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Passover 1972

Passover this year may well become one of the most momentous in the long history of its observance. The traditional celebration of the biblical exodus from Egypt this year could mark another of great and significant proportions; a major aliyah from the Soviet Union to Israel.

General Dayan said recently that Israel could accept all the Soviet Jews if necessary, that the army would give up its barracks and sleep in tents, and if again necessary, would give up its tents and sleep in the field. The concept is magnanimous and pioneering but based on reactions from recent Soviet Jewish arrivals, hardly acceptable.

The unleavened fact is that it will cost heavily to receive the Russian Jews. About 30,000 are estimated to arrive in Israel this year. The Jewish Agency expects that it will cost about \$35,000 for each family's transportation and initial absorption. The total sum almost boggles the imagination. Moses led 600 adult male Jews out of Egypt and there was no recorded cost. Nor can there be expected this time any manna from heaven. It will require the combined resources and energies of Jews everywhere, especially from areas now called somewhat pejoratively the Diaspora, to make this expected phenomenon an accomplished reality.

Postal Rates Threaten American Jewish Press

The ever-increasing operating deficit of running the U.S. Post Office Department caused the Congress last year to transform the Department to a semi-independent U.S. Postal Service with the mandate of providing mail service at a self-sustaining cost over a set number of years.

It was a wise move with a laudable motive. It has only one major flaw. It may cripple many publications, including a large number of the American Jewish press, and perhaps put many of them out of business. If one can judge by the tenor of the debate which preceded the creation of the new Postal Service, this was not the intent of Congress.

As Philip Slomovitz, editor of the Detroit Jewish News noted this week, the creation of Second Class mailing rights in by-gone years created the means by which newspapers and magazines could reach large audiences at comparatively little cost to reader and publisher, and provided the means of educating and informing the American people of events in many

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fields.

The government recognized the value of the educational and informational process by providing a subsidy for these publications. Today, the Postal Service has increased its mailing rates for newspapers and magazines to such an extent that many have already ceased and the existence of still others are endangered.

For the American Jewish community, the threat of increased mailing costs to the well-being of the Jewish press is clear and present. There may be little effect on the few Yiddish language papers which sell mainly on the newsstands. But to the vast majority of the Jewish press which reaches its readership through the mails, survival literally depends on a downward revision of present Postal Service rates for publications.

The latest creation of cartoonist Noah Bee, whose work appears in many of these publications, shows a crane coming out of a mailbox, swinging a wracking ball against a building marked Jewish publications. The cartoon asks Is This Demolition Necessary?

Jew

By RABBI SAMUEL SILVER

Israel had a lot ofchutzpah to call itself Israel.

When Ben-Gurion & Co. proclaimed the independence of the resurrected Jewish state in 1948, he should have named it New Judea or Israeland, but not Israel.

Israel is a term which refers to the Jewish people not the land. In our tradition we don't refer to the Holy Land as Israel but Eretz Israel, the territory of the Jewish people.

In our prayerbooks and lore, Israel is the correct word not for land, but for human beings.

Now our people are confused when they read the prayerbook with its many references to Israel. Children are especially bewildered.

One good result of this error would be the greater use of the word Jew. There were times in our history when Jews eschewed the use of the term Jew. They used Israelite or Hebrew or Mosaic.

In the Reform and Conservative movements new prayerbooks are now being devised. Unfortunately, these prayerbooks continue to employ the term Israel, instead of sprinkling the prayers with the words Jew, Jewish and Judaism.

The confusion is dramatized by what happened years ago in Baltimore where one of the greatest Jews who ever lived was a rabbi. His name was Israel. Rabbi Edward Israel died at the height of his great career.

In his temple the next rabbi was Rabbi Abraham Shusterman (now recently retired).

TELL TALES

"One Man Plus The Truth Constitutes A Majority"

BY JACK TELL



(Continued from Page 1)

Jewish male babies cast into the Nile. That's when Moses was set adrift in a waterproof basket and was rescued by the Pharaoh's daughter, to grow up in the palace.

Moses, who never forgot he was a Jew, belted an anti-Semite and had to go into hiding. He married the daughter of a Priest and became a sheep grazer.

One day near Mt. Sinai, a voice from a burning bush commanded Moses to set the children of Israel free. Moses tried to reason with Pharaoh but it was no use. Strong measures were needed. A plague brought death to every first-born Egyptian. Pharaoh was glad then to get rid of the Hebrews, who took off in a hurry. Three days later, Pharaoh changed his mind and set out after the Jews with the Egyptian army. The Israelites practically had to eat on the march and as for prepared food didn't have time to let the dough rise, so the short-baked bread came out unleavened - now known as matzoths.

Then came the incident at the Red Sea where the waters parted to let the Hebrews across, only to come together again to drown the Egyptians. After 40 years of wandering, the Israelites settled in Canaan, the Promised Land beyond the Jordan River. But Moses never got there.

It was God's will that Moses should get a look at the Promised Land from Mt. Pisgah before he died of old age. Exactly when Moses received the Ten Commandments from God is not clearly identified. Our belief is that Moses was in constant touch with God and all liturgical law was promulgated through him. From the Ten Commandments came all accepted criminal codes and mandates of human ethics practiced in civilized countries.

Leo Tolstoi, the Russian novelist and philosopher who died in 1910, came up with several answers to the question: "What is a Jew?" Some of his responses are appropriately significant to the story of Passover.

He wrote: "Let us see what kind of peculiar creature the Jew is, which all the rulers and all nations have together and separately abused and molested, oppressed and persecuted, trampled and butchered, burned and hanged - and in spite of all this he is yet alive.

"The Jew is the religious source, spring and fountain out of which all the rest of the peoples have drawn their beliefs and their religions.

"The Jew is the pioneer of liberty. The Jew is the pioneer of civilization. Ignorance was condemned in olden Palestine more even than it is today in civilized Europe.

"The Jew is an emblem of civil and religious toleration," wrote Tolstoi, who went on to quote Moses in remote and savage times when the principal ambition of the nations consisted of crushing and enslaving one another: "Love the stranger, Moses commands, "Because you have been stranger in the land of Egypt."

"The Jew is the emblem of eternity," wrote Tolstoi, who continued, "He whom neither fire nor sword nor inquisition was able to wipe off from the face of the earth, he who was the first to produce the oracles of God, he who has been for long the guardian of prophesy, and who transmitted it to the rest of the world - such a nation cannot be destroyed. The Jew is everlasting as is eternity itself."

After reading the writings of Tolstoi, who authored "War and Peace," "Anna Karenina," and other monumental works, you kind of get the unequivocal, indisputable feeling that the Jewish religion is here to stay. Let's keep it that way no matter how you celebrate Passover.

Incidentally, Tolstoi was not Jewish.

Asked a youngster at the time of the succession, "Are we now supposed to say, Hear, O Shusterman instead of Hear, O Israel?"

What we ought to hear in synagogues more often these days is the noun Jew and the adjective Jewish.

Hear, O State of Israel, all of us are Jews. Let's remember that.