

AN OPEN LETTER TO JEWISH PARENTS

It is a tragic reality, which nevertheless we all have to realize, that assimilation is taking a heavy toll among the Jewish youth in Australia. Thousands of Jewish children, they may be yours, are drifting further and further away from their Jewishness.

The riches of our traditions and cultural heritage, that inspired generations of our people, are rapidly losing their meaning to the Jewish youth of today.

The facts speak for themselves. It is but a small percentage of the Jewish youth who is taking an active part in Jewish youth organisations, and even smaller is the number participating in the Jewish Youth Movement.

Betar as an educational Youth Movement has always aimed at bringing Jewish youth closer to Judaism and to the greatness of our National traditions.

But how much easier would be our task if you, Jewish Parents, assisted us in our work.

We have excellent Madrichim, who are willing to impart their knowledge onto your children, a knowledge that they will not receive anywhere else.

We believe it is your duty to send your children to our meetings where they will spend an enjoyable time in a true Jewish atmosphere.

Think of your children — think of the future, and we have no doubt that our appeal for your co-operation will not remain unanswered.

RELIGION IN BETAR

In accordance with the aim and principles of Betar, Jewish Religious tradition has always been regarded as an indispensable, as well as a highly desirable part of our heritage.

The individual member of Betar may hold his own views about religion, but the movement, as such, recognises Traditional Judaism as an integral part of its education and way of life, and upholds to the maximum our ancient beliefs.

The Law upon which Rosh Betar Jabotinsky founded his political, state and social theories and philosophy.

Betar recognises that the Torah shall serve as a cornerstone on which the future of

the Nation will be built, in accordance with the traditions of the past.

DO YOU KNOW THAT—

Betar has 14 agricultural settlements in Israel, a large number of them situated at the borders of the country.

Betar has one of the best sports teams in Israel, mainly excelling in Soccer, Volley-Ball and Boxing.

Israel has a special department for Anglo-Saxon Countries, headed by Yaacov Liberman.

Betar was the first Jewish Youth Movement to advocate active resistance against the Nazis and was prominent in the fight in the Warsaw and Vilna Ghettos.

Sports — An Important Factor

in Betar Education

The teams which represent Betar on the sports grounds in Israel and in the Galuth have an outstanding record, for more than mere sports victories.

To these teams the mere playing or winning of games is only one of many aspects of sport, in addition to the development of a fine spirit of "Chaverim," is highly developed in the ranks of Betar.

In the Diaspora, our natural physical development was interrupted; physical strength and skills were even scorched.

But with the return to Eretz Israel, the ruggedness of the land developed a healthy nation from a generation of "Ghetto Jews!"

The true aim of sport is a healthy and fit body in order to achieve balance and harmony between the development of a sound mind and body.

Betar stresses the need for a healthy and strong youth. In Betar true "sportsmanship" or "Hadar," is of equal importance as physical development, in normalising a youth raised in the Galuth.



Judo Classes during Training. 1st photo: Dora Steiner and Ken Hamer practicing a boke-toshi. 2nd photo: Iris Denoff and Richard Kus'n during more advanced Judo Throw. The instructor, Joe May, is looking on.

All the above explains why all types of sports are so strongly emphasised in our Australian Movement.

Not only at Annual Camps and weekend camps do sport

activities take a prominent place, but also throughout the year.

In order to remedy the limited facilities available during the year, and to keep

up regular practice, Betar has introduced special evening classes, for the time being devoted exclusively to Gymnastics and Judo.

From a very humble beginning, the Betar Gym and Judo classes developed into a popular activity, attracting many members and also outsiders.

Although sporting activities are given such a prominent place in Betar's educational program, they are not regarded as an aim in themselves, but as the means to achieving balanced personalities, young boys and girls who have the necessary physical as well as mental abilities to put into practice and work for the ideals and aims to which they have dedicated themselves.

"CHUG LIMUD" — STUDY CIRCLE

One of the outstanding events in the movement during the past year was the formation of the Study Circle or, as it is called in Hebrew, the "Chug Limud."

In its initial stages the program was formulated and carried out entirely by members of the Netzivut who managed to instill the interest and enthusiasm for the

organisations.

Six months after a humble beginning, this new venture proved so successful, that today it gains new adherents with every passing week.

At the commencement of this year, the Study Group was handed over completely to the participants, who select the speakers and the topics.

Topics range from Tenach to Assimilation, from Hassidic Movement to the Kibbutzim and systems are

discussed. Educational subjects and Problems come up for debate, anything and everything connected with the Land of Israel, from Geography to Demographical and Cultural questions figured on or will figure on the Study Group's program.

The thought "Where there is no knowledge, there is no understanding" prompted Betar to form this Study group. By keeping this thought in mind, the Study Group should surely fulfil its purpose.



A typical scene of a study group meeting

The principal aim and purpose of the Study Group is to increase the knowledge and develop the intellect of the participants, as well as to give them a broader and deeper understanding of the various problems facing the Jewish people in general and our Movement in particular.

participation in such a Study Circle.

At the inception it was attended only by madrichim, but as weeks passed, the popularity of the interesting lectures grew, which attracted a large number of participants, including outsiders and members of other

THE NETZIVUT BETAR AUSTRALIA—

expresses its sincere thanks and appreciation to all its generous supporters and all those who made this publication possible.

MAJOR WEISER IN AUSTRALIA



Major Weiser with Betarim. From left to right: K'tzin Theo Dalberczski, K'tzin Yaacov Birjani, Major Shmuel Weiser, Natsiv Yosef E. Steiner, K'tzina Dora Steiner, (standing), with Betarim P. Mirjam, K. Hamer, B. Altman, J. Friedman, A. Morris, H. Kraus, I. Engel, A. Fieglman.

Major Shmuel Weiser, the well known Zionist personality, and member of the World Executive of Herut Hatzohar, visited Australia in the year 1953.

During Major Weiser's short visit, the 30th Anniversary Celebration of the World Betar took place, at which he was the guest of honor. This function which was

one of the most impressive youth functions ever to be held in Australia, was attended by over 350 guests, including many outstanding personalities of the community.

Major Weiser made a lasting impression on this community, and in particular on the youth, whose problems he understands so well.

Australian Betar Publications

The Australian Betar issues many publications, some for internal and some for external distribution.

The purpose of these publications is not only to offer information and literary material, but also to encourage young people within the movement to independent and creative work as well as providing them with a form for the expression of their views.

Some of these publications are:—

"Haderech" — our monthly journal, with a supplement "Kol HaIvra" for the younger age group; "Altafens" — Political News Bulletin.

"Betar" — Monthly Information Newsletter issued by Maebur Melbourne under the same name as Information Newsletter appears also for Machoz Sydney.

In addition to these regular publications, many Educational Publications are issued, ranging from topics on Psychology and Youth Leadership to Geographical and Historical Notes.

According to public opinion the publications issued by the Australian Betar are the best and of the highest standard that have been produced in recent years by any Jewish Youth Movement in this country.

BETAR CAMP EXHIBITION

In November 1954, a Camp Exhibition was organised at which the Betar Annual Camp was publicised. This Exhibition described life at a typical Betar Camp. It included handicraft exhibits, posters, photos and models. Camp Films of previous years were also screened. The Exhibition was such a

tremendous success that it attracted over 500 visitors. At a later date it was also repeated in Sydney.

The photo below shows Natsiv Yosef E. Steiner, the Head of the Australian Betar, viewing one of the Camp Exhibits — a model of a settlement.



JOIN THE RANKS OF BETAR!