

WOMEN RABBIS

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Commission stressed their recommendations were made in strict accordance with the Commission's "commitment to the notion that legitimacy within Conservative Judaism must be measured first and foremost by the halachic standard." The report stressed that there was no recommendation on the traditional practice that only men can serve as witnesses.

The minority members said that while they sympathized with some of the arguments of the majority they felt that if women were ordained they would "at some point infringe" on "halachic restrictions in the performance of their rabbinical duties." The minority said it feared "the possible disruption of the unity of the Movement" which might "result in the untenable position of individual rabbis in good conscience to recognize the validity of marriages, divorces and conversions supervised by one of their colleagues...." The minority also said it felt that the move "would seriously compromise the traditional image of the Conservative Movement and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America as an authentic halachic institution."

While the RA did not make any recommendation on the report in line with the procedure announced when the Commission was appointed, there was considerable debate on the report at the convention. Fears were expressed that ordaining women would cause irreparable harm to the Conservative Movement while others declared that it would strengthen it.

Rabbi Saul Teplitz RA president, hailed the report as "affirmative" and "rooted in halacha with reverence for Jewish tradition." The RA resolution said that the rabbinical group "will take no action on the question or ordination of women or on the Commission's recommendation prior to the study of the report by the full membership and the study, analysis and decision of the Seminary faculty on the recommendation."

Meanwhile, Rabbi I. Usher Kirshblum, who organized and is president of the Committee for Preservation of Tradition, a group within the RA opposed to greater ritual authority for women, issued a statement in New York, that if the Seminary adopts the Commission's recommendation it "will utterly destroy Solomon Schechter's principle of 'catholic Israel' and his program for a United Synagogue of America," the organization of Conservative congregations. Kirshblum of Kew Gardens Hills, N.Y., warned that ordination of women "will inevitably divide the Conservative Movement into two distinct

camps -- one for conservative Reform Jews and the other for true Conservative Jews." He said the steering committee of his group would meet Feb. 21 to plan future action.

However, Simon Schwartz, president of the United Synagogue of America, in a statement also issued in New York, said he was pleased with the Commission's "affirmative report." He said the recommendation for the ordination of women in "quite properly in the direction" that the Conservative Movement has been taking toward "full and equal participation of women in Jewish life." Schwartz noted that "each synagogue ultimately makes its own decision as to the rabbi it elects," just as it makes a decision whether to count women in the minyan.

IRANIAN MOSLEM LEADER FAVORS JEWS

PARIS (WNS) -- Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the 78-year-old Iranian Moslem leader, declared that Jews will "enjoy all rights and full religious freedom" in the Islamic republic which he is demanding that Iran set up in place of the rule of the Shah.

In an address to his followers at his villa outside Paris, Khomeini said that an Islamic Republic "would mean for the Jews a return to the day of the emirs, when all men were equal and justice reigned."

He explained with a story that in the time of the emirs a Jew had complained against an emir and a Moslem judge had ruled in favor of the Jew ordering the emir to pay damages and a fine.

"Shortly, the Islamic republic of Iran will become a reality and all its citizens, Jews, Christians and Moslems, will enjoy equal

rights," the Ayatollah said. **ISRAELITE ADS PAY**

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