

# Jewish Life

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**ELECTION OUTLOOK** *by Louis Harap*

**SUEZ CRISIS AND ISRAEL** *by Jeremiah Lesser*

**THE ILYICHEV INTERVIEW** *an editorial*

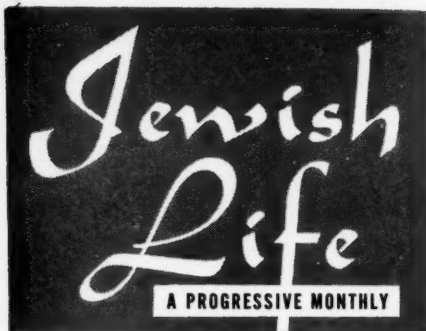
**PROSPECTS FOR SOVIET YIDDISH CULTURE**

*Sam Pevzner*

**ARTICLE-REVIEWS:**

**HOW JEWS VOTED IN U. S. HISTORY** *by Morris U. Schappes*

**JUDAISM AND SOCIAL ACTION** *by Elihu Bernstein*



Vol. X, No. 11 (119) Oct., 1956

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## CONTENTS

ELECTION OUTLOOK	<i>Louis Harap</i>	3
HOW JEWS VOTED IN U. S. HISTORY	<i>Morris U. Schappes</i>	7
THE SUEZ CRISIS AND ISRAEL	<i>Jeremiah Lesser</i>	10
IT HAPPENED IN ISRAEL		14
JUDAISM AND SOCIAL ACTION	<i>Elihu Bernstein</i>	16
INSIDE THE JEWISH COMMUNITY		20
SOUTHERN LABOR AND DESEGREGATION	<i>Southern Correspondent</i>	22
PROSPECTS FOR SOVIET YIDDISH		
CULTURE	<i>Sam Pevzner</i>	27
THE ILYICHEV INTERVIEW	<i>an editorial</i>	30
EXCOMMUNICATION OF SPINOZA	<i>Mel Shipman</i>	32
LETTERS FROM READERS		38
ORIGINS OF JEWISH FOLKWAYS	<i>I. B. Bailin</i>	40
FROM THE FOUR CORNERS		42
THE SCHOOL'S THE THING		44
INDEX TO VOLUME X		45

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309

# ELECTION OUTLOOK

An approach to the candidates,  
issues and prospects

By LOUIS HARAP

**D**ESPITE the enormous popularity of President Eisenhower and the weight of predictions in his favor, Democratic nominees Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver can win in November. But this will happen only if they conduct a campaign that, unlike their platform, meets issues squarely and fires the imagination of the people. Energetic activity by the labor, liberal and Negro forces can help make such a campaign.

One of the important sectors of the electorate is the Jewish people, especially in decisive industrial states of New York, California, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Ohio. That the Jews tend to vote as a group with specific interests has been established by the study of Prof. Lawrence H. Fuchs, *The Political Behavior of American Jews* (reviewed by Morris U. Schappes in this issue on page 7). Dr. Fuchs proves what has been apparent all along, that Jews as a whole tend to vote on the progressive side of issues. This has in the past few decades led them to vote for the Democratic Party and third party movements. In the ab-

sence of any significant third party this year, it is probable that the bulk of the Jews will vote Democratic, for it is here that the liberal-labor-Negro groups are concentrated.

If the Jews do in the main vote Democratic, they will do so in spite of the civil rights plank in the Democratic platform. Together with the organizations of the Negro people and labor-liberal forces, the Jews have been deeply involved in the current battles for civil rights. Jewish bodies are extremely active in the Leadership Conference for Civil Rights, together with Negro and labor groups. At the Democratic convention this conference urged adoption of a strong civil rights plank.

## *Weakness on Civil Rights*

The Democratic convention did the country—and their own chances of victory—a disservice by adopting a weak civil rights plank which failed to pledge enforcement of the Supreme Court decision on desegregation. Carey McWilliams points out

(*The Nation*, Aug. 25) that the pro-civil rights forces "retreated at a time when the Dixiecrats were obviously on the defensive" against the threat from Republicans in the South and rabid White Councils, and because of their need to retain their congressional power to resist desegregation. He also notes that "the issue which, in a desperate moment, the Democrats met with courage in 1948, they fled in terror in 1956. But then, there was a 'Left' opposition in 1948; there is none today." He pointedly remarks that the labor-liberal forces were tardy and indecisive in their work on this issue.

The absence of a strong enforcement provision in the civil rights plank is both a blow to the Negro peoples and to Democratic prospects. The only concession made by the five Southern politicians who wrote the plank was the mention of the Supreme Court decision. The Republican plank, which "accepts" the Supreme Court decision and leaves the matter for determination by the lower courts, is hardly any better and promises no change from the passive attitude displayed by the Eisenhower administration thus far. Both parties shamefully avoided the pressing issue of civil liberties and the need to restore the Bill of Rights.

### ***Differences Between the Parties***

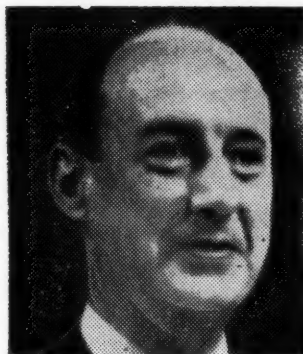
The most reactionary and Big Business groups are congealed in the Republican Party and look to Nixon to lead "the party of the future." The situation of the Democratic Party is

much more complex, for here can be found not only reactionaries and Dixiecrats, but also the main body of the labor leadership, advanced liberal groups like the Americans for Democratic Action and most of the Negro people. Here, also, are to be found some of the Jewish leadership and even a higher percentage of the Jewish voters.

The nature of the two parties was thrown into relief by the nominating conventions. The right wing was in total command at San Francisco, especially in the overpowering steamroller that shoved Richard Nixon into the vice presidential nomination. As Louis Hollander, New York State CIO Council president, said in his report to the CIO convention on Aug. 22, "the whole government has been run like a private corporation and geared to benefit big business. It has been a government of big business, by big business and for big business." Eisenhower's magnetic personal appeal for the mass of voters and the peace moves into which he was forced by the people's opposition to an atomic war and by the pressures of world forces have obscured for many people the crassly Big Business nature of his administration.

The situation was different at Chicago. The much more heterogeneous Democratic Party underwent a real struggle. Arrayed in a complex power conflict were the Dixiecrats, ex-President Truman, the machine bosses and the liberal-labor-Negro wing. The 200 labor delegates were





*Democratic candidates: Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver*

divided on the choice of nominees but the bulk of the liberal wing favored Stevenson. Beginnings of direct labor influence appeared. Labor delegates worked intensively for a pro-labor plank. The heavily-weighted labor segment of the Michigan delegation (28 out of 88) led by Walter Reuther turned the tide toward a Stevenson first-ballot victory by arguing for Governor Williams' release of his delegation from a favorite son vote.

The vice-presidential nomination of Estes Kefauver was also an important victory for the liberal forces. Kefauver has been consistently opposed by the machine bosses and was favored "only by the people." But a combination of liberal forces with various influences such as the farm groups resulted in his nomination in the "wide-open" voting.

### **Muddled Foreign Policy Platform**

Although the Dixiecrats and ma-

chine bosses were defeated in the Democratic selection of candidates, they exerted great influence on the platform. The civil rights plank discussed earlier was rammed through by the machine. While yielding to popular sentiment in the general statement favoring peace, the foreign policy section of the program at the same time muddily enunciated a cold war policy. Instead of pledging to end the cold war altogether as the greatest hope for peace, the platform complained that the Eisenhower administration was losing the cold war—which is true.

But the Democrats have not yet learned that the Geneva Conference and the steps toward peace forced on the Eisenhower administration by popular sentiment should be the foundation of foreign policy. Instead, the platform criticizes the administration for "fraternizing with the Communists" (read, steps toward co-existence), for efforts to reduce the

arms budget and for the administration retreat from its war-breeding "liberation" policy. On the key issues of civil rights and foreign policy the Democratic Platform fails the American people and can neither get nor deserve enough support to defeat Eisenhower and dreaded Nixon.

But if Stevenson develops in the course of his campaign the absolute necessity for peace expressed in his acceptance speech, if he were to make commitments for genuine peace proposals toward co-existence, he could lead the Democratic Party toward a bona fide peace position. The chances for Democratic victory would be increased vastly by a positive development of such a peace program. For one thing, a pledge by Stevenson to end H-bomb tests, as he urged last spring, would make leadership a peace force.

### ***Platform on Israel***

Of special interest to the Jewish people was the Democratic pledge of arms to Israel for defense. "The Democratic Party," says the platform, "will react to redress the dangerous imbalance of arms in the area created by the shipment of communist arms to Egypt, by selling or supplying defensive weapons to Israel and will take such steps, including security guarantees, as may be required to deter aggression and war in the area." Although the pledge to defensive arms for Israel is just, it will not be so if strings are attached.

Nor will "security guarantees" tying Israel to the West on cold war

principles contribute to peace in the Middle East. Pressure should be exerted on Stevenson to offer a policy of a negotiated agreement between Israel and the Arab states supported by UN or Big Four action, as objective conditions are likely to dictate. For its part, the Republican platform indicates no substantial change in the crisis-generating Dulles policy in the Middle East.

On domestic policy the Democratic platform was far more favorable to the people's welfare than the Republican. Labor and liberal delegates were active in assuring adoption of such progressive pledges as repeal of the Taft-Hartley law and raising the minimum wage to \$1.25 an hour. As against the stand-pat Republican opposition on the McCarran-Walter law, the Democrats specifically pledged to end racist immigration quotas and the unequal treatment of naturalized citizens. The 90 per cent of parity plank is calculated to win support from the depressed farmers.

### ***Approach to the Election***

Nevertheless, the Democratic program on the crucial issues of peace and civil rights is altogether unsatisfactory to the independent and progressive voter. One cannot endorse such a program or its candidates. Should one therefore declare a plague on both your houses and keep aloof? In our view this would not at all serve to get an administration which truly serves the people. Development of a progressive independent

*(Continued on page 26)*

# How Jews Voted in U.S. History

**The Jews have tended to vote as  
independents and on issues**

**By MORRIS U. SCHAPPEES**

**I**N what sense is there a Jewish vote? Why are Jews known as political independents, oriented more to issues than to parties? Why were Jews so overwhelmingly for the New Deal? Why do minority parties attract Jewish voters?

Everyone concerned with these questions will derive much illumination from this important book, *The Political Behavior of American Jews*, by Dr. Lawrence H. Fuchs, assistant professor of political science at Brandeis University (220 pages, The Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., \$4).

Like other recent students of political behavior, the author recognizes "the influence of ethno-religious factors on politics." While denying that Jews form a solid block Jewish vote, he affirms that "being Jewish [does] sometimes influence one's political attitudes and behavior." Furthermore, he maintains that such an influence "is not necessarily any less American than if one's class interest or occupational interests determines his politics."

Generalizing broadly, Dr. Fuchs

finds that Jews are independent voters because they look for the issues involved. "For voters who are issue-oriented rather than party-oriented, there is a great deal more logic in splitting tickets or switching parties than in changing ideas." For example, in Boston "in 1944 probably more than five out of every ten Jewish voters in Ward 14 cast ballots for Roosevelt and Saltonstall, a Democrat and a Republican [for Senator]." This independence also keeps Jews from voting simply for Jews. In 1922 Jews voted for LaGuardia for Congress rather than his Jewish Tammany opponent, and in 1928 for Franklin D. Roosevelt as governor of New York rather than his Jewish Republican rival.

Jewish political independence also reveals itself in the fact that Jews "vote for minor party candidates more than other voters." This trend goes back to the socialist tradition that prevailed in "the Jewish ghettos" in the first decades of this century. Nor have more recent changes in the economic status and social

condition of the Jews abolished this trend, although they have altered its expression.

Thus in the largely Jewish Second Assembly District in the Bronx, New York, in 1924 there were 4.2 per cent of the voters enrolled in the Socialist Party, while in 1952 there were 8.4 per cent enrolled in the Liberal and American Labor parties. As Dr. Fuchs says, "many sons and daughters of East Side radicalism carried the political predispositions of their fathers with them to the Concourse even though they left their depressed living standards behind."

These predispositions, combined with attention to the current issues, brought the Jews almost solidly into the New Deal coalition, with many tending toward its left end. At the same time, Jewish political independence is also expressed in the Communist and other socialist political parties and groups.

### ***Jewish Voting in U.S. History***

Before analyzing the contemporary issues on the basis of which the Jews make their political choices, Dr. Fuchs provides a historical survey of Jewish voting, beginning with a bare sketch of the period up to the Civil War and ending with full chapters on the New Deal years and on the 1952 elections.

Least reliable, but also least important, is his early sketch, which is marred by carelessness, the lack of prior studies of the subject, and by

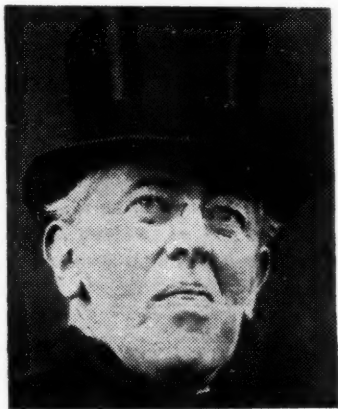
Dr. Fuch's inadequate acquaintance with the sources. While the Jews were almost solidly Democratic from 1800 to 1844, change began to appear after that. Yet Dr. Fuchs seems to me to err when he declares that "by 1860, Democrats were among the exception among Jews in the North." In 1860, the two leading Jewish weeklies, the *Jewish Messenger* in New York and the *Israelite* in Cincinnati, were oriented to the Democratic party and in 1863 they were joined by the new *Jewish Record* in New York.

Furthermore, I have found no evidence, and Dr. Fuchs cites none, to show that the majority of Jews voted for Lincoln in 1860, although it is known that a number of Jews were active local Republicans. A minor error of another sort is Dr. Fuchs's inclusion of Michael Hahn of Louisiana as Jewish. I have found no evidence, beyond the unverifiable statement in the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, that Georg Michael Decker Hahn, to use his full name, was Jewish.

After the Civil War, however, Dr. Fuchs is on firmer ground, although even here historical studies in the field are still needed. Dr. Fuchs finds that most Jews followed the Republicans in national politics up to the turn of the century. Then came the significant socialist trend. But among those outside that influence, Jews "more probably chose Republican than Democratic candidates in every Presidential election from 1900 to 1928 with the exception of 1916."

### *Swing to Democrats*

That year brought Woodrow Wilson on the scene "to crash the Republican hold over the Jews." At the



*President Woodrow Wilson: his candidacy for a second term in 1916 broke the grip of the Republican Party on the vote of the Jews and decisively swung the Jews to the Democratic Party.*

same time, the number of Jewish Democrats elected to office was growing, although "most Jewish officeholders were still Republican." In 1920, Harding made a Republican sweep and the "Jews were no less Republican than the rest of the country," except for the "substantial gains in Jewish districts" made by the Socialist Debs. That year 11 Jews were elected to Congress, nine Republicans, one Socialist and one Democrat (Dr. Fuchs errs when he says Adolph J. Sabbath of Chicago was defeated). But the tide was definitely turning.

In 1922 "more Jewish Democrats than Republicans were elected to Congress for the first time since the Civil War.

Al Smith, running for governor in New York in 1924 and for President in 1928, definitely swung the Jews over to the Democratic party. In 1930 Roosevelt was reelected governor of New York and Herbert Lehman as lieutenant governor had the highest plurality on the Democratic ticket, running ahead of Roosevelt. Thus began a veritable alliance of the Jews in New York and nationally with the Democratic party, although on issues and local candidates there was much independence and ticket-splitting.

Increasingly as the New Deal moved into the anti-fascist war, the ties of the Jews with FDR resulted in more than 90 per cent voting for him in 1940 and 1944. With some modification, the alliance of the Jews with the Democratic party has continued. Considering the Wallace campaign in 1948 as that of an independent Democrat, Dr. Fuchs finds that "the combined Truman-Wallace vote was almost as high in Jewish assembly districts and wards as the vote for F. D. R." in 1944. And in 1952, while the country swung to Eisenhower, 75 per cent of the Jews supported Stevenson, according to Dr. Fuchs's estimate. (It should be noted that Samuel Lubell, a specialist in voting analysis, believes that Dr. Fuchs "underestimates the shift to Eisenhower.")

*(Continued on page 35)*

# The Suez Crisis and Israel

A new action against colonialism,  
and how it affects Israel

By JEREMIAH LESSER

**N**ATIONALIZATION of the Suez Canal by Egypt on July 26 is a crucial world event that casts a long shadow. This bold action will spur the movement to rid the world of colonialism altogether. As Sam Pope Brewer pointed out (*N. Y. Times*, Aug. 2), the nationalization "has turned the minds of Arab nationalities to hopeful thoughts of seizure of Western-owned installations in the Middle East." This is the aspect of Egypt's assertion of sovereignty that has made Britain and France panicky and not the legitimate interest of these countries, and of many others, including Israel, in a guarantee for freedom of passage through the canal.

It is generally recognized that Egypt acted legally in seizing ownership of the canal. As the *N. Y. Times* explained (Aug. 11), "International law recognizes the sovereign right of countries to expropriate foreign private properties within their borders, provided that adequate compensation is made." These conditions have been completely fulfilled in the present case. It is therefore surpris-

ing to read the editorial view of the *N. Y. Post* (July 30) that "Unquestionably his (Nasser's) latest move is an act of international lawlessness." The London liberal *New Statesman and Nation* (Aug. 14) was closer to reality when it stated: "Nasser was within his legal rights. For Egypt to nationalize an Egyptian company is a simple act of sovereignty."

Not only was this move legal, but it was also a step toward raising the living standard of the Egyptian people. Instead of the proceeds of canal operation going to absentee French, British and other investors (dividends on the shares valued at \$81.67 were expected to be \$27 a share in 1955, reported the *N. Y. Times* on Aug. 1), they can now be used for plans to develop Egypt economically.

Since maximum use of the canal will ensure highest returns, it is to Egypt's advantage to keep navigation flowing and thus to preserve treaty-guaranteed rights of international shipping through the canal. And President Nasser has pledged that such rights will be respected. But Egypt's refusal since 1948 to



permit Israel's ships and shipping to pass through the canal is clearly illegal and justifiably casts doubt upon Nasser's promise. Nasser could gain tremendously in prestige by announcing the lifting of this illegal ban on Israel's shipping.

### ***An Old Colonialist Tactic***

The arrogant, colonialist action of Britain and France in moving troops into position to attack Egypt is not only a throw-back to the outmoded methods of rampant imperialism. It is also a violation of the UN Charter, which prohibits threats of war, especially when an issue is under negotiation. The time has passed when the people will tolerate an old-style colonialist war. Our own Secretary of State John Foster Dulles has opposed such military gestures. One would like to believe that Dulles is acting according to an anti-colonialist policy, but unfortunately this is not so. His reasons are several: U.S. oil interests are not unhappy over the further dismantling of the colonial power of Britain and France, thus increasing relative U.S. economic and political influence; and Dulles knows—especially in an election year—that the American people would not want their sons to die in a war to perpetuate colonialism and to continue the flow of profits to investors in the Suez Canal Company.

Despite the threat of military action by Britain and France, the issue is being negotiated. As we write,

Nasser is conferring with a committee from the London Conference which will try to persuade Egypt to accept the Western plan, whose essence is to re-introduce colonial domination by vesting control of the canal in an "international" board. Egypt, however, is determined to retain control of the canal and regards such "international" control as an infringement on her sovereignty. In this position Egypt is supported by four of the 22 powers that attended the London conference—India, the Soviet Union, Indonesia and Ceylon. There is no chance that Egypt will accept this so-called Dulles plan. Speaking for the anti-colonial powers, India offered an alternative plan which would recognize Egypt's control but would form an international board that would be an advisory body to assure freedom of shipping through the canal.

### ***Israel's Interest in Crisis***

Israel has immediate interests in the Suez crisis. Egypt has been violating the 1888 Treaty of Constantinople guaranteeing freedom of passage through the canal by refusing to allow Israel shipping to pass through. The UN Security Council resolution of 1951 calling upon Egypt to cease her blockade of ships to Israel has remained unheeded, nor has the council done anything to get Egypt to respect this resolution. The Big Three have thus far shown no dispo-

sition to include this aspect of the problem in their negotiations with Egypt—nor has the Soviet Union thus far done so, either.

Since Israel obviously has direct interest in the Suez issue, the Big Three were discriminatory in not having invited Israel to the London Conference. Nor did the Soviet Union include Israel among the countries that she proposed should be asked to a broader second conference. But L. P. Ilyichev, Soviet press attache, said in London on Aug. 18 that the list could be amended to include Israel. It should be noted that Chinese Premier Chou En-lai told an Indonesian delegation visiting Peking in August that Israel ships had a right to use of the canal as did all others.

On Aug. 21, Israeli Minister of State Mordecai Ben Tov commented on the refusal of the Big Three to invite Israel to the conference. There was a "justified impression," he said, that some great powers are ready to sacrifice Israel for a compromise with Egypt to safeguard their oil interests. "I hope these powers," he added, "will not consider it ungrateful if we shall be prepared to sacrifice their oil interests for the sake of a peaceful settlement with Egypt." His conclusion was that Israel must draw herself away from reliance on the west and identify itself "more and more with the Asian community of nations."

The deplorable omission of Israel from the London Conference em-

phasizes the isolation of Israel and is further indication of the necessity for Israel to adopt a neutral policy that would prevent her being ignored in such deliberations. For, as a neutral in East-West conflicts, Israel could follow a policy aligned with the colonial world and the Bandung powers and hence would be part of the anti-colonialist bloc.

### *Israel Approach to Crisis*

The Israel government has shown great restraint in the Suez crisis. A cabinet meeting early in August to consider the crisis decided to impress upon the great powers Israel's vital interest in free passage of her shipping through the canal. However, would not Israel's position and prospects have been far better if she had declared her support for Egypt's nationalization of the canal, thus adopting an anti-colonialist policy?

A significant Hebrew language broadcast from Cairo in mid-August charged that "Zionist extremists" (an obvious reference to Herut and similar elements) were trying to make common cause with the West against Egypt. The commentator expressed confidence that Israeli Jews were too intelligent to be taken in by "Zionist war-mongering of this kind" and knew that "the Middle East peoples must cooperate to solve their own problems instead of letting the imperialists use them for their own interests."



But if the Israel government was restrained, some political parties and the press were not. The fire-eating Herut Party, which has been agitating for "preventive war" against the Arabs, speaking through its leader Menachem Beigin, has urged "action" by Israel in the Suez crisis, even to alliance with Britain. Also aligned in this "activist" trend in relation to the Suez crisis is the conservative press (*Haboker* and *Haaretz*), the religious papers (*Hatzofeh* and *Letste Naies*) and even the "left" Ahdut Avodah (*Lamerchav*). One must also regretfully observe that the New York Yiddish press (except for the *Morning Freiheit*) has been rabid in its condemnation of the Suez nationalization. The true interests of the people of Israel are better represented by the comment of the commercial paper

*Maariv* in August that "it is very doubtful if we are interested to appear in the eyes of the people of the Middle East as representatives of Western imperialism."

Although the danger of war between Israel and the Arab states has been diminished for the time being by the Arab world's preoccupation with the Suez crisis, the outcome of that crisis is of the deepest interest to Israel. The negotiations over a solution should take into account Israel's right to free passage through the canal. A just solution would therefore not only ensure Egypt's ownership and control of the canal, but also Egypt's acknowledging Israel's right of passage. Such an outcome would help peace in the Middle East and would facilitate a solution of the Arab-Israel crisis by removing a source of friction.



## LEHMAN RETIRES

SENATOR Herbert H. Lehman has retired from public office at the age of 78. Perhaps more than any other government figure in post-war public life, Senator Lehman has fought for the welfare of the people. We have often differed on many issues with him. But we have followed with deep respect his valiant fight against McCarthyism and for civil rights, as well as many other issues affecting the welfare of the people. We join with the many Americans who pay tribute to him and wish him well.



# ISRAEL

**From Independence Day**, May 14, 1948, to April 30, 1956, Israel has taken in 795,392 immigrants. Never in world history has so small a country absorbed so large an influx in so short a time. The largest number came from Iraq, 123,179, with Rumania in second place with 123,118. Other countries of origin include: Poland, 104,723; Bulgaria, 38,477; Czechoslovakia, 18,323; Hungary, 14,414; Yugoslavia, 7,714; the Soviet Union, 5,012; USA, 2,585.

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**Two Arab literary** monthlies began to appear early this year. *Al Mudzhtama* (Society), a liberal journal, has stressed the theme of the emancipation of Arab women in its first five issues. *Al Jadid* (Tomorrow) is a radical periodical, connected with an Arab Literary Society which is also trying to organize an Arab People's Theater. *Al Mudzhtama* has rejected *Al Jadid's* offer of cooperation.

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**An Israeli soccer team**, having been defeated in Moscow 5-0, held the Soviet team to a 2-1 victory before 65,000 enthusiastic Israeli fans in Ramath Gan on July 31. A running account of the game was broadcast to the Soviet Union by a Soviet commentator with a 15-minute interlude of Yiddish folk songs.

•

**Yemenite Jewish** agricultural laborers went on strike when the owners of the orange groves refused to grant a wage increase. After six days the Yemenites won both the increase and full pay for the days they were on strike. This was one of the first signs of labor action among the Yemenites. (*Yiddisher Kemfer*, N. Y., July 13, Labor Zionist organ.)

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**Tabiya became** the first Arab village (population 6,000) to get electric lighting when the minister of the interior, Israel Bar Yehuda, switched on the current at the village high school. "The chairman of the local Council, Muhamad el Nashif, called the link-up with the electricity grid an important step toward narrowing the gap between the standards of living of the Arab and Jewish communities." (*N. Y. Times*, July 31.)

**A fourth oil tanker** was added to Israel's merchant fleet in July. The fleet now consists of 34 vessels with a capacity of 197,000 tons. Five are passenger ships that can carry 2,180 persons; 25 are freighters, 14 of them especially equipped for citrus fruit.

**Bulgarian Chief Rabbi** Dr. Anshel Hananel, arriving in Jerusalem early in August for a one month visit, reported that there are 4,500 Jews in Bulgaria.

**Danny Kaye** spent two days in Israel in mid-July to shoot a documentary film of children in the Jordan Valley settlement. At the end of the month his films were banned in Syria on the ground that Kaye is pro-Israel.

**A trade agreement** with Hungary was signed on July 3 calling for exports and imports of \$2,600,000 each. Israel will sell phosphates, citrus, wool thread, tires and false teeth, and will buy mares, metal products, and machinery, including Diesel engines.

**When Marian Anderson** left Israel early this year after a concert tour, she had set up a Prize Fund of 3,000 Israel pounds (equal to 55.5 cents per pound) to encourage students of singing. In August, three prizes were awarded. The first, 600 pounds, went to Aharon Cohen, a bass, Israel-born; the second, 300 pounds, to Shmaya Ashkenazi, a lyric tenor who immigrated from Bulgaria in 1935; the third, 300 pounds, to Shulamith Shapiro, a coloratura soprano who came to Israel from Rumania after the war.

**The infant mortality rate** in 1955 was 32.1 deaths under one year per 1,000 live births, a sharp decline from the 1950 rate of 45.6. (In the U.S.A., the rate was 26.8.) In Israel kibbutzim, however, the rate was only 19; at the other extreme, in immigrant *ma'barot* ("temporary" colonies), the rate was 45.4. The Jewish birth rate, which began to decline in 1951, is now down to 27.25 births per thousand; the non-Jewish birth rate, which is rising, was 45.18 per thousand in 1955.

**Permission to leave Poland** for Israel is being given to Jewish war orphans, according to a statement made on June 20 by Jan Slowikowski, Polish chargé d'affaires in Israel, while visiting the Agricultural School in Magdiel conducted by the Youth Aliya (Immigration). M. Kol, head of Youth Aliya, announced that the first six children are soon expected to arrive from Cracow.

M. U. S.

# Judaism and Social Action

The Prophetic spirit is applied  
to current problems

By ELIHU BERNSTEIN

**I**NDIVIDUALS and organizations actively concerned with community action around the many problems of human welfare will welcome a new book<sup>1</sup> brought out by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. It is designed to help improve the lot of the American citizen and to involve him in the process.

"This book is written," say the authors, "for . . . all committees and for individual Jews everywhere—Reform, Conservative, Orthodox—who similarly seek answers to questions about the relationship of Judaism to modern social problems. It is written for Jews and Christians everywhere who feel impelled by their religious heritage to give of themselves for the betterment of their communities so that mankind may move a step closer to the Kingdom of God on earth." Although written by and for religious people, the volume will be helpful also to the non-religious, for whom unity with religious people in the field of social action is necessary.

This book seeks to stimulate to immediate, concerted and intelligent action based on a command of facts and an understanding of the commu-

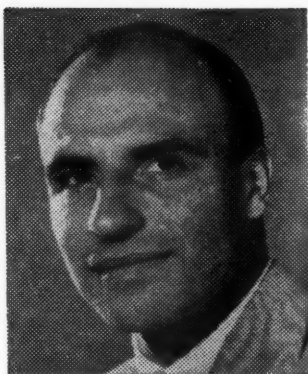
nity. It provides an insight into many problems facing the human being who seeks to provide for himself and his family a wholesome environment and an opportunity to make life meaningful and rich. "Moralistic statements and sermons are no substitutes for political know-how in the field of social action."

## *"Reshape the Community"*

In his introduction to the volume, Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath, president of the UAHC, writes: "The current religious revival of which we read much and see considerable evidence these days, if it is valid, if it is to be more than a vain and vapid 'peace of mind' anaesthetic, must impel man to reshape his community, his nation and the world in accordance with the judgment and conscience and God's moral law."

With the mushrooming of suburban areas throughout the country, new synagogues, temples and churches are rising. In many instances people join not because of religious be-

<sup>1</sup> *Justice and Judaism: The Work of Social Action*, by Albert Vorspan and Eugene J. Lipman. Union of American Hebrew Congregations, New York. 271 pages. \$3.50.



*The authors: Rabbi Eugene J. Lipman (left), director of the UAHC Commission on Social Action, and Albert Vorspan, UAHC executive secretary.*

liefs or feeling but in conformity with community mores, because of need for identification with others, because of yearning for more than sermonizing about the Brotherhood of Man. They seek more than religious institutions in the past have been willing to recognize. In response to this mass aspiration for a better life for all, the UAHC through its commission, and the authors through this book, reinterpret the social ethics of the Jewish past and of Jewish traditions in light of present-day needs. People want to reinvigorate that which is wholesome and meaningful for men today.

The authors have delved deeply into Judaic literature. An introductory chapter explores historical roots or social and welfare practices of the past. Following chapters are devoted to specific areas of human welfare and include references to inspiring

utterances and actions in the past, The Sayings of the Fathers, the Prophetic values of the Bible take on new meaning and richness in the context of present-day practice. The authors have also drawn heavily upon the experience of organizations and their leaders and other writers who have contributed to a program of action toward social progress.

Social action, say the authors, "is not politics or sociology or economics, though it involves all of them. It is of the essence of religion, certainly of the Jewish religion. It involves not only stirring sermons from the rabbis but effective grass roots action by men and women who make up the congregation. Far from being an extraneous area of synagogue life, social action is an integral and essential part of synagogue activity. A synagogue which isolates itself from the fundamental issues of social jus-

tice confronting the community and the nation is false to the deepest traditions and values of the Jewish heritage. . . ."

The authors call upon every synagogue and temple to organize some form of committee for social action in keeping with recent resolutions of national conventions of UAHC. Every committee is cautioned to acquaint itself with the facts, reminded that "the first responsibility of the synagogue is really to know the community of which it is a part." The synagogue should seek allies in the community, to educate the people in it, to mobilize them for the welfare of all.

Each of the 12 chapters explores a significant area: housing, education, marriage and the family; crime, punishment and juvenile delinquency; civic reform, civil rights; civil liberties; religious liberty; inter-religious activities; economic affairs; immigration, and peace and international relations.

The authors have much in common for cooperation with those who do not share the religious view of this particular denomination or who are not religious at all. The authors stress time and again that the topics dealt with concern every individual who holds dear the tenets upon which this country was founded and that everyone can be involved in mutual help and assistance.

This reviewer takes exception to a number of statements and positions of the authors.

We wonder whether the material could not have been arranged so that the *interrelatedness* of the problems could more readily be grasped. The subject of peace and international relations is the last one in the book. Yet that issue is uppermost in the minds of people and underlies all other issues.

### ***Some Disagreements***

For instance, how can the problem of housing, which is at the beginning of the book, better be understood in terms of budgets, philosophy of government, attitudes toward minority groups, except in the framework of our government's position on subsidization of war—past and future? On juvenile delinquency the authors quote Bertram Beck, director of the Special Juvenile Delinquency Project associated with the United State Children's Bureau: "The positive correlation between the rate of delinquency and war and cold war cannot be ignored. It is hard to instill those built-in controls of hostile behavior when children are being reared in a world that reeks of hostility and in which the whole economy is geared to the ultimate in expression of hostility—death and destruction." This quote is left dangling by the authors without further comment. A certain loss of perspective weakens somewhat the fabric around which the topics are woven.

However, this does not take away from the vigor with which some of the individual problems are treated.

The authors strongly affirm, "The only real solution to the problem of discrimination in housing is more housing—much more housing. We need a drastic increase in the housing supply. Public housing is one part of the answer, but public housing is useless, and even harmful, if it proceeds without careful attention to site location and to the urgent problem of tenant relocation. Slum clearance must not be allowed to become minority clearance."

### ***Attitude Toward Some Problems***

Similarly the authors call for more federal and state aid to education; they condemn the drive for religious education in the public schools and call for all-out resistance to it; they demand a complete overhauling of penal institutions and "a system which will rehabilitate and not debilitate, which will treat prisoners and not merely stigmatize them, which will regard them as human beings whom we must strive to restore to usefulness and not as open targets for societal vengeance. . . . Capital punishment is an inhumane anachronism."

Although the authors call for a struggle against school segregation, they do so on the basis of long-range plans. They caution synagogues particularly in the South against carrying the ball, though they urge full participation when invited by community groups. They hardly mention the plight of the Negro in the South with reference to lynching and

deprivation of voting privileges. They are sharply critical of the restrictive immigration policies of the government and of the Walter-McCarran act. In the area of civil liberties they question the "security" program, congressional investigating procedures and repressive legislation sparked by the Smith act, the loyalty oath, vigilantism and censorship.

It is regrettable that the authors picked out communists for particular attack in this chapter. The authors thus snipe at people who have in their own way helped in the struggle to achieve almost every goal of social and human welfare projected in this volume. Of course the authors disagree with communists on religious grounds. Certainly the authors do not document charges of subversion and tyranny which they level against the communists.

The authors' position here weakens but does not destroy the overall effectiveness of the book's concern for the rights of labor and condemnation of "right-to-work" laws, for growing monopolization and its influences on domestic and foreign policy, for protection of natural resources, support of poor farmers and an improved taxation policy benefiting the lower income groups.

The authors end the book on this note: "We cannot afford to be afraid of change. Our forefathers came to this land seeking change and much of the world seeks change now. Both our traditions and our self-interest

*(Continued on page 36)*



INSIDE

# THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

## ***B'nai B'rith***

The B'nai B'rith Administrative Committee met in August. BB President Philip Klutznick reported receipt of a letter from Secretary of State Dulles advising him that the U.S. will take "formal diplomatic action" on discrimination against American Jews by Arab nations. Klutznick thought that Dulles' promise of diplomatic action "suggests an improvement of our government's previous position in the matter. However, this position still falls short of giving equal protection abroad to all American citizens. There is historical precedent for accomplishing this by appropriate action in a manner that does no violence to the offending nation's sovereignty, but merely insures the integrity of American sovereignty." Klutznick promised that the BB will pursue the matter later when Dulles is not involved in the Suez situation.

## ***Anti-Defamation League***

Arnold Forster, general counsel of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League, appeared before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in July to defend the Fund for the Republic report on the blacklisting of performers accused of communist association. He called the use of the blacklist without giving the victims a hearing a "dreadful thing." Forster stated, however, that the ADL helped no one who pleaded the Fifth Amendment on questions about communism, refused to go to the FBI with informa-

tion he might have or declined to appear before the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

*I. F. Stone's Weekly* (July 23) blasted the ADL position on refusal to help those who demand their constitutional rights: "We wonder how many members of the B'nai B'rith realize that by these standards its Anti-Defamation League could not help two outstanding members of the American Jewish community whom the House Committee has just voted to cite for contempt. Arthur Miller does not measure up to the Anti-Defamation League standard because he refused to be a cooperative witness and 'name names.' Professor Otto Nathan, the executor of Albert Einstein's estate, probably the great physicist's oldest and closest friend, does not measure up to the Anti-Defamation League standard because he also refused to be a cooperative witness and declined on moral and political (including First but not Fifth amendment) grounds to permit himself to be subjected to political interrogation." The article asks "Do the members of B'nai B'rith want this organization to approve the blacklisting of an artist because he exercises his constitutional rights? . . . Why should an Anti-Defamation League end up by encouraging those whose business is defamation?"

## ***American Jewish Committee***

The European office of the American Jewish Committee reported in August

JEWISH LIFE



that a survey of anti-Semitism it made in 12 Western European countries disclosed the fact that anti-Semitism is increasing in France and West Germany. The development of the Poujade movement has "given definite impetus to anti-Semitism in France," the AJ Committee stated. "There has been a 'noticeable increase' in unfavorable comments about Jews, in the appearance on street walls of signs like 'Jew, Go Home' and in the appearance of the French anti-democratic and anti-Semitic papers." New anti-Semitic publications have recently appeared.

The survey reported concern about a resurgence of neo-nazi literature in West Germany. It stated, "German democrats see no signs of mass German repentance for the horrors Hitlerism inflicted or the signs of real understanding of what Hitlerism was and meant. Worse, they note a definite trend to ignore the existence of, and to rationalize, the whole Hitler era." The survey expressed concern "whether the German people can be counted on to rally to the defense of the democratic regime, if it should be threatened." It warned that "The next few years can well be the decisive ones for the country. And that is why constant attention must be paid to the German scene."

In July the AJ Committee issued a statement opposing a plan for the formation of a new world Jewish body. The B'nai B'rith approved the proposal for such a world body at its recent convention. A number of other Jewish organizations are considering the question.

### ***Jewish War Veterans***

The 61st annual convention of the Jewish War Veterans held in August heard a scathing attack on the policy of U.S. agencies which appease the discriminatory practices of Arab

countries against American Jews. The convention protested the introduction of a "Hitlerian concept" into an Air Force regulation. Outgoing National Commander Reubin Kaminsky cited U.S. Air Force Manual (U.S.A.E.F. Manual 30-1) entitled Clearance and Documentation for Leave and Duty Travel, dated June 20, 1953. He compared the regulations to the Nuremberg Law of Hitler's time, and quoted the following paragraphs from the regulation:

Section XXCII, Paragraph #3:—"Individuals of Jewish faith or descent are strictly barred entrance or transit of Saudi Arabia. Further, any passport containing an Israel visa will not be honored."

Section XII, Paragraph #30:—"Individuals of the Hebrew race will not be issued visas or admitted to Jordan."

Kaminsky asked, "Since when has the American government undertaken to enforce within our borders, prejudices of a foreign government and its discriminations?"

### ***American Jewish Congress***

In August the New York State Commission Against Discrimination received a complaint from the American Jewish Congress charging that the Arabian-American Oil Company (Aramco), which operates the American oil concession in Saudi Arabia, refuses to employ Jews either in Saudi Arabia or New York.

S. P.

Our deep sympathy to  
**ANNA NEWMAN AND CHILDREN**  
 on the loss of your dear Husband and  
 Father  
**KINGS HIGHWAY FRATERNAL  
 CULTURAL CLUB**  
 Brooklyn

# Southern Labor and Desegregation

Attempts to split labor by racism  
are not succeeding

By OUR SOUTHERN CORRESPONDENT

THE American trade union movement realizes today more than at any other time in its history that its self-preservation requires it to fight segregation—and in the home lair in the South. At the AFL-CIO merger convention, James B. Carey declared that, while the White Citizens Council movement was ostensibly directed against implementation of the desegregation decision, the *real* purpose . . . is to use the desegregation issue to stop economic and social progress in the South. There is substantial evidence that the movement is directed at trade unions."

But the efforts to divide Southern labor by promoting secession from their internationals based on the racist slogan, "All whites must stick together," is meeting strong obstacles. During July in Birmingham, Ala., a group called the "Southern Aircraft Workers" held a "South-wide" meeting to create a "Southern Federation of Labor." But only 250 people attended the fiasco in the 2500-seat hall.

The White Citizens Councils are

headed by big businessmen who profit from segregation and want to keep it a "paying proposition." But another part of their game is to keep unions out of the South by appealing to white workers not to join them because the union internationals are "n - - - r lovers." They hope to keep the South a preserve for runaway plants which are moving here by the million dollars worth every month.

The white Dixiecrat leaders are drawn directly from the large Southern corporations themselves. John U. Barr, for example, is a chief spokesman for the National Association of Manufacturers in the South. Joe Jenkins, Sr., of the First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Jacksonville, Fla., is a member of the board of directors of the National Right to Work Committee headed by Fred Hartley, Jr. of the anti-labor Taft-Hartley act. In North Carolina, where the White Councils are called "Patriots," there are leaders like John W. Clark, president of the Randolph and Lock Textile Mills, Robert Porter of Burlington Mills and T. D.

Bass of the Virginia-Carolina Chemical Company.

The councils have met here and there with limited local success in their appeal to Southern unionists to secede. In Hartsville, South Carolina, the local president of the textile union was expelled because he was working with the white councils in an attempt to build an all-white, "all-Southern" union movement. As soon as he was expelled, he began his separatist work in earnest. He immediately announced he would build a "Southern" union "dedicated to the principles that Southerners have always held to."

In Augusta, Georgia, some 29 union members of the municipal employes union pulled out and issued a joint statement: "We read in the newspapers that the AFL-CIO has come out fully supporting racial integration. We don't intend to pay dues to support any such program." In Tennessee a leader in the AFL-CIO Pressmen's Union is also chairman of the Tennessee Society to Maintain Segregation. This group has mailed out 10,000 copies of White Council literature to union members. This same union leader is not only interested in the "whites only" movement. Together with others he is trying to form the "Southern States Conference of Union People."

On the other hand, in Alabama, Elmer B. Brock, who pretends to speak for labor but actually operates for employer interests, got a setback

in August. After he attempted to build a "Southern" union of steelworkers, his so-called Southern Fabricating and Steelworkers, Inc. was defeated in an NLRB election. Then Brock's own union, the Painters' Union, expelled him for "engaging in acts tending to bring the . . . Brotherhood into disrepute."

### ***Unions Fight Segregation***

The AFL-CIO and its internationals in the North and in the South are fighting the councils and their "union agents." In many cases, they are taking a strong, forthright stand against segregation and those who are behind the Jimcrow laws and customs. At its recent convention the AFL-CIO Textile Union passed a resolution in favor of the Supreme Court's ruling on desegregation in public schools. Some white Southern delegates voted in favor of the resolution. Others, while not favoring it, refused to allow the resolution to split the union.

A white woman delegate, Mrs. Ethel Jenkins, of High Point, N. C., said she voted for the resolution condemning the councils because her children "wanted her to." While delegate Rene Berthiaume, a white delegate from Rock Hill, S. C., opposed the resolution, he said he would not leave the union. When baited by the white Southern daily press to leave the union, he got up on the convention stage and said, "We're against the white councils

and we want every one to know it, including the lousy Southern papers." E. T. Kirkland, white delegate of Columbia, S. C., also opposed the resolution and was baited by the daily press to leave the union. He grabbed the microphone and said for all to hear: "They ask us, those reporters, if we were walking out. We told them we weren't. I'll be a TWUA member till I die." The convention hall rocked with cheers.

The new president of the Textile Workers union, William Pollock, lambasted the councils, their segregation policies and divide-and-rule tactics. "Their primary aim," he said, "is to block the political and economic changes that will result from the growth of labor unions in the South. Their scheme is to turn worker against worker and split local unions away from their international unions. And their principal tool is race prejudice."

Another important union international fighting segregation and its partner, poor wages, is the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. At its recent convention the Union passed a resolution urging Congress to outlaw local legislation protecting segregation and to guarantee fair employment practices. The union announced a Southern drive with eight million dollars to back it up.

### ***Segregation Equals Low Wages***

Many unions already have long, honorable records in fighting the White Councils and segregation. The

United Mine Workers locals in Alabama have been desegregated for many years. This happened after long, hard experience that only in unity is there real strength. Despite council activity in Alabama, the miners' locals remain firm against segregation. They have learned the necessity for unity in order to wring concessions from the mine operators. Their history is even checkered with gun battles against mine-owner goons in which white union brothers fought alongside their Negro union brothers.

In Bessemer, Alabama, the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union have had an integrated local for years. These iron ore miners have long learned the lesson that segregation adds up to poor wages while desegregation means more money and other benefits. In Louisiana the Packinghouse workers conducted successful strikes in the sugar industry because it refused to allow appeals to race-hate break up its strength and unity.

The unions are fighting segregation in the South also by giving full support to the Southern Regional Council. This is an organization of liberal white Southerners who know that their region is harmed and kept backward by segregation. These liberals, whose headquarters are in Atlanta, issue a publication called the *New South*. They have the full backing and support of the National AFL-CIO, United Auto Workers, International Ladies Garment Work-

ers, United Steel Workers, United Rubber Workers, Meat Cutters and other unions. Paul Christopher, a Southern AFL-CIO regional director, is a member of the executive board of the Regional Council.

The unions understand that the same Dixiecrat state and local politicians and employers who make the "legal" Jimcrow laws also pass restrictive measures against unions. In Lyman, S. C., recently white textile workers were denied their civil rights by being arrested for passing out union leaflets. The Lyman cops "warned" union members that "each leaflet you hand out will cost you \$50." In Gaffney, S. C., union organizers who were organizing white workers were beaten up at the Lowenstein mills. Police were on the side of the company goons. Protests to Attorney General Brownell produced no results. In Madison, Fla., a law was passed making each union organizer pay a high "license" fee. In addition the organizer has to pay a large amount for each union member he recruits.

### ***Drive to Organize the South***

The AFL-CIO unions must either organize the South, fighting the White Councils and segregation, or lose strength in the North. Every day millions of dollars worth of industry is moving to the non-union South. This undermines the union scale and benefits up North. But this is not the only reason. From the voteless, union-less "rotten boroughs"

of the South come Dixiecrat representatives like Graham Barden of North Carolina. "Re-elected" again and again, his "seniority" gives him chairmanship of the all-important Labor and Educational Committee. He bottles up legislation for the welfare not only of the South but the North as well. No longer can he be dismissed by Northerners as "what can you expect, that's the South" attitude.

The unions of our country are beginning to act on the need to organize the South. Walter Reuther pledged that the merged AFL-CIO will work to organize the South. The Amalgamated has announced its drive and so have the textile unions. AFL-CIO representatives have vowed to organize Reynolds Tobacco Company (Camel cigarettes) where several thousand whites and several thousand Negroes are employed. The Packinghouse Workers Union, now being merged with the Butchers Union, has long had a policy of organizing the South and is doing so on an integrated basis.

The greatest hope for a death blow to segregation in the South is in union organization. Already a strong united front between unions and Negro leaders exists. The organizing drive gives hope that democracy will be established in the Southland, a democracy where all can vote, where the freedom of assembly and the press, union meetings and union literature distributions will have real meanings.

## ELECTION OUTLOOK

(Continued from page 6)

ent political force could be furthered by strengthening those elements in the Democratic Party which are potential parts of such movement. Labor, the Negro people, liberals of various shades, are basic necessities for such a regrouping.

Whether such a new political alignment will ultimately emerge in a new Democratic Party cleansed of its reactionaries and Dixiecrats or in a new third party whose core is the labor-liberal-Negro wing of the present Democratic Party, no one can foretell. The essential thing for those who look forward to a new alignment in our political life is to help consolidate and increase the strength of these forces where they are gathered *now*, in the Democratic Party.

The labor-liberal-Negro forces—and, we may add, Jewish forces—have a great responsibility and opportunity. The more advanced ideas on peace and civil rights held by them can be pressed upon Stevenson and Kefauver in the course of their campaign. Grass-roots campaigning on the precinct level can draw forth commitments from the candidates that will convince the people that popular welfare will be best served by a new administration under their guidance. The same grass-roots organization will be needed after the campaign to compel successful candidates to keep their campaign pledges.

To the extent that Stevenson and Kefauver rise above petty short-sighted machine political thinking will they improve their chances to defeat the Cadillac Cabinet and the specter of Nixon. Stevenson needs today the imaginative daring of Franklin D. Roosevelt in his day. This requires a courageous development of the idea of a "New America" that Stevenson suggested in his acceptance speech. The endorsement of the Democratic ticket by the AFL-CIO executive should impel him in this direction.

The trade unions, the Negro people's organizations, liberals, Jewish and other national groups, both inside and outside the Democratic Party, which are a part of this wing of American political life, have the opportunity to help rid the nation of the incubus of the Eisenhower Big Business administration and the ominous prospect of a Nixon Presidency. They can do this by making the Stevenson-Kefauver campaign strategists understand that they can win only by fighting on a pro-peace, pro-civil rights perspective.

This end can be served also by active participation by independent and progressive voters in congressional and local campaigns supporting candidates who tackle the issues in the interest of the people, regardless of party label. Maximum participation in both local and national campaigns will help forward the imperative objectives of peace, civil rights and the people's welfare.



# Prospects for Soviet Yiddish Culture

## Recent developments as reported from the Soviet Union

By SAM PEVZNER

**M**ORE light has been shed upon the process of rehabilitation of Jewish culture in the Soviet Union. Dr. Henry Shoskes, writer for the Yiddish *Day-Morning Journal*, soon after his arrival in Moscow in August, had a rewarding three-hour interview with leading Russian and Yiddish writers. His report of this meeting, published in the *N. Y. Times* (August 11), substantiated the general outline of projected Jewish cultural revival described by Chaim Suller (JEWISH LIFE, August) and presented the kind of a bill of particulars we have been eagerly awaiting.

In the meeting with Dr. Shoskes were Alexei Surkov, executive secretary of the Union of Soviet Writers, Konstantin Simonov and Vasily Azharyev. The Soviet Yiddish writers present were Aron Vergelis, Jacob Shternberg, Israel Serebreny, Yoshua Lubomirsky and Shmuel Halkin. Esther Markish, widow of the Yiddish poet, Peretz Markish, also attended.

Here is the bill of particulars:

A Yiddish almanac or periodical, probably 200-page issues six times a year, will appear in two or three weeks.

Yiddish type for newspapers, magazines and books has been found in the plant of the newspaper *Izvestia*.

The Union of Soviet Writers planned

to allocate 400,000 rubles out of a 600,000 ruble profit it made last year to start the periodical.

A special committee of three Russian and three Yiddish writers is working on a project to publish a Yiddish newspaper sometime in 1957.

A special committee of the Soviet ministry of culture is dealing with the plans for reopening the Yiddish theater, closed in 1948. Small companies have already been formed from the former Byelorussian Yiddish State Theater.

Dr. Shoskes also told his newspaper that he was informed by the Yiddish writers that a conference of Jewish writers from all over the Soviet Union would be held soon.

"Mr. Shoskes said he was impressed by the vast plan of rehabilitating Yiddish culture," the *N.Y. Times* reported. "He said Mme. Markish had told him that, although she had been in exile in Kazakhstan, she now felt like a 'privileged person' and was receiving a steady pension not only for herself but also for each of three children."

Two of Peretz Markish's books of poems will soon be published in Yiddish; and plans are being made to publish his novel on the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, *In Footsteps of Generations*, written by Markish in prison. It will

be published in Yiddish, Russian and English.

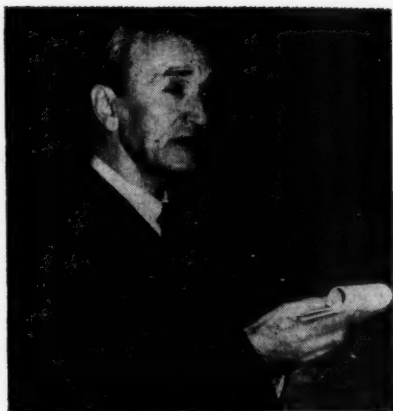
That the pace of revival is quickening is also indicated by the reports that a Jewish prayer book is in the works. Also interesting is the news of a pledge given to the American professor, Abraham I. Katsh, chairman of the Department of Hebrew Culture at New York University, by Alexander Arseneyev, deputy minister of education in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. The pledge, made to Professor Katsh in writing, promises "that henceforth Hebrew would be taught in Soviet schools if as many as ten students asked for it" (*N. Y. Times*, August 26). No comment was made about teaching of Yiddish in the schools, although the number of Jews speaking Yiddish in the Soviet Union is much greater than that speaking Hebrew. Professor Katsh did not raise the question of teaching Yiddish.

### ***The Case of Broderzon***

Taking into account the serious efforts to rehabilitate Jewish culture one is somewhat mystified by the continued failure on the part of Soviet leadership to issue an authoritative statement on the liquidation of Jewish culture and leading personalities, on the program for revival of Jewish culture and for combating vestiges of anti-Semitism.

Under the circumstances, information on what happened has come to light piecemeal. It is important for the world and especially the people of the Soviet Union, to know just how the enemies of the socialist nationalities policy carried out their crimes, under what pretexts and with what means. This is needed to learn how enemies of socialism operate and how to prevent a repetition.

For example, why did one have to learn from an interview with Moishe



*M. Broderzon, Yiddish writer who died in Warsaw on Aug. 17, shortly after his return from the Soviet Union.*

Broderzon, Yiddish poet and dramatist, who died in Warsaw August 17, that the charges of "Jewish nationalism" were used to sentence him (and possibly others) to ten year's imprisonment? (*N. Y. Times*, August 6)

Mr. Broderzon had been rehabilitated after five and a half years in Soviet prisons. He was arrested on April 21, 1950 and had been interrogated nightly for eight months. He was accused by the secret police of stating that anti-Semitism existed in the Soviet Union, and he recalled answering that anti-Semitism does exist. "Until the death of Stalin, I was not even permitted to have a pencil. Life was considerably easier after Stalin died," he said.

Mr. Broderzon estimated that of 85 Jewish writers and theater workers in Moscow after the war, at least 15 are "no longer alive." All the remaining Jewish cultural figures imprisoned have been freed and "rehabilitated."

The pattern of Mr. Broderzon's case, with the charges of "Jewish national-



ism," may or may not have been followed in the cases of the other Jewish writers. Lacking an authoritative statement, one can only hazard a guess that it was followed.

### ***The Kaganovitch Interview***

This lack of an authoritative statement is a disturbing element in the situation. Another is the contradiction inherent in the concrete efforts being made to rehabilitate Jewish culture while prominent Soviet leaders continue to express the view that the Jews of the USSR neither need nor want their own culture. This view is reported to have been expressed by Khrushchev, Madame Furtseva and others.

Dr. Henry Shoskes, in a rare interview with Lazar Kaganovich, deputy premier of the Soviet Union, asked what he thinks about the plans to revive Yiddish literature. "Kaganovich said that he is convinced that the Jews of the Soviet Union want to become partners in the great Russian culture. He explained that there is generally no need for a separate Jewish culture. . . . He agreed that if there is a demand among Jews for Jewish culture, this demand should be fulfilled. However, he did not believe that there is such a demand even from a minority of the Jews" (*Day-Morning Journal*, August 20)

Reminded of the liquidation of Jewish writers and the frame-up of the Jewish doctors "Kaganovich blamed it on a bad, short period in the history of Russian communism. In general, however, he said, he cannot imagine anti-Semitism under a communist order."

The question is not the right of Soviet Jews to become "partners" in Russian culture, as Kaganovich put it. Large numbers of Jews, doubtless, par-

ticipate in Soviet economic, cultural and social life. But it is a fact that a large number of Jews (majority or minority is of little consequence here) were *forcibly* deprived of their culture in a criminal fashion. The liquidation of Jewish cultural institutions and personalities had nothing in common with the principle of voluntary integration—it was its very opposite.

### ***Need for Yiddish Culture***

The question of demand for Yiddish culture by at least a sizable segment of Soviet Jews, it seems to us, is not a matter for speculation any more. The large number of Yiddish writers preparing works, the warm response to the Jewish concerts held in past few years, the popular reaction in Moscow to the Yiddish songs performed by Jan Peerce—all these point to a live interest and demand by Soviet Jews for an opportunity to enjoy and build their culture, national in form and socialist in content.

If the Jews of the Soviet Union don't "want" or "need" their own culture, as Kaganovich and others claim, then let the Jews decide that themselves. But certainly such a "decision" would be suspect now, right after a period of terror and forcible liquidation. The Soviet Union has a socialist moral obligation to give the Jews every opportunity to rebuild their culture. More, it should give encouragement, guidance and leadership to the Jewish people in this task. From the plans of the Union of Soviet Writers it is apparent that this help is beginning to be given. What is difficult to understand is why Kaganovich and others express views that may not be helpful to the fulfillment of those plans and to the important task of applying the Soviet nationalities policies to the Jewish people of the USSR.

# THE ILYICHEV INTERVIEW

Some questions raised by the views  
of a Soviet spokesman

AN EDITORIAL

ON Sept. 3, the *National Guardian* published an interview by Tabitha Petran in Moscow with L. P. Ilyichev, press chief of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, on the situation of Soviet Jews. Mr. Ilyichev told Miss Petran that injustice to Soviet Yiddish writers in the later period of the Stalin era was not an isolated anti-Semitic phenomenon but rather one phase of an anti-intellectual campaign which affected writers of many Soviet nationalities. It seems to us quite true, as we said in our very first comment on the tragic situation in our May issue, that Jews were not alone singled out as targets in the violations of socialist justice that occurred before 1953.

When, however, Mr. Ilyichev asserted, according to Miss Petran's report, that the *Folks-Shtimme* article of April 4 revealing the liquidation of a number of Yiddish writers and of Soviet Yiddish culture was "slandorous and anti-Soviet," we cannot agree. This article was reprinted not only here, but also in Canada, Britain, France, Israel, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Mexico

and other countries. In our opinion *Folks-Shtimme* did a service to the Soviet Union and socialism by publishing this article. Mr. Ilyichev's characterization seems to us to mistake valid criticism by a devoted friend of the Soviet Union for enmity.

Although Mr. Ilyichev granted that the article truly reports that Jewish writers were "charged and condemned unjustifiably," he denied "the conclusions this article draws as to the persecution of the Jewish people and their culture."

## Question of Yiddish Culture

Mr. Ilyichev overlooks one decisive fact: as he says, intellectuals of Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian, Byelorussian and Armenian nationality also suffered from the campaign he mentions. But these peoples were not deprived of all their cultural institutions, as were the Yiddish speaking Soviet Jews.

Why were *all* Soviet Yiddish institutions (outside of Birobidjan) shut down suddenly within a few months

after 1948 without a word of explanation? Although the Soviet Yiddish speaking audience was drastically reduced by World War II, can it be said that *no* audience existed for Yiddish? That such an audience, of whatever limited size, did exist, is demonstrated by the packed houses that have attended occasional Yiddish concerts in the Soviet Union in the past few years.

The very fact that such performances were *resumed* after the death of Stalin clearly implies that virtually all public expression of Yiddish culture was arbitrarily cut off between 1948 and 1954. Furthermore, the fact that Yiddish writers have *resumed* their writing and that plans for Yiddish publications are projected in 1956 after a lapse of eight years implies that such publication was arbitrarily stopped in 1948. In short, the welcome remedial measures for a *resumption* of Yiddish cultural expression inevitably drives us to the conclusion that Yiddish *culture* has been a victim of criminal departures from the socialist national policy.

Further, is it not conclusive evidence of such a departure with respect to Yiddish culture that the volumes of the second edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* published before 1954 totally eliminate biographical articles on the great Yiddish classical writers like Sholem Aleichem, I. L. Peretz, and Mendeley Mocher Seforim, and of others, all of whom had been given such notices in the first edition of the *Encyclopedia*,

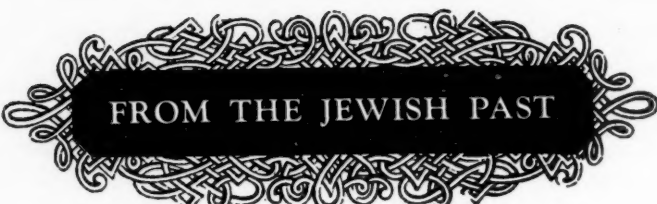
published in the thirties? Furthermore, the article on the "Jews" in the second edition in 1952 was reduced to four columns in contrast to 152 columns devoted to this article in the 1932 edition. And in the 1952 edition the existence of the Jewish people was virtually negated.

### *Question of Discrimination*

Mr. Ilyichev told Miss Petran that in the past there had been discrimination against Soviet Jews in violation of Constitutional provisions, but that these instances had been corrected and their perpetrators punished. "Perhaps at certain offices and enterprises," he said, "certain directors had followed a policy contrary to our government policy. . . . Certain cases may have occurred when people were moved according to nationality, that is, heads of offices may have violated government policy. Later some directors were removed because of mistakes. It would be difficult to say they were removed for anti-Semitism, but these things are interconnected."

But Mr. Iyichev denied that a Jewish quota system had operated in the Soviet Union. He pointed out, as is indubitably true, that Jews are represented with other nationalities in Soviet art, literature and science—and, we may add, many times more than their ratio to the total population. Further, it is also true that the Soviet Union trained and

(Continued on page 37)



## FROM THE JEWISH PAST

# Excommunication of Spinoza

By MEL SHIPMAN

ON July 27, 1656, Baruch Spinoza, Jewish-Dutch philosopher, was excommunicated by the rabbinate of Amsterdam and condemned to "eternal damnation by day and by night."

What were the reasons for this extreme form of punishment? What kind of a person was Spinoza? How is it that despite his persecution he was able to achieve permanent renown while his tormentors have long since been relegated to historical oblivion?

These and a host of other questions are answered in a series of articles prepared for the Warsaw *Folks-Shtimme* by Moshe Belenky, Soviet-Jewish writer and former co-worker of Solomon Mikhoels in the Moscow Jewish State Theater. He is preparing a play on Spinoza.

Born in a suburb of Amsterdam on Nov. 24, 1632, Baruch Spinoza was raised in a traditionally orthodox Jewish home. He studied the Hebrew scriptures in a local Talmud Torah and soon earned the reputation of

brilliant scholarship. By the time of his death in Feb. 1677, at the age of 44, this student of the Tanach, the Torah and the writings of the Prophets, had already become recognized as a thinker of premier rank.

What brought about Spinoza's critical examination of the Hebrew scriptures gradually led him to break with the mysticism of the Hebrew religion, to question the existence of a God, outside and apart from nature, and to conclude that nature must be studied on the basis of its own inner forces and laws. Here then is the materialist philosophy in its infant but basic form. Here then is the root of Spinoza's clash with the obscurantists of the Amsterdam Kehillah who saw in his search for truth a heretical challenge to their spiritual and temporal influence.

What did the Kehillah leaders do?

At first they tried to bribe Spinoza. They offered him 1,000 florints if he would promise to go to the synagogue on Saturdays and on the im-



Benedict Spinoza

portant holidays and would refrain from making his free-thinking views public.

When young Spinoza flatly rejected this proposition, an attempt was made to silence him with physical violence. Leaving a theater one evening, he was pounced upon by a hooligan wielding a knife. He nearly perished as a result of this inspired and murderous attack.

**It was** at this time that Spinoza published his first book: *The Short Tractate on God, Man and his Well-being*. The appearance of this book caused a wave of panic among the Amsterdam rabbinate. With all the

force at their command they called for the expulsion of this "atheistic upstart" from Jewish communal life. On July 27, 1656 a public hearing—at which Spinoza refused to appear—was held. A declaration was adopted and distributed for proclamation in every synagogue in Holland, condemning Spinoza to "everlasting damnation" and warning all Jews to cease any relations with him.

Not content with this step, the rabbinate reported Spinoza to the burgo-master of Amsterdam who then ordered his expulsion from the city.

Belenky then describes Spinoza's wanderings around the country and his eventual settlement in The Hague. Without means of earning a livelihood, Spinoza learns the trade of glass-cutting. In his spare time he continues his intensive researches and publishes a number of monumental works: *The Tractate on Improving the Mind*; *Theological-Political Tractate*; *The Ethics*; *Political Tractate*; a Hebrew grammar; *The Principles of Descartes' Philosophy*.

At no time is there any sign of bitterness on Spinoza's part regarding his treatment by the Jewish and governmental authorities. Belenky quotes one of Spinoza's contemporaries, Colerus, to describe his behavior and state of mind:

"Spinoza lived a well-ordered and even life. He was master of his difficulties at all times—no one saw him either too sad or too happy. . . . When he was tired he would set aside his work and his philosophical researches, leave his room and join

his neighbors in every-day conversation and listen to their gossip and small talk."

This even-tempered conduct Spinoza raised to the level of a principle of human behavior. His motto—No laughing, no crying—Belenky tells us, he employed as a weapon against the emotionalism and lack of calm objectivity of religion. With dispassionate logic, he brought God down from the heavens and placed Him upon the earth where He, in his opinion, belonged. "Nature is its own creator," Spinoza declared. It needs no external force for its existence.

Conducting a vigorous polemic against obscurantism of any sort, Spinoza came out for full freedom of thought and speech.

**Characteristic** of this principled belief in freedom of thought is Spinoza's reaction to an offer to become professor of philosophy at Heidelberg University. This offer would permit Spinoza to teach anything he wished provided it did not destroy the recognized authority of religion. Spinoza rejected this post because "it is not clear what limits I would have to place on my freedom to philosophize in order to obviate the danger that I might undermine the recognized religious authority."

In his basic and most authoritative work, *The Ethics*, Spinoza develops fully his materialist conception of nature. Evaluating this book, Belenky states:

"The basic substance, contends Spinoza, is nature or God. Yes, Spin-

oza equated nature with God, in order to combat the idea of a supernatural force with an independent existence. Great thinker though he was, this reflected the period in which he lived and he succumbed in his terminology to a 'theoretical carry-over,' although his philosophical system was thoroughly materialist."

Spinoza recognized that thought, consciousness, was not a basic substance in itself but was an integral part of nature—the very same nature whose existence as a product of God he so vigorously denied. In this respect Belenky regards Spinoza as a real pioneer. Up until Spinoza, Belenky states, materialists based themselves on Descartes (French philosopher of the 17th century), who considered thought and nature as two separate and basic categories. This dualism, Spinoza took issue with. He developed a monistic (single) concept of thinking and being which placed each as but different aspects of a single basic substance—nature, i.e., that thought has no existence outside of nature.

True enough, states Belenky, Spinoza's materialism was not dialectic. He did not see the interaction and true relationship between life and consciousness, between being and thinking. "But in his struggle against Descartes," Belenky explains, "he furthered historical progress, Spinoza's monism is an important stage in the development of philosophical thought."



Belenky tells us that Spinoza believed in a social order in which complete harmony reigned, in which everyone lived together as a "single body and soul." He condemned war, race hatred and extolled the brotherhood of man. "Seek your God in your fellow man," he repeated on numerous occasions.

Remembering that these words were written some 200 years ago, it

is little wonder that Spinoza has had such a lasting influence on human thought. He has provided inspiration for some of the greatest intellects during the last three centuries. As Heinrich Heine puts it:

"Reading Spinoza . . . is like wandering into a rich forest of thought. From Spinoza's works . . . there blows the fresh breeze of the future. . . ."

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## HOW JEWS VOTED

*(Continued from page 9)*

### *Issues Behind Jewish Voting*

What, then, are the issues which have led Jews to these choices? Dr. Fuchs sums them up as internationalism in foreign affairs and liberalism in domestic relations. The Jews "have been foremost in their support for social security, unemployment insurance, favorable labor legislation, and progressive taxation . . . tending always to favor the lower income groups in their opinions on the distribution of economic power." They have been "in the forefront of civil liberties movements" and conspicuous among the white population in the fight for equality for the Negro people. They have been "fierce defenders of intellectual independence" and allergic to McCarthyism. Therefore they have voted for liberals, progressives and radicals wherever they found them, mostly for liberals in the Democratic Party.

The issue of internationalism, however, is more complex. Their history as a people, and their concern with Jews in other countries have produced an international outlook among Jews. Therefore, Roosevelt's resistance to the international menace of Hitlerism, first as an individual spokesman for collective security ("quarantine the aggressor") and then as leader in the war, welded the Jews to his side.

But Dr. Fuchs observes correctly that this allegiance to the Democratic party has persisted, and attributes this to this internationalism. Currently, he notes, "Jews have been first among the supporters of the U. N., world government plans, Point Four, more liberal immigration policies and aid to Europe." This is a mixed internationalism, on which internationalists themselves have differences. Some internationalists deny, for example, that Point Four and "aid to Europe" are international in the sense that they really help the peoples of the receiving countries and assert that they are

subtle forms of American expansionism and domination. Because Dr. Fuchs, following the conventional distinction between "internationalists" and "isolationists," ignores this confusion, his conclusions need to be taken with some reservations. Critically weighed, however, his findings are valuable.

### ***Influence of Anti-Semitism***

In his final chapter, Dr. Fuchs ventures to explain why Jews of all classes are internationalists and domestic liberals. First he reports that Jews, although high up on the economic ladder, are "made deeply insecure" by anti-Semitic restrictions. He observes that "very few [are the Jews] who do not sense that the security of the Jewish group depends in great measure upon the largesse of liberal government." While agreeing with this, we should also call attention to a caution already entered by Samuel Lubell, that Dr. Fuchs underestimates the extent to which "Jews have divided among themselves along economic lines" in their recent political behavior.

Dr. Fuchs, however, attaches greater weight to what he defines as "Jewish group values" than to the pressure of anti-Semitism. These values he asserts to be three: an exceptional regard for learning, a high sense of social justice and a non-ascetic attachment to the pleasures of life. "Their insecurity as Jews," Dr. Fuchs concludes, "served to emphasize Jewish values as points of

reference for political action." Dr. Fuchs's elaborate chapter and vigorously argued thesis are worth serious discussion.

In this bare outline we have suggested the values and importance of the book. There are innumerable facets and facts of great interest that cannot even be enumerated in this brief space. There is much detail about the political behavior of Jews in New York, Boston, Chicago and Philadelphia, but nothing about Los Angeles and Miami (many other cities are described without detail, and the index is a fine guide to these). JEWISH LIFE will be glad to report readers' reactions and opinions on Dr. Fuchs's facts and interpretations.

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## **JUDAISM**

*(Continued from page 19)*

demand that we accept the revolutionary changes shaking the world and seek to guide them into democratic and peaceful channels."

The book contains much useful information, such as a directory of organizations active in the field of social action, important resolutions taken by responsible bodies in Jewish life, a listing of 20 questions relevant to social action and a list of members of the Commission on Social Action of UAHC. The book is well-printed, attractively designed and imaginatively illustrated in chapter headings by Russell Roman.



## ILYICHEV INTERVIEW

(Continued from page 31)

rapidly advanced specialists of nationalities previously held back by tsarist oppression.

In her interview with Mr. Ilyichev, Miss Petran also cites an interview with Moscow Rabbi S. Shlifer in which the rabbi asserted that "during (Security Chief) Beria's regime there were isolated manifestations of anti-Semitism in different places. But even under Beria there was never any state anti-Semitic doctrine." This seems to us true, even if anti-Semitism was practiced by the state security organs, as in the Moscow doctors case, under the mask of "security."

Miss Petran called to Mr. Ilyichev's attention the statement of Mme. Furtseva in a previous interview (*National Guardian*, June 25) to the effect that in certain departments where there was a very heavy concentration of Jews, they were transferred to equally good positions elsewhere. Ilyichev replied that he had secured an explanation from Mme. Furtseva of her meaning: in some cases there was a concentration of certain types of specialists in excess of the economic needs at the time. Such specialists were transferred to positions in other branches of the economy regardless of nationality.

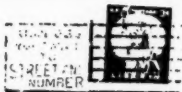
We can only say that the explanation is quite different from the original statement. We believe that

further elucidation is needed.

Finally, Mr. Ilyichev stated that it is Soviet policy not to issue statements on past miscarriages of justice, although the good names of the victims are being rehabilitated. We cannot believe that this is the final word on the matter. We, like others, have asked that the Soviet Union officially let the world know precisely what did happen to Yiddish writers and culture in that tragic period. Khrushchev, in his secret report as published in the *N. Y. Times*, did mention the crimes against other peoples (the Karachi, Kalmyks, etc.), conspicuously omitting any reference to the Jews. It seems to us that interest in this matter on the part of the rest of the world is amply justified, especially in the case of the Jewish people, who have so long and so often been victims of injustice and persecution.

We believe that the cause of socialism and of world peace has been strengthened by the measures taken in the Soviet Union to remedy injustices against Jewish writers and culture, as well as against other nationalities. But basic questions remain unanswered. Exactly what did happen to Yiddish culture, and why? What are the government plans for official encouragement of the rebuilding of Yiddish press and culture and educational institutions? We believe that peace and socialism would be advanced if these questions were answered.

# letters



## FROM READERS

### Our Reader Disagrees

*Editors, JEWISH LIFE:*

I have read very carefully and several times your first printed letter in the July issue and the Editors' reply and I wish to make some general observations concerning both.

The importance of the question of Arab-Israel relations and the continuance of the drive for peace in the Middle East are paramount not only to Americans and the world but most particularly to American Jews, who remember well that six millions perished in the nightmare of nazidom.

As editors of a Jewish cultural magazine, you should find somewhere within the confines of the editorial personality some sympathy, some understanding and some measure of warmth for S. Murray, a friend wracked by the anguish and tortured by the nightmare of the recent Soviet disclosures concerning the treatment of Jewish culture and the Jewish people in that country. From there to the present picture

of a socialist country (Czechoslovakia) selling arms to a rabidly anti-Israel state on its borders is not too far a jump for S. Murray or for any other decent-minded American Jews who see in this an outright betrayal of the basic ideology of the struggle for peace.


Let us get a few things straight.

1. I think your answer is a little supercilious and completely fails to understand the emotional impact of the Czech arms deal with Egypt.

2. In the "b." part of your answer you completely duck the issue of "alliances," as it were. You know very well that by "alliance" S. Murray meant deals of one kind or another.

3. A deal between Czechoslovakia and Egypt for arms smacks of the same "dealing from strength" cynicism as the Dulles deals with Saudi Arabia et al. And fancy language on your part will not change things or facts.

4. What is your solution? You spend most of the answer to S. Murray refuting what he says or ridiculing his



## The DEVIL IN THE BOOK

**BY DALTON TRUMBO**

Facts concerning the controversial Smith Act Trials, by the author of *Johnny Got His Gun*, *Remarkable Andrew*, and screenplays *Kitty Foyle*, *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo*, and *A Guy Named Joe*.

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choice of words or telling us that it is not your intention to defend Soviet Middle Eastern policy and then proceed in a few hundred well-chosen words to do precisely that.

In your answer I see nothing creative. Nowhere do you mention the United Nations, nowhere a call for the question to be aired fully in the UN. Nowhere do you point out the role Americans can play in exerting pressure for a return to sane discussion in an *international* organization.

All you talk of is Big Four unity for peace. Well, why doesn't the Soviet Union lead the fight in breaking through the *cordon sanitaire* that has been erected on this question in the UN.

When Shepilov offers Egypt one billion for a dam, all of us cheer. But when Czechoslovakia offers and sells Egypt arms for a damn war, we are all disturbed. And make no mistake but that the Arab nations are just aching to wipe out Israel (see your quote on page 13 by the Syrian UN delegate).

Israel is the child of the UN, one of its brightest creations, and we must not let it be destroyed because of the power politics of large and powerful nations.

All your readers really ask of you is not that you have answers to all questions or that you even are correct

most of the time. Only that you try to analyze fairly without destroying confidence and understand that your readers for the most part are your friends.

S. G.

### *A Note from England*

*Editors, JEWISH LIFE:*

I find your outspoken attitude, your Jewish reaction and your democratic willingness to print letters on the Soviet Jewish situation which are not strictly on the line, most refreshing and encouraging. I congratulate you, therefore, on the maturity and grasp of the significance of this tragedy which you have shown and I am convinced that, while we all stand or fall among the Jewish people on our position at this time, you have nothing to fear for the future.

In regard to JEWISH LIFE generally—I am not slow to criticize when I consider criticism called for but, quite honestly, I find your magazine really excellent and can think of no single point of criticism.

M. D.

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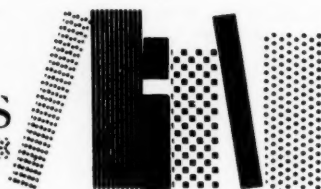
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# BOOK REVIEWS



## ORIGINS OF JEWISH FOLKWAYS

By I. B. BAILIN

*The Holy and the Profane*, by Theodor H. Gaster. Sloan Associates, New York. 256 pages. \$4.00.

**The learned** author of this book is immersed in the deep sea of bygone cultures and myths. Theodor H. Gaster set himself the task of searching for the roots of folkways, superstitions, symbols and ceremonies that the Jews have in common with other peoples who preceded them. He shows how the Jews ingeniously adapted folkways to their own spirit and traditions.

This book is as illuminating as it is entertaining and revealing. Dr. Gaster begins with the "Blessed Event" and the superstitions woven around it.

The author runs the gamut of the Jew's life from conception to birth, to the Days of Peril. According to biblical canon (Book of Leviticus) a woman is unclean for 40 days after confinement with a male infant and 80 days with a female. Based on a statement by Aristotle, the author adds such redoubtable authorities as Abraham Ibn Ezra (1104-1167) and later Isaac Abravanel (1437-1508). They believed that the foetus of a male developed in 40 days, but that of a female in 90 days.

**Such and other** assumptions hark back to Hippocrates (460-357 B.C.).

The difference is attributed to the greater impurities of womanhood because of the sin of some erring goddess or of Eve or to a process of purification through sin-offerings, or to a needed quarantine period against the demons. These notions were taken over by the Christians from the Greeks, Jews and others. Centuries later, the author convincingly maintains, the Jews took them back again from the church in the orthodox custom of women rendering thanks before the open ark of the law.

The author deals with subjects such as the use of names and nicknames to confront the "demons," which are a "reality" common to most ancient peoples, and in the case of Jews down to our own times. Among some peoples the name of the new-born is kept a deep secret or else the demons will immediately do their stuff. One phase of the rite of circumcision (as in the case of Zipora, the desert-wife of Moses) is related to this superstition among the Christians in baptism.

The author discovers such connections in the traditions of many ancient and modern peoples and religions in the rites of betrothal, marriage and death, in the dietary laws and many other practices.

Some traditions seem to be purely

Jewish, but are not. Would you believe that the Hanukkah trendle was borrowed from the German and adapted to the Hanukkah legend: The letters engraved on the four sides of the trendle are N-G-H-S, or *Nun-Giml-Hey-Shin* [letters of the Hebrew alphabet] which, we kids were told, mean "*Ness Godl hoio sham*" (In the time of the Mac-

cabees, a great miracle happened). But in old pagan Germany these letters were used in a game of chance and meant: *Nichts* (nothing) *Ganz* (all), *Halb* (half) and *Stell* (put).

On the whole this book is a highly scholarly work, enlightening and engaging. It shows how close are the ties that unite peoples at the roots.

## **CONTRADICTION, ISN'T IT?**

- JEWISH LIFE celebrates its tenth anniversary with the November issue.
- Not only will the anniversary issue be a great birthday present to its readers, but the occasion will be marked with the publication of a book: "**JEWISH LIFE**" ANTHOLOGY, 1946-1956.
- Leaf back the pages of JEWISH LIFE and you unroll a record of mighty contributions to the Jewish community in its quest for peace, civil rights and cultural riches.
- Leaf the recent and current issues and you find article after article which is indispensable to an understanding of Jewish and world issues.

### **— BUT —**

JEWISH LIFE, despite its contributions and its indispensability in the present period, is being slowly choked by its desperate financial situation. Printers' bills are unpaid, wages for its staff have been unpaid for months. **This is a contradiction, isn't it?**

- You have it in your hands to eliminate this contradiction. Immediate help is necessary! Send your 10th Anniversary present—make it the maximum you can. Raise funds in your organization, among your friends. Organize parties. **Save your magazine!**



### AT HOME

**Jews were targets**, together with Catholics, President Eisenhower and the Supreme Court, of vituperation at Ku Klux Klan revival rallies in South Carolina and Florida in July. . . . At a White Citizens Council rally in Montgomery, Ala., in August, Retired Rear Admiral John G. Crommelin vilified desegregationists and Jews. "We've got to keep this last frontier of the Anglo-Saxon race," he said, "and if I'm wrong, my name's Finkelstein." . . . In a letter to Florida Attorney General Richard Ervin early in August, the Florida Anti-Defamation League asked for an investigation of the Klan to "determine the existence of a criminal conspiracy."

**Southern Jews** and segregation. . . . The North Carolina Association of Rabbis in August once again called for an end to segregation in public schools of the state. . . . Milton K. Susman, editor of the Pittsburgh *Jewish Criterion*, noted (July 7) that in his travels "in the Southland, particularly through Mississippi and Louisiana, we found an astonishingly large number of Jews who had joined White Citizens Councils. They did so, they told us, in order to avoid boycotts and take the pressure off themselves as a minority group which might naturally be sympathetic toward desegregation." . . . In response to statements on desegregation by Northern rabbis, David H. White, a national vice president of B'nai B'rith

and editor of the *Houston* (Texas) *Jewish Herald-Voice*, protested in July that "we can accomplish much more through our own methods than we can by men living outside these Southern states." Many Jews, he said, live where "the rub of reality is much more pertinent to their welfare than of the more secure Northerner. He has to think of his family, of his economic life."

**Florida Governor** LeRoy Collins early in August informed the Anti-Defamation League that no conventions meeting under the auspices of the State of Florida would be held at hotels discriminating against Jews. The statement followed a complaint by the ADL that the Southern Governors Conference on Nuclear Energy recently was held at a discriminatory St. Petersburg hotel.

**A report on bias** in employment, submitted to Philadelphia Mayor R. Dilworth in August by the city's Commission on Human Relations, showed that 15 per cent of the complaints charged discrimination against Jews. Allegations against insurance and financial firms were three times greater among the Jewish complainants than among the total of the remaining cases.

**A survey** conducted by the B'nai B'rith, released in August, of a sampling of members of their youth organization between Ohio and the Rocky Mountains revealed that interest in "Jewish content" activities was last on a list of nine types of interest.

**Jews are** more susceptible to "heart attack" than other patients, according to a survey by the Newark Beth Israel Hospital released in July. The study showed that, although Jews formed less than half the patients during the seven-year period of the study, almost 77 per cent of patients with heart attack were Jewish.

#### ABROAD

**Anti-Semitism rises** in West Europe. . . . A report of a survey sponsored by the American Jewish Committee released in Paris on August 1 reveals that anti-Semitism in West Europe was increasing, particularly in France and West Germany. . . . Surveys in West Germany conducted independently by the North Germany radio network and the newspaper *Die Welt* showed in July that 27 periodicals in West Germany openly preach a "dangerous type of nationalism," that at least 40 regular newsletters and brochures have nazi-like material and six publishing houses issue thinly-disguised nazi literature. . . . The London *Jewish Chronicle* correspondent in Bonn reported (July 27) that "neo-nazi activities in (West Germany) are gathering momentum." Several new neo-nazi groups have recently been established and other neo-nazi groups are expanding their activities.

**The chief rabbi** of Moscow, Rabbi S. Shlifer, early in August invited the Agudas Israel and Mizrachi-Hapoel Hamizrachi (both are Orthodox groups) to visit the Soviet Union. In his letter of invitation to the Agudas Israel, which was written in Hebrew, Rabbi Shlifer wrote that he was "at present engaged in preparation for the establishment of the Yeshiva which is shortly to be opened in Moscow." At the same time, the Board of Deputies, overall representative of British Jewish organizations, is negotiating with the

Soviet Embassy in London for an official delegation to the Soviet Union. (London *Jewish Chronicle*, Aug. 17)

**The Polish government** and the United Workers (Communist) Party are continuing their campaign against manifestations of anti-Semitism. On August 21, Polish President Alexander Zawadski in a meeting before the National Front, the union of Polish parties, demanded that discrimination against national minorities be eliminated. He condemned the attitude among "certain Polish circles" towards the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Jewish and German national groups. "Tendencies of discrimination or signs of anti-Semitism should be strongly opposed," he said. . . . Communist writer Jadwiga Siekierska wrote in the July issue of *Nowe Drogi*, Communist party ideological magazine, that "we are disgraced by anti-Semitism, which is being demonstrated in various forms." She urged party members to combat anti-Semitism.

**Fritz Kortner**, noted German Jewish actor, who was to appear in Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* in Vienna, refused in August to act in it "until such time as intellectual representatives and official circles of Vienna have dissociated themselves" from a recent anti-Semitic incident against a Jewish Viennese critic who adversely criticized German actress Kaethe Dorsch, who assaulted him for it. Neo-nazi motivation is openly admitted in the attack and in those who sympathized with her.

**The majority** of Jews in the three Canadian cities of Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg are wage-earners, according to a survey published in July by Canadian Jewish Congress Research Director Louis Rosenberg.

L. H.



## *The School's the Thing*

**T**WO traditions of Jewish children's education, religious and the secular, have struck deep roots in the United States. In recent years Jewish American parents have shown an intensified interest in the Jewish education of their children. As a result enrollment in the religious schools has leaped forward. The secular schools have also experienced a resurgence of interest and enrollment.

For readers and friends of JEWISH LIFE the educational institutions which meet their own needs most effectively are those secular schools generally known as progressive Jewish schools. These institutions bring the children closer to the social and cultural traditions of generations of Jews who worked to raise their people and the oppressed of the world from darkness to freedom and enlightenment. Today these traditions are embodied in the strivings of the labor movement and of all peoples for a world of peace, friendship and equality.

In the writings of the great humanist giants of Jewish literature, such as Mendele, Peretz and Sholem Aleichem, in the songs and poems of American Yiddish writers, in the study of the liberation strains running through Jewish history, the child discovers his roots in the Jewish past and his aspirations for the future.

The progressive Jewish school is a rich and vital experience for the child. Parents who desire a rounded, modern and secular Jewish education for their children should enroll them in the local progressive schools. JEWISH LIFE will forward requests for information regarding location of existing schools, or on how to start such a school, to appropriate sources.

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*"Observation Post"* has been omitted from this issue owing to Anne Friedlander's being on vacation. She will resume the column in the next issue.

# INDEX TO *Jewish Life*, VOLUME X

## Authors

- Bailin, I. B. Origins of Jewish Folkways—Oct., 40  
 Barkan, Sarah. The Mothers Rejoice (poem)—Nov., 14  
 Berg, Henry. An Important New Musical Work—Jan., 36  
 Bernstein, Elihu. Judaism and Social Action—Oct., 16  
 Bernstein, William. The AJ Congress Convention—June, 25  
 Bick, Abraham. Rashi: Pioneer Scholar and Popular Teacher—June, 23  
 Buchwald, Nathaniel. Jules Dassin—Director in Exile—Dec., 10; A View of the Israel Theater—Feb., 3; A Brilliant Off-Broadway Season—March, 36; A Visit to "Tarbut Laam"—May, 18; Anne Frank's Diary as Drama—June, 21; Are Yiddish Playgoers "Extinct"?—July, 32  
 Buchwald, Stella. The Painting of Max Weber—May, 38; "The Subject Is Accidental"—July, 38  
 Citron, Alice. "Women Against Slavery"—Jan., 34; A Meeting at Thinking Pond (story)—March, 12  
 Da Silva, Howard. A Beautiful, Painful Play—Dec., 30  
 Du Bois, W. E. B. Appraisal of Africa—Feb., 15  
 Eisenshtadt, Peretz and the Full Dress Ball—Nov., 40  
 Fell-Yellin, Sarah. Brothers in Town and in City (poem)—Nov., 15  
 Felshin, Max. Justice for Sobell Is Overdue—June, 18  
 Finkelstein, Sidney. New Drawings of Phil Bard—Nov., 30; Philip Reisman: Realist Painter—Dec., 32; "Ballad of Asser Levy"—Jan., 37; JYF Recordings—Feb., 43; Premiere of Shostakovich's Jewish Song Cycle—June, 40  
 Gold, Michael. The New Orthodoxy of Blankfort—Aug., 12  
 Golden, Harry L. Southern Jews and Segregation—May, 24  
 Goldstein, Israel. Birth of a Giant—Jan., 12  
 Gorelick, Aaron. Portrait of a Straw Boss—Dec., 22  
 Green, Ber. America in the Yiddish Mirror—Jan., 38  
 Harap, Louis. Wouk and His "Marjorie"—Nov., 6; Jewish Labor Committee Hedges—Dec., 28; Toward Peace for Israel—Jan., 6; The Middle Eastern Crisis Unfolds—Feb., 7; Freedom's Lobby Goes to Washington—Apr., 3; The March of Anti-Semitism—May, 28; Hope for Peace in the Middle East—June, 12; Who Impedes Peace in the Middle East—July, 12; Soviet Jews: Latest Eye-Witness Report—Aug., 4; Election Outlook—Oct., 3  
 Heine, Heinrich. The Silesian Weavers (poem)—May, 11  
 Heller, Binem. We'll Go On Living! (poem)—July, 20  
 Hughes, Langston. Mississippi—1955 (poem)—Nov., 23  
 Katz, Moshe. Luria and the Self-Defense—Feb., 26; "Grandfather" Winchewsky—Aug., 26  
 Katznelson, I. Activities of Soviet Yiddish Writers—Apr., 36  
 Kobrin, Leon. Jewish Fishermen in the Ukraine—July, 24  
 Kramer, Aaron. Four Women Poets (introduction and translation)—Nov., 13; trans. of "Heinrich Heine" by Morris Rosenfeld—March, 7; tr. of "The Silesian Weavers" by Heinrich Heine—May, 11  
 Lerman, Louis. Good Boss (story)—Nov., 24; Jo Sinclair's "Changelings"—Apr., 42  
 Lesser, Jeremiah. Middle East Arms Tangle—Nov., 10; "Look" Scans U. S. Jews—Jan., 19; Religious Test for Probation Officers—Feb., 24; Neutralism Grows in Israel—Apr., 10; Israelis Review Their Foreign Policy—May, 14; World Zionism in Crisis—July, 7; Currents in the Middle East—Aug., 15; The Suez Crisis and Israel—Oct., 10  
 Le Sueur, Meridel. Courage of a Jewish Mother—Feb., 20  
 Levy, Abraham. On the Borders (poem)—Jan., 9  
 Levine, Esther. Southern Jewish Views on Segregation—Aug., 20  
 Levy, Abraham. Subversion in the South: White Citizens Councils—March, 3  
 Magil, A. B. Portrait of King Oil—41  
 Marcantonio, Vito. I Cannot Be Silent—Aug., 24  
 Mark, Ber. Adam Mickiewicz and the Jews—March, 18; "Rubble Fighters" of the Ghetto—Apr., 16  
 Marmor, Kalman. Excommunication of Hassidism—Jan., 28  
 Patterson, William L. And Now, Witch-Hunt Against Pensioners—March, 21; "A Matter of Grave Concern"—Aug., 11  
 Paver, Chaver. "The Jewish Tree"—May, 33  
 Pevzner, Sam. Passover: Festival of Liberation—Apr., 7; Prospects for Soviet Yiddish Culture—Oct., 27  
 Posner, Raphael. A Hanukkah Tale—Dec., 16  
 Raboi, Isaac. The Feast of Fresh Vegetables—March, 24  
 Reisin, Abraham. The Revolution in the Little Synagogue (story)—Jan., 21  
 Reisman, Philip. Art work—Nov., 1  
 Reizman, A. How Can I Be Quiet? (poem)—Apr., 21  
 Rosenfeld, Max. Translations: "In the Catskill Mountains" by Morris Rosenfeld—Dec., 18; "Excommunication of Hassidism, by Kalman Marmor—Jan., 28; Luria and the Self-Defense by Moshe Katz—Feb., 26; The Feast of Fresh Vegetables by Isaac Raboi—March, 24; "The Jewish Tree" by Chaver Paver—May, 33; We'll Go on Living by Binom Heller—July, 20; Jewish Fishermen in the Ukraine by Leon Kobrin—July, 24; Adaptation of poem, On the Borders by Abraham Levy—Jan., 9; The Purim Grogger (story)—Feb., 12  
 Rosenfeld, Morris. In the Catskill Mountains—Dec., 18; Heinrich Heine (poem)—March, 7  
 Safran, Hannah. On the Uphill of Time (poem)—Nov., 15  
 Schappes, Morris U. Judah Magnes: Man of Principle—Nov., 18; Anti-Foreignism in U. S. Life—Apr., 28; How Jews Voted in U.S. History—Oct., 7  
 Scheer, Julian. Southern Jews and Segregation, May, 24  
 Schutzer, Arthur. Civil Rights Laws This Year?—June, 8  
 Shipman, Mel. Excommunication of Spinoza—Oct., 32  
 Sichel, Gustav. Free Labor Among the Ancient Hebrews—Aug., 36  
 Silber, Irwin. Slander on Records—Dec., 3  
 Siskind, Max. Religion in Public Schools—Jan., 3  
 Sobell, Helen. People Are Learning About the Sobell Case—Feb., 32  
 Socor, E. The Tortured French Decade—Dec., 12  
 Stein, Ralph. Festival of Choruses—March, 39  
 Stein, Sarah. Visit With Moroccan Jews—Nov., 3  
 Strauss, Abe. A Blow Against Jimcrow Housing—Jan., 16  
 Swing, Sam. For Walter Lowenfels (poem)—Feb., 14; To the Memory of Albert Einstein (poem)—Apr., 14; To Remember Isabel Gonzales (poem)—May, 30

Teitelboim, Dora. *My Mother's Hands* (poem)—Nov., 16  
 Truchman, Jennie. *The Vibrant Life of Dora Rich*—March, 26  
 Vergelis, Aron. *A Soviet Yiddish Writer Visits His Publisher*—July, 21  
 Wasserman, Ursula. *Music in Israel Today*—Jan., 24  
 Wasserman, Ray. *Jews in Poland Today*—Apr., 22  
 Zakheim, Bernard. Translation of "How Can I Be Quiet?" by A. Reizman—Apr., 21  
 Zitron, Celia Lewis. *The Pattern of Repression in the U. S.*—July, 26

## Subjects

Africa, appraisal of—Feb., 15  
 Aleichem, Sholem, commemoration in USSR—July, 19  
 American Jewish Committee—Apr., 41; Aug., 21; Oct., 20  
 American Jewish Congress, convention of—June, 25; news notes on—Nov., 25; Dec., 27; Feb., 31; March, 16; Apr., 38; Aug., 30; Oct., 21  
 American Labor Party, on Middle East Crisis—Feb., 9  
 Anti-Defamation League—Dec., 27; Feb., 31; July, 30; Aug., 31; report on anti-semitism—May, 28; Oct., 20  
 Anti-Semitism, in Britain—Dec., 41; in Poland—Apr., 24; in USSR—June, 3; Aug., 6; in U. S.—Jan., 10; in West Germany—May, 30; March of—May, 28; of Arab states—May, 31; July, 13; of Pierre Poujade—March, 47  
 Arab-Jewish Relations, Einstein on—Apr., 16; in Morocco—Nov., 4; Judah Magnes on—Nov., 19  
 Arab States, Anti-Semitism of—May, 31. *See also* Middle East; names of particular countries.  
 Art work: by Philip Reisman—Nov., 1; by William Gropper—June, 10  
 Baghdad pact—Dec., 7; Feb., 8  
*Ballad of Asser Levy*—Jan., 37  
 Bandung Conference, and Middle East—Feb., 9  
 Bard, Phil—Nov., 30  
 Barkan, Sarah—Nov., 13  
 Ben Haim, Paul—Jan., 24  
 Bittelman, Alexander—March, 21  
 Blackfort, Michael, *The Strong Hand* (review)—Aug., 12  
 Bloch, Joshua—Jan., 40; March, 42  
 B'nai B'rith—Jan., 32; July, 30; Aug., 21; Oct., 20  
 Book publishing, in Israel—Apr., 27  
 Book reviews. Listed under author of book.  
 Brainin Clinic—May, 20  
 Broderzon, M.—Oct., 28  
 Buchwald, Nathaniel, obituary—Aug., 3  
 Catholic Church, and desegregation—May, 25  
 Central Conference of American Rabbis—May, 38; Aug., 31  
 Chagall, Marc, exhibit by—July, 38  
 Church and State—June, 26  
 Civil rights, American Jewish Congress and—June, 26; in U.S.—June, 8; July, 26; Washington assembly on—Apr., 3; in 1956 elections—Oct., 3  
 Cleveland, campaign against Jimcrow housing in—Jan., 16  
 "Cosmopolitanism"—June, 4  
*Cowboy on a Wooden Horse* (play)—Feb., 41  
 Czechoslovakia, and Egypt—Nov., 10; Dec., 8; March, 8; Slansky trial—June, 5; July, 37  
 Dassin, Jules—Dec., 10  
 Desegregation, Feb., 30; Jewish actions on—May, 36; Aug., 35; Southern Jews on—May, 24; July, 3; Aug., 20; Southern labor and—Oct., 33  
*Diary of Anne Frank* (play)—Dec., 30; June, 21  
 Dreyfus, Albert—Dec., 12  
 Druckman, Zena, letter by—Dec., 37  
 Education. *See* Desegregation; Jewish education; Public schools.  
 Egypt, and Czechoslovakia—Nov., 10; Dec., 8;

March, 8; and Middle East crisis—Dec., 43; and Suez Canal—Oct., 10  
 Einstein, Albert, on Arab-Jewish relations—Apr., 14  
 Eisenshtadt, Shmuel—May, 22  
 Elections (U. S., 1956)—Oct., 3  
 Emma Lazarus Federation—Nov., 34; Dec., 27  
 Epstein, Benjamin R., *Cross-Currents* (review)—May, 28  
 Fast, Howard—Apr., 37  
 Fell-Yellin, Sarah—Nov., 13  
 "Festival of Music on Jewish Themes"—Jan., 36  
 Folks-Shtimme (Polish Yiddish-language newspaper)—Jan., 20; May, 3; June, 34, 37; Aug., 9  
 Forster, Arnold, *Cross-Currents* (review)—May, 28  
 Foster, William Z.—March, 21  
 Fuchs, Lawrence H. *The Political Behavior of American Jews* (review)—Oct., 7  
 Gaster, Theodor H. *The Holy and the Profane* (review)—Oct., 40  
 Geneva Conference of Foreign Ministers—Dec., 15  
 German Federal Republic, rearming of—Dec., 15  
 Goldmann, Nahum—June, 14; July, 8  
 Great Britain, and Middle East crisis—Dec., 8  
 Green, Jack, letter from—May, 42  
 Gunther, John, *Inside Africa* (review)—Feb., 15  
 Habimah (theater)—Feb., 4  
 Hadassah—Dec., 26  
 Halasz, Nicholas, *Captain Dreyfus: the Story of a Mass Hysteria* (review)—Dec., 12  
 Hassidism, excommunication of—Jan., 28  
 Hebrew language—Jan., 43  
 Hebrews (ancient), free labor among—Aug., 36  
 Highams, John, *Strangers in the Land* (review)—Apr., 28  
 Ilyichev, L. P.—Oct., 30  
 Internal Security Act—Nov., 17  
 Iraq, Turkish pact with—Dec., 7  
 Israel, arms for—Nov., 10; July, 12; and Middle East crisis—Dec., 6; book publishing in—Apr., 27; cultural activities in—May, 18; dangers confronting—June, 12; eighth birthday of—May, 12; foreign policy of—March, 8; Apr., 10; May, 14; immigration to—May, 23; music in—Jan., 24; neutralism in—Jan., 8; Apr., 10; relations with Jordan—Feb., 7; theater in—Feb., 3; toward peace for—Jan., 6; and Suez Canal—Oct., 10; 1956 election campaign and—Oct., 6  
*Jewish Book Annual*—Apr., 37  
 Jewish cultural exchange, call for—Jan., 20  
 Jewish education—Dec., 36; Aug., 31  
 Jewish Labor Committee—Nov., 35; Dec. 28; May, 37; July, 31  
*Jewish Life*: errors of—June, 34; Aug., 42; new format—Feb., 42; ownership statement—Nov., 47; tenth year of—Nov., 12  
 Jewish music—Jan., 36  
 Jewish Music Alliance—March, 39  
 Jewish People's Philharmonic Chorus—Jan., 37  
 Jewish social work—Dec., 37  
 Jewish War Veterans—Dec., 26; Feb., 31; Apr., 40; June, 32; July, 30; Aug., 30; Oct., 21  
 Jewish Young Folksingers—Feb., 43  
 Jews, Adam Mickiewicz and—March, 18; and desegregation—Aug., 35; in Morocco—Nov., 3; in Poland—Apr., 22; in Southern states—May, 24; July, 3; Aug., 20; in USSR—Apr., 36; May, 3; June, 3; 34; July, 16; Aug., 4, 8, 11; in U. S.—Jan., 10; in USSR—Oct., 30; voting in U. S. history—Oct., 7  
 Kaganovich, Lazar—Oct., 29  
 Katz, Mickey—Dec., 3  
 Katz, Moshe—Feb., 27  
 Khrushchev, N. S.—July, 16  
 Klein, B., letter from—June, 39  
 Kramer, Aaron, *Ballad of August Bondi* (review)—Feb., 38  
 Labor. *See* Trade unions  
 Lamont, Corliss, *Freedom is as Freedom Does* (review)—July, 26

Lerman, Louis—Jan., 42; Feb., 41  
 Lipman, Eugene J. *Justice and Judaism: The Work of Social Action* (review)—Oct., 16  
 Los Angeles Community Council—Jan., 32  
 Look magazine, on U.S. Jews—Jan., 10  
 McCarran (internal security) Act—Nov., 17  
 McCarran-Walter (immigration) act—Jan., 33  
 Magnes, Judah L.—Nov., 18  
 Magil, A. B., *Which Way Israel?* (review)—Apr., 44  
 Mandel, Tanya, letter from—Aug., 41  
 Mandel, William, letter from—June, 37  
 Meisel, Nachman, *America in Yiddish Vor* (review)—Jan., 38  
 Mickiewicz, Adam—March, 18  
 Middle East, arms tangle in—Nov., 10; Jan., 6; currents in—Aug., 15; hope for peace in—June, 12; questions and answers on—March, 8; U.S. policy in—May, 15; way out of crisis—Dec., 6; who blocks peace?—July, 12  
 Mindel, Jacob—Jan., 44; March, 21  
 Mindel, Rebecca, letter from—July, 45  
 Mississippi, and Till murder—Nov., 22  
 Morocco, Jews in—Nov., 3  
 Murray, S., letter by—July, 42  
 Music, in Israel—Jan., 24  
 Music, Jewish—Jan., 36; March, 39  
 National Jewish Welfare Board—June, 32  
 Negroes, education. See Desegregation; housing of—Jan., 16; notable dates in U.S. history—Feb., 19; Washington civil rights assembly—Apr., 3  
 Nelson, Steve, letter from, June, 39  
 Neutralism, in Israel—Jan., 8; Apr., 10  
 New York City, religion in schools of—Jan., 3; religious test for probation officers—Feb., 24  
 New York Daily News—Nov., 8  
 O'Connor, Harvey, *Empire of Oil* (review)—June, 41  
 Oren, Mordecai—July, 37  
 Passover—Apr., 7  
 Peretz, Isaac Leib—Nov., 40  
 Petran, Tabitha—Oct., 30  
 Petroleum industry—June, 41  
 Phonograph records, anti-Semitic slander on—Dec., 3  
 Plays, Listed under name of play.  
 Poems: Brothers in Town and in City, by Sarah Fell-Yellin—Nov., 15; For Walter Lowenfels, by Sam Swing—Feb., 14; Heinrich Heine, by Morris Rosenfeld—March, 7; How Can I Be Quiet? by A. Reizman—Apr., 21; In the Catskill Mountains—Dec., 18; Mississippi, 1955, by Langston Hughes—Nov., 23; The Mothers Rejoice, by Sarah Barkan—Nov., 14; My Mother's Hands, by Dora Teitelboim—Nov., 16; On the Borders, by Abraham Levy—Jan., 9; On the Uphill of Time, by Hannah Safran—Nov., 15; the Silesian Weavers, by Heinrich Heine—May, 11; To Remember Isabel Gonzales, by Sam Swing—May, 30; To the Memory of Albert Einstein, by Sam Swing—Apr., 14; We'll Go On Living by Binem Heller  
 Poland, Anti-Semitism in—Aug., 14; Jews in—Apr., 22; Jews in (19th Cent.)—March, 18  
 Poujade, Pierre, anti-Semitism of—March, 47; Apr., 41, 48  
 Prago, Albert—Jan., 42; Feb., 41  
 Prague trial (1952)—June, 4; July, 37  
 Private Life of the Master Race (play)—March, 37  
 Probation officers, religious tests for—Feb., 24  
 Progressive Shules—Dec., 36  
 Public schools, religion in—Jan., 3  
 Rabbinical Assembly of America—June, 32  
 Rabinowitz, Sholom. See Aleichem, Sholem  
 Rashi (1040-1106)—June, 23  
 Red Roses For Me (play)—March, 38  
 Reisman, Philip—Dec., 32  
 Religion, in public schools—Jan., 3; June, 26  
 Religious tests, for probation officers—Feb., 24  
 Rich, Dora, death of—Nov., 21  
 Rich, Dora, life of—March, 26  
 Rosenberg, Ethel and Julius—June, 16

Rosenfeld, Max, letter from, June 34  
 Rotenberg, Sol, letter from—Aug., 40  
 Rubinstein, Annette, letter by—Feb., 41  
 Russia. See U.S.S.R.  
 Safran, Hannah—Nov., 14  
 Saudi Arabia, anti-Semitism in—July, 15  
 Schappes, Morris, letter from—Oct., 28; Aug., 42  
 School desegregation. See Desegregation.  
 Segal, Eugene—Jan., 16  
 Short stories: Good Boss, by Louis Lerman—Nov., 24; A Meeting at Thinking Pond, by Alice Citron—March, 12; The Revolution in the Little Synagogue—Jan., 21  
 Shoskes, Henry—Oct., 27, 29  
 Shostakovich, Dmitri—June, 40  
 Sillen, Samuel, *Women Against Slavery* (review)—Jan., 34  
 Sinclair, Jo, *The Changelings* (review)—Apr., 42  
 Slansky, Rudolf—June, 3  
 Sobell, Morton—Feb., 32; June, 18  
 Social work, Jewish—Dec., 37  
 Southern states, Jews in—May, 24; July, 3; Aug., 20; labor and desegregation—Oct., 22  
 Southland Jewish Organization—Apr., 40  
 Soviet Union. See U.S.S.R.  
 Spinoza, Benedict—Oct., 32  
 Stalin, Joseph—July, 16  
 Stephen Wise Award—Jan., 32  
 Strauss, Abe, letter from—Aug., 40  
 Subversive Activities Control Board—Nov., 17  
 Suez Canal, Israel and—Oct., 40  
 Suller, Chaim, on Soviet Jews—Aug., 4  
 Syria, and Middle East crisis—Feb., 7  
 "Tarbut Laam"—May, 18  
 Teitelboim, Dora—Nov., 14  
 Theater, in Israel—Feb., 3  
 Theater, Yiddish—July, 32  
 Till, Emmett Louis—Nov., 22  
 Trade unions, in Israel—Jan., 19; merger in U.S.—Jan., 12; and desegregation—Oct., 22  
 Turkey-Iraq pact—Dec., 3  
 Uncle Yanya (play)—March, 36  
 Union of American Hebrew Congregations—Nov., 34; Dec., 26; July, 31; Aug., 30  
 Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and Israel—Dec., 45; and Middle East—Feb., 11; March, 10; Aug., 16; Jews in—Apr., 36; May, 3; June, 3, 34; July, 16; Aug., 4, 8, 11; Yiddish writers in—Apr., 36; July, 21; Jews in—Oct., 30; Yiddish culture in—Oct., 27  
 United States, and Israel—March, 30; May, 14, 29; and Middle East—Dec., 6; Aug., 16; Anti-Semitism in—May, 29; Congress and civil rights—June, 8; presidential elections—Oct., 3  
 United Synagogue of America—Jan., 33  
 Vorspan, Albert, *Justice and Judaism: the Work of Social Action*—Oct., 16  
 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, 13th anniversary—Apr., 15; "Rubble Fighters" of the Ghetto—Apr., 16  
 Washington, civil rights assembly—Apr., 3  
 Weber, Max, painting of—May, 38  
 Wellman, Saul—March, 22  
 White Citizens' Councils—March, 3; Apr., 46; May, 41; Oct., 22  
 Winchevsky, Morris—Aug., 26  
 Women poets, Nov., 13  
 Workmen's Circle—March, 16  
 World Zionist Congress—July, 7  
 Wouk, Herman, *Marjorie Morningstar* (review)—Nov., 6  
 Yiddish culture, in USSR—Oct., 27  
 Yiddish language—Jan., 43  
 Yiddish literature—Jan., 38  
 Yiddish periodicals, in Israel (list)—June, 16  
 Yiddish theater—July, 32  
 Yiddish writers, in USSR—Dec., 41; Apr., 36; July, 21; Aug., 5  
 Zionism, and Imperialism—July, 42; world crisis in—July, 7  
 Zionism, and arming of Israel—Dec., 42; and Middle East crisis—Nov., 11; March, 11; trial in USSR reported—June, 44

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