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JWW Demands that the Jewish Community “Embrace the Treyf”

September 24, 2007/ 12 Tishrei 5768 - Jewish Women Watching, the anonymous collective of feminist rabble rousers, will be appearing in sukkot around the country in the upcoming week. In addition to a surprise personal appearance at the JCC sukkah (details below), thousands of Jews received Sukkot decorations from the renegade group.

Unlike the uninspired plastic fruit and paper chains that normally adorn the sukkah, JWW's decorations consist of postcards urging the Jewish community to take their social activism one step further. Each postcard juxtaposes a social justice issue that is considered "kosher" in the organized Jewish community with one that is considered “treyf”. For example, while fighting anti-Semitism is encouraged, fighting racism, sexism, and homophobia does not get the same stamp of approval.

In two other postcards, JWW critiques the focus on band-aid solutions versus more sustainable projects. The underlying question of these cards is: “If we really want no one to go hungry, then shouldn't we be doing more than mitzvah day?” The most inflammatory card points out the Jewish community's extraordinary focus on human rights abuses against Darfurians while ignoring human rights abuses against Palestinians. In all of these cases, the group demands that the Jewish Community “embrace the treyf,” that is, devote resources and attention to issues that are considered treyf as well as those already stamped kosher.

"Only once we start examining our own behavior, and working for justice even on those issues that make us feel uncomfortable, will we truly be committing ourselves to Tikkun Olam" said JWW's Bella Abzug. Particularly meaningful at this time of year, JWW draws inspiration from the holiday of Sukkot to communicate these ideas. Reb Beruriah, another member, explains, “The sukkah is a fragile dwelling, and for it to be kosher, it must be open. Sukkot is a time when we step outside of our comfort zones. We need to go beyond ‘safe causes’ and challenge the status quo.”

To see JWW in person, make sure to check out the Sukkos Mob on September 29 at 8:00pm at the Jewish Community Center in Manhattan, located at 334 Amsterdam Ave. at 76th St.

For more information, visit JWW's web site at www.jewishwomenwatching.com.

About Jewish Women Watching (JWW):

Jewish Women Watching is an anonymous activist collective that aims to rouse the public to challenge and change the sexist and other discriminatory practices in the American Jewish community. Since 1999, JWW has been criticizing the Jewish community's narrow-minded priorities through online, print, and street actions.

To arrange an interview, write to jww@jewishwomenwatching.com .

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