

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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deeds to his credit, he has no share in the World to Come."

I think we need to address the bigger picture. Our rabbis must realize that they set an example when they take on leadership roles.

*Daniel Kalher
Flushing, NY*

EDITOR'S NOTE: Your quotes are correct. Would you want us to compound the sin by shaming the rabbi in public, especially before so wide an audience as our readership?

The Organizer Of Hashomer Hadati

This is in reference to the article by Rabbi Dr. Moshe Weiss, which is dedicated to the 65th anniversary of Hashomer Hadati and the 60th anniversary of the Bnei Akiva movement. In that article, Rabbi Weiss states that he and Rabbi Meyer Golombek organized the Hapoel Hamizrachi movement in this country. With all due respect, Hashomer Hadati was organized in this country by my father, Mr. Aaron Bin-nun. He traveled to this country from Israel several times during the years from 1929-1934 as an unpaid emissary of Hashomer Hadati in Israel for the purpose of organizing Hashomer Hadati in America. In fact, Rabbis Golombek and Weiss were recruited by my father, and they assisted him in his work.

My father has received a number of telephone calls from persons who read Rabbi Weiss' article, such as Rabbi Leonard Gewirtz, of Wilmington, Delaware, asking him to write this letter and clarify the misconception.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and courtesy.

Atara Jacob

Thanks For Taking Stand Against Anti-Semitic Students

I commend THE JEWISH PRESS for taking a stand up front against the despicable anti-Jewish actions of students at Norman Thomas High School, including calling on Chancellor Cortines to mete out the harshest possible punishment.

I extend a special thank you to Mayor Giuliani for immediately taking a strong stand. Apparently, Mr. Giuliani was right in his criticism of the chancellor on the school security

issue.

Many of my fellow elected officials, along with Jewish organizations, came forward immediately after Mr. Cortines announced his unfortunate initial decision to allow the guilty students to participate in their graduation ceremony. They are Assemblyman Dov Hikind, City Council Speaker Peter Vallone, Council Members Stephen Di Brienza, Herbert Berman, Kenneth Fisher, June Eisland, Stanley Michels and Howard Lasher, Agudath Israel of America, the Council of Jewish Organizations of Flatbush, and Ohel Children's Home & Family Services.

With Board of Education President Carol Gresser forcing the issue, we joined in a united effort to finally prevail on Mr. Cortines to be consistent in punishing these public school students for their blatant and cowardly anti-Jewish acts. If Connecticut can go all the way and not allow its racist students to graduate until they have been educated about the society around them, so can New York.

*Noach Dear
Councilman, 44th District*

An Open Letter To Dr. Norman Lamm From The Faculty Of RIETS

Dear Rabbi Lamm:

The controversy over the gay-lesbian groups in some of the graduate and professional schools of Yeshiva University has besmirched the name of our yeshiva and caused us untold embarrassment in addition to offending our most basic moral values as believing Jews. We have refrained from significant public comment heretofore because we hoped some way might be found to avoid further desecration of the good name of the yeshiva in these matters, but unfortunately that has not happened.

In an article you were commissioned to do for the *Encyclopedia Judaica Yearbook-1974* on "Judaism and the Modern Attitude to Homosexuality," you wrote:

"Judaism does not accept the kind of thoroughgoing relativism used to justify the gay life as merely an alternate lifestyle... Under no circumstances can Judaism suffer homosexuality to become re-

The ADL Defends Israeli Consul General Colette Avital — And Rabbi Abraham Hecht Replies

Rabbi Abraham Hecht
President
Rabbinical Alliance of America
3 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011
Dear Rabbi Hecht:

I am troubled by recent public statements you have made against Israeli Consul General Colette Avital.

Ambassador Avital was chosen by the Israeli government to represent the State of Israel in our city and our community. Furthermore, she is an individual who has dedicated her life to protecting the interests of the Jewish state. As such, Ambassador Avital deserves our personal and communal respect and support.

As American Jewish leaders, we set a standard for our community. Public criticism of this kind is both unseemly, and a dangerous precedent.

Surely there are ways for you to express your opinion in a more constructive and responsible manner.

I look forward to your response.

*Abraham H. Foxman
National Director
Anti Defamation League*

Dear Mr. Foxman,

I am in receipt of your letter of June 16th and I hasten to reply.

The reason for our public criticism of Avital is simple. She has on numerous occasions expressed her disdain for Orthodox Jews and saved her venom for rabbis who don't agree with the policy of appeasement of the Arabs, now being pursued by the Israeli government. She gets involved in issues which have nothing

to do with her office and is known to be a vindictive, mean person.

She has alienated scores of people in leadership in the Jewish Community and lately has acted irresponsibly in the "infamous" Aloni-Avital confrontation.

She has made accusations without having anyone to support her contention of physical contact between Mr. Jack Avital and Shulamit Aloni — and has caused shame to the Israeli authorities in Israel who depend on her for truth and fairness in reporting what is happening in the Jewish community.

We shall continue to press for her removal and ask for a replacement worthy of such an important position.

I regret to say that I cannot accept your criticism as it smacks of obsequious sycophancy to the Israeli government. Thank G-d we in America do not live in a police state which Israel is now becoming: administrative detention, house arrests, wire tapping, jail for those who have demonstrated or expressed their negative views of official Israeli policy regarding the settlements, the Golan Heights, and a host of other problems.

As one who understands the value of public opinion, you too should join all of the disillusioned leaders who recommend a replacement for Colette Avital as soon as possible. The State of Israel needs true friends and that will only happen when a Consul General who is sensitive, fair-minded and not prejudiced against any group of Jews will be sent to represent Israel.

Thank you for writing.

*Sincerely yours,
Rabbi Abraham B. Hecht
Congregation Shaare Zion
Brooklyn, N.Y.*

spectable... Clearly, while Judaism needs no defense or apology in regard to its esteem for neighborly love and compassion for the individual sufferer, it cannot possibly abide a wholesale dismissal of its most basic moral principles on the grounds that those subject to its judgments find them repressive.... In remaining true to the sources of Jewish tradition, Jews are commanded to avoid the madness that seizes every society at various times and in many forms, while yet retaining a moral composure and psychological equilibrium sufficient to exercise that combination of discipline and charity that is the hallmark of Judaism."

We subscribe to these sentiments today as surely as you did then, and we are certain, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that you do too. We are pleased to know that you reconfirm all you have written in the above article and that these remain your opinions today as well.

While we appreciate that legal restraints, and certain outward consequences that may flow from any actions you may want to take to rectify this situation, impel you to refrain from any formal action, we feel compelled by our conscience and by

our role as teachers of Torah to make our feelings and opinions known to the public at large and we ask you to explore every possible avenue to obviate this blemish.

Notwithstanding the fact that these gay-lesbian organizations attract very few people on campus and that the university gives them neither support nor recognition, we regard their very existence as distinct groups an offense against all that we and the institution stand for. We cannot accept, and indeed we unambiguously deplore, people gathering to proclaim their defiance of the Torah's injunction against homosexuality, part of the divine moral code that has guided Western society for three and a half millennia. What Judaism tells us is an abomination should find no welcome in our institution and, indeed, in any academic institution which retains even a minimum commitment to morality.

We wish it to be known, therefore, by our students and by the community at large, that we deplore and condemn the continued existence of these gay-lesbian groups at some of the graduate and professional schools of Yeshiva University. We bear no animus towards any individual as such, but we firmly reject the notion that responsible moral people should organize themselves around a prin-

ciple of patent immoral behavior. Wherever Torah is taught and cherished as it has been throughout the ages, there the spirit of holiness must prevail, and a defiant homosexuality is antithetical to such an atmosphere.

May the Almighty grant healing wisdom to a world so very much in want of it, and may all mankind turn to Him in love and devotion. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the L-rd even as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9).

*Signed by 24 Members of
The Faculty of RIETS*

Democracy Takes A Holiday — Under Rabin

General Charles de Gaulle always sought the approval of the French people without which he would not take action on a matter of vital importance to his nation. Mr. Rabin, on March 7, ignoring opposition by the majority of Israelis to the continuation of his "peace process," stated, "What is most important is not what the people want. What is important is what is needed for the people." Has democracy taken a holiday during Mr. Rabin's administration?

It is time for Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to put country before politics and power and — however painful — to admit that his

peace process, which is built on illusions, has been a terrible mistake. Neither economic aid to Arab Palestinians nor phased truncation of the body of Israel by its leadership will diffuse religious hatred and the Arab goal of eliminating Jewish sovereignty in the Middle East.

Israel, victorious in Arab wars against it, has now been weakened and demoralized by pursuit of a failed policy of appeasement, historically the position of the defeated. Only peace by deterrence is possible for Israel with enemies who have a history of not honoring formal agreements.

*Ellen J. Singer
Hartsdale, NY*

The Status Of Jerusalem — But First ...

I think we should discuss the status of Jerusalem. Before we do so, several things must take place.

1) We should give Palmyra, NY, Fayette, NY and the State of Utah to the Mormons. Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormons, grew up in Palmyra, built his first congregation in Fayette, and the Mormon Church is headquartered in the State of Utah.

2) We should require Saudi Arabia to give joint jurisdiction for the city of

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