

Agudath Israel of America Election Day Breakfast

LEAH ZAGELBAUM

On Tuesday morning, November 3, the most important meal of the day will be taken to a whole new level, as key government figures will break bread and break ground with community movers and shakers at a special Agudath Israel of America Election Day Legislative Breakfast.

Agudath Israel of America is a national Orthodox Jewish organiza-

tion that services the community with a multi-faceted array of charitable, educational and social service projects.

Through its national Office of Government Affairs, its full-time Washington Office, and its regional chapters throughout the nation, Agudath Israel frequently takes advocacy positions before federal, state, and local governmental bodies.

In so doing, Agudath Israel seeks

to protect the rights and advocate for the interests of observant Jews and their growing network of educational and religious institutions, to promote the well-being of Israel and Jews across the globe and to offer a uniquely Orthodox Jewish perspective on contemporary issues of public concern.

Purposely scheduled to dovetail with Election Day, this timely event presents a unique and valuable opportunity for Agudath Israel's lay leadership to meet and engage elected officials in dialogue about issues of relevance to their communities. In attendance at the event will be prominent communal, civic, religious and governmental leaders with an interest in public policy, and a proven track record of involvement and accomplishment.

The featured speakers will include U.S. Representative Todd Rokita, vice chairman, House Committee on the Budget and Chair, House Education Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education; and NYS Senator Michael N. Gianaris, deputy senate democratic conference leader.

The Breakfast Chairman will be Tevi D. Troy who is the president of the American Health Policy Institute. He is also the author of a *Washing-*

ton Post best-seller. Mr. Troy served as former deputy secretary of Health and Human Services, and as a senior White House aide in the George W. Bush administration.

Peter Rebenwurz and Joseph B. Stamm will be additional Co-Chairs. Mr. Rebenwurz is a prominent businessman, philanthropist and community leader, and Mr. Stamm is the CEO and president, NYCHSRO/MedReview, a company that provides healthcare audits. The company has saved its clients over \$1 billion since it was founded over 40 years ago and now operates in 25 states.

The event is being sponsored by Jeffrey Weisenfeld, principal at Alliance Bernstein Global Wealth Management, and is being coordinated by The Friedlander Group and its CEO, Ezra Friedlander.

The significance of the Legislative Breakfast is summed up by Rabbi Chaim Dovid Zwiebel, Executive Vice President of Agudath Israel: "Our annual Election Day Legislative Breakfast gathering serves as an impressive demonstration of the high level of involvement of the Orthodox community and creates a timely and vital reminder that the Orthodox Jewish community cares deeply about where our government leaders stand on the issues of the day."

Torah Umesorah's Zechor Yemos Olam Program Comes to Texas



Rabbi Shmuel Yaakov Klein addressing the gathering in Houston.

R. ZWEIG

Last Monday evening, October 19, the Houston Jewish community, including numerous *mechanchim*, was privileged to welcome Rabbi Shmuel Yaakov Klein, director of the Zechor Yemos Olam project of Torah Umesorah, the organization's division for Holocaust study, as well as Rabbi Yaakov Astor, who together with Rabbi Klein heads the annual ZYO Fellowship.

The two presenters shared history of the time period before the war and the Holocaust era and a sampling of the *hashkafah* lessons that form the Torah perspective on Holocaust study.

The first presenter was Rabbi Astor, who gave an informative out-

line with historical anecdotes that are not generally known or taught. "I learned more about history in that short amount of time than in my years in school!" said one participant.

Rabbi Klein then shared thoughts on the Torah viewpoint of the tragedy of the Holocaust. Due to time constraints, he could share only some of what he feels are crucial components in the study of *Churban Europa*.

"I could have listened to Rabbi Klein for days!" said one participant.

All who attended walked away with a sense of mission and a feeling of pride in our history and heritage. That feeling was also shared by the participants the next evening in Dallas, where the two guests again presented before a large gathering of both *mechanchim* and general members of the community.

The Houston event was held at the Young Israel of Houston, whose Rav, Rabbi Yehoshua Wender, delivered the *pesichah*. The Dallas event was hosted by the Or HaTorah Shul, where Rabbi Yehudah Abrams, who, in addition to being a *rebbe*, teaches the Holocaust program in Mesorah High School for Girls, delivered the *pesichah*.

While in Dallas, Rabbi Klein also addressed the *talmidim* of the local *mesivta*, Texas Torah Institute, as well as the local Bais Yaakov high school, Mesorah.



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