

The Jerusalem Report

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Letters

The Luxury of Choice

From reading the various articles in your anniversary edition ("Israel @ 60," May 12), it is clear that Israelis and Diaspora Jews now have the luxury of choice. This is a situation that Jews have rarely faced in their history. Adversity and hostility from outside forced a Jewish identity on us. Like the Jews of the Diaspora, Israelis face the choice to be Israeli or to live elsewhere. This is also true about aliya. People do not go to Israel just to escape persecution, but choose to live there.

Clearly, Israel must now be more than a sanctuary. It must be a true home and haven. Israelis must work to make their country a place where they and Diaspora Jews would want to live. Zionism must become a lifestyle choice and not only an ideology. All this will have to be done while Israel faces a war of attrition with the Iranian-dominated axis of Hamas, Hizballah and Syria.

Naim Peress
Forest Hills, New York

The Solution Is Education

The article on organ donations in Israel ("Difficult Donations," April 28) quotes optimistic voices that the Schneller bill might have a positive impact. The bill, in fact, is nothing more than the Chief Rabbinate and the Ministry of Health finally agreeing to work together after 22 years of politics and personalities kept them apart.

The solution to the organ shortage in Israel is not legislation but education. Unfortunately this legislation does not allocate any significant funding to educate the public.

Robby Berman
Founder & Director
Halachic Organ Donor Society
New York

The Salonica Saga

I was surprised to read your characterization of how Yad Vashem portrays the story of Greek Jewry ("A Greek Tragedy," March 31). I am a survivor of Auschwitz from Salonica, Greece and I have been involved in Yad Vashem for over 45 years, since the old museum was estab-



lished. The truth is that when the museum opened, the story of Greek Jews was not included. I brought a yellow star and identity card from Salonica, and I had difficulties getting it displayed.

Today, the situation is very different. This is reflected in the new Holocaust History Museum at Yad Vashem, where the story of Greek Jewry during the Holocaust is presented as part of the full history of destruction of European Jewry. This is also true regarding other Yad Vashem activities that highlight the Greek Jewish story. It's unfortunate that your article gives the impression that the situation at Yad Vashem today is the same as it was decades ago.

Ya'acov Handell
Jerusalem

Evangelical Allies

Regarding your article ("Allying with Evangelicals," April 28), as an Evangelical Christian Zionist myself, I have come to realize that a large part of the problem between Jews and Christians is ignorance.

There are millions of Evangelical Christians around the world who love Israel and believe that the Jews are God's chosen people and always will be. We repent for the actions of our forefathers against Jews and the land of Israel. The God whom we serve is not a gentile - He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

We gentiles owe a debt to the Jews that we can never repay. Had it not been for the Jews, we would still be blundering on in our paganism and idolatry.

Last year, my wife and I visited Israel for the first time during Sukkot. What a thrill it was to be among the 8,000 Christians from around the world marching through Jerusalem. My eyes filled with tears as I saw Jewish men and women waving, also with tears in their eyes, because they never knew so many Christians loved and supported them.

Tony Gibson
Newbridge, Ireland

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