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Dear Editor,

Dear Editor,

As the warm summer months approach, I find myself deeply worried about the growing use of mosquito pesticides within our community. While the intention behind their use is to protect us from the annoyance of mosquitoes, we must not overlook the proven detrimental and long-term effects of these substances to our health and the well-being of our children. We must approach the use of these chemicals with caution, as their potential repercussions are not limited to the intended target as the members of our community who willingly apply the chemicals and those who are forced to breathe its vapors second-hand are harmed all the same.

Research has shed light on the detrimental impact of pesticides on people, our environment and living organisms. Numerous studies have linked exposure to these chemicals with adverse health effects, such as respiratory issues, neurological disorders, endocrine disruption, and even certain types of cancer. Children, whose bodies are still developing, may be particularly vulnerable to the potential harms these substances can inflict.

Perhaps we ought to know what's in these chemicals and reconsider whether our health is not as important as having to be bothered with smacking off a few mosquitoes every now and then. The most popular insecticide companies of the Five Towns treat the grass with a formula containing Bifenthrin. According to the EPA, Bifenthrin is known to be environmentally hazardous. If the spray mist is inhaled, Bifenthrin causes cancers and organ damage, especially to the organs of the reproductive, endocrine, and central nervous system. PBO-8 Synergist is another main ingredient in this treatment.

Piperonyl Butoxide (PBO) is a toxic carcinogen that causes a range of short- and long-term effects, including cancer and adverse impacts on liver function. PBO has been shown to adversely harm a variety of reproductive functions.

The cumulative effect of environmental pollutants is becoming increasingly apparent, and it is doubly unfair to those of us who are aware of the danger yet have no choice but to suffer at the hands of their neighbors whose decisions impact us all. We live in an era where innovative, less harmful alternatives to traditional pesticide use are available.

I implore our community to consider the long-term consequences of mosquito pesticide usage. I sincerely hope that we can reevaluate our approach to mosquito control, prioritizing the long-term well-being of our community members, especially our children. Let us not unwittingly facilitate our own demise in a world already crawling with toxins.

I sincerely thank you for your consideration.

Truly yours,

A Five Towns Resident Yearning to Breathe Free

Dear Editor,

The ba'alei ha-mussar note that in Pirkei Avot, the thirty-second out of the forty-eight steps to acquire Torah is "to love people." This symbolizes the day before Lag Ba'Omer where the students of Rabbi Akiva died out because of lacking respect for one another. Indeed, loving others is the antidote to not respecting them.

Taking it further, the midrash notes that stinginess can also refer to a refusal to teach others Torah. Rabbi Shimon

Continued on page 12

Readers Poll

Does your family use wine or grape juice for kiddush?

62%

Grape Juice

38%

Wine

Continued from page 10

bar Yochai, whose yahrtzeit is on Lag Ba'Omer, was the tikkun to this because he re-disseminated the Torah of Rabbi Akiva.

The gematria of *lev tov* is forty-nine. This is in fact the key to surpass the forty-eight levels of what's needed to acquire Torah. It's the *sine qua non* to have all blessings.

Rabbi Akiva famously said that the great rule of the Torah is to love your neighbor. We may say if you want the Torah like Rabbi Akiva did, work on achieving a *lev tov*.

Steven Genack

Dear Editor,

Last Thursday, there was a Pro-Palestinian rally at the Vietnam Memorial Plaza next to 55 Water St. The rally was sponsored by NYC Educators for Palestine. The reason for the rally was the usual message. They want TRSNYC (Teachers' Retirement of NYC) to divest itself from all business with Israel.

The only connection that TRSNYC had with Israel is via an International Investment Fund, which is one of several funds that pension members may elect for their retirement fund. TRS does not produce any products and otherwise

has no business connections with Israel. Considering how many successful profitable companies there are in Israel, that, in turn, provide significant earnings for this TRS fund, it would be foolish for TRS to divest itself from Israel. Also, considering how many Jewish teachers – active and retirees – are members of TRS, I can't fathom that members would want such action. Regardless, any member that hates Israel can individually opt to withdraw their investments from this fund and elect a different one.

I am alerting readers who are TRS members to write to the management of TRS to show your support for Israel and ask them to pay no attention to such divestment requests. On a larger scale, if you are a member of DC37, the main NYC union, you should send a similar letter to them.

Think about this angle. NYC Educators for Palestine requests divestment from profitable Israeli companies. Can you name even one Palestinian company that has been profitable?

Daniel Feldman

Dear Editor,

I take exception to the article entitled "Trust Biden on Israel anymore? Don't" on page 123 of your 5/16/24 issue. The

reason for my disagreement with this headline is that it implies some level of confidence in Biden vis-a-vis Israel, as well as vis-a-vis his world outlook in general. I have never been under any such illusion.

Let's look critically at "Jihad Joe" Biden. This is the same Joe Biden who, when senator, threatened Menachem Begin with cutting off arms supplies to Israel. This is the same Joe Biden who was opposed to the elimination of Osama bin Laden and was the only Cabinet member so inclined. This is the same Joe Biden who pulled out of Afghanistan at the cost of lives of United States Armed Service members and billions of dollars of military equipment left behind. This is the same Joe Biden who provided (and continues to provide) sanctions relief for Iran, as well as billions of dollars in ransom payments. This is the same Joe Biden who has woefully inadequately responded to attacks on vessels in the Red Sea by Houthi Yemenite rebels, funded and supplied by Iran. This is the same Joe Biden who was silent in the face of chants of "Death to America" by Islamist radicals in Michigan. Biden has always been "Jihad Joe" Biden and will continue to be "Jihad Joe" Biden.

Although your article did not mention him, a critical eye must also be cast upon Charles Schumer – Schumer the Schemer/Scammer – who never met a camera that he didn't like. The compendium of Oral Law, the Talmud, relates how the pig holds its split hooves aloft, proclaiming loudly, "Look! I'm kosher! I'm KOSHER!!" Schumer, the Schemer/Scammer, in a similar fashion, loudly proclaims, "I am the *shomer* (guardian) of Israel," but lacks the required characteristics for that title. Schumer, the Schemer/Scammer, at the time that Obama was ramming the JCPOA with Iran down the throat of America, was against that agreement at first, then for it, then finally against it – but not on the grounds that it would do incalculable damage not only to American and Israel, but to the world in general. Rather, he was permitted by Obama to publicly oppose it since his opposition would not affect the adoption of the agreement and so that Schumer would be able to speciously claim to have "stood up for Israel," even though his "stance" had no material effect on the outcome, since he did nothing to try to influence enough other Senators to prevent the agreement. This is the same Schumer the Schemer/Scammer who threatened violence against two Supreme Court justices because of opposition to their positions on abortion. This is the same Schumer

the Schemer/Scammer who attempted to interfere in the internal affairs of not only an independent sovereign nation, but an ally of the United States, by calling for the resignation of its prime minister at the time that nation is in the midst of a struggle for its very existence. Schumer the Schemer/Scammer does not raise a peep against the Communist (Bernie Sanders)/Islamist coterie that has hijacked the Democratic Party and the legislative and executive branches of the American government. This is the same Schumer the Schemer/Scammer who expressed support for withholding arms supplies to Israel while it is involved in a struggle for its existence, rather than demanding that actions be taken against Iran if it continues to arm its proxies. Schumer is not only no "guardian" of Israel, but his name can be thought as being an acronym for "*SCHakran U Motsi shEm Ra*" (liar and defamer, besmirching Israel for fighting a war that was forced upon it). Schumer is indeed "the pig who would be kosher."

Your article also omits mention of Biden and Schumer's crony, Nattering Jerry Nadler. This is perhaps not of significance, although he is as contemptible as "Jihad Joe" and Schumer the Schemer/Scammer.

One who is reading this letter might feel that it is full of vitriol, to which I would respond that it perhaps lacks sufficient vitriol.

Truly the most consequential election in our lifetime is now less than six months away. The choice is simple and stark. We are given to choose between "death to America" ("the Great Satan") and "death to Israel" ("the Little Satan") versus "make America great again" and make Israel safe again. I choose to "make America great again" and to make Israel safe again.

One Who Learns from History

Dear Editor,

I always love reading your magazine and appreciate all the articles each week.

This week, I was heartened to read your note to readers, where you pointed out that protests on college campuses are bringing scores of Jewish youth back to their roots. It was a beautiful way to look at a scary situation that is affecting Jewish teens. And it was a wonderful way to see the love Hashem has for His people.

May He bring Moshiach soon!

B. Rosengarten

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