

Fact and Opinion

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Chassidic Bank Tellers, Computer Programmers, Etc.

Would you believe a bank teller with *payith*, wearing a *yarmulke*? It could happen. The First National City Bank of New York went recruiting in the Williamsburg district of Brooklyn early this fall. It sent interviewers in a mobile unit, which parked outside the YM and YWHA and talked to young men and young women, many from the Hassidic community, about job openings for tellers, clerical workers, key-punch operators, and data processors.

Bank executives said that Hassidic Jews employed by the bank will not have to compromise their principles or practices. They will not be pressed to alter their mode of dress or appearance and will be allowed to leave early on Friday to prepare for the Sabbath, and to observe all Jewish Holy Days, from the minor festivals to the major holidays.

The recruitment program is an outgrowth of meetings between bank officials and Rabbi Bernard Weinberger of Young Israel of Brooklyn, an Orthodox congregation, arranged and participated in by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, which for several years has had a cooperative program with First National City to recruit Jewish and other minority college graduates for managerial training positions.

Meanwhile, a dozen or so Hassidim who completed training courses in computer programming have been placed in jobs. Airlines, banks and insurance companies are expected to grab up all who complete the courses because of the shortage of qualified programmers.

Talmudic training is said to be a great asset in mastering computer operation.

The Couple That Fights Together Stays Together

Jewish marriages are relationships of give and take and include a highly developed art of quarreling which resolves disputes and which is one of the reasons why the Jewish divorce rate in the United States is half the national average, according to a new book on the Jewish wife.

A summary of the book, "The Jewish Wife," published in the current "Ladies Home Journal," reported the view of researchers Gwen Schwartz and Barbara Wyden that "perhaps no other ethnic group" members "can outdo them at this art" of quarreling. "A Jewish husband and wife will spend hour after hour stormily ventilating differences of opinion while other couples stew quietly all the way to the divorce court."

Part of the explanation, according to the book, is that "the Jewish wife tends to be an equal to her husband, sometimes 'more equal' than he is, sometimes less" but "she is never a doormat." The Jewish wife is more likely than the Gentile wife to place emphasis on her husband's emotional needs. The Jewish wife believes in "commiserating with her husband when business problems arise, catering to his moods, constantly building up his ego and, whenever possible, being cheerful to keep up his morale." Non-Jewish wives, the researchers assert, tend "to put more weight on physical assets which the Jewish wife pretty much takes for granted."

The report asserted also that the Jewish wife "displays a notable lack of inhibitions" in her sex life. The study quoted psychiatrist Bruno Bettelheim as declaring that with Jews, "sex is taken for granted. Sex is sex, not a religion. It just feels good." An almost 60-year-old Jewish wife told the researchers that "Jewish men make better husbands because Jewish women keep them tired, broke and satisfied."

The researchers reported that they conducted a survey in 1966 of a random sample of Jewish wives in Greater New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Philadelphia, mostly in middle-class and upper middle-class neighborhoods, with the same number of non-Jewish wives polled in the same areas. The results of the 1966 study became the guidelines for personal follow-up interviews with many Jewish wives on which the report is based.

The Disco-Shule: Turned-On Judaism

If you arrive late for Sabbath Eve services and hear cacophonous rock and roll sounds emanating from the darkened sanctuary, don't turn away on the assumption that the building has been taken over by a discotheque; it may be a sacred service—from which you may still want to turn away, but that's another matter.

Early this year, for instance, Temple Israel in New York offered to an overflow attendance a rock oratorio titled "Prayers for Friday Night." It was received with a standing ovation, itself a notable new adjunct to worship. Somewhat later in the year, at Rodeph Shalom, another New York Reform synagogue, a special musical service, dubbed "Shabbat '69," combined electronic sounds (from a Moog Synthesizer), voices (from a choir), psychedelic lights, rock rhythms and the standard Reform

Friday evening service in Hebrew and English, in what must have been a most spiritual and uplifting event.

"Multi-media techniques" were also employed at Temple Ahavet Shalom, in Northridge, California, where the rabbi delivered or conducted or directed or projected a "sermon," in the 20-minute course of which six projectors threw images on a screen 30 feet long while three of them also produced sounds, all running simultaneously.

No doubt other Jewish houses of worship in the great heartland of America lying between the two coasts have been the scenes of similarly edifying innovations; but at press time they were not known to the editor of this department.

The Chaplain's Congregation Attends Regularly

Jews who rarely attend religious services become regular in attendance if they commit crimes that result in their incarceration in federal penitentiaries. Or, at any rate, the Jewish inmates of one such penitentiary usually attend weekly services, though few of them went to shul even once a year before their imprisonment, according to the prison Chaplain who conducts the services.

The chaplain, Rabbi Bernard M. Cohen of Terre Haute, said that the central aspect of his program was the regular weekly Sabbath services, adding that the regularity of these services was essential because "the habit-forming quality" of attendance "becomes a central pivot-point for the men and the program." Rabbi Cohen, who is a Reform rabbi, said the sectarian religious approach in his program was insignificant, explaining that "the mere fact that Hebrew is an integral part of the service and that the Torah is read serves for a spiritual, prayerful kinship."

He reported that the skullcap and the prayer shawl also were essential for the function of separating, for the prisoners, "the mundane from the holy." He added that this was attested to by the fact that it was not unusual for 25 inmates to come to a service "insisting upon wearing the skullcap and the prayer shawl." He added, "Another interesting statistic" is the fact that "a large number of the men, after departing from the penal institution, do maintain congregational affiliations as well as some regularity in attending religious services."

A Jewish library and literature rack provided through government funds and Jewish agencies are consistently used by Jewish inmates who show a strong desire to know about Jewish activities. Because of this interest, Rabbi Cohen reported, he saves and makes available to the rack his weekly Temple Bulletins, the monthly magazines from Jewish organizations and "any other publications and material which I receive."

One special problem Rabbi Cohen found was that the typical sermon is likely to evoke hostility among prisoners when they feel they are being "talked to rather than talked with." Rabbi Cohen therefore creates, instead of such sermons, "dialogue experiences concerning topics of contemporary concern, as well as the weekly Torah portion." He said he found it surprising how often the known intellectual talents of such prisoners "overtake the conversations" which proceed in the same direction that a sermon does "but without any of the hostility."

Because most Jewish penal institution chaplains are contracted on a part-time basis, there are gaps between the chaplain's visits and during vacations. However, he reported, the ongoing program he directs "creates enough momentum so that during these absences, the men

conduct their own services and involve the new inmates within the program."

More Adults Studying Talmud

The axiom that adult American Jews have little if any interest in intensive and consistent study of the basics of their religious heritage has been challenged by the results of two surveys of adult education classes in Conservative congregations in the metropolitan New York area.

The surveys show that there has been a 700 percent increase in classes studying the rabbinic literature of Talmud and Mishnah between 1957 and 1967.

The findings were reported by Rabbi Marvin S. Wiener, director of the National Academy for Adult Jewish Studies of the United Synagogue of America, in a recent issue of *Adult Jewish Education*.

The most striking development over the decade was in the area of curriculum. In 1957, 52 congregations reported a total of 170 courses, an average of 3.3 courses per congregation. In 1967, 90 congregations sponsored 425 courses, an average of nearly five courses each.

In 1967, Hebrew language and literature courses took the lead in order of popularity, with 153 such courses reported. Bible was second with 60 courses, and Jewish history was third with 30 courses. There were 38 courses in Mishnah and Talmud, 37 courses in customs, ceremonies and holidays. In descending order followed philosophy, the prayerbook, Conservative Judaism, literature, Jewish music, Yiddish (five classes), Israel and Zionism (three classes) and Jewish art (two classes). Other courses taught in one or two congregations included Jewish ethics, comparative religion, Haftorah, current events, Jewish folk dancing, the Shulchan Aruch, Jewish problems, the sociology of the

American Jewish community and life in the European shtetl.

Teenagers, Jewish Tradition, and Modern Problems

Most of the 30 teenagers who took part in an eight-month experimental course at the Jewish Theological Seminary on the relevance of Jewish tradition to pressing moral issues (*Fact and Opinion*, Fall 1969) have indicated they would register again if the course was continued, the instructor reported.

Rabbi Joel Roth, a Ph.D. candidate in Talmud at the Seminary, who taught the course, said that acceptance by the volunteer students of a traditional Jewish view, as reflected in the text material, was at most a secondary aim of the course. He said the primary objective was to develop an awareness in the students that the Jewish tradition was not silent on modern issues. The classroom procedure involved one session at which a guest lecturer discussed ethical problems relating to his field of endeavor, followed by class sessions devoted to evaluating the guest lecturer's presentation on the basis of materials from the *Pirke Avot* (Sayings of the Fathers) and commentaries on that text. Guest lecturers include judges, educators, a Congressman, a labor leader, a university administrator and similar authorities.

The scope of the issues dealt with, he said, was reflected in the wide range of topics on which the students submitted term papers. They included drug use and abuse, intermarriage, the new morality, Judaism and psychoanalytic thought, the welfare system and Jewish law, student power and its limits and "Why Can't God 'Turn Me On'?" Rabbi Roth also reported that several parents had told him that the course

content caused heated discussions at home. One father said "I wish my son would research his public school papers as thoroughly as he researched one of your topics."

Judaism Course Taken by Many Non-Jews

An introductory Judaism course, given in Los Angeles under Reform auspices for the past 15 years, has been attended by more than 6,000 persons, many of them having enrolled as a first step toward conversion. Some 60 percent of the 600 students attending each year are non-Jewish.

The program is similar in many respects to the UAHC-sponsored School for Converts in New York, also in its 15th year. Both schools enroll about the same number of students annually. Those in Los Angeles must attend for 34 hours in two-hour sessions over a 17-week period. It is said to be the most intensive program offered by Reform Judaism in the United States.

The Los Angeles classes, which have never been suspended even for vacation periods, have been offered on a year-around basis since the first class was started in Wilshire Boulevard Temple at the request of local Reform rabbis who wanted such a course for pre-marital converts. The course now is offered in six classes, two each week at the Wilshire Boulevard Temple and the others in various parts of Los Angeles and nearby Orange Counties.

Students enter the class at any time, completing their participation after 17 weeks. Instructors are recruited from among local Reform rabbis and from the Los Angeles Hebrew Union College faculty. Students who pass a final examination receive a certificate of com-

pletion. The certificate is accepted by almost all Reform rabbis as a sign of adequate preparation for conversion. The Reform rabbis then work with the students in preparation for conversion.

Many non-Jews take the course because they plan to marry Jews. They are asked to have their Jewish partner also take the course. Some non-Jews, who may have already married a Jew, take the course to make theirs a one-religion family. Some students have a Jewish background but have not practiced Judaism. One graduate attended a Baptist Sunday school for six years as a child because his Jewish father became a Baptist. Now in his 50s, he enrolled to "reclaim" his Jewish heritage. After graduation, he continued his Jewish studies and was a member of the 1969 graduating class at the Rhea Hirsch School of Education, which trains teachers for Jewish religious schools. Another recent convert is a young Negro woman who changed her name to Deborah.

Jewish Education Gains

During the past 25 years, total annual allocations by Jewish federations for Jewish education has increased eight-fold, from \$800,000 to \$6,500,000. Even so, the federation contribution represents less than ten percent of the gross annual outlay for Jewish education in the United States.

Outside of New York City, Jewish education is now receiving one-fourth of federation funds available for local purposes, excluding Community Chest funds. One Federation allocates 56 percent of its local funds for Jewish education and several others budget as much as one-third. In the intermediate-size communities, 13 out of 15 federations make allocations for Jewish education. Excluding Community Chest funds, allo-

cations for Jewish education exceed on the average 31 percent of local funds, with some running as high as 50 percent or more, and one community at the 86 percent mark.

From The European Theater

Extra-Curricular Jewish Studies

The Centre Universitaire d'Etudes Juives, at the Edmond Fleg Students Center in the heart of the Latin Quarter in Paris, offers courses at the university level in such subjects as Jewish History, Thought and Sociology; and Hebrew Language and Literature.

They are attended mainly by Jewish students pursuing degrees in one or another Faculty at the Sorbonne. The students receive no credit for them, but find them so stimulating that they somehow manage to fit them, after hours, into their heavy academic schedules.

The key to their appeal would appear to be the high caliber of the cadre of professors, recruited on a personal basis by CUEJ's charismatic director, Leon Askenazi, himself a professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne and the son of the last Chief Grand Rabbi of pre-1962 Algeria. They are chosen on the basis of their academic distinction coupled with extra-curricular expertise on Jewish subjects. This means that they can "translate" the contents of Judaism and traditional Jewish values from the rabbinical language of the Torah into intellectual and philosophical terms with which university students are familiar.

A body of young Jewish intellectuals, an important source of future community leaders, thus is being infused with the Jewish knowledge they will need to direct community affairs later on.

Efforts are under way to develop similar programs in university towns in Belgium, Switzerland, Great Britain,

Holland and Scandinavia. CUEJ course outlines are being compiled and wherever possible lectures are being taped. Also, the "Judische Volkshochschule" in Berlin has been asked to provide the texts of courses that have been given under its auspices.

Pilot projects are envisaged in Brussels and Geneva, with Jewish professors living in the area using the course material that has already been developed as a starting-point for compiling their own lectures.

Proposed Library of T.V. Films on Jewish Subjects

The Memorial Foundation of Jewish Culture has been asked to provide part of an initial \$16,000 for an experimental effort to create a library of TV films on Jewish subjects, dubbed into several languages and available to local communities through central organizations in each country. Over 100 TV films have been produced for the program, "The Source of Life," under the direction of Rabbi Josi Eisenberg, of Paris. The films continue to be produced at the rate of 25 a year. Each is about one-half hour long and 30 to 50 are considered to be of permanent and international interest.

The initial \$16,000 is projected as a budget for translating, dubbing and reproducing ten films in English (the original films would be available in French), at a cost of about \$1,000 per film, with the hope that they could subsequently be dubbed into other languages, too. It is expected that part of this money would be subscribed by communities who could expect to recoup their investment through rentals.

The films would be made available to the central community or other organiza-

tions in each country which would distribute them as being not only of intrinsic Jewish interest but also as a way to stimulate discussion of problems of Jewish life.

Notes From Israel

Drug Offenders

(Source: Study sponsored by Ministry of Social Welfare)

There has been an increase in the use of hashish (marijuana) in Israel. Convictions rose from 247 in 1965 to 738 in 1968. (Very little is known about the use of other drugs. LSD is known but rare).

Among the reasons for the increase are the reduction in price and easier access, both of which occurred when Jerusalem was unified, and the example set by volunteers from abroad who came after the Six-Day War.

Hashish smoking has spread to middle class youths, university students (mostly foreign), and children in correctional institutions. The principal centers for sale of hashish are East Jerusalem and Beersheva.

Services to Retarded

A new law, passed by the Knesset in June 1969, defines a retarded individual as "a person who, because of the lack of development or defective development, is limited in his capacity for behavior adjustment, and requires care." The mentally ill are specifically excluded from the definition.

The Minister of Social Welfare, with the concurrence of the Ministers of Interior and Finance, is authorized to require local authorities to set up services

for the retarded, and to share the costs with the national government.

A new feature is a provision requiring employees of health, welfare and educational services to report to a designated welfare officer all persons they believe to be retarded, with whom they come in contact. (Parents are not under obligation to report). The welfare officer is required to conduct an investigation and bring the case to a diagnostic committee, consisting of the welfare officer, psychologist, psychiatrist, educator, pediatrician or other physician. This committee has authority to determine if the person is retarded, and if so, what type of care he needs. (An appeals procedure from the decisions of the committee is provided for). If this section of the law is fully carried out the exact dimensions of the problem will become known for the first time.

Courts are authorized to issue orders to enforce the provisions of the law, including payment for care by the retarded person or those responsible for him.

A case may be brought back to the diagnostic committee at the initiative of the welfare officer, and must be brought back not more than three years after the first determination.

Comparative Studies of Aged

Studies of living conditions of the aged in Denmark, Britain, the United States, Yugoslavia, Poland and Israel were the subject of a United Nations symposium held in Herzliya in the summer of 1969.

Compared to their Danish, British and American counterparts, the Israeli aged (65 and over) reveal a very low divorce rate, ranging from 0.4 percent among men of Oriental origin to 3.7

percent among women of Western origin. There is also a high rate of remarriage by elderly men and often a significant age gap between husbands and wives where the husband is of Oriental origin.

There is also a difference in life span. The Israeli male on the average reaches 70.5 years as against the Britisher's 68.1, the American's 67, the Dane's 70.4, the Pole's 64.8, and the Yugoslav's 62.4 years.

Israeli women on the average live to the age of 73.2 years but this is exceeded by women in Britain (74), U.S. (73.6), and Denmark (73.8). Polish (70.5) and Yugoslav (65.6) women have a lower life span.

The proportion of aged in the total population of Israel is 4.9 percent, considerably smaller than in other countries: 9.2 for the United States, 6.1 for Yugoslavia, 11.7 for Britain, and 10.6 for Denmark.

Israel topped the other countries in the degree of family cohesion as reflected in the support given the aged by their families. Twenty-six percent of the aged live with their families, and 16 percent of those living apart from their families receive support from them.

Peculiar to Israel is the lack of knowledge of the language of the country where the aged live. Combined with illiteracy, especially among women, this makes for an acute problem of isolation.

Welfare Allowances Raised

Beginning October 1, 1969, relief allowances have been raised by about 15 percent. Single persons will have their grants raised from IL 71 to IL 83 per month. Married couples will get IL 125 instead of IL 110. Larger families have their allowances increased to about IL 38 (instead of IL 35) per member per month.

Verities in Verse: A Guide for Social Workers

Self-Evaluation

In bed at night
 Without a light
 I clearly see
 The worst in me

Community Involvement

Watch the bloom within them die
 Each day become a living bier
 For all the while the children cry
 There aren't enough of us who hear

Delivery of Services

Let us transact and intervene
 In macrosystems without a quirk
 Give me a concept shiny and keen—
 Then give me the heart to make it work

Doctrine

Applaud the truth, now Bill's, now Joe's
 But stop before you take the vow
 Recall the mot a lover knows:
 Forever may be just right now.

Symbiotic Relationship

The bonds of love become a chain
 Her hands on his a manacle
 The path they take, a prison lane
 Possession is the vehicle

Punishing Super-Ego

His mother's forbidding
 Injunctions were strong
 She made things so right
 That his conscience went wrong

Aging

If you catch a rose at its glory
 You will hear a sound as of crying
 It's a wail that comes from an elegy
 To the moment when living meets dying

Empathy

When your one hand feels warmth in the cold of the sea
 When your other can nourish the roots of a tree
 When the trod of your foot leaves the grasses unbent
 When you know of the places where old hopes live spent
 When the fancies of lovers to you become true
 When the scent of a rose has a sound and a hue

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