

TELL TALES
(Continued from Page 4)

homa being last in 1890.

As late as 1855, all religions were still not in accord in their tolerance of the holiday. The Dec. 26 edition of the year's New York Times stated: Churches of Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists were not open yesterday. They do not accept the day as a Holy one, but Episcopalian, Catholic and German churches were open. Inside they were decked with evergreens. However, by 1880, all evangelical churches were accepting Christmas.

Passing of Christmas gifts in those days was not emphasized, except the wealthy were expected to be generous to the poor. In the middle of the 19th Century, due to the influence of Charles Dickens' writings, singing of Christmas carols became prevalent, and the sending of cards began in 1875.

The classic editorial which began, "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus," in response to a child's query, was written by Francis Church for the New York Sun of Dec. 21st, 1897.

In recent years Santa Claus has become to be known as a communal folk figure. A Pennsylvania judge ruled in 1936, that any doubters of Santa Claus who appeared before him would be held in contempt of court. The court citation read: Santa is not a figment of the imagination but an actuality. He is the symbol of kindness, a token smiling charity and a badge of all that is cheerfully benevolent.

Commercial exploitation of Christmas has become systematic and thorough, impelling Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Episcopalians and Jews, to band together in Milwaukee in 1949 and decree to put Christ back into Christmas.

Meanwhile millions of non-Christian homes in scores of non-Christian countries, including Japan and India, have taken unto their own the kindness and charity and cheer of Christmas and proudly display decorated and lit trees on December 25th.

All this proves the true sense of Christmas has not waned -- its just that the Spirit of Christmas has overwhelmed and is about to inundate all humans in the four corners of the earth.

UJA LAUNCHES DRIVE

NEW YORK, N.Y. -- The United Jewish Appeal has launched a year - end "Count Up for '81" campaign to collect a total of \$310 million in cash by December 31. UJA National Chairman Herschel Blumberg announced.

"We face a pressing and immediate need for cash to sustain the lifeline of human programs and services that extends to our people in Israel and worldwide," Blumberg said in announcing the program. "Our national goal of \$310 million by year's end is a realistic projection of our capacity to give in response to the growing needs of the Jewish people and the rising cost of meeting them."

"It is essential that every Jewish community in the United States make a concerted effort to collect on all unpaid pledges to the 1981 Campaign," Blumberg added. "UJA President Irwin Field and I pledged at the Jewish Agency Assembly in Jerusalem that American Jewry would achieve the goal of \$310 million in cash

by the last day of 1981. We must keep that promise."

UJA National Cash Chairman Edgar L. Cadden reported that a total of \$192.6 million in the regular Campaign and \$9.8 million for Project Renewal had been forwarded to UJA from community campaigns throughout the country in the first 10 months of 1981. Last year, he noted, cash receipts in November and December totaled \$101.2 million. If cash is forwarded at the same rate in 1981, he said, the year - end total will reach \$296.6 million, \$13.3 million short of the 1981 cash goal.

"We are moving now to mobilize the American Jewish community to meet its commitment to Jews in need around the globe," Cadden said. "The chronic shortfall in cash has forced drastic cuts in the Jewish Agency budget bringing programs for the young elderly and settlers in the Negev and Galilee to a virtual standstill. Our partnership with our people is on the line." Cadden noted that

national UJA resources, leadership and personnel have been made available to communities to assist them in collecting unpaid 1981 pledges, and he pointed out that new tax laws make it advantageous for donors to pre-pay 1982 pledges by December 31.

"The need is there, the capacity to give

is there and, this year, the tax advantages are there," he added. "There is no question that we can meet our \$310 million cash goal. But we must act now."

Additional information on the "Count Up for '81" cash collection campaign is available from national UJA or local federations.

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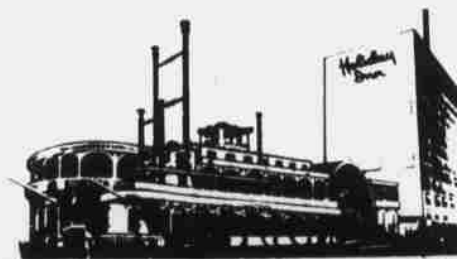
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