

LETTERS

To the Editor:

In The B'nai B'rith Messenger of Feb. 6, 1970, Rabbi Eichhorn, author of a volume that deals with the problem of conversion and intermarriage, stated that according to the Halacha, the children of the Israeli Lt. Com. Benjamin Shalit are Jewish although their mother is not Jewish; and neither she or her children were converted to Judaism. He bases his ruling upon the Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah, chapter 268, Section 11. He cites the above section as follows: "One who has been living for a long time in the Jewish community and who declares: 'I was born as a non-Jew and I became a Jew simply by living a Jewish life and I consider both my children and myself to be Jews' is not considered to be a Jew, but his children are considered to be Jews."

I wish to state that the entire citation is misconstrued and misinterpreted. In order to understand the text of the Shulchan Aruch, one has to study first the Talmud, the source from which the Law is taken. The Talmudic source from this section of the Shulchan Aruch is taken from the Talmud, Yebamoth 47a. Our Rabbis taught: And judge righteously between a man and his brother, and the proselyte that is with him; from this text did R. Judah deduce that a man who becomes a proselyte (who had been circumcised and performed the prescribed ablution) in the presence of a Beth Din is deemed to be a proper proselyte; but he who does so privately is no proselyte (as a judicial matter requires a Beth Din, so does the initiation of a proselyte).

has children, and says: I became a proselyte privately. We trust him to disqualify himself, but we do not trust him to disqualify his children!"

And so also brings the Shuchan Aruch in Yoreh Deah, chapter 268, section 11. "If one who was known as a Jew says, 'I became a proselyte privately' (not before a Beth Din). If he has children, he is not

It once happened that a man (who was known as a Jew and was married to a Jewess — Tosafot) came before Rabbi Judah and told him: "I have become a proselyte privately" (Not before a Beth Din, and therefore he is not a Jew). "Have you witnessed," Rabbi Judah asked. "No," the man replied. "You are trusted," the Master said to him, "as far as your own dis-

qualification is concerned, but you cannot be relied upon to disqualify your children." (And we maintain, therefore, that your children were born from a Jewish mother and also from a Jewish father). This ruling of Rabbi Judah, is brought by the Rambam as a law in the Yad Hachazaka. Hilchot Isurei Biah chapter 13, section 8, the rule reads as follows: "If one is married to a Jewess or to a proselyte, and trusted to disqualify his children, but he is trusted to disqualify himself."

We say we do not trust him to disqualify his children and since his mother was Jewish, we maintain that the children are Jewish without any blemish. However, in the case of Lt. Com. Benjamin Shalit's children, whose mother was not born Jewish, and neither she nor her children converted to Judaism, though the father is a Jew, the children are not Jewish as it is ruled in the Mishneh Kidushin 66 B and in Rambam Hilchot Isurei Biah Chapter 15, Section 4, and in the Shulchan Aruch, Eben Haezer Chapter 8, Section 5.

RABBI SAMUEL H. KATZ
Av, Beth Din,
Rabbinical Council of
California.

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Dear Mr. Tell:

B'nai B'rith Public Relations has enjoyed a complimentary subscription to the Las Vegas Israelite for several years.

We recently received a subscription renewal form. May we assume we can disregard it and continue to receive the Israelite.

Yours truly,
Gary Gobetz
(Wash., D.C.)

(ED. NOTE: You may, and we hope you continue to enjoy our small offering. J.T.)

Dear Jack:

Thank you for your wonderful support of the movie Benefit. It was very successful.

I will contact you when the committee meets with U.N.L.V. for the Bernice Schiffman Scholarship Fund.
Toby Artman
(B'nai B'rith Women)

LA. JEWS

LOS ANGELES (WNS) — The Jewish population growth of greater Los Angeles, which grew at a high rate during the 1940s and early 1950s, has slowed down and the decline is expected to continue due to a lower rate of out-of-town arrivals and a drop in the Jewish birthrate. A Jewish Federation-Council executive reported that between 1959-1964, the area's Jewish population went from 404,000 to 508,000, a 20,000 a year increase. This rate slowed to around 7,000 a year by 1967 when the population figure was 527,000 and the 1969 total of 533,000 represents a further slowdown.

PEACE FAST

WASHINGTON (WNS) — Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam has called for a national fast during Lent and Passover as part of the anti-war effort. A continuous fast and vigil in front of the White House to start on Ash Wed-

MEIER PRES. OF TOLEDO MINING

Prominent Nevadan John H. Meier has been elected president of Toledo Mining Dominicanas, C. Por A., a Dominican Republic subsidiary of Toledo Mining Co.

In making the announcement, Anthony G. Hatsis, president of the parent company, cited Meier's extensive background in business, mining, and the scientific community as "invaluable to the program of exploration and development planned in the Dominican Republic."

Meier also serves as president of the non-profit Nevada Environmental Foundation, with headquarters in Las Vegas. Previously he was affiliated with Hughes-Nevada Operations, where he was executive aide to industrialist Howard Hughes. In that capacity he was responsible for acquiring more than 1,600 mining claims in Nevada.



JOHN

Meier is a special consultant to President Nixon's Environmental Quality Advisory Committee and was recently honored by President Joaquin Balaguer of the Dominican Republic with the Christopher Columbus Award for his many ecological accomplishments.

OBSERVE CENSUS DAY APRIL 1

Census Day is April 1, and we need your assistance in bringing the 1970 Decennial Census to the attention of the American people since each household will play a major role. The Census needs the willing cooperation and full support of each individual.

Census questionnaires will be delivered by mail the latter part of March. This year, for the first time, 60 percent of all households will be asked to return their forms by mail which will make the 1970 Census more convenient and more private than any previous Census. Questionnaires from the remaining households, those in less densely populated areas, will be picked up by Census enumerators.

"We can't know where we're going if we don't know

where we are" is the theme of The Advertising Council campaign in behalf of the Bureau of the Census of the U. S. Department of Commerce.

This country needs the best possible information about our people, our economy, our resources, our problems in order to properly plan and carry out a wide range of major programs -- housing, veterans' benefits, social security, planning of schools and other public facilities. The information is sought in the Census because it cannot be obtained effectively in any other way. The use private business can make of Census data in marketing, locational planning and a host of other ways is, of course, well known to you and is a worthy by-product.

nessay, and continue through Passover, which ends April 28, was planned by the organization. Similar action on the local level as

also urged with the funds saved from not buying food to be sent to the CALCAV for distribution to peace and civil rights groups.

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