

TELL TALES
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Imagine a life free of anti-Semitism? Ask the oldest amongst us if they could envision their own, or their parents or grandparents in a lifetime if no bias existed.

What a revelation? All this is possible, not at some vague future century or at a definite, fixed date ten, twenty or fifty years from the present, but right now in this very year.

Think of it. It could happen to us celebrating the High Holy Days in the next two weeks. Why this generation, of all others past and future, should be singled out for so extraordinary an endowment affecting the very basics of our existence, is a fathomless mystery.

Do we deserve it? Are we any better than our forebears or those to come? But it is about to happen, very probably.

Are we happy about this proximity to a supreme cause for exultation? Are we thanking God for making even a probable event like this possible? It is not evident.

The pulpits in our nation are strangely silent on the subject, according to information gleaned from this paper's exchange with other Anglo-Jewish newspapers in the country. In fact, there appears to be a growing feeling of animosity among certain Jewish leaders towards the probable declaration by the Roman Catholic Church, which would remove anti-Semitism from the text books of all Parochial schools.

Through the thousands of years of the Jewish religion there were many instances when Jewish leaders differed on momentous decisions.

Who knows whether Moses had to overcome opposition on the direction to take in leading the Jews out of Egypt?

Within the past twenty years there was a large division in opinion among leaders in our Faith concerning the creation of Israel as a state. Zionism today, is an accepted fact and the country is recognized by nearly all the other nations of the world.

It is the opinion of this writer that the rank and file of Jewish people throughout the world are followers of the teachings of their elders and leaders.

Now comes something new for us to accept, not in our religion but in the relationship between our religion and others. Here we have some Jewish leaders asking us not to be happy with, nor to encourage and accept the possible removal of the largest cause of anti-Semitism from our lives. Why?

It is hard to conceive of a single congregationist in the Jewish Faith, who would not revel in the anticipation of the eradication of anti-Semitism. Why not these certain Jewish leaders?

Religion to most of us is sacred, a part of our being. It is a heritage handed down from generation to generation, something we honor and cherish and love. Judaism is what we believe in and want and couldn't be without. Religion to most of us means giving and sacrificing material things in return for peace of mind, gratification and spiritual satisfaction.

The history of the Jews is fraught with sadness and human misery. There were pogroms inquisitions, ghettos, gas chambers, etc. all stemming from anti-Semitism. As each of these obscenities transpired it only tended to bring us closer together. The more determined among us became better Jews because of the sufferings.

It is hard to believe that any of the spiritual leaders in our Faith who are learned and versed may not be dedicated to the welfare of all our People. After all, Rabbis are human. They study and educate themselves for a profession of spiritual leadership. They are necessary for the proper guidance of us through the required Services, Cantors and choirs are expected adjuncts to supplement our mental satisfaction in the practice of our religion.

Through a quirk of the imagination, could it be that the few spiritual leaders in our religion who are opposed to the impending statement that would end anti-Semitism, believe as they do because without anti-Semitism, the importance of these few leaders would be lessened?

But the thought concerning those few Jewish spiritual leaders and anti-Semitism came to this writer from a disclosure made by the executive secretary of the Sister Formation Conference, a Roman Catholic organization concerned with improving the teaching skills of some 176,000 Nuns. "We may have risked the future of our organization," she said, "when we began to reevaluate teaching toward the Jews."

The high-ranking executive of the Nuns added: "But it would be a worthy cause to die for. After all, this is why we entered the orders -- to help all people for the love of God. We are trying to educate teaching Sisters... to understand the historic reasons for anti-Semitism. We want them to learn what is false in their background, and that the anti-Jewish sentiments found in some lesson materials are untrue -- not maliciously so, but because they were based on earlier and incomplete knowledge."

There it is straight from the Roman Catholic Church. Here we are on the threshold of a new world for Judaism and the pulpits in our Temples across the country are strangely silent. Perhaps it will come to light during the prayers in the High Holy Days. We hope so.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Are the pulpits of our Temples across the country still strangely silent, after two years of progress??)

MAN OF THE YEAR
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He is the first Jew to be elected to the upper chamber of the Nevada legislature (and a Republican at that.)

After the votes were counted, Sen. Chic was not the kind of man who rested on his laurels, never for an instant.

His enthusiastic participation in increasing civic responsibilities are being met with a response that makes every citizen proud to have him as our elected representative. His constant appearances at meetings, conferences gatherings, luncheons, dinners and affairs of public importance have gained the respect of the entire community.

For those of our Faith who may have been dubious of his capacity to wear the mantle of Senator, all fears have been alleviated. In his quiet, discreet manner of articulation, Sen. Chic has established himself as a proper, sound and reasonable leader.

Nor did his religious responsibilities suffer because of his duties as a public servant. As a member of Temple Beth Shalom's Board of Directors, Sen. Chic shows up where a synagogue official should. He has never missed a Friday evening service, when possible, and is on hand at most other Jewish functions.

We knew all this prior to the election, and therefore we are proud to name Chic Hecht as "Man of the Year."

WOMAN OF THE YEAR
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complishments for the past twelve months the Jewish community (and all other worthy causes and religions) were unusual. This just is not so. She did not intensify her efforts for flash-in-the-pan results. Neither did they diminish during the decade or so she has resided in our community.

Kay is the rock, the foundation, the substructure of most deserving purposes in our town. She is the organizer, shaping an event from its beginning, planning every move and justifying each step.

As state chairman for United Jewish Appeal and past president of Sisterhood, Kay's projects never had a peer. Her writings, emceedings and directorships of plays, fashion shows and other fund-raisers were never less than outstanding achievements.

We would be less than 100% honest if we didn't include our high personal regard for Kay. From the outset, she has been the best friend and severest critic of the Israelite. Her unofficial guidance has proven invaluable, and we're grateful.

For her dedication, devotion and honest application of being a "mensch" in every respect, the Las Vegas Israelite is proud to name Kay Wallerstein as "Woman of the Year."

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