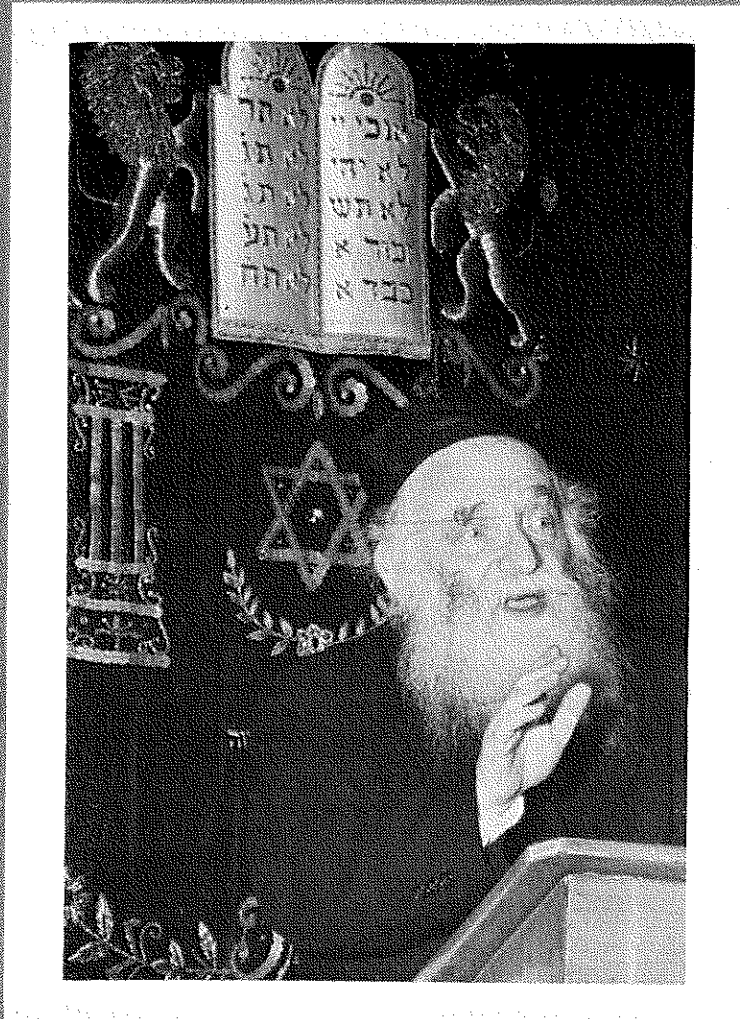


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THE JEWISH OBSERVER



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**JEWISH
"ECUMENICISM"**

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**THE
TRUE NATURE
OF THE STRUGGLE**

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**THE NEW
DANGER OF
CALENDAR REFORM**

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**THE "SOUL"
OF A MITZVAH**

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to Our Late Martyred President

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

JEWISH "ECUMENICISM"

Are there "Three Wings" in Judaism?

by Morris Sherer

IN RECENT MONTHS, the truth of the old Yiddish folk-saying *vi es kristelt sich, azoy yidelt sich* has been verified in striking manner. Echoes of the "spirit of ecumenicism" emanating from the Vatican in Rome, have apparently profoundly stirred the American Jewish community.

Writing in the *New York Times* (November 10, 1963) on the annual meeting of the Council of Jewish Federation and Welfare Funds, Irving Spiegel, the *Times* Jewish expert, reports: "*Trends towards unity in American Jewish secular and religious life are taking place coincident with the ecumenical process in Christianity.*"

The zenith of the enthusiastic Jewish reaction to the Ecumenical Conference in Rome, was the statement by the head of the Reform temple body in the United States, Dr. Maurice Eisendrath. Welcoming the Conference's planned condemnation of anti-semitism, the Reform leader declared that "inter-religious understanding based on mutual respect is not a one-way street," and called upon Jews to "reassess the oft-times jaundiced view" of the founder of Christianity, whom he described as a "positive and prophetic spirit in the stream of the Jewish tradition."

The fact, however, that a top leader of Reform "Judaism" has publicly embraced the image of Christianity's founder as having stood within the line of Israel's prophets, should not surprise us particularly. Has it not been said: "And if your hearts will be deceived, and you will turn aside—in the end—you will worship other gods"?

It should similarly be superfluous to enter into a detailed refutation of the lopsided reasoning of "rewarding" the Vatican for discussing the possibility of expunging an anti-Jewish dogma that has caused so much Jewish suffering and persecution throughout the ages, by taking the founder of their religion to our bosom. The spirit of sycophancy behind a response of such twisted logic is too evident to require amplification.

Ironically too, the warm Jewish reaction to the "ecumenical spirit" was rudely deflated when the Ecumenical Council closed its current sessions with the declaration against anti-semitism pigeonholed "till next year." The president of the American Jewish Committee, who had led the chorus of Jewish leaders in singing paeans of praise for "the new era of Christian-Jewish understanding," was subsequently constrained to issue a statement expressing "regret and

sorrow" and "deep disappointment" that their hopes had not come true.

Three Wings in "57 Varieties"

INSTEAD OF ENGAGING EISENDRATH in a theological debate, Orthodox Jewry should feel compelled by recent events to *reassess its own attitude* towards the "57 varieties" of reform Judaism, into which reform's major variants—conservatism and reform—shade off. The widespread notion that there exist "three wings of Judaism," which has not been *effectively* challenged until now, must now be subject to searching reappraisal, however "agonizing" such reappraisal might be. By default and inaction, Orthodoxy was committed to a policy of *de facto* perpetuation of our "realistic" condition—in which Torah-true Judaism is only "one wing" within Judaism. By granting *de facto* recognition to a concept that there can be a Judaism without Torah and Mitzvos, Orthodoxy has, like the proverbial tree, been providing wood for the handle of the ax which is to be used for hacking at its very roots.

It is a basic precept of our faith, that there can be no Judaism which is not based on Torah *min hashamayim*—on the Written and Oral Law revealed by G-d at Sinai. Any religion that denies this Divine Revelation, and arbitrarily custom-tailors a set of man-made codes and practices to "suit the times," may designate itself by any name it chooses—but *not Judaism*. In truth, the distance between Orthodoxy and the various brands of reform "Judaism" is far greater than the chasm that divided the Pharisees from the Saducees—or than that which *l'havdil*, separates Catholicism from Protestantism.

Though, in their desperate quest for legitimization, reform and conservative rabbis like to affirm that their difference from Orthodoxy is no more radical than that which separates "the Democratic from the Republican" parties. This despite the fact that even belief in a personal G-d is denied by many of them. By granting these movements the privilege of declaring themselves as "wings of Judaism," thus denigrating Orthodoxy to an equal-partner segment "within the totality of Judaism," we are helping to perpetuate a historic hoax which menaces our very existence.

An entire tome can be written detailing the sad results for the totality of Jewish life, of the lack of realization that the use of the term "Judaism" is a misnomer when applied to the reform movements.

It should suffice however, to indicate as an illustration, the *Churban* in the purity of the Jewish family, which has resulted from the brazen trampling of Jewish marriage and divorce laws by reform and conservative rabbis. When conservative rabbis permit a *Kohen* to marry a divorcee, against an explicit law of the Torah, and reform requires no Jewish *get* for remarriage and considers a civil divorce adequate, we are not dealing with some abstract theological dispute. Reform intentionally countenances thousands of marriages which are forbidden by Torah law, from which thousands of children are born who are illegitimate according to Torah law. Isn't it frightening beyond words to contemplate the extent to which such a situation destroys the purity of the Jewish family and ultimately that of the Jewish people?

The Forceful Step of the Roshei Yeshivos

IN 1956, THE LEADING ROSHEI YESHIVOS in this country, headed by Reb Aharon Kotler זצ"ל, took a major step to forcefully expose this spiritual deceit, by putting an end to its furtherance through orthodox

collaboration with those who would tear down the very essence of our faith. They issued the historic *P'sak din* banning orthodox rabbis and synagogues from membership in the Synagogue Council of America and the New York Board of Rabbis. These two "mixed groups" represent the most notorious manifestation of Orthodoxy's recognition of "three wings of Judaism" on a religious level.

This *P'sak din*, therefore, struck at the very heart of the Jewish religious status, which Orthodoxy itself was granting to reform and conservative rabbis and their synagogue bodies. The *Halachic* stand of the American Roshei Yeshivos was strongly backed by the Roshei Yeshivos in Eretz Israel and by the famed Brisker Rav, Reb Velvel Soloveitchik, זצ"ל. Not one acknowledged Rabbinic authority in the whole world has ever negated the *Halachic* validity of the *Issur*.

Although this *P'sak din* did not achieve its complete goal, one cannot diminish its far-reaching implications and effect. With dramatic impact, it helped arouse a new awareness amongst orthodox Jews concerning the crumbling lines of demarcation resulting from the "religious" collaboration and rabbinic comradery between orthodox and non-orthodox. As a result, many orthodox rabbis refused to join the New York Board of Rabbis and others resigned. The membership of this organization now contains only a minute part of New York's orthodox rabbis, and is dominated by an overwhelming majority of reformers.

With regards to the Synagogue Council, however, the *P'sak din* was negated by two orthodox groups. These two organizations, by maintaining their affiliation with the banned Synagogue Council, not only contributed to the continuation of the spiritual chaos, which such affiliation sorely aggravates. By publicly violating a *P'sak Halacha* issued by the world's foremost Torah authorities, they have struck a serious blow at a fundamental principle of Torah-Judaism: the acceptance of a definitive *Halachic* prohibition, which remains unchallenged on *Halachic* grounds by any authority in the field.

The Results of the "Unholy" Alliance

THE ORTHODOX RABBIS who violated this *P'sak din*, attempted to rationalize their stand by contending that through "working from within," they could "restrain" the reformist groups. The passage of time has given the lie to their contention. The reformers have not been deterred in the slightest degree from fostering anti-*Halachic* activities with ever-increasing militancy. The conservatives did not hesitate to create their own *Beth Din* for divorce procedures in defiance of the orthodox rabbinate, are dauntlessly injecting themselves into the Kashruth scene, and are brazenly exporting their brand of "Judaism" to Eretz Israel. The Reformers are sanctioning and performing intermarriage

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Jewish Divorce: Reform Style

An actual "Jewish" divorce granted by reform rabbis. Note that the legitimacy of this supposed "get," which frees the divorcee to "marry in accordance with the law of Moses and Israel," is based on her having received a civil divorce from a Judge. In the "legal opinion" of the issuing rabbis, the "get" is valid because "the law of the land must be observed." . . .

The TRUE Nature of the STRUGGLE

The Mandelbaum Gate and the Character of Am Yisroel

by Nathan Bulman

AN UNEASY TRUCE has replaced the mood of violence which characterized Shabbos in Meah Shearim during recent months. After much investigation and debate, the Knesset has decided that: (a) the Mandelbaum Gate is to remain open for traffic on Shabbos as heretofore; (b) "to the extent possible" traffic will be deflected from *Shivtai Yisroel* Street to other streets; and (c) the police will seek to prevent "provocation" of the inhabitants of the area by "Shabbos invasions" of Meah Shearim such as those which the hooligans of the "League" have recently been guilty of. Which of course amounts to a clear victory for neither side, though at least Meah Shearim has been granted some respite. One's immediate response is obviously: "Couldn't the police have followed the same procedure right from the start? Isn't it apparent now that—though the conflict was not ultimately resolved—the *violence* it engendered was spark-plugged by the anti-religious elements rather than by Meah Shearim?" But all that is past. If the lesson of the Mandelbaum Gate conflict is however not to be lost on us, we would do well to probe its underlying causes. The struggle in which religious Jewry is presently engaged in Israel is one of very much larger import and range than the Meah Shearim conflict, for all the world wide attention the latter has received and all the agony it has inflicted upon us. In fact it admirably suits our adversaries for the Torah camp to frenetically expend all its energies on this or that or a third explosive episode triggered by *their* decision, so that we might constantly appear as eternal "protestants," incapable of creative action, incapable of initiative, seemingly doomed to waging battle where our adversaries choose to strike.

If we seek to lift the pall of dread anticipation of where "the next blow will fall," which constantly hangs over us, and replace it by a pattern of confident, ordered response to the *total* challenge we face in Israel, we must not lose sight "of the whole forest because of the many trees which cross our line of vision." Such an all-embracing view could give us an entirely different perspective on our total situation—an infinitely more hopeful one than is ours presently.

They Fear Our Rising Strength

A VERY STRIKING and revealing article recently appeared in *Ha'aretz*. It was written by one of the most influential publicists in the State of Israel, Dr. S.Y. Gross, who writes under the pseudonym "Poles," and was entitled: "The Struggle Over The Mandelbaum Gate — A Struggle Over The Character Of The State."

A reading of Mr. Poles' reflections would provide us with exceptionally clear insight into the thinking of the non-religious segment of Israeli Jewry. Nothing is concealed. The core of the matter is stripped bare, and one is given to understand clearly what *stands behind* such eruptions as that which occurred over the Mandelbaum Gate.

Mr. Poles writes:

"Thirty years ago it entered no one's mind that in the year 1963 a not particularly large circle of religious zealots would be capable of bringing the entire yishuv into a dilemma. Then it was thought that the religious would decrease in number. But the situation has changed. The sense of strength has increased in the religious camp, and even though the religious sector experiences disintegration at its outer edges and large "chunks" continue to fall away from it, it remains a solid mass. The relative proportion of voters for the religious parties has grown. And what is even more important: the core of the קנאים שבקנאים (the most zealous among the zealous) has constantly become more and more forceful."

In other words the Torah camp was expected to disintegrate or at least "decrease." It was viewed as a passing phenomenon. But religious Jewry in Israel behaved "disappointingly." It not only refused to accommodate the prophets of its doom, but increased its strength. Somehow, even its continued losses are now outweighed by gains of sufficient extent to give it a larger proportion of the total vote in national elections. And what is even more astounding—the influence of the more devout is becoming more and more dominant in the religious camp. Do you understand, dear reader? *They* fear our *growing* strength. One is almost moved to send a note of thanks to

Mr. Poles for such information. After all, we aren't as weak, it seems, as many of us have imagined! How did it happen? What factors gave the lie to the prognosis of doom for us, of 30 years ago? How did we turn the tide? How does the non-religious camp envision the implications of this development? How should we envision its possible significance?

"The Appetite May Grow With The Eating"

"There is considerable doubt whether even far-reaching concessions will calm the religious camp. They already say clearly that the Mandelbaum Gate should be absolutely closed during Shabbos and Yom Tov. Another road will not satisfy them. And even should that goal be reached—who will guarantee that the appetite will not grow with the eating? Why should they be satisfied with total observance of Shabbos in the length of Rechov Haneviim or Rechov Yaffo? In the end they will demand total Sabbath observance in the entire city. And it isn't only Jerusalem which is holy but the entire country, and the same principle should therefore be applied throughout the country." Mr. Poles.

If we were to restate Mr. Poles' apprehensions a little more clearly, he is in effect saying the following: "Meah Shearim has to be broken, because if it isn't, the militancy of Meah Shearim may spread throughout Israel and impose public observance of Shabbos in all the cities of the land." Now, on the face of things Mr. Poles' fear seems hardly grounded in reality. Haven't we been told constantly, until even we, the religious Jews, have believed it ourselves, that the influence and vitality of Meah Shearim have been constantly diminishing? The old Yishuv, we have been repeatedly told, has been bypassed, left behind, overwhelmed by the reality of the new Israeli society. The "remnant" of the "unproductive, congealed, medieval, Chaluka yishuv," had become—we were assured—nothing more than a bizarre, exotic, tourist attraction, for ZOA, Hadassah, etc., delegations visiting Israel. And suddenly—we are informed—the spirit of Meah Shearim has acquired a new lease on life. The composure of the entire secularist community "from Dan to Elath," is now threatened by a resurrected Meah Shearim. In fact, Mr. Poles is so terribly frightened that he maintains the right of the Israeli non-religious community to "use strength, if it does not wish to descend from the stage. . . ."

Thus far? Are we being told that if Meah Shearim isn't brought "to its knees," that this vast, enormously powerful secularist majority will be forced "to descend from the stage"—i.e. will be "vanquished" and replaced by "petrified" little Meah Shearim?

That is precisely what we are being told! What is at stake now, Mr. Poles tells us very clearly, is "the face of this *Medina*—its collective cultural character."

"In the last two or three generations the people of Israel has gone through a process of secularization. Zionism, was in decisive measure, the achievement of Yeshiva bachurim who forsook their sacred studies and went over to scientific studies, to constructive activities. . . . Sharpness of thought and expression came to us from the Cheder and the Yeshiva."

To Mr. Poles' sorrow however, all that has changed. "There are today 12,000 young men who study in the Yeshivos of Israel. . . . It can very well be that the development of the Yeshivos decreases our development in all the other areas of life—theoretical as well as practical. . . . The established Yishuv is convinced that if the people of Israel in its state will forsake the achievements of the period of secularization and will adapt itself again to the directives of the Shulchan Aruch, it is likely not only to strengthen its isolation among the nations, but also to descend from its cultural height (*sic!*), which in the world of today and tomorrow means: scientific and technological achievement."

Those 12,000 young men in the Yeshivos—how large they suddenly loom! Are they really that powerful? Mr. Poles knows of still another army which is likely—unless prevented from doing so, to multiply those 12,000 till they transform all of Israeli Jewry into a people of Torah.

Says Mr. Poles—and how we should simultaneously rejoice and tremble over his words:

"If a sizeable segment of the children of the new olim—who are still terribly backward—will not be enabled to pass through a process of intermingling—which in this or that degree is also a process of secularization—there is no certainty that our national character in another twenty, thirty, or forty years will not be that of a people which has returned to live under the supervision of "Magidei Shiur" (those who teach shiurim in Torah), Rabbis, Poskim, who take pride in pilpulistic ingenuity. And how such a people will survive, defend itself, earn its livelihood, help other peoples, occupy its proper place in the world—one doesn't know."

We must finally understand the matter clearly. The issue is not Shabbos in Meah Shearim. The issue is the entire future of the oriental Aliya. The issue is the character of Torah chinuch and its extraordinary growth. The issue is the collective soul of the entire next generation—or that of the one after that. How they know our true strength! Do we know now why they villify us so hysterically—why they fight us so desperately. In the deepest recesses of their being they know, that our spirit will conquer the souls of their children if not their own souls.

And since they are children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and brothers of ours, we will not be daunted by their arrows. We will continue to wrestle with them until their worst fears come true—until they return—
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The New Danger of CALENDAR REFORM

by Isaac Lewin

ON OCTOBER 25, 1963, the Ecumenical Vatican Council passed an appendix to the fifth chapter of a liturgy decree, which might constitute a grave danger to the Sabbath. The Bishop who presented the proposal, Mgr. Francis Zauner of Austria, motivated it in a very curious way. He said that if the Church did not accept the Calendar Reform proposed to the Ecumenical Council, "civil authorities might reform the calendar according to some atheistic system."

Bishop Zauner's statement was doubly wrong. There was at present no tendency among the nations of the world to reform the calendar. The last attempt to introduce calendar reform through a decision of the United Nations was overwhelmingly defeated in 1956. The rejection of the proposed reform materialized after a thorough investigation of the problem by many governments. If the Ecumenical Council would not take up the matter now, the reform of the calendar might be postponed *ad calendas graecas*. And, besides this, the reform with the "blank day" device is *per se* the worst atheistic act. One can hardly understand how such an atheistic reform could be accepted only with the view to avoid another reform "according to some atheistic system."

The decision of the Ecumenical Council is worded carefully. It says as follows: "The sacred Council declares that it does not oppose efforts designed to introduce a perpetual calendar into civil society. But, among the various systems which are being suggested to stabilize a perpetual calendar and to introduce it into civil life, the Church has no objection only in the case of those systems which retain and safeguard a seven-day week with Sunday, without the introduction of any days outside the week, so that the succession of weeks may be left intact, unless there is question of the most serious reasons. Concerning these the Apostolic See shall judge."

As we see, a "perpetual calendar" was, in principle, accepted. On the other hand, "the introduction of any days outside the week" does not find favor in the eyes of the Council fathers. The succession of weeks must be left intact, unless the Vatican dispenses of it.

Dr. Isaac Lewin, a noted historian, is chairman of the American Section of the executive of the Agudath Israel World Organization. He is the representative of Agudath Israel to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, and has played an important role in the struggle against calendar reform.

As to the condition that the succession of weeks must be left intact, the "blank day" device could be explained as not breaking the succession of weeks. Any week following the "blank day" is also a seven-day week. What is being violated, is, of course, the religious day of rest. It is moved from the seventh day after the regular day of rest, which preceded the "blank day," to the eighth day. But since the "blank day" is meant to be a holiday, it would be succeeded by six days of work whereupon the seventh day (in reality the eighth day) would be declared a day of rest. Consequently, the *biblical* principle of "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (*Exodus 20:8*), would be violated. The Sabbath day would change into a nomadic day. Every year the sequence of days of the week would change with regard to the Sabbath. In leap years, when a second blank day would be introduced, the sequence of days of the week would be broken twice. Complete chaos would develop with regard to the religious day of rest. Could there be a more atheistic reform of the calendar?

We can hardly believe that the Ecumenical Council would be ready to transfer to the state authorities the authority of fixing the *religious* day of rest.

For Jews, Moslems, and probably some Christian denominations, any change of the religious day of rest is out of question. Consequently, millions of people who observe a religious day of rest would, besides the confusion as to the fixity of the day itself, be faced with a dilemma: they would either keep two days of rest, the religious and the civil one, or give up their faith and keep the new calendar. A new wave of atheism would engulf the world. Religious liberty would practically come to an end, because the law would enforce the civil day of rest, leaving it to the discretion of every individual to work on the religious day of rest or not.

There are many fields in which a legal compulsion exists with regard to the performance of certain duties. As an example let us take the situation in the school system. Most states make school attendance under a certain age compulsory. With a nomadic religious day of rest, the child would be expected to attend school every week on a day which the conscientious religious parent would deem to be his true day of rest. If the child would not attend school on that day, the parent would be punished. This would certainly amount to religious persecution.

Should we today, when the promotion of human rights, and among them freedom of religion, is considered a basic concept of a democratic society, go back to the darkness of religious oppression? Who may be permitted to trample the religious feelings of uncounted millions of men and women under his feet?

It is worthwhile to note that for many centuries nobody even attempted to change the sequence of the seven-day week. After Julius Caesar and his astronomer, Sosigenes of Alexandria, reformed the Roman calendar, in 45 B.C.E., Emperor Constantine, in 321, built the calendar on the sound foundation of a seven-day week. Since then the sequence of days of the week has never been touched.

When Pope Gregory XIII changed the calendar, in 1582, he advanced the year by 10 days by declaring that following October 4 of the year 1582 would come October 15. He did not change the sequence of days of the week. October 4 was a Thursday, and the following day, although declared October 15, nevertheless remained a Friday. Several Protestant countries did not immediately adopt the change. Great Britain waited until 1752 and then introduced the missing period into the calendar. However, it did not touch the weekly sequence of the days. Thursday, September 3, 1752, was declared Thursday, September 14. Thus all calendar changes showed their respect for the traditional biblical principle of the seven-day week. Everybody agreed that a reform of the calendar could not change the seven-day week.

The proposal for the introduction of a blank day was once truly characterized as "a death-blow to the conception of the Bible and a distortion of the command of G-d for a day of rest sanctioned by Him, as contrasted to a man-made day of economic relaxation."

* * *

HOW COULD THE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL fall into the trap of the atheists? If the Bishop from Austria who proposed the declaration on calendar reform would only have acquainted himself with the history of this ill-advised proposal in the United Nations, there would probably be a different approach in the Council to the "blank-day" device. Let me give one example. On July 7, 1954, the calendar reform was discussed at a meeting of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations of the Economic and Social Council in Geneva. Mr. Meghnad Saha of India spoke about the present calendar and the length of the present months. "There is not the slightest scientific justification"—were his words—"for these varying lengths. They are said to have been due to the caprice of two Roman dictators." (Published in the pamphlet "The World Calendar at Geneva 1954" of the "World Calendar Association," page 7). The "two dictators" are, of course, Julius Caesar and Pope Gregory XIII.

In this company Bishop Zauner and the other pro-

tagonists of the Calendar Reform in the Ecumenical Council now find themselves; in the company of people who dare to call Pope Gregory XIII a "dictator," who compare him to Julius Caesar, and call his act a "caprice!"

THE GOVERNMENTS OF the most important countries in the world, with the exception of the government of the Soviet Union, rejected the idea of a calendar reform. In my book, "In the Struggle against Discrimination" (New York, Bloch Publishing Co., 1957), all the official answers of the governments to a questionnaire of the United Nations Secretariat were reprinted *in extenso* (pp. 80-100). I would like to quote some of these governmental statements.

The United States Government wrote as follows:

"The United States Government does not favor any action by the United Nations to revise the present calendar. This government cannot in any way promote a change of this nature, which would intimately effect every inhabitant of this country, unless such a reform were favored by a substantial majority of the citizens of the United States, acting through their representatives in the Congress of the United States. There is no evidence of such support in the United States for calendar reform. Large numbers of United States citizens oppose the plan for calendar reform which is now before the Economic and Social Council. Their opposition is based on religious grounds, since the introduction of a "blank day" at the end of each year would disrupt the seven-day sabbatical cycle. Moreover, this Government holds that it would be inappropriate for the United Nations, which represents many different religious and social beliefs throughout the world, to sponsor any revision of the existing calendar that would conflict with the principles of important religious faiths."

The French Government wrote:

"This question has already been carefully studied in France. In December 1930, after consultation with the most important scientific, professional and religious bodies, the National Economic Council drafted a detailed report which was published in the *Journal officiel de la République Française*. The French Government is therefore fully aware of the advantages which might be derived from the various plans for calendar reform, in particular the plan proposed by the World Calendar Association and supported by the Government of India (E/2514). These advantages have been stressed sufficiently often not to require repetition. The French Government considers, however, that a reform of this kind requires very wide support from public opinion. That does not seem to be the case at the present time. Even the principle of calendar reform has aroused strong opposition among certain religious groups, and especially in Jewish circles. The latter consider that the adoption of the World Calendar Association's plan, which breaks the continuity of the week once a year and twice every leap year, would have the effect of making the Sabbath a movable day. Opposition based on similar considerations has been expressed by several Protestant denominations. Moreover, although many scientific organizations have welcomed the proposed reform, some have objected to the introduction of a 'blank day' at the end of the year. Furthermore, in

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The "SOUL" of a Mitzvah

by Mordecai Gifter

THE MOST POTENT FACTORS in life are the intangibles. We all know, for example, that the "soul" is the source and well-spring of life—yet no one can perceive the soul through any or all of his five senses.

In the realm of Mitzvos—Torah Commandments—there is also such a thing as a "soul." The actual deed itself, performed physically, perceived and encompassed by the senses, is merely the minimum requirement of the Law. It achieves its full expression only when accompanied by its "soul."

What, then, is the "soul" of a Mitzvah? We were commanded to perform Mitzvos in order to purify and elevate our lives—as the Talmud states, "The Holy One, blessed is He, wished to purify and give merit to Israel; therefore, He gave them much of Torah and Mitzvos" (*Makos* 23b). This aspect of the Mitzva contains its intangible potency, its "soul." The performance of a Mitzva in full knowledge and recognition of its purpose makes it life-giving. It is in this sense that we say of Mitzvos—"ki haim chayeinu ve'orech yomeinu"—they are our very life and the length of our days.

Since the soul of a Mitzva is an intangible, we are always faced with the danger of misunderstanding a Mitzva. Nay, not only misunderstanding, but even placing improper emphasis on either of its two aspects, which is even worse. There is the danger of diffusing spirit from a Mitzva, leaving us with its physical performance alone; and there is the danger of infusing spirit into a Mitzva, which ultimately leads to a denial of the need for its practical observance.

The Jew, therefore, always properly emphasizes "Torah Umitzvos"—Torah and Mitzvos—conceiving of Mitzvos as an outgrowth of Torah, drawing their sanctity and spiritual potency from the revealed Word of G-d in the Torah. For only in their context as integral parts in the over-all pattern of Torah living can Mitzvos be performed in their totality. This is part of what our Sages meant when they said: "*Bizman she-asuyim k'mitzvoson, harei haim mitzvos; bizman shain asuyim k'mitzvoson, einon Mitzvos*"—when Mitzvos are performed in their proper context, they are Mitzvos; when they are not performed in their proper context, they are not Mitzvos! The proper context of a Mitzva

is its specific place in the words of the Torah, in the Letter of the Law. This is the essence of the sanctity—*Kedusha*—about which we speak in the Brocho preceding the performance of a Mitzva. The *Kedusha* of Torah emanates from a Mitzva performed in its proper context.

The significance of such an understanding of Mitzvos is patently clear. It is the avowed, and indeed sincere, goal of many Jews that they and their children be observant of Torah and its Mitzvos. Yet, unfortunately, too many of us fail to realize that this goal demands a complete and unswerving devotion to Torah study and scholarship. For only a deep and penetrating understanding of the Word will lead to an inspired performance of the deed. Our Rabbis stated long ago, "*V'lo am-haretz chosid*"—an ignoramus cannot be a righteous person.

If "life giving" Mitzvos must, of necessity, be Torah-Mitzvos, then we must also, of necessity, strive endlessly for ever greater achievements in the field of Torah scholarship. And still, how many Jewish parents do we know who want their children to be observant Jews—"zein a frumer Yid"—yet see no necessity of "making a rabbi of him?" What they are oblivious of understanding is that qualified Torah scholarship does not mean the rabbinate as a career, and furthermore, that the very observance which they seek depends on the quality of his scholarship. Mitzvos grow and fructify in the soil of Torah study in its deepest sense.

It is true that in Eastern Europe the vast majority of Jews were observant of Torah and Mitzvos although they were not Torah scholars. Nevertheless, we must be conscious of the fact that those Jewish communities as a whole were governed and guided by Torah scholarship. The intellectual Torah giants in the various communities exerted an influence upon the whole of Jewry, and the Mitzvos of the individual average Jew were nurtured in the rich soil of the general Torah scholarship of the age. Every Jewish home in Lithuania knew of and revered Rabbi Yitzchok Elchonon, Reb Chaim Brisker, the Chofetz Chaim, z"l. The same was true of Polish Jewry and Hungarian Jewry and their respective spiritual giants. In that forest of Torah scholarship the "small bushes" were able to nestle in the shade of the "cedars of Lebanon."

But here in this country we have failed, as yet, to produce intellectual giants of Torah scholarship. We cannot, therefore, afford to be content with just observant children, Mitzva children. If Jewish parents wish

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to guarantee true Mitzva survival they must bring all possible sacrifices in order to produce great Torah scholars from among our own American Jewish youth.

The Jewish parent who sends his young child to a Yeshiva Ketana must set his goals high. We must become fully convinced that the crowning achievement of Jewish life is the creation of the *Talmid Chochom*, the *Godol BaTorah*, the Jew whose very life's breath is the will of Almighty G-d revealed in Torah. This is a demand meant not merely for the brilliant child as some parents are prone to think. It is meant for every child who comes within the framework of Torah requirements and requisites, each in accordance with his talents, to the measure of his abilities.

The responsibility of creating *Talmidei Chachomim* rests upon every parent as regards every child. The dictate of Torah is, *ישננתם לבניך — שיהיו דברי תורה — מהודין בפיק* — to teach Torah in such manner and to such an extent that the awareness of Torah be keen and sharp. The relationship of the Jew to Torah is one of "אמור להכמה אחותי את" — the close relationship of the fraternal bond of brother and sister, an inbred blood relationship. Just as one knows and recognizes his sister, so shall he be aware of the will of G-d revealed in Torah.

It is small wonder therefore that the great luminary of our age, the late Gaon "Chazon Ish," z"l, writes that the "*Talmid Chochom* is an angel who walks among men." For the *Talmid Chochom* is the product of endless toil in Torah, of a never ceasing struggle with his inner self to attune himself to the dictates of Torah.

Let us not make the grave error of thinking that American Jewish youth do not possess the capabilities for great Torah scholarship. This is simply not true. Those who are familiar with the few great Torah centers in our country know that we do have among us the

"illuy"—the young genius—capable of becoming a Gaon. But we must first come to the realization that we actually need to create Geonim! While we seem to be able to understand the need for a Salk vaccine to combat the crippling effects of polio, we do not yet fully understand the need for a Torah giant to fight the crippling effects of shallow Jewish living. We are not fully disturbed by the fact that the criteria of American Jewish living are steeped in crass ignorance of the eternal values and verities of Torah. In this respect we are failing to meet the challenge of our time.

Our potential Geonim are often lost to us because of the narrow-minded concern of parents for the material success of their children. Though wanting observant children—"frume kinder"—they are oblivious to the fact that the Gaon is the greatest nurturing agent for the survival of Torah observance. Years of advanced study are understood only in the perspective of a possible career, the rabbinate as a livelihood. We must surely change our sights and begin to see that Torah study is a process of growth and development of the Jewish personality, regardless of what field of material endeavor the student may later enter. Through this failure of parents to see the picture clearly are lost to us the potential Torah giants of our time.

And with the loss of these Geonim we also lose Torah observance for our entire people. For our Mitzvos become devoid of their "soul" and their spiritual content when they are removed from their proper context, from Torah scholarship.

The decision is ours to make. We would do well to ponder whether we are responsibly fulfilling our obligations to the future of our children, or whether we are failing them. Do we really wish for them greatness, to which they are entitled, or are we satisfied with Lilliputian mediocrity for the sake of supposed material success. Let us have an answer in the light of truth!

ON THE STUDY OF TORAH

"Thus did Hashem say: If not for My covenant day and night, I would not have placed the laws of Heaven and Earth."
(Jeremiah 33:25)

Upon which the Chofetz Chayim commented:

In everything which man does there is a deed and purpose. The purpose is obviously of greater importance than the deed. For example: a person spends hundreds of dollars to purchase a stock of goods for his store. The profit he expects is his purpose and it is greater than his investment. Large sums are spent in the erection of a royal palace. That is the deed. The purpose is greater. In the palace the royal throne

and the royal crown stand. And the greater a deed is the greater its purpose will be.

How much infinitely truer then is this principle of G-d Himself. If we observe some deed of His, how precious it must be. And when He Himself declares the purpose of his own deed, how much still more precious his purpose must be!

Thus was it said by G-d: If not for My covenant — the Torah — I would not have made the laws of Heaven and Earth. Which means that Heaven and Earth are the deed and the Torah is the purpose. The Torah is then more precious than the value of Heaven and Earth.

The American

“SHTETEL”

Emerges

by Meir Belsky

A NEW LITERATURE is growing in this country, aimed at convincing the big cities that Yiddishkeit does not drown as it crosses the Hudson. Attention is called to the impressive number of Bnai Yeshiva in the mighty fortresses of Lakewood, Telz, Baltimore, Torah Vodaath, Chaim Berlin and Beth Jacob who hail from “provincial cities.” Significant statistics are becoming public indicating a resurgence of Torah living in these Jewishly unknown, and often unpronounceable, small cities. For those who have labored long and hard—and in isolated loneliness—to bring about this resurgence, this attention is long overdue, and they should be forgiven for yielding to the temptation of immodestly taking the big cities to task for neglecting them for so long. The tone of this literature, however, is often misleading, carrying with it a seeming plea by the small Shtetel to be admitted to equal partnership in the “big city” councils. There still exists the subtle concession by the Shtetel that the fountainhead of Yiddishkeit remains in New York, and the ultimate dream of every worthy Jew still remains to move there as soon as possible. Lacking in all this literature is the vital and healthy contempt for the big city that the Shtetel of the last generation—Mir, Kovno, Radom—had for the big cities of Berlin, Warsaw, and Cracow. In large measure, the emergence of the Shtetel as a dynamic force in Yiddishkeit will come only when it will reject this inferiority complex, and recognize that there is blessing in being spared contact with the big city. At that time—and the time is fast approaching—the Shtetel will accept its responsibility to reconstruct its Yiddishkeit around the fountainhead of Torah and Yeshivos, and cast off its illusion of dependency upon the big city.

THE GEMORRAH IN ERUVIN 21 B cites the Posuk in Shir HaShirim, “*L’cho Dodi Netze Hasodeh, Nolino Bakforim*” and explains: “Says Kneses Yisroel to Hakodosh Boruch Hu: “Do not judge me together with the big city dwellers where there is corruption and distortion. . . .” The last

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Mezuzah Memphis bought in the “big city” had a beautiful casing and inside was a piece of paper in a scroll-like setting with 2 matchsticks, and the English words “Hear Oh Israel G-d is One,” admittedly a noble sentiment but slightly misplaced. In Memphis, all Kosher food purveyors were closed on Shabbos, until an agency candy store from the “big city” opened and gave us Chilul Shabbos. We tremble everytime anyone goes to the “big city” for a simcha, wedding, bar mitzvah, and sweat out their return with high tales of how these religious affairs are “packaged” in from New York. Our Shtetel has been spared synagogues with elevators, religious functions with dances, mid-winter vacations, and the like. Isolation thus can truly be a blessing.

But there is a much more serious and compelling reason why the Shtetel must become independent—and even contemptuous—of the “big city.” How else are we to explain to our people, who travel to the big city on business or pleasure, that there is no Yeshiva they may visit, no fire they may draw warmth from—for the sorry fact is that there exists no Yeshiva building in New York that can meet the standards of even the poorest Yeshiva in the Shtetel. We fear the revulsion that will come from seeing how Torah is maintained in wealthy New York City. A Memphis couple who have just completed building a 7,000 square foot home, with a private Mikveh, visited a Yeshiva in — — —, nationally famous. Their only printable comment was: “Oh my G-d” and they haven’t recovered yet. Awaited is the gifted tongue that will explain to our Baale Battim that a Yeshiva where Torah is studied does not have to be as splendid as one’s private home, or that becoming sickened with worry is the price a parent must pay for sending his son or daughter to Yeshiva in N. Y. C. What else but contempt does the richest Jewish community in history deserve.

A Lack of Insight

NOR DOES THE BIG CITY really understand the nature of the Shtetel—not even those national organizations who always claim to worry about us. The profound decency, the reverence, the deep rooted
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From "WORLD REVOLUTION" to a SECULAR STATE

by Barnett Hirsch

THE MAN WITH WHOM I had been carrying on the conversation was beyond question sincere. Yet I detected a touch of impatient sharpness in the tone and turn he gave his words.

He now demanded an explanation from me for the "unforgivably shameless behavior of the hate-crazed zealots and bigots" in Jerusalem.

"I'm aware that you have a close knowledge of, if not an intimate relationship with these headstrong and irresponsible rioters," he pressed me. "On many occasions you've insisted that their founder preached love and peace and compassion and devotion to G-d. You indicated that Hassidim are schooled in the practice of humility and piety and the virtuous life. How then do you reconcile the image you have conveyed of them and their recent terroristic behavior?"

He soon admitted that he had gotten his information from the metropolitan dailies. He acknowledged that quite a few of the terms he had used in describing the alleged acts of the Hassidim could obviously have been inspired by the wretched journalistic device of misusing the "news" columns of a prostituted press as media for the dissemination of editorial opinion. He indicated a willingness to listen to as thorough an answer as I could muster to his topical question.

From Revolutionary Marxism to Secular Zionism

TO UNDERSTAND IN DEPTH the current ideological clash we need to go back in time. Not too far back. Perhaps less than a hundred years. In the half dozen or so lands of Central and Eastern Europe, and particularly in Russia and Poland, the vast majority of our forebears were pious, traditional Jews. The hegemony of Torah Judaism was substantially complete and all-pervasive.

Our troubles of that day hence stemmed not from within, where fidelity to our Faith verged on perfection. Rather, our tribulations were directly traceable to the corruptions and oppressions of the Russian autocracy. This turn of events produced a three-fold effect in our ranks. The Maskilim appeared and they preached

modernity. They wanted us at least outwardly to assimilate to the outer milieu—in dress, in language, in manners, in *anshauung*, in cultural interests—in the gamut of what made up the polished gentile. Then, they asserted, "they" will accept us and will stop butchering us.

We are probably oversimplifying the complexities of the Haskala. We are altogether omitting what is not here importantly germane to our discussion—except that out of the loins of the movement was synthesized the original, modern, pre-Herzlian, pre-political Zionist dynamism: The tradition-oriented Colonization Movement as typified by the Bilu and the Hovevei Zion Societies.

It is altogether probable that these initial, significant manifestations of Jewish Nationalism would have died a-borning had not a number of outstanding Rabbonim of the age *initially* given their dedicated support to the movement.

Concurrently with these Jewishly oriented gropings for solutions for our specific Jewish tzores there made its debut the revolutionary Marxist movement. Its opponents preached the forcible overthrow of the tyrannical dynasty, using ruthless terror as the effective weapon. They summoned the masses, gentile and Jew alike, to join and support them.

History records that a painfully large number of our restless young Jews of that day were lured away by these alien, seductive siren calls. They forsook *Toras Moshe* and embraced the Teachings of Marx. Together with their gentile colleagues they plotted and labored in the recesses of their underground cells to bring about the realization of the marxist, Second-International, dream.

World Socialism and Pogroms

AND THEN CAME the sobering and shattering awakening! It was dismaying in the extreme for our Jewish marxists to discover that their gentile confreres gloated over the news of the pogroms. What was an even more crushing disenchantment was to find that the upper echelons of the socialist-marxist underground approved surreptitiously of the pogroms and clandestinely sent agents provocateurs among the pogromschiks to keep their activities at fever pitch. The inexorable logic was evident. Anything which added to chaos

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and civic turmoil could bring closer the day of the movement's triumph.

Whether the Jewish leftists were expelled for their protest or left the ranks of the revolution of their own accord is a matter of indifference to us. In any event their departure was brought about either because they had found their position totally untenable or because they were accused of being revisionists of, and covert deviationists from Marxist holy writ. They were confronted with the most disgraceful charge of which a marxist could be held suspect—Sentimentality!

The homeless and restless ones now had a choice of two courses. They could have contritely returned to the ranks of Jewish orientation, and they would have been embraced with the love showered upon a returning renegade. This they were gracefully unwilling to do. Or they could have taken the last, ultimate, extreme step into the point of no return by a total and irrevocable renunciation of even their peripheral identity as Jews—including the sentimental.

Some of them chose the latter course. The Trozkys, the Kaganovitches, the Litvinovs tenaciously rededicated themselves to the Manifesto, and many of them were later liquidated for their fealty!

The remainder looked about for another solution to their dilemma. They evolved the Bund, in itself an anomaly and a contradiction. For while the Bund preached substantially the doctrine of idyllic brotherhood among all militant radicals it yet had to set up house for itself, apart from the general revolutionary marxist units.

The untenable inconsistency soon became evident to the more acute among them. Then, too, it was made obvious to the Bund that it would, as a Jewish Radical entity, not be permitted to participate in the establishment of the Socialist Citadel.

Towards a Socialist Utopia in the Land of Israel

THE TRANSITION FROM BUND to marxist zionism was a comparatively easy one. The detente-accommodation was based on a quite simple radical formula: If we are not to be allowed to help topple the Old Regime here in Europe, then let us now throw ourselves into this new, budding Political Zionist Movement and ensure the seeding and blossoming of our economic-political doctrines at least in Palestine.

With their world-known organizational, promotional and infiltrational skills the radical phalanx began their systematic takeover of the Zionist movement. Every device, stratagem, technique and sacrifice, not even short of amoral Machiavellian guile, was exploited in order to gain first a foothold in and then undisputed control of all media of Yishuv operation.

Witness the hachshara camps which they opened throughout Europe and the U.S.A. The youthful can-

didates for Holy Land resettlement were therein indoctrinated with a fierce partisan devotion, first and foremost. Not a fine-point detail was overlooked. Even when a camp needed a truck an International Harvester was bought. And then only a red one—so that they could refer to it as “our Red International”!

Witness how the Shabbos, the Yomim Tovim, the Yomim Noraim and Kashrus were scoffed at or distorted beyond recognition—but, oh, how they celebrated May Day with the red flags, and with the singing of the Internationale and other incendiary revolutionary songs!

Witness that the study of our sacred literature was banned. Instead the heads of the brain-washed and heart-starved youths were filled with the works of a Marx and Engel.

Witness this carefully! For almost the entire thirty-year duration of the British Mandate over our Holy Land this Party consistently advocated *limited, controlled* Jewish immigration into Palestine. The overriding categorical imperative was the creation in Palestine of a *Socialist, Planned Society*. This required guarded screening of the (political) qualifications of all potential immigrants lest the delicately budding Socialist Shangri-La be smothered and overwhelmed by an unscreened influx of the “wrong” kind of Jew.

There were protests against this policy—both from the camp of non-zionist Orthodoxy (Agudath Israel was *persistently refused* more than 6% of the available visas), as well as from within the Zionist camp (Zhabotinsky), but to no avail. The quota system was stubbornly and unyieldingly maintained to ensure the future domination of the emergent Yishuv by marxist socialism.

At this point the reader needs to recall that Britain at that time had devised that devilish formula which was calculated to frustrate the achievement of a Jewish National Home. It was immigration based on Economic Absorptive Capacity, with the built-in implication that when “saturation” would be reached, Jewish immigration was to be totally stopped. (The White Paper of 1948.)

When we remember this chain of events we can better understand the Party feather-bedding through the manner in which this Party administered the distribution of available visas. The overt hostility towards the religious applicants, the vulgar discrimination against *any* Jew but the de-Judaized, was in each instance a daily scandal and a continuous infamy.

After the Establishment of the State

THERE MAY BE SOME among us who even then sanguinely had hoped that when the Yishuv would invest the Socialist-Marxist coalition with the administrative powers of a newly achieved independent and free Government of Israel—that this group would then rise above its petty party politicking; that the sobering

and awesome responsibility of guiding the destinies of the Nation would mature it sufficiently to swerve it from the implacable vendetta it had launched against Judaism and its practitioners.

All too soon did we with dismay discover the flaw in that assumption! The notion that a *modus vivendi* could be arranged in this instance—that Peaceful Co-existence is for any length of time possible between two ideologies one of which refuses to moderate its intention of presiding at the funeral of the other—such a postulate is a hollow and lethal self delusion.

Apologists for the incumbent administration point to its early consent for the vesting in the Rabbinic Courts of the handling of marriages and divorces. Little mention, however, is made of the fact that this arrangement had been inherited from Britain who, in her turn, had accepted it from the vanquished Turks. Domestic relations of the tri-part citizenry had *always* been handled by the ecclesiastic functionaries of the denominations of the individuals involved.

The fact is that there exists a formidably strong phalanx within the present administration which advocates the summary abolition of the religious courts and the placing of marriages under civil jurisdiction. The cataclysmic and abysmal schism of such an act is too frightful to contemplate.

Would it not then be closer to truth to assert that the continuous flow of “anti-clerical” libel pouring uninterruptedly out of the marxists’ propaganda mills has been designed with consummate cunning to discredit the *Datiim*—the religiously oriented Jews the world-over; to create a Streicher-like caricature image of us as undesirable, unpatriotic, anti-social, retrogressive, maladjusted “odd-balls” (as my questioner had at one point summarized it)?

Can many of us, here in America, deny that after having been fed such canned, tendentious and slanted “news” releases for almost two generations they have been led to the impression that all virtues are on the side of the radical incumbent administration and all vices on the shoulders of the “obstructionist, pietistic theocrats?”

From the very inception of Medinat Israel they have resisted with pagan persistence every expression, manifestation and influence of G-d in Israeli life:

Witness that awesome Friday when the word by word composition of the Declaration of Independence was being sifted, and *they* resisted any mention of, or expression of gratitude to, Almighty G-d for that momentous and miraculous event!

Witness the syndicalist discrimination in employment in Party-operated factories practiced against Sabbath-observing Jews. The union which awards employment, is an agency of the Party. The Party is the Power House of the incumbent administration. Sort of “from Evers to Tinkers to Chance”!

Witness the cynical and scandalous treatment of re-

ligious children and adults in the transition and youth aliyah camps. The cutting off of children’s Peyoss for “sanitary” reasons; the teaching of party-composed brochos with G-d’s name eliminated!

Witness the recent encouragement of the importation into Israel of quasi-religious Jewish splinter sects—whose most distinguishing hall mark is check-book Chutzpa—and as alien to Israel as is monarchy to the U.S.A. Can the purpose be aught else than to create confusion and spiritual paresis among the Sabra unaffiliated—can the motive be other than to place impediments in the path of the otherwise totally perverse growth of Torah Judaism in its own native and natural habitat?

Witness the missionary issue! The most objective and impartial observer is struck with the incredible ease and the officially receptive atmosphere in which the Christian missionaries function. It is as if their coming had been deliberately invited and welcomed from certain quarters—as if their proliferation is receiving covert official approval!

The lame pretext that regulatory missionary legislation would adversely affect international relations is an hypocritical insult to our intelligence. The King of Islamic Saudi-Arabia still receives his *daily* 575,000 American dollars despite his adamant refusal to admit missionaries. Catholic Franco of Spain controls Protestant missions with an iron fist and a finemesh sieve, yet his foreign aid from the U.S.A. pours in unchecked!

* * *

Lamentably few people in America are aware of the fact that religious Jewish settlements in the Holy Land date back many hundreds of years, long before there was a Karl Marx or a Bund. Centuries before Marx appeared history records the existence of Torah-oriented communities in Safed, in Jerusalem, and elsewhere. Centuries before the first Bundist made his initial flirtatious foray into Jewish Nationalism, Yehuda Halevy died a martyr’s death at the gates of Holy Jerusalem. And it must have been soon after his immolation by the Saracen’s sword that others followed and found a foothold in what is today Mea Sheorim.

Today we mournfully are witnesses to the indescribable tragedy of the heirs of the founders of the Mea Sheorim enclave having their crania cracked by Jewish policemen sent in by the heirs of those first Bundist interlopers.

Some Suppressed Facts

We dare not permit them any further suppression of the facts. And the facts are:

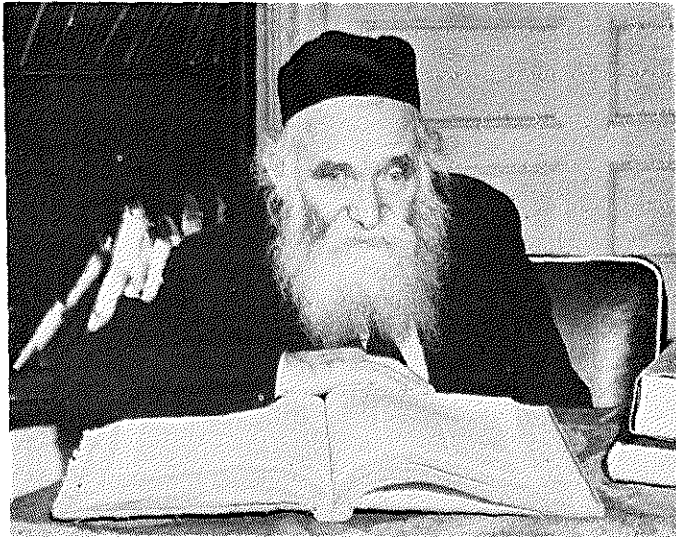
— — — The sanctity of the Sabbath in the religious enclave of Jerusalem was recognized and respected by the Islamic Saracens, by the brief Christian Kingdom of the Crusades, by the Turks who subse-

(page 27, please)

**SPARKS FROM
A SACRED FLAME**

*On the occasion of the first
Yahrzeit of the Gaon
of our generation*

(ב' כסלו)



Reb Aharon Kotler זצ"ל

IN CONVENTIONAL WRITING two assumptions are present: that the subject at hand lends itself to adequate literary expression, and that the writer has the necessary competence for the task. How foolishly presumptuous it would however be to pretend that the "life experience" and the "life achievement" of Reb Aharon Kotler ז'ת"ל are reducible to writing, or that one who did not "scale the mountain" with him—who was not endowed with at least a measure of his greatness—could do justice to the task of appraising him! These words are written then not because they can be adequate to their purpose, but because they must be written. For more than a year now he has not been with us. And even a "glimmer of understanding" is better than that his memory be allowed to pale. All his life he was the *Rebbe* of the whole house of Israel, and since no individual is left to replace him, we must at least seek to learn—to the best of our poor abilities—from his life and his deeds.

"Eight Torches of Flame"

"They said of Rabban Shime'on Ben Gamaliel . . . he used to grasp eight live torches — he would throw one into the air while catching another, but no one torch ever touched another." (Succah 53)

UPON WHICH a *Godol* once commented: The sages were desirous of more than to tell us of Raban Shime'on Ben Gamaliel's physical strength or manual dexterity. They wanted us to know that R. Shime'on was capable of simultaneously casting upwards into the "atmosphere" of his age any number of live spiritual torches—to illuminate the darkness of his time—without "one

touching the other"—without any of his efforts interfering with the other or being limited by it.

In our times only Reb Aharon ז'ת"ל exhibited such spiritual strength and "dexterity." He illuminated our Jewish heavens with innumerable "torches of flame"—without "one touching another"—without lesser effectiveness in any of his areas of concern because of his simultaneous involvement in them all.

Who can list all those "torches of flame?" He was *Gaon* among *Ge'onim*, *Rosh Yeshiva* among *Roshei Yeshiva*, *Tzaddik*, patron of Torah here and in Eretz Yisroel. He "stood in the breach" and "waged the battles of Hashem." He was the "man of truth" as well as a symbol of benevolence. He challenged and demanded and awakened. And in all things his energy was boundless and his diligence legendary.

"Rescue the Centers of Torah!"

IN NISSON תש"א (1941) while the entire Jewish world was aflame, in the midst of the terrible *midas hadin* (measure of Divine Justice) which visited G-d's people, Divine Providence granted us a thin thread of *chesed* (benevolent mercy). During that month Reb Aharon ז'ת"ל disembarked from a ship in San Francisco. Several days later he arrived by train in New York's Pennsylvania Station. He was awaited and greeted at the station by a large body of Rabbanim and Bnei Torah.

Allighting from the train he said to those assembled: "I would not have come for my own sake alone . . . I came here to help save — through you the Jews of America — the centuries old European centers of Torah . . . Torah has a future in America . . . I thank

you for the honor you accord to the Torah and I hope that you will not rest a single moment till everybody will be saved. . . . It has so happened that America is the only rescue-point from the vale of tears. Elsewhere the roads are sealed. See that the way to America — the one available rescue-tunnel — shall be opened wider — that America may grant entry to as many Jews as possible.”

Such was Reb Aharon. He may have been fatigued by months of wandering and weeks of travel. But his tasks could brook no delay. He has just emerged from the train, and is still homeless himself, but he must immediately call on American Jewry “not to rest — to save Jews from the vale of tears — to help him rebuild the age-old Torah centers, because “Torah has a future in America!”

But it was not enough to call on others. The very next day, he set himself to the task of practical realization of his aims. He knew no rest himself and gave others no rest till the *Vaad Hatzala* became a mighty rescue-apparatus not only for his “children,” the *b'nai hayeshiva*, but also for other Jews wherever they were scattered. Whoever remembers those years, will recall how feverishly he labored — how he bled and suffered — for the Jews across the ocean. How he denied himself sleep, till his ‘nights were as days’ — and how he would not let others sleep, but cried out, day and night, to all who would listen: “Rescue! Rescue!”

The result of those efforts was the arrival in America of many Jews, each of whom in his own way kindled new “torches of flame” to illuminate American Jewish heavens with the light of Torah.

New Torah Dimensions in America

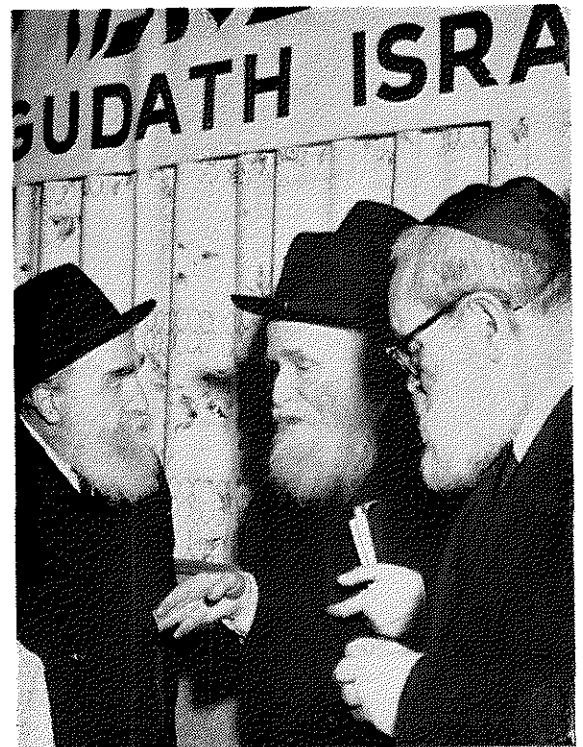
“THE DIMENSIONS OF TORAH were longer than the earth and broader than the oceans.” Torah was the very life of the people of Israel. It alone could solve our problems, remove our ills, heal our wounds. The slightest distortion of its character was fraught with catastrophic danger for our people. It would yield its true meaning only to those who gave themselves entirely to the pursuit of its wisdom. For its proper understanding razor-edge acuteness of mind was necessary, coupled with the “straining of every nerve” and utter selflessness. Only genuine *Gedolim Batorah* could safeguard the Torah against falsification and transmit it intact, without distortion, to the next generation. These were Reb Aharon’s sentiments, the breath of his life.

But could they “function” in a pragmatic, practical America? Could Volozhin, Slobodka, Mir and Kletzk be transplanted in America? Could such institutions find students, without offering them the prospect of training for professional careers? Would there be *baalebatim* to support them financially?

Reb Aharon founded the *Beth Medrash Govoha* in Lakewood, removed from the tumult and distraction of the big city. Miraculously, without American tech-

nique, without compromise, without promise of material reward, without adjustment to “the needs of America” — with nothing more than the fiery genius of his own Torah — he attracted American students in ever increasing numbers, till “Lakewood” generated a veritable transformation of the entire standard of Torah learning in America. Other Kollelim were founded. His own students — some of whom have already themselves become *Gedolim*, founded a whole group of “branches of Lakewood.” Hundreds of students began to stream to those ‘branches,’ in Philadelphia, Boston, Vineland and St. Louis. The attainment of semicha and entrance into the practicing Rabbinate ceased to be the sole aim and terminal point of “Yeshiva learning.”

The training of great *Talmidei Chachomim* was not however Reb Aharon’s only concern. And with the same burning intensity he applied to “polishing” a prospective *Godol Batorah* in “Lakewood,” he “moved heaven and earth” that a little Jewish child in Texas should have the possibility to learn *B’reishis Bara*. . . . Reb Aharon threw himself into Torah Umesorah — the national day school movement, and there again his pioneering spirit fired countless “torches of flame” in others. Directly and indirectly, his burning resolve fired others to establish new schools — to enlarge the old ones — to create an army of *תינוקות של בית רבן* (children beginning the study of Torah) as a reservoir from which future *Talmidei Chachomim* would come.



Reb Aharon Kotler z't'l (center) in a discussion with the Roshei Yeshivos y'b'l' Harav Moshe Feinstein (l.) and Harav Yakov Kamenetky (r.).

In Battle for Torah in Israel

He visited Eretz Yisroel after the war (י"ש) and returned with a call to American Jewry: "Build new *Talmud Torahs* for the *Zerem Revii* (the school system of Agudath Israel) . . . Thousands of children can be won for Torah . . ." He explained how "easy and simple" the matter was. "Altogether one needs no more than such and such a sum to erect a building. . . . With a building available, there would immediately be children. . . . Thirty new schools must be established in a year." Reb Aharon's word was a command. At an emergency gathering a resolution was adopted to implement his plan. But he had no patience for resolutions. The following morning he wanted to know what "had been done," and the morning after that he "harnessed" himself to the work.

In two years almost 40 new *Talmud Torahs* and *Beth Jacob* schools were erected. The number of children in the entire network grew from 5,000 to 20,000. Another "torch of flame" had been cast into the heavens of the holy land.

A religious crisis erupts in Israel. The Aliya from Yemen is being ruthlessly "secularized." . . . Its children are forcibly weaned away from the observance of Mitzvos. . . . The religious minority in the Yishuv needs help from *chutz la-aretz*. . . . Only "outside" protest will be heard by Mapai and Mapam. . . .

Reb Aharon again calls and awakens; he mobilizes and alarms till so mighty a protest comes from America that the "higher circles" in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv come to the conclusion that they have gone a bit too far, and the terror is at least partially stopped.

Two years later — the crisis over *sherut leumi* (military service for women) breaks. All the *Gedolai Hatorah* in Israel see in such service a terrifying threat to Jewish family morality. Again Reb Aharon stood at the head of battle till the *gezerah* was rescinded.

At the same time another development took place which menaced the future of Torah in Eretz Yisroel. Till then four school systems (the *zaramim*) were recognized by the government. The Knesset adopted a law to abolish independent *zaramim*. From then on, only two school systems would be maintained — one secularist and one religious — but both under direct government control. The Gedolim resolved to erect an Independent Torah School system (*Chinuch Atzmai*) free from secularist control and interference. How would the enormous financial needs of such a system be met? Wasn't the whole thing "a wild phantasy?"

Again it was Reb Aharon who stood at the helm. . . . Another "torch of flame." Who will ever know his heartache — the toll which his almost superhuman efforts exacted of him? In ten year's time the number of children grew from 20,000 to 40,000. There are now *yeshivos* and *Beth Jacob* schools from "Dan to Beersheba," and they overflow with *Talmidim* and *Talmidos* — thanks to his tireless efforts.

Safeguarding Torah Against Falsification

SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH all the *mesiras nefesh* of his struggle against the public adversaries of Torah, he was concerned with another danger — that of a spirit of compromise and vaccination within American Orthodoxy — which — led to public acknowledgment of the legitimacy of conservatism and reform. He saw the resultant blurring of distinction between Torah-true Judaism and the non-orthodox camp as a clear danger to the very existence of the former. He repeatedly warned against the "falsification of Torah" to which such "blurring of distinction" would lead.

"Can you imagine" — he would argue — "that physicians who heal an epidemic should belong to the same professional association with those who spread the bacteria which cause the epidemic? Is it possible to build Judaism — to raise a generation of observant Jews — while acknowledging *kofrim* (those who deny the principles of Torah) as "Rabbonim in Israel?" It was again Reb Aharon ז"ל who stood at the head of the *Roshei Yeshivos* who signed the historic ban on orthodox participation in the "mixed" New York Board of Rabbis, and the Synagogue Council of America. With his forceful, militant leadership in this struggle, he set the pace for a new awareness within Orthodoxy about the danger that beset it, and left an impact which will be felt for generations.

Building an Organized Orthodoxy

The largest part of his *k'lall* work, he did through Agudath Israel, which he saw as the great collective Torah fortress of our age, and as the one safeguard against the *collective* secularization of World Jewry. Again and again he would say: "When a Jew joins Agudath Israel, he declares thereby that the people of Israel is a holy people which must be governed by the principles of Torah. . . . Individuals alone can accomplish little. . . . Only an organized Orthodoxy under the leadership of the *Gedolai Hatorah* can save the cause of Torah."

He was Chairman of the *Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah*, but at the same time took an active interest in the day to day "prosaic" work of the movement which he also viewed as sacred. For more than a decade there was no detail, small or large, in the work of Agudath Israel, in America and Eretz Yisroel, in which Reb Aharon ז"ל did not lead and actively participate.

His Legacy: "Learn Torah!"

For all the efforts which the Gaon expended for the "survival of Torah" and against the "falsification of Torah," he was still more concerned that Torah not be *forgotten*. Whatever else he talked of he would never fail to inject: "*Jews, do not forget to learn Torah!*"

In those few words, all his life's work was contained. And they were his final *Tzavaa* (legacy) to us.

BOOK REVIEW

A Guide to the Siddur

THE WORLD OF PRAYER, by Rabbi Dr. Elie Munk, vol. II. Commentary and translation of the Sabbath and Festival prayers, translated by Gertrude Hirschler. 340 pp., New York 1963, at Philipp Feldheim.

“IT IS FROM OUR PRAYERS that we derive the finest support for mind and soul”; they inspire us to “profound faith and deep trust in G-d . . . and the labor of self-refinement.” With these words the author introduces this, the second volume of his commentary on our prayers. Deeply aware of the difficulties that stand in the way of meaningful prayer, he has undertaken to remove at least one of them: our lack of understanding of the Siddur. It is necessary to comprehend the world of thought and feeling hidden in prayer, and therefore this commentary “tries to reveal the fundamental concepts and emotional valuations which the wise authors adopted as the bases of our prayers” (*Introduction to volume I*).

After all, there is a profound reason why our sages ordained a fixed order and text of prayers, instead of leaving the formulation of his prayers to every individual. In order to attain closeness to G-d and to implore His merciful help, we must prepare ourselves by clarifying in our own mind, and heart, the real meaning of our life, our mission in this world, our true goals and our relationship to G-d. The words of the Siddur are meant to help us along this path, up the “ladder resting on earth and with its top reaching the heavens.”

Hence the enormous importance of Dr. Munk's book. Among the rapidly growing number of Torah classics available to the English-reading Jew, it deserves a foremost place. It truly opens to the reader the world of prayers, their logical structure and sequence, their central themes and underlying philosophy. Moreover, it is impossible to read in this work without encountering remarks that, like a flash, illuminate vistas of thought that one never dreamt of. Thus, on page 136, Dr. Munk quotes Rekanati's observation that “the second day of Yom Tov is a special gift of Providence to the Jew in Golus” who stands in such dire need of maximal spiritual protection.

A number of topics are discussed at such length as to form treatises of their own; thus the question of *Piyutim* (pp. 104-109), of *Mazkir Neshomos* (pp. 153-155) and of *Kol Nidre* (pp. 230-237). Each Yom Tov and its *Minhagim* are treated exhaustively, as a back-

drop to the prayers of the day. Readers will find here the explanation of *Minhagim* that they had always looked for—and other *Minhagim* which have been all but forgotten. To this reviewer it is of special interest and satisfaction that Dr. Munk draws attention to the recitation of *Selichoth* on Yom Kippur in daytime; unfortunately the *Machzorim* today on the market simply omit these *Selichoth*, skipping straight from “*Yaale Veyavo* to *Z'chor Rachamecha*.” Yet, just because of the splendid qualities of Dr. Munk's work, this reviewer regrets that opportunities were not seized which would have made it even more valuable to the wider public. In the first place, the Hebrew text should have been included; I realize that this would have made publication more expensive—but it would have made “*The World of Prayer*” infinitely more usable. Then, too, a word-by-word translation and explanation of *all* festival prayers should have been provided, in place of the more general discussion of many prayers offered.

In particular, I cannot agree with Dr. Munk that there are satisfactory translations and explanations of the *Piyutim* available (p. 109); what he has done so splendidly for the basic prayers still remains to be done for the *Piyutim*. Moreover, if the translations of the *Piyutim* had been included, they would have given further depth to Dr. Munk's analysis of the festival prayers; for instance, they would have illustrated more clearly the fundamental difference between the prayers of Rosh Hashonoh (where we are concerned with G-d's kingship on earth) and of Yom Kippur (where we are concerned with our own spiritual and personal needs).

If future editions of “*The World of Prayer*” to some degree followed the suggestions here offered, this work would become an ideal synagogue companion and also gain an additional measure of continuity and completeness. However, until such time as this will be realized, we should be deeply grateful to the author, publisher, and translator for what they have given us.

The wealth and variety of the material contained in this volume makes all the more remarkable the excellence of the translation and the faultless scholarship and lucidity of style of the author. One may take issue with his quoting of Ismar Elbogen as a source of information on the history of our prayers; one may question the author's translation of “*Birchath Hashir*” (p. 31) which is not at all supported by the sources which he quotes; but the very paucity of such questions that could be raised is a tribute to the brilliance of Dr. Munk's achievement. No Jewish bookshelf should lack a copy of this work.

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JEWISH "ECUMENICISM"

(continued from page 4)

on a larger scale than heretofore, and have also launched a huge drive to spread their ignominious ideas in the Holy Land.

Furthermore, the religious partnership of the Orthodox and reformist rabbis is opening the door to a complete breakdown of the authoritative status of the Orthodox rabbinate in Israel, which for the present fortunately enjoys exclusive jurisdiction. A story in the *Intermountain Jewish News* of Denver (November 29, 1963) brings this danger into sharp focus. This newspaper published the following report of an interview with Rabbi Manuel Laderman, whom it describes as "a national leader of the Mizrahi Religious Zionist movement," after his return from a visit to Israel:

"Rabbi Laderman urged that Reform and Conservative Judaism be given a chance to establish synagogues in the Holy Land. He argued that the Israeli Orthodox opposition to the Reform and Conservative movements creates a cleavage within American Jewry where Reform, Conservative and Orthodox rabbis and congregations cooperate in local and national rabbinical and synagogue councils and on a personal level of tolerance and working together." Does one need more conclusive proof as to the perilous path to which such a "personal level of tolerance and working together" leads?

As for the contention that the "mixed" bodies were limited to "external" activities on which there is common consent, rather than on "internal" matters, the facts tell an opposite story. Is the new Jewish Chapel under construction at Idlewild Airport, sponsored by the New York Board of Rabbis, an "external" or an internal matter? Despite the entreaties of the Torah authorities, this synagogue, with a schizophrenic personality, is now rising at the Airport, and will serve as a monument to the grotesque "three wings of Judaism" concept. It will be a spiritual travesty serving all "Jewish denominations" by alternating its rabbis on consecutive days of the week: Orthodox on Monday, Conservative on Tuesday, Reform on Wednesday, and so on. . . .

What of joint TV and radio programs, sponsored by the New York Board of Rabbis, in which the "three wings" are presumably given equal time? Do not the Orthodox co-sponsors of such programs contribute thereby to the dissemination of points of view which deny the basic and most sacred principles of Torah-true Judaism under a guise of legitimacy which orthodox participation helps create? Is this an "external" or an "internal" matter?

When the "three wings" of Judaism—under the aegis of the Synagogue Council of America—issue a joint "Back To The Synagogue" appeal, do they not thereby tacitly consent that the mass of Jews to whom their appeal is jointly addressed, are offered a legitimate

choice between the "three wings?" Is this an "external" or an "internal" matter?

A Fresh Challenge to Orthodoxy

THE NEW BOLDNESS of the reformist elements, capped by Eisendrath's declaration of reverence for the founder of Christianity, should serve to jar Orthodoxy to its senses, to impel it to discern the fruits of the "unholy alliance" between Orthodoxy and Reform. While Orthodoxy was and is always willing to work unitedly with all Jews in behalf of the physical well-being of Jews, it should by now be undeniably clear that there can be no unity regarding Judaism and the religious areas of life.

A fresh challenge has now been issued to the Orthodox rabbis and organizations still affiliated with the "mixed religious groups" to effect a *Kiddush Hashem* by publicly withdrawing their membership, and proclaiming that they recognize only *one* Judaism: the Torah-true Judaism of all the ages. It takes courage to admit the errors of one's past course, but courage is the ingredient that has kept Judaism alive against the severest odds. The alternative is the eventual watering down of the meaning of Judaism, aided and abetted by Orthodox Jews—a price which no thinking Jew should be ready to pay.

THE NATURE OF THE STRUGGLE

(continued from page 6)

together with us to the G-d of Israel and His Torah—with heart, soul and might. We will fight the battle of Torah in the land of the Fathers—in every village and city, on every hill and valley, on every street and in every home. There will be more Yeshivos and still more—until every inch of the soil of the land, and every inch of its heavens, will resound with the song of Torah—until the *Shechina's* Presence will again be revealed in the land on which the eyes of G-d **בביתנו** rest "from the beginning of the year to the end of the year."

The Necessary Balance

A sense of ultimate vindication ought not however be allowed to becloud our sense of immediate crisis. The abyss which separates the Torah-true camp and the secular one does not show immediate signs of being diminished, despite our rising strength. Quite the contrary. If anything, the immediate challenge to Torah-true Jewry is likely to become more and more pressing. On the other hand the new secularist "fear" of us speaks for us a greater "freedom of initiative" than was ours before. When one is "in a corner," his posture is likely to be one of frenzied defensiveness. But if the secularist camp now sees us as having acquired offensive strength, then we are challenged to devise a

(next page, please)

much broader tactical strategy than that which a defensive stance requires.

Clearly, the continued growth of a Torah-true Chinuch is our strongest single weapon. Clearly anything which threatens the continued growth of that Chinuch, must be seen as a threat to the very life of Torah-true Jewry, to which it must respond accordingly. *But our zeal in this matter must be matched by similar zeal in communicating our point-of-view to the secularist camp in an idiom which it can understand.*

In a recent article in *Hamodia* (the Agudath Israel daily in Jerusalem), written by *Achad Harabonim* ("one of the Rabbis" — the pseudonym for a prominent Rosh Yeshiva) the following is asserted:

"Two ways are open to us: a) total separation from the secularist camp — with a no-man's land separating both camps. The result could be a very simple one. Hatred towards us would increase still more. Our greater separation would lead to coercion. And we have seen of what coercion the secularists are capable of.

b) "The second way would be to guard to the utmost our independence of action — our educational system — for that is our very soul; to be stringent in the extreme in the observance of Mitzvos — for ourselves, but to seek and to find a single word, the narrowest of paths, through which we might uncover a spark of holiness even in "them." To find a word also for those who are not in our ranks, but in the depth of whose hearts something of Judaism's fire still flickers; for those who have lost their way on life's roads, who have been misled, or who have never known us, because they were raised on "secularist knees" — because they have never heard of the sanctity of Shabbos — because they have never seen a *Sepher Torah* or a *Mezuzah*.

"We are forbidden to think that the whole land is "Canaanite or Moabite," just as those newspapermen are stupid who speak of a "small handful of zealots who attempt to dominate the state and force their will on the majority." There is no doubt that the decisive majority of the inhabitants of the land abhor these libertinistic sects, but that majority has no real image of us.

". . . How shall these people know what Shabbos is if they have never seen it? How shall they know what holiness is, if they were not raised in holiness, and they were never for a moment attached to it? How shall they know what Torah is, if they not only haven't the faintest authentic notion of its character, but have been intentionally given a distorted notion of Torah?"

Will we find the strength for both unrelenting zeal in the battle for Torah, and unrelenting zeal in communicating its Divine truth to our alienated brothers, without prejudice to either effort? Can we strike the necessary balance?

THE AMERICAN "SHTETEL" EMERGES

(continued from page 11)

yearning, the readiness and eagerness to sacrifice, the soul searing sadness of being aware that they lack Jewish knowledge, are all characteristics of the Shtetel which are unknown—and perhaps unknowable—by the big city. The strength and majesty of Torah Umesorah comes from their tapping this healthy vitality of the Shtetel, but they succeeded only by letting the Shtetel do for itself those things that needed to be done. We recently held a Torah Institute, in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, for Jews from five Southern states. It ran from Thursday night through Sunday. There were no speeches, no greetings, no sermons, no presentations, no chairmen, and no program. Four Bnai Torah conducted constant classes in Taharas HaMishpocha, Shabbos, Kashrut, Tefilla, and Halacha. This was the first such conclave held under Torah auspices.

Almost 100 people attended and it was shattering in its impact. You literally saw the disintegration of everything *Olom Hazehdig* and the emergence of the pure Jewish soul in all its brilliance. But most amusing was the fact that we were bombarded "from New York" with advice about programming, the need for chairmen at each session, the importance of a sermon, the time tested truth that no meal was a meal without speeches, and all the trimmings so familiar to convention going Jews. "They" gave up when we persisted in being naive, but it was obvious that they did so in pity rather than conviction. In all candor, how can the big city understand us, being populated as it is by people who never lived in the Shtetel, or who were just biding time there before returning to New York.

I recall meeting the late Rabbi Kravetz in Winnipeg, Canada some 12 years ago. Though he died before his work was completed, he succeeded in building a Yeshiva there with 600 children and 2 branches, a Teacher's Seminary where he trained his own teachers, and was working toward a Yeshiva Gedolah and Bais Medrash, to make Winnipeg a self-sufficient and self-contained community. What struck one most forcefully, however, was his attitude that Winnipeg was his home, he had no desire nor yearning to go anywhere else. It was this attitude which sustained him. The Jew grew great in exile when the Prophet told him to unpack his bags, he was going to remain for the foreseeable future. It is only this sense of "temporary permanence"—when it becomes communicated to the leadership in the Shtetel—that will create for the Shtetel a place in the Jewish sun. Transients can not be creative. "*Lecho Dodi Netze HaSodeh, Nolinoh Bakeforim*"—it is our job to make the Shtetel worthy of this prophetic confidence.

AN APPRECIATED GIFT:
"THE JEWISH OBSERVER"

CALENDAR REFORM

(continued from page 8)

addition to the views which have already been expressed and which are summarized above, it is essential to take into account the repercussions which the proposed change could inevitably have on the way of life of the working population. In the present circumstances, it seems safe to say that the great body of public opinion is not prepared to abandon the traditional calendar."

The British Government wrote:

"Her Majesty's Government have from time to time stated their willingness to give serious consideration to the adoption of a world calendar provided there were a substantial demand, both nationally and internationally, for its adoption. So far, however, they have found no evidence of a substantial national demand and, while further assessment of this must await the replies of Member Governments to the present inquiry, there has seemed to them to be a similar lack of any general international demand. On the other hand there is clear evidence of strong opposition to the proposal, in particular from religious bodies. It has, for example, been made clear by Jewish organizations that a calendar of the kind proposed by the World Calendar Association would not be acceptable to orthodox Jewry because of its interference with the hebdomadal cycle. It has been argued that the adoption of a revised civil calendar would not prevent the adherence of religious bodies to religious calendars of their own, but in fact it is clear that a revised calendar of the kind proposed would cause serious difficulties to adherents of those religions whose observances are based on the hebdomadal cycle, since each seventh day, which their religion enjoins them to observe as a holy day, would fall on a different day of the week each year, and there would be two changes in a leap year."

Opposition to calendar reform with a blank day device was also expressed by the governments of Australia, Belgium, Burma, China, Denmark, Finland, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, and the Union of South Africa.

On the other hand, the Soviet Government wrote to the United Nations Secretariat as follows: "The Government of the USSR is in favor of the aforesaid reform proposed by the International World Calendar Association and considers it necessary to continue the work for the achievement of an international agreement on this question." The calendar reform was also supported by the governments of Laos, Monaco, Nepal and Thailand. Other governments wanted to have more time for study.

No body could say that there was a popular demand for calendar reform. The whole problem was artificially maneuvered into the spotlight of the United Nations and died quietly in 1956, when the answers of the governments to the questionnaire of the U.N. Secretariat were made public. Lack of public support for the proposal and confusion which would follow the adoption of a perpetual calendar with the "blank day" device were sufficient reasons for the United

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Nations to abandon the ill-advised reform.

Now, the Ecumenical Council seems to encourage further attempts to disrupt the time-honored biblical seven-day cycle of the calendar. But the final decision rests with the Pope. We hope that Pope Pius VI will not lend his support to such attempts. A calendar with the "blank day" device would only promote atheism in the world. To support such reform out of fear of an "atheist calendar," as Bishop Zauner motivated it, is not only basically wrong but also a grave historic mistake.

The "Shalom"

Act One: "This is a pure business matter, not a religious one. The Israeli government has therefore decided to overrule the recommendation of a government commission (of whose three members, two were non-religious), to the effect that the "Shalom" must have only a Kosher kitchen. The government (which holds an 80% interest in Zim Lines) holds that Zim Lines is to make its own decision. Zim Lines has decided for two kitchens — one *treifa*." — Official announcement.

Act Two: The Chief Rabbinate of Israel, the Agudas Harabonim, the Rabbinical Council of America, the Rabbinical Alliance of America, every European Rabbinate, have refused to give a hechsher to the "Shalom's" "kosher" kitchen.

Act Three: The Jerusalem Post announces that at an expense of \$30,000 per year, said hechsher will be provided by a so-called "Sanheder Harabonim, Incorporated."

Act Four: The press announces that an emergency meeting of the Zim Lines Board of Directors was convened in Tel Aviv, and it was decided to withdraw from the "Sanheder Harabonim" hechsher agreement.

Act Five: Where do we go from here?

Footnote: One doubts whether in the entire history of our people, there was ever an instance of more cynical contempt for the entire Rabbinate of the world, by a Jewish organization, in which a Jewish government holds a controlling interest. And *we're* guilty of religious coercion, not they!

Highlights of Dr. Eisendrath's Address at the Recent Reform Convention

1. On American Jewry

"Never in Jewish history was there such wholesale husband and wife swapping and promiscuity . . .

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SECOND LOOKS

at the Jewish scene

by Ben-Meir

" . . . not a few of my rabbinical colleagues . . . have confided that . . . some sons and daughters of their choicest members have capitulated to the gutter morals of the crowd . . .

" . . . unless we can arouse ourselves from our moral and mental torpor . . . we may expire by smothering from self-indulgence."

Which should make us all grieve. For no Jew can do otherwise on hearing of the depths to which children of our people have fallen. It should also have made the leadership of Reform feel at least a little guilty. Should not Dr. Eisendrath realize that the slavish imitation of gentile ways which he and his colleagues have fostered among hundreds of thousands of misguided Jews, is directly responsible for the present correspondence between the state of morality in the non-traditional Jewish community and that of its surroundings. Could he find even a semblance of the situation he so pathetically deplures, in the Torah world, both here and in Israel? But Dr. Eisendrath exhibits not a trace of a sense of guilt. The horrible failure of Reform in America doesn't even faze him. His "prophetic" anger over the "gutter morals" of some of the children of reform's "choicest families" is exceeded only by one other source of irritation.

2. Orthodoxy In Israel

Dr. Eisendrath also sharply attacked "the ruthless, savage power of a politically entrenched Orthodoxy in Israel." Whereupon one wonders: What is it that he wants so desperately to export to Israel? Since it cannot be the *Halacha*—Reform having espoused the primacy of the "prophetic faith" over "priestly legalism"—it must be the quality of "prophetic faith and social morality" which characterizes reform in America, that he wants to export to Israel. Since

by his own account however, his merchandise seems to be quite faulty, wouldn't it be advisable to "renovate the plant before looking for an Israeli account?"

In addition to which we might offer—though there isn't the slightest doubt that we aren't being asked—two bits of advice to the leadership of American reform. All this talk about the "savage, ruthless" power of Israeli Orthodoxy is misdirected. You know perfectly well that the relatively small number of religious Knesset deputies is unalterably opposed to acknowledging your legitimacy because their faith in the Divine origin of the Torah gives them no other choice. If you are denied legitimacy in Israel it is because the non-religious Knesset majority has seen fit to acquiesce with the orthodox minority in this matter. So that it isn't Israeli Orthodoxy, but rather Israeli non-orthodoxy, which is the "culprit" you're looking for. You might therefore start sniping at Mapai for instance, rather than at us. Find yourselves a different target! Why have you not had the "courage" to "bring reform" to Ein Charod rather than to Jerusalem. You might move your "archeological center and student chapel" from Jerusalem to a Mapam kibbutz for instance. After all, wouldn't you agree that Ya'ari's and Riftin's people "need" reform as much as Jerusalem? We'd love to hear about your reception in the leftist kibbutzim.

So much for Dr. Eisendrath's wrath. But unlike the state of morality in reform, and Israeli Orthodoxy's "ruthless, savage" power, recent events in the work of the Catholic Ecumenical Council inspire sentiments in him which are as deliriously benign as his other sentiments were explosively violent.

3. The Staggered Mind and The Enkindled Heart

Said Dr. Eisendrath:

"The mind is staggered and the heart is enkindled simply by the prospect of the possible implications of the Catholic Church's official disassociation from the age-old charge of deicide levelled against the Jewish people."

So much for so little? What a slave one must be to kiss a rod because *it's about* to fall a little more lightly than was the case earlier! After all the most that the Ecumenical Council is prepared to do is to lift the charge of deicide from falling upon us *exclusively*. We'll still be as guilty of deicide as the rest of humanity. What would Dr. Eisendrath say if Orthodoxy preached a doctrine one tenth as "obscurantist" as that for all of humanity?

Which leads to another not unrelated matter.

Pius X and Herzl —
January 25, 1904

On January 25th, 1904 Pope Pius X said the following to Theodore Herzl:

"We cannot help the Jews acquire the Holy Land . . . for, there are two possibilities, one—the Jews might persist in their faith and wait for the coming of the Messiah, who, in our view has already appeared, in which case, we clearly will be unable to side with them. Or—in the other instance—they will go there without religion, and then, we will be unable all the more to do anything in their behalf. However . . . if you will come to Palestine and settle your people there, then we will prepare churches and priests to baptise you all." (Panim El Panim, quoting from the Herzl Diaries, Vol. 3, page 556.)

P.S. The whole thing was a terrible disappointment. The Ecumenical Council finally tabled the resolution to remove the charge of deicide from us. It couldn't get past the opposition! Have our assimilated Jews learned anything?

A Week of Building

In one recent week (the first week of Kislev), the life pulse of Torah-true Jewry gave a wonderful demonstration of "the strength of its beat" in Eretz Israel.

1. Ashdod.

The revered *Gaon* of *Poniviez* has not rested on his laurels in B'nei Brak. The years of labor have not weakened his strength of resolve. Rabbi Yoseph Kahaneman sh'l'itah, has set himself the task of building eighteen yeshivos in Israel as respective memorials for the eighteen renowned Lithuanian Yeshivos which were so tragically destroyed during the war. First came B'nei Brak. Now the turn of Ashdod has come. Ashdod is a "new" city, and was "just born yesterday." But its swamps have not frightened the Poniviezher Rav. On Thursday, the fifth of Kislev, he laid the foundation stone for a "Yeshiva city" in Ashdod. On an area of hundreds of dunam a *Yeshiva Gedola* and a *Yeshiva Ketana* are to be built; a Kollel, a Synagogue, an orphanage, an elementary school, dormitories, residence apartments; and several industrial and trade concerns.

2. Kiryat Bobov.

On Tuesday of that week, Bat Yam celebrated the laying of the foundation stone of Kiryat Bobov. The Rabbi of Bobov came from America to attend the celebration, and was received with acclaim by masses of Chassidim as well as religious Jewry in general. Here

again there was another dramatic demonstration of the role which chassidic Jewry is presently playing in the physical as well as spiritual rebuilding of the land. The great and sainted father of the present Bobover Rav, died *al kiddush Hashem*, ת"ת. Thousands of his Chassidim were cruelly murdered in the ineffable tragedy of European Jewry's destruction. And it seemed as if Bobov could never rise again. But Divine providence willed otherwise. A son of the Bobover Rav was miraculously saved. And he rebuilt Bobov first in America and now in the land of the fathers. What is particularly noteworthy is that the Rabbi of Bobov decided to "plant" the new Bobov not in one of the "religious" areas of Eretz Yisroel, but rather in Bat Yam, which is in the "new" Yishuv. And thus another link was added in the growing chain of Chassidic *Kiryot* which have begun to dot the landscape of the "new" Israel in recent years.

3. Chinuch Atzmai and Beth Jacob.

On Monday, the second of Kislev, the *yahrzeit* of the Gaon, Reb Aharon Kotler זצ"ל, was observed and commemorated by the laying of foundation stones or by *chanukas habayis* celebrations for Chinuch Atzmai schools in Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Bne-B'rak, Be'er-Sheva, Rechovoth, Nethanya and Rosh Haayin. In Jerusalem, there also took place the ground-breaking exercises for the central building of the Beth Jacob Teachers Seminary. Could there be a more fitting fulfillment of Reb Aharon's sacred legacy than through the building of houses of Torah? Likewise is it a wonderful mark of the vitality of Torah-true *chinuch* in Eretz Yisroel, that it is in the midst of such dramatic expansion.

4. Heichal Pressburg.

On the same day, religious Jewry in Israel rejoiced in another celebration. In West Jerusalem, Heichal Pressburg was completed, on the fourth *yahrzeit* of the Rav of Pressburg, Reb Akiva Sofer זצ"ל. More than 120 years ago, the great and sainted founder of the Sofer family, the Chasam Sofer זצ"ל, prayed that "the tree might not be cut down, and that the well-spring might not dry up." To an extraordinary degree his prayer was granted. After him, there "reigned" in succession, his son the K'sav Sofer זצ"ל, and then the latter's son, the Shevet Sofer זצ"ל, and finally Reb Akiva Sofer זצ"ל. Each was one of the most illustrious Rabbinic figures of his time. But when the terrible destruction of the last war visited Pressburg, it seemed finally that Divine

acquiescence with the Chasam Sofer's prayer was no longer possible. But again Divine Providence willed otherwise. The Chasam Sofer's great grandson, Reb Akiva Sofer found refuge in Eretz Yisroel together with his son Reb Shmuel Binyamin. The latter survived his father by only two years. But Pressburg has been rebuilt, and its noble tradition is again cultivated by many hundreds of devotees under the leadership of the young Reb Simcha Bunim sh'l'itah (a son of Reb Shmuel). The Chasam Sofer's prayer is still granted. The tree has not been cut down, and the wellspring has not dried up.

* * *

All the above took place in one week. Lest we become disheartened by the agony of the conflict in which Torah-true Jewry in Israel has been engaged for all it holds holy, let us remember the enormous strength to build it exhibited the first week of Kislev of תשכ"ד. And let us know it for ourselves and tell it to others. Torah-true Jewry knows how to build the edifice of Torah no less than it knows how to wage the battle of Torah.

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From the AGUDAH MOVEMENT

Agudath Israel Convention Calls for United Orthodox Action

Greenfield Park, N. Y.—All Orthodox organizations were called upon to lay aside their ideological differences in order to cope unitedly with the problem of anti-religious tensions in Eretz Israel, in a resolution adopted at the closing session of the 41st National Convention of Agudath Israel of America. "Only emergency measures by a united Orthodox can prevent these tensions from exploding into a major catastrophe for all of Israel," the resolution declared. Telegrams were sent from the convention to all Orthodox groups requesting an emergency meeting to come to grips with this problem, and especially with the issues of the missionary activities and the flagrant Shabbos desecrations.

The three day conclave from October 31 through November 3, which was attended by 1,000 delegates and guests from the United States and Canada, also adopted a series of resolutions for the expansion of the organization's activities for maximum Torah education and for constructive religious projects in Israel. The gathering resolved to increase Agudath Israel's efforts for public support of federal aid to Yeshiva day schools, and called upon other Orthodox groups to "place the interests of Torah-education above questionable doctrinaire attitudes on Church-State relationships, and to join in this struggle to rectify the injustice from which Jewish day schools now suffer."

A Colorful and Enthusiastic Gathering

The convention, the largest in the history of the American Agudah organization, was a colorful gathering of Orthodox Jews from every walk of life: Torah authorities, professionals, businessmen, educators and students. A significant note was the large attendance of young adults, who had grown up within the American Agudah movement. It was marked with a spirit of enthusiasm and keen interest in all the proceedings, and the business sessions were scenes of lively debates on the organization's policies and program. The Shabbos program was infused with

an inspiring spirit of Kedusha, and was highlighted by the addresses of the distinguished Roshei Yeshivos and Rabbonim.

Gedolei Torah Set the Tone

The tone of the convention was set by the prominent Gedolei Torah who addressed the convention, whose soul-searching and stirring words, combining Torah and Mussar applied to current events, deeply moved everyone present. Amongst the Roshei Yeshivos who spoke: Rabbi Joseph Farber of Yeshiva Haichal Hatalmud (Tel Aviv), Rabbi Moshe Feinstein of Mesifita Tifereth Jerusalem, Rabbi Abraham Joffen of Yeshiva Beth Joseph, Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky of Mesifita Torah Vodaath, Rabbi C. M. Katz of the Telshe Yeshiva (Cleveland), Rabbi Shneur Kotler of Beth Medrash Gevoha (Lakewood), and Rabbi Jacob I. Ruderman of the Ner Israel Yeshiva (Baltimore). Rabbi Eliezer Silver of Cincinnati and Rabbi Dovid Lifschitz, presidium-members of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis, also addressed the gathering.

The Chassidic leaders who addressed the confab included Rabbi Mordechai S. Friedman (Boyaner Rebbe), Rabbi Abraham Heschel (Kopitchnitzer Rebbe), Rabbi Nochem M. Perlow (Noveminsker Rebbe), Rabbi Israel Spira (Bluzover Rebbe), Rabbi Moshe Horowitz (Bostoner

Rebbe), Rabbi Moshe Lipschitz (Philadelphia Rebbe), and Rabbi Levi I. Horowitz of Boston.

The roster of speakers also included Rabbi Yehudah Altusky, Rabbi Mendel Chodorow, Rabbi Zvi Eisenstadt, Rabbi Joseph Elias, Rabbi Yeruchem Gorelick, Rabbi Yechezkel Grubner (Detroit), Rabbi B. W. Hendles, Rabbi Lazar Kahanow, Rabbi S. Koenigsberg (Winthrop), Rabbi Lazar Levin (Detroit), Rabbi Shlomo Margolis (Boston), Rabbi Simon Morduchowitz, Rabbi Chaim Nussbaum (Toronto), Rabbi Mendel Shuck, and Rabbi Isaac Small (Chicago). Rabbi Yechezkel Besser was general chairman of the convention, and the sessions' chairmen included Rabbi Anshel Fink, William K. Friedman, Julius Klugman, Pesach D. Schonfeld and David H. Turkel.

World Problems Discussed

Knesset-member Rabbi Menachem Porush, who represented the Israeli Agudath Israel movement at the convention, called the recent Jerusalem incidents "a symbol of a deeper rift between the religious and non-religious elements in Israel, which can only be healed by educating the masses on the broader issue of the aggravated question of "Who is a Jew."

A special executive session was devoted to the problem of Jews behind the Iron Curtain, at which the main speaker was Dr. Isaac Lewin, United Nations representative of Agudath Israel. The session deplored the "highly publicized aggressive tactics that various Jewish organizations have adopted in recent months regarding the situation of Jews in Soviet Russia," and called upon the Agudath Israel World Organization to continue working in this area in the "traditional discreet manner that such a delicate situation demands."

The annual report of activities was



At the opening session: L. to R. — Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, Rosh Yeshiva of Mesifita Tifereth Jerusalem; the Bluzover Rebbe; the Boyaner Rebbe; Rabbi Abraham Joffen, Rosh Yeshiva of Beth Joseph (speaking); Rabbi Mendel Chodorow; Rabbi Eliezer Silver of Cincinnati; the Noveminsker Rebbe.

rendered by Rabbi Morris Sherer, executive vice-president of the organization, who told of the organization's growth since the last convention, and pinpointed the broad scope of projects conducted by the Agudah on the American and Israeli scenes.

A telegram was sent from the convention to Mayor Robert F. Wagner of New York, protesting the "monopoly granted to the non-orthodox-dominated New York Board of Rabbis in the area of city chaplaincies, which discriminates against the overwhelming majority of Orthodox rabbis in New York City."



At the Saturday nite session: Left — Rabbi Jacob I. Ruderman, Rosh Yeshiva of Ner Israel (Baltimore); Right — Rabbi Menachem Porush, Member of Knesset.

New Administration Elected

A six-man presidium was elected, consisting of Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, Rabbi Mordecai S. Friedman, Rabbi Moshe Horowitz, Rabbi Zvi Eisenstadt, Rabbi Lazar Levin of Detroit, and Rabbi Benjamin W. Hendles. Michael G. Tress was reelected administrative president and Rabbi Morris Sherer, executive vice-president of the movement. Joseph Friedenson was reelected general secretary, as was a finance committee consisting of Anshel Fink, William K. Friedman and David H. Turkel. Rabbi Yechezkel Besser was elected chairman of the Vaad Hapoel and the associate chairmen are Rabbi S. Morduchowitz and Rabbi Yehudah Oelbaum. A Vaad Hanhala and Vaad Hapoel were also elected.

The convention closed on a hopeful note and with a surge of enthusiasm for expanded activity for genuine Orthodoxy on all fronts the world-over.

Inner Executive Elected

After the Convention, the first meeting of the Vaad Hanhala elected the following seven-man Inner Executive to deal with the day-to-day work of the move-

ment: Rabbi Moshe Horowitz (Bostoner Rebbe), chairman; Dr. E. L. Bodenheimer, Rabbi L. Cywiak, Rabbi S. Elberg, Wolf Friedman, Julius Klugman, and David Turkel.

Zeirei Agudath Israel Elects a New Administration

The national convention of Zeirei Agudath Israel of America, which took place simultaneously with the convention of Agudath Israel, elected the following new administration. Presidium: Rabbi C. B. Gluck, Avie Gold, Meir Zlotowitz; Chairman of Executive Board: Rabbi Meir Fogel; Vice-President: Yitzchok Fink; Vice-Presidents in charge of Pirchei Affairs: Pinchus Belsky, Moshe Rosenberg and Eli Teitelbaum; Treasurer: Rabbi Benjamin Silver, and Secretary—Emanuel Straus.

The spokesmen of Zeirei Agudath Israel who extended greetings at the main public sessions of the convention were Rabbi L. Herzberg, Rabbi Shmuel Bloom of Baltimore, Shaye Schonbrun and Moshe Rosenberg.

N'shei Agudath Israel Convention

The women's Agudist organization, N'shei Agudath Israel, held its convention in separate sessions at the same time as the Agudah convention, chaired by Mrs. Esther Knoble and Mrs. Bella Young. Mrs. Josephine Reichel, national president, rendered her annual report and told of the N'shei plans to enlarge their network of 45 homes in Eretz Israel.

The women's gathering was addressed by Knesset-member Rabbi Menachem Porush, Rabbi Chaim U. Lipschitz, and Mrs. A. Rafalowitz. Amongst the projects adopted for the new year was the construction of a Vocational Training School for Girls in Israel.

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Letters to the Editor

Who Fed the American Press?

Dear Editor:

I was deeply impressed with the article in your second issue "The Cry that was Stifled" concerning the false reporting in the newspapers of the peaceful demonstrations by the Yeshiva students in Israel in front of the missionary institutions. However, it seems to me that your writer could have more pointedly expressed the fact that the American daily papers received their reports from the Israel Government Information Office in Jerusalem.

This means that the very government that is always so fearful of sensitive Gentile reaction to the banning of missionary activity, is chiefly responsible for blowing up the peaceful gathering into sensational headlines in the non-Jewish press. The Israeli government, for its own interests and to prevent any further such untruthful reporting, should launch an investigation to determine who in their Information Office, provided the journalists with reports that led to such a harmful headline as appeared in the New York Herald Tribune "Jews vs. Christians." You have performed an important service by exposing the truth.

ARTHUR GROSSMAN

Chicago, Ill.

Dr. Goldmann and Federal Aid

Dear Editor:

Your series of articles about the importance of Federal Aid for the secular studies of the Yeshivos were most informative, and were very helpful to me in discussions on this subject that we have had in our group. I believe that you will be interested to know that your views are supported by Dr. Nachum Goldmann, president of the World Jewish Congress, who came out in favor of federal aid for parochial schools in an address to the Jewish Writers Associ-

ation, in the course of which he criticized the American Jewish Congress for putting up such a strong fight against this logical demand. It would be interesting if you could obtain Dr. Goldmann's speech and publish it.

JOSEPH ROTHMAN

Brooklyn 11, N. Y.

Suggests Training Yeshiva Students for Leadership

Dear Editor:

While I agree with the basic premise of Rabbi Bulman in his article "An Alternate Course for American Orthodoxy," I feel that he is entirely too optimistic about the caliber of leadership developed from our "great Yeshivos." Undoubtedly, the Yeshivos are producing a constantly increasing number of graduates who are completely loyal to Torah and have Torah-true "Hashkofos." However, if we are to have the dynamic leadership that this article calls for, then these Yeshiva graduates must in actuality become "Torah leaders" and not confine themselves—as so many do—to their immediate family and favorite institution.

I would suggest that the Yeshivos make it a requisite for their graduates, before—or immediately after—they obtain their actual "S'micha," to spend one year working for the K'lal, so that they can see for themselves the great potential for doing good which is open to young men of their scholarship and spiritual warmth. I am confident that once these young men obtain a taste of how much they can really accomplish, they will then strive towards active leadership on the general scene of American Jewish life. In this fashion, the Yeshiva graduates can truly provide "an alternate course for American Orthodoxy."

JACOB ISAAC STERN

Bronx, N. Y.

Doesn't Always Agree . . .

Dear Editor:

Please enter my charter subscription, for which I am enclosing \$3.00. I found your issue most interesting and informative—even though I could not always agree with the views presented.

JERRY KAMINETZKY

Washington 12, D.C.

Questions Settling "Out-of-Town"

Dear Editor:

Your issue truly showed a Torah outlook. However, one article puzzled

me: the one challenging more New Yorkers to go to the "out-of-town" communities. Isn't the attitude of most Talmidei Chachomim and Roshei Yeshivos that "איני דר אלא במקום תורה," Why should these young Yeshiva graduates settle "out of town," where they put themselves in a spiritual danger, since Kiyum Hamitzvos is not as strong outside of New York?

R. BERG

Brooklyn 25, N. Y.

The "LETTERS TO THE EDITOR" section is open to our readers, whose comments are most welcome.

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FROM "WORLD REVOLUTION" TO A SECULAR STATE

(continued from page 14)

quently conquered the Holy Land, and by the British under the Mandate.

The inherent and historic prerogative of the community to a total and extraverted expression of its spirituality was challenged by no other, earlier alien government. It took the current socialist administrators of Medinas Israel to do so!

— — — The traffic which disturbs the serenity and the idyllic calm of the Sabbath is mainly by buses carrying Christian pilgrims to their shrines in Jordan-held portions of the Holy Land. On several occasions representations have been made to the Jordan Government to permit this traffic to come into its area on Friday. Every time this request has been summarily and angrily denied. Friday is the Mohammedan Sabbath. The Jordanian Government respects and upholds the faith of its Arab nationals.

* * *

There are many conclusions to be drawn. Yet one conclusion towers in significance above all others. It is that the present-day administrators of the Government of our Holy Land have for more than half a century been waging a relentless and ever more intense campaign designed to malign and discredit and libel and defame the Torah Way of Life.

Only total and genuine enlightenment of the American public can alter the image for the better which these people have molded of us. The widest possible publicity, broadcast through every available channel of information, divulging the historic background data which had led up to this shattering schism, may, and assuredly with G-d's help will, frustrate these wicked designs and topple their perpetrators from power.

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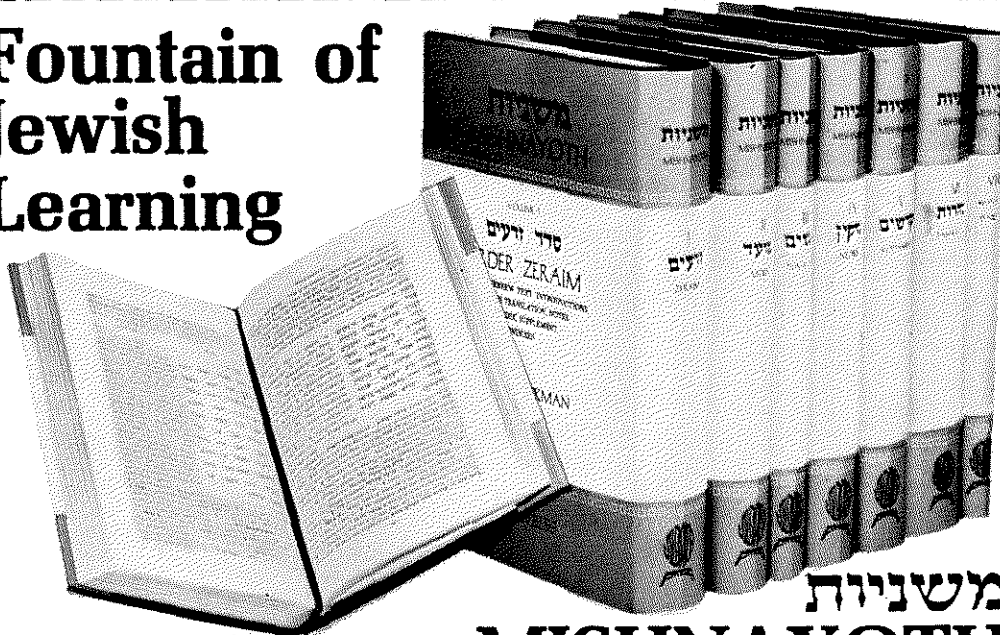
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