

Random Thoughts...

by Muriel Levitt

What has happened to the hippies of yesteryear? Not so long ago they were a most visible and certainly audible group. No matter where you lived they were very much a part of the societal scene. In fact, almost every Jewish family had someone in their mishpochah who was involved in the subculture. Like it or not, they were all around us and it seemed as though we were stuck with them.

I well remember the long, greasy, unkempt hair which was sometimes adorned with feathers or plumes. Braids and pony tails were also to be seen everywhere. Clothes were unisex and the uniform of the day seemed to be torn blue jeans and faded tee shirts emblazoned with timely messages. If the clothes had revealing holes, so much the better. When climate permitted, shoes were a no-no, and what could be less attractive than knobby, dirt encrusted feet that had not seen soap and water for too long a time.

These were our flower children, the missionaries of peace who were anti-war, anti-establishment and anti-parents. All they wanted, so they said, was to be left alone and not be perverted by the customs and rules of society. And to insure their personal freedom, they took over universities, waged sit-ins, and engaged in noisy demonstrations. Anyone over thirty did not belong, did not understand, and did not count.

The drug culture flourished and fantasy religions abounded. *Who among us did not know a young person who had dropped*

out and turned on. It was devastating and we were all sure that the younger generation was going to hell in a basket.

Communes seemed to spring up all over the place. New England appeared to be the favorite area since cheap land was still available and primitive housing was to be found. Groups of drop-outs moved in, pooled their resources and talents, and somehow managed to eke out a living. Some grew meager crops while others sewed, painted, made pottery, or pursued creative crafts. By selling their wares and raising their own food, they managed to survive.

And so it went. One day our long haired hippies were part of the social picture and the next they were nowhere to be seen. So where are they now? Where did they go and what has become of them? I don't know for sure, but I think I can make a few calculated guesses.

The schmutzy kids in the dirty blue jeans have probably graduated into today's fashion designers — what else? After years of running around barefoot, wearing cruddy pants and sleazy tops, I suppose they decided it was time for a change. Knowing they were getting older and that man does not live on love alone, I think they may have latched on to the easy money of a fashion world. Who else would be responsible for some of the weird styles being marketed nowadays!

Wouldn't it be wild if many of the peaceniks, protesters, and rioters have ended up in either the military or law en-

forcement. Their particular talents could not find a more perfect home. Surely they know how to protect the peace and keep the laws. They should, since they broke so many of them in youthful enthusiasm.

Where do you suppose the drugies and cult worshippers have gone? It's purely a guess, but I think they have detoured into health foods, vegetarianism, and parapsychology. They are possibly the last hangovers-on, the erstwhile dropouts, and all that is left of the hippie bunch. They may be older but have still not completely found their way back to the fold.

In short, yesterday's flower child has become today's solid citizen. It's quite possible that in all these years they have learned a lot. I still recall our own son coming to Charlotte ten years ago on spring vacation from college in Boston. His blonde hair was shoulder length, his clothes were ratty, and he had a large, revealing hole in the seat of his pants. He was a typical product of his environment and time. Today, said son is married, gainfully employed and a home owner in Atlanta. He is a respected member of the establishment, dressed impeccably and revels in all the creature comforts.

There is no doubt in my mind that parents must not and cannot lose faith. No matter how far out our kids go, the pendulum swings and personal values change. Take heart, all you doubting mamas and papas, there is still plenty of hope for the world!

L' Chaim

By L. Louis Albert, ACSW
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by her actions showed the importance of involvement and connection.

I first met Henrietta Wallace in August of 1980 shortly after arriving in Charlotte. As the months went by we became friends and worked together on many social service projects. Her recent death has led me to reconsider and reflect on several issues.

As a professional librarian and member of an established, southern Jewish family Henrietta was in a unique position to provide me with both an historical and social perspective on the Charlotte Jewish Community. Her own range of interests and activities were wide, and yet seemed connected by a single unifying theme with which we are all currently struggling. That issue is our human need to belong and to be connected with each other. Henrietta's activities in one way or another all worked toward bringing people together in a positive way was what it was all about for her.

Our own community is a diverse one with all sorts of organizations, clubs and communal institutions. I believe that it is our concern for each other and ability to show that care which builds a strong community out of such diversity. This kind of growth will not happen without the attention of each and every one of us. Henrietta Wallace intuitively understood this and

As a transient community newcomers often feel out of place — we must reach out and truly welcome them. Single parent families often struggle to balance job and family responsibilities — we have to find ways to provide supports. Older adults often exist apart from the flow of community life — for our sake as well as theirs we must find ways to include them. Young single adults are searching for friendship and companionship — we need programs that meet this need and send the message that they belong and matter. Even within the family we find parents and children moving through daily routine and having little connection with each other. Families need these links both individually and with other families.

Each person or family will find its own way to establish connections and to meet that very important need to care and be cared about. It might be through Temple or through playing tennis at the Center. It might be inviting a new family to your home or doing some volunteer work a few hours a month. It might be joining an organization. It could be anything... but let it be something.

Our strength lies within our relationships with each other and I can think of no better way to honor the memory of Henrietta Wallace than by building on her work of bringing people closer together.

AWACS — A Loss And A Win

By Thomas A. Dine

We accept the decision of the Senate. However, it was not a vote on the sale, nor a vote for Saudi Arabia. In the truest sense, it was a vote of confidence in President Reagan himself. Many of the Senators voted for the sale, not because their grave doubts had been laid to rest, but precisely because they had responded to President Reagan's appeal that if the sale were defeated, his effectiveness would be impaired.

We may have lost on the roll call, but we clearly won on the merits. We deepened the general perception of Saudi Arabia, and exposed to public examination cliches and myths that have obscured the public's vision of that country.

We focused attention on the fact that through this, the Saudis have not made the slightest concession to any of the expressed American concerns and interest regarding this massive arms sale. The Saudis have adamantly rejected joint American control of the AWACS or continued presence of U.S. Air Force AWACS. They have insisted that these planes and missiles could be used against Israel, which they consider to be their foremost enemy.

We succeeded in securing additional assurances from the Administration on the sale. We regard those assurances with the utmost seriousness, as do the many Senators who publicly relied on them in voting for the

sale. We expect that the agreements and understandings with Saudi Arabia will promptly be expressed in writing and the assurances closely monitored.

The Saudis' past record, unfortunately, does not give us cause for optimism regarding Saudi Arabia's willingness to cooperate in meeting American concerns and interests.

We hope that the Administration will quickly respond to the objections raised by nearly half of the Senate, more than two-thirds of the House, and an overwhelming majority of the American public. The Administration should not misinterpret the vote as a vote of confidence in a sale that most Members of Congress have seriously questioned.

This fact should be kept firmly in mind by all concerned, and Congress and the Administration should carefully scrutinize Saudi behavior toward the United States, Israel, Persian Gulf states, and the Camp David peace process over the next weeks and months.

We will continue to work with the Administration to strengthen American efforts to achieve peace and stability for all states in the Middle East.

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