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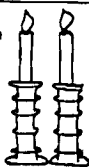
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THURSDAY, December 21, 1989

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Sabbath Candle  
Lighting Time:  
December 22  
3:57 P.M.  
December 29  
4:03 P.M.



THE MEANING OF CHANUKAH came alive through storyteller and puppeteer Alii Paul Singer (on right). She easily held the attention of the 40 youngsters of all ages who attended the Zionist House/Israel Cultural Center event on Dec. 17.

## On Chanukah: The Human Quest for Light

By Nehemia Polen  
Special to the Advocate

This is the time for candles. It is the time of the solstice, when the sun appears to stand still, far away from us, leaving us in the cold and the dark. The Talmud states (*Avodah Zarah* 8a) that when Adam, the first man, experienced the days getting shorter and shorter, he feared that the sun would eventually disappear altogether, never to return, thus throwing the world back into primordial chaos. Had he not been told that he would die because of his sin in the Garden?

So he started keeping an eight-day fast. But when, after the solstice, he began to notice the days getting longer, he realized that this was the pattern of nature, and he celebrated a festival for eight days. The following

year, the Talmud tells us, he turned even the fast days into feast days.

So it is that people throughout the world light candles at this time of year. Whether they know it or not, in the Talmud's view, they are celebrating the original Adamite festival of light. Yet, the Talmud cautions us, these days must be celebrated *le-shem Shamayim* — for the sake of Heaven, not for bacchanalian revelry of pagan abandon.

To kindle a lamp or a candle, one must know how to make fire. This, according to the Midrash, Adam first discovered when he left the Garden of Eden and the *or ha-qodesh*, the primordial light of creation, was hidden away. Adam was left in the dark and feared that the serpent would attack him. But G-d caused his mind to under-

(Continued on Page 19)

## Jewish Congress in Moscow Assaulted

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK (JTA) — Several hundred Jews from all over the Soviet Union convened in Moscow on Monday for a historic conference aimed at establishing the first congress of Soviet Jewish communities and organizations.

An estimated 700 Jews, representing 175 Soviet Jewish organizations from 75 Soviet cities, gathered at the Central Cinema, Moscow's equivalent of Radio City Music Hall, despite attempts by anti-Semitic demonstrators to keep them out.

About 60 members of the anti-Semitic group Pamyat gathered in subzero temperatures, waving placards that

said, "Jews Out," and "Down with Communism and Zionism."

Several Jews testified that they had been physically assaulted, according to Israeli reporters attending the conference.

The assaults took place despite the presence of a number of Soviet militia officers engaged to prevent such occurrences. They largely managed to turn away the ruffians, telling them that they were demonstrating without permission, whereas the conference was being held with a permit.

"Had it not been for the police, one cannot tell how it would have ended," a Jewish participant told Gideon Alon, a reporter for the Israeli Hebrew daily *Ha'aretz*.

But the police made no arrests, the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews reported in Washington.

The Union sent representatives to the conference, as did a number of Jewish organizations, including the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, the World Jewish Congress and B'nai B'rith International.

Rising Soviet anti-Semitism, in fact, was a prime topic of discussion at the conference.

Jews from the Soviet Asian republic of Uzbekistan complained that recent reports of anti-Semitic riots in that

largely Moslem part of the country were "largely exaggerated."

Nevertheless, a top priority of the new congress is the establishment of a commission to deal with anti-Semitism.

It will be one of several commissions named to deal with various issues, including problems of youth; culture and religion; coordination with Soviet nationalist movements; Zionism; and refusniks.

"Soviet Jews came off age this week, with the establishment of this group," Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress, said in a telephone call from Moscow.

The new Jewish federation, officially called the Congress of Jewish Organizations and Communities of the Soviet Union, has asked to be affiliated with the WJC and will probably send a representative of its executive committee to the WJC Executive meeting in New York next month.

The representative is expected to be Mikhail Chlenov, leader of the Jewish Cultural Association in Moscow.

Chlenov greeted conference participants with remarks stressing the historic nature of the gathering. Never had there been such an association in Russia, even before the Russian Revolution, he proclaimed.

The congress encompasses (Continued on Page 23)

## B'nai B'rith Women Votes To Retain Separate Status

By Elena Neuman

NEW YORK (JTA) — The family feud between the world's largest Jewish organization and its women's affiliate entered its second phase this week, with B'nai B'rith Women voting to reaffirm its separate legal status.

It is now up to B'nai B'rith International to decide whether it will live up to its Dec. 3 ultimatum that such a decision would end the 92-year-old relationship between the two historically affiliated national Jewish organizations.

"The ball is in their court," BBW President Hyla Lipsky

said in a statement issued Monday. "Our board has stood firm in showing that it will not change the governing structure of our organization, just because B'nai B'rith International has changed its mind about how it wants to operate," she declared.

BBW's president, Seymour Reich, issued a statement in response, saying, "The goal of the B'nai B'rith Women's leadership is clear: They want B'nai B'rith Women to become a separate and autonomous organization, while making it appear that it has been expelled from B'nai B'rith. That is not the case."

Longstanding tensions between the two groups over their relationship worsened on Dec. 3, when BBI adopted a resolution giving the women's group 14 days to rescind an October 1988 resolution that declared BBW a "separate, independent, autonomous organization."

According to Reich, it was a constitutional issue. "The women's leadership ultimately decided that they did not wish to follow the general precepts of B'nai B'rith," he said in a Dec. 7 statement on the issue.

Reich specifically was re- (Continued on Page 23)

## CJP/Hancock Long-term Health Plan Gets Airing in Newton

By Bette Keva  
Advocate Staff

More than 125 people, mostly elderly, came to the Gosman Campus in Newton

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on December 6 to learn more about the new long term care insurance policy being offered jointly by CJP and John Hancock Financial Services.

A sea of hands shot up each time General Director of Marketing Paul E. Forte finished responding to a query from the audience — evidence of how confusing it is to those contemplating purchasing such insurance, and how crucial elders believe the protection to be.

In September the Combined Jewish Philanthropies announced that it had entered into this field, one which cried out for attention. It would be the pioneer in what it hoped would be something Jewish philanthropic organizations throughout the country could model themselves after. It was offering, in conjunction with a major and well-respected insurance company, long term health care to its own "family" — any person who contributed \$10 or more to CJP.

However, in the interim, CJP and John Hancock have come under criticism from insurability expert, Benjamin Lipson, who has written extensively on this subject in *The Jewish Advocate* and in his insurance columns in *The Boston Globe*. He has charged that there are serious flaws in the policy. His

words have not gone unheeded by the public.

Many who attended the discussion at the Gosman Campus on Dec. 6 came armed with Lipson's articles.

Questions most frequently asked had to do with eligibility and who would determine whether the insured could collect benefits. People were concerned that the policy was written on an out-of-state trust and therefore not subject to this state's most rigorous requirements. There were many queries about depression, mental illness and Alzheimer's Disease being covered, and whether John Hancock could at any time simply cancel the group's policy. CJP members also expressed concern about the high cost of the insurance and whether pre-existing medical conditions such as heart disease or cancer would make them ineligible. They asked if

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## Army Criticized for Medal of Honor Snub

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Jewish groups have criticized the Army's review board for rebuffing World War II veteran David Rubitsky's claim that he singlehandedly killed 500 Japanese soldiers, and for denying him the Congressional Medal of Honor.

But Steve Shaw, executive director of the Jewish War Veterans of America, called verification of Rubitsky's claim "a problem both for the Army and for us."

Rubitsky, 72, has had his case reviewed for a Congressional Medal of Honor for the last two years. The Army said last Friday there was "incontestable evidence" that Rubitsky did not kill a large number of Japanese in a battle in New Guinea in 1942.

Army Secretary Michael Stone has the power to overturn the review board's decision, "but he's not going to do that," Maj. Joe Padilla, an

Army spokesman, said Monday. "It's just that he has reviewed the findings of the review board and concurs with the findings."

For Rubitsky to have received the medal, either Stone or the review board would have had to review Rubitsky's claim positively. In addition, both houses of Congress would have had to approve legislation exempting Rubitsky from not having filed recommendations by 1951 for World War II deeds.

Padilla praised Rubitsky for having "served honorably" and noted the veteran received a combat infantry badge and a bronze star.

Shaw said there was no evidence of anti-Semitism against Rubitsky by a senior officer who was in a position to write a recommendation, as Rubitsky had claimed. But Shaw admitted that in general, "The military is a micro-

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## Cambridge Temple Builds New Spirit, Thriving Membership

By Steve Rosenberg  
Special to the Advocate

It is the mid-seventies, and Cambridge's last remaining shul, Temple Beth Shalom on Tremont Street, is on the decline. Its membership is getting old, and fading very fast. Most of the time it's hard to raise a *minyan* and the only time a rabbi comes to town is during the high holidays.

Fast forward the years to Simchas Torah in the fall of 1989. From all sides of Cambridge, Jews are converging upon Inman Square, on their way toward Tremont street, and Temple Beth Shalom. When everyone finally reaches the old shul, there is much singing and dancing, and happiness. Outside, hundreds of Jews continue the festivity on the street, which is closed off, complete with police protection. Some 1200 young Jews will sing and

dance and celebrate the giving of the Torah on this night.

In an age of continuing assimilation, rising intermarriage, and general decline in affiliation with synagogues, Temple Beth Shalom's success story is proof that old shuls can be rejuvenated. Built as Temple Ashkenaz in 1924, the Orthodox synagogue would come to be known by older members as the "Tremont Street Shul." In 1962, Cambridge's first synagogue, Temple Beth Israel, merged with Temple Ashkenaz, officially becoming Temple Beth Shalom. By 1988, the congregation's mailing list had dropped to a minimal level, and the temple's directors decided to hire Jim Brandt as the executive director.

Aided by the temple's longstanding members, and the Synagogue Council of Massachusetts, the membership has grown in the last two years to almost 200 families. "It has been an enthusiastic response. One of the major things that contributed to the success was that the people of Cambridge wanted to have a synagogue," Brandt emphasized.

During the last two years the temple has instituted several major changes in its operation. One of the first changes was installing a computer in the office. The temple then began a full-time Jewish day care center, which now has 26 children enrolled in the program.

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## Historical Odyssey

(Continued from Page 8)

huge impact on me," Steve Lewinstein recalled. "We saw things which belonged to the victims — suitcases, eyeglasses, children's shoes, human hair — in piles," he said.

"The signs on exhibits gave information about Poles who died, not Jews. In all of Auschwitz, I saw only two instances of evidence that Jews died there, other than the memorial," Franklin added. "There were some *talismans* hanging on a wall. And I saw Jewish names in the pile of suitcases."

"It was horrible. I found myself wondering: could this ever happen again?" said Lewinstein.

"In Poland, we saw why Israel's existence is so important. Jews must have a place we can call our own. Poland made that concept concrete

for me," Garber emphasized. Franklin added, "In Poland, everything seemed to dwell on death. Israel, by contrast, was an incredibly vital place."

The diversity of Israel's people impressed both Garber and Singer. Garber offered, "Israel is a nation adapted to absorbing people. Its social fabric based on including people from all over the world."

A trip to a Youth Aliyah village near Haifa was particularly memorable for Singer. The village is home to children, from all over the world, whose parents are unable to come to Israel or who come from broken or disadvantaged families. "There were kids from North Africa, Ethiopia, Yemen, and Russia there," Garber recalled.

"Their diverse backgrounds coalesce with the help of an enormously warm and generous staff, who manage to turn these kids into an open, optimistic, and spirited group."

At the youth village, some participants played with a group of teenagers. Garber, having met them, said, "These happy, healthy kids are a great accomplishment."

Lewinstein will never forget a conversation he had with a man who fought in both the 1956 and 1967 wars who was seriously wounded in 1967. "He explained to me the meaning and exemplified the force of Israeli commitment," Lewinstein mused. "The man said to me: 'There are two reasons why we won those wars. Number one, we're smarter. Number two, and more importantly, we

were fighting on emotion. While the Arabs were fighting in order to take something, we Israelis were fighting for our very existence.'"

Franklin, Garber, Lewinstein, and Singer all felt that travelling with the Mission enhanced their experiences of Poland and Israel.

"The group had a commonality on many levels which formed emotional and intellectual *esprit*. And that *esprit* made everything much more fun," Garber said.

Singer remarked, "Since this was my first trip to Poland and Israel, I am glad that the itinerary was set up for me. I saw many things and met people I never would have on my own. If I had gone by myself, for instance, I would have never met a Polish journalist or a Palestinian political scientist! CJP came through handsomely. The Mission was a wonderful way to see Israel."

Garber added, "I travelled with a group of very open people, and not everyone saw everything the same way. The Mission was also a chance for me to learn other people's views, and I learned a lot from them."

For information about the CJP Missions Program, call Robin Rubinstein at (617) 330-9500.

## Army Snub

(Continued from Page 1)

cosm of American society and sure, there's anti-Semitism there."

Two Jews were among the Army's 255 Medals of Honor recipients in World War II. In World War I, 4 Jews were among 95 recipients, none were among the 70 Korean War recipients and 1 was among the 155 Vietnam War recipients, said Padilla.

Such a medal "shouldn't be given (out) lightly," Shaw said.

But Seymour Reich, president of B'nai B'rith International, said the Army is "better to err on the side on honoring an undeniably brave man than risk begrudging a courageous soldier a grateful nation's debt of honor."

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, called the decision "unconscionable" in a letter Friday to Stone. Foxman said the ADL had "worked on Mr. Rubitsky's behalf for the past 2 years, since learning of the discrimination."

Besides Rubitsky, Shaw is aware of one other Jewish

## Human Quest for Light

(Continued from Page 1)

stand, and he learned to rub two stones together and make fire.

Ever since that time, we kindle lamps at special moments in life, when we wish to recover the original glow of creation, to find the meaning hidden within ourselves. At the onset of Sabbath and holy days, at marriage, at the time of death: our tradition has us light candles. Even in our mothers' wombs before birth, the Talmud says, there is a lamp kindled above our heads as we study Torah with the angel. And, of course, at Chanukah:

"The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord. Searching all the inner chambers of the body."

(Proverbs 20:27)

The purpose of these lamps is not functional. The Chanukah candles may not be used, the Halacha tells us, for reading by them. They are rather to be looked at, to focus upon, to help us look inside. As *Sefas Emet* suggests, they help us find the Temple within ourselves, the Sanctuary that can never be destroyed, the holy spark that is never extinguished. The Holy of Holies, the innermost chamber of our heart, cannot be seen in the light of the sun; the most powerful searchlight could never uncover it. Only the faint glow of the candles reveals it.

Listen to a fire burn: to the crackling, the hissing, the popping. Now listen to an oil lamp or a candle: there is silence. This is the silence of revelation, of uncovering the hidden places, the discovery of truths too deep for words. There is eloquence in this silence.

We live in a society that prizes self-expression. Secrets that would have made our grandparents blush are now brought out into the open. Talk-show guests, encouraged by their hosts, vie with one another to reveal ever more shocking secrets. Yet in all this paroxysm of self-revelation, there is the sense that we are more distant from one another than ever, more unknown, more mysterious. Perhaps what we need is less ritual self-disclosure, less talking, but more silence: the silence of the burning candle.

The real task of knowing ourselves and each other has little to do with glib divulgements and disclosures. It is a going within, a paring of the superfluous to find the inner core, the one cruse of pure oil sealed with the mark of the High Priest, that does not know contamination. It is hard work, and yet supremely pleasurable.

Essential Oils — are wrong —

The Attar from the Rose

Be not expressed by Suns — alone —

It is the gift of Screws —

(Emily Dickinson)

May the glow of the Chanukah candles, and the silent eloquence of the burning oil in the menorah, link us to the infinite beauty hidden in our past and our future, to the Eternal Light, the light that even now is with us to guide our way.

Rabbi Dr. Nehemia Polen is Rabbi of Congregation Tifereth Israel in Everett and Assistant Professor of Jewish Thought at the Hebrew College in Brookline.

veteran seeking such a medal.

Tibor Rubin, a disabled Korean War veteran, claims he risked his life to save the lives of 35 fellow prisoners of war. Rubin said he stole food and supplies for his dying buddies and tended to their wounds.

The JWV last year started

a nationwide campaign to have the Army issue a medal to Rubin.

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## Alpert

(Continued from Page 12)

participated in the massacre in Butrimantz in which his mother had died.

Revelation grew in him, and after years during which he had avoided discussion of the subject with Hadassah, he decided to join her in Israel. His integration has been successful. More than fifty years ago he had studied at the famous Hebrew Gymnasium in Vilna and had learned Hebrew. For fifty years he had neglected the language, yet here it has come back to him, and he speaks it fluently.

And so I have found victims of the Nazis and new immigrants in the Russian aliyah among my immediate family. But what about the name Alpert? The first of the Devenishkys who went to America changed their name to Davis or to Devins. The girls married and raised fam-

ilies with names like Balter, Herschorn, Blumert, Vigdor, Laderman, Wagner, Gross, Ratzen, Hillman, etc. Some of them we have lost track of, though not in Boston, where the daughters of the pioneers bore the names of Nathanson and Greenfield, among others.

When my father and his brothers got to Ellis Island the immigration clerks found Devenishky too difficult to spell, and one of the clerks, named Albert, offered his name, which became Alpert. It's as simple and undramatic as that, but what a story is behind it all.

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