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Editorials, 1976.

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From the desk of Rabbi Alan D. Bregman

*Thank you if you wanted
want a copy.*



Fighting fire—and fear

Mayor Daley, acting on recommendations made by a special committee that investigated last week's nursing home fire on the North Side, has proposed three ordinances that would help assure the safety of nursing home patients. These three measures should be promptly enacted and strictly enforced.

The first would require all new and existing nursing homes to install sprinkler systems. The Chicago nursing home where 15 persons died last Friday had no such system. The Cicero home where six persons were killed Wednesday had no sprinklers on the floor where the fire broke out. Sprinkler systems might have saved lives in both fires.

Under the second proposal, new nursing homes would be required to build stairwells at the ends of corridors. Stairwells would help

speed evacuation in case of emergency—a critical need in situations involving persons whose advanced age and frail health makes them most vulnerable to fires.

The special needs of the aged also are recognized in the third measure, which would require periodic training of nursing home employees in basic fire prevention, evacuation and patient care during an emergency.

The need for these reforms is highlighted by the fact that both tragic fires broke out in homes that had been found in strict compliance with existing safety standards.

If the three ordinances planned for Chicago will help assure safer nursing homes locally, adoption of similar laws on a federal level will make the entire nation's nursing homes safer. We hope Congress remembers that.

CTA needs a full-time chief

James J. McDonough is a longtime crony of Mayor Daley, a former public servant of experience (streets and sanitation commissioner) and president of the Murphy Engineering Co., where he earns a lot of money.

Thursday he was named "acting chairman" of the Chicago Transit Authority by his fellow board members and thus the vacancy created last February when Milton Pikarsky moved to the Regional Transportation Authority is filled.

It was filled badly. McDonough and George Krambles, who was appointed CTA general manager, may both be good men for their jobs. But there is a problem with the word "acting" in McDonough's title. He turned down the chairmanship because the law provides that the chairman must be a full-time official without outside financial interests. McDonough was unwilling to give up his corporate presidency.

That hurts because the CTA is not exactly your model of a problemless transit system. Schedules are unmet. Equipment is rundown and dirty. Many L lines are in bad repute. The problems have worsened since Pikarsky

left and a committee has run the system.

The CTA now needs a full-time chairman to supervise the rehabilitation as well as a general manager to run things day by day. That chairmanship, a yearlong victim of the Daley-Gov. Walker Crosstown Expressway feud, is too important to go to someone who will regard it as only secondary.

A bar to justice

It took a story in The Sun-Times to get the owners of a Near North Side singles bar, the Hangge-Uppe Inc., to promise to let Steve Reggi come in for a drink on Fridays.

Reggi, a polio victim who walks with crutches, had been denied entry—for his own safety, the bar said. Now it says Reggi and others with handicaps are welcome to do what anyone else does at a singles bar on a busy, noisy, roistering Friday night.

Will they really be welcome? They'd better be. Denying a handicapped person entry to a public place merely because of the handicap ought to cost that place its public license.

That's the real hangge-uppe: equality.

Coleman's Concorde clumsiness

If Transportation Sec. William T. Coleman Jr. has his way, the British-French supersonic transport will begin making six flights a day between the United States and Europe next month.

He said this country needed all those trials to determine the feasibility of making faster-than-sound air travel permanent.

That's not so. The tests need not be done in the United States. The British and French, who have invested so much time, money and prestige in their Concorde, have the responsibility for proving that the plane's noise, vibrations and other environmental problems are surmountable. The United States can monitor those tests elsewhere.

The Concorde builders really want to establish supersonic travel over the lucrative North Atlantic airways and undoubtedly feel that the 16-month trial Coleman authorized will help them establish a market.

They probably can. The recession aside, there are enough rich and foolish travelers

around to fill some of the Concorde seats in the hope of saving a couple of hours in the air on an already short flight.

Coleman's decision missed the point that unjustified luxuries are pitted against hard realities in this matter. The luxury of such fast flight should not be permitted at the expense of extra noise for those living around airports. Nor at the expense of the ozone layer, which protects us all. Nor at the expense of more quickly using up oil wells, which could be drained dry in the lifetimes of children born this year.

The Concorde is noisy, dangerous to the environment and wasteful. It does not deserve approval at a time when air travel should be made cheaper, not more expensive; more economical in fuel use, not more wasteful; more respectful of the environment, not more insulting.

Coleman's decision was not the last word. It should be reversed.

End bribery's dirty business

The seamy side of international business was brought to light again Wednesday by a Senate subcommittee on multinational corporations.

Documents subpoenaed by the committee showed that Lockheed Aircraft Corp. paid up to \$7 million to Yoshio Kodama, described by the committee as a leader of a right-wing militarist political faction in Japan. Some of the money was used to help Lockheed sell its airplanes in Japan.

The payments, moreover, were part of some \$15.4 million in commissions listed by Lockheed as having been paid to agents in several foreign countries.

Some agent commissions are legitimate business expenses. But others are no more or less than bribes. And when bribes are paid by subsidized companies, they are paid by U.S. taxpayers.

Unsubsidized companies have done the same kind of thing. The chairman and chief executive officer of Gulf Oil Co. resigned last month after disclosures that Gulf had a slush fund that paid \$12.3 million to politicians in the United States and abroad.

The first step in ending this dirty business is full investigation and disclosure of its nature and extent. The next step is carefully drafted laws to help make sure they end.



"Control Tower to Concorde—land Concorde . . ."

Letters: Zionist's clarification

Your editorial, "A Zionist on Palestinians," misrepresents my position on this issue in the following ways:

- I never called on the Israeli government to make a major shift in its policies on the Palestinian problem.
- If I were to recommend a shift on this or any other issue, I would do so privately and directly to the Israeli leadership and not through the pages of the public press.
- I fully concur with the Israeli position that the Palestine Liberation Organization is a terrorist organization pledged to seek Israel's destruction and, as such, does not qualify as a fit partner in any negotiations.
- What I did say was that the interests of Arab refugees and of the Palestinians can not be ignored in the effort to achieve a solution and that there is no responsible Israeli leader who has denied this. Indeed, Israel has done more for the Arab refugees than all Arab governments with all their petrodollars combined.

I express my dismay that the "distinction" between the interests of the Palestinians and the PLO has become "blurred in the American mind" and I venture the hope that Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin would address himself to this question in order to clarify it, as indeed he did during his address to a joint session of Congress.

Alexander M. Schindler, Chairman

Conference of Presidents of Major

American Jewish Organizations, New York
EDITOR'S NOTE: The assessment that Schindler was calling for a major policy shift was ours. It was based on his call for Israel to make "a positive statement" on Palestinian refugees. The editorial noted that Schindler and the Israeli government were in agreement on Palestinian terrorism.

Patient ID's a must

Reports on the fire in the Wincrest Nursing Home indicate the anguish because there was no quick way to positively identify patients taken to the four hospitals in the area. Positive identification apparently had to wait visual identification by nursing-home personnel. This caused delay and left the door open

to mistakes in identification due to human error.

The Sun-Times report stated, "Identification of patients was made difficult because of two main factors—death and inability of the surviving patients to speak because they were comatose or in shock."

I realize that many nursing homes do routinely apply identification bands to patients and residents primarily in the interest of preventing patient-identification errors, but this recent tragic experience makes me hope that the Board of Health will give serious consideration to making this practice a mandatory requirement for safe patient care.

Doris Gleason

Congressional backfire

Looks like last year's congressional arms ban to Turkey has reaped the whirlwind: Pravda reported recently that Turkey has accepted a Soviet invitation to send observers to Turkish military maneuvers. Turkey has already contracted to purchase 60 Soviet helicopters.

Sometimes I wonder exactly whose interests our representatives in Congress are looking out after.

Joe Borysowicz, Normal

Chicago and Plato

Plato observed, "What is honored in a country will be cultivated there." What does the unanimous re-election of Ralph G. Newman as president of the Chicago Public Library Board say about our country? How can we accept this? I am shocked!

Lillian Lipson

Letters, which must be signed, are subject to editing.

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March 3, 1976

Rabbi Herbert Bronstein
North Shore Congregation Israel
1185 Sheridan Road
Glencoe, Illinois 60022

Dear Herb:

It was good of you to write regarding my new post as chairman of the Presidents' Conference. I am deeply grateful for your warm mazal tov and good wishes.

The Sun-Times editorial was shared with me by a number of people - some pleased with it, some not so pleased. It was, however, as you assume not quite accurate and lest you missed it I enclose herewith a copy of my letter to the editor.

With repeated thanks and warmest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Encl.

north shore congregation israel

HERBERT BRONSTEIN
Rabbi

February 24, 1976
23 Adar, 5736

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York, 10021

Dear Alex:

I often have wanted to write to you how grateful I am that you are president of the Conference of Presidents. I think a new stage has to emerge on the relationship of American Jewry and Israel. The idea that there is no future for Jews except in Israel could be a self-fulfilling prophecy and it is about time that we had some autonomy rather than everything here being a reflex of a message from Israel.

I wanted to tell you that this is a growing feeling here and somehow Israeli Jewry with all the support we give it ought to know this.

I have kept this editorial for a long time. You probably have seen a copy. I know it is not quite accurate but I thought you might like to have it.

Cordially yours,

Rabbi Herbert Bronstein

jg
enc.

A Zionist on Palestinians

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, believes the time has come for a major shift in Israeli policy on the Palestinian issue.

Rabbi Schindler is hardly an anti-Zionist. The organization he heads represents many Zionist organizations, including the American Zionist Federation, the Zionist Organization of America and the Hadassah. Moreover, his views are shared by many Israelis, some of them in the Israeli parliament.

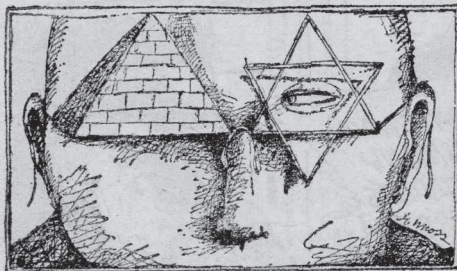
Rabbi Schindler and other Jewish leaders meeting in Washington last week urged Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to make a "positive" statement on the Palestinian issue when he visits the United States this week. He said the statement should be made to correct what he said was an unjustified feeling among the American people that Is-

rael is being stubborn in dealing with this issue.

One of the "positive" statements recommended by the Jewish leaders would have Israel declare its willingness to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization if that group recognizes Israel's right to exist and renounces terrorism. Present government policy rejects any negotiations with the PLO under any circumstances on the grounds that the group is a terrorist organization. (Rabbi Schindler agrees with that description of the PLO.)

A stated willingness by Israel to negotiate with the PLO would be of enormous benefit to Israel. If the offer were taken up by the Palestinians, then the negotiating process could begin. That surely squares with Israeli interests. If the offer were rejected, then the PLO would be subject to the accusation that is being leveled at the Israelis at the United Nations and elsewhere: the accusation of intransigence. The Palestinians, not the Israelis, would be seen as the enemies of peace.

The policy change would have another important benefit. It would encourage the moderates in the Palestinian movement who are working for a realistic alternative to bloodshed. And if the Palestinian issue is to be resolved fairly and peacefully, these nonviolent alternatives must be vigorously exploited by both sides.



January 30, 1976

Editors
Chicago Sun Times
401 North Wabash Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Dear Sirs:

Your editorial of January 26 entitled "A Zionist on Palestinians" misrepresents my position on this issue in the following ways:

- 1) I never called on the Israeli Government to make a major shift in its policies on the Palestinian problem.
- 2) If I were to recommend a shift on this or any other issue, I would do so privately and directly to the Israeli leadership and not through the pages of the public press.
- 3) As it happens, I fully concur with the Israeli position that the PLO is a terrorist organization pledged to seek Israel's destruction and as such, does not qualify as a fit partner in any negotiations.
- 4) What I did say was that the interests of Arab refugees and of the Palestinians can not be ignored in the effort to achieve a solution, and that there is no responsible Israeli leader who has denied this. Indeed, Israel has done more for the Arab refugees than all Arab governments with all their petro-dollars combined.

I express ^{ad} my dismay that the "distinction" between the interests of the Palestinians and the PLO has become "blurred in the American mind" and I venture the hope that Prime Minister Rabin would address himself to this question in order to clarify it, as indeed he did during his address to a Joint Session of Congress.

I would much appreciate it if you were to bring my letter to the attention of your readers.

Respectfully yours,

Alexander M. Schindler
Chairman

bcc: Yehudah Hellman

MEMORANDUM

To Edith Miller From Mollie Match Date 1/29/75

CC: _____

En closed please find several copies of the editorial that appeared in the newspaper.....

Regards



February 2, 1976

Rabbi Joseph P. Sternstein
Temple Beth Shalom
Roslyn Road
Roslyn Heights, N.Y. 11577

Dear Joe:

Enclosed please find a copy of the letter I sent to the Chicago Sun-Times. In addition to seeking the publication of this letter in that newspaper, I have asked that it appear in the Chicago Anglo-Jewish press, I believe the Sentinel is the paper in that area. And I have also shared it with the UAHC Regional Director, Rabbi Alan Bregman, and have asked him to see that it is circulated among all rabbis in the Chicago area.

With warmest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler
Chairman

Encl.

February 3, 1976

Mrs. C. E. Weiskopf
2455 Montgomery Road
Highland Park, Ill. 60035

Dear Sue:

Thanks for your warm good wishes on my election as chairman of the Presidents' Conference. I am deeply grateful for your kind words and appreciate your taking the time to write.

I am also grateful to you for sending me the Sun-Times Editorial. My fame may be nice, but being misquoted is not at all pleasant. While your son showed you the article with great pride, some of our people in the Chicago area were quite distressed by the editorial. I really didn't go quite so far in my statement and I have written to the editors of the Sun-Times, a copy of my letter is enclosed, and I trust they will publish my letter for I do not want the community to think I did indeed make such statements to the press.

With warmest regards from house to house, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Encl.

From the Desk of . . .

Sue Weiskopf

Jan 27

Dear Rabbi Schindler,

I was sorry your trip to Chicago last week was for such a sad mission and that we couldn't visit.

We are so pleased with your becoming "President of the Presidents" — what a wonderful honor! Good luck! We need it and we need you.

The enclosure is to assure you of your fame even here in the mid-west. My son Jim spotted it first and showed it to me with such pride. Nice, huh?

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 be nice but - Sincerely & Fondly
 I was misquoted
 didn't go for Sue
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 include cc of letter
 2 with

February 3, 1976

Dr. S. S. Hollander
Six North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Dear Sam:

Thanks for sending me the copy of the editorial in the Chicago Sun-Times.

Unhappily, I was misquoted by the editorial writer and I have sent a letter to the Sun-Times, a copy of which is enclosed herewith. I do hope it will be printed for I am told many of the Chicago area rabbis have expressed their distress over this article.

With warmest regards from house to house, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Encl.