

## The Southern Israelite

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## VIOLATION OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM BY PHONE COMPANY IMMINENT

Our unreserved protest to Southern Bell officials who on May 1 will have succeeded in perpetrating one of the most offensive religious acts we've heard of in years—in this country at least.

These automation geniuses, adept at mechanical perfection and generally keenly sensitive to public opinion, have disregarded the sensitivities of conscientious Jews by selecting the name "Trinity" for a phone exchange. Apparently unaware of semantics, they have announced that come May 1, there will not only be one exchange in Atlanta with the "Trinity" designation—but at least four. Perhaps more will follow.

Henceforth, for instance, every copy of The Southern Israelite must bear the word "Trinity." Likewise, every copy of our magazine—and much of our correspondence—in which we acknowledge that we can be reached by means other than by person or via mail—will also inappropriately have on it the word "Trinity." Not only will The Southern Israelite be affected, but every Synagogue in Atlanta will have a Trinity designation. Most of the rabbis too will have a Trinity home number. Thus thousands of Jewish members of congregations will be forced in communicating with leaders of their faith to give voluntary or involuntary telephone obeisance to a principle of Christian doctrine. They may invent little fictions that it has no religious significance or try subconsciously to forget the semantic associations, but it will require circumlocutions which are certainly unnecessary in this country of religious liberties. Besides it is a word irretrievably linked to Christian dogma.

For the benefit of the phone company officials who may be under the illusion the word is only "historical," the term is a word dear and sacred to most of Christendom. It is indigenous to Christianity almost as the word Saviour, Holy Ghost, or the component parts of the "Trinity" itself. Need we spell them out for the phone officials? And if it has become historical, it is because of association with the church or a specific church which selected it for its cherished holy significance.

We have two very strong reasons for objecting to public use of a word like "Trinity." Only one of these concerns our Jewishness.

First we feel the compulsion which the phone company has been able to achieve in ramming this name into our ken is a clearcut violation of our Constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. We cannot escape the word. It will always be on our desk. Our operators must repeat it dozens of times a day, and even if our own phone number would not have this designation, it would still haunt us as inexorably as a city regulation requiring all citizens to perform some religious rite before going from one block to another; or a taxi company requiring each passenger to genuflect before entering, or Uncle Sam making us cross ourselves before we could receive a letter from the mailman.

The phone is too much a part of our daily lives for us to escape the objectionable badge the phone company seems about to tattoo upon us.

But we are intrinsically opposed to the word on quite another ground as well—and it does not relate to our own religious beliefs. We happen to feel that on an ethical business ground such words as Saviour, Holy Ghost and other words indigenous and sacred to Christianity—and those sacred to Judaism as well or any other faith or sect—have no place in the everyday commercial world.

We consider their use in the commercial field as sacrilegious—whether by the phone company or any other public business. Thus regardless of our own beliefs, we feel the phone company is finessing us into committing a sacrilegious act unworthy of the integrity we seek for our personal life or of the respect we bear for the integrity and inviolability of the Christian values for Christians themselves.

In deference, it must be stated that we never for an instance make any inference that the selection of "Trinity" holds any anti-semitic import. Beyond doubt, the word was selected primarily because of its phonetic appeal to some official or board who saw nothing inappropriate about it—as a letter printed elsewhere suggests. The selecting group certainly knew nothing about semantics. Neither for that matter did they seem too well aware of the supply of words without any objectionable import which is in use by the phone company itself in other sections of the country. Take the New York City phone system. Surely this is the most complex system in the world. The Manhattan phone book alone has several hundred exchanges listed—and not a single one is "Trinity." Southern Bell officials could have used it as a sourcebook, as may indeed have been the case with the word "Melrose," which the New York system uses. This was recently given to one of the new Atlanta exchanges so the element of duplication may be disregarded as in the selectivity of exchange designations.

We do not feel that our Christian friends at the phone company or elsewhere have any desire to force their religious views upon us, any more than we would do the same to them. Neither surely do they wish to offend the sensitivities of hundreds of conscientious persons. But they have achieved this goal without trying.

We therefore call upon the phone company publicly to change the "Trinity" designation before May 1, if possible, or at the subsequent September transition.

If any of our readers feel strongly about the matter, they too should write immediately to the phone company and express their objections.

We do not care to sacrifice one iota of our religious freedom upon the altars of automation.

## Explanation of Phone Company

Dear Mr. Rosenberg:

Your letter of November 7, addressed to Mr. F. J. Turner, reached his office during his absence and I am, therefore, acknowledging its receipt.

Renaming of telephone exchanges in Atlanta is being carried out as a part of a nationwide

plan to further improve and expedite the handling and completion of long distance calls. The adoption of exchange names which are of such phonetic character as to be clearly pronounced and understood by the people in the United States of America and Canada is a prerequisite to the

success of the undertaking. To this end much study has been given to the matter by all segments of the telephone industry. I might add too that great difficulty was encountered in finding a sufficient number of common and proper nouns which conformed to the required specifications. The word "Trinity" meets acceptably all the required specifications. The word "Trinity" meets acceptably all the required characteristics. The name will be used in many other cities throughout the country to designate telephone offices. No theological significance was attached to the name when it was selected as a designation for telephone exchanges. As you know, there is a Trinity street here in our own city and perhaps those selecting this street as a site for business or residence did not consider the religious significance of the name.

We would sincerely hope that the same broad attitude would be taken regarding the Trinity telephone exchange for under no circumstances would an organization such as ours, which serves persons of every nationality and creed, deliberately offend the sensibilities of any segment of the people it serves.

Yours very truly,  
J. G. Bradbury  
Vice President

## COUNCIL ELECTION

(Continued from page 1)

scheduling of time so as to avoid getting in each other's way.

Dr. Sidney Q. Janus, chairman of the Atlanta Bureau of Jewish Education, reported on the progress of religious education coordinated by the Bureau, and also the development of the many institutes of adult education, especially the Institute of Jewish Social Studies.

Meyer Balser, president of the Atlanta Jewish Community Center, outlined in detail the facilities which the new center will make available to the community for recreational, educational, and civic activities.

Sam E. Levy, chairman of the Council's Community Relations Committee, gave a detailed accounting of the many problems with which the committee had to deal in its efforts to promote good community relations and understanding among all groups in the community.

Barney Medintz, the out-going president, in his message reviewed the activities of the Council and stressed the importance of leadership.

Morton L. Weiss and Stanford Makover, two of the co-chairmen of the 1956 Campaign of the Atlanta Jewish Welfare Fund, spoke briefly on the importance and urgency of the campaign this year, which is scheduled to start March 18 and run until May 30. They appealed to the representatives of all the organizations present to rally in support of this campaign.

## ATLANTA COMMUNITY CALENDAR

TUESDAY—12:30 P. M.—is the deadline for items in next week's calendar conducted for the convenience of the community. THE SOUTHERN ISRAELITE prefers to have these items in writing at 390 Courtland St., N.E., but will accept them over ELgin 8249. To make the Atlanta Date Clearance Bureau a success, it must be USED and CONSULTED by organizations.

### MARCH 4, Sunday:

3:00 P.M.—Junior Judaeans Skit Program. Shearith Israel Educational Building.

8:00 P.M.—Synagogue Youth Conference. Sponsored by all Congregations. A.A. Educational Center.

7:00 P.M.—B'nai B'rith Gate City Lodge, No. 144 Annual Meeting and Dinner. U. S. Senator Richard Neuberger, Speaker. Mayfair Club.

8:00 P.M.—Regular Meeting J.W.V. Post 112. Progressive Club.

### MARCH 5, Monday:

8:00 P.M.—JWV Post 112 Executive Committee Meeting. Progressive Club.

8:15 P.M.—Hebrew Academy PTA Meeting. Herman Popkin, Speaker. S. I. Educational Building.

### MARCH 7, Wednesday:

12:30 P.M.—Temple Sisterhood Donor Luncheon. Standard Town & 12:30 P.M.—Annual Donor Luncheon, Atlanta Mizrahi Women, Or Ve Shalom Social Hall.

### MARCH 8, Thursday:

8:15 P.M.—Parents Meeting, Dr. Abraham Millgram, USY Educational Director, Principal Speaker. A. A. Educational Center.

### MARCH 12, Monday:

8:00 P.M.—JWV Post 112 Auxiliary Board. Progressive Club.

8:00 P.M.—Beth Jacob Sisterhood's Annual Passover Workshop. Synagogue Vestry Rooms.

### MARCH 14, Wednesday:

7:00 P.M.—Annual Spaghetti Supper and Square Dance, Golda Myerson Chapter, Pioneer Women. Temple Social Hall.

8:00 P.M.—Annual BBG 176 Fashion Show. Progressive Club.

### MARCH 18, Sunday:

8:00 P.M.—USY Drama Night. A. A. Educational Building.

### MARCH 19, Monday:

8:00 P.M.—Regular Meeting, JWV Post 112, Progressive Club.

### MARCH 26, Monday:

8:00 P.M.—JWV Post 112 Auxiliary Meeting, Progressive Club.

## Atlanta Mizrahi Women Hostess for National Officer

Mrs. Nachman Ebin, national president of the Mizrahi Women's Organization of America



MRS. EBIN

Cantor Joseph Schwartzman will present a program of Jewish folk songs.

Rabbi Joseph Cohen will give the invocation.

Reservations for the luncheon can be made by calling ELgin 7483 or ATwood 2432.

## Reception March 6 For Mizrahi Leader

Mr. and Mrs. Abe Auerbach, of 1733 Wildwood Road, N. E., will hold a reception at 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 6 in honor of Mrs. Nachman Ebin, The Renanna and Atlanta Chapters of Mizrahi Women, and friends are invited. No written invitations have been issued.

## Supper; Square Dance

Golda Myerson Chapter, Pioneer Women will hold their annual Spaghetti Supper and Square Dance at the Temple, Wednesday, March 14, 7 p.m. for only \$1.50. Tickets can be secured by calling AT. 7830.

## New Young Judaea Boys Club Activated

Young Judaea this week announced the formation of a new club—the Lions of Tel Chai, with twenty member boys ranging in age from 11 to 13.

The group is making plans for its first club party and dance on March 25 when the members will announce their sweetheart.

Officers are Stanley Silverboard, president; Teddy Krick, vice president; Marty Libowsky, treas.; Lawrence Goldman, sec.; Jay Goldberg, sgt.-at-arms.

The L.T.C. will receive its charter in ceremonies Sunday, March 4, during the Young Judaea Stunt Day program. Parents and friends are invited to this session at Shearith Israel Auditorium Educational Building at 3 p.m.

## B'nai B'rith to Fete GIs at Purim Dance

B'nai B'rith men and women of Atlanta will sponsor the USO-JWB Purim Dance and Festival for GIs from nearby installations at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 3, at the Temple Social Hall.

The event is being planned in cooperation with the Atlanta USO-JWB Armed Services Committee, according to Herbert R. Elsas, chairman.

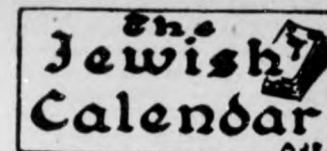
Music will be furnished by Third Army Combo. Co-chairmen are Mrs. Abe Weiner, Mrs. Hyman Wilson and Abe Goldberg. The B'nai B'rith Ladies and BB-Girls will serve as hostesses.

## Beth El Synagogue ... NEWS

Sunday, February 27, was a big day at Congregation Beth El. The morning was highlighted by a creative art exhibit in which all students of the Sunday School participated. Honorable mention was accorded the following students: Isadore Mitzner, Rosalind Berger, Pamela Reich, Sandra Lewitz and Franklin Leiter.

The judges, Mrs. Marcus Firestone and Sam Rosenberg, awarded a special prize to the class of Lou Schreibman for their Purim scene. Members of the class are: Sheryl Becker, Ted Krick, Nancy Schreibman, Robert Trebits, Debbie and Gail Weinstein. Students of the elementary grades participated in a costume party. The following received prizes for their costumes: Bruce Gadin, Renee Bagen, Marilyn Levy and Kenny Merrill. The Adult Education Class presented an interesting panel discussion on the history and custom of Purim to the teen-age assembly.

Climax of the day was the Purim Masquerade Ball held at the Progressive Club. Here too, prizes were awarded for unusual costumes. The winners were Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Merrill, Mrs. Leon Socol and Sydney Wallenstein.



### \*PURIM

February 26, Sunday

### \*PASSOVER

March 27, Tuesday

(First Day)

April 3, Tuesday

(Last Day)

### \*SHAVOS

May 16, 17—Wed., Thurs.

### \*ROSH HASHONA

Sept. 6, Thursday

(First Day)

### \*YOM KIPPUR

Sept. 15, Saturday

From the Vineyards of Israel  
To Grace Your Festive Table



For every taste and every occasion.

Certified Strictly Kosher For Passover by Chief Rabbi Isaac Halevi Herzog of Israel

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