

B'NAI B'RITH

M A G A Z I N E

PUBLISHED SINCE 1886

WINTER 2019



**JEWISH GERMAN
FASHION INDUSTRY
FLOURISHED,
THEN PERISHED
UNDER NAZI RULE**

SOME HAVE WELL GUARDED
TRADE SECRETS

WE JUST CALL THEM
FAMILY TRADITIONS

The image features a hand pointing to a detailed map of a vineyard, likely in the Clarksburg region. The map shows various vineyard blocks, roads, and geographical features. A bottle of Herzog Pinot Noir is prominently displayed on the right, with its label clearly visible. The label includes the text 'HERZOG LINEAGE' and 'PINOT NOIR CLARKSBURG'. Two small photographs are also included: one showing a dirt path through a vineyard and another showing a close-up of a bunch of dark grapes. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly wood.

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Editor's Note

German Jews prominent in their country's fashion world watched it swept away during the Third Reich, following decades of creative designs and successful merchandising of the most stylish of clothes. In our Winter issue, we write about the impressive rise and tragic fall of this Jewish contribution to European couture and culture. Elsewhere, we tell the story of Cuba's dwindling Jewish population, clinging to life despite the challenges of age, intermarriage and emigration. Accompanying the story is a striking photo essay that brings the community to life. Crossing continents and an ocean, we chronicle a remarkable journey that reunites two Ethiopian Jewish sisters with their Israeli relatives, a dramatic Out of Africa experience. For a

healthy culinary Chanukah, read "The Miracle of Oil" and learn how to experience guilt-free traditional foods.

Along with these features, B'nai B'rith International President Charles O. Kaufman champions truth as the best weapon against the lies and calumnies of anti-Semitism, CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin finds a personal connection to the new Yiddish production of "Fiddler on the Roof," and Associate Executive Vice President Mark D. Olshan urges a return to compromise and civility in the nation's political discourse and governance. Finally, our B'nai B'rith Today features provide an inside look at the many and varied activities that are the essence of B'nai B'rith. Enjoy! 📺

—Eugene L. Meyer

From the Vault

Yakir Behar: A Jewish Turk in Venice

By Cheryl Kempler

Last year, Ca Foscari University in Venice marked its 150th anniversary with "Theses Onstage," a series of plays about its alumni. "1913: A Turk in Venice" introduced audiences to Yakir Behar, a young Jewish man from Constantinople (Istanbul today) pursuing degrees in economics and law during the pivotal year before the outbreak of World War I. Motivated by his Jewish faith, he intended to use his education to improve life in his native land, especially for his co-religionists. Returning to Turkey, he would realize his goals through his involvement in B'nai B'rith.

Behar became a university professor who wrote books and articles on Turkey's economic and legal systems, as well as on B'nai B'rith's mission and philosophy. From 1919 on, he served as Secretary of District 11, encompassing lodges in Turkey, pre-state Israel, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Syria, Bulgaria, Greece and Rhodes. Second in command, he was responsible for administering philanthropic projects, writing and editing the



Yakir Behar (third from right) and European B'nai B'rith leaders at their convention in Prague in September 1925. Rabbi Leo Baeck, president of Germany's District 8, stands at the far left.

District's magazine and corresponding in numerous languages. Planning to recruit members in Italy, Behar was in Venice in 1920 to present a speech about B'nai

B'rith's history. It was later published as a pamphlet that included an endorsement by the country's Jewish former prime minister, Luigi Luzzatti, a champion of

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It was the golden age of German fashion, created by Jewish designers and business owners and centered in the city of Berlin. But within a decade, as the Nazis came to power and implemented their platform of extreme anti-Semitism, it was gone. And, today, it is little remembered.

By Dina Gold

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When A.Y. Katsof lit the menorah last Chanukah, his daughter said she wished that Suzi and Piath, two Ethiopian women the family had befriended who were on a quest to live their lives in Israel, could be with them. And so he embarked on a yearlong clandestine rescue mission to bring the sisters to their historic homeland.

By Maayan Hoffman

21 The Miracle of the Oil — in Chanukah Cooking

Chanukah is almost synonymous with oil because of the miracle of the little bit of oil that lit the Temple Menorah for eight days. Oil is the basis of our cooking every single day and is the star of many of our treasured holiday recipes. Back in biblical times there was just olive oil, but today there are many choices. Here is a guide with recipes.

By Paula Shoyer

26 Cuba's Jewish Community Clings to Life

This photo essay provides an intimate look at Cuba's Jewish community that has survived decades of challenges with support from the global Jewish community, including B'nai B'rith.

Are the Jews of Cuba strong enough to engineer another miracle, or is this the last generation of this Caribbean community?

By Nan Wiener. Photos by Michal Greenboim.



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*By Charles O. Kaufman, President
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Delegates elected a new set of officers, saluted new President David Samuels and commended immediate past-president Morris Tobias, a senior vice president of B'nai B'rith. The Courage to Care and Click to Connect initiatives were highlighted. Featured speakers included International President Charles O. Kaufman and Stéphane Teicher, senior vice president from Europe.

34 B'nai B'rith Leadership Forum: Global Security in an Insecure World

Washington, D.C., was the site of this annual gathering featuring experts from government and the media, diplomats and from within B'nai B'rith.

42 B'nai B'rith Europe Marks European Days of Jewish Culture

B'nai B'rith's European lodges held numerous events as part of the 2019 European Days of Jewish Culture. This year marked the 20th anniversary of the event, which celebrates the richness and diversity of Jewish life and history on the continent.

44 Resident Leadership Retreat: 2019 Recap

In August, residents from B'nai B'rith housing properties met at B'nai B'rith Perlman Camp for their biennial six-day retreat. This program, which began in 1987, connects resident leaders throughout the B'nai B'rith housing network while providing them with many tools to strengthen their communities.

45 B'nai B'rith Connect: Young Professional Leader Events at the Local, National and International Levels

B'nai B'rith Connect has had a busy autumn with a variety of activities for professionals and leaders under age 40.

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*Listen: Podcast on Protecting Global Jewish Communities Against Anti-Semitism Is a Top Priority
B'nai B'rith Podcast with U.S. Anti-Semitism Envoy Elan Carr*

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Who We Are: Seeking, Finding, Appreciating the Truth

By *Charles O. Kaufman*
B'nai B'rith International President



One of the best aspects of B'nai B'rith International's June gathering in Portugal had nothing to do with the Tuk-Tuk tour or wine tasting in Lisbon. It had nothing to do with wandering through the Jewish Quarter. It had nothing to do with Jewish experiences with friends, old and new.

Instead, it was that during the span of a week, I did not watch one minute of television news. As someone with a voracious appetite for media — all of it — I went completely off the opinion-driven grid. The benefits were similar to our fasting. It forced introspection. It served as a good, head-clearing detox for the soul.

Upon returning from Portugal and reconnecting with the flat-screen TV, I found, to my dismay, that nothing had changed. News topics were the same. What I discovered during my self-imposed blackout was perhaps the only truth that oddly came from one of the great purveyors of evil the world has ever known, Adolf Hitler. He understood what anti-Semites have always known. "If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it."

This philosophy fueled anti-Semitism entering World War II and is often fully integrated into global political discourse, replete with biases, stereotypes and hate. Of course, in the Jewish world we know this as *Sinat Chinam*, baseless hatred.

Sadly, it's as relevant today as it has been through the ages.

Repeated hate, repeated stereotypes, repeated lies. I chaired one of six panels this summer at a Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. One of the few areas of agreement from this diverse group was that more education is needed. As we attempt to repair the world, we first must mend growing fractures within our community.

No matter how much you believe the 2013 Pew Research data, "A Portrait of Jewish Americans," which tracked Jewish identity and observance, one thing is clear: The gap in knowledge about Judaism, Jewish history, anti-Semitism

and Zionism is, indeed, a vast abyss.

How much assimilation and adaptation of Jewish practice can we absorb without redefining the religion?

Will some "New Judaism" or "New Zionism" movement align itself with adversaries in the spirit of cooperation, only to devolve into a period of indifference or disconnection regarding Israel? Threats to Israel's security once galvanized the world's Jews. Today, the divisions are wider between today's zealots and those who've strayed. For those who know Jewish history, biblical and modern-day, this situation is nothing new. We've always had these divisions, even during 40 years of wandering in



Prayers offered at the Western Wall tunnel, at Jerusalem's Temple Mount, venerated by Jews for thousands of years.

the desert. The world today is filled with extremism — and not from just on one side, but uniquely from neo-Nazi groups on the right and communist and American socialist groups on the left. Guess who is a favorite target for both? Indeed, our people. And this dynamic is creating some splits even within our own community, particularly with the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement and with Middle East politics.

For generations, we acknowledge inherited Jewish practices because our grandparents or parents did them that way. What will your children tell their children? Just as our grandparents worried, so do we.

These concerns are a driving force in B'nai B'rith's 176-year-old mission. Too many children are facing challenges, with mixed marriages, divorces and evolving modifications of Jewish education. They are susceptible to hearing falsehoods about us as a people. Of course, this is nothing new. Blood libels have been a major part of our history for millennia. Children must learn or be reminded of these popular lies used to demean Jews and Israel and to promote anti-Semitism. It is a story that must be shared annually, much like the Exodus from Egypt, during a Seder.

We know how it begins. We know how it ends. We know the symbolic foods. We know the old joke: They tried to kill us. We survived. Let's eat.

More than the 10 plagues, here are 12 lies that are the story of anti-Semitism. They are recited daily by our enemies:

- Israel is an illegitimate state, and Jews have no claim to the land. **False.** *Artifacts and archeology prove otherwise. We've been there for 4,000 years.*

- The Western Wall belongs to Muslims. Jews have no tie to it. **Simply false.** *(See the item above.)*
- Zionism is racism. **False.** *Zionism is the concept of Israel being the homeland of the Jewish people. It is a proclamation and the source of devotion in every book of the Torah. It is espoused in daily prayers. Israel is central to Jewish identity. Without a Jewish homeland, our identity is placed in question. The racism claim attempts to redefine Zionism, to the point of eliminating both the land and the religion.*
- Israel seeks to be a colonial power. **False.** *It seeks to be an ally in the world.*
- Settlements are the cause of violence in the so-called West Bank. **False.** *Not all settlements in the West Bank are illegal. A major motivation for violence is the enduring mission to destroy Israel,*
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The Tomb of Avraham in the Cave of the Patriarchs [Cave of Machpelah] outside of Hebron on the West Bank, a place with great historical and spiritual significance to both Jews and Muslims.

Charles O. Kaufman
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Eugene L. Meyer
Editor

Felice Caspar
Deputy Editor

Cheryl Kempler
Contributing Editor and Staff Writer

Katherine Dolgenos
Contributing Editor and Proofreader

Smita Parida
Proofreader

Simeon Montesa
Art Director and Graphic Designer

Robyn Shrater Seemann
Graphic Designer

EDITORIAL OFFICES:
1120 20th Street NW, Suite 300 North
Washington, DC 20036
202-857-6591 or bbmag@bnaibrith.org

DISPLAY ADVERTISING:
202-857-6699
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Fiddler, Then and Now

By Daniel S. Mariaschin

B'nai B'rith International Chief Executive Officer



In the spring of 1969, I took the bus from Durham, New Hampshire, where I was studying at the state university, to Boston to see the national touring company's production of "Fiddler on the Roof." Tevye was played by Paul Lipson, who had performed the role of the butcher Lazar Wolf on Broadway.

This production was being presented five years after its opening in New York. Though this was the touring company, it was the first "Broadway musical" I had ever seen. I was prepared: The fanfare that accompanied the Broadway show had rippled through the American Jewish community. Finally, a treatment of the Eastern European experience would be presented to the broader American public, addressing such issues as anti-Semitism, pogroms, discrimination, intermarriage and dislocation, through a brilliant interpretation of Sholem Aleichem's Tevye stories and a score of memorable songs.

The stories had been presented before on the American stage. The acclaimed actor Maurice Schwartz played "Tevye der Milkhiger" in 1926 at his Yiddish Art Theater in New York. Schwartz reprised the role in the Yiddish-language film "Tevye" in 1939. But those productions played to Jewish, largely immigrant audiences.

It would take the 1964 Broadway blockbuster, with a book by Joseph Stein, music by Sheldon Harnick

and Jerry Bock, and choreography by Jerome Robbins, to take the story of Tevye the milkman, his wife Golde, his five daughters and an assortment of characters from the mythical shtetl of Anatevka to international fame.

No less than five revivals of the show have been staged on Broadway since its original run of 3,225 performances closed in 1972. The original Tevye — Zero Mostel — was followed by such performers as Herschel Bernardi, Paul Lipson (who was Mostel's understudy, but who appeared in his own right in the lead hundreds of times in various productions), Chaim Topol, Alfred Molina and Harvey Fierstein.

The 1971 film version, directed by Norman Jewison and starring Topol in the lead role, took the story from Broadway to movie theaters around the world. As with the musical, the movie was a success, explained by reviewers, historians and others as carrying with it a universal message that transcended the actual story of the trials and tribulations of a tiny Jewish town in the Russian Pale of Settlement in 1905.

The Latest Revival — in Yiddish!

So, when it was announced that a new revival of "Fiddler," this time in Yiddish, would be staged, I took note. Yiddish theater productions have been regularly staged in New York in recent years, usually in small venues and for shorts runs. This production, by the National Yiddish

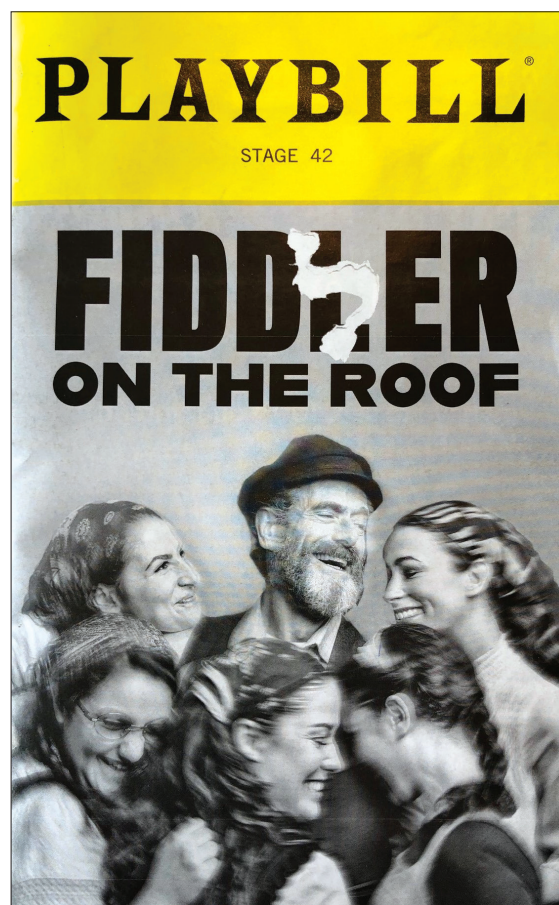


Photo credit: Matthew Murphy

Theater Folksbiene, opened last year at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in Lower Manhattan. It was an instant — and unexpected hit and received rave reviews. It was directed by Oscar and Tony Award-winner Joel Grey, with a translation by Shraga Friedman, from the Tel Aviv production in 1966.

Earlier this year, the show moved to a larger venue, Off-Broadway's Stage 42, on 42nd Street in New York. As of this writing, its run has been extended into 2020.

I took no scientific poll of those in the audience, but from standing in line to get in, my guess is that maybe 10% could carry on a conversation in Yiddish. I was not in that group. There are subtitles (the theater calls them "supertitles") in English and Russian, to accommodate the large Russian Jewish community in New York. The set is minimalist, with a large backdrop adorned only with the word "Torah" in extra-large Hebrew script. The music, so familiar to all of us, is ably conducted by Zalmen Mlotek, of the well-known Jewish musical family of the same name.

If only a small percentage of theatergoers understands the language (indeed, a number of the actors in the show are not native Yiddish speakers), what explains the success of this production?

The Sounds of Music, the Pull of Tradition

For me, it was as much about family as the music itself. Both my parents were born in Eastern Europe (Russia and Lithuania), in *shtetlach* not unlike Anatevka. As the cast members interacted with each other — in the kitchen or in the wedding scene or even in the brilliant dream scene in Teyve and Golde's bedroom — I imagined myself looking and hearing exactly how my parents lived and spoke. My paternal

grandfather was a tailor, and the storyline about Motl Kamzoyl's quest for a sewing machine resonated clearly with me. Even the time frame of the story fit my parents' experience. My mother was brought to the United States in 1903; my father in 1913.

I am one of those hundreds of thousands of Jews from my generation whose parents spoke Yiddish at home only when they didn't want us to know what they were speaking about. That said, I did often strain to figure out what they were trying to say, so I can understand a little Yiddish. My father was a subscriber to the Yiddish daily *Der Tog-Morgen Journal*, which arrived by mail. Sometimes, I would try to figure out the headlines by sounding out the words. My mother also favored the Yiddish expressions of my grandmother, and I can still repeat a few of those.

But this is a three-hour show, so we relied heavily on the subtitles, notwithstanding our knowing the story and the songs. The acting is superb, and the music, because of the quality of the small orchestra, Mlotek's direction and the excellent acoustics in the theater, made this Off-Broadway production a winner.

It's the story, though, and its relevance today that was so gripping. With the spike in anti-Semitism globally, the story of Anatevka and its residents, wary and weary of the Czarist police and their fellow travelers, was a striking reminder of the deep vein of hatred aimed at us then, and that has surfaced globally in recent years.

And the story of the edict expelling the families in Anatevka was a stark reminder not only of the great immigration to America, but the miracle of the re-establishment of Israel as a Jewish State in 1948. In both instances, I thought of how fortunate we have

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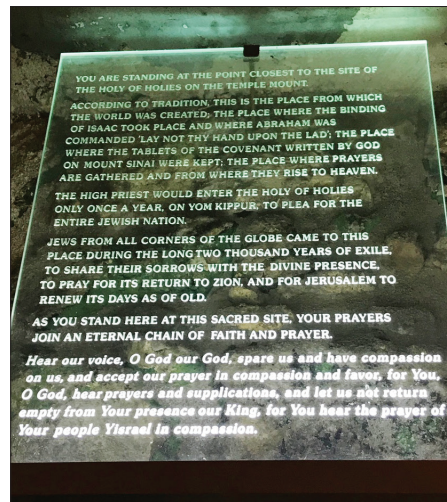
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Who We Are: Seeking, Finding, Appreciating the Truth

the crux of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Hamas charters. Refusal to come to the negotiating table is another cause.

- Israel is an apartheid state. *False. This is an insult to those who suffered under the policy of Afrikaaners from the late 1940s to the early 1990s. In Israel, Israeli Arabs serve as judges, legislators and in other leadership roles as part of the national fabric. Apartheid is a word used to describe institutional racism in Soweto (South Western Townships), a segregated suburb of Johannesburg, and the rest of South Africa. While various forms of discrimination are visible in Israeli society, just as they are in the United States and other Western societies, it no longer approaches the level of institutional racism experienced in the apartheid state.*
 - Israel keeps Palestinians in refugee camps. *False. Palestinians keep Palestinians in refugee areas.*
 - The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) operate like Nazi storm troopers. *False. The IDF, with few exceptions, is known*
- to defend Israel with great restraint. Some soldiers who crossed the line have been tried, convicted and punished.*
- Israel targets innocents at Palestinian schools provided through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, hospitals and mosques. *False. These sites are used to launch attacks through tunnels and launch missiles.*
 - Israel is working to destroy the Al-Aqsa Mosque. *False.*
 - Israel is to blame for the hopelessness that Palestinians feel. *False in so many ways ... and finally ...*
 - Jesus was a Palestinian from Nazareth. *This is historically inaccurate. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, a town in Judea. He was Jewish. Some call him a rabbi. Palestine never existed during Jesus's life.*

This list of false narratives could be longer. I haven't even touched on widely known anti-Semitic canards called blood libels, in which Jews were accused of murdering Christian children to use their blood for ritual purposes.



Inviting visitors to offer up their prayers, a plaque at Jerusalem's Temple Mount provides a narrative of its historical and theological significance to the Jewish people.

At the end of this B'nai B'rith anti-Semitism Seder, the participants will have gained an understanding of this scourge that continues relentlessly through time. No one has found a way to eliminate it, but whenever and wherever it occurs, it must be fiercely confronted. ☪

Yakir Behar: A Jewish Turk in Venice

the working class who had influenced Behar when he taught and mentored him at Ca Foscari.

In 1923, Behar visited Egypt and Syria, where he and District 11's president, agronomist Joseph Niego, founded new lodges in Tanta, Mansoura and Damascus but ran into trouble with the initiation in Aleppo. There, local rabbis, threatened by their weakening authority

and changing social mores, condemned the secret nature of B'nai B'rith as prohibited by Jewish law. Engaging in the new social life of the city, members who accompanied their families out for dinner and a film were accused of contributing to their daughters' promiscuity. The rabbis excommunicated Behar and all who belonged to the Aleppo Lodge, garnering bad publicity in the city's

newspapers as the battle waged. In 1931, Behar came back to Aleppo to launch a series of educational programs for young people designed to preserve Jewish identity, something that all parties agreed was important.

Living in pre-State Israel during the 1930s, Behar would go on to teach in Tel Aviv, where he served as president of one of the Tel Aviv lodges. ☪

Fiddler, Then and Now

been to have had both Ellis Island and Haifa Port in the lives of our people at such crucial moments in our history.

Many know the English lyrics of the songs in “Fiddler” by heart. How many weddings have been graced by “Sunrise, Sunset” over the years? One song in particular gets to me. Now that I have seen it performed in Yiddish, it speaks to me even more: “Vayt Fun Mayn Liber Heym” (“Far From the Home I Love,”) sung by Tevye’s daughter Hodl to her father as they wait at the train station, from which she is leaving to join her husband Perchik, who has been exiled to Siberia for political reasons.

I think of my parents leaving the only homes they knew, for the New World. Even with the normal feelings of anticipation, and even with the Czarist yoke under which they lived, tearing themselves away from familiar surroundings to the unknown must have been wrenching.

For others, the production surely resonated in other ways. Indeed, when



With the Statue of Liberty silhouetted on the horizon, director and photographer Joel Grey imagines a sequel to the “Fiddler” story, depicting the ensemble as newly arrived immigrants in New York.

one enters the theater, on either side of the lobby there are tall signs with the word “Tradition!” in many different languages, a nod to the universal appeal of this magnificent production.

So thank you, Sholem Aleichem,

Joseph Stein, Harnick and Bock, Jerome Robbins, and Joel Grey for enabling me to immerse myself in a musical that is not only great theater, but also great history.

My history. 🎧

PODCAST HOSTED BY B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL CEO DANIEL S. MARIASCHIN

B'nai B'rith Podcast with U.S. Anti-Semitism Envoy Elan Carr: Protecting Jewish Communities Globally Is a Top Priority



The U.S. prioritizes fighting global anti-Semitism through the State Department post of U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat anti-Semitism.

Envoy Elan Carr says he sees his first priority as ensuring the day-to-day safety of Jews around the world. “If a community cannot feel safe, if you can’t leave the house and know that you’re going to come back in one piece, or send your kids to school and know that they’re safe, there is no quality of life. It is intolerable to live in such a place,” says Carr. “So, what we’re looking at is to make sure Jewish assets are protected. In countries especially where Jews are being attacked on the streets — and there is no shortage of examples of that — protecting Jewish assets and making sure that Jews are safe and protected is number one.” 🎧



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**JEWISH GERMAN
FASHION INDUSTRY
FLOURISHED,
THEN PERISHED
UNDER NAZI RULE**

By Dina Gold

It was the golden age of German fashion, created by Jewish designers and business owners and centered in the city of Berlin. But within a decade, as the Nazis came to power and implemented their platform of extreme anti-Semitism, it was gone. And, today, it is little remembered.

“It’s an absolute disgrace how today’s German fashion industry has cloaked itself in willful collective amnesia about the incalculable debt they owe their Jewish predecessors,” says Uwe Westphal, a Berlin-based journalist and author who has spent 30 years researching and writing about the Nazi destruction of the Jewish contribution to Germany’s once flourishing fashion industry.

Westphal, who is not Jewish, wants the world to know that hundreds of Jewish fashion entrepreneurs flourished in the Mitte district of central Berlin prior to World War II, influencing clothing styles far beyond the borders of Germany until they were snuffed out within a decade.

As a one-time fashion reporter for Der Tagesspiegel newspaper, Westphal has researched archives in Germany, Poland, Israel, Australia, the United States and United Kingdom, and corresponded with and interviewed sources across the globe, including Jewish designers and former business owners.

Photo credit: John Graves Collection, Alexandria, Virginia.

Photo on left: Attracting customers to its branches in Berlin and elsewhere in Germany, the Wertheim department stores were among the many Jewish-owned businesses flourishing for decades before the rise of the Third Reich. A souvenir book commemorating the 1927 opening of its renovated Leipziger Platz location depicted palatial interiors, enhanced with fountains, mosaics, paintings, murals and sculptures.

He has now published his findings in both German and English in “Fashion Metropolis Berlin 1836-1939: The Story of the Rise and Destruction of the Jewish Fashion Industry.”

From the mid 1830s many Jewish tailors living in Galicia, in western Ukraine, and Poznan, a city in western Poland, escaped local pogroms by moving to Berlin, which had just eased restrictions on Jewish businesses. At that time, clothes were traditionally made to fit just one person, but that was about to change. Four men in particular — Valentin Manheimer, Herrmann Gerson, Rudolph Hertzog and David Leib Levin — were the first to grasp the significance of mass-producing and retailing clothing to standard sizes, and thus ready-to-wear (in German *Konfektion* and in French *prêt-à-porter*), was born — invented by Jewish Berliners.

By the middle of the 19th century, some 100 Jewish clothing firms existed around Hausvogteiplatz (literally: Square of the Governor’s Residence) in central Berlin’s Mitte district. The area soon attracted many more companies, as the location was well connected to transport, thereby enabling export all over Europe. By the 1890s the square had grown into a thriving hub for ready-made clothing manufacturers, furs, fabric and accessory suppliers. Jews dominated the industry, owning 371, or 85% of all women’s fashion businesses, reaping the rewards of soaring exports of “Berlin chic” and basking in worldwide prestige.

BERLIN: A MAGNET FOR GLAMOUR

At the turn of the 20th century, the large, Jewish-owned department stores of Tietz, Nathan Israel, and Wertheim were established, adding to the luster of Berlin as a magnet for worshippers of sophistication and glamour. Fashion, mainly in coats and dresses, was one of the largest industries in Berlin, offering jobs to 90,000 tailors and seamstresses, many of whom worked from home.

After World War I, the “Roaring 20s” witnessed the emergence of young, modern designers whose fresh approach to design was shown off in stylish fashion magazines such as

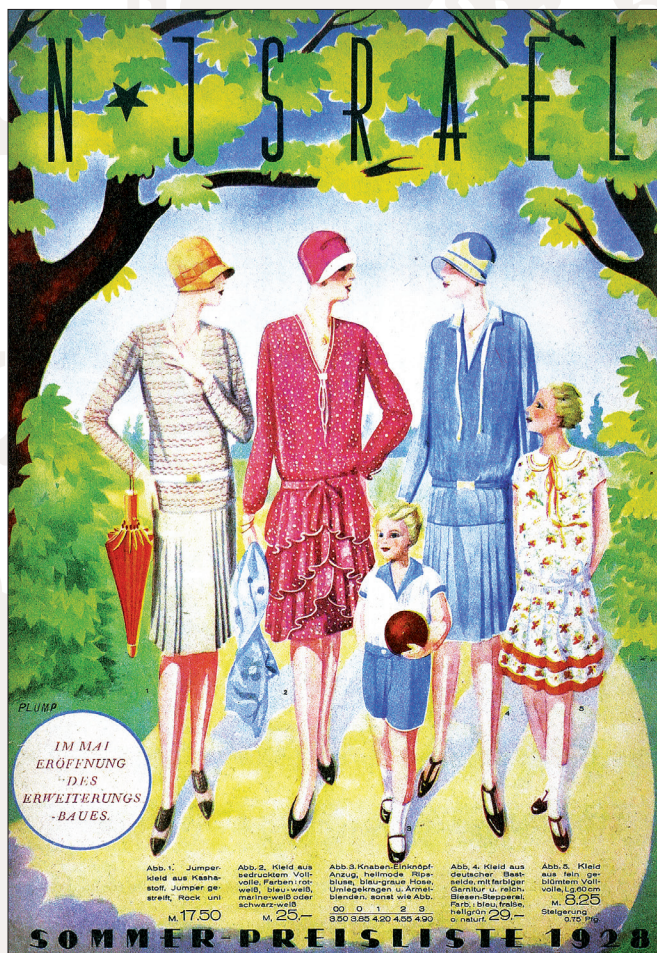


Photo credit: Roz McNulty, www.rozdigital.com.

Pictures from the Claus Jahnke Collection in Uwe Westphal’s “Fashion Metropolis Berlin” evidence the revolution in ready-to-wear that occurred in Germany after World War I. For its 1928 summer line, the Nathan Israel department store advertised chic apparel produced in a wide variety of materials, inspired by the latest Paris styles. Journalist Franz Hessel observed: “The spirit of fashion had become less dramatic, more democratic and therefore more elegant.”



Photo credit: "© Uwe Westphal"

"Fashion Metropolis Berlin" includes rare behind-the-scenes photos of the models, cutters, seamstresses and salesmen employed at Leopold Seligmann Company, another retail concern that controlled all aspects of design and fabrication, from procurement of materials to the manufacture and sale of the finished goods. Part of its operations moved to England in 1934, some years before Seligmann established a new business in Albuquerque, New Mexico, specializing in Western wear.

"Die Dame," "Elegante Welt," "Der Bazar," "Der Silberspiegel" and "Die Neue Linie," which together sold hundreds of thousands of copies. The Weimar Republic (1919-1933) ushered in liberal democracy throughout Germany — as depicted in Christopher Isherwood's novel "Goodbye to Berlin." The city reveled in its newfound freedoms. Jewish designers introduced the "reform" movement in clothing — gone were the figure-constricting corsets and in came emancipation for women with flapper dresses and raunchy, androgynous styles as worn by film stars like Marlene Dietrich. Berlin was the capital of cabaret, revue, theater, film and home of the Bauhaus architectural movement.

The talented designer Lissy Edler worked for the firm Loeb & Levy, based in Krausenstrasse, a few blocks from Hausvogteiplatz. Her beautiful drawings of dresses and shoes were published widely.

A near neighbor on Krausenstrasse was the H. Wolff fur company, founded in 1850 in Pomerania, an area on the southern Baltic Sea shore split between Germany and Poland.

Initially trading in rabbit furs used in collars, sleeves and hats, the company became one of the largest fur fashion businesses in Germany.

Modernity, emancipation of women and homosexuality were all detested by the Nazis. Very quickly, the fashion industry fell under the scrutiny of those who scorned such individualism; nationalistic agitators wanted what they called "Aryan fashion."

"It's no surprise that the Nazis focused their attention on the fashion industry, and very soon after they came to power they embarked on a program of expropriation," explains Westphal. "With 2,700 Berlin-based Jewish fashion companies, the fashion trade was, besides Paris, the largest exporter in Europe. These companies also occupied prime central Berlin real estate."

DECADES TO BUILD, SIX YEARS TO DESTROY

It took Hitler's Third Reich a mere six years to destroy an industry that had not only enjoyed a stellar global reputation for style and innovation but had also been one of the largest

profit centers in the German economy. The Reich accomplished this through the early enactment of anti-Semitic laws, the “Aryanization” program, the ruthless state-organized expropriation of Jewish companies and their properties, and the way banks and insurance companies willingly collaborated with the National Socialist authorities to strip Jews of their assets.

The building at Krausenstrasse 17/18, which had once housed the H. Wolff fur company, was foreclosed on by the Victoria Insurance company and sold below its market value to the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German Railways). (The writer of this article is the great-great-granddaughter of founder Heimann Wolff and contributed a chapter to Westphal’s book.)

The firm of Leopold Seligmann had been one of the largest clothing manufacturers, located at Hausvogteiplatz in the late 1920s. Under Hermann Göring, the Nazi Ministry of Economic Affairs systematically expropriated the buildings at Hausvogteiplatz and the surrounding streets, turning them into Nazi party offices.

From May 1933 ADEFA — the Association of Aryan Garment Producers — played a major role, especially after 1936 when membership of this organization became obligatory for all textile processing businesses. ADEFA created its own label, denoting that garments were made by “racially pure” Aryan workers.

During this period 2,000 Jewish Berlin fashion companies were handed over to Nazi party members or loyalists. Thousands of sewing

machines seized from once Jewish-owned manufacturing firms were sent east where they were put to use in the forced labor factories established in ghettos and concentration camps, including Lodz, Sachsenhausen, Dachau, Stutthof, Lublin, Lemberg, Buchenwald and even Auschwitz. Looted fabrics

from across Europe, especially from Paris, were sent to these workshops, which made not only German army uniforms but also high-end fashion items for the wives and girlfriends of Nazi leaders and SS members.

COLLECTIVE AMNESIA

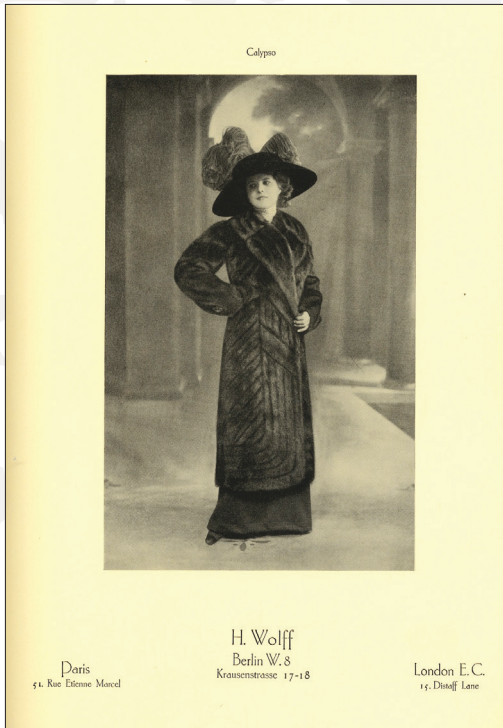
“How many people today are aware,” asks Westphal, “that Hugo Boss, C&A and Joseph Neckerman — all household names” used profits from producing Nazi uniforms to “establish industrial scale production lines using forced laborers under quite dreadful working conditions? Do they realize that when those workers fell ill and could no longer work, they were inevitably deported to the death camps?”

A few former Berlin fashion entrepreneurs who fled abroad did manage to pick up again in their adopted countries. Norbert Jutschenka, who left Berlin in 1938, set himself up on New York’s Seventh Avenue, Americanized his name to Norbert Jay and became a highly sought-after and celebrated dress manufacturer. Perhaps the most uplifting story is that of the firm Leopold Seligmann, whose owners emigrated to Albuquerque, New Mexico, changed the family name to Sullivan and launched a company called Pioneer Wear — making cowboy and Western style outfits. The Marlboro Man advertisements of the 1950s, featuring a rugged-looking man sporting a cowboy hat and sheepskin lined jacket, used clothing made by Pioneer Wear.



Photo credit: Tanya Goehring | Photographer: www.tanyagoehring.com

A rayon and cotton day dress made in Germany, c. 1940, in the Claus Jahnke Collection. Its ADEFA label indicates that the maker belonged to the Association of Aryan Garment Producers, a trade group established in 1933 to exclude Jews.



“At war’s end in 1945 the injustice continued,” Westphal says. Jews who had escaped were often denied access to records they needed to pursue restitution or compensation, and it was hardly possible to launch legal claims in what was then East Germany. Those who profited from the wholesale confiscation of Jewish companies under the Nazis simply ignored the legacy of their predecessors in the industry.

Today, a handful of public memorials recognize this tragic history.

The steps at Hausvogteiplatz subway station, now bear the names of the long-gone Jewish-owned companies that once graced the square.

In 1994, Westphal, his publisher and the Berlin Jewish community established a memorial on Hausvogteiplatz in honor of those who once worked there. It consists of three large mirrors, 8 feet, 2 inches high, reminding one of a clothing shop. Inside the installation are three tablets at the base of each mirror, with text describing the fates of the square’s personnel engaged in the

Photo credit: © Dina Gold, Washington, D.C.

In the Westphal book, Dina Gold documents the history of her family’s business, H. Wolff A.G., internationally known for fur and fur-trimmed coats and accessories. The photo of the ensemble seen left was among the many designs featured in a special advertising catalogue, c. 1910. Wolff’s opulently appointed six-story Krausenstrasse headquarters contained offices, storage and sales rooms, as well as workshops where the coats were made.

Attention all Lawyers: Join the B’nai B’rith Barristers!



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clothing companies, tailors' shops and fashion houses.

In 2016 a plaque was affixed at the front entrance to the former H. Wolff headquarters at Krausenstrasse 17/18 stating that this was the site of one of Berlin's oldest fashion firms and that, during the Nazi era, ownership was forcibly transferred to the German railways. Today the building is part of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Homeland.

In October 2018, a plaque was placed on the wall at Wallstrasse 16, a building seized by the Nazis in 1938 and used during the Third Reich to produce a million Judensterne (Jewish yellow stars) and swastika flags.

It was not until November 2018 that two memorial columns were placed in front of the building that was once the Herrmann Gerson fashion store and which now houses the Federal Foreign Office.

The Fashion Council Germany has not responded to Westphal's request for comment on the industry's failure to recognize the Jewish contribution to Germany's fashion history.

The Holocaust is widely taught in German schools and universities. There are museums and institutes where academics and researchers devote their lives to its study. And yet, an integral part of the story is the pivotal influence of Jews in the fashion industry, and how the Third Reich destroyed that legacy. That aspect has largely been overlooked. Perhaps, with the publication of "Fashion Metropolis Berlin 1836-1939," that will now change. 📖

Dina Gold is the author of "Stolen Legacy: Nazi Theft and the Quest for Justice at Krausenstrasse 17/18, Berlin" published by the American Bar Association www.stolenlegacy.com

B'NAI B'RITH ACTIVE IN REPARATIONS CAUSE

By Cheryl Kempler

From the beginnings of negotiations in 1952 between West Germany and a consortium of international Jewish agencies over reparations, B'nai B'rith, a founding member of what is now known as the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference), has continued to play a major role in obtaining support for Jews who endured World War II persecution.

During the first year, presidents Frank Goldman and, later on, Philip M. Klutznick were members of the Claims Conference Presidium, involved in forging agreements to provide direct compensation to victims and to procure funds to build and restore Jewish communities in Western Europe, the United States and Israel, all of the places where Holocaust survivors had relocated.

As Daniel S. Mariaschin, B'nai B'rith International CEO and present-day Claims Conference board member, noted in a 2014 article, B'nai B'rith's magazine published several features about the role played by Goldman in fulfilling "a basic principle of justice." Later, in 1954 in Washington, D.C., Goldman was among the delegation that urged Austrian Chancellor Julius Raab to settle claims with those whose assets had been taken by his government.

Benjamin Ferencz, noted war crimes investigator, attorney and B'nai B'rith member, advocated for survivors throughout his career. In 1966, he successfully prosecuted Rheinmetall, a Nazi arms maker that denied enslaving men, women and children in its factories. His 1979 book "Less Than Slaves" credited B'nai B'rith for its determination to shine the light on the case with the media and government leaders. Ultimately, Rheinmetall paid 2.5 million Deutsche Marks (the equivalent of \$1.426 million in today's dollars) to 1,500 claimants.

In May 1973, B'nai B'rith called on East Germany, then applying for admission to the United Nations, to do the right thing. Its International Council was included in State Department consultations with that country's government, while presidents David M. Blumberg and William A. Wexler continued to fight for survivors as Claims Conference board members. At the same time, individual lodges around the world met the basic needs of former camp inmates in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Romania.

In 1992, B'nai B'rith helped found the World Jewish Restitution Organization to help forge agreements with countries no longer under Soviet control. Later in the decade, B'nai B'rith launched an organization that assisted researchers of Nazi-looted art. 📖

OUT OF AFRICA: A LONG JOURNEY HOME

By Maayan Hoffman

All photos courtesy of A.Y. Katsof

Piath Aguar learned about the “Chosen People” when she was a child in Bible school. But for a girl being raised in Sudan, the Jews and Jerusalem were a fairy tale.

Until last Passover, when she landed in Israel.

“If you had told me 10 years ago that all of a sudden this crazy white guy would call me up and tell me he is going to bring me to Israel because I am Jewish, I would have thought you were crazy,” Piath said, speaking in Arabic through a translator, having only arrived in Israel six months prior.

“All of a sudden I find out I am one of the people in the Bible. I am chosen.”

“It was like a light came down on me,” she said.

But only one year ago, the prospects of Piath coming to Israel seemed very dim.

When A.Y. Katsof lit the menorah with his family in their home on the Aish Kodesh West Bank outpost last Chanukah, his daughter cried.

“She said she wished that Suzi and Piath, two Ethiopian women we had befriended and who were on a quest to live their lives in Israel, could be with us,” A.Y. said. “Chanukah is a time of miracles. When we light the candles, we think about the wishes we want to come true.



A.Y. Katsof and Suzi Makur Riel happily display Suzi's newly received Israeli identification card in September 2019. On her lap is her son, Mubarak, who suffered from malaria on arrival, but recovered at an Israeli hospital.

“I told her I didn’t think the women had a chance, but if God wills it, nothing’s impossible.”

When A.Y., who heads The Heart of Israel program of the Binyamin Fund, turned away from the candle flames, an Alabama pastor visiting for the holiday put a cash-filled envelope into his hand.

The pastor said he had told his church about The Heart of Israel’s efforts to raise money to bring the last Jews of Ethiopia back to Israel and resettle them in the biblical heartland. One congregant handed him a large amount of cash and asked him to deliver it.

“As soon as I got that envelope, I knew I had to bring them home,” A.Y. said.

The Stranded Sisters

He had first heard about Piath Aguar and her sister, Suzi Makur Riel, the previous spring on a trip to Ethiopia. There, he met their mother, Tewabech Tashu, whose brothers walked across the Sudanese desert to Israel 37 years ago. She stayed back with her father, who died waiting.

Tashu then tried to cross the desert on her own but was arrested and jailed in Sudan. The prison warden released Tashu and married her, and

she put her Jewish past behind. When the couple had their first daughter, they named her Piath, which means “good.”

Several years later, the warden took the couple’s children and moved to South Sudan, while Tashu stayed in northern Sudan. In 2015, she saw a newscast about Ethiopian Israeli Jews visiting Africa as tourists and wondered if they knew her brothers. She begged an Israeli couple she found to take a video of her to share with any Ethiopians they knew back home.

Within months, Tashu’s brothers, Yaakov Alamo, a resident of Ofra in the



Ayen Aguar pictured with her classmates in June 2019 at the Kibbutz Saad School, near the Ibim Absorption Center in southern Israel. She has since relocated with her family to an absorption center near Beit She'an in northern Israel.

West Bank, and Uri Ben-Baruch, a resident of northern Kibbutz Lavi, discovered their long-lost sister.

Tashu had moved to Ethiopia from Sudan to start the Aliyah process when A.Y. met her. He helped facilitate a DNA test that led to her acceptance as a Jew and the Interior Ministry's permission for her to come to Israel.

Tashu longed to reunite with her Israeli family, but just as it seemed possible, she told A.Y. she could not go. While her two sons were living with her in Ethiopia, her two daughters — Piath and Suzi — had been sold into marriage at age 12, had several children and were trapped in war-torn South Sudan.

"I decided I would have to do whatever I could to rescue her daughters," A.Y. recalled.

A Yearlong Mission

He spent nearly 12 months in a clandestine rescue mission, which took him through South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia.

Piath is divorced and her ex-husband, as is common in South Sudan, took her children — Ayen, 11, and Bior, 7 — to live with his family. A.Y. needed to find a way to reunite the children with their mother.

He reached out to Come True, a project of the Become organization, which helps children of South Sudanese refugees receive a better education. In some cases, the children are brought to Israel for school.

Although the plan was to convince Piath's ex-husband to let them leave him to learn in Israel, A.Y. knew it was unlikely. A representative of Come True called their father, and the first miracle manifested.

"I am a Christian, and I believe in God," the father told Come True. "If God wants my children to have a better future, I'll take it. The alternative is to let them die in South Sudan."

He took his children to Uganda, where Come True has a base and signed the necessary paperwork. When they crossed the border into Kenya with A.Y., they discovered their travel documents were faulty.

Police arrested A.Y. Katsof for kidnapping the kids.

It took an Israel-loving Kenyan pastor, Dennis Nthumbi, to convince the authorities to let them go. But a not-too-dissimilar situation recurred when the team made it to Gondar, Ethiopia, where A.Y. learned that the children did not have the necessary documentation again — this time for immigration to Israel. The only way to get it was to send the children back to their father in South Sudan and ask him to procure it.

"It meant sending them back to the mercy of a father who could easily change his mind," A.Y. recalled. "I cried like a baby that night. I was convinced we had lost them."

The pastor, however, would not let A.Y. lose hope. "The matter looked dangerous and hopeless," he said, "but I believed God would help."

He called a bishop, who then called another pastor he knew back in South Sudan, who ensured the father's approval throughout the process. One week later, the needed documentation arrived with a message from the pastor, "The God of Israel is mighty."

Within a week, Piath, her children and A.Y. arrived at Addis Ababa airport for their flight to Israel.

"Are these your children?" the airport official asked in suspicion, when he saw him with the children.

"These are the children of Israel," A.Y. responded. "I'm taking them home."

The man stamped their passports and placed them into his hand.

"The God of Israel is great," A.Y. said.

Returning Israel's Children

Two days later, a Jewish Agency Aliyah flight from Ethiopia arrived with Tashu and her sons.

Four months later, however, A.Y. was still fighting for Suzi, who like her sister and her sister's children, faced African bureaucracy. In her attempts to get to Ethiopia and then Israel, she was repeatedly apprehended at the airport and sent back to South Sudan. When she finally arrived in Gondar, the Israeli



Home at last, an ecstatic Piath Aguar in Netanya during Passover 2019. This was the first time she had ever walked on a beach.

embassy at first would not approve her paperwork because the name on her passport did not match her birth certificate.

Days after A.Y. and his colleagues managed to break through the bureaucracy and get Israel to approve their travel, he learned that Suzi's visa was about to expire, and she would once again be sent back to Sudan to restart the process. Moreover, her son was in mortal danger with malaria.

The Jewish Agency confirmed it would allow Suzi and her children to make Aliyah upon arrival at Ben-Gurion Airport, but it could not help them get on the plane. "My credit cards were maxed. I could not afford their plane tickets, the Israeli benefactor recalls.

Someone mentioned to A.Y. that "Israel Inspired" podcast co-host Jeremy Gimpel might want to help, so he reached out.

"Jeremy takes a picture of his credit card and says, 'This one's on me,'"

Piath, Ayen and Bior Aguar celebrate their first Rosh Hashanah with the Katsof family in September 2019.

A.Y. said. He bought the tickets, and they were on a plane two days later.

"It seemed like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, to bring Jews who were lost in Sudan to Israel," the podcast co-host said. "I wanted to help."

"I don't think there is much future for Jews in South Sudan, Ethiopia or even France," he continued. "If a Jew wants to make Aliyah, it's incumbent upon us to do what we can."

The last family members arrived in late August. Before Rosh Hashanah the sick child was released from the hospital, and they celebrated together at an absorption center.

They are now learning Hebrew and how to live a Jewish life.

"It is very important to me to be Jewish," said Piath, but she admitted she does not really know what that means. When A.Y. prays, she stands next to him. When his wife lights candles, she does, too.

"Overall, I want to be connected," she said. "There is a lot I don't understand. What I do know is that I am a dark Jew. A.Y. is a light Jew. But we are all the same family."

The Land of Honey

Piath said that for her, "everything in Israel is honey."

"You don't understand what hard is," she said. "Here, there is food. You don't wash your clothes with your hands. Water comes out of the wall. When you are hot, machines make it cold. It is more than I could dream."



However, Suzi, who has been here for much less time, is still struggling.

When she had a toothache, she asked A.Y. to take her to someone “to get it cut out with a knife.”

In South Sudan, he explained, they extract the tooth and wash the mouth with salt water. There is no modern dentistry. When her young son was in the hospital with malaria, he had never slept in a crib. She had to convince the hospital staff to put a mattress on the floor so he could rest.

And recently, she went to the supermarket and offered to pay for 500 shekels worth of groceries with five 200-shekel

bills and could not understand why the cashier insisted on giving her change.

“She never learned basic math,” A.Y. said. She does not know how to read and write, something she hopes to change at the absorption center.

The sisters dream of eventually opening up a hair salon called “African Sisters,” catering to Ethiopian and other African immigrants like themselves.

“At the end of the day, when the people of Israel say, ‘Welcome home,’ they mean it,” A.Y. said. “My sisters are home.” 🇮🇱

B'NAI B'RITH ASSISTED IN JEWISH ETHIOPIAN EXODUS

By Cheryl Kempler

In 1905, Polish anthropologist Jacques Faitlovitch, from the Sorbonne, first traveled to Abyssinia (now part of Ethiopia) to study its devout community of men and women who identified as Jews.

He became the first person to spread awareness of the Falasha Mura (“aliens,” their former name) or Beta Israel. Israel officially recognized them as Jews in 1975, but Ethiopia’s anti-Zionist policies prohibited them from emigrating. Learning that some of their people had gone to Israel from neighboring Sudan, where the Israeli government had rescued them, thousands more suffered in its squalid refugee camps, where they lost hope of making Aliyah.

At Israel’s request, B’nai B’rith’s then president, Gerald Kraft, traveled to Ethiopia to assure its Jewish community that Israel would fly the Ethiopian Jews out. His organization’s seven-branched menorah was strong proof for a people with sacred and secular traditions measured by that number: Even the Sabbath is grouped into cycles of seven. After the Ethiopian government curtailed “Operation Moses” before all the Jews were extricated, Kraft met with French President François Mitterrand and U.S. Vice President George H.W. Bush, whose administration had already planned to complete the airlift.

The approximately 8,000 Ethiopian Jews arriving between November 1984 and March 1985 were assisted in resettlement by B’nai B’rith, coordinating with Israel’s

government and clergy.

Israeli and overseas districts were among the philanthropies meeting the immigrants’ needs; British and Australian B’nai B’rith lodges constructed community centers and club houses and ran vocational programs. From a member’s significant gifts, Netanya’s David Ben Gurion Lodge established a foundation that paid for camp tuition and college scholarships.

Anticipating “Operation Solomon,” which rescued approximately 14,000 Ethiopian Jews over a few days in 1991, lodges readied clothes, diapers, medicine and furniture. B’nai B’rith’s volunteer department and District 14 (now B’nai B’rith Israel) developed an initiative relying on help from members and others who oriented the newcomers to modern life. “Adopt a Family” matched donors to individual households, who received letters and packages.

During the mid-1990s, B’nai B’rith focused on Ethiopian children who were integrating into Israeli society. District 14 funded hundreds of bar mitzvah celebrations, and a Los Angeles lodge, Ivan Franks-Ladra, donated \$5,000 to raise educational standards at a pre-school based at an immigrant trailer park. During the years in which the Ethiopian Jews were adjusting and needed assistance, B’nai B’rith continued to provide their families with, among other things, eyeglasses, dental care and, for students, sports equipment and book bags. 🇮🇱

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The Miracle of the Oil — in Chanukah Cooking

By Paula Shoyer



Photo credit: Natasha Breen from Pixabay

Chanukah is almost synonymous with oil because of the miracle of the little bit of oil that lit the Temple Menorah for eight days. Oil is the basis of our cooking every single day, and today we are faced with a myriad of choices. Back in biblical times, there was just olive oil.

In ancient Israel, olive oil production was the basis of the economy and it was used for fuel, medications, cosmetics and anointing. The word “moshiach,” the Messiah, literally means the anointed one. Olive oil is mentioned in the Bible as one of the seven treasured agricultural products native to the land of Israel. In fact, the word “oil” comes from the Latin “olea,” or olive.



In 1997, Ehud Galili and a team of Israeli archaeologists published a paper about finding thousands of crushed olive stones and pulp, waste from oil extraction likely of wild olives, in pits at the Kfar Samir prehistoric settlement off the Carmel coast south of Haifa. The findings prove olive oil production as early as 6,500 years ago.

Olive oil use spread throughout the eastern Mediterranean countries and became the basis of cooking in Italy and Spain as well.

Around 1800, olive oil was brought to America by Italian and Greek immigrants, though it became popular much later.

In many other countries, animal fats served as the primary fat for generations. In 1900, David Wesson gave Americans the first U.S.-produced non-animal fat to use in cooking. In 1911 corn oil was introduced. Canola came to the U.S. from Canada in 1985.

To make the best oil choices for your cooking, you should know the health benefits and best uses of each. When we talk about the health properties of oils, note that all fats are 9 calories per gram.

There are three types of fats: saturated, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated.

Saturated fats have a higher proportion of fatty acid molecules. The American Heart Association recommends a diet of no more than 5% or 6% saturated fats. These fats raise cholesterol levels and increase the risk of heart disease and stroke. Saturated fats typically come from animals and plant-based oils such as palm and coconut.

Monounsaturated fats come from seeds, nuts and fruits. These include olive, canola, avocado, peanut, safflower, flax and sesame. These fats help reduce cholesterol and contain vitamin E.

Says Amy Riolo, cookbook author and expert on Mediterranean food, “A great deal of research has been conducted on the principal antioxidant found in extra-virgin olive oil, known as polyphenols. The higher the amount of polyphenols that an extra-virgin olive oil contains, the better it is for you.” Polyphenols assist in preventing degenerative diseases.

Polyunsaturated fats include soybean, sunflower and grape seed oils. These are good for you because they contain omega 3 and 6 fatty acids. Omega 3s promote weight loss, fight depression and anxiety, improve brain function, reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease and fight inflammation. While Omega 6s lower your LDL (the bad cholesterol) and raise HDL (the good cholesterol), they should be consumed in moderation because they are also inflammatory and can cause illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, cancer, IBS and arthritis. Recent studies recommend a 4:1 ratio of omega 3s to 6s.

Canola is low in saturated fat and is one I use often in everyday cooking. In Canada, rapeseed plants were genetically modified to contain low erucic acid. The name “canola” comes from “Canadian oil low in acid.”

Vegetable oil is sold for Passover, as other seed-based oils are prohibited. Vegetable oil is not the healthiest because it is highly processed and predominantly made up of polyunsaturated fats. Vegetable oils are also too high in Omega 6 fatty acids.

Margarine, a solid form of vegetable oil, is made from safflower, sunflower, soybean and cottonseed, crops that absorb large amounts of toxic pesticides. It contains trans fats, which increase your risk of coronary diseases, and has been linked to obesity, diabetes, allergies, some cancers and adversely



impacting your brain, nervous system and immune response. In recent years, producers have reduced trans fats, though according to certified health and wellness coach Lori Fish Bard, “Food labeling rules allow products to state that they contain 'zero trans fats' if there is less than .5 grams of trans fats per serving,” so clearly, trans fats remain in margarine.

According to Bard, coconut oil is a better choice than margarine because, for starters, it is free from trans fats. Bard explained that contrary to many reports, coconut oil has powerful anti-fungal and anti-bacterial properties. Although a saturated fat, it is abundant in medium chain triglycerides, or MCTs. A National Institutes of Health study showed how MCT oils can prevent obesity and arteriosclerosis. In addition, most of the saturated fat in coconut oil is lauric acid, which lowers cholesterol levels and increases immunity, boosts thyroid function and improves absorption of calcium and vitamin D.

Proponents of the keto diet recommend adding coconut oil to many foods to boost energy and promote weight loss. Coconut oil can help your body get into the state of ketosis where it burns fat in the absence of carbs. Moreover, the lauric acid purportedly curbs hunger.

You should always buy virgin coconut oil rather than the refined type, as the virgin oil is less processed.

When choosing an oil to cook with, the first question to answer is how you are using it. Different oils are best for salads, sautéing, roasting or frying.

For cooking, the smoke point dictates the appropriate oil. Smoke point is the temperature at which oil smokes and burns. The higher the smoke point of the particular oil, the higher the temperature you can use for cooking. Overheating your oil

destroys the nutrients, so you need to tailor your choice of oil to the cooking temperature.

If you are frying, use an oil with a high smoke point, 400°F and higher. The best options are almond, corn, canola, grapeseed, peanut, safflower, sesame and sunflower oils.

Many people believe that you cannot fry in olive oil. According to Riolo. “If it is a good, low acidity extra-virgin olive oil, it will have a smoke point high enough to fry in.” She recommends frying latkes in it.


Next, you must consider how much flavor you want from the oil, whether strong or neutral. Taste it if you are not sure. For baking you need a neutral flavor, so I typically use safflower or canola oils in my dessert recipes. I do also bake with olive oil to create Chanukah desserts, see below. I often use coconut oil in lieu of margarine for dough and crusts. I measure and refrigerate the coconut oil until hard and then cut the chilled pieces into my dry ingredients.

For salad dressing, I prefer flaxseed, avocado, canola or extra-virgin olive oil.

If you want to make an infused or flavored oil to drizzle on your food, use extra-virgin olive oil.

For marinating meats, if I am ultimately going to be cooking at a high temperature, I will use oil with a high smoke point.

In “The Healthy Jewish Kitchen” cookbook, I recommend baking latkes and schnitzel in the oven (see next page). My method uses mere tablespoons of oil heated in a pan in the oven at high heat and then the food fries in the oil.

When baking with coconut oil, add extra vanilla, cinnamon or lemon to mask the coconut flavor, if desired. 

POTATO AND SCALLION LATKES WITH PICKLED APPLESAUCE

Parve, Gluten-free, Vegetarian, Passover • Serves 6



Everyone loves potato latkes, but no one likes the mess of frying them, or the guilt associated with eating them. These latkes are baked in the oven and easily won over my kids. You do need to watch them so they do not burn; they were done at different times in different ovens. The Pickled Applesauce is basically a tangy-spicy applesauce, which we also eat with schnitzel.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes • **COOK TIME:** 20 to 24 minutes • **ADVANCE PREP:** Latkes may be made 2 days in advance and reheated in the oven or frozen; applesauce may be made 4 days in advance • **EQUIPMENT:** Cutting board, knife, vegetable brush, measuring cups and spoons, citrus juicer, vegetable peeler, 2 jelly roll pans, food processor, medium bowl, box grater, wooden spoon, oven mitts, slotted spatula, small saucepan with lid, immersion blender

LATKES

- 2 tablespoons sunflower or safflower oil, or more if needed
- 1/2 medium onion, quartered
- 3 scallions, ends trimmed, cut into thin slices or chopped into small pieces
- 3 medium potatoes (about 1 1/2 pounds [700 g]), scrubbed clean and unpeeled
- 2 teaspoons (10 mL) fresh lemon juice
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 tablespoons potato starch
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

PICKLED APPLESAUCE

- 1 teaspoon sunflower or safflower oil
- 1/3 cup red onions, chopped into 1/4-inch (6 mm) pieces
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- 2 apples, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch (12 mm) cubes
- 1/4 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Pinch black pepper

To make the latkes, preheat the oven to 450°F (230°C). When the oven is hot, pour 2 tablespoons of oil onto 2 jelly roll pans and turn them in every direction so that the oil coats the pans. Heat the pans in the oven for 5 minutes.

Place the onions and scallions in the bowl of a food processor and chop them into small pieces. Place them in a medium bowl. Shred the potatoes by hand on the large holes of a box grater or in a food processor with the shredding blade, and place in the bowl. Add the lemon juice, eggs, baking powder, potato starch, salt and pepper and mix well.

Very carefully (I mean really carefully; move very slowly) remove one of the pans and use your hands or a spoon to scoop up and drop clumps of the potato mixture, a little less than 1/4 cup, onto the pan. I use my hands. Press the mixture down to flatten it a little.

Place the pan in the oven for 10 to 12 minutes and immediately remove the second oiled pan. Repeat the same process with the remaining potato mixture and bake the second pan of latkes for 10 to 12 minutes. Bake them until the edges are well browned, and then with a slotted spatula turn them over and cook the latkes for another 8 to 10 minutes, or until the bottoms are browned. May be made 2 days in advance and reheated in the oven.

Meanwhile, to make the applesauce, heat the oil in a small saucepan over medium heat. Add the onions and cook them for 3 minutes, until they soften. Add the vinegar and brown sugar and cook for another 3 minutes. Add the apples, coriander, ginger, cinnamon stick, salt and pepper, and cook, covered, on low heat for 15 minutes, or until the apples are soft. Let the mixture cool for 10 minutes and then purée it, using an immersion blender or a food processor. May be made 4 days in advance and served warm or cold.

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ALMOND AND OLIVE OIL CAKE

Serves 8 to 12

The use of olive oil in cakes dates back farther than the Chanukah story itself. Olive oil was used in baked offerings at the Temple. This is a super-easy teatime cake that reminds me of simple cakes I have eaten in Italy. If you are feeling decadent, serve this with whipped cream.

- 3/4 cup (90 g) sliced almonds (with or without skins)
- 1 cup (200 g) sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1/2 cup (120 mL) extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup (125 g) all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup (60 g) ground almonds
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 1/2 teaspoon orange zest (from one orange)
- spray oil containing flour

PREHEAT OVEN to 350°F (180°C). Trace an 8-inch (20 cm) round pan on parchment paper and cut it out with scissors. Grease and flour the pan, press in the parchment circle; grease and flour the top of the parchment and sides of the pan. Sprinkle and spread the sliced almonds on the bottom of the pan to cover it.

IN A MEDIUM BOWL, beat the sugar, eggs, and olive oil for about one minute at medium speed until creamy. Add the flour, ground almonds, baking powder, salt, almond



extract and orange zest and beat until combined. Pour the mixture over the sliced nuts. Bake for 35 minutes, or until a skewer inserted in the middle of the cake comes out clean.

LET THE CAKE COOL in the pan for 10 minutes and then run a knife around the sides. Turn the cake onto a wire rack and let it cool. Serve the cake almond side up. Store it covered at room temperature for up to 4 days or freeze for up to 3 months.

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Please note that our next annual issue will
arrive in homes in December 2020.

Cuba's Jewish Community Clings to Life

By Nan Wiener
Photos by Michal Greenboim

Yolanda Geller, who's in her 60s, is the "challah lady" at Adath Israel, Havana's Orthodox synagogue.

Every week, she makes challah for the 25 or 30 people who will eat Shabbat dinner there. The synagogue doesn't have an electric mixer, so Geller has to assemble and knead every loaf by hand. She often can't get yeast, and the oven is so small that she can bake only two loaves at a time. Even lighting the oven can be a challenge since matches are hard to come by in Cuba.

Luis Szklarz, 80, has a son and a daughter who both married non-Jews. They're raising their children Jewish, but many mixed couples are not, which worries Szklarz deeply. Even when they do, many of the kids end up leaving Cuba in search of freedom and opportunity. "In

50 years," he says, "Judaism in Cuba will be gone."

Such are the realities of life for the 1,500 or so Jews who live in Cuba. There used to be many more — some 14,000 in Havana alone. But most left in the early 1960s, soon after Fidel Castro rose to power and imposed dictatorial Communist rule. They escaped from a government that outlawed religion and an economy that threatened the livelihood of anyone involved in private business.

Today the community is in much better shape, thanks to international aid groups, including the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which stepped up in the 1990s when Castro loosened restrictions on religion. They restored the main synagogue and started

a Hebrew school, and they continue to send much-needed money and supplies.

But obvious challenges to the survival of the community remain. Intermarriage is a constant threat, as is the economic deprivation and lack of freedom that leads many young Cubans to want to emigrate — including to Israel, where the Jewish Agency helps new immigrants with economic and other support.

Below is an intimate look at the Jewish community in Cuba as it exists today. The people eagerly welcomed us into their world and were eager to share their experiences. But the question remains: Are the Jews of Cuba strong enough to engineer another miracle, or are we looking at the last generation of this Caribbean community? 🇮🇸



A weekday service at Adath Israel, Havana's only Orthodox synagogue. The synagogue has a membership of about 125 families. The Patronato (or Beth Shalom), which is affiliated with the conservative movement, is Havana's largest synagogue, and the only one that's been fully restored. The third one, also conservative, is Centro Sefaradi.



Yolanda Geller makes challah for the weekly Shabbat dinner at Adath Israel. She and other women from the synagogue devoutly cook for their members twice a day: once in the morning and again in the evening after prayers. For many people, especially the elderly, this is the only food they get each day.

Anyone who visits the Jewish community of Havana will invariably meet Adela Dworin, the president of Beth Shalom Synagogue and the Patronato Community Center and the unofficial historian of the Jewish Cuban community. Beth Shalom is the de facto headquarters of the Jewish community, with a Hebrew school (pictured here), an on-site pharmacy, a computer center and a video screening room. Dworin gives tours of the synagogue nearly every day to tourist groups from all over the world.



Yacob Berezniak reads from the weekly parsha to his 6-year-old daughter, Eisheva. Berezniak started coming to Adat Israel when he was two, and he had his bar mitzvah there in 1994. He is president of the synagogue as well as the only kosher “sochet,” or slaughterer, in Cuba. Every Tuesday he plies his trade at Carniceria Kosher, where, unlike other Cubans, who are not allowed to buy red meat, Jews can fill their monthly meat ration with kosher beef.



Teenagers at the Beth Shalom Sunday school participated in the synagogue's Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremonies. This is also the age when many Cubans start to think about leaving the country. In the past several decades, the majority of Cuban immigrants to Israel have been in their 20s and 30s.



B'nai B'rith in Cuba: A Historic and Ongoing Mission

By Katherine Dolgenos

B'nai B'rith's history in Cuba began in the mid-20th century. The Cuban Jewish community started its own B'nai B'rith lodge with the creation of the B'nai B'rith Maimonides Lodge in Cuba on May 17, 1943. The island nation's Jewish population largely fled before, during and immediately after the revolution that brought Fidel Castro to power in 1959. An estimated 1,500 Jews remain there today.

In 1995, we sent our first major mission to the island to aid the Jewish community. The B'nai B'rith International-led program evolved out of a smaller program created by a B'nai B'rith lodge in Pittsburgh. Our Cuban Jewish Relief Project continued to send B'nai B'rith members and aid shipments in partnership with the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund.

Recently, aid went to those affected by a series of hurricanes. This included water purification tablets for Cubans in Havana and surrounding areas. The B'nai B'rith Cuban Jewish Relief Project has also helped retirees at the Mitrani Senior Day Care Center, based in Havana's Centro Sefaradi synagogue, one of three in Cuba's capital city, providing medical and educational supplies. B'nai B'rith has helped create a food distribution program through the Maimonides Lodge and provided financial aid to 120 elderly Jews across Cuba. While most of the island's Jewish population lives in Havana, we also have helped smaller communities in Guantanamo, Santiago de Cuba, Camaguey, Santa Clara, Sancti Spiritus and Cienfuegos.

Over the years, we have sent many aid missions to Cuba, including four delegations in 2015 alone. The missions also took part in the spiritual and religious activities of the Jewish community. We have donated Torahs, paid for restoration of graves that had fallen into disrepair in a Jewish cemetery and given a meat grinder to the island's kosher butcher.

The B'nai B'rith World Center-Jerusalem held a Cuba-focused symposium in conjunction with the Cuban Jewish Relief Project in 2015. The event, encompassing the Cuban Jewish community, tourism and humanitarian aid, capped a week of meetings with the Yad Vashem International School for Holocaust Studies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the state of the Cuban Jewish community. The Cuban Jewish Relief Project hosted William Miller, the former vice president of the Jewish Community of Cuba, for this presentation and meetings.


"Despite the evolution of politics in the United States and the ever-changing nature of the U.S. relationship with Cuba, and even the evolution of our own aid and missions to Cuba over time, we remain committed to the continued support of the Jewish community of Cuba," said Sienna Girgenti, director of the Cuban Jewish Relief Project at B'nai B'rith International. "We will continue to act in whatever ways we can to ensure a bright and vibrant future for Jewish life on the island." 

Photo credit: Emmanuel del Toro from Pixabay



Highlights From the B'nai B'rith Australia/New Zealand Triennial Meeting

B'nai B'rith Australia and New Zealand delegates, during their triennial meeting in Melbourne in September, elected a new set of officers, to be led by President David Samuels. They also commended outgoing president Morris Tobias for his past six years of leadership. Tobias currently serves as a senior vice president of B'nai B'rith International.

International President Charles O. Kaufman installed the new officers and delivered an address about surging anti-Semitism around the world, including recent events in Australia. He suggested an annual Seder-like event that would tell the story of blood libels and lies that have been used to promote anti-Semitism for millennia.

"We retell the story of the Exodus every year at Passover," he said. "We know how it begins and ends. We must educate and remind our community and society about anti-Semitism. A Seder-like event would be an important tradition."

The meeting highlighted two highly successful B'nai B'rith Australia/New Zealand initiatives. For many years, Courage to Care has fought hatred by bringing Holocaust survivors and rescuers into the schools to augment the work of specially trained educators. Click to Connect is a new program in which B'nai B'rith members help underprivileged youth in Israel improve English skills through engaging conversations and online videoconferencing.

David Southwick, a member of Parliament in Australia, addressed the convention and presented a Heroes of Caulfield Award to Tania Tobias. The award recognizes the work of "unsung heroes" in this community in Victoria.

Stéphane Teicher, a senior vice president of B'nai B'rith International, discussed anti-Semitism in France and



Photos credit: Arie Offenberger

B'nai B'rith UNESCO Representative Stéphane Teicher (r) and Morris Tobias, whose leadership during six years of service as president of B'nai B'rith Australia/New Zealand was recognized during the District's September convention and gala. Both men are currently senior vice presidents of B'nai B'rith International.



elsewhere in Europe. He also spoke about his work as B'nai B'rith's representative in Paris to UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). [📺](#)

B'nai B'rith Australia/New Zealand's new president, David Samuels, (l) and B'nai B'rith International President Charles O. Kaufman, who installed new officers and spoke at the convention.

1843



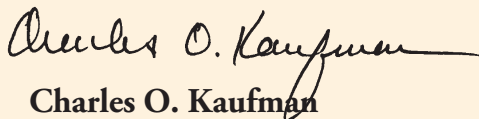
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"My Time Here Has Mattered"

B'nai B'rith International will serve the Jewish community for years to come, due in large part to the generosity of those who believe that Jewish continuity is of the utmost importance as they enrich the world today and make a difference for tomorrow.

The following individuals are members of the 1843 Society of B'nai B'rith. They have made planned gifts to the B'nai B'rith Foundation of the U.S. On behalf of B'nai B'rith International, my heartfelt thanks to all of those listed for their commitment to a strong Jewish future.

Sincerely,


Charles O. Kaufman

Names marked with an asterisk (*) are deceased.

MAY THEIR MEMORIES BE FOR A BLESSING

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Three Generations of B'nai B'rith Leadership, One Strong Belief in "Giving Back"

By B'nai B'rith Planned Giving Staff

Eric Book's parents provided a strong Jewish foundation for him and his siblings, deeply rooted in the value and importance of charity and giving back to the community.

Another strong influence on Eric's Jewish identity was the pluralistic yeshiva where he went to middle school outside Philadelphia. Eric fondly remembers the challenging curriculum and writing book reports in Hebrew. While there, he also developed an important connection to Israel. This education, along with the upbringing provided by his parents and involvement in BBYO, cemented a future of charitable involvement in the Jewish community and the community at large.

Eric was born in Montclair, New Jersey, one of six children. His father, Milton, was an electrical engineer. His mother, Eileen, was a bookkeeper for the family business, and later for an attorney in California. His family moved several times, but, wherever they lived, they were active in their local synagogue.

In college, Eric studied political science, 20th century political thought and biology. Pursuing a pre-med curriculum, he also worked nights in the restaurant industry. He was an active member of AEPi, a Jewish fraternity, where he continued his charitable work.

Soon after graduating from California State University, Northridge, in 1975 with a degree in political science, Eric joined the B'nai B'rith Lodge in Encino, in California's San Fernando Valley, where he had moved to enjoy the beautiful weather and be closer to his newly relocated parents. Initially, he was interested in the lodge's bowling night and other social activities. He wouldn't have guessed that weekly bowling would eventually lead to a lifetime of leadership with B'nai B'rith, both locally and internationally.

In 1981 Eric became president of the lodge, where his father and one of his brothers also later served as presidents. Since then, Eric has served as a member of the Board of Governors; vice president of District 4; vice president of finance, Southern California Region; member of the U.S. Leadership Council; B'nai B'rith International Leadership chair; and member of the Executive Board of Directors and the B'nai B'rith Foundation Board. He is currently the vice chair of the B'nai B'rith Foundation of the United States.



Eric Book, who joined B'nai B'rith in 1975, says that assuming a leadership position in the organization has positively impacted his life in many ways. Committed to B'nai B'rith's mission and future, he is a longtime member of the 1843 Society.

Professionally, Eric has been a financial consultant since 1976 and has been with Morgan Stanley since 1983 as a first vice president, financial advisor and senior investment management consultant.

Additionally, Eric has served twice as board chair of the Child and Family Guidance Center in Northridge, California, and also served as president of Magen David Adom, Israel's national ambulance and blood-services organization, for the West Coast.



Photo credit: Lloyd Wolf/www.lloydwolf.com

B'nai B'rith Executive Board member Eric Book (r), photographed with B'nai B'rith International member David Djemal from Panama, leads the menorah lighting ceremony during the organization's recent Leadership Forum in Washington.

Eric credits his involvement in the Encino Lodge for much of his professional success. Here, he learned how to facilitate meetings, how to run an organization, how to work with different kinds of people with differing visions and, also, how to be a benevolent leader.

Just as Eric learned from older B'nai B'rith members when he became lodge president in his 20s, he continues to pass his knowledge and his values down to the next generation.

Eric and his wife Julie, who works at a Herman Miller furniture dealership, The Sheridan Group, doing account sales and design, have been married for 36 years. They have one son, Robert, who lives in the Houston area. Robert is an associate with Arroyo Energy Investment Partners, focusing on renewable energy. In addition, he is currently in the B'nai B'rith Connect young leadership network and is very charitably focused as well.

Eric believes in giving back to the community, participating in charitable work and passing on charitable values. "The Planned Giving Department has been so grateful to Eric for helping us to facilitate a number of well-received professional estate planning seminars in Southern California over the years," said Marna Schoen, director of Planned Giving. Then, about 15 years ago, Eric decided to name B'nai B'rith International as a beneficiary in his trust. By making this commitment, Eric became a member of B'nai B'rith's esteemed 1843 Society, which acknowledges individuals who have made a commitment to the organization through their charitable estate plan.

"I felt it was important that I became an 1843 Society member if I were asking others to do the same. I believe the future of B'nai B'rith is in our hands," Eric said. "We have to lead by example to support the organization for the next generation." 📍

For more information about how to include B'nai B'rith in your will or trust, please contact the Planned Giving Department at (800) 656-5561 or email plannedgiving@bnaibrith.org.

B'nai B'rith would like to recognize and thank the Ruby Diamond Foundation for its recent generous contribution.

B'NAI B'RITH TODAY

B'nai B'rith Holds Annual Leadership Forum Focusing on “Global Security in an Insecure World”

By Katherine Dolgenos

All photos: Lloyd Wolf, www.lloydwolf.com

B'nai B'rith International's 2019 Leadership Forum, held in Washington, D.C. from Nov. 2 to Nov. 4, featured prominent speakers from the realms of diplomacy, public policy and the media, as well as a reception for participants at the residence of the Japanese ambassador.

In his State of the Organization address, President Charles O. Kaufman spoke about the ways B'nai B'rith is active globally in combating anti-Semitism and fighting for Israel on the world stage, as well as our work with senior housing and aiding disaster-struck communities. Kaufman also presented the President's Award to 30 individuals for their efforts to advance B'nai B'rith's mission.

“B'nai B'rith has a long and distinguished history of leadership in taking strong stands on behalf of our people around the world. And we made our collective, global voice heard once again,” Kaufman said. “However, understanding that the pen can be mightier than the sword, I decided that a direct way to confront emerging hate was through correspondence. I took to the keyboard in protest letters regarding situations at Jewish museums in Berlin, Munich and Warsaw. I continue to follow these issues closely. Our actions were followed in the Jerusalem Post and The Economist, among other places.”



Thirty B'nai B'rith members were recognized and honored for their extraordinary service with the new President's Award.

B'nai B'rith International CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin addressed the global challenges of anti-Semitism. “Whether it occurs in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, or Warsaw, Poland, or Crown Heights, Brooklyn, anti-Semitism must be confronted aggressively,” Mariaschin said. “The responsibility to do so falls squarely on all of us, together with our allies and all people of conscience. Just as the very existence of the Jewish people and the Jewish state is a product of hope and determination, we must continue to apply these qualities to the challenge

at hand. The security of our community depends on it.”

Ambassador Gonzalo Koncke, chief of staff for Organization of American States Secretary General Luis Almagro, and Eduardo Kohn, B'nai B'rith International's director for Latin American Affairs, discussed the security outlook of the Western hemisphere.

Koncke emphasized the OAS's commitment to fighting anti-Semitism through the promotion of human rights and democracy. He acknowledged that the OAS has a lot of work to do, including advocating that



President's Award recipients in attendance are photographed with B'nai B'rith's President Charles O. Kaufman and CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin. Seated, from left: Jack Ventura, Maryland; Kaufman; Peter Perlman, Michigan; Lila Zorn, accepting for Joel Marwil, Michigan.

Standing, from left: Harold Steinberg, Tennessee; Frank Goldman, Colorado; Sam Osmo, Brazil; David Lubin, Michigan; Shel Marcus, Illinois; Gary Javitch, Nebraska; Millie Magid, New York; Harold Miller, Connecticut; Marvin Siflinger, Massachusetts; Mariaschin.

Awardees not in attendance: Marty Adelstein and the Adelstein Family, New York; James Altman and Juliet Seifert, Australia; Valerie Bello, United Kingdom; Marvin Beleck, Texas; Barbara Brenman, Virginia; Helen Scherrer Diamond, Harry Lutz and Lee Tanenbaum, Georgia; Samuel Domsky, Pennsylvania; Rich Hollander, Texas; Marianne Kychenthal, Chile; Harold Mitchell, New York; Alan Samuels, Pennsylvania; Barry Simon, California; Dr. Daniel Sporn, Argentina; Gina Strauss, Florida; Joe Tenenbaum, New Jersey.

all countries in the region adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism.

Three security experts participated in a panel entitled "Global Security Threats at Home and Abroad." They were Patrick Daly, principal deputy

director/chief operating officer, Secure Community Network; Calvin A. Shivers, deputy assistant director of the Criminal Investigative Division, FBI; and Frances Townsend, former homeland security advisor to President George W. Bush and executive vice president for worldwide government,

legal and business affairs of MacAndrews & Forbes, Inc.

The three focused on fighting domestic and international terrorist threats in the age of the Internet and social media, noting that seemingly every week, a new platform is unveiled, and radical groups strike a balance



Michal-Mazal Mariaschin reads the Prayer for Israel.



B'nai B'rith International's 2019 Leadership Forum in Washington, D.C. opened with the Havdalah ritual, marking the end of the Jewish Sabbath. Participants included Sheila Mostyn, chair, Center for Jewish Identity and Ira Bartfield, chair, Center for Community Action.

between public posts intended to inspire, indoctrinate and motivate, and private direct messages between peers.

Because terrorist manifestos proliferate quickly on the internet, those who commit terrorist acts are able to telegraph their intent within hours of their action. Shivers told how the FBI investigates anti-Semitic threats in the United States: "We have to ensure that, where we have a single [anti-Semitic] act, we look through all the intelligence we have to make sure it's not...a larger conspiracy."

Internationally, Townsend said: "The single largest state sponsor of terrorism remains Iran. We have never seen a more aggressive Iran in our lifetime." Daly explained that there has been a shift to an equal number of domestic and international terrorist investigations, although we had been blessed with geographic boundaries as a security buffer from international terrorist threats for so long.

Alan Schneider, director of the B'nai B'rith World Center-Jerusalem, broke down the complicated Israeli elections

during a luncheon presentation.

Richard Green, executive director of the Clarion Project, which produces



Executive Board of Directors member Eric Book leading the menorah lighting ceremony from the podium with two of the participants. (From left) Paolo Foa, an Executive Board of Directors member from Italy and Senior Vice President Stéphane Teicher from France.



B'nai B'rith International President Charles O. Kaufman spoke to forum participants about the organization's achievements during the past year, described new initiatives and outlined his vision for the future.



B'nai B'rith International Chief Executive Officer Daniel S. Mariaschin initiated Sunday events, delivering remarks that detailed the increasing growth of anti-Semitism, now in evidence worldwide.



From left: Executive Board of Directors member Jorge Stainfeld introduced presentations focusing on Latin American politics that included Eduardo Kohn, B'nai B'rith International's director for Latin American Affairs (left) and Ambassador Gonzalo Koncke, chief of staff of the Secretary General, Organization of American States.



From left: Executive Board of Directors member Robert B. Spitzer moderated a global security panel featuring experts from private and government sectors including Frances Townsend, executive vice president, MacAndrews & Forbes, Inc., president, Counter Extremism Project and former Homeland Security advisor to President George W. Bush; Calvin A. Shivers, deputy assistant director of the Criminal Investigative Bureau of the FBI; Patrick Daly, principal deputy director/chief operating officer, Secure Community Network.

and distributes films warning of the threat from Islamic extremists, screened his film “Kids: Chasing Paradise.” The film examines the recruitment and radicalization of terrorists around the world, many of whom are vulnerable young children. Green answered questions from the audience after the movie.

Day two of the conference concluded with a reception at the residence of the Japanese ambassador, hosted by Ambassador Shinsuke J. Sugiyama and his wife, Yoko Sugiyama. Kaufman presented a tzedakah box to Sugiyama, who spoke movingly about the Holocaust: “This is not about your history. This is about human history. We shall never let it happen again.”



At lunch, Honorary B'nai B'rith International President Richard D. Heideman (l) was joined by B'nai B'rith World Center-Jerusalem Director Alan Schneider, who surveyed the complexities of Israel's numerous factions with respect to the complicated election situation in Israel.



Leadership, past and present. From left: B'nai B'rith's Honorary Presidents Gary P. Saltzman (2015-2018); Seymour D. Reich (1986-1990); Richard D. Heideman (1998-2002); Allan J. Jacobs (2011-2015) and Kent E. Schiner (1990-1994) with current President Charles O. Kaufman and CEO Daniel S. Mariaschin. Honorary President Tommy Baer (1994-1998), not pictured, also attended the forum.



The film "Kids: Chasing Paradise," a chilling documentary about the recruitment of children for terrorist activities, was introduced by International Council of B'nai B'rith member W. Stewart Cahn (at podium.) Following its screening, Peter A. Perlman, regional director, Great Lakes Region, moderated a question and answer session with Richard Green (r), executive director of the Clarion Project, the non-profit organization whose mission is dedicated to educating the public and policy makers about Islamic extremism.

On the final day, the Claims Conference (formally, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany), which represents Holocaust survivors and their descendants in negotiating for restitution and compensation, received an award from B'nai B'rith for its six decades of work.

The Election 2020 Analysis program with Dana Bash, CNN's chief political correspondent, and Mara Liasson, NPR's Washington Desk correspondent, was timely and engaging. Bash and Liasson, in a conversation moderated by Mariaschin, discussed the top issues the presidential candidates are talking about this election cycle, and the engaged electorate. Liasson said, "I can't think of a time since I've been covering news that there's been this much interest in politics."

Among issues discussed was the influence of social media and late-night talk shows in shaping perceptions about the candidates. Bash noted that candidate appearances are good for the shows' ratings, and they are where many young people get information.

B'nai B'rith leaders asked the guests about truthfulness in news and getting Americans on the same page. "Democracy can't function unless people have a shared reality. You have to start with a set of facts," Liasson said. She stressed the importance of civics, media and financial literacy. And she urged people to take in a broad range of news, to get a fuller picture in order to make informed conclusions.

The 2019 Leadership Forum concluded with a diplomatic luncheon featuring Ambassador of Cyprus to the United States Marios Lysiotis, Ambassador of Greece to the United States Haris Lalacos and Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy of Israel Benjamin Krasna. The diplomats emphasized the historic and continuing ties between Greece and Cyprus and the Jewish people. 🇮🇱



Japanese Ambassador Shinsuke J. Sugiyama, who hosted a special diplomatic reception for forum attendees, welcomes them to his residence.



From left: Daniel S. Mariaschin; Charles O. Kaufman; Ambassador Sugiyama and Yoko E. Sugiyama.



Leaders from The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (the Claims Conference) were acknowledged for their extraordinary dedication and advocacy in procuring justice for Holocaust survivors. B'nai B'rith has worked with the organization since its inception in 1951. Flanked by Charles O. Kaufman (l) and Daniel S. Mariaschin, honorees included: Arie Bucheister, chief of staff; Karen Heilig, assistant executive vice president and Greg Schneider, executive vice president. Also recognized with an award but not pictured: Miriam Weiner, assistant executive vice president for North America and director of allocations.

For the final luncheon panel, B'nai B'rith United Nations Affairs Chair Millie Magid introduced a discussion with Greek, Cypriot and Israeli diplomats who enumerated the myriad aspects of the continually expanding tripartite relationship among the three nations. Seated from left: moderator Daniel S. Mariaschin; Ambassador Marios Lysiotis of Cyprus; Ambassador Haris Lalacos of Greece; Benjamin Krasna, deputy chief of mission of the Embassy of Israel.



A presentation devoted to America's 2020 elections featured, from left, journalists Dana Bash, CNN chief political correspondent and Mara Liasson, NPR Washington desk correspondent. Daniel S. Mariaschin served as moderator.

B'nai B'rith Europe Marks European Days of Jewish Culture

By Katherine Dolgenos

B'nai B'rith's European lodges held numerous events as part of the 2019 European Days of Jewish Culture. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the event, which celebrates the richness and diversity of Jewish life and history on the continent. In 2018, nearly 180,000 people participated in events across 420 cities in 28 European countries. Non-Jews as well as Jews are invited to participate.

The event's founder is B'nai B'rith leader Claude Bloch, who also serves as honorary president of the European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage (AEPJ). Her late husband Georges Bloch was the chairman of the International Council of B'nai B'rith.

This year, B'nai B'rith's European lodges hosted two exciting programs, one in France and one in Denmark. B'nai B'rith United Kingdom also hosted three with the theme of "Heritage."

The event in Denmark, held on Sept. 1, focused on innovation in the Jewish community. Speakers and their topics included journalist Samuel Rachlin on innovation in the media and on social media; Henri Goldstein, the head of the Jewish community in Denmark, on plans and strategies to help Jewish life thrive in the capital city of Copenhagen; Jacob Zylber on the immigration of Polish Jews to Denmark between 1969 and 1970 during a period of resurgent anti-Semitism in Poland, and its impact on the Danish Jewish community; Uri Krivaa, the head of the Jewish school in Copenhagen, on educational innovations and

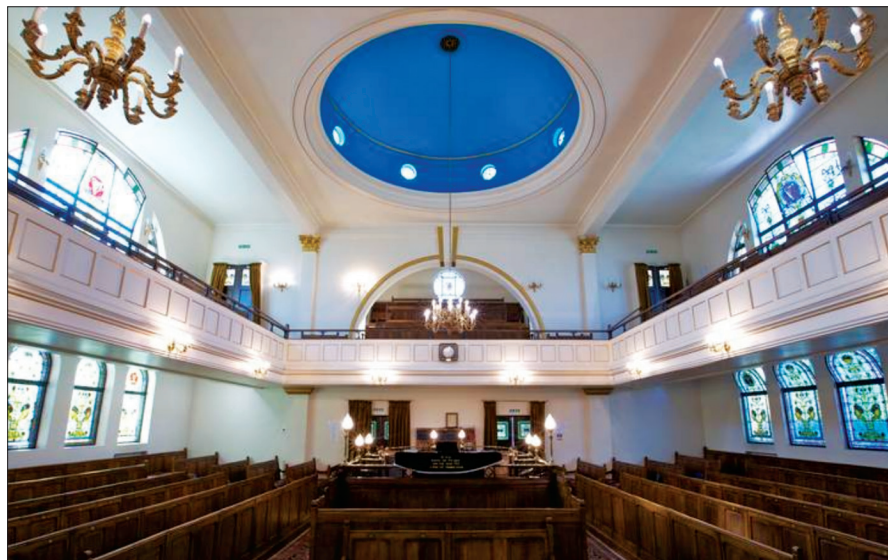


Photo credit: Jono David/HaChayim HaYehudim Jewish Photo Library

Lyn Julius, author and co-founder of Harif (the United Kingdom Association of Jews from the Middle East and North Africa), spoke in London at Yad B'yad Lodge and at the historic Spanish and Portuguese Holland Park Synagogue (above) during B'nai B'rith's 20th annual European Days of Jewish Culture celebrated in England, Scotland and Wales in September 2019.

visions for his school; pianist Poul Rosenbaum on innovations in music and musical education; and successful businessman Lennart Lajboschitz on innovative business strategies. B'nai B'rith Denmark's hosting of programs began during European Days of Jewish Culture in 2001.

"We wanted to illustrate how aspects of innovation are an important part of our life, not only in the Jewish community, but also in the communities in which we live," said Gunnar Bjørk, mentor, B'nai B'rith Denmark. "We feel that innovation is an important driver getting us where we are and not the least ... for where we are heading. Without innovation there will be no progress."

B'nai B'rith France's program had a

similar theme: "Innovate and Transmit." The group hosted its own event in Marseille on Sept. 15. Coordinated by Francine Coen, a member of the B'nai B'rith International Board of Governors, it featured Marie Telling, a food editor at BuzzFeed; Renée Dray-Bensoussan, a historian and member of the Academie of Marseille; historian Gerald Attali; Ella Marciano, a student; and Valérie Perthuis-Portheret, an author and historian.

Telling focused on two American startups, Moishe House and OneTable, which aim to promote Jewish life among young people. Recognizing that many do not host Shabbat dinners because of cost, OneTable gives \$15 to guests ages 22 to 39 to

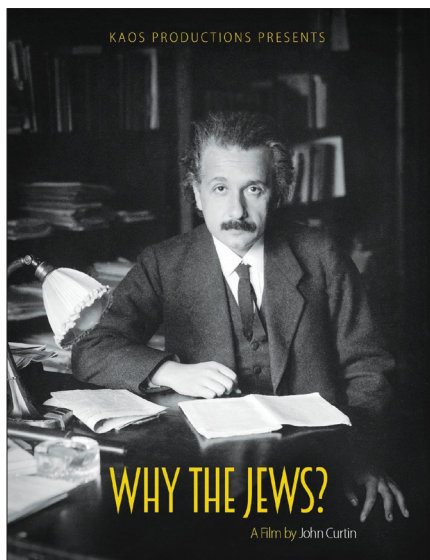


Photo credit: John Curtin

More than 100 people attended the B'nai B'rith United Kingdom screening of the documentary "Why the Jews?" in North London on Sept. 15. Canadian film producer John Curtin responded to audience questions via Skype.

use at participating grocery stores and restaurants. Moishe Houses are living spaces for young Jews who build community by holding Jewish events for invited guests. The houses provide rent subsidies and programming budgets. Though Moishe House began in the United States, it is now in more than 25 countries, and in European cities from Odessa to London.

Attali discussed the role of memory in French education that is especially important due to the country's standardized national curriculum. Marciano's spoke about Eva Heyman, a teenage diarist who died in the Holocaust. Recently, her diary was adapted onto Instagram to explore what it would be like if she had had access



In Copenhagen, piano virtuoso and music educator Poul Rosenbaum participated in a Sept. 1 roundtable discussion on innovation in the Jewish community sponsored by B'nai B'rith Denmark during the European Days of Jewish Culture.

to today's technology. The project was posted over 24 hours to commemorate Yom HaShoah. Dray-Bensoussan talked about the phenomenon of long-term transmission in cultural meaning, as defined by French philosopher Régis Debray, and its relevance to the Jewish European experience, using the tragic example of lost synagogues in Slovakia.

Coen, whose role in B'nai B'rith

France includes promoting collective memory that contributes to a group's identity, sees the European Days of Jewish Culture as a way to share Jewish culture with all of Europe. "So many communities have disappeared after the Shoah and communism. In a Europe in which we now see a resurgence of nationalism and anti-Semitism, we want to promote dialogue and exchange," she said. "We want to show our presence in Europe."

B'nai B'rith United Kingdom screened "Why the Jews?" on Sept. 15 in North London. The film attempts to explain why Jews are such a successful people without falling back on anti-Semitic tropes. Ultimately, it draws a link between a people's collective achievements and the darkest times in its history. Following the showing, there were questions and answers with John Curtin, its Canadian producer, and historian and journalist Jeremy Havardi, director of the B'nai B'rith London Bureau of International Affairs.

B'nai B'rith First Lodge of England hosted a talk and film presentation by Martin Aaron on "The World's Jewish War Heroes." Lyn Julius, author of "Uprooted: How 3000 Years of Jewish Civilization in the Arab World Vanished Overnight," spoke at London's Yad B'yad Lodge on Sept. 10. 📺



Lyn Julius was a guest on episode 46 of the B'nai B'rith International podcast.

To hear her interview, go to:
<https://www.bnaibrith.org/podcast-list-2019.html>

Resident Leadership Retreat: 2019 Recap

By Gracie Cohen

On a Wednesday afternoon in August, 25 residents from B'nai B'rith housing properties met at B'nai B'rith Perlman Camp at Lake Como, Pennsylvania, for their biennial six-day retreat. The Resident Leadership Retreat, which began in 1987, not only connects resident leaders throughout the B'nai B'rith housing network but also provides them with many tools to strengthen their communities.

B'nai B'rith is the largest national Jewish sponsor of low-income, nonsectarian housing for seniors in the country. Our buildings accommodate some 5,000 residents without regard to race, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation.

There were intensive, daylong workshops covering the gamut of challenges residents (and sometimes management) face. B'nai B'rith Center for Senior Services staff members Janel

Doughten, Evan Carmen, Gracie Cohen and our Senior Housing Committee Co-Chair Abbie Stone facilitated sessions on how to start a residents' council and write bylaws, address language and cultural barriers, communicate with management, publish a newsletter and more. Resident leaders devoted time in the program to bounce ideas off of one another, and problem-solve any issues they are encountering in their residents' association or buildings.

Aside from workshops, resident leaders spent time with many of the young sleep-away campers, getting to know one another in a song session and ice-breaker games.

One of the huge takeaways from the retreat, aside from residents connecting with one another, is that every program presented throughout the week can be replicated in each of their buildings. 🏠



On Friday night, B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Committee Co-Chair Abbie Stone oriented campers on the customs and rituals associated with the observance of Shabbat.



B'nai B'rith staff and building residents who participated in the 2019 August retreat at B'nai B'rith Perlman Camp in Pennsylvania.

B'nai B'rith Connect: Young Professional Leader Events at the Local, National and International Levels

By Katherine Dolgenos

Led by Chair Scott Knapp, a B'nai B'rith International senior vice president, B'nai B'rith Connect has had a busy autumn. The platform for professionals and leaders under age 40, formerly called the Young Leadership Network, kicked off its new name with a launch party and weekend in Las Vegas from Sept. 6 to Sept. 8. Participants networked with fellow Connect members, deepened their involvement in B'nai B'rith, experienced Las Vegas and socialized with one another.

B'nai B'rith Connect leaders attended the Distinguished Achievement Award dinner in September honoring Richard Robinson, chairman and CEO of Scholastic. Robinson was recognized for his industry leadership.

Jared Hakimi, the co-chair of B'nai B'rith Connect New York, was part of the B'nai B'rith delegation at United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) this year. The delegation advocated for Israel, human rights and the worldwide interests of the Jewish people. B'nai B'rith is proud to send a delegation annually.


Connect leaders also visited the residence of the Consul General of Japan in New York, Kanji Yamanouchi, for a reception honoring the mayor of Tsuruga City, Takanobu Fuchikami. Tsuruga is known for welcoming



Photo credit: Lloyd Wolf; www.lloydwolf.com

B'nai B'rith Connect leaders who took part in the Saturday evening Menorah Lighting Ceremony at the Leadership Forum in Washington. From left: Robert Book, Houston, Texas; Jessica Kreger, Boynton Beach, Florida and B'nai B'rith International Senior Vice President Rebecca Saltzman, Centennial, Colorado.

Jewish refugees fleeing Europe during World War II. Refugees passed through the port city on their way to other destinations, such as Shanghai.

This December, B'nai B'rith Connect Denver will hold its second annual Jewbilee bash on Christmas Eve. Last year's event, which featured a photo booth and two DJs, drew 350 guests. The Jewbilee bash aims to encourage young professionals to become involved in B'nai B'rith. 



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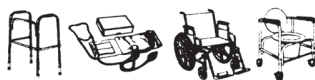
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Civility: Where Have You Gone?

By Mark D. Olshan

Associate Executive Vice President, B'nai B'rith International

A few days after the 2016 election, a young colleague came into my office, closed the door and asked if we could talk. He was experiencing a very uneasy feeling of what we were about to be living through as a country. He asked, “How are we going to get through this? You lived through similar times in the 60s and 70s. Will we be okay?”

While I shared many of his concerns on a personal level, I counseled that I felt the system was much stronger than any one individual, and that we had learned what it takes to make things work, even through difficult times.

Okay, so I was wrong.

We are now experiencing a near total gridlock on some of the most critically important issues of our times. So, from this person's perspective, the system is undeniably broken.

In the 1980s Republican President Ronald Reagan, the great communicator, with whom I disagreed vehemently on domestic spending and economic policies, had a very positive personal and working relationship with the then Democratic House Speaker Tip O'Neill. Together, they created some very popular and important bipartisan legislation. There wasn't the same vitriol permeating the air that we find in politics today. The system worked, to a point.

Unfortunately, compromise cannot, and will not ever happen in today's politically toxic climate. This, though, is not the will of the people: In a recent Hill-HarrisX poll, an overwhelming majority of registered voters — 75% of both political parties sampled — stated



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We can work it out ... Then-President Ronald Reagan (left) in the Oval Office with then-Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill.

categorically that they would prefer their elected officials reach across the aisle to find solutions.

Changing the Status Quo

So, what does this mean for the future? Watching the Democratic presidential debates, I get the feeling that the candidates are their own worst enemy. The country is more divided than it was before the last election. We have made no investment in our nation's infrastructure; the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is still holding up but has been significantly weakened by inaction to improve on it and periodic attempts to gut it altogether. Too many

candidates are trying to gain traction by doing everything they can to weaken their opponents rather than uniting to change the status quo.

To quote New York Times columnist Tom Friedman: “Dear Democrats: This is not complicated! Just nominate a decent, sane person, one committed to reunifying the country and creating more GOOD jobs ... And that candidate can win!”

Even Tom Hayden, radical activist of the 1960s, learned that you must get into the political mainstream to effect any real change. Candidates who embrace policies that are unpopular with the majority of



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Nostalgic Mantra: Make Love... Convivial audience members at the Woodstock Festival, 1969.

the electorate don't stand a chance of actually being elected and having any success in changing the political system.

For example, prominent presidential candidates for the Democratic nomination proudly raised their hands in favor of replacing private health insurance — now covering roughly 150 million people — with Medicare for All. Their alternative would be a government-sponsored, and presumably government-funded system that has not been thoroughly vetted, scored or thought out. Even if, in the long term, the concept is shown to have merit, and, if eventually enacted, properly funded and a better and more effective means of providing quality health care, is it the right proposal to be introduced to the electorate at this time?

A Hill-HarrisX poll found that only 13% of respondents favored Medicare for All if it meant getting rid of private insurance. Is it sensible to make a proposal supported by only 13% of the voting public the centerpiece of your campaign? I don't think so.

Next Steps

So, where do we go from here? Let's think for a moment as to what can be "realistically" accomplished by whoever gets through the gauntlets of debates, primaries, caucuses

and endless town halls. An infrastructure bill would get reasonable bipartisan support. I would also argue that attempts to shore up the ACA by reintroducing the individual mandate might make sense.

Additionally, I would fight to strengthen Social Security. First to go should be the cap on how much income goes untaxed to fund the program. Why should individuals currently making hundreds of thousands of dollars a year, and more, stop paying into the system after the first \$133,000 of income, the current ceiling? If you think \$133,000 isn't much money, set the cap at \$500,000, or even \$1 million. The issue of how to pay for Social Security would be moot.

Now, I do not wish to wage a war with those whose income places them in the top 1%. For the most part, I'm more than certain that you've earned that income legitimately. But I firmly believe that you have an obligation to pay your fair share in order for those less fortunate to be able to take part in federal programs that allow them to live out their lives with dignity.

Let me share one final thought. I don't want to lay this all at the feet of Democrats, to suggest they alone can help bring about normalcy simply by bringing change to 1600



Photo credit Wikimedia.org: Leena A. Krohn, photographer

...Not War. A 1971 Vietnam War protest in Washington, D.C.

Pennsylvania Avenue. Even if Democrats take a more conciliatory approach to politics, they still need Republicans to play ball. And if recent history is any indicator, even a change at the White House won't get Republicans to be the political party of comity and civility.

But, hopefully, it's not too late. Hopefully, we can go back to some sense of "normal" political squabbling ... a coun-

try, where you campaign like hell against the other party but afterwards reach across the aisle to find a little common ground. Now, wouldn't that be nice? 🌍

Mark D. Olshan, who holds a doctorate in psychology, is associate executive vice president of B'nai B'rith International and director of the organization's Center for Senior Services.

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Please note that our next annual issue will arrive in homes in December 2020.

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