

film outrages bereaved families

Our 7

By NECHEMIA MEYERS

REHOVOT, ISRAEL—In a small country where no less than 14,000 families have lost loved ones in battle over the last several decades, it is no wonder that *The Vulture*, a new Israeli film which mercilessly ridicules the manner in which the fallen are memorialized, should arouse waves of protest.

Its hero, or more correctly anti-hero, is Boaz, a young officer whose comrade has just been killed in the Yom Kippur War. When, on returning to Tel Aviv, Boaz is asked by the father of his fallen comrade for details of the son's last days, there is really nothing much to say. But Boaz, anxious to please the old man, makes up a poem which he pretends the son had written shortly before his death.

So successful is the subterfuge that Boaz decides to go on memorializing fallen soldiers by writing brochures filled with make-believe reminiscences and by arranging for the erection of tasteless monuments, all this in return for fat payments from bereaved parents.

Sexual Appetite

Moreover, Boaz is portrayed not only as a vulture living off the dead, but also as a man with an enormous sexual appetite. He begins his postwar exploits by seducing the girlfriend of his dead comrade, then goes on to rape a girl employed by the Ministry of Defense Unit to Memorialize Fallen Soldiers and finally gets both of them in bed with him at the same time.

Neither Yoram Kaniuk, who wrote the script, nor Yaki Yosha, who directed the film, claim that Boaz is an admirable person.

However, they argue that he is a credible character and that through him they are able to explore a significant, if painful, feature of the Israeli scene.

The Public Committee for the Encouragement of Quality Films agreed with them, for it decided to allocate \$50,000 (of tax money) towards the payment of their production costs.

Ridicule Shocking

Most bereaved parents, needless to say, feel otherwise. A typical reaction came from Chana Elisha, who lost a son: "My husband and I scraped together every spare penny to put out a brochure about our boy, and now these people ridicule us for doing so. How dare they?"

Peretz Alufi, 2 of whose sons were killed in battle, argues that "even the right to freedom of expression cannot justify this attempt to besmirch the memory of our loved ones. Memories, God knows, are all we have left!"

Ha'aretz, the prestigious Tel Aviv daily, understands the reaction of bereaved families, who have initiated an estimated 3,000 memorial booklets and dozens of monuments. Nevertheless, the paper says that the issue raised is a legitimate subject for public debate, adding that in a truly democratic society there can be no sacred cows.

As a result of this well-publicized controversy, "The Vulture," a film regarded by most serious critics as both tasteless and mediocre, is drawing crowds of people who otherwise wouldn't have come to see it.

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By C

HAIFA, ISRAEL
of writing Hebrew characters are less convincing to any the subject. Never done to initiate the... two reasons: one, tampering with the... simple inertia.

As for the first, I must that Hebrew has already one change in its history letters we know today a those used in ancient times perceived from perusal of... There is nothing holy about and anything which can language and make it more everywhere should be encouraged.

As for the second reason, that initiative is now already Israel to set up a movement to promote the shift. I have change and have written and again for more than century. Today I find and linguist, Dr. launched a campaign the gradual ir

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