

The Jerusalem Report

**A GOLAN
WITHDRAWAL
Can Israel
Be Safe?**

COVERING ISRAEL, THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE JEWISH WORLD

JUNE 29, 1995



Give Us Our Money Back!

Why Are Holocaust Victims' Millions Still Stuck in Swiss Banks?



The Jerusalem Report

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Russian Roulette in Brighton Beach

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Local beaches are cleaner than many others along the Mediterranean

ELLIOT HOOL



24 PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

The Jahalin Beduin didn't go to the city. It came to them.

The Jerusalem Report

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LETTERS

■ Getting It Right — Or Wrong

The influences cited in "The Americanization of Israel" (May 18) were plain to see during my recent visit to Israel. However, the inevitable victory of pervasive American capitalism was not fully impressed upon me until I returned to Los Angeles and saw an advertisement for the same pair of plastic beach shoes that I had just bought in Israel for 18 shekels (\$6). The upscale U.S. price? \$24.95! But here in America, no one buys "plastic beach shoes." This ad proclaimed the arrival of — "Jelly Sandals!"

So, wake up, Israel! A good American start in marketing might be to stop devouring that ominous-sounding national dish, the "Feel-Awful." Start dining on "Pure Vegetarian Pocket Sandwiches — loaded with Chickpeas!"

Jon E. Drucker
Los Angeles



We shouldn't be surprised by the trend toward consumerism and consumption among Israelis. Many years ago, anthropologist Margaret Mead wrote that at the early stages of change, people feel guilt over a perceived disloyalty to older ideals and believe that the fabric of society is being destroyed; but the next generation has no such conscientious misgivings. Israel's older generation got its ideals from pre-1967 austerity, swamp-draining and the kibbutz.

If Mead was right, it is expected behavior for the next generation, growing up in a time of relative plenty, to view money and material acquisition as the means to happiness.

Larry Mark
New York



To Canadians, the Israeli enthusiasm for American popular culture and products is surprising. Canada is also becoming increasingly Americanized, but many citizens view this development as far from beneficial.

Ronald C. Epstein
Toronto

■ Mom, He's Still Jewish

The Colorado Jewish mother who agreed to let her two children visit a local church "so they could experience a different culture, not join it," probably had a good idea, at least in theory ("Honey, They

Baptized the Kid," The Reporter, May 18). However, the baptism of her son reminded me of the history of the church in Europe when Jewish people were forced into baptisms at the pain of being expelled from their home countries.

The mother states that her son is now confused about whether he is Jewish or Baptist.

Let me assure her that a dip in the baptismal tank does not make him a Christian, Baptist or any other denomination.

Rev. B. Hudson

Shalom Center for Biblical Research
Yuba City
California



■ Oy, Vey

To my ears, the little Yiddish still heard in Israel is spoken by the Orthodox ("Tales from the Mother Tongue," Books, June 1). It is a *tzu brochener Yiddish ohne ta'am* — a "broken Yiddish without feeling." This is not the sort of Yiddish that was spoken in *der haim*. The last few speakers of that type can still be found in Antwerp, New York, Buenos Aires and in a few cafes in Tel Aviv.

They are the last disciples of Sholem Aleichem, Peretz, Asch, Singer, etc., and of the *Yiddisher Kultur Farband*.

The Yiddish language is an unusually vivid record of the cultural autonomy reached by Ashkenazic Jews in the Diaspora. It expresses the soul: *der yiddishe krechtz kumt fun dos pintele yid* — "the Jewish sigh comes from a Jew's innermost essence."

There were once millions of Yiddish speakers worldwide, and it was a key to instant recognition and amicability between Jews wherever they were.

The decline of this strong bond between Jewish generations is missed.

Willy Goldberg
Tel Aviv