laws (both mentioned in the original draft of the "Ten Principles") with relentless care. Moreover, the men almost always wear kipos, which by now are more closely associated with the Zionist Right than with Rabbinic custom. Two, the modern Orthodox have no perceptible interest in general ethical questions, even those that are biblically based. Unlike the Christian Religious Right, they are not drawn to moral questions that affect society as a whole, and most of their religious life is focused on notions of ritual purity and ethnic interest, quite narrowly defined. While the ritual focus is characteristic of the Orthodox traditionalists, nationalist passion combined with a fixation on the Holocaust is far more characteristically modern Orthodox.

Moral And Theological Values

My picture of modern Orthodox society is drawn from extended personal experiences but is by no means definitive. It offers a body of perceptions that I have tried to gather with detachment. Clearly my sympathies are with the middle-class German Jews of the last century who despite their naive faith in progress nurtured many of my own moral and theological values. But neither the Jewish nor Christian world which shaped the Pittsburgh Platform is any longer our own, and for today's self-identified American Jews, including Reform ones, the modern Orthodox model may be compelling.

The treatment accorded to the modern Orthodox by my mentor Will Herberg in *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* (1959) has lost relevance for our own situation. According to Herberg the modern Orthodox, then identified principally with Yeshiva University, were helping move Eastern European Jews into the American mainstream. They were part of the "Jewish division of the three great American religions," all of which "taught Americanism." Though some identification between modern Orthodoxy and America as the land of the New Deal did characterize the modern Orthodoxy of my youth, its adherents nonetheless viewed the U.S. as a gentile land, with convenient Jewish enclaves. This was the view I found among modern Orthodox teachers, some of whom are now celebrating the martyrdom of Baruch Goldstein, who in February 1994 massacred 29 Palestinians at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron. At Goldstein's funeral, Rabbi Yaacov Perrin declared that "1 million Arabs are not worth a Jewish fingernail."

Continued Alienation

The modern Orthodox achievement was not to provide a respectable Jewish vehicle for developing bonds with Christian fellow-Americans. It furnished a framework for expressing continued Jewish alienation from a Western, predominantly Christian society. That Jewish Reform leaders are now absorbing this ritual and attitudinal framework is hardly astonishing. It shows they too are afflicted with Angst, of an entirely non-religious kind. Such Angst is expressing itself simultaneously in two *related* phenomena, the radical, anti-biblical liberalism embraced politically by Reform Jews, on the one side, and, on the other, modern Orthodox ethnocentricity.

Predictably, these phenomena are now combining in a Reform movement that would shock the authors of the Pittsburgh Platform. This fusion of the byproducts of Jewish alienation may be socially inevitable but, like Allan Brownfeld, I do not believe that all Americanized Jews will buy into it. Some will drop out of Jewish life completely; others will become Christians; and still others may work toward the time when something like classical Reform Judaism can be brought back into existence. •

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GROWING INTOLERANCE
(From page 2)

That is the policy handed down by the Conservative movement's rabbinical authorities. The new policy states that congregations and Solomon Schechter Day Schools "should not engage or employ any individual who is intermarried for a position in which he/she may serve as a role model." The positions mentioned include "rabbis, cantors, educators, teachers of all age groups and subjects, youth workers and executive directors."

When a Jew and a non-Jew marry, they should not expect a rabbi or cantor even to attend a civil ceremony, much less officiate at the wedding, a statement issued by the Leadership Council of Conservative Judaism declares. Beyond this, says the statement, intermarriages should not even be acknowledged publicly at a service or in a synagogue newsletter.

Respect For Religious Differences

By taking such a position, rabbinical bodies are flying in the face of the American tradition of tolerance and respect for religious differences and, in so doing, are alienating the very young people they are so desperate to keep within the Jewish fold.

In his book *Faith Or Fear: How Jews Can Survive In A Christian America*, Elliot Abrams, president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., points out that intermarriage reflects an American ideal of "individual autonomy." He argues that, "The decision to put certain marriage partners off limits requires subordinating personal attraction and autonomy to other loyalties, usually to a racial or religious group and to a family's preferences. This is not the spirit of the age. The idea that one should sacrifice one's personal happiness to such old-fashioned considerations is a hard sell in America today . . . Religious differences are no longer a socially acceptable barrier to marriage, any more than ethnic, national or racial differences are. Americans, and especially American liberals, have understood that America is a country where individuals must be judged as marriage partners on their individual merits, not by their group membership. In fact, intermarriage 'signifies the fulfillment of the Jew's demand for acceptance as an individual — a demand he has been making since the Emancipation.'"

Jonathan Sarna, a professor of American Jewish history at Brandeis University, states that, "Where once . . . Jews and other Americans held congruent views on intermarriage, views strongly supportive of endogamy, Jews today are all alone in their views, separated from the pro-intermarriage mainstream by a large cultural chasm." To vigorously oppose intermarriage, he declares, is for Jews to set themselves against the mainstream of American life and to place separatism and particularism, group identity and group survival, above social integration, individualism and liberal ideals.

Elliot Abrams asks: "How can the Jewish community fight intermarriage without seeming to reject marriages with fellow citizens on grounds that may seem illiberal, even sectarian . . . How can Jews define Judaism, in this day and age, not as a belief system each individual may embrace or reject but as a covenant imposing obligations in a single community — indeed a community of birth, not of choice?"

Orthodox Intolerance

Intolerance is just as strong among those who are self-professed Jews as it is between the organized Jewish community and those who marry non-Jews. Orthodox rabbis, both in the U.S. and in Israel, reject the legitimacy of conversions to Judaism performed by Reform and Conservative rabbis.

In her book, *Strangers To The Tribe*, Gabrielle Glaser discusses her own conversion to Judaism: "For the first time in my life, I say prayers that make sense to me, and I have a religious community to which I feel I belong. But now some Jews, both here and in Israel, are telling me I don't."

She points to Israeli legislation which would make conversions performed in Israel by non-Orthodox rabbis invalid and the declaration by a group of Orthodox rabbis in the U.S. declaring that every stream of Judaism other than Orthodoxy "is not Judaism at all, but another religion."

"In the eyes of these Orthodox, who believe only they uphold the standards of Jewish law," writes Glaser, "my conversion, performed by a Reform rabbi, is null and void. That will not affect the way I practice Judaism, but it's left me feeling angry and excluded. And I'm not the only one: about 90 per cent of the affiliated Jews in America belong to the more liberal Reform, Reconstructionist or Conservative branches of Judaism."

Jews By Choice

Glaser declares: "Like many other converts, I've gone out of my way to make our household unambiguously Jewish . . . At a meeting the other day, the rabbi asked about Jewish writers we had grown up reading. Most of us had no answer: four out of the five were Jews by choice, as the parlance goes, and had come to the literature eagerly as adults, not automatically as children. 'I wish all Jews had to convert,' he said. He understands that we converted because we wanted to make a commitment to Judaism. And that the commitment of converts goes beyond that of born Jews . . . It is particularly painful to me that many Orthodox rabbis both here and Israel don't understand that. Am I a 'real' Jew? Am I authentic? I think I know and suspect God does too."

More and more the most extreme and intolerant voices in Jewish life seem to be gaining influence. Jack Wertheimer, provost and professor of American Jewish history at the Jewish Theological Seminary, reports that, "Out of 5.5 million Jews in the U.S., the total number of the Orthodox is in the range of 400,000. Yet their actual impact is far greater than that number suggests, and for a simple reason: they show high rates of participation in organized Jewish life."

Religious fundamentalists and separatists, he writes in *Commentary* (Feb. 1999), have replaced the "modern Orthodox" who "sought to synthesize the best of Western learning and culture with Judaism . . . Under the banner of this ideology the vast majority of American Orthodox Jews could study at secular universities, enter professions, and partake of American culture to no less a degree than their non-Orthodox counterparts."

New Type of Immigrant

In recent years, however, all of this has changed. "In the decades bracketing World War II," writes Wertheimer, "a new type of immigrant began to arrive on American shores, as Jews who had