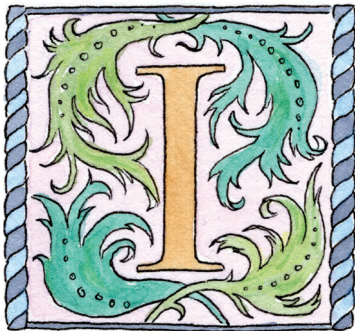


MARK CHARENDOFF

Publisher's Note



IN 1938, in an attempt to fight the polio that afflicted President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the March of Dimes was born. In 1955, a young grantee of the March of Dimes named Jonas Salk rolled out his new vaccine and effectively ended the health crisis that had paralyzed the former president and gripped America for 40 years. While the March of Dimes could have declared victory, thanked its donors, and shut down, it pivoted its focus to birth defects. Today it has an annual budget of around \$100 million.

I often reflected on the March of Dimes when I thought of antisemitism in America. Sure, it was always present. But it hid in the shadows, lurking in nasty places among nasty people. To the extent that we focused on antisemitism, it seemed to be more about remembering an old problem than confronting a current one.

How quickly that has changed.

American Jews have had much to be proud of. We worked tirelessly

for a secure State of Israel. We fought to preserve the memory of the Holocaust as a unique historical event. And we jumped in to help Jews in need around the world, from the Soviet Union to Ethiopia. If we were more outward-looking than inward-looking, that could be forgiven. After all, we enjoyed a position of strength and security. Our sense of noblesse oblige prompted us to turn our gaze elsewhere.

I, for one, don't want to go back to a world where the preoccupation of Jews is to hunker down and think solely, or even primarily, about our safety and security. But I also don't think we should settle for a world where children are afraid to walk to school wearing a yarmulke or other public signs of their Jewishness. When it comes to the safety of our children, it's folly to try to determine how much security is enough.

Still, as Bret Stephens reminds us in this issue, antisemitism is ultimately the Gentile's problem, not ours. Ours is about fostering a sense of Jewish identity in our children that is so strong that if we asked them to hide it, they would not know how. Ours is about forging a connection to Israel that inspires regular visits and a sense of solidarity with her people—our people. Ours is about nurturing a love for Torah that permeates every discussion and every aspect of our lives.

Our declaration of victory over antisemitism was premature. It is real, on the Left and the Right, in Paris, Toronto, and New York. Churchill wrote, "Truth is incontrovertible. Panic may resent it. Ignorance may deride it. Malice may distort it. But there it is." We need to recognize antisemitism and we need to fight it. But we also can't allow it to dominate our lives or our attention. Those must have an ultimate focus on fostering a thriving Jewish future.

If we don't, what kind of Judaism are we protecting? 