

# The Jewish Teacher

NEW YORK — A leading Jewish educator has issued an urgent call for the improvement of conditions among teachers in Jewish schools as "the key to the future of Judaism in this country."

In a discussion of *The Jewish Teacher: Professional Status*, published by the American Jewish Committee's Jewish Communal Affairs Department, Dr. Saul Wachs, Rosaline B. Feinstein Associate Professor of Education at Gratz College in Philadelphia, stresses the need for:

- concern for the teachers' self-respect;
- recognition of their accomplishments;
- provision for their input into decision-making in the school and community;
- use of community funds to raise standards, seminars, summer trips, sabbatical leaves, etc.;
- support for teachers' centers and conferences.

"When learning is rewarded and expected of teachers," Dr. Wachs asserts, "students and teachers in Jewish schools will begin to feel there is a real point in investing time and energy in Jewish education."

In a foreword to Dr. Wachs' paper, Yehuda Rosenman, Director of AJC's Jewish Communal Affairs Department, emphasizes that "in many ways, teaching is the most rewarding of professions. Jewish teachers in particular can draw enormous satisfaction from their influence in forming a student's Jewish identity. Indeed, historically, the teacher held a proud position as the Jewish community's resident scholar or intellectual."

However, Mr. Rosenman adds, "Jewish teachers today suffer many frustrations, some of them related to their unsatisfactory position in the school and the community. Any effort to improve Jewish education will have to find ways to encourage qualified people to enter the field as professionals."

According to Dr. Wachs, low salaries and inferior

fringe benefits are major reasons for the shortage of Jewish teachers.

"A new and disturbing development," he says, "is the increasing disparity between the salaries of teachers and of administrative personnel in Jewish schools. It is as though the community rewarded educators in inverse proportion to their direct professional contact with their student-clients."

Above all, Dr. Wachs insists, "It must be constantly borne in mind that Jewish education cannot be better than the quality of Jewish teachers. Neither buildings, nor administrators, nor curricula, nor instructional material, nor pious hopes can bring quality Jewish education unless the teacher who faces the student is talented, energetic, bright, dedicated and knowledgeable."

Among the areas covered by Dr. Wachs in his 36-page brochure are models of success, teacher incentives, job security, salaries and benefits, the in-

teraction among the home, school and community, the dignity and the loneliness of the teacher, professionalism and its rewards, and the growing need for materials and publication.

Endorsing Mr. Wachs' views, Mrs. Roseman states that "some observers believe the shortage of qualified teachers is the greatest single threat to effective Jewish education in America today."

*The Jewish Teacher: Professional Status* is the third in a series of Background Papers in Jewish Education addressed to those interested in enhancing the quality of Jewish education.

In announcing the publication, Robert S. Rifkind, who is Chairman of AJC's Jewish Communal Affairs Commission, explained that the Jewish Communal Affairs Department "seeks to contribute by improving the quality of Jewish life and to secure Jewish continuity."

## Boulevard Mall Teen Board Try Outs

LAS VEGAS — Twenty lucky high school students in the Las Vegas area will have the opportunity for free training in the fields of modeling and public relations, sponsored by The Boulevard Mall Merchants Association, Inc. The qualified students will become members of The Boulevard Mall Teen Board, and will receive training at the Barbizon School of Modeling in Las Vegas.

Try-outs for the Teen Board will be held at The Boulevard Mall on October 10, 1984 at 5:30 P.M. Twenty students and two alternates will be selected on the basis of poise, appearance, and completeness of a questionnaire. Interested students, both male and female, may apply. Students must be between fifteen and eighteen years of age, currently enrolled in a Clark County High School

with a minimum GPA of 3.0. Proof of age and a copy of the students' most recent school transcript are required in order to participate. Those students who are selected will begin classes at Barbizon on October 15, and will be expected to provide The Boulevard Mall with 40 hours of practical application, including fashion show modeling, hostessing, and mannequin modeling.

Interested students may pre-register at The Mall on October 10 at 5:30, with try-outs beginning at 6:00 P.M. For further information they may phone the Merchants Association at 734-1562.

PARIS (WNS) — Five synagogues, some hundreds of years old, have been declared "monuments of national historic importance" by the French Ministry of Cultural Affairs. Under French law "historic monuments cannot be altered but in exchange can obtain the aid of the state-paid architects for any renovation work."



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