

JACK TELL'S NEWSPAPER

# LAS VEGAS ISRAELITE

OF NEVADA

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## The Detroit Tragedy

DETROIT (WNS) Richard Wishnetzky, the 23-year-old youth who critically wounded Rabbi Morris Adler has died of the self-inflicted wound.

His victim, Dr. Adler, who was shot twice by the emotionally disturbed youth as he was nearing completion of the Sabbath Service at the Shaarey Zedek synagogue, is fighting for his life at Sinai Hospital, where he has undergone brain surgery twice.

by Nathan Ziprin

I was in the midst of reading "The Beginners", a new novel by Dan Jacobson, when the radio blasted the tragic news that a berserk twenty-three-year-old Detroit youth who had seemingly despaired of the only anchor in his life, religion, had shot and critically wounded the rabbi of a synagogue in protest against the emptiness he said he found in the very sanctums he hoped to find fulfillment.

The boy, said the newspapers the next day, had been a brilliant but emotionally disturbed student who seemed to be troubled by such problems as the meaning of life, religion, man's place in the universe and his ultimate destiny. At the apex of his mad moment in the synagogue, he was reported to have proclaimed: "This congregation is a travesty and an abomination. It has made a mockery by phoniness and hypocrisy of the duty and spirit of Judaism and is composed of people who, on the whole, make me ashamed that I am a Jew. With this act, I protest an unacceptable position."

The tragedy that came upon the Detroit synagogue and its saintly spiritual leader, Rabbi Morris Adler, could not have been hatched by any but an insane mind.

But what of the motivation?

In Jacobson's novel, released for publication this week by Macmillan, a young man in South Africa has just returned from the war and is taken to shul by his parents, not overly religious people who go to worship more out of habit and custom than out of belief. The young man, Joel, had seemingly hoped to find a new climate in the synagogue.

Everything in the synagogue, the author speaks for Joel, "was the same, not least the feeling of boredom and estrangement which came over Joel immediately the service began. . . The prayers were still meaningless. . . Still the God to whom they raised their plaintive, discordant voices and bowed their workaday bodies--still that God did not exist. . . Joel believed that he would have been moved by the history which was embodied in the service, by the very supplication to that God in whom he did not believe."

Joel did not end up in madness. Instead, he took another path.

However, both Joel and the young man who vented his despair on the venerable rabbi acted out of the same motivation. Both had dreams and saw them melt into nothingness for them and they rebelled, each in his own way. What has added significant dimension to the Detroit tragedy lies in the fact that both the victim and his assailant were in essence in quest of same purpose--finding meaning in life and in creation.

The rabbi's assailant apparently had a deep sense of Jewish values, of Jewish meaning, and he was fearful that they were being watered down in the very precincts he expected them to be preserved. In his demented mind erzsats Judaism was a seared pasture on which he could not feed and, rather than perish slowly, he chose the path of self-immolation. But he seemingly would not go down alone, for then the very evil he complained of would survive and so he chose to perish together with the Philistines of his sick mind.

What happened in Detroit was a tragedy of Grecian conception, but only in the sense that it was a thunderbolt cutting down two men, their families and the congregation. Its significance however is of transcending importance, for the event, though doubtlessly generated by a madman,

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## VOICE OF NEVADA

by Gov. Grant Sawyer



### No More Columns

Dear Jack:

When my weekly column was initiated last fall, it was with the understanding that the program would be discontinued if I should become a candidate for office.

I have decided to seek re-election as governor of Nevada. My announcement is scheduled to be made on February 22. Thus the column which you received last week was the last of the series.

ies.

I undertook the regular column with some apprehension, but it has been a very enjoyable experience for me. I hope it gave your readers some information and enjoyment. I appreciate your cooperation in making "From the Capitol" a regular feature of the Las Vegas Israelite.

Kindest regards,  
 Grant Sawyer  
 Governor

### Files for Re-election

Appearing before a breakfast gathering of Elko County Republicans and Democrats who supported his original candidacy in 1958, Gov. Grant Sawyer Tuesday announced he is a candidate for re-election as chief executive of Nevada.

Returning to his hometown of Elko to launch the campaign for an unprecedented third term, the governor said, "I am asking the opportunity to help the citizens of Nevada continue the programs that have shaped the success of our state. I ask once again for the trust of the people in implementing new and improved guidelines for the future."

Sawyer, 47, was elected in 1958 and re-elected in 1962. He received 67 percent of the vote in 1962, a record for Nevada and the third highest in the nation.

In his brief statement of candidacy, the governor pointed to what he termed an era of growth, respect and prosperity.

"The record is not free of mistakes," he said, "but progress cannot be denied."

Sawyer noted the state's leadership in personal income, government reor-

ganization, per capita growth, education, employment, manufacturing and warehousing, tourism development of recreational areas and crime reduction.

"With all of this," he said, "there have been no new or increased general taxes and we have preserved a substantial balance in our treasury."

However, Nevada has little the governor warned.

"If we are to insure continued development in a time of change, stability of government and maturity of leadership must accompany sound planning and bold action."

In conclusion, the governor pledged a high-level campaign that would not harm the image of the state.

"While the campaign issues are yet to be determined, I want the people of Nevada to know that I will have nothing to say that is petty or personal or that unnecessarily hurts any person, group or institution in this state. My concern is to build and protect our state, not damage it."

(Continued Next Week)

## U.S.Y. YOURS

by Jan Klein

Sunday, February 20 was the date for the Brotherhood Program at Temple Beth Shalom, where USY hosted youth groups from local churches. Each group presented a short program: there were folk dancers, folk singers, and a band. The evening terminated with group singing: it was a successful affair and lived up to its title.

Received correspondence this week from the regional secretary of SWUSY (South West USY), in Texas. Among their recent regional projects are:

1. A membership drive, held every January. In December, flyers are sent to all regional chairmen and chapter presidents, telling them what types of programs to plan for their chapters, how to get new mem-

bers and how to keep them interested, and also chapter quotas for the year.

2. A Regional Directory, listing all members in the region, and their addresses and phone numbers. The directories are sold for 35 cents each, but most of the profit is made from the sponsoring ads which are sold beforehand.

Anyone who wishes to place an ad in the Far West Regional Yearbook is welcome to--if interested, call me, 735-3506 or write Sue Racklin, 6937 Knowlton Place, L.A. 90045.

Don't forget our 1966 Purim Carnival for all Hebrew and Sunday School kids--March 6th at the Temple--we need your support. Workers please contact Abe Schwartz - 384-5070.

## TELL TALES

"One Man Plus The Truth Constitutes A Majority"

BY JACK TELL



TO BE CERTAIN THERE IS NO MISUNDERSTANDING, THE OBSERVATIONS EXPRESSED BY JACK TELL ARE HIS AND HIS ALONE, AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS THE OPINIONS OF TEMPLE BETH SHOLOM OR THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AT LARGE.

## "Zulu and the Zayda"

By Rabbi Samuel M. Silver

If you liked "Fiddler on the Roof," you'll love "The Zulu and the Zayda."

The rollicking Broadway production, starring Menashe Skulnick, has elements which even place it above Fiddler.

Both have comedy. Both have music. Both have pathos. But Zulu has gently satire; it kids South African apartheid. Zulu has Yiddish. True, it's all translated, but it's a delight to hear.

Zulu also has a gentleness about it. It tenderly reminds us of our link to our parents. There's one scene which you'll never forget. It's where the man who plays the son of Menashe Skulnick, in an outburst of exasperation, puts his hand on his father's arm. Whereupon his own son rises to defend the grandfather, physically restraining his father. Cries out the son: "Take your hand off me!" While he shouts, he looks down and sees that he is doing to his own father what his son is doing to him. It is a kind of Laoconish dramatization of the Fifth Commandment.

That lasts but a moment. But the other scenes are simply charming. The exchange of language lessons between the grandfather and the African bushman will have you chuckling continuously.

And those lovely songs, by Harold Rome! One of them will constrict your heart-strings; it's called "It's Good to Be Alive." Another dandy is "Oisgetzechent," the Yiddish word for excellent.

The play is oisgetzechent. Long ago there was a great Yiddish rialto, Second Avenue. The plays there, featuring people like Jacob Adler and Boris Tomashevsky and Leon Blank and Maurice Schwartz, were superb. They conveyed much of the splendor of Judaism's outlook. There isn't much left of Second Avenue these days. Now and again, some spark of the old flame is visible. But, alas, that happens infrequently.

Now Howard de Silva, one of the scriptures; and Menashe Skulnick, a bridge between Second Avenue and Broadway; and Harold Rome have relayed to the big theatrical area some of the flavor of the Jewish theatre at its best. This particular play is not only nostalgic, like Fiddler; it's contemporaneous. It talks about Judaism today, but it does it in terms of what our faith has to say about family living and about a better program of living for the human family as well. Don't miss "The Zulu and the Zayde!"

### CANTORS

(Continued from Page 1)

cantorial song, chanted in the liturgy of lamentations, praise, gratitude, joy and pleas for forgiveness, truly has been one of the unmistakable historical ties of contemporary Jews to the traditions of their ancestors.

There are those who feel that the venerated art of the cantor is being eclipsed by the modern trend toward choral and solo work. In selecting "The Cantorial Art" as the theme of the 22nd annual Jewish Music Festival, the National Jewish Music Council may very well help to dispell this notion.

Over the years, the National Music Council, which is sponsored by the National Jewish Welfare Board, has built the Jewish Music Festival into a significant cultural event and has done much to encourage and promote community efforts to foster appreciation of Jewish music. This year, through the more than 2,000 Jewish Music Festival programs to be conducted by synagogues, Jewish Community Centers, Hillel Foundations, Hadassah and Council of Jewish Women chapters, B'nai B'rith lodges, Jewish schools, radio and TV stations, colleges and choral groups, the cantorial art will be reaffirmed and appreciated as a meaningful expression of Jewish living.

To assist religious, cultural, educational, fraternal and women's organizations in preparing for the Festival, which is to be observed from Purim, March 6 to Passover, April 6, the National Jewish Music Council has published a volume of articles and essays devoted to the cantorial arts and related matters.

In essence, the cantorial art is being projected beyond the inner circle of practitioners, proponents and musicologists. By the time this year's Jewish Music Festival is over, many members of the general Jewish public should have come to regard the art of the cantor as a cultural form that merits their serious and sustained attention.