

The Shofar

December, 1991/January, 1992



UJC Exempted from Taxes, Allowance Granted for Members' Donations

The Inland Revenue Department has informed The UJC that for Hong Kong income tax purposes, members and others may now deduct contributions to the Congregation as tax exempt, charitable donations (for details, see enclosed letter). Also, in recognition of The UJC's status as a charitable institution, the IRD has granted the Congregation exemption from various taxes including stamp duty, entertainment, and business registration fees.

'Subject to certain limitations,' according to the ruling, 'an allowance is granted for tax purposes under the Inland Revenue Ordinance, for donations of money to charitable institutions or trusts of a public character. As your organization has been recognized as such, donations of money made to your organization will be allowable.'

UJC Treasurer Victor Falk emphasized that 'this applies to *donations* only.' He said that Inland Revenue has asked The UJC to be careful when providing receipts to distinguish donations from other payments [e.g., subscription fees] which the Treasurer has duly noted.

'Having been successful in obtaining this charitable status,' the treasurer said, 'we much hope that members will now take advantage of this privilege and make donations to the UJC, especially as they will be able to obtain tax relief in Hong Kong on them.'

Any member who has mislaid his or her receipt for (now tax deductible) past donations should contact Victor Falk.

Jewish Club Offers Holiday 'Winter Camp'

The Jewish Club has scheduled seven, half-day sessions for children during the winter holidays that will include stories, games, arts and crafts and lunch.

They will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on December 23, 27, 30 and January 2 and 3 at The Jewish Club Melbourne Plaza, 4/f and on December 24 and 31 at Synagogue Ohel Leah (70 Robinson Road).

The cost per session is \$100. Because of the limited number of spaces available, parents are advised to register early by calling Mrs. Ziva Tamari at 525-0387 or Mrs. Idit Shem Tov at 858-1929.

Documentary, Discussion on Antisemitism Scheduled for January in Jewish Club, Lecture Series for February

A Thames Television documentary on anti-semitism will be screened January 15 (part one) and January 29 (part two) as the first of a joint UJC-Jewish Club adult education series of talks and events for 1992 gets underway.

Beginning February 11, the newly-arrived vice-consul at the Israeli Consulate, Mark Regev, will conduct a weekly, seven-part lecture and discussion series on Israeli politics and society. Details of this and other adult education programs under planning will be announced in subsequent issues of *The Shofar* and *Jewish Club News*.

Each showing of the documentary will start at 6:30 p.m., followed by discussion led by a member of the community. The cost is \$25 per person including light refreshments.

The title, *The Longest Hatred*, derives from the continuity and intensity of hostility toward Jews that can be traced back over more than two thousand years, 'the longest and deepest hatred in human history,' according to the Catholic theologian Edward H. Flannery. The documentary explores the roots of this hatred and, according to a description of its contents, asks 'what has fed it and ensured its survival. What responsibility does Christianity carry for the Nazi horrors? To what extent, fifty years after the Holocaust, does the European heritage of hatred remain intact?'

'As Eastern Europe [and the Soviet Union] undergoes tumultuous change, antisemitism has surfaced as a dangerous force. The current resurgence of anti-Jewish feeling, East and West, means that antisemitism can no longer be dismissed as yesterday's racism.'

'For Zionists, history has come full circle and the rightful and necessary legacy is the Jewish state of Israel. Arabs profoundly disagree, and the future peace not only of the region, but of the world, may be tied to the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. To what extent does racial bigotry and religious fanaticism fuel this conflict? What is the connection between anti-Zionism and the growth of antisemitism in the Middle East?'

The documentary considers these controversial questions in the light of both academic research and original investigation. By exposing the myths and stereotypes which underpin antisemitism, *The Longest Hatred* makes an important contribution to our understanding of this persistent phenomenon.

'Flexibility' is the Watchword as Trustees Opt for Modified Redevelopment Plan

Scheme Centers Club Activities on First Floor of Residential Tower, Offers Limited Penthouse & Rooftop Use

At a meeting with community leaders December 2nd in The Jewish Club, trustees endorsed a redevelopment scheme said by their consultants to maximize and make the most efficient use of space, keep additional construction and other costs to the community to a minimum, and allow expansion or contraction as needed. 'Flexibility is the name of the game,' one trustee said.

A space of nearly 46,750 square feet (4,750 square meters) has been allocated for the new Club in the redevelopment at 70 Robinson Road. Community members had voted earlier this year in favor of a penthouse scheme that 'provides spectacular views of the whole harbour and Peak with ready access to a rooftop sun-deck from express lifts dedicated to Club use,' according to a synopsis of the plans considered. But the consultants maintained this would entail additional costs of around 65 million dollars, restrict the potential for larger functions, reduce the number of service apartments and limit the space available for dedicated worship facilities for other congregations. It would also make the principal facilities (the penthouse) remote from other Club facilities, they said, and restrict penthouse use because of religious dictates that preclude taking lifts on Shabbat and at other times.

The plan favored by the trustees, known as the 'Tower One First Floor Scheme' [T1FF], provides 'two principal Club spaces with light and commanding views over the resident's lawn, Synagogue and surrounding gardens. . . The space is flexible and capable of seating large functions' and allows for the addition of balconies or 'conversion into residential accommodation, as required.' The scheme also provides two function rooms at the penthouse level 'with controlled access' and 'access to the rooftop for sunlit recreational space, without the need for independent lifts and consequent loss of G.F.A. [gross floor area].' The consultants estimated that each of the function rooms could seat up to 40 people.

Head of The Jewish Club's redevelopment committee Alan Goldstein challenged drawings from the consultants, contending the perspectives shown from the first floor facilities were inaccurate and misleading. The actual views, he said, would be less attractive.

Proponents of the T1FF scheme said the main difference between the two plans was the location of the restaurant

(penthouse versus the first floor). A third scheme under consideration provided for a first floor restaurant and 'fun pool' at the same level, but was rejected as being too inflexible and impractical for various reasons. All three schemes include provisions for educational and recreational facilities including an indoor swimming pool.

Representatives of the consultants (Jones Lang Wooten and Wilkinson & Cilley) pointed out that new Government regulations on construction would become effective December 28. Because of the 'uncertainty of the implications' of the laws, they said, it was urgent that joint venture partner Swire Properties submit plans to Government without delay. In response to questioning, the consultants were unable to clarify how the new regulations would affect the development.

Trustees rejected requests from several of the community leaders for further study of the plans, saying they were unanimous in their support of the T1FF scheme and planned to proceed accordingly. They also emphasized the need for flexibility in planning and locating actual facilities, showing a decided reluctance to make any commitments which might prove difficult to support at later stages financially, operationally, or otherwise.

In view of the fact that use of the facilities and income at the temporary premises in Melbourne Plaza have been considerably less than originally projected, Club consultants called attention to the financial burden of operating a much larger space at a location less likely to draw lunchtime trade. The indoor swimming pool alone, one participant pointed out, is larger than the entire temporary premises. Present health club facilities in the temporary premises, it was noted, are seldom used more than once or twice a day.

Under all three plans, a yearly operating deficit of around four million dollars was projected. Trustees generally accepted that this would have to come out of trust revenues. The actual financial terms of the redevelopment agreement have not been publicly disclosed although it is generally known that the community will receive substantial income from the sale of apartments in the development.

Questions about religious functions within the new Club have not been clearly resolved although all three plans presented showed dedicated space for UJC and Chabad Lubavitch worship facilities.



Looking Ahead . . . a strictly personal view

'Listen to their opinion? We have told them our principles and stance so there is no need to listen.'

— Wang Pingqing, vice-director of the New China News Agency about the Legislative Council debate

It would be easy to romanticize (but I won't) the battle Alan Goldstein has fought as head of the Jewish Club's redevelopment committee to obtain the best possible facilities for the Jewish community at 70 Robinson Road. There's a natural inclination to sympathize with the underdog, the lone crusader, David in his confrontation with Goliath. After all, isn't this the classic case of a dreamer, a visionary fighting almost alone against powerful, self-perpetuating opponents for something as insubstantial as the right to enjoy 'precious' commodities like fresh air and sunshine in a crowded, noisy city? What value can things like that have and how could you possibly measure them? Which consulting firm does this kind of analysis and evaluation?

Good try, Alan, but what made you think that anything but the best interests of the community would prevail when all the figures were laid on the table? Of course it's nice to imagine that the lovely outdoor space traded away on our behalf would be translated into some kind of equivalent in this massive development. But what prudent mind would factor such a thing into the equation if it cost an extra 60 or 65 million dollars? We can certainly trust the trustees and the developer's consulting firm if that's what they say the figure is. Console yourself with the fact that the Club will partially overlook the spacious lawn and outdoor pool for the residents. And remember, the purpose of the trust is to provide religious, educational, and charitable support for the Jewish community, not specifically social or recreational facilities.

It's fine to imagine that an attractive, glamorous club with penthouse restaurant and patio where we could breathe mountain air, enjoy a panoramic view, swim, barbeque, sit in a jacuzzi and watch our children and grandchildren play would draw bigger numbers than our planners projected. It's nice to think that a showcase facility could somehow be a powerful enough attraction to draw more uncommitted, unaffiliated members into our community. But what responsible leaders would take such a daring risk spread over nearly 100 years, charged as they are with administering the hundreds of millions of dollars that are likely to come into their hands within a year or two? Were our original benefactor Jacob Sassoon alive today, what would he say to such foolishness? Surely, he never had such a grand vision in mind when he handed over a piece of property 88 years ago to be 'used and enjoyed by the Jewish community.'

For visionaries, the cost of building castles in the sky is very little. For Alan Goldstein, it cost thousands of hours and application of valuable expertise as an engineer, un-

paralleled dedication, perhaps, in the entire history of our Jewish community. Although based on anecdotal evidence only, it furthermore seems that in the long course of this process he put up with repeated frustration in his efforts to pin down facts, figures, and the true intentions of those involved.

Unfortunately, Alan Goldstein's experience is not unique among those who have dedicated themselves to Jewish community work. But thanks to a persistent, 'can-do' approach to problems, he managed at least to rescue us from the bowels of the tower where the developer had originally situated Club facilities by agreement with the trustees, the 'mole hole' as he called it. This is truly something for which the entire community should be very thankful.

This is more than an account of a castle that will never get built, however, or the phenomenon we can now see of how communities may fail to recognize or waste the all too rare and valiant efforts of their individual members.

The trustees are known by most of us to be sincere, well-meaning men with the near-impossible task of looking after and balancing the interests of this most diverse of Jewish communities anywhere. It may well be seen more clearly in retrospect that their decision was the only responsible one in the light of all known factors at the time it was reached. The argument here, therefore, is not necessarily with the actual decision reached, but with how it was reached.

It was reached with only six people in the Jewish community knowing full details of the deal with the developer (until at least a very late stage), a fact which made intelligent comment or suggestions from the larger community during the long planning process virtually impossible. The question that will continue to be asked for years to come is: Why the secrecy?

At the end of the day, when it became clear that there were no options except to accept what the trustees had already decided, there was one more call, forlorn-sounding, perhaps naive, for better communications between the trustees and community members, to which trustees could be heard murmuring their assent.

I returned home from that meeting shaken, upset, and depressed by the feeling that members of the community, no matter what their tenure or religious view, had been deprived of an active and genuine dialogue on arguably the most important issue the community has ever had to deal with. We had been treated to the form but not the substance of a dialogue with all the give and take that word implies. This affront made me realize more clearly than ever before just how flawed the process is.

Strength derives from conviction that is clearly informed and strongly felt. The community will no doubt adapt and live well with whatever form the new Club takes. The more essential question to the community's health is when will it obtain the right to fully participate in the important decisions that concern it? When will the realization come that the only restriction on the right of the governed to exercise their will is the collective will of the governed themselves?

■ Bob Green

Readers' replies invited



Why Can't the Jews Be More Like Him?

CHUTZPAH

By Alan M. Dershowitz.
Illustrated. 378 pp. Boston
Little, Brown & Company. \$22.95

By Sidney Zion

When I hear that still another American Jew is writing about being a Jew in America, I reach for my pillow.

But Alan M. Dershowitz is to sleep what my Aunt Geshka's horseradish was to the colon.

'American Jews need more chutzpah,' he says. It is the opening line of his book. There are a lot of Jews I know who will not want to read the next line. More chutzpah? From the man whose name is practically synonymous with the word that, like him, needs no introduction?

'Notwithstanding the stereotype' — this is his next line — 'we are not pushy or assertive enough for our own good and for the good of our more vulnerable brothers and sisters in other parts of the world.' And he goes on: 'Despite our apparent success, deep down we see ourselves as second-class citizens — as guests in another people's land.'

I think most Jews believe this. They feel the country really belongs to the goyim, that uneasy lies the head that wears even an invisible yarmulke. And of course there is objective evidence that goes far beyond synagogue desecrations and other overt acts of anti-Semitism to support them.

There has not been a Jew on the United States Supreme Court for 22 years, despite a disproportionate number of Jews in the legal pantheon. There are plenty of prominent Jewish Republicans, but not one Jew in the Bush Cabinet. No Jew has ever been Speaker of the House or majority leader of the Senate (or minority leader or whip for that matter), and no Jew has ever sought the nomination for President or even Vice President from a major party, much less been nominated. In Israel, Jews have proved themselves to be among the ablest soldiers and spies in the world, but there are no Jews on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and if there is a ranking Jew in the C.I.A. is the the agency's best-kept secret.

No Jewish outcry has been heard in the land against this political apartheid, in spite of the flourishing existence of a plethora of organizations that look out for Jewish interests, including the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress.

It would be wonderful to believe that the reason for the silence is that Jews are too secure to worry about these things anymore, and anyway such demands would smack of quotas, which are ultimately bad for Jews. You actually hear this kind of talk, sotto voce, in Jewish leadership circles. The short answer is, if we're so secure, why do we need an Anti-Defamation League? The long answer is a belly laugh.

In 'Chutzpah,' Mr. Dershowitz, a Harvard Law School professor whose books include 'Reversal of Fortune,' doesn't go for laughs, he goes to the *kishkes* (next door to the solar plexus). American Jews are scared witless, he says, are afraid to rock the boat — 'a boat whose owner, they fear, may ask them to disembark.'

A hundred years after their hearty ancestors arrived here in the holds of rickety boats, Jews remain in thrall to the first commandment of the ghetto: Thou shalt not shame thee in the eyes of the gentiles.

With a respectful eye to the past, Mr. Dershowitz acknowledges that the Jews who came scurrying to Ellis Island at the turn of the century had to worry about what the goyim thought, that they were indeed

'guests in another people's land.'

Their sons and daughters, fighting to make their way against anti-immigrant bigotry, coming of age during the Depression and in the shadow of the Holocaust, were 'understandably fearful of demanding equality.' Even the subsequent generation,



those who reached political maturity after World War II, after the establishment of Israel, after the elimination of most barriers to economic, educational, residential and social acceptability, are excused by Mr. Dershowitz. They had achieved status so quickly, they simply couldn't risk offending the real establishment.

But no more Mr. Nice Guy.

'We must no longer accept as inevitable,' Mr. Dershowitz declares, 'that American presidents must all be Christians, that anchorpersons on the network news may not 'look Jewish,' or that there will always be ceilings on the proportion of Jews in our great universities, on our courts, and in our corporations.'

Is it in the hands of the Jews themselves to change things? Is that what Mr. Dershowitz is saying? Yes indeed! His book is a polemic based on autobiography (a redundancy; his *life* is a polemic) detailing his fight against anti-Semitism, from the great Wall Street law firms to Harvard Yard to the Soviet Union, with stop-offs at the State Department, the Defense Department and the courts. He knows more than he would like to know about what Jews have faced and still face from their enemies. Yet he insists 'There is nothing that Jews cannot accomplish in America, unless we choose not to strive for it.' The barrier is *shanda* — 'fear of embarrassment in front of our hosts.' The cure is chutzpah — 'assertive insistence on first-class status among our peers.'

I can already hear the derisive, if nervous, laughter from the Jewish Establishment. Is this Dersho-

witz meshuga? Does he think we don't want to go first class? Doesn't he realize that discrimination is imposed from the outside? Anyway, where does he get this second-class business? Jews have it damn good in America. So we can't be President of the United States, so what? Who wants it? If we had a Jewish President they'd blame us, doesn't he know that?

Whip-smart and savvy as he is, I wonder if Mr. Der-showitz knows what a hard sell he has undertaken. Precisely because he is so right about the depth of the *shanda* syndrome in American Jewish life, it is inevitable that he will be met by this sort of double talk, double think — and unless he's doubly careful, he could end up with a double hernia.

The influential Jews he's talking about may quake before "the 'real' Americans", but they are positively fierce when another Jew accuses them of faintheartedness.

Mr. Dershowitz can take care of himself, for sure, but can today's American Jews — the next generation to whom he appeals — take care of *themselves*? Assuming that first-class citizenship with all of its trappings is within their reach, have they got the chutzpah to grasp it, or does *shanda* already cluck in their bones?

Obviously, two leaps of faith are required to accept Mr. Dershowitz's argument. As great an advocate as he is, he can prove neither that the Jews have the key in their collective pocket nor that they are capable of wanting to use it. So what he does instead is to present his life as a Jew. He is too smart to call himself a role model — or maybe he doesn't have quite the chutz-pah — but you don't have to have Mr. Dershowitz's I.Q. to figure out the ultimate question he poses: Why can't the Jews be more like me?

He has every right to ask it. He has written a bold, powerful book because he has lived a bold, powerful life. Let anyone or any government try to defile Jewish honor, let Jews be attacked for being Jews anywhere in the world, and Alan Dershowitz is on the spot, at the ready.

He became co-counsel to Natan Sharansky immediately after the K.G.B. arrested him in 1977 on phony espionage charges. This was a case to be won not in courts but in diplomatic back rooms and in the world news media.

Demonstrating his considerable skills in both arenas, Mr. Dershowitz played a key part in orchestrating the nine-year struggle that finally delivered the great refusenik in triumph to Israel. But if you thought, as I did, that the Israeli Government was always in Mr. Sharansky's corner, you have a surprise coming. Mr. Dershowitz reveals here, for the first time, that the Israelis wanted no part of Mr. Sharansky from the outset, and for a long time thereafter. Why? Because he was not, in the Israeli Government's view, a 'Prisoner of Zion.' Mr. Sharansky's sin was to demand human rights for all Soviet dissidents, not just Jews.

Mr. Dershowitz writes here more in sorrow than in outrage. He is sensitive to *Realpolitik*, understanding that Israel did not wish to engage the Soviet Union beyond the desire for Jewish immigration. Moreover, he worries, even as he breaks this story, that it will provide ammunition to the Israeli-bashers in the press and the United States Government. But just as he rejected Israeli advice to forget Mr. Sharansky, he insists on his right to criticize Israel when it is wrong.

This motif is played throughout the book. Mr. Der-showitz is a noted civil libertarian. He loves Israel. He knows well that there are loads of important, powerful people who do not love Israel. He knows that many who support Israel nonetheless insist that it live by a pristine standard never required of any other nation, including the United States.

Time was when it took a secure Jew to criticize Israel. Now, with the intifada, and after the Lebanon war, it takes a secure Jew to defend Israel. Mr. Der-showitz is secure enough to do both, but wise enough to know where to draw the line. He will ask more of Israel than he will of the Arab nations, but he won't

ask more than he will of the United States. In today's intellectual milieu this sets him apart.

Mr. Dershowitz is so secure as an American and a Jew that he now represents Jonathan Pollard, the American Jew who received a life sentence after pleading guilty to spying for Israel. This case, which practically induced cardiac arrest across the Jewish leadership spectrum — "the ultimate *shanda fur de goyim*," Mr. Der-showitz says here — was the nightmare come true for Jews who worry about 'dual loyalty,' and it's a rare Jew indeed who does not worry about that age-old charge, predating by centuries the renaissance State of Israel.

But Mr. Dershowitz explains that he decided not to check his civil libertarianism at the door just because the spy was a Jew. The sentence was wildly excessive — Americans spying for the Soviet Union get on average nothing like life in prison. Besides, who in history ever got the maximum after pleading guilty? The Government clearly double-crossed Mr. Pollard.

'What shocked me,' Mr. Dershowitz says, 'was the deafening silence of a community that speaks out so loudly against injustices perpetrated on others.' Shock? How could he be shocked by this? Doesn't his book tell us that the Jewish leadership in the United States remains in thrall to *shanda*? Did he expect them to shed it over Mr. Pollard?

Of course not. But I believe that he was shocked, and that he will always be shocked at the Jews of silence, Jews who have nothing to fear but fear itself.

Alan Dershowitz turns 53 this year. If he keeps thinking his way he may never be happy, but he will never grow old. In the meantime, his book ought to be required reading for Jews, and on the suggested list for goyim. Everybody can use a little chutzpah.

Reprinted from *The New York Times Book Review*
Contributed by Martha Josephson, Robert Meyer

'There is nothing that Jews cannot accomplish in America, unless we choose not to strive for it.' The barrier is *shanda* — 'fear of embarrassment in front of our hosts.' The cure is chutzpah — 'assertive insistence on first-class status among our peers.'

Applications Available for Summer Camp in California's Santa Cruz Mountains

There's everything from tennis, dance, and drama to biking and backpacking for summer campers in California's Santa Cruz Mountains.

One, two, and three week sessions costing from US\$495 to \$1225 will run from June 16 to August 9 for third to 12th-graders at Camp Swig, a Reform-oriented camp operated by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

According to the application form, the camp is geared to 'challenge and actively involve campers in creative Jewish experiences.'

Activities at the forested, 200-acre site, four miles from Saratoga, California, include sports (swimming, basketball, softball, soccer, football, volleyball, and frisbee), nature and campcraft (hiking, wilderness skills, campouts and campfires), the arts (music, photography, video, batik, ceramics, quilting, silkscreening, graphics, drawing, painting, weaving, and puppet, mask and candlemaking) and special programs such as a performing arts festival, social action program, music concerts, and a sports day.

Many of the camp counselors are former Swig campers. The senior staff is composed of rabbis and educators, rabbinic and Jewish education students, and accomplished Jewish artists and specialists who have years of camping experience.

'We know that every camper is unique,' a camp brochure says. 'Your child will experience the fun of living with other children his or her own age in a cooperative and loving family environment. . . Our experience shows that upon return to their synagogues, Camp Swig campers of all ages display a strong commitment and enthusiasm for their Judaism.'

For more information, please contact The UJC or Veronica Frankenberg.

Effort Underway to Arrange Screening Here for Tay Sachs

Testing for Tay Sachs, the best known of the 'Jewish diseases,' may become available here if enough prospective parents show interest.

Tay Sachs is a lethal disorder of excess fat storage in the central nervous system that causes progressive mental deterioration and death by five years of age. Because of modern technology it is now, in some sense, a 'controllable' disease.

The disease is carried by a recessive gene. This means that a person can have one gene for Tay Sachs and still not get the disease. Such a person is called a carrier. If two carriers marry, the odds are that each will provide a Tay Sachs gene in half their sperm and eggs. Therefore, on the average, one-quarter of their offspring will get Tay Sachs disease.

One in 30 Ashkenazic Jews is a carrier (and one in 3,600 is actually afflicted with the disease). If both parents are carriers, the fetus can be tested in utero (in the uterus) at the end of 14 weeks of pregnancy.

The test for Tay Sachs carriers is a simple blood test — brief, inexpensive, and painless. There is no reason, religious or otherwise, for any Jew of childbearing age to avoid having such a blood test — for Tay Sachs or any other Jewish disease that is preventable.

If enough persons are interested, it may be possible to arrange screening in Hong Kong at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Please call Anne Godfrey at 873-0464 for more information.

Carmel Pre-School Plans Mother/Infant Music Classes

Infants (with help from their mothers) between 11 months and two years old are urged to enroll now for a 'music and movement' class being organized by Carmel Pre-School. For more information, call co-ordinator/instructor Lee-Ann Touyz at 517-1990 between 5-6 p.m.

Jews By Choice Study Program Starts January, 15 Sessions Scheduled

Organizer Martha Josephson has announced details of what she describes as a "terrific 'conversion' study program provided by Rabbi Sam Joseph."

She said response has been enthusiastic and expressed confidence that those participating would find the program very beneficial. She noted that Rabbi Joseph would be 'monitoring our progress throughout.'

A course syllabus has been mailed to each participant who has ordered the course books. Any questions should be directed to Martha Josephson (865-0118) or Kathy Goeld (812-6549).

Meetings will be from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The first session is scheduled for January 23 at Kathy Goeld's apartment, #2191, Tower 17, Parkview. Subsequent meetings are on the following dates, venues to be announced: February 20, 27; March 5, 19, 26; April 9, 23, 30; May 7, 21; June 4, 11, 18; July 2. Please mark your calendars now!

The Shofar

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The Shofar

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A Letter to the World from Jerusalem

I am not a creature from another planet, as you seem to believe. I am a Jerusalemite — like yourselves, a man of flesh and blood. I am a citizen of my city, an integral part of my people.

I have a few things to get off my chest. Because I am not a diplomat, I do not have to mince words. I do not have to please you or even persuade you. I owe you nothing. You did not build this city; you do not live in it; you did not defend it when they came to destroy it. And we will be damned if we will let you take it away.

There was a Jerusalem before there was a New York. When Berlin, Moscow, London and Paris were miasmal forest and swamp, there was a thriving Jewish community here. It gave something to the world, which you nations have rejected ever since you established yourselves — a humane moral code.

Here the prophets walked, their words flashing like forked lightning. Here a people who wanted nothing more than to be left alone fought off waves of heathen would-be conquerors, bled and died on the battlements, hurled themselves into the flames of their burning Temple, rather than surrender; and when finally overwhelmed by sheer numbers and led away into captivity, swore that before they forgot Jerusalem, they would see their tongues cleave to their palates, and their right arm wither.

For two pain-filled millennia, while we were your unwelcome guests, we prayed to return to this city. Three times a day, we petitioned the Almighty: 'Gather us from the four corners of the world, bring us upright to our land; return in mercy to Jerusalem, Thy city, and dwell in it as Thou promised.'

On every Yom Kippur and Passover, we fervently voiced the hope that next year would find us in Jerusalem. Your inquisitions, pogroms, expulsions, the ghettos into which you jammed us, your forced baptisms, your quota systems, your genteel anti-semitism, and the final, unspeakable horror, the Holocaust (and worse, your terrifying disinterest in it) — all these have not broken us. They may have sapped what little moral strength you still possessed, but they forged us into steel. Do you think you can break us now, after all we have been through? Do you really believe that after Dachau and Auschwitz we are frightened by your threats of blockades and sanctions? We have been to Hell and back — a Hell of your making. What more could you possibly have in your arsenal that could scare us?

I have watched this city bombarded twice by nations calling themselves civilized. In 1948, while you looked on apathetically, I saw women and children blown to smithereens, this after we had agreed to your request to internationalize the city. It was a deadly combination that did the job: British officers, Arab gunners and American-made cannons.

And then the savage sacking of the Old City: the wilful slaughter, the wanton destruction of every synagogue and religious school; the desecration of Jew-

ish cemeteries; the sale by a ghoulish government of tombstones for building materials, for poultry runs, army camps — even latrines. And you never said a word.

You never breathed the slightest protest when Jordanians shut off the holiest of holy places, the Western Wall, in violation of pledges they made after the war — a war they waged, incidentally, against a decision of the UN. Not a murmur came from you whenever the legionnaires in their spiked helmets casually opened fire upon our citizens, from behind the walls.

Your hearts bled when Berlin came under siege. You rushed your airlift 'to save the gallant Berliners.' But you did not send one ounce of food when Jews starved in besieged Jerusalem. You thundered against the wall which East Germans ran through the middle of the German capital, but not one peep out of you about that other wall, the one that tore through the heart of Jerusalem.

And when the same thing happened 20 years later, and the Arabs again unleashed a savage, unprovoked bombardment of the Holy City, did any of you do anything? The only time you came to life was when the city was at last reunited. Then you wrung your hands and spoke loftily of 'justice' and the need for the 'Christian' quality of turning the other cheek.

The truth is — and you know it deep inside your gut — you would prefer the city destroyed rather than have it governed by Jews. No matter how diplomatically you phrase it, the age-old prejudices seep out of every word.

Our return to the city has tied your theology in knots; perhaps you had better re-examine your catechisms. After when we have been through, we are not passively going to accommodate ourselves to the twisted idea that we are to suffer eternal homelessness, until we accept your Saviour.

For the first time since the year 70, there is now complete religious freedom for all in Jerusalem. For the first time since the Romans put the torch to the Temple, everyone has equal rights. (You preferred to have some more equal than others.) We loathe the sword — but it was you who forced us to take it up. We crave peace — but we are not going back to the peace of 1948, as you would like us to.

We are at home. It has a lovely sound for a nation you have willed to wander over the face of the globe. We are not leaving. We have redeemed the pledge made by our forefathers: Jerusalem is being rebuilt. 'Next year' — and the year after, and after, and after, until the end of time — 'in Jerusalem.'

□ Eliezer Ben Yisrael

Reprinted from *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, November 2. Contributed by Professor Michel Millidot.



ATTR girl, refined, coll grad, seeks sincere, non orth yng gent, 26-32. Obj. Matr. Bx 4777 c/o JP

American born, beautiful girl of 25, highly educated, member of prosperous family of Polish-Russian descent wishes to meet attractive, personable medical doctor or dentist no older than 30, will consider new Soviet arrivals and will extend all necessary assistance. Non-Orthodox. Object matrimony. Box 4810 c/o JP

ATTRACTIVE widow, 59, 5'6" modern, educated, financially independent, non-orth, seeks gentleman in same category. obj. matr. Box 4812 c/o JP

Widow, seeking man bet 50 and 60 to share my life with. Must be financ. secure, non-orth. Matr. Box 4820 c/o JP

ATTR girl, refined, coll grad, seeks sincere, non Orth yng gent, 26-32. Obj. Matr. Box 4777 c/o JP.

ATTR blonde, blue eyed Hebrew teacher, wishes to meet man, mid 60's. Obj. Matr. Box 4799 c/o JP

Attr, refined woman seeks to meet man at least 5'7 in early 60's. Matr. Box 4809 c/o JP

PARENTS introduce their beautiful daughter, 23, honor coll grad going for Mstrs. seeks non orth prof. 24-28. Reply fully name, addr, tel. obj matr. Box 4816 c/o JP

AMERICAN GIRL is looking to meet average American man. Non-orth man 22-27, 1 am 5'6". Matr. Box 4817 c/o JP

YOUNG MAN 5'11" handsome, articulate coll grad, Jr. exec, seeks attr, slender, charming, yng lady, conserv, 21-23, currently employed, obj matr. recent photo appreciated. Box 4819 c/o JP

YOUNG MAN 5'8", 31 yr, warm outgoing personality, wishes to meet affectionate sincere yng. lady. Obj. Matr. Box 4818 c/o JP

Seeking lady over 40, millionairess, to match gentleman, same values. Please send late picture. Marriage is desired. Box 4794 c/o JP.

SUCCESSFUL self employed stone importer, 26, 5'10", fine character & personality & handsome, seeks fine, attr. girl, 19-25 (coll not needed). Only Sh. Shab. Plse send photo. Matr. Box 4801 c/o JP

YNG lawyer, Hi public positions, tall, handsome, seeks, religious pretty lady 29-34, must have proper educa & ready to share a life of involvement in communal activity travelling & other interests. obj. matr Box 4813 c/o JP

ORTH man 58, educ. fine char. 5'5" good pos. seeks orth. attr. balabalsh lady to 50, matr. Box 4814 c/o JP

Coming Up at The Jewish Club

Tuesday, January 7

Movie Night

Wednesday, January 8

Backgammon

Sunday, January 12 or 19

Israeli dancing for children

Wednesday, January 15

Adult Education (see page 1)

Wednesday, January 22

Bingo

Wednesday, January 29

Adult Education (see page 1)

Wednesday, February 12

Movie Night

Saturday, February 29

Spanish Night

Wednesday, March 4

'Musical Mosaic of Judaism'

Wednesday, March 11

Movie Night

Sunday, March 22

Purim Party

In addition to the above, there are regular Israeli dancing sessions on Monday nights (January, February, March and continuing), classes by Rabbi Lopian on Thursdays in January, and joint UJC/Jewish Club adult education classes on Tuesdays in February and March. For more details, contact The Jewish Club.

UJC Calendar

Friday, December 20

Shabbat service, hosted by Henry Goldstein, Carol Betson
Address: Estoril Court, Block 2, Apt. 40D Tel: 526-7337

Friday, January 10

Shabbat service, hosted by Tomas and Veronica Frankenberg
Address: House Number 7, Pacific View, 22 Cape Road, Chung Hom Kok Tel: 813-8627

Friday, January 24

Shabbat service, hosted by Simon and Robin Krieger
Address: 25A Harston, 109 Repulse Bay Road Tel: 803-1256

Friday, February 14 and 28

Shabbat services, venues to be announced

Friday, March 6

Shabbat service with Rabbi Ken Roseman at The American Club, followed by buffet dinner at The Jewish Club

Friday, March 20

Purim service, BBQ Buffet and party, The American Club, Tai Tam

Friday, April 17

Passover Seder, Aberdeen Marina Club

Please note that home Shabbat services start at 8 p.m., followed by a Kiddush and Oneg Shabbat. Please call the hosts if you plan to attend to help them with their planning.

*The United Jewish Congregation
of Hong Kong*
G.P. O. Box 6083, Hong Kong

