

WHY B'NAI B'RITH EDUCATORS UNIT?

Dear Fellow Educator,

Over the past several years there has been a significant rise in anti-Semitic incidents throughout the United States but even more so in Southeastern Pennsylvania. There was a 37% increase (nationally) in hate crimes against Jews just from last year (2017) alone and more from the prior years. From desecrating Jewish cemeteries, to swastikas being sprayed onto Jewish properties, to Nationalistic marches - the effort to intimidate Jews as "The Other" and to recruit more haters are just some of the steps to isolate Jews. Less obvious are the efforts to hold back Jews in their chosen professions. We have seen evidence of this in education in SE Pennsylvania.

THE EDUCATORS UNIT OF B'NAI B'RITH was formed in 1968-1969 in response to a **pervasive atmosphere of anti-Semitism** that was affecting educators throughout the Philadelphia school system. It became our mission to stop this from taking hold. **WE WERE SUCCESSFUL** then. We adopted the position that we wanted an "even playing field" for Jews applying for positions in the system. We have continued to fight for the issues that led to our formation. Additionally, our programs appeal to a variety of interests. One of our unit's efforts is to raise funds to support Jewish youth by supporting youth organizations such as Hillel Houses and AZA/BBG, as well as other related activities.

Our unit has had a voice in raising awareness for others to respect our history and culture. In April one year, an elementary school principal announced "famous" people who had birthdays that month. He included mentioning Adolph Hitler's birthday. Our Unit president learned of this incident and dealt directly with that principal. He never did that again. On another occasion, an after-school hours central office meeting was held during the week of Passover. Sandwiches were available for the educators attending this meeting. There wasn't any matzah available for the Jewish educators in attendance. This faux pas was brought to the attention of the administrator who organized the meeting. This was changed in future such meetings.

Within the Philadelphia region, **THE EDUCATORS UNIT HAS BEEN A LEADER.** We were one of the first groups to change to Unit Status (men and women in one group). Several members of our unit have served in leadership roles in Philadelphia Council. We have been one of the largest B'nai B'rith groups within the Philadelphia area.

B'nai B'rith is the oldest and largest Jewish fraternal and service organization of its kind in the world. For many Jews, it has been the flame that has kept Judaism alive in hostile countries. B'nai B'rith activities include establishing orphan and old age homes and hospitals. We have supported Hillel Foundation houses on many college campuses and AZA/BBG chapters for our youth, March of the Living, etc.

B'nai B'rith formed the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to fight against anti-Semitism and other forms of racism following the anti-Semitic lynching of Leo Frank (ca 1913) in the South. ADL has been one of the main leaders in this fight. ADL exposed Farrakhan – by exposing his public anti-Semitic statements and also tracks anti-Semitic acts nationally.

IT HAS NEVER BEEN EASY BEING A JEW. The cost of **not being united** is even greater. **WHY B'NAI B'RITH EDUCATORS UNIT?** Because we need **the strength of being organized** to help Jews – around the Philadelphia region and within our profession and especially, within the Philadelphia School District and surrounding suburban school districts.

JOIN US NOW so that by our strength we can face adversity in numbers!