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Jewish Cop-Out

Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, spotlighted what he called the "growing retreat" of American Jews and their institutions from participation in general social concerns, other than specific Jewish causes of all kinds. He claims that the "Jewish cop-out" stems from deep hurt at the relative silence of the non-Jewish world about Jewish problems in Russia and the Middle East.

That is a debatable statement but Rabbi Eisendrath is closer to home when he says that the "new conventional wisdom" moves many Jews to withdraw from such community issues as civil rights, interfaith activity and urban projects in the name of "Jewish priorities."

Since the American Jew is part of the whole of our Society, his so-called priorities are directly related to those of the whole of society. In the face of the larger scene, the smaller ones (in size and importance) cannot be solved first. It would seem more logical to work for a re-ordering of the whole of society, in terms of the so-called priorities, calling for a transfusion of high moral dimension into a system which has been eroded, especially in the past twenty-five years. Once the unpopular war in Vietnam is ended, and attention given to the problem of the urban un-society, and it appears that American leadership is not devoted to partisan or selfish or unethical causes, then the atmosphere for constructive change would be effectuated coincidentally with the correction of specific grievances against our society. One way to do this is to participate fully in the American democracy. Certainly, then, the young Jews, the future of Judaism, would not feel that the older generation, the establishment, both Jewish and Christian, was neglecting "their concern that the world is going up in flames."

There is, really, a time for everything.

My House Was Bugged

By ROBERT E. SEGAL

"What is painful is that my own house was bugged. At first, I refused to believe this was possible."

That was Anwar el-Sadat, President of Egypt, expressing surprise back in May when he destroyed a nest of palace revolutionists.

Egypt's top man had his awakening and made a few radical changes. But wire-tapping and spying of other sorts in this electronic age are universal. And we still haven't had an answer to this vital question:

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when will the awakening come in the United States?

Do we have to leave it all up to the American Civil Liberties Union and Senator Sam Ervin? Are we going to have to continue to conduct our private little skirmishes against those who keep inaccurate and misleading files on our private lives and turn them over to the military and other arms of the government?

Little foxes gnaw at our freedoms constantly. Consider a few contemporary examples:

One press service reports that federal and state authorities monitored nearly 400,000 private conversations involving nearly 30,000 people in a recent 12-months span.

An admiral forbade a Naval District Band to give a summer concert in East Bridgewater, Massachusetts, because the admiral objected to the anti-war views of the chairman of the recreation council arranging for the concert.

Some citizens in the Yellow Springs, Ohio, area were barred from the dedication of an Air Force museum at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, with President Nixon as speaker; and a few cantankerous folks were dragged from the hall and kept for hours in police vans.

You can add to this list with dismayed ease by watching the day-to-day record of unwarranted attempts to suppress speech and protest simply by using the First Amendment as a yardstick with which to measure the news. You can also gain an awareness of the degree of concern by noting that the President of the Association of American Law Schools, Jefferson B. Fordham, warned not long ago that he sees indications of a mounting threat to individual liberty in America in the form of repressive measures characteristic of a police state.

Recent testimony by respected media people before the Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights has helped to arouse concern about government efforts to exercise a heavy hand in determining what goes into newspapers and out over the airwaves. Even the Association of American Publishers has been warned by the unit's chairman that "nothing like this (interference with free expression) has happened since the days of Senator Joseph McCarthy."

Perhaps the folks who edit and print the books, publish the newspapers, and do the newscasting will prove strong enough to reverse the trend. But continuing assurance will come only if hardy citizens throughout the nation value their liberties enough to go into court to fight for their continuance.

TELLING IT LIKE IT IS
 (Continued from Page 1)

the gambler quickly forgets all those curses and promises of "giving it up" he or she delivered on those countless losing days. Just give a gambler one winning streak and the electric bulbs start popping.

One particular gambler in Las Vegas experienced the electricity of a winning streak. Here's what happened. He was a counterman at a hamburger joint slinging chopped meat and buns for about \$80 a week. He was a hardened gambler. You know the type. Every time he had 10 bucks in his pocket his hand couldn't stop wandering inside his slacks to feel the green. His game was craps. After about a year in this town of working, gambling and mumbling, he was constantly broke. Rent time was the worst because he would have to sacrifice part of his bankroll to keep a roof over his head.

One day with about a \$20 B.R. (bankroll) he strayed over to a downtown casino which offered a 10 cent minimum bet crap game. As luck would have it, our gambler friend could not do anything wrong. If he bet right the dice would stay in the shooter's hands for an hour. When he switched to bet wrong the bones forgot how to make a pass. His B.R. grew quickly to \$1,000, then \$5,000. He rushed madly to a strip hotel where he was allowed a \$1,000 limit and in two hours ran his stake to \$60,000. He was on top of the heap as he walked out of the strip hotel. Chasing him were bosses who cooed him to see a dinner show on the house, have a drink and stay at their place completely complimentary. Anything to keep our friend in their joint. Brushing them off he walked out standing ten feet tall, head raised high and feeling more confident in himself than at anytime in his life. The first thing he did was to wire \$10,000 home to his mom on the East Coast. The next thing he did was call his boss to announce he was through tossing hamburgers. Then he tried to rest. But sleep didn't come easily. There on his dresser were piles of \$100 bills. He grabbed about \$5,000 and drove to another strip hotel. The money was lost in a half hour. The next day he blew \$10,000. Before the week was out he was pleading with his mom to send back the \$10,000. Needless to say, our friend, before the week was out, was back at the hamburger stand begging his boss for his old job back. He had gone through his winnings without even buying a new shirt. You can see him sometimes telling anyone who will give him a sympathetic ear his story. Or you might run into him at a downtown hotel which now offers a 25 cent crap game (the price of inflation in Vegas) trying to rebuild his fortune.

This chap just couldn't stand the fact that he was way ahead. The winnings was just relative to the size of the bet he would lay down. The thrill of victory became a phoney sense of accomplishment.

And The Beat Goes On as Sonny and Cher would say it. The three-ringed circus of events in the life of a gambler most always winds up the same. Down the line one close friend will have to bear the expense of a funeral because gamblers die broke.

Now we have major cities booking off-track betting. Highly paid advertising agencies produce finely phrased propaganda telling citizens about the fun of wagering a daily bet on a nag. On your way to your bus or train ride is a booth where you can legally try your hunch for the day. Non-gamblers are swayed. People who never even invested in a U.S. bond start betting their milk money. Arguments about a particular horse race replace talk about Vietnam and pollution. Husbands and wives have blistering fights. Guys are late for work. Touts hang around public transportation buildings whispering the sure thing for today. Husbands hide their winnings in a secret bank account. Women neglect their hair salon appointment because they get a tip from the milkman. Children are denied that new two wheeler daddy promised. The poor legless chap who rolls down the street on a little cart selling pencils now has a tip sheet. The local bartender provides a racing form. People openly handicap races while crossing a major intersection. Nine and ten year old kids find adults who will place a bet for them. Newspapers extend their racing section to become the major sports issue. Topless beer joints start losing money. Lunches are missed to start a bankroll.

And The Beat Goes On.