

Rabbi Morris Kosman
20 West Second St.,
Frederick, Md. 21701

11/22/91

Dear Rabbi Kosman,

I appreciate your finding time with your busy schedule for your informative letter of the 12th. I know the problem of not being able to lead an orderly schedule because in addition to all the many interruptions I have from those inquiring about my work I am limited in what I am able to do as the result of complications following a number of successful operations. We too often can't do what we'd like to do.

I have no doubt at all about the sincerity of those in the congregation who do not believe as I do about the local papers, Roy Meachum and anti-Semitism and Israel-bashing in general. Most, however, are probably younger than I hence can't remember what I do, and I doubt that many, if any, duplicate some of my experiences. Rather than go into detail on the latter I tell you that when Rabbi Paul Richman headed the Washington office of the ADL he used to refer to me as a "one-man ADL." Paul was a good friend, I was able to help him and I did a fair amount of exposing of native Nazis and other anti-Semites.

History tells us that it is dangerous for Jews to be silent when they are under attack. It also tells us, I believe, that only too often this was foreign to what I at least like to think was the traditional ^{early history} Jewish response. There also is, I think, what principle as well as pride and self-respect requires, and I fear that those who have no immediate worries, without realizing what they are doing, cop out with a fiction, that opposing what the papers and Roy are doing will help sell papers. There are no other local papers and if a few more were to be sold, which is doubtful, it would be of no significance.

But especially because these rags are the basic source of information in the area it is important to make an effort to deter if not prevent the hatred incited as a matter of both policy and belief. Delaplaine and Meachum are making more anti-Semites and Israel-haters all the time.

I draw on good and dependable sources in telling you that Betty Delaplaine wanted George to fire Meachum long ago. He wouldn't. However, as you may not recall, once I got after him his columns were cut in half. Moreover, for a while he was quiet on his hate-inciting and indulging. This is to say that doing something is not impossible if an effort is made. With trying nothing good happens.

Not intend^{ing} to appear to be what I'm not, a psychologist, I also think that we lose the respect of the areas non-Jews when we are silent, referring to those who know the truth, and persuade those who are not informed that the papers and Ray are telling the ugly truth when in fact they lie and are propagandists.

I am well aware that all the papers get does not appear. Much if not most of what I've written was not used. This was typical when Crum edited that, rather those pages. He is

not editing them as of my last knowledge. Mike Powell is. The only time I did not respond immediately is when Rita Gordon asked me not to. When I saw that what she expected was not going to happen I began responding again.

It is important to be comfortable in what we do. You say you are not comfortable tangling with Roy in public. Then don't. It would, I believe, be much more important in any event if you would try to be comfortable, by which I mean find out if you can be, in an entirely different role.

It has been dismaying to me not to see Christian clergymen opposing this evil, this overt incitation to hatred. I think they can be and should be spoken to and that those (who if qualified at all ought not be many!) who do not know the truth be told the truth.

There are many things that can be done, not necessarily in public, and many people who are in a position to do it. Those to whom in the past I've spoken are Jews and with one exception none did a thing. One is not easy. That is to make George uncomfortable, which he has not been. If the ADL had been active locally this would have been done long ago. It still should be done. If anyone makes the effort I have a fairly complete file.

Which reminds me: a compilation and analysis could be done by a college student who does not work during the summer. We should make the case and it could be very embarrassing to George and to the papers, particularly if they had any reason to believe that the study might get some public attention.

Which it can get through the ADL. *And public meetings and discussions.*

With your statement repeated at the bottom of page 1, that it "may be a legitimate point of view" that in opposing this we attract attention to it, do their work for them, I disagree. ^{this}, I think, is the problem of being complaisant when there is no immediate danger. Doing nothing merely lets the evil grow. I fear it may be unseen but there for the young people in school, when fellow students either read his rot or hear it discussed as though it is the truth at home.

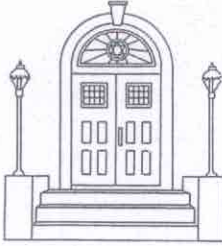
Speaking of the young, I think their elders are not setting them the example they need to be able to later face the stresses of adulthood. They ought not grow up timid or ashamed or self-intimidated.

The Jew-hating Jew has not responded. I have forgotten his name. But I was curious and checked the phone book. At the same address the person I suppose is his wife is connected with some kind of church.

There is no telling when Meachum will sound off again. I think the political gangup on Israel, headed by Bush and his radically altered policy, may inspire and cover him. If he is not responded to, then those who read the papers will be misled and misinformed. It will be a mistake, I think, to continue to assume that politically the future will be as the past was. Public opinion can become quite important for Israel.

Thanks for finding the time. With best wishes to all, Sincerely, Harold Weisberg

Harold



BETH SHOLOM CONGREGATION

20 West Second Street • Frederick, Maryland 21701

Morris Kosman, Rabbi

November 12, 1991
B.S.D.

Dear Mr. Weisberg, A.M.S.H.

Thanks for both your letters. I hope you are feeling well, you and your wife. I have no excuse for not answering you sooner, excepting that I am not going to write what you want to hear.

I don't recall whether or not Rita Gordon, then acting president, spoke as a result of a board decision, or was that her own feeling? I truly don't recall, but I do remember very well, decisions about Roy that took place at board meetings. At that time, Ellie Kinland was on the board and part of a group, Catholic and others, that had formed to meet with George Delaplaine. At that time the consensus of opinion was not to help Roy sell newspapers by doing consistent battle with him. The views of the board at that time had with it a ghetto mentality, 'keep quiet and it will go away.'

We have a different kind of board now. I read your second letter to the board and explained my position, which of course you have been waiting to hear for at least three years.

I am grateful that you are putting a lantern to the dark columns of Roy. There are others from our synagogue that watch his columns and are quick to respond. It doesn't always get in the newspaper. Morrie Kelsey is on the board and is a constant rebutter to Roy. Hal Neufeld, Leo Sperling, Leo Reisberg and others that I cannot recall at the moment. His columns do not go by without some strong comment, amongst whom you are one of the strongest, thank G-d.

I am not comfortable in tangling with Roy in a public forum. As long as someone is doing it, I will gladly bow out. Whether you may label it as cowardice, hiding my head in the sand or whatever, so long as someone is responding, I am satisfied. Usually, not always, but the respondents read me their rebuttals for my opinions and support.

Meeting with George Delaplaine on at least three occasions and voicing our complaints brought nothing in return.

A ghetto mentality lives amongst us, but that is an extreme way to describe what may be a legitimate point of view. There are some who feel that the more attention we attract, the more people read his column, the more papers are sold, the more we are helping him. That is a legitimate point of view, free of judgmental accusations. There are some who feel we do no service by answering. I don't feel that way, but there are many who do. That is a point of view.

I told all this to the board in the light of your letter which was read. In addition, I don't always feel qualified to really disprove his obvious stretches of the imagination. This other fellow who most recently has been writing anti anti letters, to whom you replied, asking for proof of some of his statements, he most certainly comes out as a self-hating Jew. It's sad

I am grateful that you are out there. I don't have the kind of schedule that permits me an orderly kind of existence, ie. you receive a letter, it's on your desk, and you answer it. I'm not looking for sympathy, because I love my work, but being the sole energizer vis a vis., Hebrew and Sunday school, Adult classes, fund-raisers, services, and myriads of respond now situations, to even begin some research to refute some of the callous statements in print is a task beyond my time capabilities. Again, I'm grateful that you and the others are responding. Would I be the only one to respond, then it becomes a different kind of priority.

I think that spells it out as clearly as my feelings can be expressed. I believe that I'm saying it the way it is from my corner.

Sincerely and very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rabbi Kosman". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Rabbi Kosman