

ETERNAL LIGHT RADIO SHOW 25 YEARS OLD

by REUVEN FRANK (President NBC news)
 With the program of Oct. 26 we observe the twenty-fifth anniversary of "THE ETERNAL LIGHT" on the radio network of the National Broadcasting Company. The play will be the one presented on the first broadcast, October 8, 1944. A quarter-century is not a long time, except in Broadcasting. Those of you who respond to the invitation to write for a copy of the script will find it marked, "Copyright, 1944, the Jewish Theolo-

gical Seminary." It is not often that a broadcasting idea displays such vitality that a quarter-century-old script can be presented unchanged with all the validity and relevance of its first broadcast. "THE ETERNAL LIGHT" was a new idea 25 years ago. Up to then, almost without exception, religious programming consisted of sermons; the microphone was substituted for the pulpit, and no other change was thought necessary. The resources of broadcasting to

reach hitherto unreachable numbers of Americans, and conversely, the adaptability of techniques used in other areas of broadcasting to ethical and moral concepts were by and large ignored until the first "ETERNAL LIGHT" broadcast. All that changed -- for all religious programs -- 25 years ago. And, in 1951, "THE ETERNAL LIGHT" became a regular feature of television, again a partnership between the Jewish Theological Seminary and NBC.

In its quarter century on radio, this program has won dozens of formal awards -- about 70 in all -- and hundreds of thousands of informal awards, the letters of appreciation from Americans of all faiths, and perhaps even more encouraging these days, of all ages. It has been NBC's pride to be part of this, the broadcasting company working with the theological seminary, the artists with the scholars, the technicians with the rabbis.

In the Oct. 26 play, "A RHODE ISLAND REFUGE", by the late genius of his art Morton Wishengrad, an actor reads the words of Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island:

"All men may walk as their consciences persuade them, and every one in the name of God."

Here, in the play, meant the Rhode Island colony of the eighteenth century. Here, today, through this program, means the United States of America, twentieth century.

JORDAN -- WHO DAT?

NEW YORK (WSN) - A Middle East affairs specialist has challenged the view that Jordan has a historic past dating to Biblical days that gives it inviolate boundaries as a result of historical tradition.


Instead, Dr. Joseph B. Schechtman, in his new book, "Jordan, A State That Never Was," asserted that Jordan was "artificially and arbitrarily created 47 years ago by the British for the British" and has never acquired "a collective national identity of its own." As a result, this artificially created upstart, the so-called Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, has assumed a central role in the United Nations Middle East peace efforts that is way out of

proportion to its historical, cultural and political significance."

Dr. Schechtman, who has authored numerous other


books, called Jordan a "brazen political hoax" that has "not given security, prosperity, national cohesion or happiness to its own population and has been a source of constant unrest."

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