific issue of greater Torah living in America? Perhaps then, for example, Torah Tours will be more effectively utilized, publications will be more widespread and their herculean efforts, now so hampered by duplication and competition, will be more fruitful.

Perhaps these are nothing more than dreams. But this in itself may be a sign of good tidings. For when G-d returns us to Zion, *ha-yeenu k'cholmim*, we are like dreamers (*Ps. 126:1*). Perhaps we are at the cross roads leading back to Zion in its profoundest sense, and therefore a dream or two can be forgiven.



A JEWISH LEADER

by Yehuda Leib Orlean ז"ל

*In commemoration
of the Chofetz
Chayim's (ה"צ) 30th
Yahrzeit*

The First Keneisiah Gedolah — Hope and Apprehension

THE first Keneisiah Gedolah (World Congress of Agudath Israel) was an event of ranking significance for the entire Jewish world. In opposition circles, the original response to the event was one of condescending disdain. The very possibility of a religious congress of worldwide character was considered inadmissible. The Keneisiah was represented as a provincial small town gathering accidentally transferred to a European metropolis.

At the outset doubt was cast upon the likelihood of broad public interest in the Keneisiah. The Jewish masses were too absorbed in their daily worries. The religious "intelligentsia," the fervently pious, and the Torah scholars, generally had little feeling for new forms of organization. In fact, the criticism coming from the nationalist camp struck strong responsive echoes in the religious camp. Mutual confidence was extremely weak. Every undertaking was accompanied by pervasive suspicion. One religious group was incited against another. The most prominent and active personalities were downgraded and besmirched. The honor of the Torah authorities was torn down. A fire of contention between young and old, man and wife, was kindled and fanned.

Could the poisonous food, which the "nationalist" press "supplied" the Jewish masses daily, remain without effect? Could the torrent of slander pouring down upon Agudath Israel vanish without trace? Would it still remain possible to sense the hidden intentions of those who incited hatred towards the builders of our organization?

The doubts "stole into" our thoughts as well. We too momentarily doubted our own strength. The num-

ber of delegates was after all of secondary significance. The Congress itself was of prime significance. It was necessary to give the world a true reflection of our vitality. It was necessary to display an accurate image of the historic people of Israel. It was necessary to give adequate expression to our need and our pride. To accomplish all this, we would need the most gifted of orators, organizers of exceptional diligence and know-how, statesmen of rare shrewdness. As for the Congress itself, were we not terrified over the possibility that it might explode from within? There was no small degree of sharply conflicting opinion among us. Where would we find the appropriate, generally acknowledged authoritative figure, to hold us together at some threatening moment?

While we doubted, our opponents were certain. Our failure was in their estimate, unavoidable. Day after day, this was the foreboding which the "nationalist" press drummed into the minds of its large number of readers concerning us. In a mood which oscillated between fear and hope, we entered the immense hall to attend the first major session. There were five hundred delegates from all corners of the globe, and two thousand guests—the hall was filled. It was my lot to be seated in one of the first rows, near the platform. The curtain parts, the scene is majestic. In the center, the praesidium; on both sides two great wings in which the very elite of world Jewry is gathered; the most prominent Rabbis, the most renowned Ge'onim, the most sainted Tzadikim, the most beautiful of Israel's human treasures. All are here. None shamed us. Spontaneously an image forms in the mind of the Sanhedrin meeting in the Hall of Hewn Stones (in the Sanctuary). One begrudges his own eye the enjoyment of such splendor.

The first hammer blow is heard. Total silence pervades the hall. Hearts begin to beat in awe and joy simultaneously. It seems a dream. One "walks" with his eyes from one end of the hall to the other—the soul is warmed. The "ingathering-of-exiles" in miniature. One sees "K'lall Yisroel" with his own eyes—the laymen, the scholars of the Torah, the young and the old, the masses and their leaders. For the moment you "separate" them from one another. You want to recognize them personally. Is not each of them a prominent identity, a personality of note, in his own home? Another instant you "bring them together." You want to enjoy their imposing wholeness; to draw near to their wholeness and to be absorbed in it.

Yehuda Leib Orlean ז"ל was the director of Beth Jacob Teacher's Seminary of Cracow, and a leader of the Torah educational movement in pre-war Poland. His articles appeared in many orthodox publications.

The Chofetz Chayim is Introduced

At the praesidium table, Dr. Pinchos Kohn appears: "The floor is given to the Chofetz Chayim who will be the first to extend greetings."

Pleasant anticipation fills the hall. The most popular name at the Keneisiah. Near to East European as well as to West European Jewry. Beloved to everyone. Everyone's Rabbi and teacher. Who does not know him? Who has not turned to his *Mishnah Berurah* for the solution to some complex Halachic problem? Whom has he not warmed and soothed with his gently affectionate words of admonition? What place did his works fail to penetrate? He belongs to everyone. He is the central figure of the Keneisiah. He is the common authority for East and West. Who then should be first to extend greetings, if not he? But Dr. Kohn attempts to verbally motivate his choice.

"It is customary," Dr. Kohn adds, "at every Congress, to bestow upon the oldest delegate present the honor of being first to extend greetings. It happens," Dr. Kohn triumphantly concludes, "to be our good fortune that our oldest delegate is the beloved Chofetz Chayim."

Pleased smiles appear on all faces. A good sign! Everyone's glances concentrate towards the right, where the small grey beard with the large satin hat is hardly visible in the mass of Rabbinic headgear. Fingers point:

"There he sits, the Chofetz Chayim." But minutes pass, and he does not move from his place.

Foreign Observers — The World Watches

At that moment the two long tables filled with guests, placed between the platform and the delegates' benches, strike my eyes. Foreign faces—Gentiles, Ambassadors, representatives of various nations, representatives of the press.

Their glances too, wander over the platform in search of "the world renowned Gaon," "the Jewish leader." They pick up the fragmented phrases of the delegates: "The greatest Rabbi," "the greatest leader," "the greatest Gaon!" The assembly becomes more and more tense by the minute. The stillness becomes painful. Those seated close by run over to the aged Gaon and Tzaddik, bend over towards him, stand humbly, and plead. To no avail. He does not move.

Unhappy thoughts run through the mind. Who knows? Perhaps they, our opponents, are right? Perhaps he is not "with us" at all? Perhaps he came to the Keneisiah with the intention of disrupting its proceedings, of protesting against Agudath Israel? He is still silent, because he does not wish to be troublesome at the "time of joy." The tension grows. The silence is oppressive, and the Chofetz Chayim does not move. Dr. Kohn is at a loss. Finally he reaches a decision. He leaves the lectern and himself runs over to the Chofetz Chayim. After a while we

see the Chofetz Chayim led towards the praesidium table by Dr. Kohn on one side and someone else on the other. The diminutive Jew with the illuminated face appears at the lectern. The assembly breathes easier. But the air is still as before a storm. No one knows what is happening. Heads are inclined, ears are sharply attentive. Everyone seeks to "catch" at least a word. But it is difficult to hear.

"... Why, why ..."

The apprehensive faces of those seated on the platform, who do seem to hear each word, brighten up. They seem pleasantly surprised.

"How Little Torah I Possess"?

Dr. Kohn senses our perplexity and, immediately after the Chofetz Chayim concludes, he introduces the Lubliner Rav (R. Meir Shapiro ר"מ ש"פ) to convey the content of the Chofetz Chayim's remarkable greetings. The masterful orator, the beloved rising star of Polish Orthodoxy literally repeats the Chofetz Chayim's every word:

"I don't know why I am accorded the honor of being the first to greet the Keneisiah. Why me? Is it because I am a *Kohen*? Is that an accomplishment of mine? My father ר"מ was a *Kohen*, I am therefore also a *Kohen*. Is it because I am old? But that is a gift of G-d—He granted me years. Is it because of Torah? How little Torah I possess!"

The clear voice of the Lubliner Rav, his precise diction, makes it possible for the entire hall, including even the non-Jews present to understand him without regard to language differences. The assembly is uplifted and affected beyond words. We are electrified. Tears of joy flow from our eyes. Words surge from our mouths: "Happy is the people which has such a leader." The Jewish soul has revealed itself. Whoever did not witness it personally; whoever did not gaze into the figure of the Chofetz Chayim while he spoke, cannot imagine such total integrity, such wonderful whole-heartedness fused with illuminated wisdom, such genuine humility side by side with extraordinary genius! One saw with the certainty of the senses, that such was the Chofetz Chayim's innermost conviction; that he lived with that conviction constantly. The Gaon in Halacha, the master of good deeds, the monarch of the spirit, the living example of righteousness—proclaims his poverty in Torah.

My glance again falls upon the non-Jewish guests. I see sitting before me the entire European world. The representation of all the peoples; the representatives of modern culture and civilization. They look and are amazed. They utter fragmented phrases: "The oldest Rabbi, a Jewish leader, a great Gaon. Wonderful, amazing, unnatural! This is how a leader talks; this is how a Gaon talks!"

We learned then the meaning of true Jewish honor, and of true Jewish leadership.

THE MITZVAH OF TOCHACHAH (ADMONITION)

by Alexander Zusha Friedman ז"ל

An Unpopular Mitzvah

ONE Torah commandment which contemporary Man finds it most difficult to tolerate, is that of *Tochachah* (Admonition); namely, the obligation placed upon every Jew who sees his fellow commit a wrong, to draw the latter's attention to the character of his deed, and to admonish him over it. The modern nose "wrinkles up" in the matter, as if to say: "It isn't proper to interfere in the affairs of others, to impose upon others one's personal views on how they ought to conduct themselves and how they ought to live." The modern, "unrestrained" world has adopted as its motto the conventional dictum: "Must I be the *Ribbono Shel Olam's Cossack?*" Or, "Why must I probe the soul of another?" These and similar utterances convey the attitude in the matter, of our "refined" and "ethically sensitive" world—a world which, as is known, scrupulously adheres to the dictates of good taste and propriety.

It is therefore fitting for us to seek the clearest possible insight, for ourselves and our children, into the exalted foundations of human love and social well-being, on which the *Mitzvah* of *Tochachah* rests.

Admonition — The Result of True Brotherhood

WHAT does the Torah command us?

"You shall not hate your brother in your heart—you shall surely admonish your fellow and you shall not bear sin over him" (*Vayikra* 19:17).

It is clear then that the *Mitzvah* is specifically based on friendship and brotherhood. When you see your friend doing something improper, whether in his behavior towards his fellow man, or in acts which are between man and G-d—do not allow your anger, which is the result of his wrongdoing, to enter your heart. You are rather to point out his failing to him and to admonish him over it (the root of *Tochachah* means to point out, to prove as well as to admonish). For, only through your unwillingness to bear his wrongdoing in your heart, through your desire that he not repeat his sin a second time, do you attest to your love for him.

Alexander Zusha Friedman was a prominent leader of the Agudath Israel movement in Poland and a prolific writer and author. Amongst his best known volumes is "Der Torah Kvall."

In truth, the daily events of life demonstrate that it is precisely nearness and friendship which lead to greater penalty for wrongs committed. The father punishes his child the more often, because it is his child—who is nearer to him than any other person, and whom he loves more dearly than all others. It is for this reason that he wants his child to walk in the right path and not to do wrong. To a stranger, all this doesn't matter, for it isn't his affair. And therefore, the Torah—which desires for every Jew to see his fellow as one who is closest to him; as one who is his brother (since they are both children of the same Father),—obligates Jews to behave towards one another like brothers; to *react* to each others's wrongdoings.

The modern view in the matter is characterized by a sense of cold estrangement. "Let every one do as he wishes. It is no concern of mine. Isn't he a stranger to me." Certainly such an approach has nothing to do with friendship and brotherhood. For *those* feelings impel a sense of mutual responsibility and concern.

Only through this very distinction are we enabled to reconcile the seeming discrepancy in the teachings of our Sages, who in one instance point to baseless hate as the reason for the destruction of the *Beis Ha-mikdash*, but in another ascribe the Sanctuary's destruction to the lack of mutual admonition. For both were only aspects of the same cause, and they each led to the other. The prevalent hate, the widespread sense of mutual estrangement, brought it about that none should be concerned over the lot of another, and that none should draw the other's attention to his misdeeds. Had friendship and brotherhood prevailed, the necessary result would have been the presence of mutual admonition.

The Safeguard of a Society's Well Being

IF we were to probe deeply into the essence of the *Mitzvah* of *Tochachah* we would see that it is intended to advance the pursuit of both individual and

social perfection. For a society can only achieve betterment if its members are prepared to bend an ear to criticism of its evils. Similarly, can the individual ascend the ladder of self-improvement only if he views words of admonition as a mark of friendship intended only for his good. The person who seeks perfection, will always willingly draw his friend's attention to any of the latter's misdeeds, because he wants his friend to do the same for him. However, one who prefers a life of licentiousness, is unwilling to address criticism to his fellow, so that the latter might not restrain his libertinism.

Modern mankind—which so dislikes criticism—seems to have a secret agreement: “Let us not disturb one another! I will not trouble you, and you are not to trouble me . . .” How wonderfully idyllic libertinism becomes. . . .

The way of Torah however, must be entirely different. For the Torah seeks to lead mankind to an utterly different kind of “agreement”; to one which would replace the mutual tolerance of libertinism by the mutual tolerance of admonition. To the contrary! “I will not permit you to do wrong so that you should similarly restrain me from wrong.” For one always sees another's blemishes more clearly than his own. Mutual admonition therefore is a means of mutual assistance and protection.

The lack of patience which modern Man exhibits for admonition, recalls to mind the well known anecdote:

Two blind men ate *kreplach* together. Out of fear that one might eat more *kreplach* than the other they agreed that each of them was to take no than one *krepl* at a time. Suddenly, one began to beat the other. When asked for an explanation, he replied simply: “If I took two *kreplach* and he failed to protest, then he must have taken three *kreplach* at a time . . . Otherwise, he would have shouted at me for taking two at a time. . . .”

The blind man of our days does not react on seeing some minor misdeed of his friend's, so that the latter might not react to a weightier wrong on his part . . . He is agreeable to his friend's eating two *kreplach*, so that the latter might permit him to eat three at a time. . . .

Not for naught did our Sages ascribe the Sanctuary's destruction to the absence of mutual criticism. For a society which is founded on the silent consensus to maintain libertinistic tolerance, must disintegrate, since it lacks the primary foundation of ethical existence.

Self Perfection

ADMONITION addressed to another necessarily leads to self-perfection, if only in the given area of concern. For he who addresses admonition does not want his criticism to be hurled back at himself. Indeed our Sages teach us that before one says to his

fellow: “Remove the splinter from your teeth,” he ought to make certain that the latter be unable to retort; “Remove the mote from your eyes.” And since no one wants to make of himself a target for such “compliments,” he will therefore strive for self-perfection.

Thus another motive presents itself for our generation's abhorrence of the ‘rod’ of admonition. Its members do not want to be thereby bound in their own behavior. . . . They do not want to base their lives on purity and ethical norms, so that they might be worthy of addressing admonition to others. They constantly fear therefore, that another might say to them: “Take the mote out of your eyes.” . . .

The Torah, however, which desires that Man constantly strive for self-improvement and personal perfection, demands that we should address admonition to each other—as a means for self-improvement. In the *Mitzvah Hocheiach Tochiach* (you shall surely admonish), an additional commandment is implied:

“Make sure that you improve your own mode of life sufficiently, for you to be worthy of admonishing others. Remove the splinter from your own teeth so that you might have the right to tell your friend that there is a mote in his eyes.”

Admonition Must Never Shame Another

AND since the foundations of the *Mitzvah* of *Tochachah* are love for another and the desire for self-perfection, the performance of the *Mitzvah* must always correspond to those foundations. The purpose of admonition must be solely the improvement of another, never his embarrassment or degradation. The one admonished must always feel convinced that whoever admonishes him has no aim other than his good. Indeed, the matter is precisely formulated in the *Halachah*:

“If one sees his fellow having committed a sin or having followed an evil path—it is a *Mitzvah* to return him to the good, and to inform him that he had committed wrong through his evil deeds—as it is said: ‘You shall surely admonish your friend.’ Whoever admonishes his friend, whether in matters that are between themselves, or in matters that are between his friend and G-d, should do so in private. He should speak gently, with mild language, and should let his friend know that he speaks only for the latter's good, in order to lead him to the life of the world to come . . . Whoever admonishes his friend should not speak to him so harshly as to embarrass him, for it is said: ‘You shall not bear sin over him.’ Upon which the Sages commented: “One might think that he should admonish another even if the latter's face is altered—it is therefore taught: “You shall not bear sin over him.” We learn from this that it is forbidden to shame an Israelite, and all the more (is it forbidden to do so) publicly. Even though one who shames another, does

not incur *malkos* (the penalty of stripes), all the same it is a great sin (to do so). Thus did the Sages say: "He who causes his friend's face to turn white (with shame) has no share in the world to come (*Rambam, Hilchos Dayos, Chapter 6, Halachah 7-8*)."

Side by side then with the paramount obligation to utter admonition, far-reaching assurances are prescribed to make certain that one who is admonished shall not suffer or be shamed thereby. For otherwise, the purpose of the *Mitzvah* would not be served. And if, on occasion, the *Halachah* does permit the utilization of sharper means of *Tochachah*, even to the extent of public embarrassment of another (*Rambam ibid.*), it does so only where thrice repeated, gently uttered, admonition—in matters that are between man and G-d—has been to no avail. For in such an instance, the matter affects the desecration of the Divine Name, and therefore has educational significance for the given surroundings.

The Extent of the Mitzvah

THE significance attached by the Torah to the matter of *Tochachah*, is illustrated by the *Halachah* which treats of the prescribed extent of the *Mitzvah*:

"And so, a person is constantly obligated to utter admonition till the sinner strikes him and says to him: "I will not listen." And whoever has the capacity to prevent (sin) and fails to do so, is held liable for the sins of those whom he could have prevented from committing wrong" (*Rambam ibid.*).

The requirement that a person be prepared even to be struck by the sinner, and his being held responsible for the latter's wrongdoing, demonstrates the significance which the Torah ascribes to the matter of *Tochachah*, namely, that it sees *Tochachah* as the foundation of the ethical existence of a society and the means for its improvement.

It is therefore clear that the *Mitzvah* of *Tochachah* must be the foundation of any organization which demands religious devotion from its members. If, in a Torah-true organization, the necessary sense of brotherhood is lacking, so that no mutual admonition is possible; if, in a Torah-true organization, there is no profound striving, no genuine yearning for self-perfection, so that the Torah sense for admonition cannot prevail over the modern tolerance for libertinism—then such an organization or society is not a healthy one. Even more so is it far from being a genuinely Torah-true organization.

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What Price Unity?

(continued from page 6)

chumrah (observance beyond the requirement of the Torah). He urges the pious to willingly study Torah together with others whose *study of Torah might not be pursued lishmah* (for its own sake). Ultimately the light of Torah would purify their motivations and deepen their piety.

Of whom then does the Netziv speak? Of the Lithuanian *maskil* or of Broadway and 122nd Street or Cincinatti's H.U.C.?

To what sort of Jewish community did the Netziv address himself? If there had been a Reform or Conservative Temple in Volozhin, would the Netziv have jointly conducted a marriage ceremony with the minister of the one or the other as a colleague? Would we have participated in a funeral service in either of their edifices? Would we have allowed either of their ministers to stand before the Ark of his synagogue, and to address his people, on any occasion whatsoever? Would the Netziv have been a partner for a single moment to a community Talmud Torah in which he would teach one class and his "Conservative colleague" would teach another? If there had ever been a welfare fund or federation in Volozhin whose most influential members and leaders were assimilated Jews, would the Netziv for a moment have entrusted the fate of the Yeshiva of Volozhin to their tender mercies?

Is it not perfectly obvious that the absolute precondition for the Netziv's *Teshuva* is the capacity of the Orthodox element in a given community to function independently, without prejudice or danger to its most sacred interests as a result of any cooperative endeavor undertaken jointly with the non-Orthodox element in the given community? Does it not border almost on the defamation of a rare and great sage and saint of our people to foster the notion that the Netziv's great love of Israel had anything to do with the present course of American "liberal" Orthodoxy?

What Is the American Experience?

IN AMERICA the principle of "unity above all" has been well nigh prevalent in most of American Orthodox institutionalism for several decades. The only pockets of resistance to its total rule are some of the immigrant *Kehillos* established here since the war, and some of the great Yeshivos. What are some of the results? In a very few words—unity, accommodation, compromise, apology and finally, justification.

In very many "Orthodox" Synagogues throughout the country, an Orthodox Jew is no longer at home. And the legitimacy of the Orthodox designation of those Synagogues and their Rabbis is now *militantly upheld* (see the above mentioned article in Tradition).

The functioning of an authentic Orthodox Rabbinate has become almost impossible in hundreds of our

congregations. ("We don't want a Rabbi who is a fanatic. Orthodox Congregation X and Rabbi X permit this and that and a hundred other things and their Orthodox national bodies do not question their Orthodox legitimacy.") Can Rabbis of integrity and stature breathe in such a climate?

On the question, "Who is a Jew?", Torah-true Jewry in Israel fought, and continues to fight, with desperate resolve, in the knowledge that the very life of our people depends on the answer given to that question. In America we have allowed the question to be answered in all the community-wide agencies and organizations precisely as we have so desperately fought against its being answered in Israel.

Collective Jewish charity—I mean communal Jewish giving—is controlled by assimilated Jews. In this time and place, whoever holds the key to the collective Jewish pocketbook holds more than 9/10's of the key to the future character of the Jewish community. But for Torah, which is the breath of our life, we are content to "shnorr" for crumbs from the tables of the wealthiest Jewish community in history. And we do not see that an *independent*, world wide United Torah Appeal is an utterly final necessity; that the *financial power structure which controls the entire Federation, Welfare Fund, AJA structure will never yield more than "fifth wheel" status to us.*

And two final thoughts. A Rabbinate which serves a "mixed pew" Orthodoxy must press for ideological legitimacy. In fact, it is presently doing so. There are powerful voices in American Orthodoxy who orally and in print deplore "the rigidity of our fundamentalist Halachists." They want a "dynamic" rather than a "static" *Halachah*. Which means in very simple and precise terms, that they want to effect changes in the *Halachah* under the mantle of Orthodoxy. To this too, some of our "anti-separatists" have come.

Finally, the voice of *Cheshbon Hanefesh*, of stock taking, of self-criticism, is almost silenced among us. Relentlessly the "liberals" drum into us the fear of giving offense. Our inner crisis is vehemently denied. The "unity mystique" now conceals the failures which resulted from its history of accommodation and compromise, by driving its adherents to shout constantly, till they believe it themselves, that all is well in the Torah camp, and growing even better. Look at our new buildings. See our membership rosters, the growth of our student body, the prominence of our contributors and the size of their contributions. A dissenting voice is of course branded instantly as "fanatic," "destructive," "fundamentalist," "sermonic," "divisive," etc., etc. But without self-criticism we cannot live as a people of Torah.

What is the vision of the "separatists" for the future of Judaism in America? That question will, please G-d, be the theme of an article in the coming issue of the *Jewish Observer*.

Reb Aharon Kotler זצ"ל

Almost a year has passed since the *p'tirah* (the demise) of the *Gaon* of our generation. At the time there was unprecedented grief in the Torah world. Many tens of thousands attended the *L'vayah* both here and again in Eretz Yisroel, where the *Gaon* was interred. Countless eulogies were delivered orally and in writing, which served as a "release valve" for the seizure of world wide grief which then gripped the soul of the Torah world, but which did not dare to pretend to adequately convey the significance of the great *Rosh Hayeshiva's* life and accomplishments. Nor will this puny pen dare to make such an attempt. A few fragmented observations, shared by the entire Torah world do however press for expression as the *Yamim Noraim* draw near.

Reb Aharon זצ"ל broke through the wall of American pragmatism, which saw *Semicha* as the final purpose and the terminal point of Torah learning. He effectively challenged the transformation of the American *Yeshivos* into professional schools for the training of Rabbis, and generated among hundreds of *B'nei Torah* the willingness to live for years, together with their families, on "bread and salt and measured water," so that the American Jewish community might be provided with a reservoir of future *G'dolim BaTorah*. His conviction was unshakable, that only the propagation of higher *lomdus* could prevent the distortion and falsification of Torah.

2. Of him there may be asserted the Rabbinic dictum: "*Avad gavra d'mistapina miney*" (the man I feared has perished). Even his opponents feared him. They knew with their hearts, that the voice of Torah spoke through him. Whenever he felt the sanctity of Torah threatened, he responded instantly with all the fire of his leonine spirit. Ulterior motives could not be ascribed to him. When Reb Aharon z.t.l. said: "*Assur,*" those in the Orthodox world who dared to do otherwise were troubled in conscience. Now their consciences are alas, much less disturbed.

3. His concerns were with the whole Jewish world. He was the great mentor of Agudath Israel, the founder and patron of Chinuch Atzmai in Israel, and the revered guide of Torah Umesorah in America. He was the acknowledged head of the American section of the *Moetzet G'dolei Hatorah*. He closed an era and there is none to replace him.

Y'hi Zichro Baruch.

The Torah World in Israel

Approximately two hundred (200) schools! Close to forty thousand children in Chinuch Atzmai (the in-

SECOND LOOKS

at the Jewish scene

by Ben-Meir

dependent Torah school system in Israel)! More than twelve thousand (12,000) students in the higher Yeshivos! No room for hundreds who beat at the doors of the Yeshivos for entry!

The road ahead is still so long, and the obstacles to be passed are so many. But how filled with the trembling of sacred joy every Torah-true heart must be, upon sight of those figures. The eternal Divine promise has again been kept. The Torah has not been forgotten from the mouths of our children. And those 50,000 children and advanced students are in the vanguard of the total return of the whole house of Israel to Israel's Torah. Notwithstanding the heart-breaking financial difficulties of Chinuch Atzmai and the great Yeshivos; despite all the efforts of opponents to retard their progress and growth, the ultimate issue is already settled. *B'chasdei Hashem*, there now exists a mighty army of Torah in the land of the fathers. And such an army is invincible.

Ben-Gurion's Plan For Jewish Survival

A JTA press dispatch relates:

Former Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion called on American Jews to intensify their efforts for the survival of Israel and of Jewry abroad through a three-pronged program. He spelled out the program as one including deeper Hebrew education for the younger Jewish generation in the United States, deepening of "Personal identity" with Israel, and strengthening the "unity of the Jewish nation."

Second thoughts might have caused Ben Gurion to quickly backtrack on his three "medicines." For "deeper Hebrew education," he might have to go "a-begging" to the Orthodox Yeshivos. Where else will he find it? In the Bar Mitzvah factories and the Sunday

Schools? As for the "deepening of personal identity with Israel," he seems to be having better chances of success with the non-Zionist and anti-Zionist Chassidim, who have built the various Chassidic Kiryot in recent years, than with the 400,000 American Jewish youths, whose representatives forced the dropping of a resolution demanding "personal identity" with Israel, at the recent "World Jewish Youth Conference" in Jerusalem, on threat of withdrawal from the conference.

As for Jewish unity—where is such unity more likely? Between a secularized sabra generation and a secularized American "temple trained" generation, or amongst a Torah-true youth the world over?

Seven Hundred Participants in Ponivezh Yarchei Kallah

In the ancient Babylonian Yeshivos, Jews occupied normally in the various means available for pursuing a livelihood, would gather, at intervals during the year, for the exclusive study of Torah. The great Ponivezher Rav revived that beautiful institution eleven years ago in his celebrated Yeshiva. The present year seven hundred (700) Jews from all walks of life, from all parts of the country, and of all shades of opinion, spent two full weeks exclusively in the study of Torah, in the Ponivezh *Yarchei Kallah*.

The Ponivezher Rav announced that another *Yarchei Kallah* Institute would be held during the coming month of Adar for approximately three hundred (300) soldiers and farmers.

The above needs no second look. Let the Rav's ringing words at the close of this year's *Yarchei Kallah* suffice:

"Jews are knocking on the gates of Torah. Let us open those gates for them!"

We Will Outlive Them

"Jews sentenced to imprisonment for matzoh baking, speculation in Russia." "I need matzohs during Pesach as I need breath for air." (A woman on trial for "sale" of matzohs.)

"Jews sentenced to death for speculation in Russia."

"Last shul in Minsk closed."

"Plea denied for Jewish burial ground in Moscow. Jews interred in general cemetery. Appeals of no avail."

"Students of Moscow Yeshiva, denied permits to return to Yeshiva after trips home."

"From now on, tourists in Russia will not be permitted to bring extra Teffilin, Talleisim, Seforim, etc. with them. They have in the past given such religious objects to Russian Jews in need of them

who are denied the means of obtaining them otherwise."

Let us tell these things to our children. And let us know with all the certainty of Divine truth: When archaeologists will be disputing whether some excavated coffin contains the remains of this or that "ancient" forgotten *Rasha* who perpetrated these things, the *Am Hatorah* will still live.

This Is Honest Reporting?

A JCNS news release from Johannesburg:

"Orthodox rabbis in South Africa have been warned by the Beth Din that to pray together with reform Jews, no matter what the occasion or the setting, will place them "outside the framework of the Orthodox Ministry."

Now this is almost "Goebbelsian" in its viciousness. The writer of that dispatch knows full well that the South African Beth Din *did not* prohibit "praying with Reform Jews." He knows clearly that they prohibited participation in prayer in which *Reform ministers conduct prayers*. How much intelligence does it take to perceive that the two are a million miles apart? Does everything go, for the purpose of villifying Orthodoxy and of inciting hatred against Orthodox Jews? Is it not elemental decency to recognize that the Orthodox Jew is forbidden in deepest conscience to

acknowledge the legitimacy of denial of the Torah which seeks to create the impression that it speaks in the name of Judaism?

Unexpected Victory in Be'er Sheva

In the last national elections, Agudath Israel polled approximately 270 votes in Be'er Sheva. In the municipal election held two weeks ago, the number of Be'er Sheva residents who voted for the Agudah candidate to the municipality, reached 1112. The results of the election evoked jubilation in the entire Israeli Torah camp, particularly because it was symbolic of the rising strength of Torah-true Judaism in the new Yishuvim, which are largely populated by oriental Jews who entered the country in recent years, and who have unfortunately, known all too little of the existence, the ideology and the achievements of Agudath Israel in the State of Israel. It is particularly noteworthy that the victorious candidate of Agudath Israel, Reb Yosef Malka, is one of the most respected of Be'er Sheva's residents. A son of his is a brilliant student of the Chevron Kollel; his daughter is one of the finest teachers in the Beth Jacob movement, and he himself handed over his business concerns to his family six years ago, for a two-and-a-half year period, which time he spent exclusively in the study of Torah as a student of the Rav of the city.

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From The AGUDAH MOVEMENT

Agudist World Executive Calls Knesiah G'dolah Next July in Israel

The international Executive of the Agudath Israel World Organization, which met for nine days in Jerusalem this summer, issued a call for a Knesiah Gedolah (World Congress of Orthodox Jewry) for July 1964 in Israel. This will be the fifth Knesiah Gedolah since the founding of the Agudist movement 50 years ago, and the first in ten years.

The conference of the Agudist Executive, which was attended by leaders from the United States, Israel, England, Belgium, Holland, Canada and South America, deliberated on the policies and activities of the movement in every part of the world. The meetings were chaired by the heads of the three sections of the executive: Rabbi Itzhok Meier Lewin (Israel), Rabbi Abraham Babad (Europe) and Dr. Isaac Lewin



Gedolei Torah Addressing Conference (left to right):
Rabbi Shmulevitz, Rabbi Weidenfeld, Rabbi Sorotzkin.

(U.S.A.). They were addressed by distinguished Torah authorities in Israel, including the *Lutzker Rav*, Rabbi Zalmon Sorotzkin; the *Tsebiner Rav*, Rabbi Dov Weidenfeld; the Rosh Yeshiva of Chevron, Rabbi Yechezkel Sarne; the Rosh Yeshiva of Mir, Rabbi Chaim Shmulevitz; Rabbi Yechezkel Abramsky; the Rosh Yeshiva of Torah Vodaath, Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky, and distinguished Chassidic leaders.

Special sessions were devoted to the religious, political, and practical issues in the current Israeli scene, the problems of Torah education, the standards of religious observance in the Golah, and Jews behind the Iron Curtain. A full day was dedicated to the reports and expansion plans for Chinuch Atzmai, the independent network of Torah schools in the Holy Land.

Amongst the resolutions adopted were, a call to convene the Knesiah Gedolah in Jerusalem next summer, the establishment of a worldwide Torah *chinuch* central organization, a broad range of constructive projects in Israel, the acceleration of efforts to ban missionary activities in the Holy Land, a call to Torah-loyal Jews of all circles to unite under the authority of the Gedolei

Torah, an ambitious expansion program for Chinuch Atzmai, and the establishment of a department for effective orthodox public relations on the world scene. It was also decided that the American Agudath Israel organization will establish a huge housing project, *Kiryat Agudath Israel*, for religious American Jews who will settle in the Holy Land.

Many thousands of Israelis had the opportunity to greet the Agudist leaders who participated in the conference at impressive public receptions which were tendered in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Bnai Brak.

41st National Convention of Agudath Israel Oct. 31-Nov. 3

The 41st National Convention of Agudath Israel of America will take place from Thursday evening through Sunday, October 31-November 3rd, at the Pioneer Country Club, Greenfield Park, New York, it was announced by Rabbi Yechezkel Besser, general chairman of the convention. Delegates from every part of the United States and Canada, including the foremost Torah authorities, are expected to attend this gathering.

The distinguished president of the executive of the Agudath Israel World Organization, Rabbi Itzhok Meier Lewin, will arrive from Eretz Israel as the special guest of the convention, and will report on the latest developments in the Holy Land. This will be the first nationwide gathering of the American Agudath Israel movement since the loss of its spiritual leader, Hagaon Reb Aharon Kotler, of blessed memory, who was the chairman of the *Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah*.

The Agudist youth organization, Zeirei Agudath Israel of America, will hold its annual convention simultaneously in special sessions. N'shei Agudath Israel, the women's organization, will also conduct separate sessions devoted to the specific concerns of the orthodox woman.

Preparations are already in full swing to arrange a program which will be both stimulating and of practical value in shaping the future course of the Agudist movement. Associate chairmen of the convention committee are Max Grossman and Julius Klugman, and the Nominations Committee is headed by Rabbi Mendel Chodorow, chairman, and William K. Friedman, associate chairman. Chaim Hertz is chairman and P.D. Schonfeld, associate chairman, of the Program Committee.

In the center of the deliberations will be plans for mobilizing American Orthodoxy to participate en masse in the historic fifth Knesiah Gedolah (World Congress) of the Agudath Israel World Organization, which has been called for July 1964 in Jerusalem. Convention reservations are already being accepted at the National Headquarters of Agudath Israel.

Camp Agudah and Camp Bnos

On August 27th, Camp Agudah for Boys and Camp Bnos for Girls completed a highly successful 9-week season. The camps, which are summer educational projects of Agudath Israel of America, service over 1,000 children from 35 communities throughout the United States and Canada, in beautiful facilities located in Ferndale and Liberty, N.Y.

Before the summer, a program of major capital improvements was executed, including the construction of several new cottages. The Agudist camps have earned national acclaim for the unique, warm Torah spirit that they instil into their campers, besides the wholesome physical benefits. Letters were received this season from many educators praising the help that the camps have been to their Torah-institutions, by supplementing their programs and breathing into the youngsters a more intense love for Torah-study.

"Dos Yiddishe Vort" Publishes Enlarged Rosh Hashonoh Issue

The popular Yiddish monthly magazine "Dos Yiddishe Vort," published by Agudath Israel, begins its eleventh year of regular publication with an enlarged Rosh Hashonoh issue. It contains a large number of articles and essays on current issues and Yomim Noraim themes.

The editors of "Dos Yiddishe Vort" issued an announcement that a small number of its special publications, for which there have been a heavy demand, are still available: the Fiftieth Anniversary Book of the World Agudath Israel Movement, the Reb Aharon Kotler, z.t.l. Volume, and the Yomim Noraim Almanac.

Reject Plan for Saturday Elections

In reply to a request from the chairman of the President's Commission on Registration and Voting Participation, to express an opinion on a proposal to conduct national elections on the first Saturday and Sunday of November, Agudath Israel of America responded firmly in the negative. In an official letter to the President's Commission, the organization declared that this proposal "would only have an adverse effect" since it would lead to the profaning of the Sabbath day. The communication also pointed out that, despite the opportunity this proposal would give to a Jewish Sabbath observer to vote on Sunday, there are large numbers of Jewish officials employed in the voting procedures at the election polls, whose activity on a Saturday would violate Jewish law.

Agudath Israel also subsequently joined in a document signed by all orthodox groups in the United States jointly rejecting this proposal. It is expected that the opposition of religious leaders will remove this plan from any further active consideration.

Agudah in Civil Rights Conference

At the invitation of President Kennedy, a representative of Agudath Israel participated in the White House Conference of religious leaders on the civil rights problem. The gathering, which was addressed by the President and the Attorney General, mapped plans to involve religious leaders more directly in the struggle for equality for all Americans, regardless of race, color or creed.

Efforts to Ban N.Y.C. "Blue Laws"

Agudath Israel, working jointly with other orthodox groups, has actively participated in a series of summer conferences with leading New York City officials, to assure passage of a bill this September, that would enable Jewish Sabbath observers to keep open on Sunday. After many years of concerted effort, it now appears that Jewish Sabbath observers in New York City are on the threshold of a new era, when they will no longer be harassed by the police for violation of Sunday "Blue Laws."

Annual Taharas Hamishpocho Drive

The annual drive to distribute Taharas Hamishpocho literature throughout the United States was launched by Agudath Israel this month. The key feature of "Jewish Family Life," published by the Spero Foundation is the distribution of the 76-page book, dated and written by Dr. Sidney B. Hoenig. The organization has already distributed thousands of copies of this book free of charge in recent years.

Copies are now again available to married Jewish couples who seek this invaluable information on the meaning and practice of the traditional laws which safeguard the sanctity of Jewish married family life. The only charge is a 10c fee for shipping expenses to be mailed to Agudath Israel's national office.

United Orthodoxy Scores Justice Cohen's Blasphemy

An emergency conference of all orthodox organizations in the United States, held in the office of the Agudas Harabonim, adopted a united proclamation calling upon the Israeli government and its citizenry "not to tolerate" the blasphemy of Israeli Supreme Court Justice Chaim Cohen. The statement declared that Justice Cohen's remarks, which characterized the Torah laws as reflecting "the racist approach of the Nazis" are such "shameless blasphemy, manifesting self-hatred," that "no non-Jew of our time would dare to make such an absurd declaration." Agudath Israel played a major role in convening this united conference and in shaping the resolution that was adopted, which was forwarded to the leaders of the Israeli government and to the entire Israeli press.

Chinuch Atzmai News

FIFTEEN MORE SCHOOLS ADDED TO NETWORK

A bumper crop of registrations for the new term, which resulted in the administration undertaking the construction of fifteen new schools to house the enrollment of over four thousand additional students, is reported from Chinuch Atzmai headquarters in Jerusalem.

In reviewing the list of new Torah Schools one cannot help but notice that they are mainly in the outlying rural districts, far removed from the great urban centers, which supplied the greatest number of students in the early years of Chinuch Atzmai.

One reads such exotic, and practically unknown, names as Ofakim (Negev), Chatzor (Galilee) and Ras-El-Ain (Judean Mts.) as the townships in which the latest schools were established.

This trend is in keeping with the policy of Chinuch Atzmai, that first priority for new schools goes to those towns and villages where no Torah Schools exist at all.

GALA SIYUM HASEFER CELEBRATION

Over four hundred people attended an impressive *Siyum Ha-Sefer* in Belle Harbor, on the lawn of the summer home of Stephen Klein, Chinuch Atzmai National Chairman.

The Sefer Torah which was completed on Tuesday evening, August 27th, was the gift of the Executive Committee of Chinuch Atzmai Torah Schools in Israel to Irving Bunim, the guest of honor of the American Committee's 1963 annual banquet.

Upon completion of the inscriptions the Torah was turned over to Beth Medrash Gevoha, Lakewood, N.J. Receiving the Torah on behalf of the Lakewood Academy were Hagaon Reb Schneur Kotler, Rosh Yeshivah, and Martin Klein, president.

Rabbi Kotler delivered a stirring message, recalling his late father's hopes and ambitions for the Chinuch Atzmai network of Torah Schools as, "the base upon which Judasm and Torah in Eretz Yisrael, for many generations to come, will be built."

The gathering, which was chaired by George Klein, was also addressed by Irving Bunim, Rabbi Emanuel Jacobovitz, Consul General Katriel Katz, and

Stephen Klein. The procession of Torah inscribers was headed by Charles Avnet. Mr. Stephen Klein appealed to American Jewry to endorse Chinuch Atzmai's Torah Schools, "now that it is a proven reality, and to supply the funds needed to achieve our goal of 90,000 students." He revealed that the initial sum for the founding of Chinuch Atzmai was contributed by American Yeshiva students and teachers who despite meager salaries signed notes for sums ranging from \$100 to \$1000. These men sacrificed bread to build Chinuch Atzmai.

WORLD CONFERENCE OF CHINUCH ATZMAI

In a joint statement issued by the Lutzker Rav, Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin, President of Chinuch Atzmai in Israel, and Stephen Klein, National Chairman of the American Committee, it was revealed that the international Torah organization has scheduled a world conference of its rabbinic and lay leadership for the summer of 1964.

Regarding the anticipated attendance at the World Conference, Klein declared, "We expect strong delegations from London, Brussels, Vienna, Paris, and of course every major American and Canadian city."

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