



Middle East Center

Mr Alan Tigay, Executive Editor
Hadassah Magazine
50 West 58th Street
New York City 10019-7900

March 30, 1992

Dear Mr. Tigay,

My old friend, Walter Eytan, has suggested that I write you with an idea I have for a piece on Cyprus. I read your magazine (my wife's a member) and enjoy the travel pieces especially, because they walk the line between the usual kind of travel information and cogent observations on the history and culture of Jews in the area.

Friends at the Embassy of Cyprus to the United Nations have expressed an interest in helping me write there. I'd like to see what can be done while there this summer towards photographs and towards re-locating some of the old synagogues and other relics of ancient Jewish inhabitation--it was quite an important Jewish residence in antiquity. But I'm particularly taken with the part the island has played in our modern history. In the wake of the Second World War, over 50,000 immigrants (including Paul Newman, as it were) were kept there by the British. And now Cyprus has become a vacation site for Israelis, in two different ways: just vacationing there is pleasant, inexpensive, presents no language problems. And getting married there is something that any Israeli who doesn't want a marriage controlled by the rabbinate has to do. Many of these marriages are between people of mixed backgrounds or communities or who have special problems with Jewish law. But very many are between people who simply want a civil marriage. Of course, it's quite odd that one of the first shrines to Aphrodite is at Paphos and

ENV 1.8

that the little rocky island that lies off Paphos may be the origin of the whole story of Aphrodite/Venus rising up out of the sea, a la Botticelli, on the half-shell.

I think that paying some attention to this site, as Jews turn more and more towards the lands to which we fled following the expulsions of the 15th and 16th century, is worth doing. Your magazine would be most appropriate for a not-too-heavy, well-illustrated presentation. I'd very much like to hear of your interest.

I will, in fact, be in New York between April 25-30th (a work I've written on R. Isaac Luria will be in a works-in-progress series at the 92nd St. Y the evening of the 29th, with Arthur Strimling) and would like to meet with you then, if you can.

Sincerely yours,

Harris Lenowitz