

Rabbi Akiva Mann From the Rabbi's Desk

Hymie Sorokin
March 1984

Who within himself can find words sufficient to describe the deep and piercing sorrow we feel today at the loss of our very dear and beloved friend, Mr. Hymie Sorokin

It is practically impossible to reconcile ourselves to the thought that *ר"ח* has departed. He was so much a part of this community, for so many years a *צינור* - a foundation upon which it rested, that it will require a great effort of the mind to realize that he has left us for the "Land of the living".

The entire Jewish community in edmonton justifiably says at this moment - "*כִּסֵּי אֲנָשֵׁינוּ אֲבָדוּ הַיּוֹם*"

- "the crown of our heads has today fallen."

We all lament; for not *ר"ח*'s family alone- but all who have ever had the privilege of even meeting him know that we have lost one of the princes of our communal household.

King David, our revered Psalmist upon whom we rely so heavily for our daily inspiration, extols G-d in these words
וַיִּשָׁךְ אֱלֹהִים אֵלַי שֶׁמֶן טוֹב וַיִּמָּחַר עָלַי, "You have anointed me with fine oil, My cup runneth over."

Let us look at the life of our dear departed and see what were the contents of his cup!

Mr. Sorokin migrated to this country at the age of sixteen, escaping from Russia with a suitcase in hand, a family *Torah* which he saved, *א ספרייה* which he could not part with and a load of holy books which he could not bear to leave behind and he came to Canada searching and hoping for a better future.

As a young man he built that future- by himself- by the sweat of his brow- coupled with over five decades of companionship with his devoted and loving wife, Rae . He and his family were always sure of her loyalty and certain of her understanding.

"His cup runneth over".

The real contents of a man's cup of life are his children and grandchildren. Here they are today, living testimony to the fact that Hymie was a man of good fortune. He sacrificed for them, he moved to Edmonton for them, he supported them, he guided and he lived for them. Chaim trained his children in the tradition of our people and afforded them an education which was deeply rooted in the heritage of our Holy Torah, and in turn they transmitted this to their children.

Hymie may well have said with his last breath, "My cup runneth over."

It was Hymie's happy lot to be gifted with a desire to see his Schul and his community meet its spiritual, religious and cultural needs. I personally, can think of few people who were so involved, so totally immersed in the profession of "giving" and "helping" as Hymie was. From a deeply rooted connection with B.I.S. to Bnai Brith- to the Zionistic causes such as 'ה' and Histadrut, from the U.J.A. campaign (200 cards in a year) to Bonds. from two decades of active involvement in the Kashout Committee, to his dedication to the ק' society, .. ח"ם Sorokin never ever said "no" to a Jewish cause. (And he taught others never to say "no".) But firends, our dear Hymie went even farther than that..Mr. Sorokin was not only a politically affiliated or philosophical Jew, on the human level, the love he extended to all people, especially to our brothers and sisters from Russia,* was something beyond belief. He provided not only jobs, apartments, opportunities and business connections but more importantly, he extended understanding, warmth and sincerity to those less fortunate than himself. I myself, testify on his behalf, that he was directly responsible for at least twenty Jewish circumcisions and more than thifty Bar Mitzvahs that absolutely would not have occurred without his influence and guidance. "His cup runneth over".

ח"ם was a tender "eideleh" individual who cared and sincerely loved people with all his heart and soul and yet was stubborn and uncompromising when it came to protecting his sense of ethics and Jewish sensibilities.

Milton and Herchel told me yesterday that their father had no hobbies- His hobby was "to work". But if there was one particular "activity" which Hymie cherished above all others, it was his love for farming,- his desire to be close to nature. He loved planting, sowing and tilling the earth and watching things blossom and grow. Hymie himself might not have been aware that he was more of a grower than he realized.

He planted seeds of inspiration and committment within this community. He laboured, to make the Jewish values system dominant in our communal life and ח"ם he did see Jewish Life in Edmonton develop, blossom and mature, even though the job is not yet completed.

To Hymie's children, who loved their father throughout his life and displayed an unbelievable amount of devotion and respect for _____ during his illness and who were all present as he slipped away amidst the recitation of the *שאל*. I say,

Be consoled, Be comforted and listen to the words of the Psalmist-

..... *צדק ויגבון / גליגד / זלילים ונכס / ימים / יהוה*

"The righteous will continue blossoming like a palm tree- like a cedar he will continue to grow tall."

As we march into the endless future, the average person passes from our sight and is soon forgotten. But the righteous literally live on, urging us ever forward to complete the unfinished tasks they have left behind for us. Such a cedar was _____ in our midst. His name was *ר"ח*. His life was worth living. We will all continue to see the image of a faithful and decicated founder and his memory will forever be a source of inspiration.

In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully requests that donations in memory of Mr. Sorokin be forwarded to the Hymie Soroking Memorial Fund at Beth Israel Synagogue.

Shiva and Shiva services will be observed at the home of Milton and Maime Sorokin, 5 Valleyview Crescent:

morning services 7:30 a.m.
Aft. and Evening 7:30 p.m.
concludes Monday morning April 16, 1984.