

our Community

February 2017

A ROYAL VISIT

CHIEF RABBI EPHRAIM MIRVIS OF BRITISH COMMONWEALTH TOURS CANADA WITH IMPORTANT VISIT WITH JCC OF MONTREAL

▶ CHIEF RABBI LAUNCHES MEDICAL SHIUR SERIES

▶  @ KOSHERFEST!

▶ PICS OF THE MONTH

COMPANY HIGHLIGHT: MI & STU



JCC Jewish Community Council of Montreal

Conseil de la Communauté Juive de Montréal

ועד העיר דמונטריאל

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Friend,


It has been a pleasure traveling to the various Shuls in Montreal over the past few months and engaging and discussing many different topics with the attendees. Meeting people from the different communities and hearing their questions and comments assists us in ensuring that we service you in the best way possible. After all, we are here to service the public from Kashrus to Beth Din issues and any other area of concern that may arise.

In Pirkei Avot, Ethics of the Fathers it says "Eizehu Chacham Halomed Mikol Adam!" Who is a wise person, he who learns from everyone. We can never stop learning and gaining experience from others, provided we are prepared to listen and learn from each other. Understanding the needs of and empathizing with other individuals is important. While we may not be able to satisfy everyone, showing that we care and that we understand others is already a great trait. Trying to do more for people is our life mission and we should set out to succeed in this pursuit. There are so many organizations that need our help; be it visiting the sick, delivering meals to those who don't have any, helping the needy and the list goes on. Why not pick one thing that we can do and let's specialize in it. Let's wake up in the morning asking ourselves "How can I help a fellow Jew today?"

With this attitude, we will ensure the world is a better place, filled with loving-kindness and the care of every individual towards the other.

Wishing you all a safe winter and a life of loving-kindness towards a fellow friend.

Rabbi Saul Emanuel

 - Canada's Kosher Certifier


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WE ARE STRIVING TO SERVE YOU BETTER:

Should you have any suggestions, questions or ideas, or if you'd like to see an article written on a certain subject **email kalmanemanuel@mk.ca**

We'd Love to hear from you!





CHIEF RABBI LAUNCHES MEDICAL LECTURE SERIES

RAV BINYOMIN WEISS LAUNCHES MEDICAL SHIUR SERIES TO RABBONIM.

After hearing the erudite and highly knowledgeable Rav Weiss speaking recently on Medical Ethics in Halacha, Rabbi Yerucham Glustein was inspired and presented this series idea, roundly lauded by the Montreal Jewish Community Rabbinate.

Rabbis throughout the city are constantly called upon to deal with emergency medical situations or perhaps life-threatening and end of life issues. Rabbi Glustein's idea was that Rav Weiss empower each of the Rabbis with answers to some of the most commonly asked questions (Shailos) in Halacha. This would empower them by enabling them to speak with authority to often dazed and grief-stricken family members.

Together with the compelling and very topical subject matter, a by-product of the series is unity and Achdus. Medical Ethics crosses all boundaries as does illness, G-d forbid. No one and no community is immune and Montreal Jewry is fortunate to have Rav Weiss, a world-renowned expert available for these incredible talks.

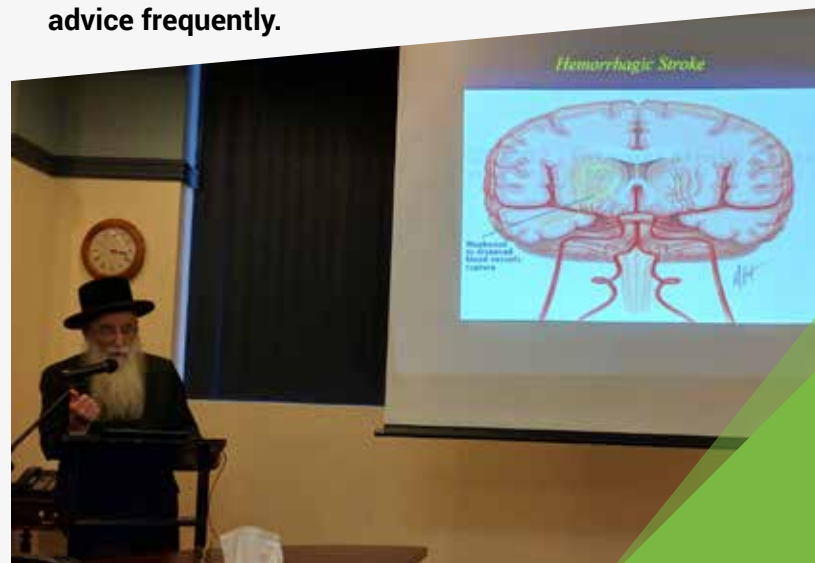
Over twenty five Rabbis from across Greater Montreal representing Tosh, Ville St. Laurent, Cote St. Luc, Outremont, De Vimy and Lubavitch were

fortunate to be able to attend the first few of six lecture series entitled "End of Life Issues." They were extremely impressed and more informed about this delicate, yet crucial issue which they all face within their respective communities.

Rav Weiss's shiur also included a PowerPoint presentation as he spoke about the different issues that arise. The slides depicted diagrams of the parts of the body being discussed. Rav Weiss is able to break down the most complex issues so that both Rabbis and laymen can understand.

Rav Weiss speaks fluent English, Hebrew and Yiddish and chose to give the Shiur in English.

Rabbis unable to attend the event will be sent a complimentary video. It is to be noted that Rav Weiss is always available to answer any medical Shailos (questions). Rabbis and Doctors have a warm and open relationship with the Rav and call upon his advice frequently.





THE ROYAL VISIT

A VISIT BY CHIEF RABBI OF ENGLAND EPHRAIM MIRVIS

Transcribed by Joannie Tansky

CHIEF RABBI OF ENGLAND, EPHRAIM MIRVIS WHO SUCCEEDED LORD SACKS, WAS INSTALLED ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2013 IN AN HISTORIC CEREMONY ATTENDED BY HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL FAMILY ATTENDED A SERVICE FOR THE INAUGURATION OF A CHIEF RABBI.

In early fall, together with his wife Valerie, Rabbi Mirvis toured Eastern Canada. Montreal, as part of that tour, included a stop at the Jewish Community Council to meet with leaders of Montreal's Jewish community.

Rabbi Orenstein, President of the RCC thanked the organizers including the JCC, who worked behind the scenes to bring in Rabbi Mirvis to Canada. In his remarks he noted that when Rabbi Mirvis spoke in the Canadian Parliament, he received a standing ovation. Rabbi Orenstein graciously thanked Rabbi Mirvis for taking time out of his busy schedule to come and speak to the Rabbis in Montreal.

Rav Weiss then delivered eloquent and warm greetings. He began by saying that mentioning Hashem's name in a greeting is a common practice in many cultures and

Rav Weiss formally welcomed Rabbi Mirvis. "We extend our greetings to the head of the world famous London Beis Din which is officially known as the Court of the Chief Rabbi. We are fortunate to have a very close relationship with the London Beis Din which is known for its professionalism, moral integrity and its outstanding members..."

Among the many past and present members of the London Beis Din that Rav Weiss mentioned, he held a special place for the late Chief Rabbi Lord Jakobovitz. Rabbi Jakobovitz, Rav Weiss went on to state, was a brilliant Torah scholar and a world class orator and was a pioneer in the field of Jewish Medical Ethics. He actually coined the term and created the discipline. Reading his writings on these topics is a must for any aspiring student of Medical Ethics.

Rav Weiss then went on to elucidate the landmark ruling of the London Beis Din, together with former Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, on the topic of organ transplantation and brain death. "It was a historic decision, thoroughly researched, brilliantly crafted, and courageously rendered, and fully consistent with Jewish law and tradition. It created a tremendous Kiddush Hashem and at the time we conveyed to them our appreciation and admiration."

**"NO BLESSING CAN BE RETAINED WITHOUT SHALOM,
AND WHERE SHOLOM REIGNS,
ALL THE BLESSINGS OF HASHEM CAN BE REALIZED"**

Introductions

Rabbi Saul Emanuel, Executive Director of the JCC thanked the attending rabbis for coming. He warmly welcomed Rabbi Mirvis, extending greetings from everyone present and the Montreal Jewish community at large. It is to be noted that both Rabbi Emanuel and Rabbi Mirvis are native-born South Africans.

languages. In our tradition we greet guests with the words Shalom Aleichem. He questioned however, why we mention specifically Shalom more than the other attributes of Hashem? The answer he proposed is that no blessing can be retained without Shalom. Where Shalom reigns, all the blessings of Hashem can be realized.



Rav Weiss ended his remarks by sincerely lauding Rabbi Mirvis, saying that, "Rabbinic leaders are builders, builders of relationships, builders of Neshomos – Jewish souls, and builders of bridges. In this regard, the Chief Rabbi has proven himself to be a master builder. We wish him much success and Siyata Dishmaya in all his worthy endeavors."

Rabbi Mirvis – Formal Address

Rabbi Mirvis expressed his pleasure at being in Montreal, a great, well renowned and respected Jewish Community worldwide. He had already been to Toronto and Ottawa to visit the Jewish schools and communities and Parliament and was genuinely appreciative to be in the presence of his colleagues.

He began his formal talk by speaking about the Keruvim (angels) that existed in the Holy of Holies. They were formed in the face of a boy and a girl and according to Rashi, they had the images of innocent children, angelic beings.

He then went on to say that on Shabbat Bereshit we read about Keruvim, again citing Rashi's commentary which states that they (the Keruvim) are agents of destruction to prevent mankind from coming into the Garden of Eden. How, he asked, can this be? We are faced with two opposite explanations.

Rabbi Mirvis then smiled and said that the property market and its adage of location, location, location is the best explanation for this paradox.

A Keruv can grow up in a holy environment and it will become a holy, innocent being. Take the same Keruv and raise it outside of paradise, in the midst of an alien environment and that Keruv has the potential to become not nice.

We have the responsibility to establish a Kodesh Kodeshim – a Holy of Holies to prevent this and he went on to say, we have this in Montreal thanks to the spiritual leadership. He praised those present telling them, that coming from Montreal are outstanding Rabbis, Rebbetzins and teachers who go all over the world and create Holy of Holies wherever they go.

He then spoke about Parsha Noach and how Rashi is troubled by the absence of names. Where are the names

in this Torah portion and furthermore where are the attributes of Noach?

His first answer is that we mentioned his name as it is the name of the Torah portion and therefore we have already given him accordance.

His second answer was more subtle, yet very profound. The main impact of a person, including Noach, is through their actions, through teachings, through being role models. This enables others to appreciate their Yiddishkeit, going from one generation to another impacting people for all time.

We are not told about Noach's actions because when one is a holy person and behaves in an appropriate way, people notice. A true leader is a living Sefer Torah who inspires others. The authentic Torah flavor of life is what people notice and internalize. Those involved in educating the next generation have a responsibility to inspire them.

Question Period

Following Rabbi Mirvis's address, there was a very informative and interesting question and answer period:

The first question asked of Rabbi Mirvis was to explain the situation in England regarding assimilation. He was asked to inform those present about the 'soul of England'.

Rabbi Mirvis began by quoting Charles Dickens saying that it was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It is the best of times because there is a remarkable resurgence





of Judaism. He explained that in 1990, 28% of Jewish children attended Jewish schools. Today the figure is 68%.

Part of the reason for that is the mushrooming of educational operations as the government provides aid to Jewish schools. As well, there has been a revolution of Teshuva. Bakeries, kosher restaurants and other Jewish establishments are on the increase. He himself teaches synagogues the tools to help bring people back to Yiddishkeit.

He continued to expound on how synagogues have now become JCC's, the heart of active community life. More people are connected to Shuls and therefore connected to Yiddishkeit through good food, social and cultural activities.

At the same time, he went on, we are going through challenging times in terms of assimilation. There was a National census which asked about faith and he reported that, thank G-d, from 2001-2011 the Jewish population in England increased by 5,500.



However, in a 2011 Census of people who acknowledged that they are Jewish, 27% are not members of any Kehila - community of any denomination which means the potential for assimilation is enormous. To help deal with this serious issue, they have a healthy, centralized community system, and close working relationship with the Federation, the Sephardi and Charedi communities.

The next question asked concerned anti-semitism which is growing in Europe. Does it affect him and his community in England?

He replied that tragically, one would have never thought that seventy years after the Shoah one would have seen Jews killed in the streets of Europe simply because they

were Jewish. The position on the Continent is cause for much concern.

The UK is blessed with benevolent governments who help the Jewish people on a constant basis and are on excellent terms with the Royal Family and new Prime Minister. He is concerned about the labor party and Church of Scotland and campuses are a great worry. Overall however, the position of Jews in the UK is stable. The rule is that they are living freely and openly and very few people encounter incidents of anti-semitism.

Given that, he did not want to minimize the threat that exists. He astounded those present by recounting the following: "Here, I don't have six armed police guards when I walk around every time I step outside. Nor do I have a 24/7 police guard living in my home." He described the security at every single entrance to every Jewish building, saying " ...security is part of our lives".

As of this Rosh Hashanah all 4000 security volunteers must have bullet-proof vests. "We cannot take chances. Here I feel free to walk wherever I want. I bless you that you should never have such concerns with this." He then clarified a very important point: "Some people say what we are going through in Europe today is similar to the 1930's. This is totally wrong. The situation overall is good even though we have a lot to worry about."

The next question had to do with projects that he is passionate about and involved in. He responded that of all the things he is involved with, the Shabbat Project and Ben Azzai Programme take up much of his time.

Waxing poetic, Rabbi Mirvis said, "I am very much a project person. Every single letter and space between the letters



in the Torah is a recipe for great living. The way we put over this beauty is what counts. Today at the press of a button our younger generation has images and entertainment that is very appealing to them. We, as leaders, must outdo them in terms of our programming and ideas.”

They were planning Shabbat UK, their third Shabbat project kicking-off with a Challah Bake. He said “it will be different from last year where there were thousands of people located in one venue. This year there was no large event, rather many smaller local ones.” They had seventy-two Challah Bakes, localized in different communities thereby empowering people to take ownership of the project.

As well, the amount of communities who must rent halls for Friday night has risen greatly due to the huge amounts of people registered - between 500 and 1000 people at each place.

Centre for Rabbinic Excellence (CRE)

Rabbi Mirvis then went on to say that he had created a new department in his office called the Centre for Rabbinic Excellence (CRE). How this came about was fascinating:

“I had a personal experience while I was a community Rabbi, mentoring community Rabbonim and lay people. One man had an idea to have a Friday night supper for the young marrieds in his community. He needed 200 pounds more than he had for the meal of forty people for a Friday night Shabbat dinner. His synagogue didn’t have the money to lend him and the communities he approached would not give him money as his project had never been done before. “I said this cannot be. If someone has an idea, there must be funds to help and I personally gave a considerable sum of money.”

The criteria to have one’s idea funded is that one must prove one’s concept has not been done before. Plus monies are allocated to Rabbonim to run new programs in their Shuls. “Our task is to give them the know-how, guidance and seed money to achieve their goals. This has transformed the landscape within a short period, with hundreds of new projects.”

Ben Azzai

In 2015 Rabbi Mirvis and his wife Valerie traveled to India, visiting nineteen communities. There, they saw first-hand a number of outstanding examples of social responsibility

supported by the Jewish community, which strove to alleviate the considerable need and poverty that exists in the country. Upon his return, Rabbi Mirvis created the Ben Azzai Programme using the realization that people on campuses are already engaged in Tikkun Olam.

“I decided to create an environment for our frum students so they can have a proper visit to show kindness to others. It is an annual initiative open to high calibre university students, taking them on an immersive and extraordinary international trip to the developing world, to learn about the challenges of poverty, education and social mobility. They meet with individuals and organisations working in these areas, doing so within an Orthodox framework. Central to the initiative is the follow up that takes place on their return from the trip. Participants share their experiences widely, within communities, in schools, on campus and beyond.” Rabbi Mirvis is truly a visionary.

Rebbetzins

Crucial to communities said Rabbi Mirvis, are the Rebbetzins, truly a resource to women in each area. Mrs. Valerie Mirvis has personally run a host of Rebbetzin programs. A while ago she took fifty Rebbetzins to Gibraltar which Rabbi Mirvis described as “a gem of a community”. It is a vibrant place with 820 Jews and four active Shuls. Together the Rebbetzins bonded with each other and the communities in Gibraltar, allowing them to showcase their vibrant community in action.

Closing Remarks

Rabbi Mordechai Zeitz delivered the closing remarks. He thanked Rabbi Mirvis for his words, saying that we have a ‘Teva’ of Jewish communities throughout the world. Teva can mean two things, ark or word. In this instance he referred to Teva as a word.

“People are listening to your words which radiate from your heart in terms of who you are and what you want to build. These beautiful Torah words and thoughts are not kept locked up. You see what is needed and step out. Your words are so simple, yet so profound. You touch the hearts, inspire others and in your honor, we will continue our work in our communities.”



By: Joannie Tansky

Mimi and Stephanie make the original dynamic duo look lame and weak. These two women have endless energy, feed off each other in a positive, uplifting way and somehow are able to impart this right into their products.

In case you were wondering about the name, we will put your curiosity to rest. Mimi is obviously the Mi part of the name. Stu was Stephanie's nickname in college - hence the catchy Mi & Stu.

IN THE BEGINNING...

AS THE SAYING GOES, necessity is the mother of invention. Such was Mimi's case.

Sixteen years ago, her daughter was diagnosed with Idiosyncratic Rheumatoid Arthritis, causing severe and persistent pain, swelling and stiffness. In an attempt to relieve her daughter's painful symptoms, Mimi removed inflammatory foods from her diet. Gluten, dairy, night-shade vegetables, and refined sugars were the first to go.

She restructured her kitchen, pantry and way of thinking, reinventing old recipes to suit her daughter's challenges. At the time, there were very few, if any gluten-free products in stores.

Mimi was forced not only to revamp old recipes, but as time went on, to invent her own. Cooking was easy, but baking was a bit more of a challenge. With each trial and every taste test, the end results improved, until her friends and family were pleading with her to make muffins for them or bake their child's birthday cake.

Stephanie (her best friend) and her family are foodies. They were and are the best tasters and, more importantly, the best critics.

Mimi continued cooking out of her kitchen but it quickly became obvious that space and equipment were becoming an issue. She simply could not keep up with the demand.

In 2011 Mi & Stu was born and found a home in a retail store on Park Avenue between Bernard and Van Horne. It was wheat free, gluten free, dairy free, casein (milk proteins) free, whey free and nut free. While their walk-ins grew, their wholesale business exploded. Finding true gluten-free, non-contaminated airline meals, even just a few years ago, was akin to mission impossible. They offered the real deal.

AND THEN THERE WAS GROWTH


One of their big breaks came as a result of one of Mimi's greatest fears. Someone had eaten an airline meal and become violently ill because the gluten-free meal was not truly gluten-free. It was an airline who contacted her.

In order for gluten-free to be officially certified as such, it must be under 10 parts per million gluten-free, sealed and opened only by the end-user.

Once the airline got on board, space became the main issue at the Park Avenue location. There were no loading docks for the huge trucks backing in to pick up palates of meals. In fact, they had to 'shlep' boxes down the fire escape. Obviously that was not going to suffice so after three and half years, they decided to move to a 7500 square foot facility.


Neither Mimi nor Stephanie had the time to find new clients, so they hired a sales broker who helped expand their quickly growing company.

THE MEALS AND PRODUCTS

In their HACCP (food safety standard), gluten-free and now  certified establishment, they pump out simply delicious meals and baked goods.

If you are lucky enough to get one of their breakfast meals on an airline, you will find a muffin, scone, applesauce or delicious vegetable frittata, rolls, quinoa pasta and homemade sauce. Dessert? Their signature brownie, danish or cake.

How good are the brownies? So good that someone flying on Lufthansa Airlines recently contacted them to buy their own supply after tasting them on the meal during their flight.




Mi & Stu has big plans and, from their meteoric growth in the past few years, will be very successful. Acquiring Canada's Kosher Certification -  - will definitely help them. They would like to expand their airline meals, move their products into the United States and build up their private label business. One of their biggest challenges is to keep their product artisanal while upgrading their automation to keep up with the demand.



GOING KOSHER!

When Mi & Stu started off as a retail bakery, they applied for  certification. Many Jewish customers would come into their store, intrigued by the gluten-free products which were not readily available at that time, enquiring as to their kosher status.

They made the initial call, Rabbi Jaffe met with them and explained how to become Kosher. As they were in the process of expanding their business, they had no choice but to let the kosher business wait. Given that, they knew they would become kosher, as the market is immense and the need is great.

When they moved and settled in their larger premises in Lasalle, the timing was right and they called the  - Canada's Kosher Certifier to get the ball rolling. They received an unbelievably warm reception from both Rabbi Jaffe and the staff at the . Everyone was eager to explain what had to be done and how to go about doing it. It did not take long for Mi & Stu's label to bear the  insignia.

Whether you are in need of gluten-free products or just want to add some very healthy food to your diet, look for the Mi & Stu label in stores and on airlines.





MAKES WAVES

kosherfest 2016

By: Kalman Emanuel

OUTSTANDING GROWTH!

On your next visit to your local grocery store or supermarket, take a moment to look around and think, you'll be amazed at just how much food, drink and ingredients are available to the kosher consumer, with reliable kosher certification! On my recent trip to the annual Kosherfest in Secaucus, New Jersey, I was more than amazed, I was stunned.

Kosherfest is an annual, two-day trade fair for the Kosher Certified food industry held at the Meadowlands Exposition Center in Secaucus New Jersey. Established in 1989, it includes an exhibition hall, lectures, cooking demonstrations, a culinary competition between celebrity chefs, and new product awards. Kosherfest is considered a showcase for food trends and innovations in the kosher-certified food industry. Kosherfest is the world's largest and most attended kosher-certified products trade show. From chain supermarkets to corner groceries, foodservice establishments to caterers, every kind of kosher decision maker will find opportunity and inspiration at Kosherfest. More than 6,000 industry professionals attend, and more than 325 exhibitors feature kosher-certified products and services for the kosher market.

Canada's Kosher Certifier has officially participated at the Kosherfest show since 2003. As always, the MK met a great deal of interest from consumers and many in the Kosher food industry about the MK mark of trust. However, for our exhibitors, representing the MK – Canada's Kosher Certifier at the show is more about pride than business. Many companies present at the show are already under the MK's kosher supervision and have been for a while; a source of pride to them as well. The great relationship the MK has established with these companies over the years, guiding them through the ins and outs of kosher food production has paid off handsomely; rising profits on their part and more obtainable kosher food for the kosher consumer, the MK's ultimate aim.

DELICIOUS WITHOUT GLUTEN!

Also present at the show, alongside MK representatives, was Miriam Pearl, President and CEO of Delicious Without Gluten. Miriam set up a beautiful array of DWG's famous Challahs and other heavenly pastries to spread the word of her outstanding products to the gigantic United States' market. Through her brand, Miriam has opened the door for those with celiac disease to a whole new world. She has allowed them to partake in what the rest of us take for granted; delicious baked goods, pastries, breads and Challos.

AMSELLEM- WINNING FORMULA!

On the opposite side of the massive Exposition Center stood a crowded booth with an overflowing line of anxious food experts and lovers awaiting their turn to taste an all new, already popular product. Usine Amsellem created tremendous buzz throughout the Kosher world with their launch of an outstanding line of cured sausages and salami meats. Our team stood proud as Amsellem was chosen as one of the Kosherfest 2016 New Product Winners. Congratulations to Amsellem, for their delicious sausages, which won the hearts of the judges, not only for the quality in taste, but for the overall product packaging, design and presentation.

MUNCHREAL!

Another MK company present was Munchreal, a Canadian Gluten free brand, specializing in Passover products. Munchreal has become known throughout the Passover Market as a brand of trust for both taste and quality.

So on your next grocery shopping spree, take a moment to reflect on how lucky we are to benefit from the abundance of food available to us as kosher consumers and to appreciate the efforts that have gone in to making all this possible, by both kosher certifying agencies like the MK and manufacturers alike.

PICS OF THE MONTH



Rabbi Peretz Jaffe, Kashruth Administrator in discussion with Rav David Banon, Member of the Vaad Harrabanim and Vaad Hakashruth.



Rabbi Saul Emanuel at a recent Your Questions. Answered. Event in Dollard.



Rabbi David Sabbah, Chief Rabbi of Quebec in deep discussion with Rabbi Saul Emanuel





#spreadingourwings

Welcoming
LSG Los Angeles Airline
Kitchen to the  Family

*Why is this year
different from all
other years?*

#EZPASSOVER

