

Orthodox slam Reform vote on gays

NEW YORK: Reform rabbis have "gravely misled not only other Jews, but the entire world by fostering the notion that Judaism tolerates homosexual acts" an ultra-Orthodox group has charged.

Agudath Israel of America attacked the Reform movement's acceptance of gay commitment ceremonies in a quarter-page advertisement in the *New York Times*. The advertisement was a response to a March 29 resolution adopted by the Reform movement's Central Conference of American Rabbis asserting that "the relationship of a Jewish, same-gender couple is worthy of affirmation through appropriate Jewish ritual".

The advertisement states: "Judaism Is Not a Mirror of Society's Shifting Mores", and "Let it be said loudly and clearly: The Torah, the very basis of the Jewish faith, explicitly considers such acts and relationships deeply sinful, condemns them without qualification and leaves no room for their formal recognition"

Rabbi Avi Shafran, a spokesman for Agudath Israel, said the advertisement is "aimed at doing one thing: making sure the general public, both Jewish and non-Jewish, realizes this is not a Jewish move of a Jewish movement and doesn't reflect Judaism as it has been historically defined."