

Redder than the Rose

by RABBI SAMUEL SILVER

No matter how Orthodox you think you are, there's someone on the right who thinks you are a heretic.

In New York, the New York Board of Rabbis expelled rabbis who officiate at intermarriages.

But at Kennedy Airport, a chapel run by the New York Board is anathema to some Orthodox who say that the chapel's mechitza (gender-divider) isn't just right.

Some of those who object to the chapel are supporters of the chief rabbi of Israel, Shlomo Goren. They say that the Israel government should back up Goren in casting doubt upon the legitimacy of conversions performed by Reform and Conservative rabbis.

But Rabbi Goren himself isn't Orthodox enough for a segment of Orthodoxy, who claim he's too lenient in conversions and some of his rulings. So he's been the object of demonstrations and protests.

But some of the critics of Rabbi Goren aren't kosher enough for those on their right, like the group that doesn't even recognize Israel though they live there. Some of them won't even use an Israeli etrog on Sukkot because it might have grown on land which wasn't given the proper sabbatical.

Here in the U.S. the board of the Union of American Orthodox Congregations recently called for a pullout from the umbrella group known as the Synagogue Council because Reformers and Conservatives there have asked Golda Meir not to permit the outlawing of conversions by non-Orthodox rabbis.

All of these holier-than-thou people ought to hearken to the words of an Orthodox rabbi who recently wrote an article in the official publication of the Rabbinical Council of America, the group which represents Orthodox Jewish clergymen.

The author, Rabbi Reuven P. Bulka reminds the readers of the magazine called "Tradition" that in Judaism Law is not looked upon as an ultimate value, but rather as a means to the fulfillment of the divine will.

And one can fulfil that will without being so censorious of others. Indeed, Rabbi Bulka, apparently in chastisement of some in his group, cites a Talmudic passage (Nazir 23b), which even justifies the officiating at a marriage of a Jew to a non-Jew, if the purpose is to retain the Jewish partner in the faith. Says the Talmud: "A transgression performed with good intention is as good as a precept performed for an ulterior motive."

That statement should be inscribed on the walls of every religious institution and in the heart of every zealot.

MINSK JEW ACCUSED OF CAUSING SUICIDE

Minsk's top activist, Yefim Davidovich, has been accused of driving a young Russian Jew to suicide in what the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry termed "a virulent, calculated attack of personal slander by the Soviet authorities" against the 50-year-old war hero.

Sovietskaya Byelorussia, in an article "The Barrier of Incompatibility," characterized Davidovich as "an unrestrained liar" and "a fanatical adherent of Zionism." Davidovich and other Minsk activists "have taken upon themselves the unseemly role of helpers of the Zionist 'inviters.' On their conscience they have more than one broken and destroyed life of those who, believing Zionist propaganda, have gone to Israel.

"It was certainly under Davidovich's influence in particular that the young worker Yevgeny R., who abandoned his family and had completely mixed himself up in the webs of the Zionist propaganda, had attempted to commit suicide." No documentation of this charge is detailed.

Refusing to be intimidated, Davidovich and four other Minsk activists have protested to KGB chief Andropov and Byelorussian Party Secretary Masherov that a newly-released

"documentary" film "The Secret and the Open," is "another portion of anti-Zionist poison."

The film, which claims to "uncover the activities of the Zionists," is a "film version of the 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion' in an easily digested form," the five

charged. Anti-Jewish violence might result. "Well understanding the situation now apparent in the city we

warn; the showing of this anti-semitic film is fraught with serious danger. No one should say later he was not warned.

NEW YORK -- Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations has been designated to serve as a member of the World Zionist Organization Executive and will assume his seat on the American Section, representing the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

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