

JEWISH AIR-CONDITIONING

It was a sweltering August day when the Cohen brothers entered the posh Dearborn, Michigan offices of Henry Ford, the car maker.

"Mr. Ford," announced Norman Cohen, the eldest of the three. "We have a remarkable invention that will revolutionize the automobile industry."

Ford look skeptical, but their threat to offer it to the competition kept his interest piqued.

"We would like to demonstrate it to you in person."

After a little cajoling, they brought Mr. Ford outside and asked him to enter a black automobile parked in the hot sun in front of the building. Hyman Cohen, the middle brother, opened the door of the car. "Please step inside, Mr. Ford."

"What!" shouted the tycoon, "Are you crazy? It must be two hundred degrees in that car!"

"It is," smiled the youngest brother, Max, "but sit down Mr. Ford and push the white button."

Intrigued, Ford pushed the button. All of a sudden a whoooooosh of freezing air started blowing from vents all around the car and within seconds the automobile was not only comfortable, it was quite cool.

"That is amazing!" exclaimed Ford. "How much do you want for the patent?"

Norman spoke up, "The price is one million dollars." Then he paused. And there is something else.

The name 'Cohen Brothers Air-Conditioning' must be emblazoned right next to the Ford logo.

"Money is no problem," retorted Ford, "but no way will I have a Jewish name next to my logo on my cars!"

They haggled back and forth for a while and finally they settled. Five million dollars, but the Cohens' name would be left off. However, the first names of the Cohen brothers would be forever emblazoned upon the console of every Ford air-conditioning system.

And that is why, even today, whenever you enter a Ford vehicle, you will see those three names clearly printed on the air-conditioning control panel: NORM, HI and MAX.