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School Desegregation in N. Y.

by Max Stein

New Moves Against McCarran-Walter

by Abner Green

Esther

a Purim story by Sholem Aleichem

Progress Toward Middle East Peace?

by Jeremiah Lesser



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SCHOOL DESEGREGATION IN N. Y.

Measures are being pressed to break
down Jimcrow in education

By MAX STEIN

WHAT is the relation of decent white folk up North to the new situation created by the Supreme Court decision on school desegregation? While the Negro people in New York City have joined the struggle to eliminate Jimcrow from schools, it cannot be said that the rest of us have *fully* seen our responsibility. Northern white people tacitly assume that Northern cities do not have segregated society—as indeed is the case *legally*. Up to a few years ago, charges of Jimcrow in education in New York City by Negroes and white progressives had been vigorously denied by the New York City Board of Education. In the heightened current struggle, led largely by the Negro people, the Board now admits the truth. But it has not set about determinedly to eliminate school segregation.

The Board had put the blame on segregated housing. Jimcrow housing—for which the Board may properly claim no blame—is a factor in the creation of Jimcrow schools. What the Board failed to see was

that in the face of the reality, they did have a *responsibility* in the school situation. Indeed, let it be noted that the Board had never been entirely without blame, for in some cases the Board had gerrymandered school districts to guarantee that certain new schools would bypass Negro neighborhoods. The Board now recognizes that it can help remedy the situation by school zoning in such a manner—particularly in areas peripheral to compact colored neighborhoods—as to embrace both white and non-white neighborhoods.

In the current movements to eliminate Jimcrow schools, the Board set up a special commission on zoning. Some doubt is cast on the Board's good faith by its failure to integrate the newly constructed Junior High School 258 in the Negro Bedford-Stuyvesant area in Brooklyn, where Jimcrow schools are the rule. Segregation in this new school, which opened 16 months after the Supreme Court decision illegalizing segregated schools, aroused the Negro community to militant activity. Civic

and Jewish organizations joined forces with Negro groups in the stepped-up campaign.

What Teachers Said

There are signs that the Northern white population is assuming greater responsibility on this issue. Many important organizations, including the United Parents Associations, supported at the January 17 hearing of the New York City Board of Education the reports of the Commission on Integration dealing with school re-zoning and teacher assignment for schools to be integrated.

It was unfortunate that most of the teacher representatives at the hearing opposed the report. Except for the statement of Mrs. Rose Russell, representing the Teachers Union (Independent), who was the "only teacher representative to endorse fully the two integration recommendations" (*N. Y. Post*, Jan. 18), all the representatives of the major teacher organizations in one form or another rejected the reports. The other teacher organization connected with labor, the Teachers Guild (AFL-CIO), gave endorsement "with reservations." The objections were that re-zoning would "inconvenience" pupils and parents through the bus transportation that integration would require; that "race consciousness" would engender conflict and hostility; that experienced teachers would be reluctant to trans-

fer to the desegregated schools.

Certainly this expression from teacher leaders could not have been voiced if the teachers and public at large had a clearly defined feeling about their responsibility to contribute to a solution of the problem. In the North, there is a basis for the development of mass action among the whites in the strong support for desegregation officially given by such organizations as the United Parents Association, the Public Education Association, the Citizens Committee on Children, The Intergroup Committee on New York's Public Schools, the American Jewish Committee, the Urban League, the American Jewish Congress, the NAACP, B'nai B'rith and others.

Who Is To Blame?

Despite the resistance exhibited by teachers at the January 17 hearing, it would be a serious error to view the teachers as the main impediment. This would lead to wrong paths of action in the campaign. Yet teachers are not altogether free from a share in the blame, in the same sense that all the people share in it. The problem is Everyman's problem. But that the main and immediate responsibility rests upon the Board of Education is amply demonstrated by the facts. If the Board offered leadership and concrete action on the current reports, masses of



people, as individuals and in their organizations, would have forced the needed funds for desegregation from the governmental organs.

That de facto segregation of Negro and Puerto Rican children exists and that this segregated education is inferior to that of the rest of the school system is shown by some revealing figures. These facts point to the identity of those mainly responsible. The figures also show what corrective action must be taken. The current movement has provided much publicity for these facts, which are not, however, new.

Two years ago, shortly after the Supreme Court decision, Prof. Kenneth A. Clark of City College charged segregation against the New York schools, thereby opening the first battle in the current movement. As recently as December 1956, New York School Superintendent William Jansen angrily denied Prof. Clark's statement that "over 70 per

cent of the children attending public elementary and junior high schools in New York City do not have an opportunity to come in contact with children of different color."

Facts Tell the Story

Most of the telling facts were presented in the report of the conservative Progressive Education Association (PEA) which followed Prof. Clark's presentation of facts and figures to the Supreme Court. This study showed that 445 of the City's 639 elementary and junior high schools (71 per cent) enroll "90 per cent or more Negro and Puerto Rican children or 90 per cent or more children of other ethnic origins." The PEA also observed that the Board has not shown any eagerness to correct this situation. For there are 259 peripheral areas which could easily be integrated.

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Nasty Compliments

A Conversation

By ALICE CHILDRESS

MARGE, I can see why you say you don't like this butcher shop on the corner even if they do have the best quality of meat. . . . I know you have had words with the man that owns the place, but I guess I will really avoid goin' in there after today! . . . Sure, he is sickenin'! . . . I don't pay him too much mind although I have had to jack him up about callin' me "girlie" and "honey-chile," but every once in a while I will find myself wantin' a nice piece of steak and will go in there 'cause it is the closest shop to my house.

When I went in there tonight, he tries to pick a conversation with me by sayin', "There's some *fine* colored people around here, and I can say this: I'd rather know a Negro any day than to know a Jew." All the time he's talkin' he's also grinnin' at

ALICE CHILDRESS is an actress, writer and playwright. Her play, previously named *Trouble in Mind*, has been announced for production on Broadway soon. She is the author of *Like One of the Family* (Independence Publishers, Brooklyn), from which the above is reprinted.

me like a chessy-cat! I suppose he thought he was payin' me a compliment!

So, I says, "You mean that if you had to keep some unpleasant company, you would rather it would be mine." He says, "Oh, no, I mean that colored people are better to deal with than Jews. A Jew will always try to take advantage of you and a Jew will . . ."

I cut him off then. "I'm not interested," I says, "because folks that talk about Jews that way will be very quick to call me 'nigger'!" "Oh, no," he says, "I'd never say anything like that!"

Now, Marge, all this time he is busy cuttin' my round steak and gettin' ready to grind it in the machine. I answered him real snappy, "You're a liar and the truth ain't in you! I have heard you say 'spick' after some Spanish person left the store. I also heard you say 'wop' one day, and I know that if you like nasty words like that you just couldn't resist sayin' 'nigger'."

Well, he looks kind of flustered-like and says, "I'm sorry, sister, all I



Alice Childress

meant was that I like you people." "I know what you meant," I says. "and I don't wanna hear no talk out of you 'bout how you think I'm better than some folks who you consider to be nothin' 'cause if the truth is to be known, I can't imagine *anybody* bein' interested in makin' *your* acquaintance!" The next thing I did was shake my finger at him and read him some more, "You oughta be tickled pink that anybody buys your old, crummy dogmeat!"

... Now, Marge, I know the meat is good, but I just called it "dogmeat" in order to be mean! "Furthermore," I says, "I'm not gonna buy that round steak, and I'm gonna tell all the people I see not to come in here and buy anything you got. I'll bet if everyone was to stay away from this place for a while you'd be tickled to death whenever you finally

did get a customer, any customer!"

I'm tellin' you, those kinda people make me sick! . . . Sure, I remember the time that woman told you about Puerto Ricans. Ain't that some nerve! She's gonna ask *you* what you think of some many of 'em movin' in her neighborhood! I'm glad you told her that you was plannin' on movin' over there *yourself*. I guess that held her for a while! Folks who rent apartments got a real crust to come talkin' about *their* neighborhood!

Marge, if there is one thing I can't stand it's gettin' one of them back-handed compliments! I remember a man tellin' me once that he like me 'cause I was "different." I said, "Different from what?" Then he went into a big old wringin' and twistin' 'bout how some colored people was terrible, but I was very nice. I told him, "You can get off of that 'cause I'm just exactly like most of the colored people I know!"

... You are so right! I know a lot of folks swallow that old line when it gets thrown at them! . . . Don't I see 'em grinnin' and smilin' with that thank-you-so-much look on their faces! But if the fools only knew that as soon as they turned their back another name was pinned on them they'd grin out of the other side of their mouth. No, *nobody is gonna* get in my good graces by tellin' me that some other folk is so distasteful to them that I look nice by comparison! We gotta straighten these name-callers out!

New Moves Against McCarran-Walter

The campaign against the racist law
is revived in Congress

By ABNER GREEN

DEVELOPMENTS during the first month of the 85th Congress indicate that possibilities exist for some changes in the McCarran-Walter law by the present Congress.

The Immigration and Nationality law, to call it by its formal name, was enacted over President Truman's veto in June 1952. Since its passage this law has been subjected to continuous criticism because of its discriminatory, racist and police-state provisions. For four years, Rep. Frances Walter (D., Pa.), co-author of the law, used his position as chairman of the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization to prevent any consideration of the many bills introduced to revise or repeal the law.

Rep. Walter may attempt to continue his one-man dictatorship over immigration legislation and may again prevent Congress from considering any changes in the law. As the Associated Press on Feb. 1 re-

ported one congressman as saying, Rep. Walter "is almost like a caged animal; he is on the defensive constantly; he has become almost psychopathic about any criticism of himself or the act."

The pressure for changes, however, appear of sufficient importance this year to force Rep. Walter to allow Congress, at a minimum, to consider amending the law. Whereas during the last four years Rep. Walter consistently took the position that public hearings on proposed amendments to the law were unnecessary, during the past two months Rep. Walter has stated on several occasions that his subcommittee will hold public hearings. On Jan. 22, the *New York Times* reported that "Mr. Walter said yesterday that his subcommittee would have hearings—but not right way—on a bill to make fundamental revisions in the McCarran-Walter act."

This announcement indicates that Rep. Walter has not succeeded in his attempt to win public support for his position on the McCarran-

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Walter law. To this end, Rep. Walter used his position as chairman of the House Committee on Un-American Activities to foment red-baiting hysteria by an attack on the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born with hearings last November and December in Washington, Youngstown, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle. He has tried this year to use the issue of Hungarian refugees—claiming that “communists” are being allowed to enter as a refugees—to divert attention from the McCarran-Walter law without success.

Some of the developments reflecting the extent of the public pressure for changes in the law during the past month include:

On Jan. 25, four Republican sen-

ators (Ives, Javits, Saltonstall, and Smith) introduced S. 836 providing for extensive technical changes in the immigration provisions of the law.

On Jan. 30, the United States Senate adopted S. Res. 51, authorizing the Senate Judiciary Committee to “examine, investigate and make a complete study of any and all matters pertaining to immigration and naturalization” and submit a report of its findings no later than Jan. 31, 1958.

On Jan. 22, Rep. Emanuel Celler (D., N.Y.) introduced H.R. 3364 and announced that 27 other members of the House of Representatives would introduce an identical bill, which proposes a complete revision
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Latest News About Soviet Jews

ALMOST 10 per cent of all scientists in the Soviet Union are Jewish, although the percentage of Jews in the total population is about one and a half per cent. Harry Schwartz reported in the *N. Y. Times* during Jan. that a Soviet handbook recently published stated that of the 223,893 scientists in the Soviet Union, 133,285 are Great Russians. Second are the Jews with 24,620 and third are Ukrainians with 21,760. . . . On his return from a visit to the Soviet Union, S. Mikunis, secretary of the Israel Communist Party, stated on Jan. 18 in Tel Aviv that there were 260,000 Jews in the Soviet state apparatus, the party, industry, science, literature and art. He added that 40 per cent of all Soviet professors were Jewish. . . . Harrison E. Salisbury reported in the *N. Y. Times* (Jan. 27) that among the many rehabilitated writers whose works are now being republished in the Soviet Union were the Jewish writers Mikhail Golodny, Peretz Markish and the so-called “cosmopolitan” critics Prof. I. Nusinov and I. Altman. . . . Early this year 54 Yiddish writers in the Soviet Union issued a statement of greetings to Z. Vendrof, dean of Soviet Yiddish writers, on his 80th birthday.

Progress Toward Middle East Peace?

Latest steps by the UN and the Soviet Union's plan

By JEREMIAH LESSER

IN THE last issue this magazine expressed a preference for Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's "doctrine" over that of President Eisenhower. On Jan. 7, Mrs. Roosevelt had proposed that the U.S. put the Soviet Union "on the spot" by challenging her to accept a Middle Eastern plan under which she would join the U.S. in an arms embargo and a pledge not to exert military or economic pressure on the area.

On Feb. 12 the Soviet Union did indeed offer a six-point program for settling Middle Eastern questions that was in some respects close to the one Mrs. Roosevelt had dared Washington to propose. In notes to the Big Three, U.S., Britain and France, the Soviet Union asked them to join with it to agree to: 1. settle all Middle Eastern questions by negotiation; 2. not to interfere in Middle Eastern internal affairs and respect independence and sovereignty in the area; 3. reject military alliances of any states in the area with any big power; 4. liquidate foreign bases and withdraw all foreign troops; 5. embargo arms shipments into the area; 6. cooperate in econom-

ic development of the area. (See box on page 13 for full text.)

Would not such an approach solve the thorny problems that have plagued the Middle East, including Israel? Arab refugees, Gaza Strip, maintenance of Egyptian sovereignty, Israel use of the Gulf of Aqaba and the Suez Canal, a settlement of border disputes and other issues become manageable and soluble with such Big Four cooperation.

The Immediate Crisis

In the meantime, the immediately dangerous situation is focussed on the Gaza Strip and the Sharm el-Shiekh area at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba. The UN resolution on Jan. 10 passed by a 74-2 vote (France and Israel in the negative) ordered Israel to withdraw. The Ben Gurion regime, with the support of masses of the Israeli people, has thus far refused to comply. Israel has vowed not to do so until the UN also agrees that Egypt will not return to the Gaza Strip (which was never Egyptian), that Egypt stops its raiding

and grant Israel free passage through the Gulf of Aqaba. The more complex issue of Israel's right to free passage through the Suez Canal is not included in the conditions for withdrawal (*N. Y. Times*, Feb. 12).

In themselves these demands are just. The incessant terrorizing fedayeen raids are not only in defiance of UN decisions and destructive of the security of Israelis, but are also a danger to the maintenance of peace. And Israel has the right and vital necessity of enjoying free passage through the Gulf of Aqaba, which is an international waterway. If Israel's demands were satisfied, some sources of tension would be removed.

However, the United Nations is concentrating on the fact that Israel forcibly occupied these territories and the UN rightly insists that it cannot, as a keeper of the peace, tolerate such actions. A condition for further steps toward granting Israel the guarantees on these points is that Israel withdraw from the Gaza Strip and Sharm el-Sheikh. The UN has thus far failed to enforce its decisions on Israel's right of passage through the Suez and a stop to raiding on Israel. The UN must assume full control of the complex Arab-Israel situation. The UN would be responsible for setting the stage for a new outbreak of war if it allowed a return to the explosive situation that prevailed before the Israel attack on Oct. 29, 1956. To avoid creation of this war danger, the UN must guarantee that Israel's demands be met after the withdrawal.

Imposition of sanctions by the UN

upon Israel would aggravate the situation. Not only would it be discriminatory against Israel, since Egypt too has failed to comply with UN resolutions. Sanctions would not help to solve the problem but would complicate it. Fortunately this has been recognized by UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold, Washington and others. A plan offered by Washington to assure the right of Israel to passage through the Gulf of Aqaba after Israel withdraws from Gaza and Sharm-el-Sheikh may be a beginning to a solution of the immediate crisis. Agreement by the USSR on this point would reinforce the guarantee.

An Overall Solution

But this partial solution still leaves the overall crisis unresolved. The past few years have proved—if demonstration were needed—that only by Big Power negotiation and agreement can the threat to peace be blunted. The turning back of the danger of world war from the aggression against Egypt was possible because the U.S. and the Soviet Union voted on the same side of the issue. Hope for Middle Eastern peace still rests with Big Power cooperation, basically U.S.-USSR cooperation. The Soviet proposals of Feb. 12 therefore offer at least a basis of negotiation to end the war peril in the Middle East.

It is noteworthy that the Soviet Union offers to agree on an arms embargo, which would in effect neutralize the Middle East. If Washington is really interested in promot-

ing peace and not oil super-profits, why should it not consider discussion of these proposals in the tense situation? Washington's scepticism about Moscow's intentions can best be tested by accepting the USSR's offer to negotiate.

Yet, as we went to press just after announcement of the Soviet plan, the plan was shockingly rejected out of hand. "The proposal was rejected," said the *N. Y. Times* (Feb. 13), "before most of the critics had seen more of it than the news teletype reports." The same report stated that "officials and Soviet experts said there was not a point in the program that offered real promise of solving the Middle East's problems." "Not a point," indeed! An arms embargo, Big Power negotiation, joint economic aid, non-interference, no military alliances—these are said to hold no "real promise" of a solution!

The reason for the rejection was readily offered—that the Soviet plan was, as White House Press Secretary James S. Hagerty said, an attempt "to discredit or stop the Eisenhower plan for the Middle East" (*N. Y. Times*, Feb. 13).

The doctrine provides that Congress give the President complete discretion to put U.S. troops into war if some Middle East state attacked by "international communism" requests this and also gives the President unrestricted control of \$200,000,000 to be expended in the area. This move is an attempt to take over military, economic and political control of the Middle East where Britain and France are discredited and being forced out.

Rising Opposition to the Doctrine

Is then the "Eisenhower Doctrine" really an attempt at Middle Eastern peace? The very fact that the people and Congress have insisted on deliberating about the problem, instead of assenting to the administration's plan to hurry it through Congress pell-mell, shows that the American people are worried about the doctrine. Last month this magazine tried to show that the doctrine actually increases tensions and may well lead to war. As Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney said on Feb. 11, the doctrine is a "blank check" to make war—without benefit of Congress. Even John Foster Dulles admitted that no threat of "communist aggression" exists in the Middle East when he declared he had no evidence of any sign of such aggression.

Thus the threat to use U.S. troops appears in its true light as a cold war, tension-breeding instrument. Former Secretary of State Dean Acheson in a speech characterized the doctrine thus: "To fight an enemy that is not going to attack with forces that don't exist, to carry out a policy you haven't decided upon yet." (*N. Y. Times*, Jan. 7). Although his last phrase is true enough, it is not altogether accurate. For the overall policy that the doctrine is designed to carry out is to take over control—filling the "vacuum"—of the large area around the Middle East that France and Britain have had to relinquish. And this is a policy of dollar diplomacy and power penetration which increases tensions in this

(Continued on page 44)

APPROACHES TO ISRAEL-ARAB PEACE

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's Plan

"MRS. Roosevelt suggested," reported the *N. Y. Times* (Jan. 8), "that the United States challenge the Soviet Union to join in an agreement for a hands-off policy toward the Middle East. Each nation should agree to bar the sale of arms to Middle Eastern countries and promise not to attempt to exert military or political pressure on them. The two nations would agree to channel all economic aid through the United Nations."

Dr. Goldmann on ME Neutrality

"AN AGREEMENT between the Soviet bloc and the Western powers to neutralize the Middle East," reported the *London Jewish Chronicle* (Oct. 4, 1956), "was the only way to solve the problems and conflict of 'this most explosive and one of the most important regions in our modern world,' declared Dr. Nahum Goldmann, president of both the World Zionist Organization and the World Jewish Congress, in a forceful speech in London last week. . . . Dr. Goldmann said that only by an agreement to keep the Middle East out of power politics and ideological rivalry could such conflicts as that over Suez and that between Israel and the Arab state be peacefully settled. . . . Within such a neutralized and pacified area Israel could be integrated in the Middle East and

Zionism and Arab nationalism could develop together."

The Soviet Plan

On Feb. 12, the Soviet government sent similar notes to the United States, Britain and France to join in the following plan to solve the Middle Eastern problem:

1. The presentation of peace in the Near and Middle East by settling questions at issue, exclusively by peaceful means, on the basis of the method of negotiations.
2. Non-interference in the internal affairs of the countries of the Near and Middle East. Respect for the sovereignty and independence of these countries.
3. Refusal to undertake any attempts to draw these countries into military alignments with the participation of the great powers.
4. The liquidation of foreign bases and the withdrawal of foreign troops from the territory of countries of the Near and Middle East.
5. Joint refusal to supply arms to countries of the Near and Middle East.
6. Assistance in the economic development of countries of the Near and Middle East, without putting forward any political, military or other conditions incompatible with the dignity and sovereignty of these countries.



ISRAEL

"The Diary of Anne Frank" opened in Tel Aviv at the Habimah Theater, Jan. 22. "Unlike the German and Dutch audiences, which were too stunned by the drama to applaud," wrote the *N. Y. Times* next day, "the Israelis recalled the performers and director for repeated curtain calls." The Habimah cabled Anne Frank's father, Otto, that it would plant an Anne Frank Forest in the Jerusalem hills.

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Israel's Population in Jan. was 1,872,000, of which 89 per cent (1,668,000) was Jewish. The population increase in 1956 was 4.8 per cent. One third the population is already native-born. Emigrants from Israel totaled 8,000, about 11 per cent of the number arriving in 1956; an increasing proportion of emigrants were old settlers. (*Jewish Agency Digest*, Jan. 17, 1957.)

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One thousand books printed in Poland went on exhibition Jan. 8 in Tel Aviv, among them books in Yiddish. Opening the affair, Haim Levanon, Warsaw-born mayor of Tel Aviv, declared that "our mission is to raise the cultural standards of this area." . . . At an international symposium on forestry early in Jan. in Moscow, Dr. E. Gur, director of the Forestry Service of the Israel Department of Agriculture, delivered a paper on the Bible as a source of knowledge about forestry in Palestine 3,000 years ago. . . . Prof. Aharon Katchalsky, head of the Polymer Department of the Weizmann Institute of Science, delivered a paper at the conference on the chemistry and physics of macro-molecular compounds held in Moscow, Jan. 28-Feb. 2, under the auspices of the USSR Academy of Sciences and the Soviet Ministry of Higher Education.

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Yugoslavia ordered 100,000 cases of citrus fruit late in Dec., after having suspended buying operations for a time. . . . The Soviet Union, which bought 528,000 cases last year and was to buy about 800,000 cases this year, has not yet placed its order. . . . At the end of the year, the USSR canceled its order for bananas.

In Jaffa the first teachers' seminary for Arab girls opened late in Dec. with 42 students. Tuition is free, and some students get subsistence loans and grants.

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Surveying the position of the Arab worker in Israel, Ferdynand Zweig, Polish-born economist now in London after two years in Israel, concludes: when working for Arab employers, "the Arab workers' terms of employment are notably below Jewish conditions. . . . The position of the Arab in the Jewish sector of the economy, however, is entirely different. . . . Where the Arab works alongside his Jewish mates, his terms of employment are exactly the same as those of the Jewish workers, and I have heard of no friction or trouble in Arab-Jewish relations in industry . . . the large majority of Arabs working in the Jewish sector are in the Histadrut. However, they are not full members of the Histadrut with full voting rights in the general body of the organization . . . in 1955 only 53.7 per cent of the whole Arab working population were fully employed (against 72.9 per cent of the Jewish population). . . . The Arab question within the Histadrut still remains to be solved, and it can be solved, in the opinion of this writer, only in terms of unqualified equality." (*Israel Speaks*, New York, Dec. 14, 1956.)

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Ben Gurion's resignation has been called for by the Zionist writer, Reb Benjamin, in the Jan. issue of the monthly, *Ner* (Light), published by the Ihud (Unity) group.

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The Communist Party of Israel issued a public statement in mid-January also calling for a new cabinet to replace the one headed by Ben Gurion. Published in *Kol Ha'am* (People's Voice), the statement points out "the lawful rights of our people to independent sovereign existence, to freedom of navigation in the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Aqaba were not ensured by violence and alignment with the colonialists against the Arab peoples. The lawful rights of Israel . . . will be ensured by a policy of national independence, neutrality and solidarity with the anti-imperialist struggle for national liberation of the Arab peoples, and of all the peoples of Africa and Asia. . . ." The CPI proposes immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces to the armistice lines, an end to collaboration with imperialist powers, Britain, France and U.S.A., recognition of the right of Arab refugees to return to Israel and the settling of the border problems. The Communists warn against an impending alliance between France and Israel which might allow French troops to be quartered in Israel and call on the Arab States to recognize the right of Israel to its existence.

M. U. S.

ESTHER

A Short Story

By **SHOLEM ALEICHEM**

THIS is not a story about the *heder* or the Rebbe or the Rebbetsin. I've told you enough about *them* already. In honor of Purim, perhaps you'll allow me to tell you a story about Esther, the Rebbe's daughter?

If Esther of the Megillah was as beautiful as the Esther of *my* story, then it's no wonder that she was such a favorite of Ahasuerus. The Esther of my story was everybody's favorite; everybody loved her, even I and my older brother Motl, who was already Bar Mitzvah and ready for the matchmaker. Motl wore a gold watch and chain, and if I'm not mistaken, was beginning to show the first signs of a beard.

You may take it from me that my brother Motl really loved her. I can tell you exactly how it was. He thought I didn't know that his regular Sabbath-afternoon "study" with the Rebbe was a fake. The Rebbe would be snoring away like a steam-engine. The Rebbetsin would be sitting outside on the grass gabbing with the women. We *heder*-boys

would be playing games. And Motl and Esther would just sit there and look into each other's eyes.

One time we were playing "Kutsibaba." And since you don't know what that is, I'll describe it to you. It's a game where they blindfold you, stand you in the middle of the room, and all the other kids jump around you and yell, "Hey, hey, catch me!"

Motl and Esther liked to play "Kutsibaba" and I knew why. When they played this game with us, they would chase each other and catch each other; first he would catch *her*, then she would catch *him*. There were a lot of other such things I could tell you about, but I'm not that sort. . . .

Once I caught them holding hands. It was an evening in the middle of the week and Motl was supposed to be on his way to synagogue, but he "lost his way" and stumbled upon our *heder*. When he found out the Rebbe wasn't at home, he walked straight over to Esther

and took her hand. I stood there and stared at them and she pulled her hand away. Then he gave me a groshen not to tell anybody. I asked for two. He gave me two. I asked for three. He gave me three. You know something? If I had asked for four, or five, or six, he'd have given them to me. But I'm not that sort. . . .

MY BROTHER MOTL, AS I TOLD YOU, had grown up. He didn't go to *heder* any more and he didn't want to study at home either. My father would call him "Savage!" That's all: "Savage!" Mother couldn't stand it. "What's the idea of calling him 'Savage'—a boy old enough to be married!"

"But that's what he is, a savage!"

And then they would quarrel. I don't know how other fathers and mothers are, but mine never stopped quarreling. Day and night, night and day, that's all they ever did. The stories I could tell you about them, you'd hold your sides . . . but I'm not that sort. . . .

Well, anyway, Motl was no longer studying at *heder*. Nevertheless, he did not forget to send the Rebbe *shalachmones* [gifts] every Purim. After all, a former pupil! This time he had composed a Hebrew poem and was sending it with two rubles as a gift for the Rebbe. Naturally, I was to be the bearer of the *shalachmones*.

"Take this to the Rebbe, and when you return I'll give you ten groshen."

Ten groshen is not to be sneezed at, but I was not quite satisfied. "I want the cash now," I said.

"You're a scoundrel!" my brother said.

"It may be that I am. I won't argue the point. But let me make the acquaintance of the money first."

Who do you think won?

Having paid me the promised ten groshen, he gave me the Rebbe's *shalachmones* in a sealed envelope and, as I was leaving, he quickly stuck another envelope into my hand and whispered: "And give this one to Esther. . . ."

"Esther?"

"Esther!"

Someone else in my place would certainly have asked twice as much for an errand like this, but not I. I'm not that sort. . . .

"Good Lord!" I thought to myself as I walked along with the *shalachmones*, "What can my brother be writing to the Rebbe's daughter? I'd love to take a look. It won't hurt anybody. And I opened Esther's envelope and read . . . a whole Megillah! They were the words of the real Megillah—but what a translation! I'll tell it to you word by word.

"FROM MORDECAI TO ESTHER"

"*Ish*—a man, *Yehudi*—a young fellow, *haya*—there was, *B'shushan habira*—in our town, *ushmo Mordecai*—and his name was Motl. *Vay'hi omayn*—and he loved, *es Hadassah*—

Esther. . . . And the maiden was a beauty and pleased him. And the maiden told no one about this, because Motl had so instructed her. Mordecai, that is, Motl, passes by her *U'vchol yom v'yom*—and every day, Mordecai, that is, Motl, passes by her house and looks at her. And when the time comes for Esther to marry, he will take her unto him for a wife. . . .”

What do you think of that brother of mine, the way he interpreted the Megillah! I decided that I would like to hear what my Rebbe would say about such an interpretation. But how get the cat over the water? I thought of a plan. I'd make a little switch! I would give the Rebbe's poem to Esther, and Esther's megillah to the Rebbe . . . let him enjoy it too! And what if afterward there would be a great commotion? Would that be my fault? Isn't a human being allowed to make a mistake?

“*Gut yomtov*, Rebbe!” I charged into the *heder* with such force that I jarred the Rebbe. “My brother sent you *shalachmones* and wishes you good health!”

The Rebbe opened the letter containing the Megillah, read it, studied it, and examined it on all sides as though he were looking for something else. Then he put on his silver spectacles and read the Megillah again, but this time without even blinking an eye. Just a gentle sigh. Nothing else. Then he said to me: “Wait a bit, and I'll write a few

words, too.”

While I waited, I meandered through the *heder*, accepted a piece of cake from the Rebbetsin, and then, in secret, so no one could see, I handed the Rebbe's poem and his *shalachmones* to Esther. She blushed, hid in a corner, opened the envelope slowly, and then her face flamed and her eyes burned angrily. “Seems like she's not pleased with the *shalachmones*,” I thought to myself and went back to the Rebbe to get the “few words” he had written.

I was already out the door when Esther, tears glistening in her eyes, ran out to me. “Here!” she exclaimed angrily, “give this to your brother!”

ON THE WAY HOME I OPENED THE Rebbe's letter first. This is what it said: “My dear devoted pupil Mordecai, may your light shine in Israel. I thank you very much for the *shalachmones* which you sent me. Last year and the year before you sent me *shalachmones* that was more substantial. . . . This year you have sent me a new commentary on the Megillah. I thank you for the Megillah. But I must tell you, Motl, that I don't like your commentary at all. . . . In the first place, Shushan Habirah was a capital city, not a *shtetl* [small town]. . . . Your interpretation is quite mad and without any feeling. Every commentary must have its own logic. Last year you sent me something else. This year you chose to send our Rebbe a com-

Speidel's Appointment to NATO Command is Protested

ON Feb. 7 came the announcement that the former nazi General Hans Speidel had been appointed commander of the NATO ground forces in Central Europe. Under his command are U.S., British, French, West German, Dutch, Belgian and Danish troops. Before this final official news, however, strong protests against the projected appointment were made in France and Britain. The French Cabinet was flooded with letters to prevent his taking command of French soldiers. The French National Federation of Deportees and Internees and French Jewish and other organizations added their voice to the protest. In Britain, 17 Labor M.P.'s introduced a motion in Parliament to stop the appointment. The protests, however, have gone unheeded.

Who is Speidel? His enlistment by NATO is justified on the ground that he was implicated in the plot against Hitler's life in 1944, after the nazi cause became hopeless. But Speidel's hands were far from clean. Documents have been produced to show that as nazi chief of staff in France during the occupation, he signed orders for the shooting of hostages and the deportation of French Jews and resistance fighters to death camps. As the French organization or deportees said, it would dishonor Frenchmen to serve under him. American organizations, including those of the Jews, should carry forward the protest against this appointment.

mentary on the Megillah and a confused commentary at that. Well, if that's the way it is, maybe that's the way it has to be. Therefore I am returning your Megillah, and may God grant you a good year, as wished for you by your Rebbe. . . ."

That's what I call pinning the ears back! Let it be a lesson to my brother! He won't write any more Megillahs like this one, I thought.

Having finished with my Rebbe's letter, it was time to see what *she* had written—the Rebbe's daughter, that is. I opened the envelope, and don't you think the two rubles dropped out? And in the note—only two lines: "Motl, I thank you for the two rubles. You can have them

back. Such *shalachmones* I did not expect from you. I don't want such gifts from you and charity most certainly not. . . ."

Ha! And what do you say to that! She didn't want the charity! A pretty story!

WELL, WHAT TO DO NOW? SOMEONE else in my position would probably have torn up both letters and stuck the money in his pocket. But I'm not that sort. . . . I did something better. I reasoned this way: I had already received payment for the errand from my brother so I didn't have to worry about *him*. Better that I give both letters to my father and hear what

(Continued on page 45)

Cross-Country Look at Discrimination

An Anti-Defamation League survey gives a documented picture of job bias

DATA on hiring practices among employers of "white collar" workers, gathered over a period of five years, reveal that religious bias remains a major factor in filling "job vacancies on all levels from clerical to professional."

A resume of the findings of surveys taken in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver, Pennsylvania and among mid-west college placement bureaus, was published on Jan. 19 by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

In making the report public, Henry Edward Schultz, national chairman of the League, declared that the figures disclose a "national paradox" in which "a tight labor market is coupled with the irrational religious prejudices of some employers. Such employers are creating an additional serious economic bottleneck and retarding the nation's productivity by costly waste of manpower," he said.

The report cited an on-going study of the hiring practices of major Chicago business firms by the Bureau on Jewish Employment Problems which found that "about 18 per cent of 20,000 job orders placed during the past six months with Chicago's commercial

employment agencies bar Jews from consideration."

A previous survey by the Bureau, conducted jointly with the ADL, disclosed that from 1952 to 1955 "8,800 or 22 per cent of 40,000 job orders placed with Chicago employment agencies were restrictive against Jews." Of the 5,500 firms covered by the survey, 1,500 or 27 per cent specified restrictions against Jews."

Many of these firms "were identified as contractors with the Federal government who were violating their contractual pledge not to discriminate because of race, religion or national origin." The report noted, however, that the President's Committee on Government Contracts, which is empowered to enforce a provision in government contracts against employment discrimination, is making progress in the elimination of job bias.

A study of the experiences of 5,600 applicants at a *Chicago* employment agency disclosed that whereas "20 out of every 100 Protestant applicants and 17 out of every 100 Catholic applicants were placed in jobs by the agency, only 9 out of every 100 Jewish applicants could be placed."

In *Los Angeles*, an ADL survey found in 1954 that "125 out of 126 employment agencies had agreed to screen out Jews when referring applicants to prospective employers. The one agency which had refused to be a party to discriminatory requests was Jewish-owned."

In 1956 the Institute of Industrial Relations of the *University of California* surveyed employment discrimination against Jews in the San Francisco Bay area and reported that of 340 private employers in major industries interviewed, 75, or 22 per cent, acknowledged that they followed a policy of discriminating against Jews. They either barred Jews completely or limited their employment on a quota basis. This figure, ADL said, may "run higher, as not all firms interviewed replied fully to all questions."

An ADL survey in 1955 in *Denver, Colorado*, found that 45 out of 46 public and private employment agencies had agreed to service a request for a "white Protestant" secretary. An official of the Rocky Mountain Association of Private Employment Services, ADL said, emphasized that employment discrimination was "the sorest spot in the Denver minority problem."

According to an official survey of 1,229 *Pennsylvania* firms, 1,086 or 89 per cent, discriminated against minority groups in hiring or in promotion, in upgrading or apprenticeship. The survey, conducted by the Pennsylvania Governor's Commission on Race Relations, said that a "significant amount of discrimination was revealed with respect to members of the Jewish faith."

As a result of restrictive practices of job placement offices in *colleges and universities*, the ADL report said. "Jewish graduates frequently find themselves discriminated against in

their own college placement offices."

In 1954 the experiences and practices of 155 college placement offices in seven *midwestern states* were surveyed by the Midwest Regional Committee on Discriminations in Higher Education and the ADL. The survey showed:

1. 53 per cent of these offices experienced difficulty in placing applicants due to race, religion or national origin.

2. 66 per cent reported receiving job orders specifying restrictions against Jews and members of other minority groups.

3. Accepting discriminatory requests from prospective employers, 40 per cent of the college placement offices used registration forms which requested information regarding religion. An additional 9 per cent asked for such information when interviewing job applicants.

4. 71 per cent as a matter of administrative routine or on request furnished employers with information regarding the religion of student applicants.

The report was prepared under the direction of Arnold Forster, ADL national civil rights director. Additional surveys in other cities are planned. The League noted that "though employment discrimination is still widespread, much progress in its elimination has been achieved since the 1930's when religious discrimination was rampant." The report attributed this progress to the work of community relations agencies and to "the educational and enforcement activities of state and municipal fair employment practices commissions." It paid tribute to the President's Committee on Government Contracts as a "strong new force in combatting job discrimination."

(*Press release of the Anti-Defamation League.*)

INSIDE

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Women's Organizations

The growing movement to amend the racist McCarran-Walter Immigration act was strengthened by action of the Conference Committee of National Jewish Women's Organizations at its meeting on Jan. 15. The Conference Committee, representing 11 national organizations having a combined membership of one million women, expressed to President Eisenhower its "deep concern over the inequities and anti-democratic provisions of the McCarran-Walter act" and asked him to work for amendments which would eliminate the national origins quota system, increase the annual admission of immigrants, abolish distinctions between native-born and naturalized citizens and institute procedural safeguards for the protection of the alien as well as the security of the U.S. in all immigration proceedings.

The constituent organizations of the Conference Committee of National Jewish Women's Organizations are: Hadassah; Mizrahi Women's Organization of America; National Ladies' Auxiliary, Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.; National Women's League of the United Synagogue; Pioneer Women's Organization; Women's American ORT; Women's Branch, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations; Women's Division, American Jewish Congress; Women's Supreme Council, B'nai B'rith; National Council of Jewish Women and National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods.

Anti-Defamation League

In a report on integration made by the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, made public Jan. 11, it was declared that a study of certain trouble spots indicated that Southerners respect law and order more than they oppose racially mixed schools. The findings were reported by Dr. Warren Breed of Tulane University, Southern sociologist, who wrote: "Not one Beaumont white person with the possible exception of a student, declared publicly in favor of desegregation at Lamar (State College of Technology, Beaumont, Texas), not even from Southern liberal ranks. Despite this, desegregation took place and in a city 29 per cent Negro."

After a recent visit to the school, Dr. Breed reported: "By all odds the whites have accepted the Negroes as fellow students and have probably bent over backward to be pleasant."

This study was made after serious violence had flared in Beaumont last October.

Orthodox Organizations

On Jan. 9, Atlantic City was the setting for the merger of two religious Zionist groups, the Mizrahi Organization of America and the Hapoel Hamizrachi of America, an orthodox labor body. The merged group will be known as the American Religious Zionist Organization.

Plans for expansion in membership, Jewish day schools and cultural centers were made to strengthen and revitalize religious Jewish life in the United States.

Secular, and especially progressive, Jewish organizations have taken note of the increased efforts to bring religious influence to bear on the Jewish community, in the first place upon its educational institutions, and recognize that this presents a challenge necessitating increased efforts on their part.

Jewish War Veterans

When preparations were being made to plan welcoming ceremonies for King Saud on the occasion of his recent visit to Washington, Bertram Reifkind, commander of the Department of the District of Columbia, J.W.V., asked for "immediate removal" of his name from a Citizens Committee organizing the State welcome. Reifkind wrote to G. M. Thorne, secretary of the Board of Commissioners, that his organization considers King Saud "unworthy of being a guest of the American people" who prohibits Jewish servicemen to serve on the American military force on the Dahrn Air Base in Saudi Arabia, discriminates against ministers of the Christian faith, and practices human slavery. "My action does not imply," wrote Commander Reifkind, "that I or my organization have anything but the deepest sympathy for the people of Saudi Arabia who are living in poverty, hunger and disease while Saud receives hundreds of millions of dollars from American oil companies in oil royalties."

World Jewish Congress

In a special report to World Jew-

ish Congress leaders, Dr. Maurice L. Perlzweig, director of the organization's Department of International Affairs, warned that despite the fact that a few Egyptian Jewish leaders had been released from prison and some properties and businesses returned to their Jewish owners, these acts "do not in any way ease the position of the many thousands of foreign and stateless Jews, many of them of Egyptian birth, who are being economically ruined and ruthlessly uprooted." Dr. Perlzweig called for "unremitting effort by world public opinion to safeguard the human rights of the Jews in Egypt."

AJ Congress and Rabbis

Last Nov. the school board of New Hyde Park, Long Island, voted to post copies of a so-called "Public School Ten Commandments" in the schools. At a hearing conducted Jan. 30 by James E. Allen, Jr., N. Y. State Commissioner of Education, Leo Pfeffer, representing the American Jewish Congress and the New York Board of Rabbis, protested the posting of the Commandments as "another step in the threatening evolution of a new religion in America—'public school religion.'" He described the move as "bad theology, bad pedagogy and bad law." Bad theology "because the public school version differs from those accepted and considered sacred by all major faiths." Bad pedagogy because it raises questions that the public school teacher is forbidden to answer. Bad law "because it violates the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New York." Both constitutions require public schools to refrain from religious instruction and religious indoctrination.

S. P.

N. Y. DESEGREGATION

(Continued from page 5)

The PEA report designated school buildings attended by 90 or more per cent of Negro or Puerto Rican children as "X" schools. The average age of these "X" elementary school buildings was 43 years. Schools with 90 or more per cent white children were designated as "Y" schools. The average age of elementary "Y" school buildings was 31 years. Of the junior high schools, the X group averaged 35 years, the Y group, 15 years. The elementary X schools are renovated one half as frequently as the Y. For the X elementary schools, says the report, "there is less square feet of floor space, site-space, ground level space and playground space per child than in the Y elementary schools. The X schools have fewer special rooms than do the Y. In the X schools there is more rapid turnover and only 50 per cent of the staff are regular teachers on tenure, so that the substitutes and less experienced teachers constitute a larger proportion of the staff than in the Y schools."

Facts on the appointment and placement of Negro teachers were first disclosed in the Teachers Union survey of 1955, based on statistics of approximately 15,000 teachers. The report showed that only "1.9 per cent of the staff are regularly appointed Negro teachers" and that the ratio of Negro substitute to Negro regular teachers is three times

the ratio of white substitutes to white regular teachers. There are no Negro associate superintendents, only one Negro superintendent, no Negro high school principals and less than six Negro elementary school principals. Ninety per cent of the Negro teachers are employed in Harlem, Bedford-Stuyvesant and similar areas.

Behind the Teachers' Views

In the light of these conditions in the X schools, it is understandable that the teachers objected to being asked to transfer to these schools. In addition, there is abroad among the population and the teachers a fear bordering on the hysterical of what is supposed to happen in these schools—undoubtedly a reflection of anti-Negro bias that is part of our culture. Is it any wonder that the teachers felt they were being singled out to be martyrs?

A transfer presents a real problem for teachers who have not had experience with the problem, since the conditions of their professional life had made it possible for them to carry on their work under conditions of relative comfort. And in truth, it is not easy for one who has taught for 20 or 30 years in a single school or a single type of school suddenly to move without misgivings into a new situation.

Unfortunately, the fear of teaching under these conditions was so strong that in their objections the

teachers lost sight of the fact that the reports also clearly called for numerous improvements for these schools. Among these were: smaller classes, improved physical plant, additional clerical staff to enable teachers to devote more time and energy to actual teaching, additional special services, such as guidance counselors, psychologist, social workers, etc. and many more.

One might argue that the teachers could have accepted the report with the realization that the improved conditions projected would have made the transfers less serious. Unfortunately, however, much experience over the years has given them good reason to lack confidence in the Board's will to realize these proposed improvements. That this scepticism was not unfounded is evidenced by the danger that the Board expects the proposals to remain on paper. This fear was voiced only one week after the Jan. 17 hearing by the Intergroup Committee on New York's Schools, the organization of the 26 groups which sparked the campaign. It was only after they protested against the fact that the Board had not even requested additional funds in its budget to implement the reports, that Board President Charles Silver on Jan. 31 announced that the Board would ask for these additional funds. And since the Jan. 17 hearing, the Board has several times postponed its meetings on the reports.

The Board's failure thus far to

carry out its full responsibility on the issue is also indicated by its non-integration of the new Junior High School 258, in connection with which some board members were known to fear that integration was not feasible because it would call forth violence! Compare this with the actions of Louisville Superintendent of Schools Omar Carmichael. As far back as 1946 Mr. Carmichael initiated a systematic campaign among the teachers to accept integration. Since the Supreme Court decision he has taken the first steps to obey the law of the land by calling upon the Louisville Board of Education and the citizens to adopt necessary measures to integrate.

The question before the citizens and teachers of New York City is: can they organize to move the Board of Education to demand funds for carrying out this program? History will show whether the white man of the North can rise to meet his share of the responsibility as the Negro in the South is doing. The New York situation should be closely watched by all those in Northern cities genuinely interested in democratic education. Segregation in the North is no help to the determined struggle being put up by the Negro people in the South at the core of the question. For success in the integration program throughout the country will help in the creation of a vast reservoir of healthy-minded children as the surest guarantee for a better country and a peaceful world.

Jewish Problems in New Poland

An approach to several aspects of the serious situation

By DR. DAVID SFARD

From Dec. 2 to 6, 1956, the administrative executive of the Communal-Cultural Union of the Jews in Poland held an enlarged meeting, the first since the October events in Poland. Following are portions of an address delivered on that occasion by Dr. David Sfard, secretary of the organization executive and poet, on the impact of recent developments on the Jews of his country. The outlook for Polish Jews has improved since this was written, following the overwhelming endorsement of the Gomulka regime at the polls on Jan. 20.—Eds.

Anti-Semitism in Poland

The Jewish population of our country has recently felt distinctly nervous and uneasy as a result of the general situation and of the increase in anti-Semitic occurrences. Jewish people ask us: What is the way out? Where is the voice of the leadership of the [United Workers (Communist)] Party and the government? Can they secure the life and existence of the Jews?

These fateful questions must be considered with calm deliberation in order to reach correct conclusions which are so necessary at this time. The Eighth Plenum [of the United Workers Party held in Oct. 1956], which marks a new stage in democratization, the struggle for the genuine sovereignty of the country and the introduction of Leninist principles in all aspects of our life, has tremendous significance not only for own country but for all the socialist countries and for the entire working class movement. It has posed the entire question of genuine internationalism and cooperation between nations, of coming to the people with the whole truth, of squaring word with deed.

We too must speak the truth—that despite the fact that the Eighth Plenum clearly asserted the right of national minorities to free development and sharply condemned nationalist elements in our movement, we have recently seen an intensified chauvinistic attack by various elements against the national minorities, including the Jews.

Before the Eighth Plenum, we correctly noted that anti-Semitism was coming from the top. We now see anti-Semitic occurrences in a number of industrial plants. We constantly receive alarming information from these places about the dismissal of Jews from jobs because of alleged "Stalinism." These facts have caused uneasiness and fear among the Jewish population. But it would be a grave error for us to separate these anti-Semitic manifestations from the general situation in the country, from the things now taking place in the factories, in the villages, in the party committees and community organizations.

What has occurred is not merely a change of leaders but actually a change to a new way of understanding the substance of socialism. As is well known, no revolution, even a peaceful one, is without victims. On the wave of democratization a filthy scum of hooliganism and anarchism has appeared. The whole country is still in a state of flux. Everything is in turmoil. The revolution has not yet reached every city and village. We know of instances where destructive and demagogic elements are influencing certain sections of the people. If we correctly understand this, we will better grasp the character and causes of the anti-Jewish outbreaks.

In discussions with the leadership of the party the members of the Executive Committee of the Commu-

nal-Cultural Union have stated the situation of the Jewish population in all its gravity. Party leaders do not doubt that they will overcome this problem because the party has the confidence of the great majority of the people, of the intellectuals, of all political groupings. The party has shown that it can mobilize all the forces of the people for the struggle for socialism and it will not tolerate any nationalistic hooliganism. It is not true, the party said, that the Polish workers want a Poland without Jews. This is the slogan of black reaction. The present situation of the Jews is one aspect of the general situation in the country. The anti-Jewish actions are crimes which will be combated with all the severity of the law.

Jewish Emigration from Poland

Some people think that the desire to leave Poland is a result of the recent anti-Semitic events. Others believe the cause is incorrect work of the Communal-Cultural Union. I believe that the latter reason is not acceptable. Our accomplishments in this field—the theater, publishing house, press, Jewish Historical Institute, drama groups, choruses, clubs—have meaning for Jewish culture generally. Even our honest opponents will agree with that.

On the other hand, it is true that we committed a number of errors, that we sometimes held incorrect views towards certain political ten-

dencies and toward many Jewish national traditions. But this resulted from an entire system which influenced us, as it did the entire international workers movement.

Whatever the reason, we must no longer take a hostile attitude toward those Jews who want to emigrate. Certainly we should not regard them as enemies. We cannot blame Jews who want to join their relatives or those who want to leave because of fear. We cannot even condemn those who maintain that Israel is their fatherland; even more, we should help these people to solve complicated questions, overcome bureaucratic obstacles and distortions in the local governmental organs.

We should try to strengthen our relations with Jewish organizations abroad. It should be emphasized that we have always called for cooperation and have always cordially received representatives of various organizations and listened to their opinions. Yet it must be said that the tone of our appeals was not always correct and thus did not help stimulate such cooperation. The reason is understandable: we were affected by the cold war climate.

Something similar happened in the Jewish community of Poland itself. Even in our call to the artisans, the religious Jews and the petty bourgeois sections to work with us, the tone was not proper. The time has come to establish a unified organization of all the Jews in Poland.

Attitude Toward Israel

It should be emphasized that our position toward Israel flows from our deep concern for the future of the Jewish state. We believe that the present policy of the Israel government does not promote the well-being and growth of that state, but rather the opposite. This is not only the opinion of Communists, but also of some of the Left-Poale Zionists, General Zionists and others. We say categorically that we are ready to help the peace forces of Israel in every way possible in their work on behalf of the Israeli people.

We believe too that our press should radically change its manner of describing life in Israel. We should criticize what is wrong and call attention to what is positive, to that which Jews have created. We should not look at Israel one-sidedly.

We oppose categorically the present aggression against Egypt, just as many honest people of various views in Israel itself are opposed. At the same time we cannot close our eyes to the constant provocation and attacks of the Arab nationalists. We know that only the imperialists are interested in intensifying the conflicts between Jew and Arab. Only peace and friendship will bring good to both sides.

All Jews are sympathetic to Israel and wish it well. But this sympathy should make us see both the good and the bad. Chauvinism is the op-

The Prospect for Polish Jews Has Improved

ALTHOUGH the situation of Jews in Poland remains serious, some improvement has been noted. Hersh Smoliar, editor of the Warsaw Yiddish *Folks-Shtimme*, observed in an article in that paper on Jan. 24 that "the atmosphere is becoming more favorable for the Jewish population than a week or a month ago." One reason is the overwhelming victory of the Gomulka government in the elections of Jan. 20, since anti-Semitism was one of the weapons used by the government opposition. Sidney Gruson reported in the *N. Y. Times* (Jan. 31) that "The Communist Party and the government have launched a campaign of speeches, interviews and newspaper articles attacking anti-Semitism." The government has set up a special apparatus to give energetic battle to anti-Semitism and hooliganism. A decree was issued by the Ministries of the Interior and of Justice authorizing summary trials for law-breakers and chauvinists and sterner sentences than heretofore for outbreaks of hooliganism. A special meeting of the Warsaw militiamen (police) was held to discuss execution of this decree and special police patrols in cars and motorcycles equipped with radios were set up to guard against anti-social elements. Since the Gomulka election victory a number of Jews were restored to the high posts from which they were previously removed.

Last Dec. the Warsaw Yiddish *Folks-Shtimme* published a letter it had sent to Leonid P. Ilyichev, press chief of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, refuting the charge made by him (in an interview with Tabitha Petran in the *National Guardian*, Sept. 3, 1956) that its April 4, 1956 article on the crimes committed by the Stalin regime against Yiddish culture and Yiddish writers, was "slandorous and anti-Soviet." They affirmed that the article was the work of deep friends of the Soviet Union and socialism.

posite of patriotism and leads only to disaster for any people.

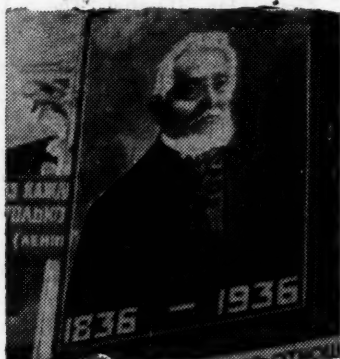
Soviet Jewish Culture

We will not cease to demand the rehabilitation of Soviet Jewish culture. We cannot agree with the claim that all the Jews in the Soviet Union are assimilated. This is not true nor is it in the spirit of internationalism. We take our stand with the articles on this subject in

the [Warsaw Yiddish] *Folks-Shtimme*, which have placed this question clearly and forthrightly. However, we categorically oppose the use of this issue as an occasion for anti-Soviet provocation, as many of our enemies do. Our criticism is one of devoted friends, who believe profoundly that this problem will soon be solved.

(Translated from the Yiddish by Max Rosenfeld.)

FROM THE JEWISH PAST



Why I Wrote in Yiddish

By **MENDELE MOCHER SEFORIM**

In the following pages, the "grandfather of Yiddish literature," Mendele Mocher Seforim, tells why he decided to write in Yiddish. The first passage is from his memoirs and the second from his *Ahyin Mishpat*. Both are here reprinted from the introduction by Gerald Stillman to his translation of Mendele's *Dos Klaine Mentshele*. This work under the title, *The Parasite*, translated by Stillman, was published in 1956 by Thomas Yoseloff, Inc., New York. The passages below are reprinted with the kind permission of the publishers.—Eds.

I OBSERVED the life of my people and I wished to impart to them

Jewish tales in the holy tongue [Hebrew—Eds.]. The bulk of them, however, did not understand this language, but rather spoke Yiddish. What profit accrues to the writer for all his thoughts and all his labors if he does not thereby serve his people? This question . . . has placed me on the horns of a dilemma. In my time the Yiddish language was a hollow vessel, containing naught but gibes, nonsense and fiddle-faddle, the work of fools who couldn't talk like human beings. . . . Our writers, the possessors of the gift of expression, were interested only in the holy tongue and did not care about the people; they looked down their noses contemptuously at Yiddish. If

one in ten ever reminded himself of the "accursed tongue" and dared to write something in it, he would hide it beneath his holy prayer shawl, so that his shame might not be discovered to damage his good name. . . . How great then was my dilemma when I considered that if I were to embark upon writing in in the "shameful" tongue, my honorable name would be besmirched! . . . My love for utility, however, conquered my hollow pride and I decided: come what may, I will write in Yiddish, that cast off daughter—it is time to work for my people. One of my good friends, Joshua Mordecai Lifschitz, stood by me and we both began to convince the editor of *Hamalyitz* [the leading Hebrew literary journal of the time—G.S.] to issue a journal in the language of our people. . . . Then

the peace of God descended upon me and I wrote my first story, *Dos Klaine Mentshele*. . . .

A LITERATURE which has no connection with the people and their needs and is not interested in them can move no one. Such a literature is of no interest to the people and is superfluous so far as life itself is concerned. The masses of people wonder why such a literature exists at all and ask: "What does it want, whom does it serve, of what use is it? What is this writer accomplishing? Of what use is this stylist?" And these writers become confused and have no answer. Woe to the honored writer, with volume upon volume to his credit, if he meets a man of the people who puts this question to him point-blank, without any niceties. . . .

Justice and the New Spy Case

THE searing memory of the Rosenberg case is brought to mind by the indictment of Jack Soble, his wife Myra and Jacob Albam on Feb. 4 on the charge of espionage for the Soviet Union under the "Rosenberg law" of 1954, which permits the death penalty for peacetime espionage. Before any evidence or facts are at hand, the press has already begun a "Trial by Newspaper," as the *N. Y. Times* headed its editorial on Jan. 29. "We think," the editorial said, "the press does have a responsibility to treat pretrial information with restraint. . . . But the best way to protect the defendant from unfair and prejudicial press statements by lawyers and prosecutors is to stop this abuse at the source." The FBI and the Justice Department, as well as the press, should heed this admonition. In the light of past performances by these agencies, we think the public should follow this trial with the closest scrutiny to insure a just outcome.

**"Jewish Life" announces the annual
William Newman Poetry Awards**

for the three best poems, in original English or in translation,
submitted to and published in JEWISH LIFE in the course of the year.

1st prize—\$50; 2nd prize—\$25; 3rd prize—\$10

CLOSING DATE FOR 1957: SEPTEMBER 30, 1957

Judges: *Frederic Ewen, Louis Harap, Annette T. Rubinstein, Yuri Suhl*

WILLIAM NEWMAN - HIS BROTHER'S KEEPER

WHEN William Newman died at the age of 57 in Brooklyn last summer, his family, friends and the whole community suffered a great loss. He was a true son of the Jewish people. He was not "famous" but he was loved and respected by all who met him. His deep love for his family encompassed the greater family—all humanity. In the tradition of the ancient prophets he sought truth, lived in honesty and dignity and fought against poverty, injustice and above all, against war. His faith was the credo: "I am my brother's keeper."

Willie was born in Bobruisk, in tsarist Russia, in 1899. His family emigrated to America when he was six. His mother had to take in borders and Willie went to work when he was 11, doing odd jobs and delivering newspapers at three in the morning, getting back home in time to leave for school. He had an insatiable thirst for

knowledge and culture. Unfortunately his family's economic situation forced him to quit high school before graduation.

Willie met his wife-to-be Anna in a contemporary literature course at New York University. Anna recalled poetry by "William Newman" that she had read in *The Call*, the Socialist organ, and in literary magazines.

The Great Depression of the '30's was the turning point for Willie though he was now an employer, a partner in a small sheet metal shop, his conscience could not allow him to overlook the "one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clothed, and ill-fed." Once, when his partner wanted to cut the wages of the half-dozen employees, Willie balked.

"Could you get along on so little?" Willie asked.

"But I'm the boss" his partner protested.

"It makes no difference," Willie insisted. "They have to live!"

Needless to say there was no wage cut. Nor did Willie Newman ever become a wealthy man. As time went on, Willie wrote less poetry. His "poetry" became activity, tireless devotion to the cause of the people. His main activity for the last two decades of life was in the multinational, democratic fraternal organization, the International Workers Order. Practically single-handed he built Lodge 585 of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order, which at one time had almost 1,000 members. In the Kings Highway section of Brooklyn, Willie was known as "Mr. 585." During World War II, Willie's activities also included the duties of air raid warden (official) and writing innumerable letters to servicemen (unofficial).

By 1944 his health began to fail. In the summer of 1956 he became seriously ill. He lived long enough to celebrate the birth of his first grandchild, whom unfortunately he was never to see. Before he died on Aug. 13, 1956, Willie penned on his hospital bed a little poem to the baby:

"Dear little bundle
How pink and white
A new addition
To our delight.

May your future be bright and clear
We are all around you, so have no fear."

Last fall more than 200 people jampacked the meeting hall of the Kings Highway Jewish Community Club to pay tribute to the memory of their dear friend and brother Willie Newman. One of Willie's favorite cultural mediums—JEWISH LIFE—was chosen to administer a living memorial. "The William Newman Annual Poetry Award."

Willie's name and memory will always be remembered with love and affection, in the spirit of his poem, "Forecast," the first five lines of which read:

"Boldly with laughing hearts and rapturous tread
We greet the rising sun of our tomorrow,
We millions marching, with each uplifted head
Alight and proud. We cannot grieve or sorrow;
For a blazoned rainbow colored dawn is ours."

NEW SONG

(After the Yiddish of Abraham Reisin)

By MAX ROSENFELD

And though the day
be far away,
'tis not as distant as it seems.
Soon or late,
we'll see it yet—
Peace is not an idle dream!

I hear the songs
of mighty throngs,
singing welcome to the sun.
And every note,
in every throat,
thankful that the night is done.

A new day breaks,
the world awakes,
from all its nightmare-fears released.
And herald-voices
sing "Rejoice!
Here's life, and work, and joyous peace!"

MCCARRAN-WALTER

(Continued from page 9)

migration provisions of the law.

On Jan. 31, President Eisenhower, in a special message to Congress, called for special revision of the immigration provisions of the law.

Perhaps the *most important development is the introduction of the Celler Bill, H. R. 3364*, which contains many worthwhile provisions, although it includes some provisions that should be amended before the bill is passed, if the entire bill is to

meet democratic standards. Major attention, however, should be devoted by all interested in winning changes in the law to the demand for public hearings on the Celler bill and other legislation to revise or repeal the McCarran-Walter law as speedily as possible. Letters and resolutions should be sent to your own representative and to Hon. Emanuel Celler, Chairman, House Judiciary Committee, Washington, D. C., and to Rep. Francis Walter, Chairman, House Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization, Wash., D.C.

Anti-Semitism and Hungarian Refugees

REPORTS of anti-Semitism among Hungarian refugees directed against their fellow-Hungarian Jewish refugees cropped up in various places. In Toronto a Jewish refugee was victimized. On the Italian refugee ship "Venezuela" going to Canada, a young Hungarian pulled an old Orthodox Jew's beard. Some of the Jewish refugees on the ship reported that pogroms had taken place in several Hungarian towns, adding that "The people who started these pogroms wanted to turn the clock back to 1944 and fascism" (*Jewish Western Bulletin*, Jan. 25). And the American Jewish Committee charged on Jan. 31 that "a nest of unregenerate nazi propagandists, collaborators and war criminals" had circulated anti-Semitic papers at Camp Kilmer among Hungarian refugees and the Army authorities admitted that they had approved the paper for distribution.

The London *Jewish Chronicle* (Jan. 18) reported a discussion of refugee Jewish Hungarian students under auspices of the London University Jewish Union Society. They said: "Cardinal Mindszenty was and is a fascist. He is so regarded by the Jews of Hungary and has made anti-Semitic pronouncements in the course of his career." The paper reported that one of the students "declared that although the Hungarian insurrection had had the support of the people, particularly in its later stages, fascist elements, which had always existed in the country, came to the fore. Hungarian Jews, he said, were prepared for pogroms and 'if the Russians had not been there, I do not know what would have happened.'" Another refugee student said that "during the rising the authorities had given one group permission to publish an anti-Semitism newspaper but upon the arrival of the Russians, had prevented its publication."

letters



FROM READERS

REPLY TO SID RESNICK ON THE BUND

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

The letter of Sid Resnick in the Jan. issue on the problem of Soviet Jews raised some interesting questions. One point in particular intrigued me, perhaps because I disagreed with it so promptly.

Mr. Resnick asks: "From the vantage point of today, can one still completely disagree with the old Bundist principle that the Jewish working class required its own socialist party to protect its interests as a national minority and its right for cultural expression? . . . In the light of today was the Bundist position completely without merit?"

It is unfortunate that so little material is available in English on the Bund, which was an important development in Jewish life in the past 60 years. The English speaking Jew of the left knows about the Bund perhaps solely from Lenin's *Critical Remarks on the National Question* and Stalin's *Marxism and the National Question*, both of them first published in 1913. Most of the original source material is in Yiddish and Russian. A few references in English by non-left sources are the article, "Bund," in *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*; "The Bund," by J. Hodeś, *Jewish Review* (London), no. 4, 1933, pp. 48-56, and "Arkady Kremer, Vladimir Medem the Ideology of the Jewish 'Bund,'" by Koppel S. Pinson, *Jewish Social*

Studies, vol. 7, 1945, pp. 233-264.

The Bund (full name, General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia) was founded in 1897 (the same year as the first World Zionist Congress) before the Russian socialist movement established its political party, the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party. The Bund was in fact one of groups that founded this party and was an affiliate for a time after the formation. At first the Bund was largely the channel for conveying to the Yiddish speaking Russian masses the program of social justice and national equality of all peoples and of socialism. As Hodeś remarks, it was in its first few years "an auxiliary socialist wing using Yiddish to disseminate" socialism.

After the Kishinev pogroms in 1903, it was the Bund which led in organizing the heroic "self-defense" groups which saved many Jews from the pogromists. (It is an interesting, little known fact that in his youth Nikita Khrushchev, though a non-Jew, fought in a self-defense group in Mariupol in 1913 and was even injured in a skirmish with pogromists. (review of *Khrushchev of the Ukraine*, by Victor Alexandrov, in *London Jewish Chronicle*, Jan. 18).)

But Jewish nationalism developed early in the Bund, which split with the Russian Social Democratic Party over

should carry on a stubborn but friendly ideological and political struggle in a number of countries to influence the Soviet leaders to change their present approach to the national question." I, too, am fully convinced that here, in the U.S.A., we can come to the aid of the progressive Jewish people in the Soviet Union.

When the issue is raised about the need for a practical and workable program to facilitate organized action to induce the Soviet leadership to change their policy, among the arguments presented in opposition went thus: Let Jews become more active in building and sustaining Jewish culture in the United States. The job of rehabilitating Jewish culture in the Soviet Union is the responsibility of the Jewish people who live in the Soviet Union. There are others who totally reject any kind of organized activity by stating that we have done all we can. They refer to the issuing of the memorandum to Soviet leaders published in the American press [see JEWISH LIFE, Dec. 1956].

Such attitudes only point to the old line of blind following of the Soviet Union. I do not see any logic in these arguments. Certainly, we in the United States should help to build Jewish culture. However, this does not mean that

only those active in Jewish cultural life have the moral right to demand a change in the Soviet Union's attitude.

Taking into consideration all factors in this situation, I offer the following proposals:

1. We should develop a broad educational program to help people to distinguish what we consider a true interpretation of the national question from the present or past distorted position of Khrushchev, Kaganovich, Furtseva and the rest. Disagreement on this question does not mean that we are anti-Soviet or even necessarily anti-Khrushchev. But we basically disagree with this policy because it is a distortion of socialist justice. However, we offer our criticism in a friendly, constructive manner. We feel that a correction of this injustice to the Jewish people will help peaceful co-existence with the Soviet Union.

2. I recommend that the individuals who signed the memorandum mentioned above should try to work out a program of further action.

I feel that it would be tragic at this time to wait for someone else to take action.

M. RICH

Flushing, N. Y.

Lehman's Call for a Principled Democratic Party

FORMER Senator Herbert H. Lehman did some plain speaking to the Democratic Party in a speech on Jan. 18. The presidential election, he said, was lost by the Democrats even before the campaign opened because of their record since 1953 on peace and civil rights. Bipartisanship on foreign issues and capitulation on civil rights—the two most important issues before the people in 1956—doomed the chances for 1956 before the convention. Lehman called for an end to capitulation to the Dixiecrats and a vigorously liberal program. The Democratic Party, he thought, should determine policy through an annual convention and thus deprive political compromisers of the power to dictate party policy. "It is later than most think," he said.

Observation post

By ANNE FRIEDLANDER

We Go Round the World and land in Johannesburg, South Africa. *The Judean*, a monthly published by the J.W.V. of S.A. reprinted the article by Jeremiah Lesser on "The Suez Crisis and Israel" which appeared in the November issue of J.L.

New Progressive Jewish School in Downtown Brooklyn is still taking applications for enrolment. A wonderful curriculum is planned based on the progressive traditions of the Jewish people and the contributions they have made culturally, economically and politically, on the world scene and in our own country. You can help your child understand his rich heritage by enrolling him in this new school. Write to Box E 41, JEWISH LIFE, 22 E. 17 St., Rm. 601, N. Y.

To Anonymous in New York City: Our heartfelt thanks for that \$100 contribution for us. It came in the nick of time—just when we had a monster of a \$400 note to meet. Our sigh of relief must have reached you.

A Telephone Call and a Story: Several weeks ago Morris Schappes got a telephone call from Celia Stein. She had to see him—would he come right over. When he arrived, she reminded him that she had left something for J. L. in her will. But when she received our desperate plea for funds, she decided that now was the time to give it. Thanks, Celia Stein—and may you continue to read and enjoy J. L. *bis hundert un zwanzig yahr.*

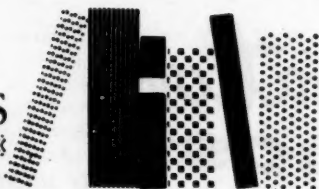
From the West Coast: A letter from F. C.—"Enclosed please find \$25 toward your Fund Drive. We arranged a house party for two members, Ethel and Morris, and in honor of their anniversary we are sending you the money." A Happy Anniversary, friends, and may we celebrate many anniversaries together.

Chicago Leads in Sub Renewals and New Subs: They've got an unbeatable team that is really getting things done. The N. Y. office sends them the list of "lapsed" that have not responded to our reminders—the team adds the personal touch by a phone call or a visit. Result: about 25 readers saved in the last two months. How about a team like that in our city? We may even give a prize to the city with the highest percentage or renewals and subs.

The 1957 Fund Drive has gotten off to a very slow start. Our Committee of 260 to Save Jewish Life should be much larger by now. A pledge to raise \$100 for J. L. makes you or your organization a member of the Committee. Let us hear from the four corners—from Florida to Washington; from California to Maine and all points between.

Our Theater Party for "Purple Dust" was a success—every seat in the house sold out. Our special thanks to B. P. in Queens and F. G. in Great Neck for their help. We're \$375 ahead and everybody had a wonderful time.

BOOK REVIEWS



SOBELL POEMS

By **MARTHA MILLET**

You, Who Love Life: Poems, by Helen Sobell. Lithographs by Rockwell Kent. Foreword by Ring Lardner, Jr. Sydmar Press, 30 Charlton Street, New York 14, N. Y.

HERE are poems compounded of experiences a small number of Americans were fated to personify in their cruellest form. These few were Jews as well. Ethel and Julius Rosenberg made of their tragedy a triumph over their persecutors and bore it beyond the grave. Morton Sobell, the prisoner in Alcatraz, and his courageous wife are living an epic that challenges the conscience of all of us.

These soft and moving poems, lit with anger and pride, bring us intimately close to the lives of a young husband and wife and their children upon whom the fist of cold-war madness fell and is not yet lifted. The prison visits—

When you have passed through the eye,

(The magnetic eye of Alcatraz which Warns its master with its ringing.)

Then you must censor

The heart that always hopes,

And holds it from its leaping. . . .

Kiss the wall and caress the glass,

MARTHA MILLET is a poet. She has published two volumes of poems and her poetry has appeared in scores of magazines here and abroad.

Feast, after your lonesome fast. . . .
(*Alcatraz*)

What shall I tell my son, my son,
What shall I tell my pretty one?
That his father lives in an eight foot cell

Eating the tear drenched bread of Hell. . . . (*Courage*)

And there is the unquenched capacity to look forward to joy, the joy of that moment when Morton Sobell shall be liberated from the nightmare; and all those who have set their hands to the noble task may rejoice for their own souls' sake—

Come, my glorious brother, laugh with me,

Take my hand, my sister, clasp it joyfully,

Children, come, your father stands here free.

It is the birthday of the world. (*Rosh Hashonah*)

The strong and meditative figures of Rockwell Kent's full-page lithographs are a superb accompaniment to Helen Sobell's poems, poems that will quicken many more to the meaning of the Sobell case. For others, there could be no finer introduction.

IN SINGABLE ENGLISH

By **Irwin Silber**

Tumalalaika, a Collection of 17 Jewish Songs for Singing in English,

compiled and arranged by Teddy Schwartz. Hargail Music Press, 130 West 56th St., New York City. 50c.

TRANSLATION is indispensable to contemporary life. It is essential if the cultural heritage of our various nationalities is not to die out. For unless this culture is adapted to the reality of the American scene, succeeding generations will have neither the desire or the ability to keep it alive.

In this little volume, Teddy Schwartz and Arthur Kevesh have undertaken to translate 17 Yiddish and Israel songs into singable English. And even though the booklet is modest in size and appearance, their task was monumental. For in addition to the normal headaches of translation, they have tackled the extremely difficult problem of transferring that most idiomatic portion of any national culture—its folk songs—into English which is both characteristic and singable.

There should be no problem in finding a song to your liking in this collection. The choice of songs is happily varied, though little attempt has been made to be representative. Among the traditional Yiddish songs are *Hob Ich Mir a Mantl*, *Lomir Alle Zingen* and the title song, *Tumbalalaika*. Songs for Purim, Hanukah and Passover also appear, as well as both contemporary and traditional Hebrew songs.

The real measure of their work can be provided only by the extent to which singers, professional and amateur, sing the songs. In the final analysis, of course, audiences will decide on the merit of the material. I hope that choruses, including Yiddish-language groups, will try some of these songs before audiences. Soloists might experiment with some. And those of you who are familiar with the original or just enjoy singing around the piano

or mandolin, should try them out on your family and neighbors.

This little book is well worth having. Even if you find only a few of the songs satisfactory in this form, it will be of value. And since the original words to all the songs appear in Yiddish or Hebrew transliteration, you certainly can't go wrong.

IRWIN SILBER is editor of the folk-song quarterly, *Sing Out!*

SACRIFICED GENERATION

By CHARLES LAW

The Sacrifice, by Adele Wiseman. Viking Press, New York. 346 pages. \$3.95.

A DEVOUT Jew was apprehended by the Winnipeg police several years ago following the knife-slashing of a disreputable woman in a rundown section of the Canadian prairie metropolis. This anomalous occurrence provoked a flurry of speculation. The orthodox and the cynics, the gossips and the wishful thinkers all sponsored their own interpretations.

It was this bizarre murder which Adele Wiseman chose as the climactic scene of her first novel and it was the milieu giving rise to the incident which served as her working material. The end product, completed after seven years of labor and entitled *The Sacrifice*, is a skilful and wonderfully human work of art, rich both in Jewish folklore and the understanding of a people.

And well it might be, for Miss Wiseman was for most of her 28 years a stitch in the fabric that makes up the cosmopolitan Winnipeg north-end—part of the flux of East European immigrants assimilating a new land. Her

father is a tailor and furrier, her mother a dressmaker. Her education included Yiddish schooling at the Peretz and Sholem Aleichem *shules* and literary training at the University of Manitoba.

The central figure in her tale—which spans three generations—is Abraham, uprooted by pogromists from his Ukrainian *shtetl* [small town] and cast adrift until he, together with his life-weary wife and surviving son, step a resolute foot onto a Canadian city street. Abraham is a butcher by trade and a strict believer by choice.

But his religious experience is a challenging one. As death successively depletes his family, Abraham wrestles with his God, finding Him wanting when his two eldest sons are felled in the pogrom, but embracing Him eagerly when the youngest, Isaac, lives through a bout with typhus.

Abraham's peace of mind is marred only by two traumatic experiences: the unexpected killing of his two older sons and the unsanctified slaughter of an animal by Abraham during his youth. And events bring these fears to the fore. Abraham feels abandoned by God again when Isaac succumbs to a heart ailment aggravated by an unpremeditated rush in to burning synagogue to save a Torah. The father's world comes crashing down. He cannot comprehend the justice of death as a sequel to an heroic and "prophetic" deed.

The story now rushes to its tragic climax. The aging Abraham, sensing that he has outlived his usefulness in a very pragmatic world, strives to maintain his last link with the new—his relationship with his grandson. But even that fades before the realities of life. Seething with suspicion, possessed by a terrifying sense of guilt

and distraught by a quarrel with his daughter-in-law, he rushes into the night and to his doom, a nocturnal visit to the apartment of the slattern Laiah. The ritual slaughter of a woman who embodied all that Abraham despised was his answer to the adversities that had befallen him.

The title itself — *The Sacrifice* — gives us a clue to Miss Wiseman's point of view. The first inclination is to attribute the title to the throat-cutting of Laiah, which has its biblical analogy in the sacrificial offerings to God by the first Hebrew, Abraham. But on second thought, we could just as easily ascribe it to the saving of the Torah by Isaac, a "free thinker" who perished in his successful bid to preserve what was dear to his father.

But "the sacrifice" has implications in this book that transcend any one decisive act. Indeed, Miss Wiseman has selected the word that characterizes the guiding concept of a whole generation of East European Jews. Abraham's very being is directed towards nurturing his offspring at the expense of his own health and comfort. The only price demanded is allegiance to the Family. Isaac's plight is similar. His forsaking of scholarship for the crippling toil in a sweatshop—so that his child may have what he could not—is reminiscent of the sacrifice of thousands of talented immigrants on this continent.

There is a difference, however, between father and son. Abraham has never escaped the ghetto thinking of his ancestral home: his world is geometrically bound by his frame home, the synagogue and butcher shop and mentally circumscribed by the laws of the Torah and Talmud.

Isaac's fate was a more heart-rending one. He aspired to peaks of accom-

plishment but in a depression era could only scale the foothills. His father unwittingly represented a restraining hand; his parental sacrifice a tug in the opposite direction.

But Abraham never becomes an object of scorn or derision despite his little world and his bloody deed. Miss Wiseman has the grandson, Moses, visit Abraham at the mental institution to which Abraham is committed after the slaying. The young sophisticate melts under the piteous smiles of the grandfather who had built him a "crooked house." It is a scene of fulfillment, in which the reader, like Moses, is reminded not to forget that while Abraham was limited in his outlook, his was a human and a wholesome approach to living. The sacrifice was not wasted.

Critics have generally lauded Miss Wiseman's first novel, alluding to the powerful strokes with which she outlines her story. And there is a vividness in the way she catches life in both her narrative and descriptive passages.

But one wonders whether the external world can be so lightly disposed of with but the briefest reference to time and place. One wonders whether the locale—Canada—and the period of boom, depression and war impinges so little on the thinking and doing of these immigrants.

Miss Wiseman exploits symbolism and biblical allusion without trying to fit life into some convenient mold. And yet, she does not commit the opposite sin of failing to develop a pattern out of this meeting with life. The dialogue has all the flavor of the Yiddish idiom, with seldom a false note struck. The motivations are lucid, the characters warmly drawn, the clash of worlds—whether through a family argument or a philosophical dissertation—portrayed with such fidelity that we can only conclude that Adele Wiseman is well on the way to being ranked one of Canada's foremost novelists.

CHARLES LAW is a Canadian journalist.

ZISHE WEINPER, 1892-1957

IN the early morning hours of Jan.

27 Yiddish culture in the United States lost a poet and effective cultural administrator, Zishe Weinper. Author of volumes of poetry and fiction, editor of a number of Yiddish literary journals in his years in this country since 1913, when he came here from his native Ukraine, Weinper was a leading spirit of the Ykuf and its monthly journal, *Yiddishe Kultur*. As Dr. Joshua Bloch, former director of the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library said, "The death of Z. Weinper is a great loss for Yiddish literature." The Editors mourn his loss.



MIDDLE EAST PEACE

(Continued from page 12)

area of colonial liberation. As Acheson said on Jan. 10, it is "perilously like another approach to the brink."

No wonder that opposition to the doctrine is building up. The N. Y. *Times* reported (Feb. 1) that "The mail of senators on the Foreign Relations Committee is running eight or nine to one against the 'Eisenhower Doctrine'. . . . The criticism comes from all over the country. . . . The opposition mail is unorganized." Although the House on Jan. 30 approved the doctrine 355-61, it is having tougher sledding in the Senate. Senator Wayne Morse called the doctrine "unconstitutional" because it usurped the power of Congress to make war. He added that the effect of the doctrine would be "to adopt police state tactics in America."

As for those whom the doctrine is designed to "protect," their opposition is strong. On Feb. 3 the Associated Press reported from Cairo that the newspaper *Al Shaab* polled its readers on the doctrine and found 68,432 opposed and three in favor.

In a joint statement Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Syrian President Shukri al-Kuwatly put the matter succinctly: "A military approach to the problems of this area (the Middle East) will only serve to create further disharmony and instability besides contributing to the heightening of tension and endangering world peace. Intervention by the big powers in the form of military pacts and alliances is detri-

mental to peace and stability in the Middle East. The Baghdad Pact has caused bitter conflicts and divisions in the Arab world and has greatly increased international tensions" (N. Y. *Times*, Jan. 22).

One of the main objectives of the doctrine is to secure the flow of oil super-profits and to ward off the nationalization of oil by Arab states. This objective, as well as renewal of the contract for the U.S. base in Dahrán, explains the spreading of the red carpet for Saudi Arabian King Ibn Saud's recent visit to this country.

How great the profits involved in oil are can be judged from a few figures. In 1955, U.S. oil companies owned 56 per cent of the Middle East's production of crude oil. Last year the Arab rulers received about \$700,000,000 in oil royalties and the companies got \$1,300,000,000. Of this latter figure, American companies received about \$700,000,000. And the prospects are for a threefold increase in profits in ten years! (*Economic Notes*, Feb., 1957.)

At bottom it is these profits that the Eisenhower Doctrine is designed to insure. This furthers neither the interests of the American or Israeli or Arab peoples or world peace. The American people should press the administration to abandon the doctrine and instead discuss the plan of the USSR or something along the lines of the proposals of Mrs. Roosevelt.

ESTHER

(Continued from page 19)

he would say. He would understand the Megillah better than my Rebbe, even though he was only a father and the Rebbe was a teacher. . . .

What happened when Father read both letters and the "Megillah" and put my brother on the carpet—don't even ask. If I were to imitate my brother Motl, I'd have to begin with the words and the tune of the Megillah: "And there came to the city of Nebuchah. . . ." But that's not the main point. You must want to know the end of the story: what finally happened to the Rebbe's daughter Esther and my brother Motl?

What *could* have happened? Nothing. Esther got married—to a widower. Ach! did she cry. I was at the wedding. What she was crying about, I really don't know. Apparently, her heart told her that she wouldn't grow old with her husband. And that's how it was. She lived with him a half-year and then she died. Of what, I can't tell you. Nobody knows. Not even the Rebbe and the Rebbetsin. People said that she took poison. Just like that—simply went and poisoned herself. But that's a lie. "Enemies made it up." That's what I heard from the Rebbetsin herself.

And my brother Motl? He got married, even before Esther, and went to live with his in-laws. But he

came back soon, alone. He wanted a divorce. Father said: "Savage!" Mother wouldn't stand for this and they quarreled. Things were lively! But it didn't help. Motl got his divorce and married again. Now he has two children, a boy and a girl. The boy's name is Herzl, after Doctor Herzl. And the girl is called Esther. Father wanted her name to be Gitel, after his mother, Babba Gitel. And Mother would have given anything for her to be named Leah, after *her* mother. So there was a dispute between Father and Mother. A whole day and a whole night they argued, and finally settled it this way: The baby would be called Leah-Gitel, after both my grandparents. Then Father thought better of it. "What's the sense of it? Why should *her* mother's name come first?"

But that day Motl came home from synagogue and announced that he had named his baby Esther. Father said: "Savage! Why Esther? For whom are you naming her Esther?"

Motl said: "Have you forgotten that Purim will be here soon?"

Well, what could they do to him? That was the end of it. Father did not call him "Savage!" And my mother and father looked at each other strangely and didn't say a word.

What this silence meant and the looks they gave each other, I don't know. Maybe *you* know?

(Translated from the Yiddish by Max Rosenfeld.)



FROM THE FOUR CORNERS

AT HOME

"Private Housing Eludes Negroes," was the headline of the leading article in the Real Estate section of the Sunday *N.Y. Times* of Feb. 3. The article discusses the fact that, "Despite the fact that Negroes have been moving into many established white neighborhoods around New York, they are still barred from most new private home developments." Important facts are revealed by the article. "The New York State Committee on Discrimination in Housing says minority families have been, for all practical purposes, excluded from the benefits of the Federal Housing Administration, which has been a major factor in increasing the supply of new homes. The committee found that of the more than 100,000 new homes built in New York City since World War II with FHA insurance, not more than 900 units, or one per cent of the total, were bought by minority families."

A fight against racial discrimination in unions was pledged by top New York AFL-CIO labor leaders on Jan. 13 after a meeting of the labor advisory committee of the State Commission Against Discrimination. Charles S. Zimmerman, vice president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, was designated to head implementation of the program.

Democratic Party voting strength among Negroes fell 18 per cent from 1952 to 1956. Figures show that Stevenson got 79 per cent of the Negro vote in 1952 and 61 per cent in 1956, while Eisenhower got 21 per cent in 1952 and 39 per cent in 1956.

The Jewish Socialist Verband, the largest affiliate of the Social Democratic Federation, voted overwhelmingly not to join the SDF in merging with the Socialist Party in Jan. The reason for the opposition to the unity move was that the Socialist Party runs candidates against those backed by organized labor. The merger (except for the Verband) heals a split that came in 1936.

A record enrollment of 132,016 students in Jewish schools in greater New York for the 1955-56 school year was announced in mid-Jan. by the Jewish Education Committee of New York.

An informative series of 12 articles by Stan Opatowsky on the White Citizens Councils was run by the *N. Y. Post* from Jan. 7 to 20. The article on Jan. 15 deals with the participation of Jews and Catholics in the WCC, despite anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic bias in many councils. Most councils, says Opatowsky, mail out anti-Semitic literature. Some Jews and Catholics, he says, "are deep in the Citizens Councils and frequently produce some of the most rabidly anti-Negro speak-

ers the WCC can muster." Some Southern Jews join "only out of pained expediency" and are "agonized" over it. The synagogues, however, "have almost universally taken a stand against the Councils."

ABROAD

New data on Jews in Bucharest were derived from figures published by the Rumanian Central Statistical Board based on a census taken Feb. 21, 1956. Of the total population of Bucharest of 1,237,000, Jews number 43,492, or 3.5 per cent of the city's population. Yiddish was given as the mother tongue by 4,461, or a little over 10 per cent, of the city's Jews. Earlier estimates of Jews in the city were very much higher than the number revealed by the census.

Rumanian Chief Rabbi Dr. Moses Rosen was a candidate of the People's Democratic Front for the Rumanian Grand National Assembly in the Jan. elections. "My candidature," said Rabbi Rosen, "as well as that of other religious denominations, confirms once more the full religious liberty enjoyed by all the religions in Rumania."

A conference called by the Union of Jewish Communities in Yugoslavia to mark the tenth anniversary of the revival of Jewish life there was held last Oct. This group is a member of World Jewish Congress. In his opening address Chairman Dr. Albert Vajs stressed that Jews enjoyed equal rights with all nationalities in Yugoslavia. From a Jewish population of 75,000 before the war, only 6,500 Jews remain. They live in 35 towns.

A joint communique issued early in Feb. by a delegation of the French Communist Party visiting Poland and the Polish United Workers Party af-

firmed, among other things, their determination to struggle against "influences of reactionary ideology, especially against chauvinism, nationalism, anti-Semitism and anti-Soviet feelings."

The worst fears expressed 11 years ago by the Canadian Jewish Congress over the introduction of religious instruction in the public schools of the province of Ontario have been realized, said a brief submitted in Jan. by the CJC to Ontario Premier Frost. The brief pointed out that "unnecessary and unwarranted distinctions that create serious psychological hazards in the emotional development of children" resulted and that Jewish children are taught doctrines that conflict with their faith.

An anti-Semitic smear sheet, called *Behind the News*, has begun to appear in a Toronto suburb. The paper revives the nazi fantasy that a "Jewish conspiracy" exists to create a world war and dominate all countries.

I. G. Farben signed an agreement on Feb. 6 with the Conference of Jewish Material Claims Against Germany to compensate slave laborers who were pressed into work for the cartels during World War II. Already 3,000 Jews have registered for compensation and the number may rise to 6,000 eventually. Not more than \$6,430,000 has been assigned for this payment.

Formation of a central representative body for the 26,000 Jews in India is under consideration. Bombay has 18,000 Jews, Calcutta 2,000 and the remainder are scattered in 30-40 other towns. The Cultural Department of the World Jewish Congress is prepared to provide funds for the recording of Jewish folk music in India. L. H.

*The Literary Hit of
the Season*

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