

The Democratic Convention, 1988: Not Even An Honorable Mention

By Rabbi Marvin Hier

As an American Jew, I found myself glued to the television, mesmerized by the notion that unity had finally returned to the party of Franklin Roosevelt. I watched my party select a candidate who intones the confidence and compassion of John Kennedy, the character and integrity of Harry Truman, and the management skills of Lyndon Johnson.

I was moved by Michael Dukakis' hopes and dreams for America. Touched by his empathy for the less fortunate and the downtrodden. And yet, I could not shake a feeling of loneliness, of being uncomfortable, that gripped me amidst all the thunderous cheering and hoopla.

I heard well the eloquence of Ann Richards, who spoke of the vice president "born with a silver foot in his mouth"; of Ted Kennedy's "Where was George?"; of Jesse Jackson's "but your patch is not large enough."

Toronto Suburb Approves Canadian Holocaust Memorial

TORONTO (JTA) — The Parks and Recreation Committee of North York, a suburb of Toronto, has approved the building of a 36-foot memorial to survivors of the Holocaust.

The monument, expected to be built by 1990 in Earl Bales Park on Bathurst street, is Canada's first public memorial to victims of the Holocaust.

North York has the largest Jewish population of any Canadian municipality, and many Holocaust survivors live within walking distance of the park.

"San Francisco, Washington and New York have public memorials, but this is the first one in Canada, to my knowledge," said Ed-

mund Lipsitz, executive director of the Canadian Jewish Congress in Ontario.

Artist Ernst Raab conceived the project and will sculpt it over the next two years. He and his wife, Goldi, collected private donations to cover the cost of the \$300,000 memorial.

Raab, a survivor, said this project will be the one "closest to my heart."

And yet, in this convention of diverse ethnic groupings, no one seemed to want to weave in the Jewish patch into this quilt of ethnic diversity.

Somehow, in what must have been an orchestrated departure from the Democratic Party's long tradition, not a single speaker felt comfortable enough to reach out, extend a hand to the Jewish patch which had been part of the tapestry of the Democratic Party since the turn of the century.

This was the first time in memory that neither the principal nominees nor the leaders of the party made mention of the State of Israel, nor did they even venture out to mention Soviet Jewry.

It was the first time that a plank calling for a Palestinian homeland had been brought to the floor of a Democratic Party Convention. True, the Dukakis forces made sure that the plank would not be voted on, nor would it be seen on prime time television.

But even that could not mask the fear that grips American Jewry, that Jesse Jackson's forces have become the decisive major group in the Democratic Party.

It would be a mistake of major consequences for the Dukakis team to assume that Jewish issues can be relegated to Jewish audiences in order to avoid alienating the Jackson forces.

The Jewish community deserves and expects to hear a clear enunciation of Michael Dukakis and Lloyd Bentsen's Middle East policies.

It is true that the "intifada" has caused debate among American Jews as to which direction Israel should pursue. But as I found out in my discussions with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres recently in Jerusalem, the diversity of their views are quite different from those of Jesse Jackson.

Peres would not negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, nor is he in favor of a PLO state. Even on the question of land for peace, Peres' view is that Jerusalem and other strategic areas of the West Bank are non-negotiable. Nor does he believe that the Israeli defense forces would ever pull out of the strategic areas of the West Bank.

Joint Technion-Touro Medical Program Graduates First M.D.'s



Eight new American physicians taking the Hippocratic Oath upon completion of the Joint Touro College/Technion course of medical studies.

The first graduates of a course combining medical studies in Israel and the United States received their M.D. degrees from the Faculty of Medicine of the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology June 3, 1988.

Eight Americans received their degrees after completing medical studies jointly administered by Technion and Touro College of New York.

The graduates studied premedicine at Touro, a course of preclinical subjects at Technion to integrate them into the Israeli program and two years of clinical studies at Technion's Faculty of Medicine. The new physicians completed their rotating internships and M.D. theses.

All Americans have a right to know where Dukakis and Bentsen stand on Israel, on Soviet Jewry, on Jewish minorities in Arab countries, and on all human rights issues.

The Democrats once were elected to the White House by a coalition of ethnic groups. Dukakis stirred the emotions of some of these ethnic groups. His challenge now is to inspire those he left out.

Rabbi Marvin Hier is dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles.



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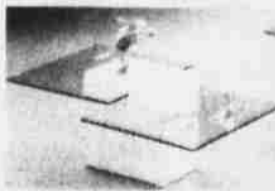
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