

THE JEWISH STAR

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January 27, 2011



Letters to The Jewish Star 1/28/2011

Misrepresenting the RCA

To the Editor:

The Jewish Star's article on the brain death controversy in the Orthodox community ("Is Brain Death Enough? The RCA Says Maybe"; January 21, 2011) was a good overall summary of the major issues of a very complex topic. However, we think it was misleading to suggest that the Rabbinical Council of America has no position on the issue.

In fact, the RCA took a very admirable position in its clarification statement. It stressed that there are two legitimate and equally valid opinions on what constitutes halachic death — brain stem death and irreversible cessation of heartbeat — and individuals rabbis are free to choose the position they feel most comfortable with.

In addition, the statement emphasized three other important points:

n The debate is about how one defines halachic death, and does not involve the question of whether or not organ donation is permissible in Jewish law.

n Organ donation saves lives, which is of paramount importance in Jewish law. If one defines halachic death as brain stem death, the opportunity to donate organs is greater, but even if one defines halachic death as the irreversible cessation of heartbeat, there are still limited opportunities to donate organs.

n Live organ donation is permitted by all halachic decisors.

We applaud Rabbi Moshe Kletenick, Rabbi Shmuel Goldin, and the RCA for stressing the importance of organ donation in Jewish law, while recognizing the very serious and complex debate on how to define death in halacha.

Harold Perl, MD

Teaneck, NJ

Michael Feldstein

Stamford, CT

Members of the Board, Halachic Organ Donor Society

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To the Editor:

Mr. Gerber is embarrassing himself with his ignorance of history ("The Kosher Bookworm: What's so Jewish about blood libels and ghettos"; January 21, 2010) The Frankfurt and Rome ghettos are in fact quite similar to the urban ghettos in which many African Americans found themselves in the 20th century, as both the Jews and the African Americans were legally prohibited from living in other sections of the cities.

Real Jews died in both the blood libels and in the Warsaw Ghetto. Sarah Palin did not. But she has defenders like Mr. Gerber singing her praises all over the internet. Would that the Jewish victims of blood libels had such an amen chorus!

Charles B. Hall

Bronx



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1 Rule of a flat stomach :
Cut down a bit of stomach fat every
day by using this 1 weird old tip.

Tip



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