

# Jewish Life

A PROGRESSIVE MONTHLY

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25¢



Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois

**APPRAISAL OF AFRICA** *a review by Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois*

**THE MIDDLE EASTERN CRISIS UNFOLDS** *by Louis Harap*

**A VIEW OF THE ISRAEL THEATER** *by Nathaniel Buchwald*

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Vol. X, No. 4 (112) Feb., 1956

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# A View of the Israel Theater

A returned traveller tells about the main  
dramatic groups and their productions

by NATHANIEL BUCHWALD

THE THREE leading theaters in Tel Aviv—and in Israel—are Habimah (The Stage), Kameri (Chamber) and Ohel (Tent). These theaters differ in their style and caliber of acting. But one thing they do have in common: a desire amounting to a passion to produce famous plays, both classical and modern.

The amazing and heartening thing is that in Israel there are large audiences for the kind of plays that would in this country be regarded as fit fare only for "highbrows" and "eggheads." The biggest box-office success at Habimah in recent years was Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*. The "hit" at Kameri during my visit in Israel was Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, only to be challenged by Berthold Brecht's *The Good Woman of Setzuan*, also in Kameri's repertory.

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NATHANIEL BUCHWALD is dramatic critic of this magazine who has just returned from a trip to Israel and Western Europe. He is a staff member of the *Morning Freiheit*. His regular monthly column in these pages, "In the Theater," will resume next month.

At Ohel, the business manager was plainly unhappy and profusely apologetic about the success of the new play, *Eldorado*, by Igal Mossensohn (whose *Sands of the Negev* had a limited run in New York last year). It was an inferior play, he complained, one that dragged down the prestige of Ohel. But in view of the accumulated deficits, the theater needed a "strong box-office play." Now that Ohel was straightened out financially, it would be able to resume its policy of producing worthwhile plays.

Over the years, the repertory of the Israel theaters has encompassed the entire history of the drama, from the classical Greeks to the outstanding dramatists of today. It was gratifying to learn that the best of contemporary American drama was well represented in Israel. Arthur Miller's *The Death of a Salesman* and also *The Crucible* had been done by the Habimah (in excellent Hebrew translations, I was assured) and received with enthusiasm by both critics and audiences.

*Troublemakers*, by George Bellak, about the witch-hunt in the United

States, was a sensational hit at Kammeri, perhaps the biggest in the ten-year history of that playhouse.

*The Teahouse of the August Moon*, done by Habimah, was no less popular in Tel Aviv than in New York or London. The theaters are interested in *Inherit the Wind*.

In the lobby and on the staircase of Habimah I found a retrospective exhibition, including numerous scale models of the stage sets, covering the 34-year history of that famous theater. Among the authors of the 130-odd plays produced one found the names of Sophocles, Lope de Vega, Moliere, Shakespeare, Ibsen, Bernard Shaw, Chekhov, Gorky and O'Neill as well as Goldfaden, Peretz, Hirshbein, Sholem Aleichem, Sholem Asch, David Pinsky and S. Ansky, whose *Dybbuk* started Habimah on its career. A similar even if shorter list could be compiled from the productions of Kammeri, with Ohel generally following in their footsteps. Apparently, Israel theaters are geared to cultured audiences and cultivated tastes.

### **How Habimah Started**

Habimah is undoubtedly — and deservedly — the leading theater of Israel but Kammeri is not only a close runner-up but a very active challenger. If Habimah is mellow with tradition and has evolved something of a style of its own, Kammeri has verve, daring and drive. Its style may be eclectic but its constant experimentation is stimulating and more than makes up for its somewhat immature acting.



*Hannah Rovina in the first Habimah production of The Dybbuk in 1922.*

Habimah's prestige is not confined to Israel. It has its admirers also in Europe and in this country, where it toured last in 1948. But outside of Israel it is admired and respected for the wrong things, as it were. Somehow the notion persists that Habimah is steeped in Jewish traditionalism, both in its style and in the content of its plays. In this sense it is regarded abroad not only as the national theater of Israel but indeed as the theater of "Jewish culture" and the "Jewish spirit" in a nationalistic, chauvinistic and obscurantist sense.

The early history of Habimah and its plays lends support to this erroneous notion.

The group was formed in Russia shortly before the first World War



as a dramatic circle dedicated to the promotion of ancient Jewish drama in *Hebrew*. In 1917 (before the October Revolution) this band of stage-struck young men and women came to Moscow in search of wider recognition. But the cultural atmosphere in Moscow was not favorable for mere amateur theatricals and the Habimah group, imbued with nationalistic strivings and Zionist ideology, was reorganized as the Habimah Studio and embarked on a course of serious study and training. They continued to cling to Hebrew as their banner and as a kind of demonstrative parting of the ways with the revolutionary Jewish workers and intelligentsia, whose language was Yiddish.

But to the extent that these young Jewish intellectuals were interested in the theater as a cultural pursuit, they found well-wishers and teachers among the leaders of the Russian theater, including the great Stanislavsky himself. Thus it came about that one of Stanislavsky's most brilliant disciples, Eugene Vakhtangov, undertook to guide the Habimah Studio.

The end result, after some three years of training, was *The Dybbuk*, a masterpiece of inspired stagecraft that put Habimah on the map. *The Dybbuk* became the symbol and the hallmark of Habimah. To this day, Jewish people here and abroad regard the Ansky play as the type of theater Habimah has been practicing in Israel ever since it made its home in Tel Aviv in the middle 20's following its first tour of the United States.

That Vakhtangov's *Dybbuk* left its indelible mark on Habimah is undeniable. It also precipitated a profound crisis in the life of the group because, try as they might, they could not find another play to match Ansky's mystic drama of thwarted love, nor another regisseur to match Vakhtangov's genius. Dejected, Habimah players began wondering whether they were really actors or just *Dybbuk* performers. In such a mood the group split, with some of them (including Benno Schneider and Benjamin Zemach) remaining



Aaron Meskin in an early Habimah production of *The Golem*.

behind in the United States while the main body of the ensemble went to Tel Aviv to make their home in a social and cultural environment that was more conducive to Hebrew

and to mystic Jewish nationalism than America or Europe.

But as it settled down, Habimah gradually shed its *Dybbuk*-coloration. While keeping Ansky's play and also H. Leivick's mystical poetic drama, *The Golem*, and one or two other such standbys in its repertory, it no longer specialized in plays of Jewish mysticism and traditionalism. In this sense it all but lost its "Jewishness" and became just a good theater doing all kinds of good plays in Hebrew.

But something persists in its style that links it to the Habimah of the *Dybbuk* and *Vakhtangov*. That something is not exactly outward style in a formal sense but rather a spirit of dedication, a total absorption in a play, a reverence for the Stanislavsky tradition and a penchant for stylization. The young men and women of the *Dybbuk* days have become seasoned actors, a few of them—great actors. To mention such outstanding ones as Aaron Meskin, Shimon Finkel, Hannah Rovina, David Vardi and Raphael Klatzkin is to leave out the other veterans who help keep alive what may be called the Habimah tradition.

A survey of the Israel theater would require more attention to the other two leading theaters, Kamari and Ohel, than space permits. (A more detailed treatment of these theaters may be undertaken on another occasion.) But somehow, Kamari and Ohel are also Habimah. To put it another way: were it not for Habimah, there would be no Kamari and Ohel. In a sense, Kamari represents a revolt against



Scene from the Kamari production of *He's Gone over the Fields*, by M. Shamir, with Hannah Maran and Komaiko.

the Habimah style and Habimah tradition, which are considered by some as dated and sterile.

The argument runs thus: while originally Habimah captured something of the excitement and imaginative innovations of the young Soviet theater, it proceeded to mark time while the Soviet theater developed and outgrew its "infantile diseases." The result is that Habimah has become outmoded in its style and incapable of going forward. I for one do not share this view but the fact remains that precisely this critique of Habimah prompted the founding of Kamari. Certain it is that the director and moving spirit of Kamari, Joseph Millo, is not tradition-bound, nor

(Continued on page 39)

# The Middle Eastern Crisis Unfolds

The real forces operating in the situation  
are exposed by recent developments

By LOUIS HARAP

A QUICKENING pace in the unfolding of the Middle Eastern crisis has occurred in past weeks. The events in Syria and Jordan have caused the real nature of the forces operating in the area to emerge with greater distinctness. The need for measures toward peace has become more urgent than ever. The attack by Israeli troops on a Syrian outpost near the Sea of Galilee on Dec. 11 has shocked the Israeli people into a realization of the perils of "activism." The raid was launched in the midst of an ominous whipping up of "preventive war" sentiment. Ben-Gurion himself later admitted that he personally and without consultation of the cabinet had made the decision to send the troops into the attack in which 56 Syrian soldiers and civilians and six Israelis were killed.

The provocative, warlike nature of this action aroused the people and many Israeli leaders. Sharp criticism of the action appeared in such conservative Tel Aviv papers as *Maariv* and *Letse Naies*. The conservative *Haaretz* on Dec. 16 warned that the attack "brought Israel dan-

gerously close to dictatorship by the chief of government [Ben Gurion]." Shocked disapproval was heard round the world. In New York, Senator Herbert H. Lehman on Dec. 16 applied his call to "show restraint" and "respect for the sanctity of each human life" to the attack on Syria. Even the Yiddish press has expressed criticism.

On Dec. 14, *Haaretz* editorially frankly questioned whether the attack was at all justified. Friction on that border, it said, was so unimportant (no Israeli lives had previously been lost in that sector), that it had not even been mentioned in the Israel press. As a result of popular disapproval and parliamentary debate on the issue in the first week of January, Ben Gurion agreed to commit his government against resort to "preventive war."

Yet the danger of provocative action is by no means past. For there still remains wide "preventive war" sentiment in Israel.

This "activism" has already resulted in extreme isolation of Israel from all world forces. This was clearly evident in the debate on the

Syrian complaint in the UN Security Council in January. On Jan. 19, the Security Council unanimously voted their condemnation of Israel for the attack and grimly warned Israel of more severe action in case of recurrence. It has thus been dramatically shown that peace and resolution of the crisis cannot come with an "activist" policy.

### ***The Jordan Demonstrations***

The momentous, decisive popular outburst in Jordan against the threat that the government would join the Baghdad Pact, brought to full view not only the powerful anti-imperialist feelings of the Arab masses. It also exposed the provocative and war-breeding nature of that anti-Soviet military alliance.

Not only has the pact created disturbance in the Arab world. It is also resulting in the arming of Iraq, bitterest enemy of Israel, which makes no bones about its intention of using these arms against Israel. On Dec. 22, U.S. Army Chief of Staff Admiral Arthur Radford arrived in Iraq to discuss American army supplies to that country under the pact, thus aggravating the arms race.

The massive demonstrations of the people of Jordan against the pact are remarkable in that they show how advanced is the anti-imperialist sentiment of the Arab masses. For Jordan was a virtual colony of Britain. A British general, Glubb Pasha, commands the "Arab Legion," which

includes British officers and is financed quite openly by Britain.

British General Sir Gerald Templer hurried to Amman, Jordanian capital, in December to rush that country into the pact. He "pounded the table" (*N. Y. Times*, Jan. 9) in his arrogant demand that Jordan join the anti-Soviet alliance. He even tried to hold out a bribe to the Jordan government with offers of increasing the present military British grant of \$24,500,000 (*N.Y.T.*, Jan. 10).

But the Jordanian people have had enough of this colonialist dictation. Popular indignation broke out in widespread demonstrations that toppled three governments in as many weeks. So decisively was the will of the people asserted, that the present Jordan government has pledged itself not to join the pact.

### ***Baghdad Pact is Anti-Israel***

This is a heartening omen for the people of Israel when it is considered how explicitly the Iraqi leaders regard the pact as pointed against Israel. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported that the Iraqi ambassador in Syria issued a statement that the pact was directed against Israel and the arms given by Britain and the United States would be used to "save" the Arabs from the "Zionist danger" (*Forward*, Jan. 8).

Yet the flow of arms to Arab states had been begun by Britain and the United States in the effort to wheedle them into joining the anti-Soviet

military alliance. This flow is now increasing, as evidenced by the shipment to Egypt of over 200 British tanks via Belgium and further promises of arms to Iraq. An integral part of this policy is the demand being made on Israel by Dulles and Eden to surrender at least part of the Negev in exchange for the arms that Israel has been trying to get from the United States. The Alsop brothers reported early in

January that when Sharett saw Dulles in Washington concerning sale of \$50,000,000 worth of arms to Israel, Dulles' demand for surrender of Israel territory was so outrageous that "Sharett furiously replied that apparently Dulles wanted to destroy Israel altogether."

But Israeli and Zionist leaders will not help Israel out of the crisis until they grasp the immense meaning of the Bandung conference of April

## AMERICAN LABOR PARTY ON THE CRISIS

*Following is a statement on the Israel-Arab crisis issued by the American Labor Party of New York on January 3:*

**A**LL who love peace are apprehensive over the developing crisis in the Middle East.

The Middle East arms race has only recently come into headline prominence as an issue between the Big Four powers. At this moment, France and England, as well as Czechoslovakia, are shipping arms to Egypt, while England is arming Jordan and the United States is arming Iraq and Iran. An arms race such as this intensifies the danger of a full scale shooting war.

The Summit Conference in Geneva decided that differences between nations must not be settled by war in this atomic age.

The American Labor Party believes that this is the time for the Big Four powers to implement this decision. We believe the road to peaceful development in the Middle East lies in economic and technical aid to both the Arab and the Jewish peoples, and not in embroiling that area in an arms race.

We urge therefore that the Big Four bring the Spirit of Geneva to the Middle East by the following actions:

1. A guarantee by the Big Four to Israel and the Arab nations against aggression from any source.
2. A Four-Power call for direct peace negotiations between Israel and the Arab states.
3. A Four-Power agreement to halt all arms shipments into this area, and to substitute economic and technological assistance.

1955, in which Egypt played an important part. Still hoping for alliance with Dulles, they are acting in opposition to the strong determination of the Asian-African peoples to win their complete independence from domination of the State Department and the British Foreign Office.

The Bandung states realize that this objective would be best furthered by the promotion of world peace. Hence many Arab governments of 1956 have a different orientation from those of 1948, when they made war on the infant state of Israel. Thus the possibilities of peaceful settlement exist to a greater degree today than eight years ago, when, spurred on by arms from Britain and passive support from the United States, the Arab states fought Israel.

In this connection the statement of Marshal Tito on Jan. 10 after his return from a visit to Col. Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt is important. Tito stated that "Egypt does not want war." This is confirmed by *N. Y. Times* correspondent Kennett Love's statement (Jan. 18) that "Premier Nasser is believed by United States as well as by British diplomats in Cairo and Foreign Office circles here to be the first Arab leader since the Arab-Israel war who is not only desirous of peace but more able than any other in the field to bring off negotiations without prior conditions." This is the reason why Egypt is leading the fight of Arab states to keep out of the Baghdad pact. This Egyptian policy is

the basis for the view that the arms bartered with Czechoslovakia will not be put to aggressive use against Israel. The "neutralist" peace policy to which Egypt subscribes is growing in influence in the Asian-African world especially because these peoples know that a war policy militates against their struggle to gain independence.

How greatly the chances of peace for Israel would grow if it too adopted such a policy of neutralism. But a military pact would tie Israel to those governments whose imperialist policy is hated by the masses in the Middle East and would expose Israel to renewed hostility as an agent and ally of this policy, as the Arab peoples now see so clearly. Neutralism is in fact gaining in Israel. As far back as October, the veteran Zionist leader, Yitzhok Greenbaum, member of the first Israeli cabinet, called for a change in Israel policy to neutralism. The French journal *Tribune des Nations* reported recently that "The influence of the ruling Ben Gurion groups is waning and neutralist tendencies are growing."

### **Toward Four Power Talks**

But even before such tendencies may gain the upper hand in Israel, it is possible to make a start on the path to settling the critical situation in the Middle East. This start lies in Four Power negotiations, including the Soviet Union, with Israel and the Arab states to settle outstanding



issues. Such offers of negotiations stand a good chance of overcoming Arab reluctance to negotiate with Israel.

As *The Nation* said on Jan. 7: "On the question of the Middle East, we recognize the Soviet Union's intimate concern with an area which the West is attempting to incorporate into its military defense structure. At the same time we cannot agree that the arming of the Arab states will serve international peace. Rather we see the solution in agreement by the major powers to encourage direct negotiations between the Arab nations and Israel."

The essential point made here is that the solution can come through Four Power negotiations. The British Labor Party is now promoting this policy. On Jan. 2, Labor Party leader Hugh Gaitskell urged in Parliament that the Western powers invite the Soviet Union to join a common effort to secure peace between Israel and the Arab states. Prime Minister Anthony Eden continued to throw cold water on this proposal, which in fact conflicts with the Dulles-Eden intention of keeping the Middle East an exclusively Western preserve.

The Soviet Union has repeatedly shown its readiness to participate in such Four Power discussions, which are essentially the technique of Geneva. Commenting on the UN consideration of the Syrian complaint, the *N. Y. Times* stated (Jan. 11): "So-

viet sources privately have been saying that they moved into the Syrian-Israeli dispute because they have been left out of the consultations that the Western Big Three have been holding for three weeks. They object that in matter of such grave concern they were not kept informed and had to follow developments in the press.

"They also have remarked pointedly that it would be in every one's interest to get a unanimous vote on a resolution and that they were consulted on two past occasions on Palestine issues on which the Council reached unanimity."

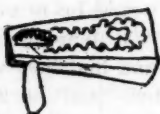
Only by such Big Power unanimity will peace be achieved. Big Three action to the exclusion of the Soviet Union perpetuates the cold war. Big power unanimity is the most powerful force in the world, a force which Middle Eastern countries cannot resist. Only a united Four Power agreement to stabilize the peace and enforce the UN decision to establish the state of Israel can curb those Arab extremists who are intransigent against Israel and to compel Israel and Egypt peacefully and conclusively to negotiate their differences and reach a permanent peace. Under the present conditions only the persuasion of the Big Four can bring peace to the Middle East.

*Editors' Note: Readers are invited to send in questions on the crisis for reply in these pages.*



# THE PURIM GROGGER

By MAX ROSENFELD



THE neighborhood bully had been tormenting me for days—throwing my ball over the roof, tearing up my treasured “picture cards,” calling me names in front of my friends. It was not that he hated me more than his other victims; I was merely his target for the week. That was the way he worked. One week he picked on one kid and was “pals” with the others; the next week he selected another target and was everybody else’s protector.

There were never enough kids mad at him at one time to tackle him collectively, and he was too big and too strong and too cruel for any one of us to challenge him single-handedly. His cruelty showed in his

face and it was frightening. He knew that we all called him Bully, but he gloried in the name. His greatest delight was in leading his victim on to think that he was “friends with him,” tantalizing him, then suddenly turning on him with fury and sadism in his face.

In my mind’s eye, all the scourges in Jewish history looked like Bully. No matter which tyrant I was studying about in Hebrew school—Herod, Torquemada, Haman—he always had Bully’s face.

On this particular day, as I ran home from school in the fresh snow, Bully had tripped me and scattered my books over the wet ground. As I gathered them up, he pelted me with snowballs.

“An emesser Hummin” (a real Haman), said my mother, when I tearfully explained why my books were dripping wet. “Maybe we should go talk to his parents?” she suggested to my father.

“*Es vet im ahren vi Hummin dem grogger,*” answered my father with a Yiddish saying. (“He will mind that as much as Haman does the grogger.”) [A “grogger” is a noise-making instrument sounded to manifest contempt for Haman—Eds.]

I had often wondered whether the din we created in the synagogue on Purim wasn’t rather a satisfaction for ourselves than a punishment for Haman’s soul, and this old proverb confirmed my suspicion. But it was little help to me in the present situation. My desire for revenge on

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my own personal Haman grew with each passing hour.

For tomorrow night would be Purim. And on Purim I went to the synagogue to hear the reading of the Megillah. The synagogue was five blocks away and I knew from past experience that Bully would be waiting for me near the railroad tracks on the way back. I was determined to find a way to defend myself.

THE MEN AT THE SYNAGOGUE WERE already in the Purim mood, smiling broadly and beaming in anticipation of the Purim *l'chayims*. The shammos had unlocked the closet and was dragging out a big box of Purim groggers. This was his annual custom and he repeated every detail in precisely the same way every year. First he would line up all the kids. Then with a great flourish he would select the proper key, open the closet and haul out the big box.

In the box were two kinds of groggers. There were the old-fashioned wooden ones which you held by a big handle and whirled over your head. These were not popular because their clackety-clack sound was not very loud; they were always the last ones taken. Then there were the modern, mechanical ones, small, handy and made of tin, which ground out a croaking, raucous noise at the least touch of a tiny handle. These were the favorite ones, because in addition to making more racket, they were small enough so that you could

hold them out of sight and turn the handle even when Haman's name had *not* been pronounced. This had to be done skillfully, by one kid at a time, so that it seemed like an accident. Then an old greybeard, his eyes twinkling as he tried to look severe, would say:

"Quiet, you little troublemaker! We can't hear the Megillah! You're supposed to grogger only when the Reader says 'Haman!'"

"But I thought he did say it!"

"You! Sit still and listen! . . . or I'll take the grogger away from you!"

He never did, of course. On Purim, everything is permissible.

After the service, the shammos would line up the kids again, and each one had to put his grogger back in the box, where it would stay till next year.

I STOOD WAITING MY TURN, BUT THIS time I had no heart for the playful jostling of the other kids. I was still feverishly concerned with Bully. My hand reached out automatically for the small, modern grogger. But suddenly my eyes saw the full beauty of those old wooden groggers, large, heavy, and—eminently wieldy. I chose the largest and heaviest—and returned to my seat.

The Reader began the chanting of the Megillah. Whenever he came to Haman's name, the groggers dinned and feet stamped the floor. The Hebrew words of the ancient Scroll of Esther were not strange to

my ears; we had studied the Megillah all week in *heder* and Mordecai and Ahasuerus and Vashti and Esther and Haman were real people to me. Especially Haman. I turned my wooden grogger and kept seeing Bully's face. I *had* to get out of the synagogue without returning my grogger to the shammos.

I did not wait for the end of the Megillah. Hiding my grogger under my shirt and keeping one eye on the shammos, I sidled over toward the door and dashed out.

Slowly I walked homeward, rehearsing my plan. A few yards from the railroad tracks, a snowball hit me in the face. I continued walking slowly toward the thrower. This seemed to surprise Bully so much,

that he forgot to throw the second snowball. "Come closer, and I'll wash your face!" He jeered.

I ran the last few steps toward him, pulling the grogger from underneath my coat. Before he realized what was happening, I had whacked him furiously on both shins and was running home. He howled and grabbed at his legs, but made not attempt to chase me.

As I ran, I twirled the grogger noisily and triumphantly over my head. Mordecai himself could not have felt as victorious as I did that night, even when Haman was leading him through the streets of Shushan on the King's horse! This was one Purim when Haman had really felt the grogger!

## FOR WALTER LOWENFELS

By SAM SWING

To jail the poet is to cloud the noon;  
Some days are dark and some are bright with light,  
With light and thunder—sing it now and soon!—  
Of nations marching in the freedom fight.  
Think you that stone and iron can contain  
The world's staunch will to forge the lasting peace,  
That locks will hold a striving people's pain,  
Keep mongers warm within a gilded ease?

Too late! Too late! You cannot jail his deed;  
His freedom songs upset the master plan.  
Yes, tremble! tremble! in stockaded greed,  
The work goes forward and will free the man  
To comrades bearing with a freedom cheer  
Bouquets of sonnets for the sonneteer.

# APPRAISAL OF AFRICA

A distinguished authority reviews  
the recent book by John Gunther

By DR. W. E. B. DU BOIS

**T**HIS is an excellent book which persons interested in Africa must read. It is long, but printed in clear and readable type, with tables and maps, index and bibliography.<sup>1</sup> The succinct eight-page table of the chief characteristics of modern African countries is priceless and unique. Only a seasoned author knows what work it entailed.

It is written with sprightly, popular appeal and is especially valuable by the comparison which the author can make between widely separate parts of the earth which he knows by personal visits.

Africa covers 11,262,000 square miles, and is as big as the United States, western Europe, India and China put together. "Most is not sultry and forbidding jungle, but

eroded desert, savanna and hard, high, spiny plateau country, with a minimum of vegetation. . . . If you want to see a naked savage, you have to go out and look for him, and this process may be laborious. Much of Africa—of course I am generalizing broadly — is not even particularly hot. I never found a place, except possibly Khartoum, as hot as Houston in a heat wave or as uncomfortable as Washington. Nor is much of it necessarily unhealthy to visitors who take reasonable precautions." (p. xxii)

Above all, Gunther regards black folk as human, writes of them as normal persons and not museum pieces, and regards their problems not as unique but like those of other men the world over both in our day and yesterday. He does not, like most writers on Africa, "patronize" the peoples of Africa and write down to them from a world far above.

The work which has gone into this

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DR. W. E. B. DU BOIS is the dean of American scholarship and is a leader of the American and Negro people. His picture appears on the cover in celebration of Negro History Week as the embodiment of the political and scholarly activities of the Negro people.

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1. *Inside Africa*, by John Gunther. Harper & Bros., New York, 1955, 952 pps. \$6.00.

compilation is enormous. His background of reading is wide. But beyond that, the sheer physical task of covering the continent of Africa from Tunis to Capetown and from Addis Ababa to Dakar, in heat and cold, rain and desert; through forest, bush and swamp, took courage and strength and was possible only with the staunch co-operation of his wife. It must be true, as the author says, "The I in this book is mostly we."

Just **what** the author means by the Negro race is not clear. According to his own testimony, a man may be black and classified as white; his hair, his height, his history and culture have "nothing to do with the case." Gunther's definition of the Negro race seems to be a matter of flat nose, full lips and bulging jaw. If such characteristics indicate a race, then we have not three but 22 races, as some ethnologists used to assert. When modern anthropologists divided mankind into three races, they

did not take refuge in a "Hamitic" race<sup>2</sup> which never existed, but classified Ethiopians in among the Negroids as well as the majority of Egyptians and North Africans. When Gunther declares the Bantus are "not Negroes," he becomes absurd.

### *Africa and Socialism*

A second criticism of the book is Gunther's attitude toward socialism. He is no rabid "red-baiter" but he refers to Communism as a sort of disease like smallpox. Is it not time that a writer with so wide an audience should speak rationally about the greatest phenomenon of our day, the spread of socialism? Socialism is widespread in Britain and Scandinavia, in America, Asia and Africa. It has reached its most spectacular success in Russia and China and

2. A notion derived from the Biblical story of Ham, second son of Noah, according to which the black people of the world were said to be the descendants of Ham.—Eds.



*African National Congress demonstration in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1952.*



*Woman of Equatorial Africa.*

aroused its fiercest opposition in the United States. But however bitter our opposition may be to the methods which Communism used to reach socialism, nevertheless honest scholars must admit that socialism is the goal of Britain as well as the Soviet Union and not talk as if there was no link between the two. In Africa the current socialism is evident. Gunther mentions the Volga project on the Gold Coast:

"... The total cost will be roughly £144,000,000, of which the Gold Coast government contributes £40,000,000. . . . The project as a whole will be—if all goes well—a kind of African TVA. . . .

"But nationalist Gold Coasters thought that the whole business might be a device. After acrid debate the Africans at last accepted the proposals, but Nkrumah demanded — and got — plentiful safeguards. The Gold Coast government, not the British, will control the proj-

ect and the private aluminum companies have bound themselves to be subject to Gold Coast tax laws." (p. 827)

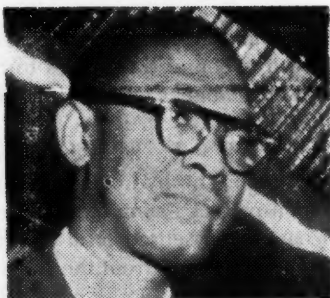
The French Sudan is headquarters for an important hydroelectric and irrigation project. "Some 27,000 Africans have been settled on a 95,000-acre tract reclaimed from the desert. The Niger Office is a non-profit agency and has been called an African TVA. All over French West Africa planned economy is a watchword." (p. 874)

Of cocoa in West Africa, Gunther says: "One fact so striking that it can scarcely be believed is that every cocoa farm in the country, of which there are many thousand, is African-owned. Moreover the Gold Coast Marketing Board, a semi-state organization like the great marketing boards in Nigeria, is African-managed; of its ten members eight are Africans. This supervises the industry on a broad basis, buys the crop, sells it, accumulates funds for lean years, and contributes widely to other elements in the Gold Coast economy. . . .

"Production from 1892 to 1896 was a total of 12 tons; in 1951 it was around 275,000 tons." (p. 825)

Beside these socialist undertakings, there is an African background of socialism shown historically in landholding, trading and the treatment of widowhood, orphans and poverty. What should be our attitude toward this? Should we try by big business methods to beat back this





*Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Prime Minister of the Eastern Regional Government of Nigeria and President of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons.*

socialism and transpose it into industrial capitalism with individual private profit as the chief goal; or should we encourage the building of a modern socialistic state on the ancient African model? When now the Soviet Union offers a path to this socialism, must we regard this offer as a disease or treat it as a crime?

He notes that a West African newspaper states: "If the Communists can help us to attain our objective, we shall welcome them just as Britain recently gave King Tito of Yugoslavia a royal reception in the capital of the British Empire." (p. 771)

Gunther says: "The easiest way to make them go Communist is to deny them opportunity for development and freedom. For the United States to associate itself exclusively with colonial powers and ignore or snub nationalist African sentiment is shortsighted in the extreme." (p. 92)

## ***African Leaders and Socialism***

We must not deceive ourselves. The African leaders of today know about the Soviet Union and China. Also they know what Europe and America in the past have done to Africa. It is up to these leaders of civilization to show Africa how its peasantry can emerge from degradation as the Russian and Chinese are emerging. The Africans are not fools, as Gunther so abundantly proves, and they are not going to be convinced of the "crime" of Communism if they find no other way to freedom.

Alan Paton says: "No one can say what is the real present strength of Communism in Africa. I suspect it is not great but only a fool would take comfort from that or conclude that 'Communism does not suit the African.' The truth is that Communism may well suit any person who has grievances against society and who feels hindered and frustrated." (p. 538)

Gunther adds: "If Communism is ever let loose on the great mass of black illiterates, among the intolerably poor and crushed in the submerged regions of the continent, a development might arise like that in China. And we will have lost Africa, as China has been lost." (p. 19)

What is meant by "lost"? Lost to Chiang Kai-shek and American big

*(Continued on page 35)*



## NOTABLE DATES IN U.S. NEGRO HISTORY

1619, Aug. 20. First Negroes imported from Africa to American colonies to perform forced labor, were landed at Jamestown, Va.

1831, Jan. 1. William Lloyd Garrison began publication in Boston of *The Liberator*, a most powerful Abolitionist organ.

1850, Sept. 18. Strong fugitive-slave bill passed. Mass resistance began throughout the nation.

1852, March 20. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe's anti-slavery novel, was published and helped arouse anti-slavery sentiment.

1859, Oct. 16. John Brown, with 21 followers, including five Negroes, attacked the arsenal at Harper's Ferry, striking a major blow for freedom.

1862, July 17. Congress approved arming of Negro people to take part in the Civil War.

1863, Jan. 1. The Emancipation Proclamation went into effect, declaring all slaves in the areas still in rebellion to be "forever free."

1868, Feb. 23. Birthday of Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, great and militant leader of the Negro people.

1869, Dec. 6. National Negro labor convention met in Washington, D. C., and created the Colored National Labor Union.

1870, Feb. 25. Hiram R. Revels, first Negro U. S. Senator, elected from Mississippi, took the oath of office.

1913, March 10. Death of Harriet Tubman, born in slavery, who as conductor of the Underground Railroad brought more than 300 slaves to freedom; also a leader of the women's suffrage movement.

1931, March 25. Nine Negro youths were seized near Scottsboro, Ala., and framed on charges of "rape." Mass protest resulted in their eventual freedom and established the right of Negroes to serve on juries.

1943, Nov. 2. Benjamin J. Davis, Jr. member of the National Committee of the Communist Party, leader of the Negro people, elected to the New York City Council; re-elected in 1945.

1947, April 11. Jackie Robinson, first Negro player with any major league team, played his first game with the Dodgers at Ebbets Field.

1951, Dec. 15. A delegation headed by Paul Robeson and William L. Patterson presented to the United Nations a petition charging the U.S. government with a genocide policy against the U. S. Negro people.

1954, May 17. U.S. Supreme Court, as a result of more than a century of struggle, handed down a decision outlawing segregation in the public schools.

*These dates and text are drawn from Elizabeth Lawson's The People's Almanac (see review, p. 38).*

# Courage of a Jewish Mother

In a crisis the mettle of this working woman emerges in its full luster

By MERIDEL LE SEUER

## Minneapolis

SHE flew out here from Brooklyn to Minnesota to see her son, who was born Samuel Horowitz, and is now known as Paul Brown, who served 450 days in a Minnesota workhouse and county jail and then was kidnapped to Wisconsin, all for the heinous crime of changing his name in order to live. The charge—owning and driving a car under an assumed name. He did not tell his mother, Fannie Horowitz, he was in jail, worried that she wouldn't understand it, that with his papa sick and the living to earn, it would be too much for her.

Well, the way it turned out, Sam never knew his mother and her strength. To him she was a Jewish mother who worked hard, had no education and had to be shielded.

But the jailer at the county jail, the governors of two states, various and sundry officials and committees,

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MERIDEL LE SEUER is the author of numerous books, the latest of which is *Crusaders* (Blue Herron Press).

saw a beautiful, strong and fearless woman come into a state, strange to her as a foreign country. We had no inkling of the courage in her.

WELL, IT WAS A HOLIDAY, AS I REMEMBER, and you couldn't visit the county jail where Sam had been sitting without sun or exercise as Wisconsin tried to extradite him. A member of the committee went with her to try and get in. The jailers saw only a young worker and a short woman. They would have been frightened if they had seen all they represented. The visitors were ignored, told to sit down and wait.

Fannie Horowitz had not seen her son for a long time. She did not know he had been in jail for six months until she saw it in a New York paper. "How does it feel," she told me, "for a mother to see in the paper that her son Sammy is in jail in far-off Minnesota? I didn't tell his father, I said Sam is sick, I want to go to him. Go ahead, do what you want, he said, you always do! The committee said fly. So I flew!"

So she did not intend to spend the holiday sitting in the jail with Sam behind bars, feeling him only through the thick iron and stone around her. She said to the worker with her, "Let's not sit here, let's go over and stand there and look at him, just look at him, do not take our eyes away. Every man has a mother!" So they stood at the rail



*Mrs. Fannie Horowitz*

and the jailer felt those eyes, got nervous, asked, "What do you want?"

"I told you, I want to see mine son. It is a holiday. I am a mother. I have come in an airplane to see my son. It is only human that I see him."

"Sit down, lady," the jailer said. "Wait."

But they did not move; they just stood looking at the jailer. Finally he could stand it no longer. "Come

on, lady" he said, "I'll see what I can do," and he took her up the iron cage, into the white cold anteroom with the police coming and going, very official, enough to intimidate anyone, and then down through the hallway to the double-barred doors through which you had to try and see and talk to Sam. Leaning against the bars, squinting though she could barely see him as he cried, "Ma!" and she cried, "Sammy!"

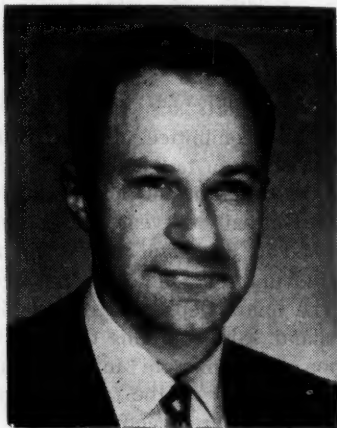
"Look" she said to the guard, "It's a holiday. Couldn't I touch my son? Couldn't I be in a little room with him? What could it hurt?" He took her to a room, let Sam in and she told me later, "Oh, when I see him my boy Sammy and when he got me round!"

SHE WENT TO SEE THE GOVERNOR with the committee. Fannie Horowitz had been taught by her whole life the brutalities of power. Coming from Germany 52 year ago, she had worked in Brooklyn and New York in the umbrella factories, belonged to the union, took care of her sick husband. She told this to the governor of Minnesota in a vibrant voice that has all the range, power, nuance of a great actress.

"My son grew up in the depression. He saw me leave in the early hours of the morning to go to work and return after dark in time for supper, do the housework, some laundry for strangers. He had to go with me to home relief offices for a dole of a few potatoes, coal, to keep

us from starving or freezing. When he was young, to help me he built himself a shoe shine box and gave me all the pennies he made. He sent himself to school.

"During the war he founded the blood bank in his shop. I am proud he has always been a good boy. He is not and never will be a criminal. The only crime he ever committed is that he loves his freedom, his fellow man and yes, his just right to speak his mind, even if it is not the thought at the time of the majority. Honorable Sir, as the 67-year-old mother of Samuel Horowitz, a woman of 67 who has struggled most of



Paul Brown

her life in this great land of ours, I appeal to you to give my children a better life than I had. Set my boy free!"

The governor had no power!

So they went to Wisconsin to

Governor Kohler and she stood before this little tsar of plumbing and made one of the most beautiful speeches I have ever heard:

"What kind of a life has my boy had, I ask you? A shoe shine boy in the slums he was, a little schooling bitterly worked for, 40 months in the army in the South Pacific, at Okinawa, married for three years only, his young wife dead, a few years working, hounded by the F.B.I., 450 days in jail without light or books or exercise, jailed for a little charge, not a criminal, all for his piece of bread. Is this a life? My son has been persecuted enough. If you send him to prison, I may never see him again. How much more can I endure!"

There was much more to endure. She and Sam's sister organized affairs for support of Sam in Brooklyn, in New York City. On Mother's Day last spring Mr. Horowitz died. He had been visited by the FBI, stopped on the steps as he came home from trying to peddle knick-knacks, was asked about his son, if perhaps in the house there was a letter from him they could look at, knowing all the time the son was in jail in Minneapolis.

They would not let Sam go to the funeral. They wanted an \$8,000 bond which would have cost \$1,000 from the bondsman for four days. Naturally he could not go. In jail he thought about the lives of his father and mother and his own life. He talked by phone to them, spoke

### *What to do*

Write or wire District Attorney Wm. J. McCauley at Safety Bldg., 8th and State Sts., Milwaukee, Wisconsin, protesting the continuing persecution of Paul Brown and urging dismissal of the charges.

Write for additional material on the case to CRC, 914 N. Plankinton Ave., Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Send contributions to CRC address.

to his brother, told his sister how proud he was of her.

"My mother's voice, unlike my own," he wrote from jail, "was clear and steady as we inquired about each other's health and we had already said our goodbyes when she seemed to leap into the room and in the most courageous words I ever heard, her voice went into my very marrow as she said, 'Be strong!' This is the woman I call mother. I hope I will never fail her. I went back to my cell, unpacked my few belongings, lay on my cot, stared at the ceiling and followed in my mind the casket of a little old man, my father, and the woman who could cry across the distance—'Be strong.'"

AFTER THAT, AS THE MINNESOTA lawyers were in the judge's chambers getting a stay of extradition, he was kidnapped, taken over the border to Wisconsin, where he is out on \$7,750 bail awaiting trial on charges of buying a car and getting a driver's license under the name of

Paul Brown. In Wisconsin it is a criminal charge carrying a penalty of five more years in prison.

Dismissal of the charges has been asked on the grounds that no crime was committed. The small life savings of the Horowitzes are gone, briefs, transcripts, attorneys' fees now continue. Fannie Horowitz still fights—"We have always been hard-working, honest people, why do they try to hurt us? My boy is the victim of a shameful period of cold war when many innocent people were wronged because of imagined fears. Now in calmer times we should right these wrongs."

The strength of this working mother, unknown even to her son, with the courage to oppose the power of state and kings, is a strength that, once roused and known, will pour into the life of our people a great power and beauty.

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# Religious Test for Probation Officers

The issues involved in the current debate  
on charges of discriminatory hiring

By JEREMIAH LESSER

**A**N intense public controversy has been going on for over a year in New York City over the appointment of probation officers of the Children's Court according to religion. The legal excuse for this practice over several decades has been a provision of a law passed in 1915 that a child shall be assigned to a probation officer of the same religion "when practicable." As a consequence, probation officers are appointed by religion strictly in proportion to the faith of children to be treated. Since the case loads of the children have for some years run to about 50 per cent Catholic, 45 per cent Protestant and five per cent Jewish, probation officers have remained in the same proportion.

The American Jewish Congress has been active in bringing this situation into the open and frankly calls the policy a "quota system." Over a year ago the AJ Congress formally submitted a complaint against the Children's Court of discriminatory hiring to the New York State Anti-Discrimination Commission. This commission has not yet given out any ruling. The New York State Probation Commission, however, re-

cently unanimously issued an advisory ruling in opposition to the discriminatory hiring policy.

Two basic issues are involved in the controversy. First, the sectarian mode of hiring is clearly a discriminatory practice based on religious affiliation. Second, neither the community nor the children are properly served by a system which does not base its appointments primarily on professional competence.

The religious test for employment of probation officers violates not only the FEP law of New York State, but is basically contradictory to democratic practice. Strongest proponents of the prevailing system are the Catholic Charities of New York and Children's Court Presiding Judge John Warren Hill. The latter defends his view not only on his interpretation of the 1915 law but also on the ground that a religious approach to rehabilitation of children has great value. But this is not denied by many opponents of the religious test. The latter maintain that professional competence is most decisive in helping the children. This does not by any means exclude the necessity for the genuinely compe-



tent probation officer, whatever his religion or lack of religion, to give sympathetic consideration to religious problems of the child.

Recently the Very Rev. James A. Pike, dean of the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine, said: "If one of my children got in trouble, I would rather have the court assign to him a highly trained and sincerely dedicated Roman Catholic or Jew than a Protestant selected from the bottom of the civil service list who might lack gifts of intelligence, sensitivity and dedication. . . . Therefore let the very best probation officers be appointed—regardless of religious affiliation."

Yet another serious breach of freedom is involved—the practice does

not recognize the rights of those parents and children who do not profess any religion at all or whose beliefs do not fall within the three main faiths. This basic consideration is simply not recognized in the situation at all. A serious infraction of religious freedom, which also includes freedom from religion, is therefore involved.

The non-Catholic social work profession is firmly against the religious "quota system" in hiring of probation officers. Dr. Kenneth D. Johnson, dean of the New York School of Social Work, has expressed strong opposition. And the New York City Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers voted overwhelm-

(Continued on page 44)

## ***To Live, "Jewish Life" Needs Action!***

### **ACTION!**

By every reader of *Jewish Life* to contribute and raise funds for the 1956 Campaign.

### **ACTION!**

By every organization and *Jewish Life* committee to establish fund drive goals and take immediate steps to organize the campaign.

### **ACTION!**

To assure the successful fulfillment of the quota of \$15,000 by April 1, 1956

*You must help make it successful so that America's fighting little magazine can keep on fighting for peace, civil rights and cultural progress in the Jewish community.*





## FROM THE JEWISH PAST

# Luria and the Self-Defense

By **MOSHE KATZ**

**T**HE city of Pinsk justified my expectations in all particulars—even its mud. When I came to Pinsk early in 1906, the mud—even in the main streets—was so deep that I once lost my galoshes in it. So I acquired a great “respect” for the Pinsk mud and made no more attempts to cross the street unless it was a matter of urgent necessity.

I do not bring this up now because I wish to insult the Pinsk of 50 years ago, but because it is connected with an interesting incident which took place a few months after I arrived.

That summer rumors spread through Pinsk (and many other towns) that the police were preparing a pogrom. We immediately decided to take measures to defend ourselves. One of these measures, of course, was to strengthen the Self-Defense organization. In order that the population—and the police—might know that the Self-Defense was not asleep, several picked groups used to row out to the swampy islands on the Pinia River and drill

and shoot so that the noise could be heard in the city.

But “arms” (a few old revolvers) was something the Self-Defense had very few of. So we had to raise money to buy weapons. For this purpose the committee of the “Z. S.” (Zionist - Socialists), together with the Self-Defense group, which it controlled, sent out a few comrades supplied with credentials to visit the shops throughout the city to collect the necessary contributions.

One of the two members on the committee was a 17-18 year-old fellow named Michele, the son, I think, of a shammos. Michele was a fiery youngster. There wasn't a risky piece of work for which he didn't volunteer—the riskier it was, the better he liked it. He had one fault—he could never keep him indoors at meetings or study groups. He preferred to stay on the outside with the patrols which guarded the meetings from police attack.

So Michele and Baruch, his fellow-committeeman, took their creden-

## 70th BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO MOSHE KATZ

**T**HE Editors are happy to publish these reminiscences of Moshe Katz during this period of his 70th birthday celebration. Moshe Katz has had a distinguished career of 50 years in the working class movement in Europe and in this country and among the Jewish people. He has been one of the most gracious and keenest of the leading spirits of the Yiddish speaking people in our country as political writer, literary critic and lecturer and member of *Morning Freiheit* staff. We are proud to have published his writings from time to time. We look forward to many more years of fruitful association with Moshe Katz.

The incidents recounted here are drawn from Mr. Katz' autobiography, currently being serialized in the *Morning Freiheit* and eventually to appear as a book. Max Rosenfeld has translated this passage from the Yiddish.



tials and went from store to store for several hours to collect money. Suddenly they came running to me greatly upset. It seemed that when they came to Aaron Luria, the richest man in town, he tore the credentials to bits and threw the pieces to the ground! He told them that he spit on the committee and its credentials and that they had better clear out at once or he would call the police.

Michele was so wrought up at this treatment that he had wanted to shoot Luria on the spot for this insult to the organization. Baruch had barely restrained him and they came

to me to discuss what could be done.

Very little actually could be done at the time. Aaron Luria owned a big factory and several lumber enterprises; his timber floated down the Pinia River and he was the owner of ships in the harbor, if not the harbor itself. A man as rich as that, naturally, had connections with the police and with the authorities. Not only the chief of police but the governor himself visited at his home. And since Aaron Luria loved to throw his weight around, it was not advisable to "start" anything.

But Michele was determined that

something must be done to teach that impudent "goir" (rich man) a lesson, otherwise all the wealthy men and the merchants would follow his lead and it would become impossible not only to collect money for the Self-Defense, but even to conduct a strike. We agreed that this was correct. But since we had no immediate plans worked out and terroristic methods (of which Michele was very fond) were absolutely forbidden, it was decided to wait for an opportunity to arise to teach Luria a lesson. The best way would be to organize a strike in one of his many enterprises.

Michele, however, was not satisfied. Whereas before he was quite close to me, I now began to see him less and less, until he finally disappeared even from the workers' "birzhe" ("hangouts"). Nobody knew where he was. I got the impression that he had left the city.

ON YOM KIPPUR, AS I SAT IN MY ROOM, my "landlord," a fur-worker, came running in and told me breathlessly that someone had just "murdered" (*geharget*) Reb Aaron Luria in broad daylight. In the Ukraine, where I came from, the word "*geharget*" had only one meaning, killing someone. I was of course quite disturbed by the news. First, because it was an expression of individual anarchistic terrorism among the workers; second, if a man like Luria had really been murdered, we

could expect a severe reaction among the population and harsh police repression and arrests.

After a while several comrades of the committee came and told me that Luria had not been "killed" but only "*geharget*," that is, beaten up. And they added that Michele and several of his cronies had been seen on the street during the incident and that they had run away. It was obvious that the attack was Michele's work and that it was his revenge from the insult to the committee.

In the evening the comrades brought Michele to me. He denied nothing. Yes, he was the organizer. He and several other fellows had done the job. They had "only" beaten up Luria in broad daylight as he was leaving the synagogue and had thrown him into the deep mud in the street and given him a good licking. With what? With sticks. That was "all"—and let it be a lesson to him.

Michele added that he could not understand the political considerations that prompted me to forbid "taking measures" against Luria. He knew only that he couldn't rest until he had paid Luria his just deserts. Now the committee could do with Michele whatever they wished—they could expel him, or he would resign, as they saw fit.

The truth is, I had no heart either to "lecture" or punish him. More important was what were we going to do now. We decided to wait until we found out what Luria planned to

do about the "lesson" he had received.

SOME DAYS LATER—IT WAS THE FIRST day of Succos—my landlord came from the synagogue with another piece of "sensational" news. The talk in the synagogue was that Aaron Luria wanted to "make up" with the organization and was ready to apologize for his insult. Later, Michele came to me happy and triumphant with the same news. We immediately called a meeting of the committee and decided that if Luria really wanted to apologize and make up with the organization, he had to do two things:

First, to apologize publicly in the synagogue and promise never to do it again; second, that since the two comrades who had been gathering contributions had collected 200 rubles in the two hours before the incident and would have continued for another 4-5 hours, Luria was to pay the 500 rubles which, because of his interference, they had not collected.

This decision was communicated to Luria the same evening and was immediately accepted. He paid the 500 rubles. The next day he declared from the pulpit in the synagogue: "Gentlemen, I have done wrong and I beg the pardon of the committee and the Self-Defense, which I undeservedly insulted. I now believe that an organization which defends its own honor so steadfastly will also defend the honor and the interests

of all the Jews. And I am now certain that the penalty of 500 rubles which I have paid will go for a good cause."

After he made this statement, which had been previously agreed upon, Luria added of his own accord in a sort of ecstasy: "Did you ever hear such a thing! Here I am, walking from the synagogue with several other people, minding my own business. Suddenly, before I know what happened, somebody pulls me away from the others and throws me into the mud; blows are rained upon me and I think my end has come. Suddenly I hear someone call out 'Stop!' and the blows stop and the guys disappear as if they had never even been there. That's what I call organization! You can stake your life on such young Jews and I will let the world know that they are not to be insulted."

It is interesting that this was the same Luria who was a political reactionary, a member of the reactionary Octobrist Party. After his "lesson" Luria became a good friend and supporter of the organization. When it became impossible to get police permission for any sort of concert or lecture, we used to get the permission in Luria's name.

Michele's prestige in the organization rose after this incident. But unfortunately it did not prove very useful either to the organization or to him as an active worker. In a few months he again disappeared from Pinsk for good.

INSIDE

# THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

## *Virginia—and Segregation*

On January 9 the state of Virginia declared that it does not recognize the U. S. Constitution and the Supreme Court set up by it. By a majority of 2 to 1 the voters of the state (of course, not including the voteless ones due to a poll tax and other bars to prevent Negroes from voting) decided in favor of calling a convention to amend the state constitution so that public school funds could be used for the education of children in private schools. This racist abomination of a decision would prevent the establishment of non-segregated public schools. The anti-integration move was initiated and pushed by the governor, Senator Harry Byrd and other officials and groups. The action of these notables indicates that democracy is in mortal danger in Virginia and that its subversion has been promulgated by the very men sworn to its protection.

The fact that one-third of the voters marked their ballots for democracy shows that a considerable force in Virginia opposes the conspiracy of the racists to subvert the Supreme Court and the law of the land.

In a test between segregation and non-segregation, the position of the Jewish people should be clear. Can it be any other than unrelenting opposition to segregation and inequality? Many important Jewish organizations

in Virginia were not heard from, at least from what can be ascertained in the press. If many were silent, then it was the silence that hinders the fight—not only the courageous Negro people who fight like lions for their rights—but the Jewish people of Virginia, to whom discrimination is no mystery.

At least two Jewish groups took democracy seriously and went on record against the racist amendment: the Norfolk Council of Jewish Women and the Hampton Roads Rabbinical Association. These are the only two Jewish organizations recorded in the *N. Y. Times* (1/7 and 1/9), which gave thorough reports on the lineups in the Virginia struggle.

Another Jewish voice in Virginia to speak out against the amendment was that of Rabbi Emmett Frank, who told his congregation: "It [the amendment] will set our educational system back 100 years or better. . . . The legislature of our state has dropped into our laps a time bomb with multiple destructive force." (*N. Y. Times*, 1/4).

Let us hope that all the Jewish organizations and leaders in Virginia—and throughout the South—will wake up and acquit themselves with honor in the continuing struggle for observance of the Supreme Court desegregation decision—as did the few voices recorded above.

## **Jewish War Veterans**

The parole of nazi Elite Guard General Josef (Sepp) Dietrich from war criminal's prison was sharply protested by Reuben Kaminsky, National Commander of the Jewish War Veterans, on Dec. 16. Kaminsky demanded the removal of Edwin A. Plitt, an American member of the Mixed Board that recommended parole for the nazi murderer. In a letter to Secretary Dulles, Kaminsky wrote "How any American sitting as a member of such a board could join in recommending a parole to a confessed murderer of American soldiers under the conditions of the Malmedy massacre is beyond our comprehension." Plitt's removal was also demanded by Timothy J. Murphy, national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

## **American Jewish Congress**

In a letter to Secretary Dulles, the AJ Congress demanded that the nazi butcher, Col. Joachim Peiper, be refused parole.

At the 19th annual Hanukkah breakfast of AJ Congress in Chicago, Adlai Stevenson said that the nation had suffered an "ignoble interval" in which "many loyal and innocent citizens have been grievously injured, and even punished, by the government itself." At the same breakfast Rabbi Joachim Prinz, national vice president of AJ Congress, declared that if the Arab leaders "retreat from their original extremist opinion that Israel must be destroyed . . . it might form a basis for direct negotiations between the Arabs and Israel, which is a prerequisite of peace in the Middle East."

We might add that if the Israel gov-

ernment would "retreat" from some of the preventive war tendencies and the orientation toward cold war military alliances (instead of neutrality) "it might form a basis for direct negotiations between the Arabs and Israel" with the help of all the Great Powers.

## **Anti-Defamation League**

Arnold Forster, chief counsel of the Anti-Defamation League, speaking before the Los Angeles Regional Advisory Board at the Sportsmen's Lodge, stated that organized anti-Semitism is quite alive in the United States and that it is preparing another "Man on Horseback" in the person of Lieut. Gen. George E. Stratemeyer, retired, U.S. Air Force. (*B'nai Brith Messenger*, Los Angeles, Dec. 9, 1955.)

## **Einstein Meeting in Chicago**

More than 1200 people attended a memorial tribute to the late Albert Einstein in Chicago on Dec. 4, 1955. The Midwest Jewish Council, composed of rank and file Jews in fraternal bodies and landsmanshaften, organized the meeting despite a slanderous campaign conducted by official Jewish organizations.

The meeting was chaired by Chicago business man Herman Bush. Speakers were Steve Bailey, vice president of Plumber's Local 130, Boris Steinberg, Rabbi A. Abramowitch and Arthur Schlipp, professor of philosophy at Northwestern University. They stressed Einstein's contributions to the fight for civil liberties and his concern for international justice. Resolutions on the defense of civil liberties and peaceful settlement of the Middle Eastern crisis were unanimously passed.

S. P.



# People Are Learning About the Sobell Case

The wife of Morton Sobell writes about  
encouraging signs on her tour

By HELEN SOBELL

**T**HIS time my visit to Alcatraz was different. As we looked at each other through the tiny pane of glass and spoke to each other through the telephone, we knew things were different. Mort's eyes flashed as he spoke of the motion for a new trial which will be presented to the District Court in New York City right after the beginning of this New Year of 1956. The motion will ask for a new trial on the basis that the prosecutors, including Roy Cohn, had knowingly used perjured testimony to bring about the conviction which has already resulted in laying waste to more than five years of our lives. We now have documented testimony of these perjuries.

It was wonderful to see Mort's face light up as I told him of the crescendo of movement of people all over our country who have taken up the fight. Mort had been permitted to read both *The Judgment of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg* by John Wexley and *The Atom Spy Hoax* by William Reuben, but he didn't know of the comments by Judge Patrick

O'Brien, Carey McWilliams, Brett Halliday (author of the Michael Shayne stories), Elmer Davis and so many others.

We were permitted four visits this time, since I had not seen Mort for almost half a year. The last visit, of course, was the hardest. It was only because we were able to talk about the reaching out into entirely new fields that the leave taking was less difficult. So many times Mort had said, "You must talk to an ever widening circle, it is only by forever reaching out that the truth will be uncovered."

## *Visit to Calgary*

And now I had the opportunity to reach out into new places. Calgary, Regina—these were places in Canada where I had never been, but I had been invited and I would go.

Canada was as warm and friendly as are the people of the United States. In Vancouver I spoke to a public meeting of 350 people. The large ad in the *Vancouver Sun* read,



"Justice for Morton Sobell. . . . An Innocent Man, Serving 30 Years in Alcatraz Prison. Auspices: Vancouver Sobell Committee." The following day the paper in reporting the meeting stated, "Mrs. Helen Sobell said she was convinced that evidence unearthed since the trial will clear her husband. . . ." I had known what to expect in Vancouver, we had a Sobell Committee there and there are no finer, more devoted, more creative people than those who have undertaken the work of freeing Morton Sobell. My next stop was to be the real unknown, Calgary.

In Calgary a group of people under the leadership of Mrs. Walker, one of Calgary's most respected and esteemed citizens, had set up a public meeting, arranged for a press interview, a radio interview and a number of small social functions. The public meeting held in Calgary's best hotel was attended by more than 100 people and the headline in *The Calgary Herald* read, "Calgarians Aid in Sobell Case." The morning I left Calgary, Mrs. Walker went to a CCF (Canadian Commonwealth Federation) convention where she was going to take up the Sobell case from the floor of the meeting. "We are just starting to go to work here," she assured me.

### ***Support in Regina***

In Regina a sponsoring committee had been set up for the public meeting. The sponsors included high gov-



*Helen Sobell and her son Mark, 6.*

ernment officials, trade unionists and educators. This meeting, like all the others, was publicly advertised, well attended and passed resolutions asking for a new trial and for transfer of my husband from Alcatraz so that he might help in preparation for the new trial. Many of the meetings asked for freedom for Morton as a gesture which would not be misunderstood by a world moving toward a period of peace and brotherhood. The resolutions were sent to the American consuls, the Canadian ambassador and to Lester Pearson, minister of external affairs.

The meeting was chaired by the Saskatchewan deputy minister of labor and the speaker who discussed the reasons for Canadians being con-

cerned with this matter was a health department official. The appeal for funds was made by a prominent Regina woman. The audience at the two meetings which were held included four provincial cabinet ministers; a federal member of parliament; a number of candidates for, and members of, the legislative assembly; a number of extremely prominent trade union leaders; outstanding journalists and others equally important.

### **"No room for McCarthyism"**

It is most significant that after the meeting one of the members of the legislature called for the firing of the public officials who had participated in the meeting. The premier of Saskatchewan, Mr. Douglas, then issued a statement saying, "There is no room for McCarthyism in Saskatchewan." He defended my right to ask for a new trial for my husband and the right of those who agreed with me to do the same as a democratic right given to all. His statement and those by the officials who were attacked were most wonderful evidence of clear, vigorous thought uninfluenced by fear or hysteria.

I concluded my trip in Winnipeg, where again there were warm friends, a fine luncheon, a most responsive audience of about 200 people and a promise of doubled and redoubled efforts.

When I returned to New York and gathered my two children together again and read the letter awaiting me from Mort, I found things had not been quiet here. Yuri Suhl, author and poet who had visited the Canadian cities before me to make known the truth, had again made an important trip. The front page of *Campus Times*, a publication of the University of Rochester, was one third given over to a report of Yuri Suhl's address there. In Rochester, too, a half hour on the radio had been given to Mr. Suhl's discussion of the case of Morton Sobell. Everywhere people are talking, listening, learning.

Dear friends, here, now, at the beginning of this year there is such a promise for each of us, but it will not be fulfilled if we sit with folded hands. The things which happened in San Francisco, in Los Angeles, in Calgary, Regina, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Rochester are happening all over. It will be a good day for the whole world when Morton Sobell is freed. With your help it will come quickly.

### **Rosenberg Poetry Anthology**

**S**IERRA PRESS has undertaken an anthology of Rosenberg poetry in the United States.

Published or unpublished poetry on the Rosenberg case will be considered for the anthology if sent to Sierra Press at P. O. Box 96, Long Island City 4, N. Y.

## APPRAISAL OF AFRICA

(Continued from page 18)

business? Yet won by the Chinese people.

Gunther does not enlarge on the part which American big business is playing in Africa, but he mentions pertinent facts:

"The working profits of the mines [in South Africa] in 1954 reached £38,000,000, as against about £35,000,000 in 1953. Most South African gold goes to England in the first instance and eventually finds its way to the United States." (p. 547)

He says: "Three quarters of total production [of diamonds] goes to the United States." (p. 557) And "South Africa has become almost overnight the chief source for uranium used in America. This, one political observer has suggested, is why 'the United States, no matter how much it may dislike the Strijdom government, is going to go easy on it.'" (p. 553)

### *Toward Freedom in Africa*

"Africa is not in some respects a Dark Continent at all; it is flashing with vivid light. Much of it is luminous—in fact incandescent." (p. 3) "The African states already self-governing or near to becoming so comprise 87,052,000 out of Africa's 198,000,000 people, on 3,458,471 square miles out of 11,262,000. From the point of view of people, 44 per

cent of African Africa is free or almost free; from the point of view of area, 31 per cent." (p. 16)

Abdel Krim said (as paraphrased by Vincent Sheean): "At the end of the war there was a superb opportunity for the United States, basing itself upon the . . . Atlantic Charter, to rally all the colonial and oppressed peoples to a new organization of human society. This opportunity was missed and the American power chose instead to support colonial empires everywhere, no matter how shaky they might be, in southeast Asia, Africa and the East. The colonial and oppressed peoples now find that the only power which professes belief in their ability to rise is Soviet Russia." (p. 115)

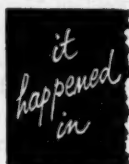
We may close with one significant quotation. Kwami Nkrumah, Prime Minister of the Gold Coast, British West Africa, studied in the United States. "How was he treated?" Gunther asked.

"The Prime Minister replied that, at a bus station in Baltimore, he once asked where he could get a drink of water and the clerk pointed to a spittoon." (p. 799)

***What are the facts about  
Negro-Jewish cooperation?***

***What are its objectives?***

***Read "Jewish Life"!***



# ISRAEL

**On Nov. 21, 1955**, there were admitted to the Bar 118 new lawyers, 11 of them women. The average age was 36, and 80 of them were born abroad: 26 in Poland, 14 in Romania, 6 each in Russia and Iraq, 5 each in Bulgaria, Germany and Czechoslovakia, 2 each in Egypt, Yugoslavia and Turkey, one each in the U. S., England, South Africa, Hungary, Syria, Brazil and Argentina. But 80 of the 118 were graduates of Israel law schools. . . . More than 2,000 scientific papers published in Israel since 1948 were displayed at the conference of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Atlanta on Dec. 26. Subjects ranged from aerodynamics to zoology.

•

**Next to the young** Israel novelist Mordecai Shamir, the most widely read novelist in Israel is Howard Fast, whose works in Hebrew translation are published by the Mapam house, Workers' Books. . . . Jehudith Hendel recently won the Asher Barash Literary Prize for her realistic novel of urban life, *The Street of the Steps*. She contrasts the young Israeli worker who aided the illegal immigration and then fought in Israel's War for Independence with the city merchants, who think primarily of their own profits. Need and luxury are shown side by side in their interrelationship.

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**Premier David Ben-Gurion** promised to appoint a commission to study the possibility of reducing Military Government over Arab populated districts in Israel (London *Jewish Chronicle*, Dec. 2) after proposals in the Knesset by Communist Deputy Emile Habibi and Mapam Deputy Y. Kamis, both Arabs. Habibi proved that, despite government promises to relax restrictions, new ones had just been imposed on the Arabs requiring them to obtain permits to enter kibbutzim and settlements. Habibi showed that the purpose was not "security" but to keep Arabs from getting jobs in Jewish settlements. "Mr. Kamis said that peace in the Middle East must come first from the emancipation and equality of the Arab minority in Israel. The policy of restrictions on the freedom of movement of the Arab was adding fuel to the fire of hatred."

**Histadrut, the General Federation** of Jewish Labor in Israel, has more than 500,000 members, which is 75 per cent of the total labor force. More than half the members are women, including 160,000 housewives, who have full membership status. . . . A 1951 law provides for a 47-hour week and eight-hour day, with overtime subject to permission from the Labor Ministry, at rates of time-and-a-quarter for the first two hours per day, and time-and-a-half for more or for holiday work. . . . The law also requires 12 days' vacation with pay. . . . The national insurance law of 1953 provides for accident pay of 75 per cent of regular wages; maternity grants and 75 per cent of regular wages for 12 weeks' maternity leave; old age pension for men of 65 and women of 60, and pensions for widows and orphans. Workers, employers and the state contribute to the insurance fund.

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**On January 2, 1956**, Premier Ben-Gurion announced that the compulsory military service period had been extended from two to three years.

•

**Poland ordered** \$250,000 worth of rubber tires from two Israel factories, it was announced on Dec. 28. At the same time, 2,772 tons of sugar arrived in Haifa from Poland. The Polish Bureau of Foreign Trade has proposed to the Israel Committee for International Trade that trade between the two countries be increased to \$12,000,000 a year on each side, offering to buy Israel oranges, citrus fruit, artificial teeth, tires, etc. . . . On Dec. 16, Israel concluded a three-year trade agreement with Burma. Israel will export hardware, building materials, machinery, plastics, textiles, foods, and leather goods, and will import rice, oil cakes, beans, corn, timber, rubber, minerals and ores.

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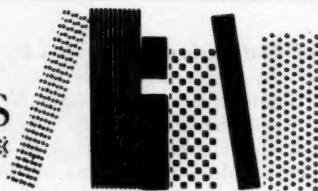
**In 1954, Israel** produced 900 tons of cotton on 750 acres. In 1955, the cotton crop was 7,500 tons on 5,500 acres, which takes care of 42.5 per cent of Israel's annual cotton consumption. The Ministry of Agriculture plans to increase the cotton acreage to 12,500 in 1956.

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**Considerable attention** was given to an unusual exhibition, recently held in the Haifa Hall of Art, of the popular Chinese folk art of paper cut-outs, fashioned simply by scissors or knife and sometimes colored. The 60 examples of this mass art-medium portrayed life in the villages as well as the new industrial activities.

M. U. S.

# BOOK REVIEWS



## A BONDI BALLAD

*A Ballad of August Bondi*, by Aaron Kramer. Printed by the author, New York, 15¢. (Order from Aaron Kramer, c/o JEWISH LIFE, 22 E. 17 St., Room 601, N.Y.C. 3).

This dramatic poem about the Jewish abolitionist who fought with John Brown in Kansas, created as part of the celebration of the Tercentenary, is already known to readers through the parts of it which appeared in JEWISH LIFE and *Masses and Mainstream*. It is written in a narrative

style, permeated with poetry and emotion. The Jewish Young Folksingers commissioned Serge Hovey to make a musical work on the text of the *Ballad*, which received its first performance at this magazine's concert on December 2, 1955. The poet was well-advised to make the text of the *Ballad* easily available in this booklet form, for it forms a genuine contribution to American and American Jewish poetry.

## "REMARKABLE DAYS"

*The People's Almanac: important dates and events in the history of the struggles of the people of the United States*, compiled by Elizabeth Lawson. New Century, New York. 64 pages. 50¢.

In his sprightly introduction to this pamphlet, Rob F. Hall writes: "This booklet is primarily an almanac of 'remarkable days.'" Miss Lawson has gathered together in chronological order, by month and day, memorable dates, many of which are not always found in conventional calendars, and has concisely characterized the significance of each. The *Almanac* is especially rich in dates of labor and Negro significance. Her characterizations are of such interest that this almanac can be read through for the many facts it conveys. Many dates of American Jewish historical interest are also included. The pamphlet is attractively arranged and illustrated.

### "A BALLAD OF AUGUST BONDI"

a dramatic poem

by AARON KRAMER

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## THEATER IN ISRAEL

(Continued from page 6)

fascinated by the past or any given style. As to Ohel, it was conceived originally as a workers' theater (which it is not) in contradistinction to the "aristocratic" and bourgeois Habimah.

Also, there is the matter of developing and bringing forward new cadres. Habimah, it is charged not without reason, is star-bound. While undoubtedly devoted to the principle of ensemble acting, the leadership somehow chooses its plays with an eye to big roles for the Big Three—Meskin, Rovina and Finkel—or the Big Four, if Klatzkin is included.

This season's production schedule is cited as typical. It includes Pirandello's *Henry IV* (a vehicle for Finkel), Euripedes' *Medea* (with Rovina cast in the lead), Zalman Shneor's *Pandra the Hero* (with the lead probably going to Meskin), and Maurice Politi's *Maayana*. Not a single play about Israel is included in the Habimah schedule for the year. And this is typical of Israel theater in general.

Leading Israel theaters perform their plays not only in the metropolis but also in other large cities, such as Jerusalem, Haifa and Beer Sheba (in the Negev) as well as in the smaller towns, in the *kibbutzim* (rural communes), villages and even in the *Maabarot* (makeshift camps for new immigrants). This is one of the finest aspects of Israel theater. The line of demarcation between the big city and the hinterland has been all but obliterated as far as

theatrical activity is concerned. Each theater has its "parallel" acting group performing "on the road" while the other group plays in Tel Aviv. The two groups alternate and the same plays are performed by the same actors in the well-equipped playhouses of Tel Aviv and on the improvised stages in the rural communities. The enterprising Kameri theater has two "parallel" companies and operates simultaneously two playhouses in Tel Aviv.

### Theater Financing

Financially, Israel theaters find it hard to make ends meet. Though they are the beneficiaries of tax-exemption and various public subsidies, they are on their own as far as balancing the budget is concerned. Habimah is the most favored and subsidized of the three principal theaters, receiving financial assistance from the government, the Jewish Agency, the Histadrut (Labor Federation) and the American Fund for Israel Institutions. But all this adds up to less than 10 per cent of the budget.

Habimah has been demanding for some time that it be granted the status of a national theater and once and for all relieved of the burden of meeting its own deficits. The question was dramatized to me as one of "to be or not to be." A statement to that effect was presented to the Culture Committee of the Knesset (parliament) with little likelihood of success.

But Habimah has a strong case, even if it is over-dramatized. The mounting production costs and the

fixed low prices of admission (the top for all theaters being two and a half pounds, or \$1.37) make deficits inevitable. This in turn leads to unhealthy skimping at the expense of artistic quality. It also leads to an opportunist search of "box-office plays." To make matters worse, the actors are shamefully underpaid, subsisting on a salary of 250 pounds (\$137.50) a month and a take-home pay of about 200 pounds (\$110.00), which is the prevailing wage for office clerks and unskilled laborers and is not sufficient to provide a bare living.

In the opinion of other theater leaders, Habimah has overstated its case. The choice, it is argued, is not necessarily between good plays and box-office attractions but between plays that interest the people and plays that interest the leading actors. Also, I was told, Habimah is inefficient and its overhead could be cut in half without injury to the theater.

There may be some merit in all this criticism but the fact remains that Israeli actors are woefully underpaid, that the fixed admission prices are unduly low (here, apparently, is where the government makes a stand in its fight against the high cost of living!) and the public subsidies are too miserly. Even Ohel, which is officially sponsored by Histadrut, gets from its sponsor no more than a token subsidy. All in all, the economic position of the Israel theater is highly insecure, and there is merit in the saying that economically the actors are the forgotten men of Israel.

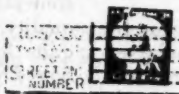
If I were to sum up in a few words my impressions of the Israel theater, I should say that there are good theaters in Israel but no Israel theater. Certainly, the life of the country is not reflected on the stage. Of some 50 plays produced by Habimah since the founding of Israel in 1948, only a half dozen, I was told, dealt with Israel themes, and among them there was not a single one of caliber. By and large, the same is true of Kameri and Ohel. The leaders of the theaters are apologetic about it and plead a lack of good Israeli dramatists and scripts.

Be it as it may, there is no corps of working dramatists in Israel and no body of Israel drama. The names of Igal Mossensohn, A. Ashman, Haim Hazoz and Leah Goldberg just about exhaust the list of capable Israeli playwrights, with Mossensohn the most popular and prolific though not the most talented of the group.

Nor have I noticed anything approaching Israel style in the theater—in acting or in staging. At best, I found there a mixture of derivative styles. But to expect a national style in the Israel theater would be expecting too much of a country too young to have developed a culture of its own, even though the cultural life there is rich and varied. As in her economy, Israel is also culturally a deficit nation, with import greatly outweighing domestic production.

***Interested in progressive  
Jewish culture?  
Read "Jewish Life"!***

# letters



FROM READERS

## *More on Lerman Story*

*Editors, JEWISH LIFE:*

I very much enjoyed Louis Lerman's short story, "Good Boss" [Nov. 1955], which seemed to be a well-realized, sensitive sketch of a very important and fairly common conflict in working class and lower middle class Jewish life. However, I do not here so much want to discuss the story itself as I do the criticism of it by Mr. Prago in your January issue. I think that that letter was specifically unfair to the story and, more important, it was dangerously wrong in at least two fundamental general assumptions.

First, to say that Lerman's story "left a bad taste" and then to conclude, "Let's have more of Sholem Aleichem and Peretz and the great classicists," is not only ungracious but, in terms of cultural development, is utterly self-defeating. There are all too few places today where forward-looking writers—the classicists of tomorrow—can begin to try their voices.

Second, and even more unfortunate, is the fundamental misapprehension of literary significance betrayed in Mr. Prago's demand that the progressive writer avert his eyes from the troublesome reality and write tracts with stereotyped figures labelled "good," "bad," or courses of action explicitly tagged "right," "wrong." The reactionary implications of such an aesthetic are emphasized by the un-

justified distrust of an ordinary reader's ability to understand life and art, which is expressed in the letter. This letter also indicates a curious double standard of criticism, for not one of the great Jewish writers it praises would have accepted—or passed—such narrow and unimaginative tests. Surely your correspondent needs to seriously re-think his cultural approach in terms of his progressive attitude to the world in other fields.

ANNETTE T. RUBINSTEIN

*New York City*

## *"Cowboy" on the Stage*

*Editors, JEWISH LIFE:*

A dramatization of Yuri Suhl's *Cowboy on a Wooden Horse* is being warmly received by Philadelphia audiences. The adaptation, written and directed by Jack Rosenfeld, is being staged by the Mansion Players, a local community dramatic group. The three-act play retains the folk humor of Mr. Suhl's book and the new dimension given to the characters by the dramatization serves to emphasize further how true and familiar these types are to American Jewish life.

This authenticity—aside from the artistic values concerned—is important because the Mansion community is an inter-racial one. Many of the Negro people in the audience were seeing American Jews portrayed in a new light, one which they could understand

and appreciate and even identify themselves with.

It is indicative of Yri Suhl's ear for the people's language that whole sections of his dialogue could be transplanted bodily into the dramatization and sound as though they had been written for a stageplay. The convincing performance of the players is characterized by a sincerity which indicates that the lines are not at all foreign to their own lives; this sincerity communicates itself to the audience and a good time is had by all!

The Mansion Players group and Jack Rosenfeld, adapter of the play, are to be congratulated for this "grass-roots" contribution to American Jewish culture.

BEN MILLER

Philadelphia

### **"Too fond of the old friend"**

**Editors, JEWISH LIFE:**

My opinions on the new format are mixed. It's a beautiful job and you are to be congratulated on it. But I also liked the old format and the solidity and thoroughness with which questions of historical importance were discussed sometimes through several issues that seem difficult to do in this more topical format.

I have always considered that JEWISH LIFE more than any other progressive publication successfully accomplished its aims and I am as yet too fond of the old friend to greet the new too heartily. Of course, it's the

same magazine, format or no, and the contents are the determining mark of quality. I think I'll perhaps get yet quite fond of the new form too.

San Francisco

SAM SWING

### **Appreciation Abroad**

**Editors, JEWISH LIFE:**

Regret delay in not renewing before, but funds hard to come by. For your determined stand against race discrimination and for peace, you deserve all the success in the new format you have adopted.

In my country your paper comes like a breath of fresh air into the nightmare of the Fascist Nationalist government's attack on the people's liberties. Once more, good luck.

Johannesburg, South Africa

V. S. G.

**Editors, JEWISH LIFE:**

Many thanks for the copy of the reprint of "Israel-Arab Crisis: the Way Out." I think it is very valuable and would like you to send me 20 more copies, for which I enclose \$1.25.

Britannia Beach, British Columbia

H. G.

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## Appreciation at Home

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

I have just finished reading the December issue and all I can say is, where have I been? It is the first time in a long while that I have read a magazine from cover to cover at one sitting and still want to go back and reread some of the articles immediately.

I do not read Hebrew or Yiddish and it is difficult to obtain periodicals in English on Jewish life which speak the truth. JEWISH LIFE is exactly what I was looking for and I am eagerly awaiting the next issue of your magazine.

Los Angeles

A. G.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

Enclosed is our monthly sustaining contribution. We would like to be able to do more and were planning to. However, the State attorney general's office and the FBI has been giving us enough trouble as to have warranted my husband's losing his job (in their eyes at least).

I cannot close without mentioning the wonderful job we think Louis Harap did with his criticism of Herman Wouk via *Majorie Morningstar* [November 1955 issue]. It was a source of much enlightenment to us and to the many others whom we are passing it around to.

Tiffin, Ohio

MRS. MARILYN SCHUCHMAN

Editors' note to all readers: Won't you, too, send us a monthly sustainer?

In Memory of  
Our Beloved Friend  
**JENNY CORES**  
Died, January 16, 1948  
*Friends of Jenny Cores*

## JYF RECORDING

THE always enterprising Jewish Young Folksingers, under the leadership of their conductor, Robert DeCormier, have made their debut on a long-playing record. This is good news for the many thousands of people who attend their concerts and afterwards find the music still running through their head.

The approximately half-hour of music on this ten-inch record comprises ten selections. One side has five Yiddish songs; Jacob Schaefer's captivating arrangement of a waltzing folk song, *Oy a Liebe*, Goldfaden's *Rozhinkes mit Mandlen*, *In a Shtetl*, arranged by Lester and Madeline Simon, *S'falt a Schnei*, arranged by L. Sheinin, and *Dire Gelt*, arranged by Hal Colter. The other side is a little anthology, "Songs of Many Peoples." It contains *En mi viejo San Juan*, *Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel* and *Hava Nagila*, all arranged by Hal Colter; *La Carmagnole*, arranged by Elmer Bernstein, and *Frankie Slide*, arranged by Serge Hovey. The record is issued by Stinson, and is sold at all record stores.

It is to be hoped that this record is only the first of a series, and that its reception encourages the JYF to go further. With backing from the public, it may be that the JYF will be able to put one of the major classics of the Yiddish choral repertory on records. It is one of the ironies of musical life that the catalogues of long-playing records now include hundreds of the most esoteric items, and yet one of the most vital contributions to 20th century American music is missing, that of the large-scale music written for the Jewish people's choruses.

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

## PROBATION OFFICERS

*(Continued from page 25)*

ingly against the system at a meeting on December 6, 1955, at which 500 members were present. Several Catholic social work leaders who challenged the resolution offered at the meeting evoked little support. The resolution passed with a few dissenting votes, stated:

"We can affirm that adequate case evaluation does not require that case worker or probation officer and child be of the same racial or ethnic group. There are no sound professional grounds for case assignment on a religious basis in a public agency."

### ***Hiring in Jewish Agencies***

One phase of the controversy raises certain fundamental questions in the field of Jewish social work. In his report on the Jewish social work conference held on May 22, 1955, Louis Harap reported in this magazine [July 1955, p. 25-27] that one problem troubling Jewish social workers is whether Jewish social agencies should hire non-Jews to do case work. The approach that enjoys wide support was epitomized in the speech at the conference by Dr. Maurice B. Hexter, executive vice president of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York. Dr. Hexter said, "I happen to believe that only Jewish eyes can understand the pangs in Jewish eyes which face him or her." Dr. Harap

reported that this issue aroused much soul-searching and debate among the social workers present. The problem is in fact troubling many deeply democratic-minded Jewish social workers.

The basic principle involved in the religious test for hiring of probation officers and in restricting case workers to Jews in Jewish agencies is essentially the same. Whether the agency involved is public or private does not alter the validity of the principle that hiring should be non-discriminatory and based on professional competence alone.

While it is true that the legal situation is different in the case of public or private agencies, the basic democratic issues are not essentially different in either case. Should not discriminatory policies be opposed in Jewish social agencies as much as in hiring of probation officers? Jews are naturally sensitive to job discrimination anywhere because they are among its victims. That sensitivity should therefore be as great in situations in which they themselves determine policy. For the application of democratic principles everywhere is fundamental to the well-being of the Jewish people.

***Have you introduced  
"Jewish Life" to a friend  
or neighbor lately?***



# Observation post

By SAM PEVZNER

**New Format News:** Comment from readers is enthusiastic on the new mighty mite JEWISH LIFE. The first three issues in the new format, and with improvement in vitalizing content and style, have met overwhelming approval. There are some readers who feel the new magazine and approach sacrifices important elements of thoroughness which the larger format provided. The important thing is that we now have a mag with much more appeal and breadth—giving our readers the opportunity to expand its circulation among friends and organizations.

**The 64-page Question:** When the new format was planned, it was to start off with 64 pages. A few weeks before the appearance of the new issue we were informed that the printing bill will be increased due to rise in costs. This forced a 48-page magazine upon us because, with our deficit-laden situation, we couldn't tackle both the normal increase attending the new format plus another increase. The decrease in pages curtailed our program of additional popular and important columns and features, which the readers want and the magazine needs.

**Goal Attainable:** The much-desired 64-page JL can be achieved! How? By the successful completion of the present fund drive for \$15,000. But the drive is even more important than

the answer to the 64-page question. Its success is absolutely essential to the very life of the mag. Every reader, JL Committee, and organization should hop into this drive without delay—and make a most important part of the campaign the signing of subs and expansion of bundle orders.

**Bravo! Emma Lazarus Clubs:**

The Dec. 24 issue of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, leading Negro newspaper, featured the endorsement by the Emma Lazarus Federation of that paper's demand that Eisenhower send troops to Mississippi to put an end to the murder, terror, and lawlessness directed against the Negro people there. A full quote of the wire and a picture of Leah Nelson, president of the EL Federation, accompanied the feature story.

The women's clubs of the Federation have also organized a campaign to send canned food to the Mississippi Council of Negro Leadership to be distributed among Negro families persecuted by the racist boycott. The Federation characterized the boycott as "a form of genocide like the nazis imposed upon Jewish children." The appeal for food made by the heroic Negro leader of Mississippi, Dr. T. R. M. Howard, was published in the Dec. 15 issue of the *N. Y. Post*. In addition to the EL clubs, many societies and landmanschaften are also responding with a food collection campaign.



### AT HOME

**Anti-Semitic vandals** broke into a synagogue at 718 Bryant Ave., Bronx, twice during Christmas week and inflicted damage of over \$5,000. Holy books were torn to shreds, window panes broken, lights torn out of walls and walls and ceilings torn into. . . . Four boys, 13 to 16, confessed late in Dec. to smashing 152 windows of 16 Jewish-owned unoccupied houses in a Barrington, Mass., beach and resort area. The boys had scrawled the words "Jew," "kike" and "Hitler" in the area. The boys denied being encouraged by adults.

**Anti-discrimination front.** . . . The Connecticut Motor Club early in Dec. recommended to the American Automobile Association that use of the AAA emblem be withheld from hotels and other establishments that practice discrimination. A ruling has not yet been made by the AAA. . . . On a complaint by the AJ Congress, the New York State Commission Against Discrimination ruled early in Dec. that a N. Y. State hotel advertising "churches nearby" must stop using the phrase. . . . The New York City CIO Council and the NAACP joined with Jewish defense organizations in demanding a conference with the 329,519-member Automobile Club of New York to take up charges that the club discriminated against Negroes in its hiring and allowed listings of biased hotels and resorts. The auto club set up a committee late in Dec. to investigate.

**A friend-of-the-court** brief was entered by the AJ Congress in Dec. in the Iowa Supreme Court in a case of a Protestant mother cited for contempt for refusing to bring up her child as a Roman Catholic as required by a divorce decree. The brief argued that this was a violation of the mother's religious freedom.

**A drive to appoint** Negro and Puerto Rican teachers to the N. Y. public school system was proposed as part of the integration program in the schools by the Teachers Union (Ind.) in Dec. This proposal was part of a comprehensive plan to wipe out all forms of school segregation, whether accidental or not, offered by the union to the Commission on Integration of the N. Y. C. Board of Education.

**The 47th annual NAACP** meeting on Jan. 3 held in N. Y. C. criticized the White House for considering "other matters more important" than the "widespread fraud, violence and intimidation which are characteristic of elections in Mississippi." Another resolution called upon Attorney General Herbert Brownell to order an FBI investigation of civil rights violations in that state.

**Sen. Herbert H. Lehman** announced on Jan. 4 that he would fight hard for his bill to protect voting rights by a Congressional Electoral Commission that would supervise elections.

**Democratic presidential** candidate Adlai E. Stevenson called on Jan. 1 for

an "honest, forthright" immigration law. "The many sections of the Immigration Code are so interwoven as to make a complete revision, with a broad and human approach, the best remedy," he said. (*N. Y. Times*, 1/2)

**A new anti-desegregation** group calling itself the Federation for Constitutional Government containing top political and industrial figures from 12 Southern states was formed in Memphis, Tenn., on Dec. 29 at a secret meeting. A main objective is nullification of the Supreme Court school desegregation ruling. (*N. Y. T.*, 12/30)

#### ABROAD

**The 300th anniversary** of the re-establishment of the Jewish community in England when Oliver Cromwell's regime re-admitted the Jews into the country, is being celebrated in England with an exhibition in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London during Jan. and Feb. The exhibit includes works of art, historical objects and documents dealing with Jewish life in England. (*N. Y. T.*, 1/6)

**A Polish engineering** company was awarded a contract in Jan. to rebuild the Hejaz railway (500-mile line between Damascus, Syria, and Medina, Saudi Arabia). Its bid was accepted over those submitted by 15 countries by a commission of representatives of Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia.

**A distinguished** Jewish doctor, Dr. Leon Ben-Zaggon, who is a member of the central committee of the World Jewish Congress, was designated minister of posts and telegraph in the Moroccan cabinet of Premier M'barek Bekkai early in Jan. The new governments of French Morocco and Tunis have promised the Jews full equality with their Moslem neighbors.

**Jewish organizations** in France are protesting the rehabilitation of leading Vichyite collaborators. The main Jewish representative body, Crif, in Dec. protested acquittal recently of Horace de Carbuccia, former editor-owner of the fascist weekly *Gringoire*, as an "outrage to the families of the victims of nazism." The Union of French Jewish Students has protested the appointment to the Sorbonne faculty of Jean Guittou, fascist philosopher who published works under Goebbel's propaganda group imprimatur during the occupation.

**"Major" nazi war** criminals returned from the Soviet Union to East Germany were jailed in Dec. to serve the balance of their terms in East German jails.

**The board of directors** of the Central Council of Jews in Germany at a meeting in Duesseldorf late in Nov. protested that indemnification of victims of nazism was unsatisfactory and "desperately backward" ten years after the end of nazism. Another resolution noted with deep anxiety the revival of nazism and criticized the glorification of former nazi leaders.

**The last Jewish** displaced persons camp, Foehrenwald, in West Germany was scheduled for closing on March 31, 1955. At the end the camp holds 1,129 persons, including 169 who returned "illegally" from Israel.

**The West German** Social Democratic press service revealed in Dec. that the millions of marks in plunder accumulated by nazi bigwigs to the amount of 19.4 million Reichsmarks, plus 511,000 in interest, are now available for spending by their heirs. Some of the released accounts: Goering, over eight and a half million; Ribbentrop, about one half million; Kaltenbrunner, two and a half million. L. H.

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