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Hold Off The Kaddish

During the past six or seven years, there have been half a dozen issues of major Jewish importance which have stirred emotions deeply, caused widespread consternation, and generally called forth loud and prolonged wails from those of little faith, ever ready to throw in the sponge.

We recall the several occasions, after the birth of Israel, when U.N. discussions on the ultimate disposition of Jerusalem was the occasion for tragic confessions of defeat on the part of U.S. Zionists.

More recently, there was the fear that Western Nations would sell out Israel to Farouk as the price of a fair settlement on his Sudan recalcitrance. The issue is not yet fully resolved, but Egypt has allowed the first Israel-bound cargo through Suez. This, to our mind, represents a development more shocking (in a pleasant sense) than any that have to date set in motion the premature Kaddish-zoggers.

Again, we have a similar example in the Bonn-Israel Reparations talks. Obviously a most patent breach of faith must have been perpetrated by the Germans to cause their own delegation heads, Prof. Franz Boehm and deputy Dr. O. Kuester, to resign. Up to this point, the dire forebodings of the opponents of negotiations with Germany, are amply fulfilled. But negotiations have not halted at that point. The very act of resignation indicates that negotiations . . . or the set of circumstances in which they proceed . . . did not come to a halt even when the Israeli delegates determined to suspend talks. That the Israeli move should have been followed by so public a confession of moral guilt as the resignation, and that the resignation should be followed by a concrete offer of \$750,000,000 (which boosts the earlier negotiation period figure by 50 per cent) is all to the good.

It is still too early to recite Kaddish over the Bonn talks, as it is over Israel's alleged failure at the United Nations, or her alleged diplomatic defeat (in Mideast NATO terms) by Farouk.

Behind all these ready and voluble analyses of Israel's inability to cope maturely with her problems, we detect the rancour of political factionalism. The difficulty is not that Israel lacks mazel . . . but that the jaundiced eye of the political schlimazel always sees the worst. As the private consolation of minority parties, we can tolerate the dissemination of such views privately. But to elevate them to the level of weighty and impartial critiques of Israel's conduct of foreign affairs, is to render Israel a disservice.

Child Rescue

Of all the conflicting reports emerging from Israel today, greatest unanimity of opinion seems to be found in the reactions to the child care programs. Observers may accuse Israel of ignoring "A" political faction, or discriminating against "B" skin color immigrants. All, however, agree that children are the top priority concern of the land. Some go so far as to say that whole country represents one vast kindergarten.

That is as it should be. In no land are youth so highly cherished as in Israel. And in no land, it may be alleged without fear of contradiction, do youth pose so many problems.

We refer to the experiences Israel's youngest

The City Editor's Desk

BY MELVIN FENSON

TWO YEARS AGO the front page of The Jewish Post carried the pictures of six young Jewish men and women who had won gold medals in the various faculties at the University of Manitoba Convocation. This year, we carried the picture of a single gold medal winner, and the names of no more than three additional Jewish students who achieved scholastic distinction.

The material at hand is too unrepresentative to give us grounds for generalizing . . . but it does duplicate on the local scene a change in the calibre of the Jewish university student which has been carefully traced in Commentary by Morris Freedman, faculty member at The City College, New York. As a former son of CCNY, the writer recalls those types whom, we are assured by Freedman, no longer exist. We need not hark back to the student days of Morris Raphael Cohen or Felix Frankfurter at CCNY to find examples of the young immigrant, or first generation student whose college career represented the apex of achievement to their parents. In them the cerebral brilliance that once was channelled into Biblical or Talmudic exegesis roamed the fields of science, philosophy and literature. These latter day illui could be distinguished by their utter unconcern with the etiquette of dress or refinement of manner. Fraternity life was to them terra incognita. The passionate drive to exceed, and probably the need to raise themselves by their own bootstraps far above the norm in order to reach a modest reward, was the dominant factor.

WE PRESUME THE DECLINE and ultimate passing of this type is related more to the prevalence of cars, rising standards of living in their homes, and general prosperity than it is to any physiological alterations. New goals have replaced those that once captivated the old-fashioned Jewish college boy. It's Mammon vs. Maimonides, as a rabbi friend once put it.

The pioneering social psychologist Kurt Lewin once spoke of this problem within the framework of the State of Israel. There, he felt, the relaxation of pressure to exceed the Gentile and beat the higher standards of discriminatory competition, would tend to depress the level of Jewish intellectual achievement. Israel, he said, would produce fewer Jewish geniuses . . . but far more normal and adjusted Jews.

Question: Is this too high a price to pay for adjustment? On the larger question of Israel's ultimate effect on "Jewish genius," we will reserve judgment for at least two hundred years.

FASCINATING SIDELIGHTS on Shevuoth were offered in a study of the festival by Dr. immigrants have undergone by the time they arrive in the land. Death camps, ghettos, oppression . . . these are all their heritage from the diaspora. To erase this heritage and fill the vacuum in heart and soul with faith, comradeship, spirit, and a sense of dedication to something positive and secure, is a holy task, and a painfully slow one.

Among the groups who have dedicated a large part of their collective energies to this work of salvation are the Israeli branches of Moatzot Hapaolet, the Working Women's Council whose Canadian and American affiliates are the Pioneer Women chapters.

To further these programs; to enlarge the facilities and accommodations at Child Rescue homes and training institutions for Israel's citizens of the future; to help care for the children of working mothers, and to fit the younger generation with skills and attitudes that will enable them to live productively in Israel; to achieve these goals, constant financial support is channelled from communities such as ours to Israel.

Next Tuesday, Winnipeg womenfolk will have their single opportunity of the year to support this work by attendance at the Women's Child Rescue Luncheon.

We know that they will respond generously, and in large numbers, this year as they have in the past.

Theodore H. Gaster, of Dropsie College, in the May issue of Commentary. Basically, Dr. Gaster agrees that Shevuoth, like all other major Jewish festivals, combines an original nature commemoration with newer, historical meaning related closely to Jewish history.

Of the "nature" side of Shevuoth, Gaster writes: "the presentation of the first fruits is no mere token of thanksgiving or submissive rendering of tribute . . . it is payment to God of the dividend on His investment. To withhold . . . is an act of embezzlement."

HOW THE "NATURE" ASPECTS and later historical meanings run parallel, are explained in the following terms:

" . . . if the former (giving of the first fruits) marks the end of seven weeks collaboration between God and man in reaping the material harvest, what the latter (giving of the Torah) celebrates is the end of a corresponding spiritual harvest, which began with the deliverance from Egypt, and reached its climax in the conclusion of the covenant. If . . . in the primitive agricultural rite, man offers to God as a symbol of cooperation, two loaves of new bread, in the historical counterpart, God offers to man the two tablets of the law."

BUT GASTER IS MOST startling in his explanation of the relation of the Book of Ruth to Shevuoth. We always felt that the charming figure of the young gleaner in the fields of Boaz belonged naturally to the festival of the First Fruits. The other aspect of the Book of Ruth, related to King David, who was Ruth's direct descendant, seemed of secondary importance on Shevuoth. Historically, it appears that the Book of Ruth was a creation of the fifth century B.C., when Ezra came up to the shattered community of Palestine from the rich exiles of Babylonia, and found inter-marriage rife among Palestinian Jews. His cruel edict against inter-marriage found a telling opponent in the tale of a Moabite girl's faithfulness to Naomi. The fact that King David traced his descent to such an inter-marriage was strong argument against Ezra's policy of racial exclusiveness.

THE BOOK OF RUTH, according to Dr. Gaster, is read on Shevuoth not merely as an agricultural idyll, suited to the First Fruits theme. He enters into the field of comparative religion, and refers to the Christian spring-holiday of Whitsun, to point up some interesting comparisons. Whitsun, for the Christians, commemorates the "date on which the Holy Spirit was miraculously poured forth upon the original disciples of Jesus."

THE JEWISH PENTECOST symbolizes that "not to a select few but to a whole people had come the revelation of God." This took the form of the Matan Torah, giving of the Torah.

The Christians, at Whitsuntide, foresee that "Jesus would return at the end of days . . . and bring renewed salvation to men."

"So too," writes Gaster, "would David or his scion appear to usher in the Messianic age."

THIS IMAGINATIVE TREATMENT of Shevuoth concludes on credible and traditional ground with Gaster's outline of the lavish banquet at which God-regales the faithful in heaven following his victory over the monsters Leviathan and Behemoth. (This forms the substance of the fanciful Aramaic poem, Akdamuth, read on Shevuoth.)

WE FEAR WITH ALL the richness of historical and legendary associations, Shevuoth, like many other festivals, would be soon lost but for two agencies. One is the synagogue . . . without whose services (and in particular, Yizkor service) few would note the occurrence of the Festival. The second great agency is the Blintz . . . whose association with Shevuoth is variously explained as stemming from the natural bond between dairy dishes and pastoral or agricultural festival tone. Whatever the reason, the festival diet succeeds where all other compulsions end. Hail, then, the Blintz. Without it few might recall the Z'man Matan Torah!

Shevuoth Story For Children:

And Not a Bird Tittered

By LEVIN KIPNIS

In the wilderness near Mount Sinai, Moses pastured the flock. One day Moses saw a burning bush, and a bird had spread its wing and was flying hoveringly above the bush, twittering bitterly.

Said Moses: "Let me go up and see what has happened to the bird." And Moses ran to the burning bush and saw among its branches a bird's nest, and young nestlings stretching out their heads, beyond the nest, chirping ceaselessly.

Moses made haste, thrust his hand among the branches of the bush, and drew out nest and birds together. Nor did Moses pay heed to his hand that was scorched by fire and pierced by thorns, and he went and he placed the nest among the branches of another bush.

"The mother-bird flew after Moses, hovering about his head, waited until the pacing of the nest was completed, and emitting a strong whistle quickly entered the nest.

While he was binding up his hand, the mother-bird came and perched herself on the palm of his hand, and chirped and touched his lips with her bill. Moses understood that she was kissing him and thanking him for rescuing her nestlings and her nest. Moses kissed

her and freed her in the air. The bird flew away.

But from that day on she became attached to Moses and visited him, she and her fledglings who had already learned to fly, and they chirped and twittered to him, and Moses chirped and twittered to them, until he learned the language of the birds.

And word reached the birds in the land roundabout of Moses' deed, and that he understood the language of the birds, and many of them left their nests and their homeland and came to see Moses, and nested on all the bushes and on the ground—and the desolate wilderness was filled with joyful chirping.

One day Moses again saw a burning bush.

And when he turned to see it, a voice was heard calling to him from the bush. "Moses! Moses! I saw you take the nestlings out of the fire—go now to Pharaoh and take the children of Israel out of Egypt."

Moses left the wilderness, the flocks, and the birds, and went to Pharaoh.

And when he took the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, he led them through the wilderness to Mount Sinai.

The birds saw the children of

NEWSY NOTES

By BORIS SMOLAR (Copyright, 1952, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

ISRAEL AMONG NATIONS: The statistical year book of the United Nations reveals very interesting data on Israel. . . . You may not have known it, but Israel has a slightly larger population than Northern Ireland, Paraguay, Jamaica, and Liberia and a slightly smaller population than New Zealand. . . . It is appreciably more people than Cyprus or the Saar, and has ten times as many inhabitants as Iceland. . . .

There would still be room in London for more than 80 per cent of its inhabitants. . . . Israel is credited by the United Nations as having a very decent standard of living. . . . An average income of under \$100 a year is credited to people in India, Ceylon, Turkey, Greece, Spain, Japan, while in Italy, South Africa, Hungary, Austria and Egypt the average is less than \$300 annually per capita. . . . In Israel—in the company of Argentina, western Germany and the Soviet Union—the average citizen has an income of between \$300 and \$450 a year. . . . Above \$450 a year are Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. . . .

The United States is in a category by itself. . . . Only Britain and the United States are ahead of Israel in newspaper circulation. . . . In this Israel is a little ahead of the most advanced countries, such as France, Holland, Finland, Australia and Canada. . . . In cinema attendance, Israel occupies one of the foremost positions. . . . While the inhabitants of India and Turkey see films once a year and those of Bolivia and Egypt twice, the Israeli figure is 38 films a year per capita, as compared with 29 in Britain and 22 in the United States. . . .

ART AND LETTERS: Maurice Schwartz, founder of the Yiddish Art Theatre, is now starring Broadway with his acting in the English one-man play "Conscience". . . . It is a two-act play in which Schwartz plays all the characters: the hero, his wife, his son, his daughter, his mistress, his father-in-law, his mother-in-law and the family doctor. . . . In perfect English he keeps the audience spell-bound during the three hours in which he single-handedly portrays the story of a man who loses his family and everything dear to him. It is no mean artistic effort, and Schwartz's acting justifies the applause which he receives. . . . The play, originally written in Portuguese, was a great success in Brazil where it ran for more than a year. . . . It was translated into English by Claude Vincent and adapted for Schwartz by the noted Canadian English-Jewish poet A. M. KLEIN.

Israel coming and welcomed them with song and joy. But one of the children of Israel, saw a bird's nest with the mother sitting on the young, and he took the mother with the young. . . .

A great confusion arose among the birds; they wished to come to Moses to complain of the evil deed that had been done, but feared to approach him; for the man Moses had changed. Then he had been young and happy, a shepherd of flocks, playing with the birds; and now, his face frowned, he was busy occupied, and did not even glance at the birds! Was this the good Moses who rescued the nestlings from the fire? And the young lads of the children of Israel spread out in the wilderness to find nests and they took the mothers with the young. . . . The birds made haste to leave their nests and went far into the wilderness and mounted to the summit of Mount Sinai, to the place where no man could overtake them. Only the mothers sitting on their tender children stayed in the nests and waited trembling for the young to grow and their wings to sprout.

And not a bird was seen in the neighborhood, and the joyful chirping was no longer heard.

III And one day the birds heard: "Moses is giving the Torah to Israel on Mount Sinai!" All the birds from round about assembled and sent emissaries to Moses. The bird-emissaries flew and soared aloft to the upper reaches of Mount Sinai and found Moses standing with a chisel in his hand, and he was engraving on two stone tablets.

They stood on the tablets and said: "Moses! The Torah which you are giving to Israel—what is written therein?"

Moses said: "Thou shalt not kill!" Said the birds: "And do you know that the children of Israel have found birds' nests and taken the mothers with the young?"

Moses was silent. Said the birds: "You are silent, but we will not be silent, we will beat with our wings, we will chirp ceaselessly, nor will we allow you to speak until you write in the Torah one commandment, one sentence for the protection of the birds!"

Moses stood a moment occupied with his thoughts, and then lifted shining eyes to the birds, and said to them: "You are right, my friends. I will write it so in the Torah!"

The emissaries returned with the good tidings to those that had sent them. One day passed, two days passed. And on the third day in the morning, when all the children of Israel were gathered at the foot of the mountain, the birds came in great numbers, one flock after another like grey clouds, and they surrounded the mountain and hovered and trembled in the air. . . . And Moses read the words of the (Cont. on page 6)

World Wide News Briefs

BEST BOOK AWARDS INCLUDE KLEIN

NEW YORK (JTA) — Five awards carrying cash prizes totalling \$800 for 1951's best works of Jewish interest in the fiction, poetry and juvenile fields were presented at the annual meeting of Jewish Book Council of America, sponsored by the Jewish Welfare Board.

The \$250 Samuel H. Daroff Fiction Award, named for its donor, Samuel H. Daroff, Philadelphia communal leader, went to Zelda Popkin, New York, for her "Quiet Street." The \$250 Isaac Siegel Memorial Award for 1951's best Jewish juvenile in English was given to Mrs. Sydney Taylor, of New York, for her "All-Of-A-Kind Family." The three Harry Kover Memorial Awards of \$100 each went to: A. M. Klein, Montreal, for his cumulative contributions to English-Jewish poetry; Mordecai Jaffe, New York, for his Yiddish translation of "Anthology of Hebrew Poetry"; and to Prof. Hillel Bavit, New York, for his cumulative contributions to Hebrew poetry.

QUEEN RECEIVES BRITISH JEWRY CHIEFS

London (JTA) — Representatives of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and of the Anglo-Jewish association this week visited Queen Elizabeth and presented to her an address of sympathy on the death of her father, the late King George VI, and a message of congratulations on her accession to the throne. Lord Justice Cohn, introduced Dr. Abraham Cohen, president of the Board, and Ewen Montague, president of the A.J.A. The Queen shook hands with both men. Also present on the Jewish delegation were representatives of Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie and of the Sephardic community in Britain. The Queen thanked the Jewish leaders for their messages.

WON'T CUT MUTUAL SECURITY AID TO ISRAEL — A headlong rush to chop down the Administration's Mutual Security Aid program, already cut more than a billion dollars by the House Foreign Affairs committee, was stemmed this week when economic and technical aid allocations for Israel totalling \$79,000,000 came under debate in the House of Representatives.

A move to cut aid to Israel was spearheaded by Rep. Thurman Chatham, who had made an unsuccessful fight against these items when the aid bill was in committee. His amendment, reducing economic aid to Israel from \$76,000,000 and aid to Palestine Arab refugees from \$55,000,000 to \$50,000,000 each, was defeated by a vote of 103 to 22.

TRUMAN TO VETO MCCARRAN BILL

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Informed circles here this week expressed conviction that President Truman would veto the McCarran-Walter omnibus immigration bill and the belief that liberal opponents of the measure would be able to muster sufficient strength in the upper house to sustain the veto.

The McCarran bill was adopted by the Senate by a voice vote when the opposition collapsed after a bitter two-week fight on the measure which has been denounced as racist and discriminatory and as infringing civil rights.

The failure of the Senate as a whole to recognize the issues at stake in the McCarran bill and the apathy with which the majority of the chamber regarded the question was strikingly stressed when the final vote was taken. As throughout most of the debate, when few senators remained to hear the arguments, only about a dozen members were on the floor when Vice President Alben Barkley called for the vote.

NEW YORK TO NAME EGYPT PERMITS ISRAEL CARGO THROUGH SUEZ

NEW YORK (JTA) — The first cargo of goods bound for Israel to pass unobstructed through the Suez Canal, has arrived here. The cargo consisted of a shipload of beans from Abyssinia valued at 89,000 pounds. The vessel which carried it was the Italian freighter Isola di Capriera. The shipment was clearly "entered" on the ship's manifest, which was inspected by the Egyptian authorities.

ISRAEL MERCY KILLING STIRS INTEREST — TEL AVIV (JTA) — The arraignment of a mother on the charge of killing her five-year-old son, the first mercy killing in Israel's history, is arousing great interest throughout the country.

When the defendant appeared before a magistrate here this week the child's physician testified that he had informed the mother that the boy, born mute and mentally retarded, had no chance of recovering. According to the prosecutor, who said that he believes that the physician's verdict convinced the mother to kill the child, she took him to the seashore and drowned him. The mother told the police that the child's death was an accident, but, according to the prosecutor, she later confessed to the police that she had murdered the boy.

BRITAIN WILL NOT INTERVIEW WITH GERMANY

London (JTA) — The British Government has no intention at the present time of approaching the German Government to urge it to take concrete steps in the matter of Israeli reparations claims, it was indicated here. Sources close to the government said that Britain had throughout the negotiations considered them "exclusively an affair be-

GERMANS BREAK PLEDGE — SHARETT — NEW YORK (JTA) — The resignation of Prof. Franz Boehm, head of the German delegation at the negotiations at The Hague, and of his deputy Dr. Otto Kuester, is in effect a breach of faith on the part of the German Government in regard to its moral responsibilities towards the Jewish people, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett declared in New York this week.