A Prize First

Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits has a fresh way of looking at old ideas, in the view of the people who award the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion. Rabbi Jakobovits, the Chief Rabbi of Britain, last week became the first Jew to be awarded the prize, which was created in 1972 by John M. Templeton, an American financier. The prize carries a cash award, $200,000 this year, that is deliberately kept larger than the Nobel Prizes because Mr. Templeton considered religion more important than the various disciplines recognized by the Nobels. Rabbi Jakobovits, who became a member of the House of

Pro Whose Bono?

Even for a Park Avenue law firm, Myerson & Kuhn seemed to be charging a bit much—millions too much. Clients complained to Federal authorities, an investigation was launched and last week Harvey Myerson was indicted on charges of swindling his clients and partners out of $3.3 million in two years. The indictment said that Mr. Myerson, who was a law partner of Bowie Kuhn, the former baseball commissioner, used the money for a wide array of personal expenditures, including luxury gifts for friends—like an $86,000 diamond ring for a woman—and chartered jets and expensive hotel rooms for friends and family members. Investigators charged that Mr. Myerson stole most of the money—$2.5 million—from six corporate clients by billing them for work that was never done. Myerson & Kuhn went bankrupt in December 1989, two years after it was founded. Mr. Myerson denied any wrongdoing and said he would represent himself and "erase the cloud that has been placed over me."

An Ethical Death?

Are there circumstances under which it is ethical and moral for a doctor to help a terminally ill patient reach the end sooner? Dr. Timothy E. Quill seems to have provided, by his own example, the most thorough answer to date. In an article published last week in the New England Journal of Medicine, Dr. Quill described how and why he helped a longtime patient die. The patient, a 45-year-old woman identified only as Diane, had acute leukemia and stood a 25 percent chance of survival if she opted for a grueling regimen of chemotherapy and other treatments. Diane said she would rather die. When she later asked him for barbiturates to help her sleep, Dr. Quill said he knew she had decided to end her life. He prescribed the pills and told her how many would kill her. Authorities in Monroe County, N.Y. where Diane died, say they are investigating the incident. But a medical ethicist, Dr. Ronald E. Cranford said, "This is a very important case and people will have trouble criticizing the procedure."