

JEWISH BIRTHS ...
(Continued from Page 1)

American Jews was lowest among the major religious groups. The fertility of United States Jewish women is more than 20 per cent below the urban American population. It is more than a quarter below the entire white population and almost 30 per cent lower than the national average, according to the book.

Reporting on current Jewish population, the study said that 45 percent or five million of the world's Jews now live in the United States, while Israel and Russia are next with 2.5 million each. Other major centers of Jewry are France, Britain and Argentina, 400,000 to 500,000 each; Canada, 250,000; and Brazil, South America and Rumania, 100,000 to 150,000 each.

CONVERSIONS CAUSE KNESSET STRIFE

JERUSALEM (WNS) — The National Religious Party was prepared to leave the Cabinet because of the majority Labor Party's refusal to sponsor legislation in the Knesset which would make Orthodox conversions the only conversions recognized as valid by Israel. Premier Meir has been meeting with NRP leaders in an attempt to work out a compromise, but past plans offered by other Labor Party officials have been rejected by some NRP leaders.

The NRP, supported by the Chief Rabbinate, has indicated that recognition of conversions performed by other than Orthodox rabbis in Israel or abroad would mean that the Government has recognized as Jewish persons who were not

Jewish according to Halachah.

Israel had just gone through a national debate over the question of Who Is A Jew? when the Supreme Court ordered the Ministry of the Interior to register as Jewish the children of a woman who was not born Jewish or converted. That identity crisis was supposedly ended when the Government passed legislation which had the effect of recognizing as Jewish only those born of a Jewish mother or converted.

But that measure failed to state whether conversions by Reform and Conservative rabbis would be recognized as valid in addition to those performed by Orthodox rabbis. The question came to a head when an American woman, Mrs. Helen

Zeidman, was converted to Judaism by a Reform rabbi in Tel Aviv and went to court to obtain registration as Jewish under the new law.

The Ministry of Interior, which is held by the NRP, has indicated it would defy the Supreme Court if ordered to register Mrs. Zeidman as Jewish.

The NRP's decision was backed by the Chief

Rabbinate which has issued a ruling barring the party's continued participation in the government unless the Orthodox demands are met. Orthodox politicians have indicated they cannot disobey a rabbinical ruling.

If the NRP left the Cabinet, it wouldn't mean it would leave the Government. It could, like the Mapam party, hold Cabinet rank without portfolio. Labor Party leaders haven't said if such an NRP move would be acceptable to them. The LP has indicated it was prepared to govern without the NRP and the other members of the coalition Government would still have a majority of the Knesset seats.

others, Mr. Tell, in our age category had to be moved by these stories also.

I must apologize for imposing on your time and your mourning with such a long letter, and I ask forgiveness. I am enclosing a check for \$7.00 for the privilege of continuing to receive the Israelite. How I wish that I could turn the clock back and try to sell ad space for your publication — Amen. (You would be a welcome addition to the Israelite family. JT)

(2 paragraphs deleted)
I enjoyed the story about Jackie Gaughan being made Irishman of the Year. I made copies and mailed them to some friends and acquaintances away from Las Vegas. I have known Jack since he was a youngster. (I am only a few years older, but I founded an A.K. organization) and I even coached him on a basketball team that he played with some Jewish boys of his age at that time.

I fervently hope and pray that you and yours enjoy a healthy, peaceful and happy future — Zei Gesunt!!

Warmly,
Dave Greenberg
(Los Angeles)

P.S. I trust I may be blessed with the opportunity of meeting with you for a few minutes in the near future — Long live Israel and the Tell family. (ED. NOTE: It will be our pleasure to meet you, Dave, and thanks for your thoughtful letter. JT)

BEAUTIFUL LETTER

Greetings and Salutations,
Jack Tell:

Regardless of the fact that we have as yet, not had the opportunity to sit down and chat in a personal visit, I feel that we are fairly "close" nevertheless.

I regret that I was unaware of the existence of the Israelite and the Tell family until a few years of the infancy of the Las Vegas Israelite had elapsed. I wrote to you some time back that I grew up on an Anglo-Jewish weekly called The Jewish Press, based in Omaha, Neb.

The closest that I got to meeting Jack Tell, not too long ago, was prior to Jay Tell's marriage and his subsequent exodus (from LA) to his family and to Las Vegas. I am a subscriber of the Free Press.

I wish that I would have had the good fortune to have read Jack Tell's reporting of the news and his articles when he was on the New York Times. (We did some news and features,

but were mainly engaged in writing captions for pictures.)

I have awaited the arrival of the Israelite each week with anticipated pleasure, even though I receive the paper one week after publication date. (Sorry, we address thousands all over the world each week, rush them to Post Office, which takes it from there.)

The story that you penned, Mr. Tell, about your experience and the attendant feelings, thoughts, etc., during and after the mysterious attack on your throat, etc., had me spellbound. I would be grateful if you would be able to send me a clipping of that particular story. (Will do if you can advise an approximate date it ran. JT)

Now, Mr. Tell, and to you and your dear wife, and to the entire Tell clan, may I belatedly offer my heartfelt condolences on the passing of your sister and a second mother.

To an old man like myself, and with only a high school education, these two stories have moved me immensely with down-to-earth hameshek (homey) writing. These are sad pieces, but if I felt like I did regarding them, then

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