



Shana Tova From President Nixon

Fellow Americans of the Jewish Faith observe the High Holy Days and welcome the coming of a new year on your calendar at a time when the challenges we face as a nation make the self-examination and spiritual rededication that are so traditionally a part of your observance particularly relevant not just for you, but for every citizen.

We are in the midst of an era in which each of us is called upon to do his part in making sure that the less fortunate among us receive every opportunity to gain self-fulfillment in their lives and thus better contribute to the strength and vitality of our society as a whole.

Throughout the ages man has consistently been uplifted and fortified by an adherence to religious belief and by the inspiration and capacity for perseverance

that he derives from it.

A remarkable sense of justice, dignity and decency has placed the American Jewish community in the vanguard of every major endeavor to enhance the

quality of life for all our citizens.

In this Holy Season as you reassess the meaning of your daily lives in the light of the rich traditions you cherish, I know that not just you, but our nation, will benefit.

President Nixon

Ashes and Archives in Burgenland

'Jerusalem Is Sole Heir', Vienna Told

By JACOB NEUSNER

(Last of a two-part series.)

I: "Zeev, can you think of other governments that would spend expensive diplomatic 'capital' in retrieving an old archive?"

Ambassador Shek: "I can't think of any examples."

I: "What can I do?"

He: "I don't want to tell you what to do. You might make enemies."

I: "You don't understand us American Jews. We are afraid no more—we are no different from you. Never again! These would be good enemies. I'm not afraid."

He: "Then don't lecture in Eisenstadt."

I: "Why not?"

He: "Because you are being used, and you don't know it. The fact that you are lecturing there is interpreted to mean Jewish scholars support the Museum, will come and work there, endorse its purpose, and do not care that the documents are there and not in Jerusalem. And we want the originals. If their purpose is only scholarly, they could make photocopies and give the originals to Jerusalem."

I: "I shall cancel the lecture and..."

He: "That is splendid. What more?"



Dr. Jacob Neusner

I: "Let me issue a public statement, in my name and in my words."

We went to an upstairs guest room, where the ambassador kept an old portable typewriter; I guessed it came from Prague 30 years before. The ribbon was barely able to make a mark on paper. We had to use carbon paper. I issued the following statement, which was sent to the state government in Eisenstadt, in the province of Burgenland:

"Since coming to Vienna, I have learned of the existence of priceless Jewish archives in Burgenland, in the town of Eisenstadt. I also understand that the Central Archives of the Jewish People have made great effort, entirely fruitless, to restore those Archives to the possession of the Jewish people.

"As a scholar in the history of the Jews and as a Jew I strenuously support that effort. Jerusalem is the sole heir of the spiritual treasures of the Jewish people. The surviving remnant of Austrian Jewry has unequivocally expressed its wish to preserve this heritage in Jerusalem.

"I earnestly hope that the Burgenland government and its scholarly counsellors will see their way clear to respect the aspirations of world Jewry in this regard. While we cannot restore to life those who tragically died, we can at least keep faith with their memory in Jerusalem, toward which they turned in prayer.

"I am constrained to make this

statement because I had accepted an invitation to lecture this weekend in a state conference in Eisenstadt. Had I known, however, of the issues at hand, I should not have accepted that invitation to begin with."

This statement was sent to various interested parties as well. I lectured that night at the University of Vienna, and the next day left with my family for Stockholm, to visits with my friend, Rabbi Morton Narowe, now the chief rabbi there, as well as to lectures at the Swedish universities of Upsala and Lund.

Ambassador Shek later told me that Professor Yigael Yadin, the great Israeli archaeologist, who had been my colleague at Brown University the preceding year, had passed through Vienna shortly afterward and had done what he could—which was considerable—to help out. He wrote that my statement had had influence on "important people."

Cardinal Koenig had requested a copy of the statement, and after reading it, had promised to use his influence. As a result, the Jerusalem Archive had been able to open direct conversations with the Burgenland Archive. That is where matters stand as of September, 1971.

I should not have told this story in public but for one fact. The Vienna Jewish paper, "Allgemeiner," on May 28, 1971, printed a story about the Eisenstadt meeting, over the name of Willehad Paul

Eckert. Eckert was on the program of the conference, so evidently he was there. He is identified as being at Cologne, where I lectured, later on in May, at the University of Cologne Institute for Judaica.

He was not present, so perhaps was unable to get the facts of the Eisenstadt meeting straight. That is why in his report he claimed I was present at the Eisenstadt Jewish Museum, "University Professor Dr. Jacob Neusner dealt with the problem of assimilation and self-hatred in contemporary Judaism. He referred chiefly to the situation in America."

What bothered me still more in the Eckert report is the absence of a single reference to the destruction of Burgenland Jewry. He wrote as though they had lived and died somewhere else. On the moon perhaps.

Then I understood, it is not stylish in Vienna to talk about murdered Jews. I remembered that when I had opened my lecture in Vienna with the following words, I had noticed frowns and scowls on the faces of the (predominantly gentile) audience:

"I cannot begin a lecture in Jewish scholarship in the city of Vienna without calling to mind the vast Jewry of Vienna which is no more, and without reflecting, in sadness, upon the many great Jewish scholars who flourished here and perished, but, especially, upon the many who might have more suitably occupied this podium in my place, had they lived. Their memory is a blessing."

Letters to the Editor

"Let Thy Words Be Brief"

Koheleth (Ecclesiastes)

Check the Reason

To the Editor of The Chronicle:

(Editor's Note: Dr. Richard Goldman sent the following letter to both The Chronicle and to Dr. Martin Adler of Beth Shalom and the University of Pittsburgh.)

I read with much interest the recent article in The Jewish Chronicle regarding the plans by Beth Shalom to operate a day school. While I disagree with Rabbi Goldblum's rationale for the existence of the school, this disagreement is not my primary concern.

It seems to me that it is more than a coincidence that the plans for day school follow closely the busing proposal of the Board of Education for Squirrel Hill children. I am still naive and romantic enough to believe that our American society can survive only if we have real contacts among all groups.

If my assumptions are correct, many parents who participate in the day school will send their children, not based on religious or cultural purposes, but based on class and racial bias.

A parallel situation could exist in Israel between the middle and lower class populations. If the European Jews isolated themselves from the Oriental Jews civil war could begin after an Arab-Israeli peace.

My concern, therefore, is that

we as a community examine our motivation for planning a school.

Richard Goldman
Asst. Professor,
Learning Research &
Development Center
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Synagogue's Lament

To the Editor of The Chronicle:

We have a beautiful synagogue here in Midland, Pa. I was married in this Shule in 1933 and now for the first time since 1926, the Synagogue, Sons of Israel in Midland, will be closed and dark, as no holiday services will be held due to the failure of a few Jewish residents who have deserted us and have gone to East Liverpool, Ohio and Beaver Falls, Pa.

I, Nat Moll, and my wife have worked hard in keeping the place open. If every Jew living in Midland would help support us and pay annual dues, this place can continue. Last year, we just made it with our loyal 10 men for a minyan. It is a disgrace to see such a fine Synagogue going by the wayside.

If these three or four men will help, this place would be open. The town is talking about these few Jews who have deserted us, for no reason at all. For the past 10 years I had a gentile contribute \$500 or more to pay the cantors.

Nat and Fannie Moll
Midland, Pa.

The Time Has Come

To the Editor of The Chronicle:

After reading recent Chronicle articles on the state of Judaism in America, I believe the time has come when American Jews must ask themselves some crucial questions. We as a special group of people are divided on some basic issues such as:

- 1) The distribution of charity dollars (how much to Israel? how much for Jewish Jews? how much of one's income is a fair proportion to contribute to Jewish charity?).
- 2) The defense of democratic ideals and the conflict at times with religious values such as in the issue of government aid to Day schools.

3) The interpretation of our basic principle of sanctity of life as is symbolized in issues such as abortion and efforts to prolong dying and hopelessly suffering lives in the light of a worldwide over-population dilemma.

4) The means by which Judaism can best fulfill the Messianic hope and promise to unify the peoples of the world under the one God with peace and justice for all.

I believe that although the Jews of America are physically far removed from their spiritual homeland of Israel, they must not think of themselves as in existence as a people primarily to insure the survival of Israel, but as a vital community simultaneously perpetuating the same ideals.

Louis Finkelstein has said. "If you take religion out of the social structure, all the evils remain—the bigotry, the wars, the group hatreds, everything one objects to in religious history remains—all that is taken away is the mitigating influence of religion as one can see by observing recent history."

To me the American Jewish Community is approaching a time of high calling. We should not be complacent about enjoying the highest status and security in this country of all time when we recall that other such fortunate Jewish communities in history portended imminent disaster. But we should be reassured in the knowledge that because of the democratic ideals of this great nation, we Jews have the opportunity that other Jewish communities did not have; we can still make these ideals work for us and for others as well.

A good place to begin would certainly be the rehabilitation of our needy fellow Jews in America. Through proper assistance and training we can develop them so that they can help others help themselves. This great ideal of our immigrant generation must not be abandoned.

Next, we might ask ourselves if our interpretation of separation of church and state is suited to the realities of our times?

The wise Albert Einstein had said in his quest for world peace, "In matters concerning truth and justice there can be no distinction

between big problems and small; for the general principles which determine the conduct of men are indivisible. Whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted in important affairs."

Judaism in America has always sought to demonstrate and uphold the American ideal that allegiance of men need not be won by political fraud and trickery, but through the living example of a morally exalted way of life. This is the spirit the American Jew must recapture today more than at any other time in our history.

This is the spirit that must begin in our Jewish Communities everywhere and eventually lead to the only spirit in which a peace-keeping supernatural organization can be ever established.

I believe our basic confusion lies in our inability to honor the commandment, "Thy shalt have no other Gods before me!" We must all ask ourselves the question, "What God are we worshipping today individually and collectively? Is it the God and idolatry of materialism and nationalism or is it our ancient God, whose path is the only true path to peace?"

Natalie Berez
Pittsburgh