

JEWISH NEWS BRIEFS

Washington, D.C.--Chaplain (Capt.) Samuel Sobel, who was the first rabbi to be commissioned as a chaplain in the Regular U.S. Navy Chaplains Corps, has been appointed executive director of the Armed Forces Chaplains Board. The Board is comprised of the Chiefs of Chaplains of the Army, Navy and Air Force and their deputies.

London (WNS) The recent spate of attacks on synagogues by anti-Semitic arsonists is under investigation by Scotland Yard, according to press reports indicating that a special squad of track detectives has been assigned to the task. Since last fall twenty-two cases of arson and attempted arson were reported.

TEL AVIV (WNS) Official opening of the first German Embassy in this country has passed largely without incidents and sans the wave of demonstrations that had been predicted by the opponents of diplomatic ties between Israel and West Germany.

VIENNA (WNS) President Jonas of Austria awarded the Silver Order of Merit of the Republic of Austria to George Kuenstlinger, publisher of the lone Jewish monthly in the country, the Welt.

NEW YORK (WNS) Nathan Chanin, one of the leading figures in the Jewish labor movement in the United States, died at the age of 78 after a long illness.

CHICAGO (WNS) More than 13% of the approximately 2,100 homes that are offered for sale through the multiple listings of the Evanston-Northe Shore Real Estate Board are barred to Jews through printed instructions approved by less than fifty percent of the owners, it was disclosed here by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith in a report which said that "unauthorized social engineering" was being carried out in many cases by real estate brokers with no particular bias against Jews but out of sheer profit motivation.

NEW YORK (WNS) Nathan Chagin, one of the leading figures in the Jewish labor movement in the United States, died at the age of 78 after a long illness.

TEL AVIV (WNS) Hearings by a Mapai Court of Honor on the ouster from the party of former Premier David Ben Gurion and six of his supporters have been postponed for "technical reasons." The ousted members claimed their ouster was in violation of Mapai's constitution and improper. Ben Gurion and his followers were expelled for forming an opposition ticket in the forthcoming national elections.

NEW YORK (WNS) Jewish leaders are trying to convert the planned Vatican declaration on Jews "into political capital for Israel," it was charged by one of five Catholic bishops in all of Germany who replied to a plea by the Coordinating Council of Societies for Christian-Jewish Collaboration in Germany for support of the declaration at the forthcoming session of the Ecumenical Council in Rome. Although the letter was sent to all prelates, only five replied, one negatively and the rest indifferently, according to a report in the New York Times.

LONDON (WNS) Chief Rabbi Yehuda Leib Levin of Moscow, in a move that could be of greater significance than it now seems, has presented a gift of a 200-year-old Holy Scroll breast-plate to the International Synagogue at the Kennedy airport in New York, according to a report reaching here from the Soviet capital.

JERUSALEM (WNS) Two large silver Torah crowns have been stolen from the King David tomb atop Mount Zion, thus marking the first time that a theft of that nature has been reported.

Whence Came Mezuzah?

by Sidney Peilite

What is easily the most familiar and most readily identifiable article found about Jewish homes is the Mezuzah. Indeed, it is this unobtrusive object, attached to the entrance portal of a house or other dwelling unit, that identifies the dwellers therein as Jewish people. Its use rests upon the express command in the Torah: "And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." Contrary to popular belief this direction does not refer only to the Sh'ma, but to all the essentials of the Jewish faith as well, although for practical purposes literal observance is confined only to the former, and to some additional excerpts from the Torah.

The origin and evolution of the present day Mezuzah is not entirely clear, and the authorities do not shed much light on the subject. It is known that the ancient Egyptians, long antedating Mt. Sinai, inscribed some sacred adage at the entrance to their homes. This practice was intended to ward off evil spirits and forms of physical danger, such as roving wild beasts. It is surmised that this custom may have been borrowed and incorporated into Jewish practice by Moses. But here again practical considerations had to be applied. How write a lengthy text on a doorpost? Obviously, difficulties were presented, hence the writing of the words on a piece of parchment was substituted.

The parchment was now rolled up in such a way that the inscription was on the inside; the next problem to overcome was how to attach it to the door posts. Physical attachment as we know it to-day was not achieved. The method adopted followed the practice employed in the synagogue, where, after each service, the Torahs would be carried outside the synagogue (until the later time when a fixed cabinet was used) and placed in a cavity scooped in the doorpost. Sometime about the second or third century the Mezuzah was encased in a container, such as a reed or plain wooden or metal receptacle. As could be expected this innovation evoked disagreement among the rabbis and was the object of considerable debate. The proponents of encasement prevailed and the inscription has ever since been enclosed.

It is interesting to note that from rather early times the Mezuzah unwittingly acquired the mystic characteristics of a talisman against evil spirits, safeguarding the inhabitants of the house to which it was affixed. This conception was heightened during the middle ages when

the Jews were subjected to the perils of that "enlightened" era and when the need for protection was felt to be increasingly acute. Writing the word "Shaddai" the name of God, on the blank side of the roll was thought to add extraordinary protective powers to the Mezuzah thus giving added insulation from danger to the edifice to which it was affixed. Maimonides sanctioned the addition of God's name and the addition has been retained ever since. The word can be seen through a small aperture covered with a little movable door.

The proper place for the Mezuzah is on the right hand side of the door post as one enters the home. Its slanted position in present day use is a compromise between two opposing views. The Shulchan Arukh recommends the vertical position, others preferred the horizontal, thus the compromise was evolved, and the slanted position is now approved.

There doesn't seem to be any prohibition against embellishing the Mezuzah, which accounts for the newly designed types being used today. Since the birth of the State of Israel, very beautiful, and in some cases ornate Mezuzahs have appeared and are becoming more popular. Regardless of the type used, a Mezuzah belongs on the door post of every Jewish home. Some feel that every Jewish edifice should display a Mezuzah, but this is not universally accepted. Synagogues are expressly exempt for two reasons. 1.) The Torah, containing the text of the inscribed parchment, is within and 2.) those entering are aware that it is a House of God.

IF YOUR BUSINESS CANNOT AFFORD TO ADVERTISE THEN ADVERTISE IT FOR SALE IN THE LAS VEGAS ISRAELITE.

8 a.m. 'til 12 Midnight Across from the Stardust

ZELLO'S Hair Fashions

Facial \$4.00
Complete Make-up \$4.50



in Fashion Square

735-7471 735-5062




TWA to Europe and Israel

New low group fares for travel this Fall — 22 to 43 Day Deluxe Programs all inclusive.


- TWA lowers excursion fares to Athens effective Aug. 30th.
- Now — Direct service to Madrid — departing every Sunday 9:05 A.M.

Nation Wide — World Wide Ticket Offices

SAHARA HOTEL
3079 PARADISE RD.



TV SERVICE
FAST - RELIABLE
870-1333
SIGHT & SOUND TV
1401 DECATUR



EWART L. ROGERS
Director

CLINIC OF Prescription Hypnosis
FREE CONSULTATION
1302 So. 3rd 384-5628

PARTICULARLY
FOR THOSE WHO WORK UNDER PRESSURE

Also
SALESMEN - STUDENTS

And
BY PHYSICIANS DIRECTIVE:
ASTHMA — MIGRAINE — ENURESIS
OVERWEIGHT — STUTTERING
CONDITIONING FOR CHILDBIRTH

The Old **STAGE COACH INN** SALOON & CAFE

JACK POT RODEO
RIDING ★ BOARDING HAYRIDES
MOONLIGHT AND BREAKFAST RIDES
EVERY SUN. 6:30 P.M.

Horses and tack — bought and sold at all times
Stables open 24 hrs. — Riding lessons

8775 Las Vegas Blvd. So.
CALL: LESTER 736-9819

Ron Markin's
TROPICANA HOTEL SHOPS

- Women's Shop
- Men's Shop
- Gift Shop
- Florist Shop
- Candy Shop