

THE JEWISH OBSERVER

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**Must
We
Still
Mourn?**

the decline of the generations

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Chinuch Atzmai Comes of Age

THE JEWISH OBSERVER

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the decline of the generations

THE FOLLOWING IS AN ATTEMPT to state the classic Torah concept of *מיצוט הדורות*, the Decline of the Generations, together with its implications for our time. Citations from classic sources are from a paper by that name by Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe, *Menahel Ruchani* of Yeshiva Be'er Yaakov in Israel, which appeared in the Yeshiva's publication *הבאר*. A number of passages have been freely translated from the original Hebrew. However the writer must assume responsibility for the ideas expressed. □

*Man has, after all, survived up to now . . .
He was good enough to do so for many
thousands of years . . . What has made him
in 1952 less fitted to survive? . . .*

Joseph Wood Krutch

*Know then thyself,
presume not G-d to scan;
The proper study of Mankind is Man.*

Alexander Pope

Quoted in: *THE MYSTERY OF MATTER*
Oxford/New York, 1965

AT NO TIME IN MAN'S HISTORY has the rate of scientific discovery been so rapidly accelerated as in our own age. In every area of inquiry, yesterday's frontiers are quickly passed and each day the horizons loom ever larger. Medicine has overcome many fatal diseases and man's life expectancy has grown. The schoolboy of today knows more about the universe than the intellectual giants of the past could even dream of knowing.

The Jewish Observer / June, 1966

Yet, in the realm of Torah learning, in the area of the spirit and the soul, the Jew faces the paradox that each succeeding generation witnesses a pitiful decline. The Sages formulated this concept of *Mi-ut Hadoros*, the decline of the generations, in the oft-quoted:

If the early ones [the patriarchs and prophets] could be likened to angels, then we can be likened to mere mortals; if the early ones could be likened to men, then we can be likened to donkeys.

To compound the paradox, Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud, whose revolutionary teachings have shaped the thinking and the condition of modern man more so than any of their contemporaries, were both Jews—alienated from their faith and their heritage, but Jews nonetheless. In the area of literature, which has replaced philosophy in our time, the single greatest influence on most all modern writing was the tragic figure Franz Kafka, a Jew who was searching for his lost Jewishness, but was cut off from life before he could find it.

Had these men channeled their genius into study of Torah, we can only speculate as to what they might have achieved. But it is not speculation to believe that they could not have had the same quantitative impact in the area of Torah learning, as they did in their respective fields. From time to time men have arisen—a Vilna Gaon, a Chofetz Chaim, a Reb Aharon Kotler, whose stature is reminiscent of earlier periods of greatness in Torah, yet they did not manage to arrest the decline of their own generation or succeeding generations. The formulation of *Chazal* "If they were as angels . . ." continues to operate as we move further away in time from Sinai.

What is it that makes this decline such a relentless principle in the unfolding of Jewish history and Jewish destiny? What is the factor that appears to dull the Jewish intellect in search of Torah truths and Torah understanding?

The Sages tell us in *Sanhedrin* (106):

Rebbi says, "Doag and Achitofel posed 400 questions (on a halachic matter) and were unable to resolve even one," to which Rovo replied, "Is there then greatness implicit in posing questions?" In the times of Reb Yehudah learning was limited to the study of *Nezikin*, while today we study all six orders . . . yet Reb Yehudah had only to remove his shoes [preparing to pray for rain] and the rains fell. Yet we cry out, and it appears there is no one to answer; but [what is the difference] the Lord desires *liboh* (heart), as it is written: "And the Lord looks upon the heart."

It appears from Rovo's words that the intellect was not a factor in achieving closeness to G-d, which is the ultimate goal of Torah, for Reb Yehudah's generation was suffering a decline which limited their learning

potential—a potential which was achieved in Rovo's time whose generation had upgraded the level of Torah scholarship. Yet, Reb Yehudah had the capacity to place his petition before the Almighty, without even the need to verbalize it—so great was his measure of *heart*; so close was he to G-d.

The factor then which accounts for the decline of our generations is *heart*, but what is *heart*?

To understand heart we must contrast it with the intellect. The intellect gains understanding by observing cause and effect, by measuring quantity and volume. I know for example, that water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen, because when I mix the two in the proper proportion water is produced. *Heart*, on the other hand, gives me a more intimate grasp of things as implied in the *posuk* "And my *heart* has seen much wisdom."

For example: When I speak *about* someone I describe his appearance, delineate his character, recount aspects of his life, and attempt to evaluate him. In doing this I make use of the intellect. However, when I speak *with* someone, in the course of our conversation I form certain impressions of him; I become aware of his intelligence; I confront his personality. These impressions generate a certain feeling toward him, be it hostile or loving, and this is a function of *heart*. I am no longer speaking of this man as an abstraction; I have confronted him and he has come under the scrutiny of *heart*.

Necessary, But Not Sufficient

What is it that the Almighty wants of us, when he asks for *heart*? The intellect is a necessary instrument for comprehension—it is *necessary*, but not *sufficient*. When comprehension remains in the intellect, it is still-born. This comprehension is real in a sense, but unless it progresses to the stage of *heart*, it will be prone to cut us off from, rather than bring us close to the object of our comprehension.

This is so on the lowest levels; it is all the more so on the highest level: the comprehension of G-d. The Torah commands: YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR G-D WITH ALL YOUR HEART—that your *heart* shall not be apart from G-d. Rashi explores this concept further in commenting on the *posuk*.

And G-d said to Moshe, "SPEAK IN THIS MANNER TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE: 'YOU HAVE SEEN THAT I HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU FROM ON HIGH.'" *There is a difference between what a man sees by himself and what others tell him; in what others tell him there is always an element of disbelief.*

It becomes clear from Rashi's observation, that only by 'seeing' can we achieve 'total belief,' and this precisely is our duty when the Torah insists: *And you shall*

love G-d with all your heart. In this matter of *heart*, it is no difference if one gains this comprehension through prophetic insight, as did the Jewish people at Sinai, or through the emotional experience of immersion in G-d's word and the sense of awe and wonderment achieved by such confrontation and communion with the Divine.

In the very same manner, the Torah expects us to know our fellow man. One can accurately describe the condition of one who suffers poverty; one can eloquently expound on the causes and remedies of his poverty—but having done this, one has not yet fully grasped the anguish of the poor man. It is for this reason that Mussar teachers underlined the need for such intensive identification with one who needs his help, that even before he makes any physical gesture, he is already *נושא בעול עם חברו*. *in the yoke with his brother.*

Criterion For Leadership

It is this capacity to carry his brother's burden that the Torah declares is the first criterion for leadership. "AND IN THE COURSE OF TIME MOSHE GREW, WENT OUT AMONG HIS BROTHERS, AND HE 'SAW' THEIR ANGUISH." Again Rashi clearly defines the nature of "seeing": *He focused his eyes and his HEART (on his brothers) so that he might actually feel THEIR pain.* Moshe was not the objective observer, surveying the needs of his people and seeking the means of meeting their needs. This was of course a necessary prelude to helping them—*necessary*, but not *sufficient*. Unless Moshe could actually sense the pain of his brothers, he was not a fit candidate for leadership. And this same demand is made of every Jew, who must develop his character, his *heart* to such a degree of awareness that someone else's need becomes his own.

In the realm of the intellect, one can achieve scholarship without emotional involvement with one's subject. An economist need have no special feelings toward the groups or people he deals with; the Sovietologist need have no affinity with the Russian people. Yet, one cannot study Torah with the intellect alone. The Sifri tells us:

Man must direct his eyes, his heart and his ears to the words of Torah. And so is it said, "*O son of man, see with your eyes, and direct your heart. . .*" We have here a *kal v'chomer*: In conceptualizing the Mishkan, which is visible to the eye and can be measured with a gauge, man must direct his eyes, his heart and his ears in order to understand; *so much more is this the case regarding Torah concepts which are like mountains suspended by a hair.*

In studying Torah, one may have before him a perfectly clear image of the reality which the halochah relates to, yet the ultimate comprehension awaits the

“As our technology makes it possible for Man to perform undreamed of feats of intellectual prowess, he may be on the verge of losing his ability to think and to act for himself. In a word: Man is rapidly reaching the point where his technology will no longer be his slave but his master.”

vision of *heart*—only then does the halochoh come forth from the words in their ultimate clarity.

There is yet another dimension—only one whose *heart* is attuned to G-d, who stands in confrontation with Him, will achieve full comprehension of G-d's word. This was Rovo's meaning when he asked rhetorically, “Is there greatness in posing questions?”; that is to say, that the failure of Doag and Ahitofel to find the answers to their questions was not a tribute to their intellectual prowess—but it was rather a failure to go beyond the intellect which stymied them. Halochoh, the Holy of Holies, emerges not from the pure intellect alone, but from the vision of *heart*. Rovo, of whom it is stated that his position prevails in halachic dispute with few exceptions, recognized within himself a slackening of the powers of reason stemming from a more basic weakness—of *heart*.

TO THE JEW WHO FINDS TORAH to be the only constant in a world which is in a constant state of flux, the decline in Torah wisdom presents a unique problem. But the Jew as a human being, looking at civilization as it unfolds before him, becomes aware that all of Mankind suffers from the downward trend of Man's spirit, Man's *heart*. The remarkable advances made in our time by the physical sciences as well as the social sciences have been achieved by the sharpening and the use of man's intellectual capacity. But in the process, the intellect has been severed from *heart* to the extent that most every major advance in the sciences brings with the benefits that accrue to mankind, greater threats to man's survival. While this factor may be more clearly evident in the area of physics, it is no less present in the biological disciplines where increased knowledge of disease and the nature of life, which offer a rich potential for prolonging life, suggest ever more ghastly methods of biological warfare. The growing body of knowledge of the human psyche and personality brings with it greater opportunities for controlling men's minds to the extent that Man may be on the verge of depriving

himself of the very freedom which we are told is the basic factor in insuring his survival.

In our preoccupation with the intellect and the vast powers which the intellect dangles before our noses, we have lost *heart*; we have lost the capacity to confront the Master of the Universe, the Master Intellect. At times a glimmer of *heart* appears, but only after the fact. The development of atomic and nuclear power was a result of “pure science” with little thought given to its implications for Man's survival, and with few dissenting voices in the scientific community. After Hiroshima and Nagasaki there was a ripple of concern among the scientists; a feeling of remorse at having made available to Man intellectual achievements which his *heart* was not prepared to cope with. An attempt was made to superimpose *heart* retroactively, but it was too late. *Heart* must function simultaneously with the intellect; we may have passed the stage where *heart* can undo the mischief of the intellect. Only a vast re-awakening of *heart*, a massive confrontation with G-d can save man from self-destruction. More and more it appears that only Divine intervention in the affairs of Man can restore balance to mankind.

What does all this mean to the Jew who continues to place his faith in G-d and continues to seek the resolution of Man's dilemma in Torah and Mitzvos? If we are so far removed from Sinai, if the relentless decline of Torah understanding continues to bear in on us, how can our spirit survive?

The answer is simple: the channels which connect us with our G-d are still open; there is still salvation in Torah and Mitzvos. And in the darkest hours, in the time when *heart* seems to have left us, a Baal Shem Tov, a Reb Yisroel Salanter, a Chofetz Chaim appears, who dips deeply into the resources of Torah and gives us a new glimpse into Jewish spirit and Jewish strength. And when we are not so blessed, the collective heart of Israel, desperately clinging to Torah and Mitzvos, straining every muscle of our being to live with G-d, sustains us through the darkness of *hester ponim*, when G-d appears to have been eclipsed—and we find Him again.

Why indeed is man who survived up to now seemingly no longer fitted to survive? A glimpse of the answer lies in the words of Pope:

*Know then thyself, presume not G-d to scan;
The proper study of Mankind is Man.*

The solution to man's problems is not “out there,” not in the external world. It lies in the “proper study of Mankind,” in the study of Man, in the search for *heart*. This is the proper study of Mankind; it is the unique preoccupation and responsibility of the Jew. The Jew clinging to Torah and Mitzvos, is the key to Jewish perpetuity; it is at the very same time the key to the survival of Mankind.

YAAKOV JACOBS

By Nosson Scherman

AMERICAN VISITORS TO the little bank in Ashdod usually arrive with dollars in hand, bent on bartering them for *lirot*. This one, however, came to make a deposit in the local Chinuch Atzmai account. The bank's manager, who doubled as its only teller, was curious. Upon inquiry, he learned that the "tourist" had come to inspect the local Chinuch Atzmai school and bring funds for its day camp program in his capacity as executive director of American Friends of Torah Schools in Israel.

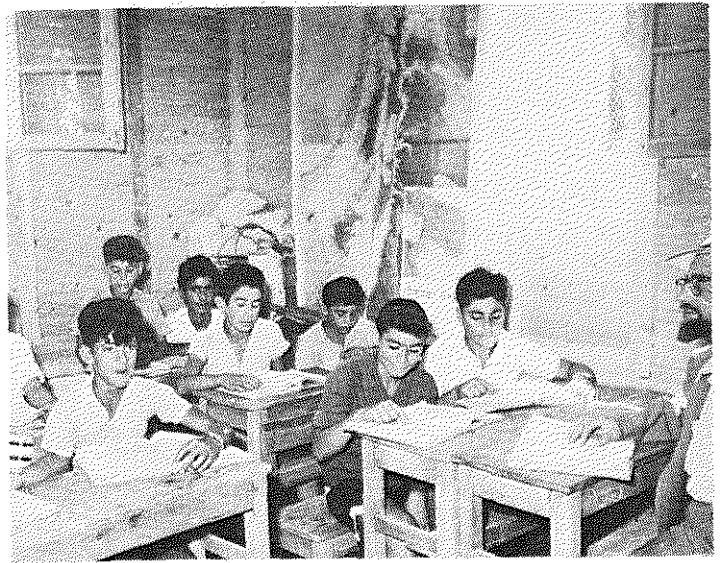
The manager, a very modern Sabra, had a surprise of his own—his son was a Chinuch Atzmai student. "They are so far ahead of the other school systems in town," he explained, "it would be a crime for me to send him anywhere else. The teachers are marvelous. They do things in the first grade that others don't do until the third. If only they had a decent building!"

This incident points up the progress Chinuch Atzmai has made in its fourteen-year history both in the quality of its performance and, with much greater difficulty, in its acceptance by the people. Since its inception, the road has been rocky. The obstacles ahead are at least as formidable as the early ones, but they are of a different sort.

Chinuch Atzmai was, from the start, a school system of consequence. In its fledgling year of September, 1953, it already boasted 104 schools and 20,719 students. The bulk of these schools and students came from the *Zerem Rev'i*, the independent school system of Agudath Israel which became the nucleus for Chinuch Atzmai. But in spite of this strong beginning, the new system was on trial to prove itself. Derided by its enemies and disdained by its friends, Chinuch Atzmai was regarded almost universally as an insufficient answer to an insuperable problem. Indeed, the need which called it to life was so overwhelming that there were few among those who grasped it who were not resigned to losing the struggle by default.

The establishment of the State of Israel opened the floodgates to waves of immigration unequalled in history. The country was called upon to provide homes, jobs, education, clothing, training, security—all the needs of a modern society for hundreds of thousands of newcomers who were virtually without means. The results are history and there is no point in embellishing the vast material achievements of the last eighteen years. However, the international Jewish power structure and fund-raising apparatus is in the hands of people antagonistic, or at best apathetic, to the needs of the religious Yishuv.

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Chinuch Atzmai

With tens of thousands of youngsters entering the country in need of a Yeshiva elementary education, Orthodoxy could only wring its hands at the prospect of its youth being educated and weaned from its religion. The massive infusions of foreign capital for school construction were used to best advantage by the secularists to whom Torah was but an "opium" of the people standing in the way of the upbuilding of the Land. Obviously, Torah could not survive, much less blossom in Israel if it could offer only the few institutions already in existence at the time of the State's establishment.

True, the State recognized that it could not assimilate the large religious population if it denied them suitable education for their children. To cater to their needs, a State Religious School System was set up parallel to the secular school system. It is indicative of the religious outlook of the population that the State religious system enrolls slightly over 30% of the elementary school population in spite of the many pressures exerted and inducements offered to influence parents to register their children in the secular State Schools. However, the Gedolei Torah saw in this system an attempt to give balking parents just enough to satisfy their religious craving but not enough to provide the needed Torah *Chinuch*.

The curriculum of these schools was watered down to the point where it was preponderantly secular in emphasis. In the words of the Israel Information Services, "the main difference between the curriculum of the State Schools and that of the Religious State Schools is that the former calls for four lesson-periods of Bible



Comes of Age

per week, the latter for five; and the former has only one weekly lesson-period of Mishna or Talmud while the latter has seven." Admittedly, one cannot measure a religious education in terms of the quantity of "lesson-periods." One must give emphasis to the sentiments of Joseph S. Bentwich of the Ministry of Education: ". . . Teachers and children are expected to keep all the outward observances . . . (the "general objectives" are) to implant in the children a belief in G-d as creator and lawgiver. . . . To educate them to carry out the Mitzvos."

However, with all respect for these intentions, a four-and-a-half-hour school day encompassing all the general and religious studies can hardly be considered adequate by Torah standards. Just as serious a flaw: It does not equip its graduates to go on to Yeshivos Gedolos. As a result, these Yeshivos would have withered for lack of new students and the resultant shortage of Roshei Yeshivos, Rabbonim and scholars would have given the anti-Torah wielders of power the Israel they wanted. As a matter of fact, the early years of the State, despite the great increase in population, were a period of decline for the Yeshivos.

The fate of Torah in the land of Torah hung in the balance and only new and imaginative thinking could open the doors to the future. In prolonged consultations among the Gedolim of Israel and America, the key to the solution was devised by the Chazon Ish ז"ל. Individual Yeshivos could hold their own but they could not wield the power needed to cope with a problem manifest over the length and breadth of the land.

There had to be a network of schools across the country under centralized control for both academic and financial reasons. Though the main concern would be to attain the highest possible level of Torah study, the general studies program would have to be comprehensive enough to attract the support of parents as well as the approval of the Ministry of Education. For without government acceptance, a new school system of such scope would be hounded out of existence. With it, it could exist, flourish and even hope for government subsidies. The answer was Chinuch Atzmai, Independent Education, and it went into operation in September, 1953.

The moral force of the Gedolei Torah around the world provided the base of support among religious Jewry which has been a prime source of indispensable financial aid. Agudath Israel, especially in Israel, offered the services of its personnel and unselfish fundraisers of reputation and stature who travel the world in its behalf. The government bowed to pressure and granted Chinuch Atzmai schools recognition and subsidies.

THE EARLY YEARS WERE TRYING in every way as Chinuch Atzmai went on its history-making way. It was an enterprise unparalleled in our history and the course was entirely uncharted. Organization, textbooks, classrooms, staff, registration, budget, finances and all the other elements of a school system had to be worked out day by day and, too often, haphazardly. The typical Orthodox way of demeaning the quality of its own endeavors, the abundance of carping and lack of confidence made the ordeal much more difficult for the selfless individuals charged with transforming Chinuch Atzmai from a noble experiment to an established success.

Reb Aharon Kotler ז"ל, whose dynamism moved the entire project from the conference rooms to the classrooms, became the backbone and the soul of the movement. He was everywhere, trumpeting the call to arms in behalf of Chinuch Atzmai. It was his conviction that the future of Torah in Israel depended entirely on the success of the fledgling system's struggle for life and he communicated this belief with all his awe-inspiring, infectious zeal. It is no exaggeration to say that without him, there would be no Chinuch Atzmai today. Few, save this great visionary, dared prophecy that Chinuch Atzmai would more than double in its first decade and it was only his immense prestige and personal example of constant dedication to it that stilled the scoffers and spurred the sluggish to the efforts needed to make it so.

THE EDUCATION LAW IN ISRAEL provides that the Ministry of Education pays for teachers salaries while the municipalities are charged with building the schools

and maintaining them. At present, the Government subsidizes Chinuch Atzmai by paying 85% of teachers salaries for the *legal school day*, providing the schools are recognized as meeting national standards. These two qualifications are much more far reaching than they may seem at first glance.

The legal school day extends from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. This early dismissal causes a host of problems in a country with high percentages of working mothers, ill-housed families and culturally deprived immigrant children. No one is pleased with the abbreviated school day and the Ministry of Education is groping for means to lengthen it. For Chinuch Atzmai schools especially, a four-and-a-half-hour day is unthinkable for it is totally inadequate for the double program which must qualify its students to enter Yeshivos upon graduation.

Therefore, a *Sho'os Nosafos* (additional hours) program has been instituted wherever possible to provide extra instruction in *Limudei Kodesh*. The cost of this program, however, exceeding as it does the legal school day, is not covered by the government. In addition, a voluntary program has been instituted to further increase instruction in Gemora whereby Chinuch Atzmai teachers contribute one hour a week of free teaching. The response has been overwhelming to the point where the secular schools have made a similar appeal to their staff with dismal results.

A further complication is that school attendance is compulsory only from the age of 6-14. Younger and older students at Chinuch Atzmai schools are not covered by government grants. Moreover, the governmental subsidies are for salaries only. They do not cover the physical plant, equipment and other expenses of a school. And they begin only after district representatives certify the school as maintaining the required academic and physical standards. In a country notorious for the large number of people in power who are openly antagonistic to Torah, this requirement presents untold opportunities to religion-baiters and untold anguish to those engaged in the fierce struggle for Torah. Chinuch Atzmai can rarely lavish the funds on school construction needed to provide truly adequate facilities. Often, a new school will open in a few rented rooms, cramped and unesthetic. An irreligious inspector looking for excuses to delay certification does not need a microscope to find them. Often, Chinuch Atzmai has had to operate schools completely at its own expense for months and even as much as two years before approval was won. This problem has intensified in the last few years as schools have been established in increasing numbers for the urban centers of the established Yishuv. In the new immigrant towns of the frontier, the Negev and the Galil, high-handed administrators are virtually a law unto themselves as we have seen to our chagrin in the infamous case of Mayor Alon of Nazareth Alit.



The last school year saw twenty-four such schools completely dependent on Chinuch Atzmai's budget and the new schools opened this year add to the total. All this means, in essence, that the subsidy is more like 60% than 85%.

Chinuch Atzmai is now fourteen years old. Its competence is no longer questioned and it must no longer prove it is worthy of the task it has undertaken. Its educational standards have risen and are comparable to the best of its competitors.

Its status established, Chinuch Atzmai's horizons have broadened. In the early years, the system was primarily urban in nature with its heaviest concentration in the larger cities and towns. Circumstances made this imperative. It was there that the heaviest concentration of Orthodoxy was located presenting the greatest need. In addition, problems of logistics, canvassing and transportation made moving to outlying settlements extremely difficult. However, the continuing influx of immigrants and the trend to settle them in outlying areas made imperative the decision that Chinuch Atzmai must move out to fill the vacuum in Torah training. The expense and the obstacles surpassed any previously encountered but the task proceeded.

Areas once thought impregnable to the "ghetto Jews" were opened up in Chinuch Atzmai's expansion drive. An example of the immense possibilities was the amazing success of the Torah School in Rosh Ha'ayin, a fourteen-year old Yemenite town near the Jordanian border. Chinuch Atzmai moved in from the start despite the myth that Orthodox Jews are "well known" to avoid such trying conditions. And trying they were—a school is spread out over several far from luxurious locations. The heavy winter rains flooded half the classrooms and collapsed the ceiling

in another. But as soon as the elements abated, the business of learning went on as usual with, no doubt, an occasional wary glance at the ceiling. This sort of effort moves the word "dedication" from cliché to reality, and has made Chinuch Atzmai the largest school in Rosh Ha'ayin with 1,700 students!

Two years ago a registration drive in Chatzor, high up in the northern Galil, was stalled by hostile local authorities. In 1964 a new attempt was a smashing success, and a Chinuch Atzmai school was opened with nearly 200 students in the primary grades. If any area was off-limits to organized Orthodoxy, it was Dimona, a sun-baked platter of a town deep in the Negev desert between Beer Sheva and S'dom, but Dimona is another recent addition to the Torah School network.

It is this combination of proven performance and crusading zeal which has enabled the network to grow from its original 104 schools to its present 243 and from its original 20,719 elementary students to its present enrollment of 45,300 with over 1,700 teachers. It also includes two teachers seminaries for men to complement the women's seminaries of the Bais Yaakov movement.

However, this very success has brought new needs and new problems. Since schools are usually begun with only a few primary grades and gradually work up to the full eight grades, Chinuch Atzmai's class statistics are something like a pyramid with very large numbers of first graders and relatively few graduates. However, the graduating classes are growing every year and already exceeded 1,000 with the total expected to go up each year. But . . . where are they to go when their elementary education is completed at age fourteen?

THERE IS ALREADY OVERCROWDING in the Yeshivos despite the tremendous growth of new institutions in recent years. Experience in Israel has shown that youngsters of fourteen set loose, free from Torah training and influence in a secular society, often fall prey to the very forces Chinuch Atzmai was set up to thwart. This tragic situation was foreseen by Reb Aharon and he urged the establishment of Mesivtos, especially in the newer immigrant communities which are the target of the current expansion drive. A Mesivta was established in Rosh Ha'ayin at his behest.

Such an effort is a severe strain on the organization's budget, for a regional Mesivta requires dormitory and dining room facilities and its expenses are completely unsubsidized by the government. However, the necessity could not be ignored and, at a meeting in Jerusalem last year, Israel's leading rabbinic figures decided to

CHINUCH ATZMAI'S GROWTH

<u>School-Year</u>	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>
Sept. 1953	104	20,719
Sept. 1954	118	22,839
Sept. 1955	128	23,132
Sept. 1956	141	23,898
Sept. 1957	166	28,003
Sept. 1958	171	31,688
Sept. 1959	178	33,840
Sept. 1960	188	35,716
Sept. 1961	202	37,800
Sept. 1962	218	40,282
Sept. 1963	231	42,856
Sept. 1964	235	43,500
Sept. 1965	243	45,300

develop a network of Mesivtas within Chinuch Atzmai. The first three are already in operation, inaugurating an exciting new era in the struggle to bring Torah to every youngster in Israel.

Reb Aharon's thirteen-year old conviction that Chinuch Atzmai would be the savior of Torah has been abundantly borne out. The Yeshivos of Israel are filled with the system's graduates; new ones are springing up throughout the country to accommodate new generations of scholars, and traditional Jewry has burst forth with a vigor that has brought its secular opponents to the barricades to defend themselves against "religious coercion." The expenditures required for salaries, construction and development are already enormous and steadily increasing. The brunt of the responsibility has fallen upon American and world Jewry. The legendary dedication of Reb Aharon to the cause which became so identified with him and his indefatigable fund-raising forays in its behalf have inspired his successors to undertake the burden of assuring its continued growth. This task is becoming steadily more difficult but there is no rest in sight. Forty-five thousand students and two hundred forty-three schools are impressive figures but Chinuch Atzmai is haunted and driven by the challenge hurled by Reb Aharon in the closing months of his life:

"True, there is financial deficit, but there is also a deficit far greater than this. There is a deficit of 50,000 students who could be added to our rolls if we had the schools for them."

U.S. Orthodoxy unites To halt missionaries

—Headline, November 1963

... Three Years Later

ALMOST THREE YEARS AGO, "a historic meeting, motivated by deep concern with missionary activities . . . in the State of Israel, brought together every group of Orthodox rabbis and laymen on Wednesday, November 6, 1963," according to the *Young Israel Viewpoint* of that time, which headlined the story: U. S. ORTHODOXY UNITES TO HALT MISSIONARIES. As a result of this meeting, a strong statement was addressed to the government of Israel, demanding action on this problem. What has happened since? Two frightening facts emerge from a survey of the situation:

- *The Israel government not only has not taken any action to curb this plague, but in effect gives invaluable aid to the missionaries!*
- *The missionaries have become vastly more successful as the result of increasingly sophisticated and varied methods.*

It is our sacred duty to face these facts and to decide whether American Jewry can sit by passively in the face of this tragedy.

The Role of the Israel Government

According to Israel law, every child must attend either a "government school" or a "recognized school." Mission schools are neither; according to a report by the Ministry of Religions (Special Duties Branch), "this type of school has no legal standing and they are also not recognized for the purposes of the Compulsory Education Law. Despite this, the Ministry of Education does not take any action against parents sending their children to these schools, out of a desire to avoid a conflict with the missionary institutions."

But this is not all. On January 30, 1965 the Nazareth Baptist School wrote to the U. S. Board of Foreign Missions in Richmond, Va.: ". . . we may take IL 7,000 for this year ending March 31, 1965, if we accept the [government] grant. The per capita grant is IL 20. We have always been rejecting government grants but I

think we have to change our mind now. . . ." Such government grants have so far been offered to fifteen mission schools many of which have Jewish students.

Mission schools have even obtained official government forms to be used for the enrollment of pupils. Rabbi Sorotzkin, the venerable Torah sage, bitterly remarked that the only difference between Chinuch Atzmai . . . and mission schools seems to be that the latter get up to IL 30 per child and the former IL 100.

Another facet of the problem: On July 13, 1965 the Municipality of Beer Sheva confirmed to Peylim that a plot of land was being turned over to the Church on a 99-year basis, for the erection of a church center in the city. . . . "The matter was clarified with the Ministry of Religions, and the conclusion was that, for the sake of the welfare of our brethren in Catholic countries and the protection of synagogues there, we must grant the Bishop's request."

The mayor promised all possible efforts to prevent the new project from becoming a missionary center. However, the Bishop himself, in a letter to a German backer, wrote as early as 1965: "The plan that we want to carry out cannot be based upon the small number of Catholics in the entire South, of which Beer Sheva is the center. One must not be narrow. . . . It is necessary to have a foothold in such a center."

On January 13, 1964 *Davar* reported that "the government has authorized Premier Eshkol to approve the establishment of *Nes Amim*, a Protestant village, against whose establishment vigorous protests had been lodged in the *Knesset*. The Protestant organization obligated itself again to abstain from missionary activity." A letter written exactly eight months later (on August 13) by one of the leaders of the village to a Swiss backer states:

"There is no room for traditional 'mission' but only for 'dialogue.' The aim of such dialogue . . . means that the Church must remain true to its message. . . . 'Nes Amim' must prepare the way

for the gospel. This is exactly our intention. This we also declared to the government, and the Minister of Religions told me in a long conversation that Christians can never stop proselytizing. . . We are convinced that the work of 'Nes Amim' will, in first line, help the position of the Hebrew Christians in Israel. . . . My visit has shown that the ability of this community to radiate influence is excellent."

Permission was given by the government for the establishment of various Christian hostleries; one, for instance, was established by Germans in Zichron Yaakov with the help of the Youth Aliyah, and now serves as a center of missionary activity for the entire Shomron. Another one is planned for the Carmel.

The deferential treatment given by the government to missionaries deserves a special study. There are over 1,200 missionaries in Israel, many more than the Christian population warrants; yet visas and extensions of stay are given without the slightest delay. Missionaries are, of course, admitted to the *Ulpanim*, the Hebrew language training centers for new immigrants, where they make valuable contacts. Freedom from conscription is not only given to all clergymen but also, for instance, to any young person merely submitting a written note from the "Witnesses" that he is a member of their sect.

There is grave suspicion in Israel that a number of missing children were abducted by missionaries into Jordan. This could never be proven; but an American Baptist, Rev. Robert Lindsay was caught smuggling a Jordanian Arab child into Israel, against the will of his parents. This was certainly a grave violation of Israel's security laws—but some months later he was appointed one of the judges in the International *T'nach* Contest.

A special role is played by the missionary hospitals in Israel, where sick and dying patients are persuaded to sign papers requesting Christian burial and to accept baptism. Yet, the government closed the only public hospital in Nazareth, leaving only three mission hospitals. Moreover, the government employs Christian nurses in its hospitals, including some about whom evidence was brought that they were trained missionaries and specialized in "working with" the sick. A letter from one of these nurses was intercepted, in which she requested "suitable" children's books from abroad.

Some diplomatic missions in Israel, notably the French and Spanish, cooperate closely with their missionary groups, referring to them even their own Jewish nationals if they have a problem. The government is aware of this, but has refused to act.

To see the government's attitude in the right perspective, it is important to emphasize that many countries, without interfering with religious freedom, have passed laws restricting missionary efforts. Article 51 of the

Swiss Federal Constitution actually reads: "The Order of Jesuits and its affiliated societies may not be received in any part of Switzerland, and their members may not be active in churches or schools. This prohibition can be extended by Federal Law to any other clerical order whose activities . . . disturb the peace between the different religions."

The New Missionary Approach

The *London Jewish Chronicle* of May 20, 1966, reports on an interview with Dr. Shaul Colbi, director of the Christian communities department of the Israeli Ministry of Religions: "Asked about missionary work in Israel, Dr. Colbi said that he had seen representatives of many of these institutions. Most agreed that the obsolete methods ought not to be used in a modern State and that any approach should be made on the lines of a dialogue."

The meaning of such "dialogue" emerges quite clearly from the letter quoted earlier—they "must prepare the way for the Gospel," but in a more sophisticated and therefore much more dangerous manner than the old approach. A letter written by the Vatican in connection with the establishment of the new Secretariate for Non-Christians makes this quite clear.

This letter stresses that, unlike the Office for the Propagation of the Faith, the new Secretariate is established for purposes of "closer contact and cooperation" with members of other faiths, not for their outright conversion. However, the letter calls for "an enquiry into the most fitting and attractive manner of presenting our faith and all its dogmas and rules, and the presentation, for this purpose, of (its) trends of thought in newspapers, literature, debates, etc."

The new "soft-sell" is clearly described in a letter to Father Oesterreicher, a prominent *meshumod* working in this country, written by one of the leaders of a new monastery in Nazareth which considers itself a mission to the Jews and "seeks discussion with all the religious and intellectual leaders of the Jewish community who make themselves available. . . . We make as many contacts with the Israelis as we can. Our liturgy and mass are in Hebrew which is also gradually becoming the language of the monastery." Since "we are working for the same cause," the writer requests shipments of Jewish books for their library.

This new monastery, called Mishkan-El, presents itself as "a bridge . . . to demonstrate that our Christian life transcends all races." A hostel is connected with the monastery, "to show hospitality to all those who would like to share our way of life for a few days." A number of secular youth groups were reached by these means and other projects.

A joint Jewish-Christian weekend in Ein-Kerem was conducted by the head of Mishkan-El and Professor Garon of Hadassah Hospital, and a week at the Red

Sea was conducted by him in cooperation with Rabbi Cohen, a Reconstructionist, of the Hillel House in Jerusalem.

A more sophisticated approach can also be found in the work of the "Witnesses" who have so far concentrated on Tel Aviv but are now acquiring a center for IL 500,000 in Haifa also. They propagate "Bible Classes"—but they also train their workers in how to make contacts, to influence people, etc. A psychologist is employed by them specifically for this purpose.

Of course, these approaches go hand in hand with the more old-fashioned exploitation of human misery. Here is an extract from the April 1965 report of a Protestant group:

"In Kfar Yeruchem we found a kind of Refugee Camp . . . the people there live in a very poor condition. There are very large families, many children in each family. . . . I hope that this will be one of our stations for the spreading of the Gospel in that region. On our first visit we had with us for these people only a few boxes of canned milk. . . ."

The Israeli government speaks of about 250 Christian converts since 1948; the records of the missionaries and surveys conducted by Peylim indicate that the rate of conversions has been running lately at about 200 per year! The discrepancy is due in part to the fact that converts submerge in the Christian hostels and villages like *Nes Amim*, and are helped to leave the country as quickly as possible, without drawing attention to their conversion.

Much more important, however, is another factor: many of the victims of the missionaries become so-called Hebrew-Christians and continue to claim to be Jews. The spread of this branch of missionary movement may, in fact, prove to be the most serious new development.

The leaders of the Hebrew-Christians—among them a Rav Ben Meir—have succeeded in creating great confusion in the minds of the simpler Sephardic Jews by their argument that:

"We have NOT become Christians, we have made our Jewishness more complete. . . . The religion known to the world as Christianity is nothing but a glorified form of paganism that had its origin in Babylon and Rome. The true religion of the disciples of J. C. was the pure Jewish faith."

The Hebrew-Christians, or Messianic Jews as they also call themselves, completely reject the idea of conversion as unnecessary. Their literature is written in traditional Jewish style; it calls for the observance of the *Mitzvos*—together with the acceptance of J. C. Thus they have their own Passover *Hagodoh*—traditional, but laced with Christological references. A special prayer to be recited at the lighting of the Chanukah candles reads:

"As we light the Chanukah lights, we ask to remember J. C., the light of the world. . . ."

The confusion created is exemplified by a seventeen-year old Sephardic girl attending a Seminary who, when told about Maimonides' Articles of Faith exclaimed: *"But the Moshiach has come already. . . .!"*

A letter written by one group of Hebrew-Christians in February, 1964 to their supporters abroad, states that they have 150 members but only 25 of them are known to the government as converts. (Half of the 150, incidentally, are listed as employed by, or owing money to the sect!) Informed guesses set the present number of Hebrew-Christians as over 500.

And We?

The facts here stated, gathered from a report of the *Peyley Hamachaneh Hatorati* speak for themselves. *What will our answer be?*

Barnet Hirsch

Liberalism's Dilemma

OUR JEWISH COMMUNITY in America is currently being buffeted by a series of threatening thrusts of a most ominous nature. Attacks-in-force, as well as pulse-sensing forays and skirmishes, have been and are being launched from important sources. These are aimed not merely at some peripheral phase of our collective existence, but more often than not at the very fountain-head that nourishes our common life.

I am not here alluding to the transplanted Nazis, nor to the pre-Nazi bible-belt Jew haters, nor even to the malevolent hate-peddling racists. This paranoid type is a product of and a problem for western civilization and its Christian formulations.

What alarms us is the contemporary intensification from many directions simultaneously, of efforts directed at our nerve centers by elements who are concededly liberal and sympathetic and warm-hearted. And because these groups may not in all fairness be accused

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of overt antisemitism, their forays find a responsive chord among some unwary Jews, thereby magnifying the problem for us.

Let me illustrate with a minor case: On the Ed Sullivan program of April 3rd, a skit was presented wherein a Jewish lad is matched up with a Christian lass by electronic computer. He is not, mind you, one of those ignorant, assimilated Jews: He loves the "Jewish" cooking of mother and grandmother! Yet, by the grace of an amalgamating computer and a matchmaking impresario, the youngsters are found to be compatible.

And yet, despite the implicit disrespect for Torah Judaism, Mr. Sullivan, I'm certain, holds an antisemite like Rockwell in utter contempt.

Is there a computer which can measure the degree of contribution to the pestilence of intermarriage of skits such as this one?

Observe now the unbending resistance to all our efforts to ameliorate the heavy-handed treatment of *Shomrei-Shabbos* merchants. The best compromise offered, but unacceptable by any self-respecting Jew, was that we put on our windows a badge-of-shame-type card if we wanted to operate on Sunday. Aside from this totalitarian-style concession, the "Blue Laws" were to remain untouched. Yet who would accuse the gentlemen who proposed the onerous compromise, of being anything but an amicable, sincere liberal? Nevertheless, it is my position that a leadership in a pluralistic society which legislates the Christian Sunday as the only and the compulsory day of rest may not at the same time lay claim to being of a liberal and democratic orientation.

And just as the churches, while volubly proclaiming their interfaith fraternal feeling for us, were not at the same time reluctant to apply sinister pressures upon our law-makers to establish *their* Sunday as the civil rest day—so the various friends of animals' ultimate objectives is patently to establish by law the non-Jewish method of slaughter as the only "American" way of preparing meat for our tables. Indeed, some of their *original* proposed legislation naively—and insolently—said as much.

The Latent Threat

Even for the highly sensitized Jew it is often difficult to recognize the latent threat when it comes from such a universally acclaimed liberal as the late Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. In 1948 or thereabouts she had published an article in which she encouraged citizens with "foreign-sounding" names to "Americanize" them. Oddly enough, most of the alien names she cited as ripe for changing appeared to be Jewish. Her own name, which is Dutch, was not among them. Amazingly, the names she suggested as replacements were no less foreign, being mostly English-British.

And in the same article Mrs. R. referred to bacon and eggs as "the typical American breakfast" and to Christmas "as a beautiful American holiday."

For all these confusions and fallacies I took the author to task. I protested her attempts to help create in America a monolithic sociological definition that, by implication, would leave the unaccommodating Jew in a precarious and vulnerable stratum, open to the charge of disloyalty at worst—and suspicious non-conformity at best. As clearly as possible, I emphasized that bacon is a Christian and not an American food; that Christmas is a *Christian* and not an American holiday; for the author to attempt to equate the two separate points of reference is a disservice to the genuine concepts of American democracy.

The Unitarian theologian, Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, who at the time seemed to espouse the ideal of cultural pluralism, in an article along the same vein, jolted the integrationist ranks by stating that to the authentic Jew it makes no difference whether he is physically annihilated in the millions by the Nazis—or absorbed by assimilation and integration in to the community of man, by gradual and adroit alienation from his roots so that his Jewish communal identity and affiliation are ultimately sublimated, diluted—and eliminated.

Details of this crusade—and I use the term with caution and deliberation—may be endlessly recounted: Civil Service examinations conducted on Shabbos; the pained outcry against the granting of public funds for even the most peripheral functions by non-public schools; the incessant dilutionary references to "our Judeo-Christian moral and ethical teachings"; the deliberate and studied avoidance of reference to any distinctively Jewish eternal Torah values whenever a Jewish theme is treated by the mass communication media like stage, screen, radio and press; the attempts to stigmatize those who wear the yarmulka in the classroom; the anti-faceted attempts to inject Christian ecumenism into our ranks.

All of these can have but one purpose—to remove one by one those significant structural underpinnings upon which we can here erect a potent Jewish cohesiveness, a Jewish communal collective within which our individual Jew's identity can unimpededly flourish.

The Jew who has not yet fallen victim to the desensitizing effects of cultural assimilation cannot be blamed for suspecting the existence of a willful pattern to thwart our every effort along the above mentioned lines.

Why is this so? How can this take place in a constitutional democracy? What are these two social philosophies which seem at this time to be on a collision course?

ALMOST FROM THE INSTANT when this country was conceived as an independent political entity, and the existence of its government stabilized and secured, there

developed a contest between two contradictory sociological trends. There were decades and eras when this struggle was contained within the framework of a polite, academic dialogue. Then there were times when it flared up into a civil war. To this day the knotty problem has not been resolved to the total satisfaction of either side.

In its contemporary form the problem revolves around the question of what to do with the ethnic and religious and cultural minorities in the United States. Bear in mind that at no time—not even during the Colonial period—did America enjoy total racial, religious, or cultural homogeneity. In addition to the English, settlements of Germans, Scandinavians, Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish peppered the land. Then came the massive immigration waves of Negroes, Poles, Irish, French, Italians, and our own Jews. If ever a nation was a composite kaleidoscope, composed of the most diverse and heterogeneous elements, America is the one.

The Two Sides

As objectively as it is possible for an avowed and practicing Jew to state the positions of the two sides of the controversy it is this: One group maintains that American national imperatives require maximum absorption—total assimilation—of the members of each minority group and their (or their children's) reconstruction into a nationally homogeneous amalgam; that American comity will best be served when separatist identities and disparate behavior patterns and, what they refer to as, ghettoizing morés are gradually reduced in the intensity of their day-to-day application; when subsequently, and in their stead, only one complex of cultural procedures will be practiced *by all* Americans in order to insure a sense of national solidarity and fraternity and identity.

Observe well the emphasis on gradualism. The liberal, the democrat, the constitutionalist abhors violence. Force is intolerable to him. Physical compulsion is synonymous with tyranny. His weapons are education, persuasion, and adroit control over the mass-media of information. When need be or when possible he will make full use of political power to achieve a predetermined goal.

Perhaps I have oversimplified the characterization and the methods. Perhaps not all those who seek American national uniformity subscribe to the philosophy of the Rights of Man. Certainly those who inspired and legislated the inhuman immigration control laws of the 20's had little concern for the Rights of Man. And their heirs of the 40's who refused to permit some modification of these closed-door laws were in a sense unwilling partners to the Nazis in their destruction of Jews with no place to go.

Nevertheless, on balance, their primary motivation

The democrat's defense of the Jew saves the Jew as Man—and annihilates him as Jew.

appears to have been sociological uniformity. They assumed that by checking off any further ethnic influx those already here would more readily submit to the acceptance of a new set of culture-patterns being sculptured for them.

In antithesis to the social-democrat (I use the term here solely in its sociological and not in its political context) stand those who proclaim that the greatness of America, and its uniqueness, are derived through its retention of its cultural pluralism; that this concept is most in consonance with historic Americanism and to the greatest degree conforms to the intents of the Founding Fathers.

For how could it be otherwise? The suppression of cultural collectives is the hallmark of the totalitarian state. A majority is identified as tyrannical when it is intolerant of and cannot co-exist with minority enclaves. To claim that the method used for their removal is euthanasia is transparent and guileful hypocrisy. No matter how mercifully the extinction is to be achieved, it is yet assassination.

The grandeur of American democracy as distinct from the European democracies is inherent in its distinctive—and instinctive talent to accept—not merely to tolerate, but to accept, differences;—so long as these differences are not anti-constitutional or politically subversive.

Those of us who espouse and embrace America's cultural pluralism maintain that the continental concepts of the Rights of Man, spawned as they were in the French Revolution and further incubated in the European Emancipation period of the 18th century, have no rightful place in this land.

For this reason: the exponents of the Rights of Man seek to defend Man in his generic and broad outline at the cost of his innermost spirit. They see Man in the abstract but not Jew, not Italian, not Scotsman in the concrete.

If I as a Jew am attacked he will defend me as a Man, never as a Jew. As a keen French savant noted: *The democrat's defense of the Jew saves the Jew as Man—and annihilates him as Jew.*

This liberal will never grant me my claim that I wish to retain my contacts with the Jewish community and yet not deny the legitimate bonds which tie me to the American national entity.

Every generation has its modes and its morés. Today America is caught up in the fever of racial integration. The devotee of the Rights of Man deems it a triumph when through his "good works" a Negro is served a meal in a lily-white restaurant—or when two people of

different religions intermarry—or any public demonstration of the blunting of differences.

But I have yet to hear a logical and reasonable reply to our claim that a blurring of group differences will lead to cultural and perhaps even to political tyrannic totalitarianism.

Be that as it may, we are in a position to understand more fully these contemporary attacks upon our Jewish community citadels when we view them as part of the general manifestation of the so-called liberal drive to establish Man and his rights in the abstract through the demolition of the rights of particular communities.

Elkanah Schwartz

The Guest Speaker: **Hosea**

THE WORLD-WIDE CONVENTION had been set. The convention call had gone out. "You are cordially invited..." the invitation read. The Guest Speaker: the Prophet Hosea.

Plead with your mother, plead, for she is not my wife, nor am I her husband.

The Prophet addresses himself to the coming generations who are about to come into the world and tells them that their mother, modern Jewry, is misbehaving. The Almighty who took the Jewish People as His "wife" at Sinai declares her to be an unfit mother, not worthy to carry His Name.

Jewry today gives every evidence of being deeply involved in "Jewish activity," but it does not take the eye of a prophet to peer through the transparency of our works. We go to Schul, but we pray without warmth and fervor. We buy Jewish books, but we do not read them. We inscribe the words of the Torah on our door-posts, but not on our hearts. Our conduct in the office, in the shop, does not reflect commitment to Torah. We give *tzedokoh*, but not well, not wisely, not sincerely. We give "yeoman service" to our organizations, but not in any effective way. We carry out mitzvohs . . . half-heartedly. We fuss about some "Jewish problems," but ignore the most basic needs of Jewry. The casual observer would believe that we are quite busy with our Jewishness; the serious observer knows that we are not.

If this is so of the observant Jew—the Orthodox Jew—what indeed shall the Prophet say of those who in growing numbers foresake their Jewishness? Collectively: observant and non-observant, we are not a faithful "wife" to the Almighty; not a proper mother to *His* children and *ours*.

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For their mother misbehaved; she that bore them did so shamefully.

In the realm of physical and spiritual reproduction, our generation is far from being flawless. Our weddings, the time for expressing true Jewish *simcha* and the manifestation of Torah dignity are, more often than not, ostentatious displays of wealth which is often as unreal as the spirit that prevails.

The *Shulchan Aruch* requires the presence of ten adult males, and someone other than the groom to read the *brochos*. Today, a Jewish wedding becomes a field-day for caterers and photographers; for printers and bakers; for musicians and florists; for clothiers and renters; for yarmulka makers and liquor dealers; for rabbis and cantors; for designers and loan-sharks; for waiters and launderers; for auto-rental agencies and taxies; for haberdashers and hatters; for barbers and beauticians; for cigar and cigarette vendors; for a growing list of merchants and suppliers who benefit by the massive expenditures incurred by the family and friends. We beg, we borrow, we . . . do whatever we can to make our wedding "different." And when one of us does something that is "really different," we all rush to be equally "different." The bride and the groom are lost in the shuffle; their needs on the threshold of a new life are completely ignored. Interest is focused on the "ceremony," the personalities and preparations involved and other trivia, while the essence of the whole matter, which is the sanctity of the religious and human aspects of a new home in Israel, is ignored.

As we attempt to reproduce ourselves spiritually, we also fumble and fall. The yeshiva student who sees the "inside" of his yeshiva's executive office learns it is often guilty of the very same practice it is critical of in other institutions and which yeshiva students are taught to reject. Since each institution deems itself "holier" than others, it grants itself the right to do what no one else should do. While the *Bais Hamedrash* teaches the *theory* of Jewish life, rare is the executive office that can serve as an example for its own students in the *practice* of those teachings. No one is guilty,

for no one can change the system. It is the "law of the jungle" that must be lived with. As to the public? Yeshiva students pride themselves on knowing the spiritual assets of various *Mosdei Torah*, and most could very easily recite the "standings" of each institution on the basis of the caliber of students and graduates, the caliber of faculty, intensiveness of study, publications, frequency of lectures, etc. But to those outside the walls of the *Beis Medrash* a yeshiva's standing in the community is equated with the number and caliber of wealthy people, rarely learned and not always observant, that attend the annual dinner. Other factors are the locale of its dinner, the chairman, guest speaker and guest of honor, the size of its journal and the amount of space it gets in the press before and after the dinner. The students are totally innocent of these malpractices; they and their supporters live in two different worlds. The two tides meet at times in the yeshiva's executive office, and the storm that results rarely does anyone any good, least of all the executives themselves.

But neither are they to blame. They all claim individually and collectively, that they have no choice and that it's the community that forces their hand—and they are right. Being an executive director of an Orthodox Jewish organization or institution is a thankless position for a man of principle, who usually is a target for criticism from all sides. The mother is misbehaving: She is bearing the next generation shamefully.

For she said: I will go after my lovers that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink.

Jews in America are blessed to live in a society and a country that not only tolerates scholarship and full religious observance, but encourages it. The poorest family on welfare can live on a standard much higher than wealthy men struggled to live on years ago. Never did our people fail to achieve high levels of spirituality and scholarship or produce classics of Torah literature except in times of extreme famine, perhaps, or during plagues and wars. Our ancestors undoubtedly would envy our material position today: more than enough to eat; a roof over everyone's head; good public health; the sounds of battle are not heard in our land; our economy is based on maximum wages with minimum hours—everything one could wish for to gain a maximum opportunity for personal spiritual development and fulfillment.

It is a prime moment to encourage growth in Torah learning and practice. Instead, the drive in the overwhelming proportion of our homes (including many of our traditional families) is for getting ahead in business or in professional life: buying a fancy automobile and a comfortable home in a nice neighborhood, and being able to afford the "best" in vacations and luxuries. There is no conscious intention to minimize the role

of Torah. But there *is* a conscious striving toward more and more material gain.

In how many good Jewish homes today is a son encouraged to become a teacher or a rabbi? While the conditions in these two fields are not enviable, neither are they impossible. For one with sincerity and a sense of responsibility, the lack of affluence should not be too much to bear. But our best minds are often drawn to the secular professions, to work with and be equal to one who cannot appreciate a yeshiva. There is a new standard. No longer is one motivated to be the best student in the *Bais Medrash*. The mark of achievement is one's standing on the Dean's list in the secular college, to prove one does not have to be "un-Jewish" to love college. Recognition in the synagogue goes to the one who was promoted over his non-Jewish and non-observant colleagues in his laboratory or firm. Whereas the standard of pride of one Jew for another once depended upon Jewish considerations, today it is the reverse.

This avant-garde attitude has become the vogue. Wherever people assemble and opinions are passed about, respect seems to go strongest to one who proves himself a better *goy* than the *goyim* are while still remaining completely Jewish. We have lost our pride. We have lost our standards. No longer do we measure the achievements of an individual with the standards of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We have adopted the standards of the society in which we live. We are no longer content to be integrated but try to be assimilated. We are no longer content to clothe ourselves with simple garments but seek the latest modes at any price. We are no longer content that our homes simply keep us warm and protected; we search for homes of grand design in "fancy" neighborhoods. We are no longer content to have furniture of convenience that will serve us with comfort but insist that we have the "latest" fashions. We are no longer content with traditional foods; instead we "kosherize" chow mein, chop suey and pizza so that we can enjoy the "best" of what our neighbors have. We are no longer satisfied to earn a livelihood through simple, respectable means but strive for the businesses and professions which offer prestige.

Even in the observance of mitzvos we are caught up in the vicious pattern of outdoing our co-religionists, not so much in the fervor and intent of the deed but in its appearance: a more decorated *succah*, a more lavish *kiddush*, a more glamorous *shaytel*, a more vulgar fund-raising theater party, a more expensive *essrog*-box, a silkier-looking tallis, a more prestigious *aliyah*, working for charities that give more prestige, *et al.* Gone is the once-popular notion of living a simple life with service to the Almighty as its prime aspect. While we give of ourselves for religious practices, we do not seek new ways of service to the Almighty but rather self-service through material goods. There is nothing

wrong with enjoying the good things the Almighty blesses us with, if they come to us in the normal course of events. To strive for them as our goals is so wrong. We have gone after our "lovers"—in the words of Hosea, "those that give us our bread and water, wool and flax, our oil and our drink." We have become so intoxicated with the benefactions of our environment that we strain to imitate its way of life. Instead of expressing appreciation in a traditional manner, we shed our individuality to adopt an alien culture.

Therefore, behold, I will hedge up your way with thorns, and I will make a wall against her, that she will not find her paths.

And she shall run after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them, and she shall seek them, but not find them.

Then shall she say: "I shall go and return to my first husband, for then was it better with me than now."

For she did not know that it was I that gave her the wine and the oil and multiplied unto her silver and gold which she misused.

Therefore will I take back my corn in the time thereof,

and my wine in the season thereof, and will snatch away my wool and my flax, given to cover her.

And now will I uncover her shame in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of my hand.

I will also cause all her mirth to cease. . . . and I will lay waste her vines and her fig trees, of which she has said: "These are my hire that my lovers have given me. . . ."

And I will visit upon her the days When she went after her lovers and forgot me.

Our behavior is not going unnoticed. Hosea's contention is not against individual acts of transgression. He speaks of the "mother," of the prevalent societal attitudes, of the communal practice, of the examples set where people look for them. We try to have everything our neighbors have, but they in turn let us have these things only when they choose to. They will have us join them when the time and the situation are expedient but will reject us when we are no longer needed. They will entice us when we can be of service but ignore us when we need them.

We bemoan intermarriage at conferences in gaudy hotels and conventions in glamorous country clubs. We appeal for funds to feed yeshiva children at dinners where more food is thrown out than is consumed. We make far too much effort to copy, to emulate, to imitate, even to demand what our neighbors have, while history

teaches us that the negative backlash was at least as strong as the demand.

The civilization we raised is now raising us, but only because we arrange it that way. And the Prophet warns us that when we shall finally sober up to realize the folly of our ways, the Almighty will take back all that He gives us now to enjoy. "For she did not know that it was I that gave her the corn and the wine and the oil and multiplied unto her silver and gold which she misused. Therefore will I take back my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will snatch away my wool and my flax. . . . I will also cause all her mirth to cease. . . . And I will lay waste her vines and her fig-trees, of which she had said: 'These are my hire that my lovers have given me.'" We are warned: we cannot complain should this all come to pass.

As we listen to the Prophet's words, we nod our heads in agreement. "He really gave it to them," we tell ourselves. But . . . there's the rub . . . "to them," we fail to understand that he was speaking to "us" not to "them."

But the Prophet hasn't finished his address; he is not a prophet of gloom, but of hope. He does not only threaten, he offers G-d's love for *Klal Yisroel*.

Therefore behold, I will allure her . . . and speak tenderly unto her. . . . And in that day will I make a covenant for them. . . . And I will betroth you unto me in faithfulness, and then shall you know the Lord.

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A Letter from Johannesburg

We have reported on some of the counter-currents in the South African Orthodox Jewish community (Oct. 1965, Jan. 1966). The following report on one of the brighter sides of Torah life in that troubled community was sent to us by one of our readers in Johannesburg.

OUR CONTINENT BEING KNOWN as "dark Africa," one might justifiably think that the situation of Judaism is even more dark. While the general picture is hardly bright, I should like to describe one of the more positive aspects of Jewish life in Johannesburg.

The Congregation Adaas Jeshurun was founded some



*A view of downtown Johannesburg
(South African Information Services)*

thirty years ago by a small group of Jews from various kehillos in Germany who fled to South Africa during the Nazi period.

The general level of religious observance was in a state of unfortunate decline at the time and there was no organized community that could have been called "Orthodox" in any real sense. The primary concern of the four founding families was to provide a proper Torah *chinuch* for their children, and the absence of a *minyone* where Shabbos was taken seriously crystallized the desire to create a kehillah.

The first step was the purchase of a home which was converted into a schul, followed by the establishment of a Talmud Torah where the children were taught in the afternoons following morning instruction in the government schools. A unique feature of the Talmud Torah was that the teachers were *shomrei mitzvohs*, which is unfortunately to this day not common in most Jewish schools. The level of instruction was high, extending to the study of Gemmorah with *Tosphos*.

The next logical stage was to bring a rav to the Kehillah. His leadership has been the driving force behind the following major achievements:

- A beautiful mikve was built with the guidance and sanction of *Gedolim*. It is the only mikve in Johannesburg and the whole Reef.
- The Kehillah has its own shechiteh which is used by observant Jews outside the Kehillah.
- The Kehillah has the only supervision for *Cholov Yisroel* in the entire country.
- The only Shatnes Laboratory in all of South Africa is sponsored by the Kehillah.

There is, of course, nothing unique about these institutions, which every Jewish community should have. Yet, in a community of about 120,000 Jews, Adaas Jeshurun is unique in providing these services. The need for creating and maintaining these ventures, at the cost of personal sacrifice, has molded the group into a unified community.

Obviously, these efforts have resulted in a greater awareness by the youth of their Torah heritage and the level of observance of mitzvohs has been significantly raised.

There are in Johannesburg some "old-timers" who studied in their youth in *Litvishe Yeshivos*, but unfortunately they have been unable to instill the spirit of Torah learning in their heirs, and as their number diminishes so too does the learning of Torah diminish.

Adaas Jeshurun has succeeded in creating a new love for *Limud Hatorah* among the young people. *Shiurim*, attended by young as well as old, are held each morning and evening, and already this small Kehillah has sent many young men to yeshivos abroad.

A more recent development was the establishment of a yeshivoh which in a short while has achieved substantial results. It is hoped that the influence of the

yeshivoh will be felt in the entire Johannesburg community, as has been the case in the other areas where Adaas Jeshurun has pioneered higher standards of Torah life.

Earlier this year, a historic step forward was taken. Spearheaded by Adaas Jeshurun, but with the support of others, a Kollel was opened which will serve the entire community. Although the Kollel has its own characteristics suited to local conditions—it will for the time being function only several evenings of the week—renowned Roshei Yeshivos who have visited South Africa regard this venture as a spiritual revolution. Rabbi Wolpe of Yeshivas Ashkelon and Rabbi Brode of the Chevron Yeshiva were the first guests from Eretz Yisroel to deliver *shiurim* within the framework of the Kollel.

Chief Rabbi Bernard Casper, in his Kollel dedication address noted that the word "Kollel" means "all em-

bracing," and quoting from a responsa of the *Netziv*, he pointed out that study of Torah is *the* unifying factor which transcends all political differences and petty disagreements. He expressed his pleasure that the Kollel was the work of the Congregation Adaas Jeshurun, which has nurtured other religious facilities.

This brief sketch of the achievements of a small group of Jews who maintained their loyalty to the principles of Torah Judaism, is further indication of what can be done by dedicated individuals. Fortunately, there are today other positive forces working within Johannesburg Orthodoxy, a portent of better days ahead for Torah on the dark continent.

Jews from abroad who visit Johannesburg find a warm welcome in the Adaas Jeshurun Kehilloh. You too are welcome to enjoy the sunny side of life in South Africa when you visit our country.

J. SCHOEMANN

Must We Still Mourn?

A Prophetic Message by Samson Raphael Hirsch

The following is abstracted from: *JUDAISM ETERNAL, Selected Essays From the Writings of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch*, translated by DAYAN DR. I. GRUNFELD and published by the Soncino Press, London, 1959. The original article appeared in 1855, seventy odd years before the Nazi plague appeared in Germany and spread throughout the European continent.

IT IS NOW SOME SIX OR SEVEN AND TWENTY YEARS AGO since one evening of the ninth of Av, the Rabbi of a small town in South Germany had his synagogue brilliantly lit up and invited the members of his congregation to attend in their best clothes. This was the night when over the whole face of the earth, wherever a small group of Jews form a congregation and come together for prayer in the House of G-d, light and cheerfulness and festive mood are banished from the gathering, and every man who calls himself a Jew sits mourning on the ground, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah over the orphaned city of G-d find an echo in every Jewish breast. And it was on this evening that the preacher mentioned mounted the pulpit and raised a loud protest against this sadness and this mourning and this yearning for Palestine. He accused the millions of his mourning brethren in the whole world around him of treason and enmity towards State and Fatherland, and he called on his dismayed congregation, in

contrast to these millions, to show by means of a festal celebration their repudiation of the out-of-date yearning for Palestine, and to give proof of their patriotic attachment to the Fatherland in which they lived and worked, and from which they at least hoped to obtain full civic freedom and equality. Jerusalem, he said, was here. Palestine was now situated on German soil . . .

. . . Only in that state in which almost three decades ago the mourning of the ninth of Av was to have been abolished does grim Jew-hatred luxuriate, only here does it invent ever-new restrictions, forge ever-new chains, generate ever-new scorn and more than any other impel its Jewish children in droves to seek a new Palestine across the ocean . . .

WE WISH NOW, HOWEVER, TO CONSIDER THE QUESTION whether there is after all a spark of truth in the whole outlook and mode of thought underlying the protest of that Jewish minister against the mourning of Tisha be-Av . . .

No doubt to the progressive outlook of a modern Jewish preacher ancient Palestine is no different from the other oriental states; under the ruins of Jerusalem nothing of more consequence lies buried than is covered by the remains of Nineveh or Babylon or Carthage; in one place as in the other it was only a political structure which flourished and only a political structure which fell. If that is the case, then indeed the mourning for Jerusalem's downfall and the yearning for Jerusalem's revival would have only political motives and

meaning; it would be a mourning for the loss of political independence, it would be a yearning for the sceptre of David and the sword of Joab and the decorations of Ahithophel, for the inventory of Adoram, the archives of Jehoshaphat and the treasury keys of Eliakim. It would be a yearning for our own fields and our own sickle and our own hearth, with the oppression and scorn swept away.

Then indeed such a mourning and such a yearning would have had meaning and justification only during the dark centuries of the Middle Ages. Then the modern Jewish view would be perfectly right, that in the century of hopes of emancipation this old mourning and this old yearning should grow ever fainter, and that they should at last completely disappear when these hopes should be realized, and the children of Israel should have found on European soil equality of civil rights and a homeland which should secure to them along with the rest of mankind a solid footing and equal opportunities for treading the path to sustenance, and to office and dignity.

The modern view is that the Jewish state, both of the past and of the future, is to be regarded as belonging to the same class as all other political phenomena. It has lost all consciousness of the quite peculiar nature of the Jewish state and its difference from all other states. In that state, too, it sees only an institution in which the development of the political elements mentioned above is the goal to which everything else, including Temple and Torah, is to be subordinated as mere means and instruments.

“Modern” Judaism

. . . If we have genuinely imbibed the spirit of modern Judaism, we certainly do not fast on the day of Zion, we do not say any more *סליחות* or *קינות*. We should even be ashamed to catch a surreptitious tear in our eye or a sigh in our breast for the fallen Temple, a yearning in our heart for the home of the “bloody sacrificial cult.” We have reduced all this to a myth. Our feelings have been “disinfected” by the cooling waters of real knowledge. Our minds have been cleared of illusions by science. We understand, and we value, all this quite differently. Moses and Hesiod, David and Sappho, Deborah and Tyrtæus, Isaiah and Homer, Delphi and Jerusalem, Pythian tripod and Cherubim-sanctuary, prophets and oracles, psalm and elegy—we pack them all peacefully together in our minds in the same box, they all rest peacefully in the same grave, they all have one and the same human origin, they all have one and the same significance, human, transitory, and belonging to the past. All the clouds have dissolved.

The tears and sighs of our fathers fill no longer our breasts, but our libraries. The warmly pulsating heart of our fathers has become our national literature, their glowing breath of life has become the dust of book-

shelves. We let the old Jews fast on *תשעה באב*, we let them say *סליחות* and weep over *קינות*. But in return we know far better than they do in which century one of these “poets” flourished, in what metre another one composed, who it was that nursed them when they were infants. We cherish in our hearts such reverence for this Jewish antiquity that we rummage through all the dust of libraries and collections in order to find out the date of an author’s birth and death and to record correctly the inscriptions on their tombstones. Now that the old Judaism is visibly sinking into its grave, we are at great pains to see that at least the memorial of it is preserved in the histories of literature, and that a few leaves from the evergreens that peacefully surround these graves should encircle the brows of our scholars . . .

Do these departed spirits rejoice in the literary gratitude of our present generation? Whom do they recognize as their true heirs? Those who repeated their prayers but forgot their names, or those who forget their prayers and remember their names?

LET US SEE NOW. THIS OLD JEWISH MOURNING AND Jewish yearning—for whose sake is it, what is its meaning and object? It is for the Temple, for the sanctuary of the Torah, for the seat of G-d and of the Divine word that this mourning and this sorrow is observed. It is for the Temple where, in a casket of fragrant cedar wood overlaid with gold, the Torah should find its resting place on earth under the protecting wings of the Cherubim, where this Torah and it alone should with its right hand dispense light and life and with its left hand well-being and enjoyment; where this earthly existence flowing from the Torah and wedded with light and life should consummate itself in a manner pleasing to G-d and raise upon earth a center round which the labors of man can build a wall of cedar-fresh right living and golden steadfastness, round which the Cherubim of G-d can lie encamped, and on which they may smilingly waft down the blessing of G-d from heaven . . .

It is for this “Galuth Shechinah,” this “Exile of the Majesty of G-d,” as our ancestors with true insight called it, it is for this sad disfigurement of the Torah that Jewish tears are shed and Jewish hearts grieve. Not for *his own Galuth*, but for the *Galuth of the Torah* does the Jew mourn. And must this mourning die away, must this sorrow disappear, must these tears dry up if the nations become more humane and just, if they loosen the chains on the hands and feet of Galuth-weary Israel, and an emancipated Israel steps into the company of non-Jewish states as a fully-privileged member? Will the Torah be any the less in exile for this? Will the “Galuth of the Majesty of G-d” be brought to an end by this? Will the Torah have found its own soil again, will it be more at home on earth, will it now strike deeper roots and will it put forth blossoms and bring to ripeness all the fruits of blessing and salvation

for which it should serve as the everlasting tree of life? Or has it to endure new and harder trials, is it faced with new Galuth sufferings, is it threatened with a new and more painful and bitter exile? In the darkest centuries of the Galuth, when the Roman sword rent the curtain of the Temple and the Shechinah left the Jewish state and with it this Jewish state itself vanished from the earth, the majesty of G-d and the holiness of the Torah found refuge in the Jewish family life, the Jewish home, and every Jewish dwelling remained a sanctuary and every Jewish table remained an altar and every Jewish breast preserved like a priest the "light of G-d" and the striving for "Divine perfection." The barriers are falling, the chains are being struck off, Jewish homes are emerging from night and shadow into the light of open day, the children of Israel are being received into the bosom of the nations. Will Israel be able to carry over its intimacy with G-d from the ghetto into the court, from the hovels into the mansions, from the *cheder* into the *salon*, from the corner-shop into the bureau, from the *shools* into the "Temple?" Is Israel equipped to take over with it into the new civic life the old allegiance to G-d, the old sanctity of the Torah? Or do the Shechinah, the kingship of G-d, the Torah, face the last and sternest stage of their exile? Are they now to be exiled from the Jewish family life, from the Jewish home, from the Jewish heart, as they were once exiled from the Jewish state? Oh, that these questions were still questions! . . .

One day men will yearn for this law, and then to fulfill this yearning they will turn to Zion. Then, then—

"The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the G-d of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge between many peoples and shall decide concerning mighty nations afar off, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree and none shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken." (Micah 4, 1-4.)

But until then:

*Mourn Zion, mourn ye cities
Like a woman in her travail,
Like a bride girt with sackcloth
For the bridegroom of her youth.*

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BOOK REVIEW

THE PUBLICATION OF RABBINIC responsa in English is proceeding apace. In 1947, the National Jewish Welfare Board published *Responsa in War Time* dealing with practical questions faced by Jewish chaplains in the United States Armed Forces, from the recitation of the Kaddish without *Minyan*—permitted by the authors to isolated soldiers—to weddings on Shabbos—

JEWISH LAW FACES MODERN PROBLEMS

Dr. Immanuel Jacobovits

STUDIES IN TORAH JUDAISM No. 8

Yeshiva University, 1965

forbidden. In 1954 the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform) published a collection of responsa taken from its yearbooks. It contains such remarkable learned inquiries as whether the prohibition against blowing the shofar on Shabbos could be waved by those Reform congregations which only observe one day of Rosh Hashonoh; in deciding that the importance of hearing the shofar every year outweighs the prohibition, the learned rabbi apparently never thought of the alternative of reverting to two days of Rosh Hashonoh. More recently, *Responsa of Modern Judaism* promises the answer to hundreds of questions ranging from the use of a toothbrush on *Shabbos* to the use of a dishwasher for meat and dairy dishes.

There is, of course, grave danger in such publications, even if they are written competently and strictly from a Torah viewpoint. It could perhaps be compared to the danger inherent in popularizing methods of producing LSD or firecrackers. No matter how much the author may emphasize that his book is not a "legal home companion" and that, when a question arises in practice, it should be submitted to a *Rav* for decision, the ordinary reader will certainly see no reason to bother, if he has the answer—as he understands it—in black and white before him. He is most unlikely to realize that *his* question may differ in some small but vital aspect from the case discussed in print. Moreover, when he reads about opposing views on a certain issue, or about a prohibition that is "merely" rabbinic or based on *Minhag*, can he be blamed for adopting a "liberal" approach in the matter, unable as he is to weigh the significance of the controversy or the authority of the *Minhag* involved?

THE BOOK BEFORE US was certainly not meant to be a "do-it-yourself" manual for deciding religious ques-

tions. It contains a series of surveys of recent halachic literature, prepared by the author for *Tradition*, and was published in order to show the capacity of Jewish law to respond to the changing conditions and challenges of our age. This objective the author undoubtedly achieves. But he does not escape the pitfalls in the way of such a publication.

It is true that, as in his other publications in the field of Halochah, particularly as it touches on medicine, he specifically cautions the reader that "the verdicts listed in this volume should not be used for practical purposes except if endorsed or reviewed by a recognized rabbinical authority" (p. 12). But such a warning will not prevent the reader from jumping to conclusions or carrying away erroneous impressions, such as that there is no rabbinic authority opposing the *Eruv* in Manhattan (the author even quotes Rabbi Moshe Feinstein as endorsing the legality of such an *Eruv*, p. 33)—while a *Psak Din* issued in 1962, and signed by Rabbi Aaron Kotler . . . as well as Rabbi Moshe Feinstein among others, declares this "so-called *Eruv*" illegal. A number of other examples could be added. It is interesting that the author himself warns against the easy identification, for practical purposes, of the talmudic "cup of sterility" with the modern contraceptive pill (p. 68)—yet this is exactly the popular and sensational interpretation that has been given to his statements on the subject.

Infinitely more serious, however, is another problem raised by the volume before us. In his introductory remarks, the author excellently describes the objective nature of the halachic process, governed not by the views or whims of the individual rabbi, but by his application of the established norms of the law (pp. 22-23). The resolution of new issues arising in every age is also possible merely through the application of these norms. It is to the demonstration of this principle, in fact, that this volume is devoted. It carries a foreword, however, written by Dr. Stitskin who edits this series of publications on behalf of Yeshiva University—and this foreword introduces an entirely different note:

"When we speak of Judaism, we mean the religious affirmations embodied in the biblical-rabbinic tradition. *The rabbinic tradition received its initial impetus with the Pharisees.* . . . What is still disturbing is that, within our own fold, there are those who maintain that *the rabbinic tradition, as set into motion by the Pharisaic sect*, projects a legal system that is repressive, static, inflexible and anachronistic.

"Nothing can be further from the truth. Josephus speaks of the Pharisaic Tradition as a philosophic system. . . . The 'Oral Law' emerged to endow man with a margin of subjectivity in applying the high ideals of biblical law. . . ." (p. 7)

These ideas are not new. The concept that pre-

Pharisaic Judaism was frozen and rigid, in absolute loyalty to the Written Law, along Saducee lines; that the Pharisees introduced liberal "modes of interpretation" of the Written Law; that they thus originated the Oral Law, though considering it *implied* in the Written Law and thus affirming their devotion to the latter; that our Judaism, in effect, is not Biblical but Rabbinic or more exactly, Pharisaic; that actually many "Biblical" laws read by the Rabbis into the written text were really newly introduced by them, in keeping with the ideals and purposes of the Written Law; and that such a "flexible" approach to *Halochoh* is still called for today — this entire approach can be found in a number of writings by a variety of authors who had broken with the established Torah traditions. It has been a source of great concern to many that in recent years views of this and similar nature have appeared in the writings of Orthodox scholars, like Dr. Sidney Hoenig. It is an even greater shock to see such views echoed in the present volume.

This reviewer, for one, feels that two questions must be posed at this point. *One*, since this volume is an official Yeshiva University publication and Dr. Stitskin the official editor, are the views he expresses considered acceptable by Yeshiva University? If not, why are they disseminated in this manner? *Two*, since Dr. Jacobovits, by the evidence of his own writings certainly does not share Dr. Stitskin's views, how can he permit a book of his to be distributed with this foreword without even a word of disassociation to the reader? It is surely not unreasonable to ask for an answer to these questions.

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של בתי הספר
ובין השעות
השונות והיעד

second looks at the jewish scene

Purim Torah

PURIM TORAH IS an old tradition in Jewish life which gives the scholar the opportunity, once each year, to give flight to his imagination, and to propound mythical *kashes* and fanciful replies. One scholar who announced that he would say Purim Torah proceeded to quote a *Rambam* and in a most serious vein discoursed on the *Rambam's* statement for a long while. When he was called to task for being serious and

asked how his discourse qualified as Purim Torah, he twitted his critics by telling them that the *Rambam* made no such statement.

Jews in Israel were recently treated to such Purim Torah, but they were unaware of its nature until it was all over. In a letter to *Haaretz*, one Israel Shahak charged that Jewish law forbids one to desecrate the Shabbos on behalf of a non-Jew, while one may do so for a Jew. A good number of letter-writers jumped on the bandwagon and denounced "Orthodox medievalism." In response to those who disputed Shahak's contention, he replied that he had himself witnessed an incident where an Orthodox Jew had refused the use of his telephone on Shabbos to summon aid for a non-Jew who had collapsed. When he inquired of a *Bais Din*, he alleged, he was told that indeed one may not violate the Shabbos on behalf of a non-Jew. The affair filled the columns of newspapers throughout Israel for days on end, and provided grist for the anti-religious forces in all areas of Israeli life.

BUT, SHAHAK'S CASE soon began to collapse. The Jerusalem rabbinate denied that any such ruling had been issued, and affirmed the obligation to violate the Shabbos for saving the life of any human being. Mr. Shahak was unable to give any specific details of the incident he had described which was the basis for his contentions. Israeli Jewry soon realized that it had been victimized by a vicious sort of Purim Torah.

Carl Alpert, an Israeli writer who is hardly an Orthodox apologist, summed up the matter quite eloquently in his syndicated column.

It appears that in their desire to attack and embarrass religion in Israel, some people are willing to go to any extremes. Jewish history records many vile attacks and false accusations against us. For the most part these came from external enemies. Somewhere in the shades of history someone first gave birth to the odious Passover blood libel against the Jews. It gained currency and in the course of time thousands of Jews fell victim to the hatreds generated by such canards.

Even in Israel we are not safe against malevolent attacks without regard to truth or to the possibility that fresh material is being supplied for coming generations of anti-Semites. Some Jewish foes of religion have even organized for the purpose, not unlike the Yevsektzia of forty years ago. And abroad, some naive, well-meaning but unthinking "liberals" encourage the kind of program which creates an atmosphere in Israel conducive to the worst kind of anti-religious extremism.

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A Bad Precedent

THE CASE OF RENA EITANI was a *cause celebre* in Israel and among world Jewry a little over a year ago. Mrs. Eitani, who is in fact not Jewish, came to Israel after World War II and was granted Israeli citizenship on the basis of her own declaration that she was Jewish. When she applied for an Israeli passport it was also granted to her on the basis of her citizenship. When her true status was revealed, the Ministry of the Interior asked her to return her passport since not being Jewish she was not entitled to automatic citizenship.

Mrs. Eitani, backed by Israel's secular press and forces hostile to Torah, insisted that since she had identified herself with the Jewish people, had served in the Israeli army, and had been a good citizen, she was indeed Jewish in spite of the absence of conversion to the Jewish faith.

Recently she applied for the renewal of her passport, and the Ministry of the Interior's delay in granting renewal was questioned in the Knesset. Finally, the Deputy Minister of the Interior ruled that Mrs. Eitani was duly entitled to a passport as an Israeli citizen without regard to her non-Jewish status and her failure to go through the naturalization process. The Ministry invoked an English legal doctrine known as *estoppel* declaring that a false declaration made "in good faith" by an applicant for citizenship could not be used as grounds for revoking citizenship granted on the basis of such a declaration. Only on the basis of a false declaration made "in bad faith" could citizenship be revoked.

THE QUESTION INVOKED in this case, "Who is a Jew?" is of course not a question at all. Jewish law clearly states that only one born to a Jewish mother or converted to Judaism is in fact Jewish. Asking "Who is a Jew" is not a question, but simply

a challenge to the authority of Torah couched in emotional and essentially dishonest terms. The Ministry's ruling very cleverly bypasses this issue and leaves intact the law of the land that only one recognized by *halocho* as Jewish is entitled to automatic citizenship under Israel's Law of Return. Nevertheless, there is a dangerous precedent in granting recognition as an Israeli citizen to one who does not qualify under any of the three conditions: 1. Jewish birth; 2. Conversion, or 3. Naturalization. The forces in Israel who would bring about a split of the nation into two peoples, Jews and Israelis, have taken one more step—albeit a small one—toward such an unthinkable situation. Let those who cherish *Klal Yisroel* be warned.

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Kollel

THE JEWISH TRIBUNE (London, England) of April 1st reports on the formal opening of a *Kollel* in Manchester, with the participation of rabbis not only from various parts of England but also of the Continent. In itself the opening of a new *Kollel* is, thank G-d, no longer an unusual event in any part of the Jewish world. But what distinguished this occasion was the clarity with which the speakers outlined the significance of advanced Torah study for the entire Jewish community.

Rabbi Isaac Weiss, Dayan of Manchester and one of the outstanding Halachic authorities of our time, provided a most effective answer to the detractors of the *Kollel* idea when he compared the function of the *Kollel* to the role of the university in the modern world, which assists scientific progress through scholarship grants to gifted students. Dayan Grunfeld, noted exponent of Hirschian philosophy, who was guest of honor, pursued this thought further when he stressed that:

Unless the spiritual and moral advancement of mankind, its humility and awareness of the existence and constant guidance of G-d, kept pace with the fantastic scientific progress man is making daily, mankind is doomed.

The Dayan traced the origins of the *Kollel* movement and explained the vital role it has played in the preservation of Judaism through the last decades:

At all times men of vision had established Yeshivos and *Kollelim*, be it the flourishing communities, or even in the camps after the war. In our day and age it was even more important that Torah should bring light and salvation to our people and thereby to mankind.

Letters to the Editor

College

To the Editor:

Rabbi Weinberger's interesting article on college and the *Yeshiva Bochur*, is based on a popular but mistaken assumption—that college is essential for making a decent living today.

A recent article in a mass circulation magazine, "Jobs for the Asking," points out that, while blue collar jobs are disappearing, there are rapidly expanding possibilities in the lower and middle echelons of the white collar field. These jobs need either specific vocational training after high school or, at most, junior college. Examples are computer programmers or, for women, dental hygienists, both in very short supply. The Labor Department has a growing list of such fields.

The problem, therefore, is not one of making a living but rather of status: College attendance gives prestige. Let's call a spade a spade. Maybe that will lead to a more intelligent solution.

JACK WEISS
New York, N. Y.

To the Editor:

Rabbi B. Weinberger in his recent article (*College and The Yeshiva Bochur*) should be commended for a job well done in explaining the many reasons why colleges . . . today are dangerous and harmful for the religious and moral well being of Jewish boys and girls.

The most renowned *Gedolei Torah*—as Hagoan Rav Aaron Kotler, Hagoan Rav Avrohom Kalmanowitz, and . . . Hagoan Rav Moshe Feinstein, the Lubavitcher Rebbe—have clearly stated their *Daas Torah* on many occasions, by word and in writing, that colleges are *Ossur* and are detrimental for Jewish youth . . .

As to his suggestion for all yeshivos to establish a jointly sponsored college,

I must say that at best it is wishful thinking, but actually it is not practical, will not solve the old problems and will also bring new hardship to Orthodoxy.

• How will the necessary funds be raised to support this "private" college—the cost running into the millions? Will not the already struggling yeshivos and low salaried *Roshei Yeshivos* and *Melamdin* lose out if public contributions will be side tracked for this new institution?

• What solution does Rabbi Weinberger offer for Jewish students living in Cleveland, Philadelphia and other cities? Shall all out-of-town Yeshivos close their doors and send their graduates to New York to study in the new "Yeshiva" college?

• Will the remnant of dedicated Yeshiva Bochurim—who learn only Torah in Lakewood, Telz, Spring Valley or Torah Vodaas—despite parental objection and pressures—be put to stronger tests and hardships when this ideal "kosher" college will be placed before them?

• Who will supervise the program of this college—deciding on the various policies of accepting students, making a study program, eliminating "apikorsus," etc.? Can we rely on the good-will or knowledge of laymen who control the funds of the college? Will they not put pressure on the *Roshei Yeshivos* to expand the program and bring it to the level of fame and prestige as Yeshiva University has "in the eyes of the world?" Was not Yeshiva College established with "good and noble intentions" and has not the Torah department been "swallowed up" by the ever-growing secular department?

I could go on and on posing more questions to show the impracticality of Rabbi Weinberger's suggestion.

I hope that the better part of his essay will open the eyes of many parents and students who look at college as their "salvation" and do not think of the dangers to be found.

We Jews were never hasty to find "easy" solutions. If there is at present no alternative, let us not make things worse and create new problems.

RABBI MORDECHAI ZVI SUSNER
Secretary
Vaad Leharomas Keren Hatorah

To the Editor:

Having been at one time, a student of Rabbi Bernard Weinberger, I always thought him to be a very liberal man. However, some of his assumptions in his recent article (*The Yeshiva Bochur and College*) [are] inconsistent with this ethos.

It has long been taken for granted by the yeshiva community that going to college is but a prerequisite to *parnassa* and should be thought of as nothing more. By so doing, the advocates of this

policy are defeating the many benefits of college. The assumption of Torah leaders has always been that the teachings of college—as Rabbi Weinberger writes—“... do violence to some of the basic tenets ... in the yeshiva.” This leads me to believe that Rabbi Weinberger and his colleagues have something to be afraid of in exposing the Jewish education to the courses in college. I must respectfully submit that this attitude does not impress me with much faith in Jewish education, if it cannot stand up to shallow criticism.

Rabbi Weinberger, I am sure, went to college; Rabbi Weinberger read Plato and Aristotle, Kant and Spinoza ... If Rabbi Weinberger has not drifted to the depths of heresy, why does he believe that others will? If the Jewish educational system is a good one, they undoubtedly will not.

Furthermore, the Rabbi takes issue with the “social setting” of academe. He says: “While indulging in civil rights, ban-the-bomb, and pacifist demonstrations our college youth have been nurtured to a disregard and ... contempt of traditional mores. Our entire social structure is being undermined by this spirit of rebellion ...” These do not sound to me like the words of a liberal. Does Rabbi Weinberger actually believe that a society can stand still unquestioned? Does he not allow the possibility of some things being amiss in our social structure? What happens when the yeshiva bochur goes out in the world? Does he shield himself from all that goes on around him?

If protest against unnecessary killing and war, and the treatment of fellow human beings as inferiors is immoral, I am afraid to think of what Rabbi Weinberger means by “our traditional mores.” Where is it stated in the Torah, or in the learning of our Sages, that a good Jew should avert his eyes from injustice and slaughter? If it is an undermining of our mores, why do the scriptures say, *Lo yisoh goy el goy cherev, v'lo yilmedu od milchoma* [Nation shall not lift up sword against nation and they shall no longer learn war].

NOE NORMAN GOLDWASSER
Bronx, N. Y.

To the Editor:

I read with deep interest the article in your March issue, *The Yeshiva Bochur and College*, by Rabbi Bernard Weinberger.

It seems to me that Rabbi Weinberger has presented the problem in its proper perspective, although he has not covered all aspects of the problem. The Telshe Rosh Yeshiva [Rabbi Mordecai Gifter] dealt extensively with the problem in his address ... at the last Aguda convention.

Rabbi Weinberger's suggested solution,

however, misses the mark. It is merely a new twist resulting from his basic premise that the Roshey Hayeshivos have recognized college de facto but not de jure. This may be true of certain yeshivos. However, Telshe Yeshiva and Lakewood are the two bastions where no recognition in any form has been granted. Their stand in the matter is not one of antagonism to secular studies, but rather dedication to that study of Torah in unadulterated form which can lead to the development of Gedolei Torah. If this is the purpose of Yeshiva, then Rabbi Weinberger's solution is completely off mark.

I remember the words of my revered Rebbe, the late Gaon Rabbi Eliya Mayer Bloch, ז"ל, who pointed out that he didn't wish to argue the merits or demerits of college, but that Telshe Yeshiva had its own purpose, and in order to achieve that purpose it could not change its form in any manner. Rabbi Weinberger's “solution” is certainly a change in form, if not much more.

I would refer Rabbi Weinberger to a great voice of personal experience—that of the late Gaon Reb Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg, ז"ל. In the Nissan issue of the Rabbinical Monthly *Hapardes*, Rav Weinberg writes, “Why has Rabbi so-an-so been persuaded by the false charm of the doctoral degree? I deeply regret my carrying this alien title. I have long wished to free myself absolutely from this title, which is not at all suited to one who has grown in the Bais Hamedrash ... whose pride and glory is Torah. Those Yeshivos who hold strongly by the banner of Torah should not bring this idol into their temple. ...”

ARMIN JOSEPH
School of Law
Western Reserve University
Cleveland, Ohio

Yeshiva University

To the Editor:

In the article *The Yeshiva Bochur and College* by Rabbi Bernard Weinberger there is a one paragraph discussion of Yeshiva University and the author's explanation of its program of synthesis. Rabbi Weinberger's interpretation is completely erroneous, and I should like to correct some of the points made in this single paragraph. ...

1. Rabbi Weinberger is way off base in his interpretation of what Yeshiva University means by synthesis. I suggest that he read some of the materials of the late Dr. Bernard Revel and of Dr. Samuel Belkin. Briefly, the synthesis at Yeshiva University is in terms of the human being or the personality rather than in any subject matter or departmental studies.

2. I will buy Rabbi Weinberger a cigar if he will show me any enticing slogans utilizing the expression: a synthesis of Torah and secular learning. The point of view expressed by Dr. Belkin is not a *chiddush*. There was never an attempt to teach Jewish biology or Jewish chemistry.

3. The synthesis that Rabbi Weinberger speaks of may have failed. However, the one that we speak of is a bright chapter in Jewish history. Yeshiva University's record in the past forty years—since it instituted programs of general study, and even earlier when it opened the first high school in 1915—stands as a glorious chapter in achievement and example of positive accomplishment.

Yeshiva University graduates have given leadership and vibrancy to the Day School movement as it exists today. They have in their own families brought into being a second and in some cases a third generation of practicing Jews.

They have provided leadership in numerous areas of Jewish life which other groups standing on the outside have constantly criticized as outsiders rather than becoming involved themselves. And, what is even more important, Yeshiva University has produced learned people who now occupy teaching positions and are serious scholars and students of the Torah.

I don't know how much time Rabbi Weinberger has taken to speak to those yeshiva students who did not continue their studies at Yeshiva College. If he

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had gone into the matter in some depth he would have discovered that they do not do so for various reasons, least of which is the one that he attributes. A large number of yeshiva students go to other colleges for the simple reasons that:

1. Some students go to college in the evening.
2. Many attend the City colleges where the price is right.
3. Some of these students take courses in accounting, business and allied fields which are just not available at an institution such as Yeshiva College.
4. Some want to attend a co-ed school.
5. Some are rejected by Yeshiva College.
6. Some are dissuaded by their Rosh Yeshiva.

For the record, the number of students from other yeshivas enrolling at Yeshiva College has been rising over the years despite the fact that very few of these yeshivas encourage their students to attend this institution.

I would also ask Rabbi Weinberger whether he honestly believes that the very same forces who are opposed to any type of secular education will suddenly accept the concept of a college? The rejection of a secular education has more intrinsic elements, among them a genuine "fear" of confrontation with the outside world. People like the late Rabbi Kook, who was certainly the equal of any of our present rabbinic scholars, had no such qualm and neither do many other distinguished personalities.

SAM HARTSTEIN, *Director*
Department of Public Relations
Yeshiva University
New York City

To the Editor:

I must object to statements made by Rabbi Bernard Weinberger concerning Yeshiva University in *The Yeshiva Bochor and College*. The author states that "the 'synthesis' philosophy—if not the philosophy, its practical implementation has proven a failure." As his only evidence to support this charge, Rabbi

Weinberger contends that both the Torah and secular departments have suffered by their mutual inclusion in the same curriculum.

As a student in the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary and Yeshiva College, I consider Rabbi Weinberger completely misinformed about Yeshiva University. In the area of *Limud Torah* there is little question that Yeshiva University has produced many of the most respected and influential rabbis and teachers on the American Orthodox Jewish scene, as well as hundreds of well-educated laymen who are now the pillars of their communities. From the secular point of view, it suffices to say that well over 90% of each class continues on to graduate school, one of the highest percentages in the country.

Yeshiva University is not perfect and may not be the choice of every high school graduate, but it has successfully afforded an opportunity for many boys to achieve a Torah-oriented college education. To consider this a failure is to be blind to reality.

DAVID S. RIBNER
North Bergen, N. J.

The editor's reply:

Rabbi Weinberger's article did not aim to deal with Yeshiva University and its "synthesis." The observations here referred to were meant to indicate that in the author's view Yeshiva University did not provide a satisfactory solution of the problem discussed. Mr. Hartstein may not agree with this view and he may be critical of the oversimplification inevitable in such a short reference; but certainly the particular form that the development of Yeshiva University has taken, with its graduate divisions such as the Einstein School of Medicine or the Ferkauf School of Social Studies, and Mr. Hartstein's own definition of the synthesis underlying this development, make a negative view at least permissible.

Nor is such a questioning of Yeshiva University's position answered by a reference to the number of fine graduates produced. If Yeshiva University has produced generations of practicing Jews, it also has seen a sizeable number of its graduates become leaders in the anti-Orthodox camps. Is the record of its graduates superior to that of the graduates from other Yeshivos who attended night colleges?

Mr. Hartstein also oversimplifies the reasons why many Yeshiva students may not attend Yeshiva University, and his list, as presented, hardly does justice to the subject. Actually the success or failure of Yeshiva University's synthesis deserves a proper and dispassionate analysis and we hope to touch on it in some forthcoming articles.

To the Editor:

While my differences with your editorial policy are well known, I cannot and must not withhold my praise and commendation for much of that which you publish, and especially the several magnificent pieces by Rabbi Shubert Spero. Few indeed are the men who can address a Torah message to contemporary intellectuals because they know the modern temper and can separate its wheat from its chaff. Unlike *Tradition* your magazine provides writers like Rabbi Spero with a forum for briefer essays and most meaningful insights.

RABBI EMANUEL RACKMAN
Far Rockaway, New York

To the Editor:

I wish to . . . compliment you on the work you are doing in putting out this journal. The articles are well-written and very informative. Myself, a yeshiva bochor, I always find the topics very interesting and helpful to me to survive as a Torah-true Jew in our secular society. I feel that it should be read by every yeshiva bochor, and even more so by those who have left the *Daled Amos Shel Halochoh*, and have gone to study in college or seek any other means of survival. May the *Ribono Shel Olom* help you to continue the splendid work you have done until now.

DAVID A. FRIEDBERG
Montreal, Canada

To the Editor:

I wish to commend you on the Nissan 5726 issue of *THE JEWISH OBSERVER*. I also wish to commend Rabbi Chaim Dov Keller's article, *The Nature of a People*. The article was very well written and to the point.

Being a former *talmid* of Telz of Chicago I had the *zchus* to hear many *mussar shmuses* from Rabbi Keller on various controversial topics that affect American Orthodoxy and the American Yeshiva bochor. Let us hear more from Rabbi Keller.

CHAIM STEINBERG
Brooklyn, N. Y.

To the Editor:

I respectfully call your attention to your unfortunate use of the word "crusade," in reporting the *London Jewish Chronicle's* overly zealous activities in behalf of Dr. Louis Jacobs. You most certainly are aware of the definition of the word *crusade* as it is found in any reliable dictionary and what this word means to the sensitive Jewish ear. There are many other words which would aptly describe the *Chronicle's* campaign vis a vis Dr. Jacobs without resorting to the word *crusade* . . .

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(RABBI) DAVID BERENT
Lewiston, Maine

To the Editor:

It is heartwarming to know that the Daas Torah on vital issues reach so many of our brethren in America. As an avid reader of your magazine from its beginning I can't urge you enough to make all efforts to expand your good work to Israel where it is practically impossible to read an objective English language write-up on any religious topic.

It really is very important that the OBSERVER reach the susceptible American in Eretz Yisroel. They are bombarded with poisonous anti-religious propaganda while in America they were generally exposed to respect for religion even if they themselves were unobservant. While there exist some excellent religious Hebrew-language magazines and papers (Bais Yaakov, etc.) there is nothing in English to my knowledge. Who knows how much feeling for Yiddishkeit and support for Torah could be won if the OBSERVER found its way to the American Embassy libraries in Tel Aviv and Yerusholayim or to the libraries of the Association of Americans and Canadians in Israel or the English association libraries.

An editorial last April in the *Jerusalem Post* reprimands "fanatically religious groups" for protesting Shabbos desecration on Kikar Shabbat (the crossroads between the religious Meah Shearim-Geulah sections of Jerusalem and site of many demonstrations) although the drivers were simply exercising their privilege to use a public thoroughfare. While it is obvious that Torah Jewry has its own approach to this problem, the basis of secular objections is that a democratic society prohibits the suppression of individual activity, not harmful to or in conflict with activity of others.

The question we are dealing with is, if driving through Kikar Shabbat, can in effect, be considered an action exercised within the realm of privacy and only indirectly painful to spectators, or is this pain directly enacted.

Obviously wearing loud clothing in the presence of a conservative individual is not a direct affront. While the flashy dresser does create an uncomfortable situation, a measure of endurance is expected. If this is lacking the resulting pain can be considered self-inflicted. Democracy, however, does not require extraordinary endurance and thus certain actions, seemingly personal by na-

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ture, are in reality directly offensive. A sunbather, disregarding public sensitivity, doesn't stand a chance of keeping out of jail. If others were to follow suit, the irreligious editors would certainly be the first to organize demonstrations and would themselves yell "decency" instead of "Shabbos." This, although superficially speaking, they would actually be depriving bathers of their right to the public streets.

The situation in Kikar Shabbat creates similar distress. To the Jew, who recognizes his tradition of Sinai, is reared in an environment where the Shabbos is sacred and its desecration unthinkable, *Chillul Shabbos* is personally shocking and abhorrent. What's more, if vehicles make a thoroughfare of his observant area, he sees in this the destruction of his home no less than do others in the violation of *their* standards in *their* midst.

There is, however, a second problem. We are confronted with conflicting interests. While driving hurts, not being allowed to drive also hurts.

The religious person who sees G-d and his law in the universe must of necessity take a different view and course of action than the secular individual. Even the non-observant Jew who nevertheless identifies himself with his people, their religion, their Shabbos, their land and their history should be expected to bend for a Jewish sensitivity and the cause of peace in his homeland. Let us however assume for the moment that the subject of this particular conflict of interests is not a religious one, nor the land a Jewish one. What would democracy, which most certainly recognizes minority rights, dictate.

The number of people affected in a conflict of interests is a factor to consider. The extent of interest to each

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side also plays an important role and can even outweigh the first consideration. Thus while a government will benefit a more populated area with a new factory when it is equally advantageous to all citizens, it will not create uncomfortable conditions for a few even to benefit the masses. It will never, for example, physically harm someone no matter how great the public interest.

Generally, the motorists on Kikar

Shabbat come from other sections of Jerusalem into a predominantly religious area. How many people really use this road and how many are offended by its use? Is the small inconvenience of bypassing an observant community comparable to the pain felt by its inhabitants who witness the secularization of their homes?

MORDECHAI GARBER
Jerusalem, Israel

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CAMP AGUDAH FOR BOYS and Camp Bnos for girls will have a peak season this summer when they open their nine-week program on June 30th. The camps, which are sponsored by Agudath Israel of America, are located in Ferndale and Liberty, New York. The campers come from every part of the United States and Canada. These projects have served thousands of children since their inception two decades ago, and are a major educational factor during the often-neglected summer vacation period.

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BAKODESH**

101 PARK AVENUE
New York, N. Y.

CHINUCH ATZMAI CONVENES

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL conference of Chinuch Atzmai, the vast network of Torah Schools for Israel, opened in Jerusalem on May 31. The three-day gathering brought together distinguished Torah authorities and lay leaders of the Chinuch Atzmai school system from every part of the world to map a broad expansion program to meet the growing needs of Israel's school population for an independent Torah education.

The American delegation was headed by three distinguished Roshei Yeshivos who flew to Israel especially to join in the deliberations: Rabbi Yaakov Kaminsky, Rosh Yeshiva of Mesivta Torah Vodaath; Rabbi Yaakov Ruderman, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva Ner Israel, and Rabbi Shneur Kotler, Rosh Yeshiva of Beth Medrosh Govohah. Two lay leaders who participated in the gathering were Dr. Ernst L. Bodenheimer, chairman of the executive committee of the American Friends of Chinuch Atzmai and Julius Klugman, co-treasurer.

The conference broadened the Directorate of Chinuch Atzmai in Israel and strengthened the organizational structure of its entire administration. This unusual gathering is expected to be a turning point in the history of Chinuch Atzmai, which is entering its 14th year in the

Holy Land, where it has earned wide acclaim as the largest united network of Torah schools in Jewish history.

N. Y. COUNCIL ORGANIZED

AN ALL-DAY ASKANIM CONFERENCE on Sunday, June 5th in Rockaway Park, New York, worked out an ambitious program to organize Agudath Israel branches on a regional basis in many areas. As one of its first activities, the conference undertook the organization of a New York Council of Agudath Israel branches, which will engage a special executive director to implement its goals. Plans for an intensified youth program were also adopted.

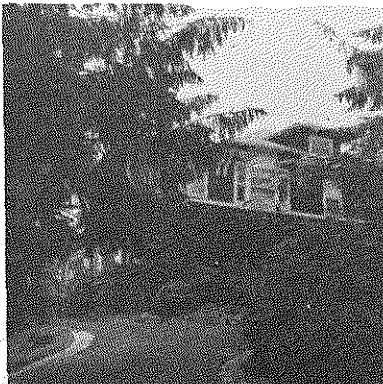
THE TEXTBOOK BILL

DURING RECENT WEEKS Agudath Israel concentrated its legislative efforts in Albany on the passage of the Speno-Howard Health and Welfare Bill which provides a broad program of health and welfare services to children in non-public schools. Although this measure passed the New York State Assembly by an overwhelming majority, Agudath Israel charged in a public statement that it is being bottled up in the Senate committee. A massive campaign is being waged to release this bill from committee, based on the belief that once it gets to the

Senate floor for a vote its chance for passage is good.

Agudath Israel also continued its efforts to persuade Governor Rockefeller to sign the Dominick Amendment to the Ferrall-Speno Textbook Bill. The Textbook Bill, which passed the New York State Legislature last year and was signed into law by Governor Rockefeller on June 1, 1965 (Chapter 320 of the N. Y. Laws of 1965) states that the local school boards must provide secular textbooks to children from the 7th through the 12th grades, for which they are reimbursed by the State with \$10 per child, beginning September 1966. The Dominick Amendment, which now awaits Governor Rockefeller's signature, would have the State reimburse the local school boards with \$25 per child for the first year and then with \$10 for the ensuing years.

While in principle the original textbook bill would provide the Yeshiva children with all their secular textbook requirements, the Dominick Amendment is valuable in that it spells out the State's obligations in clearer terms. Agudath Israel had mounted a massive state-wide campaign last year for the passage of the textbook bill, for which its leaders received warm recognition from the bill's sponsors and a public award from *Citizens for Educational Freedom*.



To open ת"ש, this coming Z'man during Elul, 5726

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