

A CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO PASSOVER CANDY.

Fine chocolate candies are among the most delicate of gourmet foods, a fact that is especially true at Passover. According to Rabbi Nychim Kornmehl, Kashruth supervisor for Barton's Candy, the ingredients used in chocolate made exclusively for Pesach also results in candy much finer and richer in flavor than at any other time of year.

"If a box of chocolate certified for Pesach seems more aromatic and flavorful, it is because of higher cocoa butter content," says Rabbi Kornmehl, who has overseen Barton's Passover production since it became the first year-round kosher candy maker in 1938. He notes that in the past 45 years little has changed in the Pesach Kashruthing. This traditional process begins each fall with a trip to Switzerland to painstakingly supervise the purchase of all ingredients. The most complex and expensive of these is the cocoa butter, which gives chocolate its smooth, silken flavor.

Since cocoa butter melts at a surprisingly low temperature (92-93oF.) it is important to keep the chocolates away from direct heat or sunlight. Exposure to either can result in the cocoa butter separating from the rest of the candy. Known as "blooming," this occasionally creates a white film on the chocolate. While this natural process won't affect the taste, it can reduce the visual impact of a box given as a gift.

Traveling with Passover chocolate therefore deserves some special attention. For airplane trips, a cushioned place in a carry-on bag is safer than checked luggage, since cargo compartments can experience some change in air pressure and temperature. On long car trips, insulating (and isolating) it with clothing in a suitcase is a most convenient solution since Passover chocolate is susceptible to aromas and flavors of other foods. After a box is open, storage in a cool, airy spot is best, although the candy can be kept in a refrigerator if tightly wrapped in plastic.

Rabbi Kornmehl notes that the seal of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations is the consumer's assurance that the chocolate meets all the requirements of the Pesach Kashruth. At Barton's, this process includes closing the factory for as long as two weeks for the ritual steam cleansing, all of which is supervised by Rabbi Kornmehl with the help of two assistants.

Founded principally as a retail candy store in Manhattan in 1938, Barton's has since grown to become the nation's largest manufacturer of kosher candy. The company's Brooklyn factory produces more than 24 candy items, among them Chocolate Matzo Balls and Almond Kisses, especially for Passover, as well as a full line of sugar-free confections.

STRENGTHENING CHRISTIAN - JEWISH RELATIONS

NEW YORK, N.Y. -- The strengthening of Christian - Jewish relations, specifically with the Evangelical Church, will be one of the numerous agenda items to be discussed by the Rabbinical Assembly, the international body of Conservative Rabbis, at their 83rd annual Convention, April 10-14 at the Hilton Inn in Dallas.

Rabbi Arnold Goodman, President of the Rabbinical Assembly, indicated that "we are always interested in achieving a greater understanding with our Christian colleagues," Rabbi Goodman who serves Congregation Ahavath Achim in Atlanta, indicated that no formal session with Evangelical leaders had been scheduled as part of the RA's meeting but that "we will take the opportunity of our geographic location to hold informal dialogues." He stressed that American religious leaders have many common concerns that would be enhanced through greater understanding and cooperation.

Rabbi Goodman cited strengthening the involvement of laymen in religious life, concerns regarding nuclear proliferation and the State of Israel as several topics that might be discussed.

The Rabbinical Assembly represents 1200 Conservative Rabbis in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere serving 1.5 million members.

The Rabbinical Assembly's meeting will receive a preview of the new Siddur Shaleim, a comprehensive prayerbook containing all of the Sabbath, Festival and Weekday prayers soon to be published for the first time in the history of Conservative Judaism.

Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, Executive Vice-President of the Rabbinical Assembly, stressed that the new prayerbook was part of the general "updating and modernization of the Conservative movement's liturgical materials." He said that the process began several years ago with the completion of a new "Mahzor" for Rosh Hashanan and Yom Kippur and in 1982 with the publication of a new Passover Haggadah "The Feast of Freedom." Rabbi Kelman expressed gratification that both works have been "enthusiastically received by both rabbis and laymen."

The new Siddur Shaleim is being written and edited by Rabbi Jules Harlow, the RA's Di-

rector of Publications. Keynoting the four-day Convention will be Dr. Robert Gordis on the theme of "The Jewish Message for a World Crisis." Dr. Gordis will call for an acceleration by the Conservative Rabbis of their domestic and international social action activities. He will specifically call upon them to participate with other like-minded groups in seeking a cessation of the nuclear arms race.

Rabbi William Frankel, the Rabbinical Assembly's Convention Chairman announced that the

meeting has scheduled one session dealing with the (Continued on page 26)



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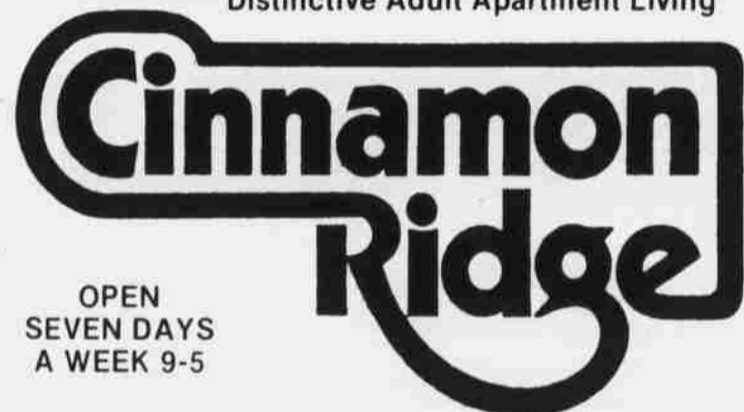
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