

Jewish Life

Issued Monthly by the Morning Freiheit Association

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"Thou Shalt Not Bear False Witness"

By JOSEPH KING

A RECENT event in Jewish life has revealed integrity in the rabbinate when faced with treachery from within and danger from without. It is a fact that gives heart to the Jews of America.

Into that contemptible group of men who disgrace their holy office, a group that includes such vicious elements as "Father" Charles Coughlin, the "Reverend" Gerald L. K. Smith, has now entered "Rabbi" Benjamin Schultz. The honor is dubious. But it does prove that the Jews are subject to all the ills man is heir to.

It hardly seems possible, but it is true that Schultz has sunk even lower than his new-found colleagues. While Coughlin and Smith used their exalted positions to vilify and slander the Jewish people, Schultz used his rabbinical position to betray and inform against *his own* people. The Jews had a name for such vermin: a *moser*. And they considered it such an evil that, according to Talmudic law, the death penalty was at that time considered the deserving penalty.

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DECEMBER 1947

BEHIND THE GLAMOR CURTAIN

By BARTLEY CRUM

A JEW CONFRONTS THE UN-AMERICAN COMMITTEE

By SAMUEL ORNITZ

WHAT DOES CHANUKAH MEAN?

By MENDELE MOCHER SEFORIM

STATE DEPARTMENT VS. JEWISH ASPIRATIONS

AN EDITORIAL ARTICLE

From the Four Corners

AT HOME

A study of prejudice against minorities made by *Fortune Magazine's* Survey of Public Opinion (published in its October issue) reveals that one-half of all Americans have a bias against some minority. Jews were the target of 73 per cent of those with prejudice for economic reasons and of 52 per cent of those prejudiced for political reasons. Besides the 36 per cent of the population who resented "Jewish economic power," 12 per cent thought that Catholics had more of this power than they should. Twenty-one per cent think that Jews have too great a voice in the government while 15 per cent think this of the Catholics. Thirty-four per cent of the population thought the Negroes and 10 per cent thought the Jews deserved better treatment. Twenty-eight per cent of all Americans believe that bad treatment of certain minority groups should be countered by strong measures.

☆

A proportional decrease in enrollment of Jewish students in professional courses from 8.8 per cent in 1935 to 7.0 per cent in 1946 was reported in B'nai B'rith's Decennial Census of Jewish College Students. The drop was attributed in part at least to a more restrictive quota system, since Jews go to college today in about the same proportion as 11 years ago. The percentage of Jewish students declined from 15.9 to 12.7 in 67 of the 89 medical schools reporting in both 1935 and 1946. The percentage of Jewish students dropped from 28.2 to 18.9 in 31 out of 45 dental schools reporting in both years. In 77 out of 160 law schools reporting in both censuses the Jewish proportion declined from 25.8 to 11.1 per cent. Similar declines have occurred in schools of engineering, architecture, social work, agriculture and other professional institutions.

☆

The Anti-Defamation League will soon embark upon an enlarged program of legislative activity aimed at combating racial and religious intolerance. This major change in ADL policy was announced by national chairman Justice Meier Steinbrink.

☆

Evidence showing that Ferenc Nagy, ex-prime minister of Hungary now being sponsored by the State Department in this country, supported Hitler policies during the war, was advanced in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* recently by foreign editor Spencer Irwin. Irwin states that on June 9, 1932 debate was held in the Hungarian House on a bill to confiscate Jewish "land, woodlands, buildings and equipment." In his discussion of the bill, Nagy said: "We look upon this bill first of all as a land policy to protect the Hungarian race and strengthen it. From this point of view we can only sanction the fact that this bill aims to give all this land to Christian Hungarian Society. If the sense of the idea in the bill is really to protect the race it will be necessary to go a few steps further and then we will not fear how the Jewish land will be distributed or who will get it."

☆

Three Jewish boys, from 14 to 17 years old, were walking near Reading Road in Cincinnati at midnight the Monday before Rosh Hashonah. They were stopped by three hoodlums about 20 years old with the question, "Are you Jewish?" Without waiting for a reply, the Jewish boys were set upon and beaten. One boy lost two teeth, another's eye was bruised and the third suffered knee injuries. The culprits have not been apprehended. The Public Relations Committee of Cincinnati's Jewish Community Council is investigating the case.

☆

Homer L. Loomis, Jr., leader of the fascist

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VOL. II, No. 2 (14)

DECEMBER, 1947

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JEWISH LIFE is devoted to the scientific study of the political, economic, cultural and social development of the Jewish people, and to the militant struggle for equality and democracy. It carries on a consistent struggle against anti-Semitism and all other forms of discrimination in the United States. It fights for the building up of a progressive Jewish life in our country and throughout the world. It gives maximum support to the development of Jewish communities where they exist. It recognizes that the chief strength of the Jewish people lies in an alliance with the progressive forces of the world, particularly labor, and with the masses of the oppressed peoples.

THE EDITORS.

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Columbians, Inc., of Atlanta, Ga., became an official member of Gerald L. K. Smith's America First organization at a meeting held in Detroit on October 9. Loomis urged political action by the fascist organizations in preparation for the 1948 elections. "We must keep this present Congress in office," he said. "They have done a good job." He added, "I am concentrating now in three cities in America—Detroit, St. Louis and Atlanta—and once a month I will make speeches in these cities."

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Following several years of unsuccessful attempts to expand his "Christians of America," Frederick Kister, erstwhile G. L. K. Smith lieutenant and a glib anti-Semite, has announced

dissolution of his organization. He pledges, however, that he will continue his publication, "Christian Veterans' Political Counsel."

☆

Notes on Negro-Jewish relations . . . Every Jewish organization in Brooklyn is represented on the committee supporting the candidacy to the New York City Council of Ada B. Jackson, universally admired Negro woman. She is uniting the Jewish and Negro communities of Brooklyn to an extent never before achieved in Brooklyn. Mrs. Jackson said to a gathering of Jewish women recently: "My children, of course, are Negro children. When the ugliness of discrimination comes between them and the sun, I feel it

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FROM MONTH TO MONTH

STATE DEPARTMENT VS. JEWISH ASPIRATIONS

An Editorial Article

IN UN Committee Room Two at Lake Success the Palestine Committee meets in the morning and the Political Committee in the afternoon. Enter the meeting room in the afternoon, when the Greek question is under discussion and you will find things at a fever pitch. Above all you will notice how clear and unequivocal the United States position is. Sit in on this Committee for a while and you will see how the US delegation has taken the bull by the horns and is rushing to accuse, to get its position adopted and to get the voting over with.

An earlier hour on the same day, walk into the same room while the Palestine Committee is in session. Here the US delegation is in no hurry at all. Herschel Johnson, who heads the American delegation, has used every possible tactic to delay the work of the Committee. He withdrew the US resolution calling for an immediate vote on acceptance of the partition plan in principle. And at his insistence further postponements have been effected through the creation of unnecessary sub-committees, whose conclusions will have to be debated and discussed all over again by the full Committee and then by the General Assembly.

If the situation were not so tragic in its implications, it would be amusing to watch how the US delegation can roll up all the votes it needs on every major issue before the UN but has suddenly developed helplessness on the Palestine issue. It is ironic to see countries such as Argentina, Cuba and the Philippines, whose delegates would not dare to let out a squeak without American approval, suddenly become daring and oppose the US on the partition proposal.

What is taking place can be gleaned even from the newspapers. Thus Thomas J. Hamilton reports in the *New York Times* of Oct. 20: "The United States has made it very plain that it attaches the greatest importance to acceptance of its resolutions for the creation of the 'Little Assembly' and a Balkan Frontier Commission, but feels that the decision on Palestine should be a United Nations decision, it was said."

What does such pious double talk mean but that the State Department has no intention of doing anything to facilitate the fulfilment of Jewish statehood to which it had pledged itself? This has been corroborated by many observers. I. F. Stone reported in *PM* (Oct. 19) that "the Loy Henderson crowd, the men actually in charge of Middle Eastern affairs . . . have been very indiscreet in making it evident to other countries that they do not agree

with American declared policy and in hinting that the U.S. will not consider a vote against partition or abstention from the vote at all unfriendly."

Why is our government so militant on the Greek issue but so "indecisive" on the Palestine question? Does the State Department have different policies for Greece and Palestine or is the policy the same except that different tactics are necessary to meet the particular situation in each case?

The answer is not too hard to find. American imperialism is quite well aware of how rotten and decadent the present fascist Greek regime is. The State Department knows that ever growing numbers of the Greek people are joining in the fight against their oppressors, who remain in power only because of British and American intervention. Each day lost means a further weakening of the puppet regime. That is why American imperialism dare not delay on the Greek question.

Palestine, too, is part of the Middle East and the Truman-Marshall doctrines apply equally to it, as to Greece and Turkey. But unlike the Greek question, where haste is imperative, in the Palestine case America can reach its aims only by delaying and by sabotaging any real solution. For the State Department is confronted with several contradictory aims. On the one hand the State Department does not want an independent Palestine any more than it wants an independent Greece or Turkey. And in order to keep Palestine from real independence, the US needs allies both inside and outside that country. Its best allies are the reactionary Arab leaders, who themselves fear independence because they know that this will doom them as well. Therefore decisive elements in the State Department would like to throw overboard all its promises to the Jewish people, to betray Jewish aspirations and work with the Arab reactionaries.

But this is not easy because American public opinion is deeply in favor of Jewish aspirations. Then, too, they must bear in mind the elections in 1948. For these reasons, as well as many others, American imperialists cannot easily or openly betray their promises to the Jewish people. Their plan is therefore to operate in a double-faced way, to make public promises endorsing the establishment of a Jewish state and to move secretly behind the scenes to prevent any real solution.

Extremely revealing in this connection was the article of Cyrus L. Sulzberger in the *New York Times* (Oct. 20)

in which he stated: "That the United States has assumed a newly expanded role in the Mediterranean is obvious. The Truman Doctrine exemplifies this. Furthermore it demonstrates how closely Britain and the United States are trying to work together in the Mediterranean basin. . . . British spokesmen state not only that their government fully intends to quit Palestine but also that this move will come rather more speedily than dubious Americans expect. Just how these fluctuations in Britain's strategic position in the Mediterranean affect the United States' world position is not entirely known. *Certainly one may presume this aspect has been fully discussed in the joint Anglo-American staff meetings which still continue quietly in Washington*" (emphasis ours—Eds.).

What can this mean but that a secret deal is being worked out behind the scenes between America and Great Britain. And of one thing we can be certain. It is an anti-Jewish deal and should arouse deep concern in everyone favoring the establishment of a Jewish state. With the passing days the words of Andrei Vishinsky, Soviet delegate to the UN, becomes more and more convincing: when asked what he thought of Creech-Jones' speech announcing British withdrawal from Palestine, Vishinsky declared, "I am very much afraid that this is a plan not for the withdrawal of the British but rather a proposal to force the Jews out of Palestine." The wisdom of this remark and the clear understanding of the Palestine question which it indicates is proved more every day by events.

It is significant that the British declaration tried to blame everything that had happened in Palestine on the Jews and Arabs. Britain was merely an innocent bystander. Nor had the American declaration anything more to say on this score. Not a word on the British role in Palestine. Not one word of condemnation for the terror and persecution that Britain had instigated in Palestine. On the contrary the American declaration too indicated, although not so flagrantly as the British, that the people were to blame. What was intended by this maneuver but to distract the attention of public opinion from the real issue, namely, the guilt of imperialism and the necessity for UN action to ensure the immediate removal of British imperialism from Palestine and to make it appear as if the major issue were Jewish-Arab antagonism.

Of course Arab-Jewish unity is of the utmost importance. And of course every democratic person will continue to fight for Arab-Jewish unity. But he will do so with the knowledge that the prime prerequisite for the achievement of unity is the elimination of imperialism, which is the basic cause for the present disunity. By hiding this fact and seeking to distort the issue, America and Great Britain seek to evade any real solution to the Palestine question.

We had hoped that the leaders of the Jewish Agency would avoid this trap and would come out with a fighting declaration indicating the real menace to the *Yishuv* and to the establishment of a Jewish state. We had hoped that the Jewish Agency leadership would give both to the Jewish people as to the world generally, a fighting lead by force-

fully showing that Jewish statehood can be assumed only by removing the Palestine question from imperialist control and turning it over fully and unequivocally into the hands of the UN and with Big Five responsibility for the interim period.

Instead of doing this and bringing out a clear and forthright program for the people to fight on, both Shertok and Weizmann devoted their time to answering the arguments of the Arab reactionaries without a single word of condemnation of British rule in Palestine. On the contrary, there was a conciliatory note towards Great Britain both in the Shertok and the Weizmann speeches. The Jewish people were amazed at such an attitude on the part of Jewish leaders towards a Great Britain that has and is now doing everything in its power to destroy the *Yishuv*, to hunt and persecute harmless refugees and to send them back to concentration camps in Germany. Such an attitude will certainly not aid us in breaking through the sabotage of Great Britain and America.

There is great need for organized, militant action against the plans to frustrate Jewish aspirations. Perhaps no one has indicated so warmly and unequivocally the road to Jewish statehood as did Semyon K. Tsarapkin, the Soviet delegate, who pointed out that the UN can reach a solution to the Palestine question and thereby bring statehood to the Jewish people on condition that the mandate be abrogated, that the British administration and troops be removed immediately and that the UN itself take over. This gives a clear lead to those who want to fight for Jewish statehood to press our government for these demands.

GOING HITLER'S WAY

EVENTS in the United States are not the private concern of the American people alone. The position of our country on the world scene makes everything we do, everything we think the immediate concern of peoples throughout the world.

We are today, as a nation, the chief exporters of what we are pleased to call, with typical American modesty bred in the huckstering trade, "western civilization," "western democracy," and when we permit ourselves a slip of the tongue, "Christian civilization." But the people of the world, having experienced at first hand the holocaust of fascist efforts to establish a "new order," seek behind the glowing words for the concrete content. And they look to the home base of this exportable "democracy," to see exactly how it operates.

And how does it operate? What has happened in the last few weeks in the United States?

Leon Josephson, who endangered his life fighting against Hitler right in Hitler's back yard while the rest of the world was still debating whether Hitler was a fake, a lunatic or a capitalist messiah, was found guilty of un-Americanism. We wonder what the 300,000 American war dead, whose bodies are now being returned home, would think of that.

In Trenton, New Jersey, a mob of 2,000 defied a court injunction, and in typical lynch spirit prevented a meeting scheduled to hear Gerhart Eisler, anti-fascist refugee, from taking place.

Howard Fast, prominent anti-fascist author, was found guilty by another court for helping Spanish democrats in their struggle against Franco fascism. The sale of his latest novel, as a result of an anti-democratic conspiracy, is being sabotaged.

Mob violence was threatened in Jersey City, New Jersey, against a meeting at which Dr. Frank Kingdon, of the Progressive Citizens of America, who is planning to run for Senate against the notorious Republican reactionary, Albert W. Hawkes of New Jersey, was to speak.

An epidemic of police brutality has broken out in the presumably progressive city of New York against the Negro people, and all the fine language of Mayor O'Dwyer and Police Commissioner Wallender has not yet brought a change in the situation.

A whole series of deportation proceedings have been started by the Justice Department under the leadership of Attorney General Tom Clark against outstanding progressive and militant trade union leaders like John Santo of the Transport Workers Union, Michael Obermeier of Local 6, Hotel & Club Workers Union.

And finally, for this limited record, there is the effort to establish thought control by the House Un-American Committee in its un-American and illegal methods of investigating Hollywood. This seems to have opened up the sewage sluices of fascism in so far as the behavior of the Committee and its investigators are concerned.

And on the other hand, every democratic proposal made is turned into its opposite. Thus Austin calls the efforts to halt war-mongering the actions of a "police" state. And Mrs. Roosevelt considers UN action against traffic in women and children in the colonies an infringement of the sovereignty of colonial peoples. And President Truman himself considers the reintroduction of price control in the interests of the people the action of a "police" state.

The peoples of the world see this American "way of life" in action and are becoming increasingly determined to resist the super-salesmanship of the American Century builders.

The American people, however, will be the first to suffer, as the German people were the first to suffer, from the continued development of this drive toward fascism. There need not necessarily be at one step a plunge into fascism. It may come as a result of a step by step campaign of intimidation, of terror. These steps are being taken now. The counter-offensive cannot be delayed.

The action of the 19 artists from Hollywood, and their more numerous supporters in the film industry, is winning a new and a more fundamental stardom for the principals. America applauds them. But America must do more in their defense and in the defense of the American people. It must emulate their fighting spirit.

JEWISH WAR VETERANS MEET

THE 52nd annual encampment of the Jewish War Veterans, which met in St. Paul from October 15 to 19, was an important event for the Jewish community. What these 500 delegates said and did, has great significance for all American Jews.

The thousands of veterans who joined the JWV after VJ-Day were motivated by an intense desire to fight against anti-Semitism, to solve the pressing problems of housing, jobs and education. They felt obliged to add their strength to fight for a free Palestine and to insure that they would get the kind of peace for which they fought. They saw their problems without blinkers and were determined to do something about them. This was manifested in their militant activities, such as the fight against anti-Semitism in the New York *Daily News*, against the Columbians in Georgia, and against Gerald L. K. Smith in various cities. The veterans took many actions to support the fight for a free Palestine and for the Exodus refugees.

The veterans' militancy was expressed in this year's encampment in some important resolutions. The resolutions defended civil liberties, opposed loyalty oaths, witch-hunts and the rebuilding of Germany's war potential. They demanded the immediate termination of the British Palestine mandate, they condemned lynching, urged the retention of rent control and the passage of the Wagner-Ellender-Taft Housing Bill.

But we must recognize that the encampment did not discuss concrete steps to implement these resolutions. Why did not the encampment this year project a program against anti-Semitism, as it did last year? The national meeting was silent on the Buckley Bill to outlaw anti-Semitism, despite endorsement by many local and county organizations of this legislation.

Doubtless the answer lies in the disproportionate influence within the organization of reactionary big business elements who advocate hush-hush. Another reason was the inability of many new posts of World War II veterans to raise the cash to send delegates to the encampment. The new national commander has admitted that, if the encampment had been held in a more accessible place, he would have been congratulating his opponent on election. The new commander is Julius Klein, who has large financial interests, is a public relations consultant for such companies as the TWA and the Hearst newspaper chain, and a former assistant to ex-Secretary of War Patterson. Mr. Klein boasts of his close association with such men as Senator Taft and Herbert Hoover.

Big business assimilationist elements at the encampment were willing tools of the current reactionary offensive, and prevented the encampment from drawing closer to the democratic front against reaction. They jammed through a resolution supporting universal military conscription and succeeded in getting through an amendment to the JWV constitution barring avowed communists from member-

ship. The latter was adopted despite the vigorous opposition of many delegates who warned that a witch-hunt in the JWV would prevent it from carrying out a militant program with the unity so imperative today.

The veterans must not permit these reactionary decisions to divert their attention from the positive achievements of the encampment. If the JWV is to continue to serve their interests as veterans and Jews, they must work for a program of action which will contribute to Jewish unity, to peace and security and to an end to discrimination. Only then will they rally the thousands of Jews not yet in their ranks. Only then will they take their place in the community as the carrier of the progressive fighting traditions of the Jewish people.

MORGENTHAU ACCUSES

“WE knew in Washington, from August, 1942, on, that the nazis were planning to exterminate all the Jews of Europe. Yet, for nearly 18 months after the first reports of the nazi horror plan, the State Department did practically nothing. Officials dodged their grim responsibility, procrastinated when concrete rescue schemes were placed before them, and even suppressed information about atrocities in order to prevent an outraged public opinion from forcing their hand.”

This is the profoundly shocking accusation that Henry Morgenthau, for more than 12 years a member of the Roosevelt cabinet, makes in his political diary, published serially in *Collier's*. He accuses by name former Assistant Secretary of State Breckenridge Long, old admirer of Mussolini and defender of the bloody Franco, as one of the main instigators of State Department sabotage of efforts to rescue millions of European Jews. Mr. Morgenthau also directly charges the British government under Churchill with collusion in this sabotage. While it was yet possible to bring hundreds of thousands of Jews out of Germany and nazi-occupied countries, the Churchill government coldly answered the United States government requests for cooperation that Britain could not work along with these efforts. The world knows that these Jews were subsequently strangled in gas chambers.

Mr. Morgenthau's diary is not an academic document. It bears a grim and terrible accusation. And the millions of surviving Jews in Europe and America, as well as the peoples of these two countries, must demand an answer from their governments.

Not only were millions of Jews killed because “career” diplomats in Washington and London deliberately and cold-bloodedly sabotaged their rescue. The tragedy is that these same “career” diplomats, who are steeped in anti-Semitism and sympathy for nazis and fascists the world over, still carry on in the State Department and the Foreign Office and influence policy.

These are the very men in our own government who have led our country into duplicity on the Palestine question. As revealed by Bartley Crum in *Behind the Silken Curtain*,

every time Roosevelt or Truman or a major American political party made declarations favorable to the Jews of Palestine, these men informed British and the Arab countries not to take these statements seriously because the promises to the Jews were meaningless. And these are the leaders of the British Foreign Office who organized the Arab League, who support the Palestine Arab Higher Committee, who sponsor the pro-nazi Mufti and who encourage all of them in their threats and military preparations against the *Yishuv*.

And these American and British officials are friends of all the reactionary adventurers in Europe and Asia and bitter enemies of the Soviet Union and the new European democracies. Against Russia and the democracies these diplomats carry on perpetual intrigue and incitation to war. If they succeed in bringing on a new world war, it is horrible to contemplate what they would be willing to do with the remaining millions of surviving Jews.

Mr. Morgenthau's indictment omits one important question. Why was it that, after Hitler's extermination plans were known in America, responsible Jewish leaders permitted themselves to become confused and frightened by State Department sabotage? Why did they not expose this and rally the sentiment in the country to rescue those who could still be saved?

These Jewish leaders might reply that they thought it inappropriate during the war to create a furore about anti-Semitic sabotage by State Department officials. Then why did not these Jewish leaders cry aloud after the war ended, when they could see clearly that the State Department and the British Foreign Office were continuing their anti-Jewish policies as though nothing had happened?

This question is a matter of life and death for the Jews—not only in the past, but in the present and the future. It must not be passed over in silence. The effective way to reply is to expose the current machinations of these same anti-Semitic elements in our State Department which are expressed in the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. These policies not only endanger democracy in the world, but are an imminent threat to the Jews.

CIVIL RIGHTS

AS we go to press, the President's Committee on Civil Rights has issued its report. The Committee has verified what progressive forces, including the Communist Party, have been claiming for years: that the situation with regard to the rights of the Negro people and other minority groups in the US is a historic crime. It is well that this has come out from official sources.

Other aspects of the report, however, must be thoroughly examined. Especially must we guard against any efforts made by Pres. Truman, who instituted a loyalty oath and an international communist hunt, to use this report as a mask for the further extension of thought control. *JEWISH LIFE* will go into the report more deeply in future issues.

BEHIND THE GLAMOR CURTAIN

By Bartley Crum

I SAW an awful lot of misery and horror "Behind the Silken Curtain" over there, resulting from fascism, which shocked, appalled and angered me. But little did I dream that I would return to my own country and see behind a "Glamor Curtain," in Washington, Hitler's slickest trick pulled, to take the American people down this awful road of fascism—I refer to the old army game which won Hitler the name of "Adolf Legalite."

For I saw American congressmen with smug, pious expressions, desecrate and trample upon every known basic legal right of a citizen. Behind this trumpery every type of vilification, slander, libel, abuse, distortion and character assassination was indulged, encouraged and incited, and, when one of my colleagues protested against this un-American procedure, and demanded the simple basic legal right to challenge and cross-examine, he was ejected; and then, when I sought to confer with my clients, they ordered me to be forcibly seated, while a national columnist advised the congressional policemen to beat my brains out with a blackjack. Even Hitler's courts conducted their proceedings with nicer decorum.

As a result of my grim experiences as a member of the Anglo-American Palestine Commission, I learned a grizzly historical fact. It is this—that, down the centuries, whenever reaction sought to push back the clock of progress, it caused anti-Semitism to reappear to divert the attention of the people from what was being done to them. So, when I came into this case, I was immediately struck by one fact—that the star member of this star chamber un-American Committee is the nation's leading bigot and that every member of this Committee vies with the other for the honor of having about the worst voting record in Congress.

Then another fact began to emerge, and I began to wonder if it were only a coincidence, namely, that every one of these 19 American Catholics, Jews and Protestants, had either written, produced, directed or acted in motion pictures that attacked racism, and honorably pictured minorities as human beings deserving equal rights and equal consideration.

Take a current picture that is one of the outstanding cinema successes—*Crossfire*. Or is it only a coincidence?

BARTLEY CRUM is the distinguished attorney who was a member of the Anglo-American Inquiry Commission, and is author of the book *Behind the Silken Curtain*. He is now counsel for the 19 Hollywood progressives who are under attack from the Un-American Committee. This article was a speech read for Mr. Crum by Larry Parks, Hollywood star, at the Keep America Free Rally on October 25, 1947 in New York, sponsored by the Progressive Citizens of America of which Mr. Crum is vice-chairman.

As a Catholic, I am very proud of the fact that two gifted Catholic boys, Adrian Scott and Edward Dmytryk, under subpoena, respectively produced and directed it, and that a Protestant boy, John Paxton, wrote the screen play of this inspiring blow against anti-Semitism.

Perhaps it is again only a coincidence that Albert Maltz has been subpoenaed and that he is the author of the screen play *Pride of the Marines* and the short *The House I Live In*, both of which attack anti-Semitism and anti-peopleism in general.

Richard Collins, also under subpoena, wrote for our armed forces an educational short called *Don't Be a Sucker*, which instructed the soldiers not to fall for prejudice towards the Jews, the Negro and other minorities!

The coincidences pile up! For we find that another of the subpoenaed men, Lester Cole, wrote *None Shall Escape*, prophesying the fate that would overtake the leading nazis and which hate groups in America tried to stop by creating disturbances in the theaters, just as in 1931 they created disturbances in the theaters of Germany and stopped the showing of an anti-war picture called *All Quiet on the Western Front*—and what a coincidence!!—the man who directed this picture, Lewis Milestone, has also been subpoenaed. And to pile coincidence, this same Lewis Milestone, under subpoena, also directed *Of Mice and Men* in which a Negro receives warm and human treatment on a basis of equality and not on a basis of patronage.

And here comes another—Ring Lardner, Jr. wrote a film cartoon called *The Brotherhood of Man*, which scientifically established that there is no difference in the races, that we are all alike and that any ideas of white supremacy or any other supremacy is the bunk.

And, in this connection, we are struck by another coincidence—that the investigators employed by the un-American Committee and its leading members are devout and impassioned advocates of white supremacy.

And yet here is another one—Waldo Salt, under subpoena, wrote for the OWI *The Commington Story*, a documentary short showing displaced Jews, received in an American town, first with hostility, and then with friendship and affection after the people got to know them. And perhaps it is only another coincidence that this same Waldo Salt, under subpoena, also wrote the script of Howard Fast's *Freedom Road*, which treats the Negro people with due dignity.

And coincidence marches on! Robert Rossen, producer-director-writer, under subpoena, is just about to release his picture *Body and Soul*, which every critic in the country has acclaimed at previews for its treatment of both the Jews and Negroes, particularly the performance of the great

Negro actor, Canada Lee, which expresses his people's determination *not to take it any more*.

And perhaps it is not such a coincidence that Samuel Ornitz, author of *Haunch, Paunch and Jowl*, also under subpoena, is the leader of the fight against anti-Semitism in southern California and is number one target of the lunatic fringe out there.

And here we come to Herbert Bibberman, under subpoena, producer of *New Orleans*, in which Negroes and whites treat each other as though there were no color distinction, as there isn't in God's eyes—how subversive!

And finally we come to the master coincidence—to wit, that the *one actor* who was subpoenaed as an "unfriendly" witness, is the gifted young man who so sympathetically and sincerely played the part of the Jewish singer that it is conceivable that Al Jolson himself now believes that he has been reincarnated in this Protestant Kansas boy, Larry Parks!

I'll tell you what makes me mad, bitter and fighting mad—and that is to hear these un-American congressmen sit up there and talk about stopping these brilliant creative men from overthrowing our government. I shall ask them

if our government isn't violently overthrown every time a Negro is lynched, and why this isn't un-American to the un-American Committee!

I shall ask them, categorically, if the government, local and national, is not overthrown in every community where the hooded Klansmen set up their own terror rule! Indeed one of them characterized the capers of the Klansmen as being *traditionally American as the illegal sale of whiskey!*

I have become so addicted to coincidences, I must indulge in one more. Isn't it a coincidence that Huey Long, shortly before he died, cynically forecast that fascism in America would come in the guise of ultra ultra Americanism. Or isn't it a coincidence?

But what isn't a coincidence is the determination of these 19 outstanding American creative artists not to let this happen—their determination to go before this Un-American Committee and yield not one iota of the right of conscience, criticism, conviction, opinion and the free communication of ideas and ideals, no matter what the cost to them personally!

This is why my colleagues and I are so proud to represent them.

HOW JEWISH WORKERS LIVE IN PALESTINE

By G. Koenig

THE Jewish working class is the backbone of the Jewish *Yishuv* in Palestine in point of numbers, weight of sacrifice and love of country. In Palestine are the beautiful houses, roads and highways and factories built by the Jewish workers. In cement, textile and metal plants, in glass works, on the railroads, in port, in the fields—everywhere I met them. I saw them under the burning sun, in the *khamisin* winds, in the rains, burned, emaciated by heat and sweat. I studied them at work, in the city and inter-urban busses that carried them to and from their work. I saw them deep in newspaper, pamphlet or book. I listened to their discussions among themselves. I talked to them. I visited many workers' homes. I spoke to some at 25 lectures and discussions in towns and villages, collectives and factories. Not always did our opinion on this or that question correspond with that of the majority of these workers. But we always understood each other; we felt the closeness of our common class; the same determination, not clearly felt by many, to see the working class and all humanity happy, joyous, socialist; the same great love for our people.

How do these workers live? I was constantly alert to observe this, as well as to discover what they were thinking.

G. KOENIG, editor of the French-Yiddish paper, *Neue Presse*, has recently returned from a four-month visit to Palestine.

When I was in Palestine at the end of 1946 and early in 1947, I found the shop windows packed with all kinds of goods. The most varied commodities, necessities as well as luxury items, all sorts of foodstuffs, fruits, wines. The ration system, except for one or two items, did not exist. In comparison with the countries of Europe and other parts of the world, Palestine did not suffer from the war. Because of special conditions, the war years were a period of unprecedented prosperity in Palestine. Palestine had worked for the allies, some of whose soldiers passed through the country and some of whom remained there. Industry developed greatly, trade blossomed. About £100 million of savings were deposited in the banks.

To what extent did the worker share in this prosperity? Very little, sad to say, in comparison with the earnings of the entrepreneurs, merchants and speculators. The only gain for the workers was a full week's work for the first time since the unemployment caused by the serious economic crisis of 1936-1940. Real wages, however, did not rise during the war years or in the post-war period, but actually kept dropping.

The prominent statistician of the Jewish Agency, Dr. Didrowitch, made a survey among a great number of Jewish working class families. These are the results: only 25 per cent of the Jewish workers earn somewhat more than the minimum living standard, the rest earn less than the mini-

mum. This minimum is 102 to 132 per cent of their income.

Have wages fallen since the war? Not at all. On the contrary, money wages increased about threefold. But the prices of all kinds of commodities more than quadrupled. Despite increased wages resulting from high prices, real wages are lower than before the war. The comment of the Histadruth's statistical journal *Elon* of January 1947 on the survey of Dr. Didrowitch is characteristic. "It becomes clear from this investigation," wrote *Elon*, "that the masses of workers cannot get along on their earnings and are compelled to fall into debt. The conditions of the lower strata are particularly difficult. From this it can be seen that the complaints about the high living standard of the Palestinian workers have no justification."

And here is a second statistical study, also a Histadruth investigation. Working class families in various parts of the world spent on the average the following percentage of their budget on food:

Country	Year	Per Cent
England	1938	39.5
England	1943	50.
United States	1943	37.6
Palestine	1939	50.6
Palestine	1941	59.8
Palestine	1946	64.9

Even omitting comparison with the United States and England, these figures show that in Palestine a working class family spends almost two-thirds of its budget on food, while before the war it spent only a little more than half!

Crowded Housing

True, according to official figures, rent for the Jewish worker amounts to less than half of the pre-war figure—9.1 per cent of his budget. But how do most of the Jewish working class live? Here we come to one of the most painful problems in the life of the Jewish workers, its housing. At a time when the rich Jews in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem live in beautiful villas, in six, eight, ten and twelve-room apartments, the majority of the Jewish workers suffer in one-room flats. Everywhere one sees the system of common kitchens. This means that in an apartment of several rooms, a different family lives in each room, while the kitchen is shared by all. Since the war, children have been added, families have become larger, and the crowding has become even more unbearable. As a result quarrels frequently arise which embitter the lives of not a few families.

There was no construction during the war, but it was resumed after the war. But getting a new apartment is an unattainable dream for the vast majority of the workers, since one must pay hundreds of pounds for the right to take possession!

Here is one incident among hundreds about a girl who

has been in the country for 12 years. She works in an aluminum plant and earns a pound (approximately four dollars) a day. Years ago she met a young man who is a government employee in Tel Aviv and earns £32 a month. She lives in a small, dark room in a barrack, without water or conveniences of any kind. He lives in a hotel. Their earnings, after deducting dues, taxes and fares, are barely enough to get along on. It is impossible for them to marry for they must have at least £200 to £300 in order to take possession of a small room in Tel Aviv, let alone pay for furniture and other items.

Certainly there are workers who are well accommodated, with nice apartments rented before the war, and who pay £4 to £5 a month rent; or those who have flats in the new housing developments. But unfortunately they are a minority. We refer again to official figures. A survey of the Jewish Agency in 1946 established the fact that on the average the following number of persons live in one room:

In Tel Aviv	4.6 persons
In Haifa	5.2 persons
In Jerusalem	6.1 persons

Tax and Dues Burdens

About 10, and sometimes 12 per cent of a worker's earnings go for dues in the Histadruth and other funds. Needless to say, this crimps the budget of workers, let alone the various indirect government and municipal taxes, and cost of education of a child even in elementary school, for books and notebooks. Health maintenance, like school maintenance, rests almost exclusively on the shoulders of the workers. It is enough to indicate that the 1946 budget of £2 million of the Histadruth sick benefit fund, which applies to about 40 per cent of the Jewish *Yishuv*, was made up from the following:

Taxes from workers	83.3 per cent
Employers and institutions	14.7 per cent
Miscellaneous	2.0 per cent

In a country where the government has absolutely no ties with the population except through the police, dungeons, barbed-wire and persecution of all types; in a country where the occupying power tries to suppress initiative to improve the living conditions of the population—in such a country the struggle of the worker to maintain his rights and living standards is increasingly difficult. A trade union, no matter how strong it is, cannot, especially under colonial conditions, represent a state. In fact the present policies of the Histadruth carry out its obligations to the workers badly. Hence I have rarely experienced anywhere such insecurity for the future and fear of unemployment as I found in Palestine. It is apparent how workers deny themselves, work overtime, work in two or three different places at the same time, in order to save for bad times.

In recent years the structure of the Jewish working class in Palestine has undergone a basic change. If the Jewish worker several decades ago was on the whole young, very often without family ties, he is today on the average much older. The majority have families, and in any case the difficulty of earning a livelihood is much greater. Here are some figures to substantiate this:

While in 1922 only 32 per cent of the Jewish workers were married, 77 per cent were family heads in 1945! While in 1922, 78 per cent of the workers were under 30, in 1937 only 53 per cent were younger than 30, and in 1945 only 34 per cent.

Real Wages Fall, Profits Soar

The rich Jews—who consider themselves fiery Zionists—who were great gainers from war prosperity, exploit every opportunity to try to cut wages. Wages, they complain, are “too high” and therefore it is impossible to meet foreign competition. Facts show, however, that while wages before the war amounted to 32.5 per cent of the value of the production, at the end of the war it equalled only from 20 to 22 per cent.

The example of the diamond industry is classic. This industry grew up during the war. Diamond dealers became extremely rich. In 1945 they exported more than £6 million worth of gems. All expenditures for raw materials, wages and other costs amounted to £4 million. This left a clear profit for several hundred establishments of £2 million (approximately 8 million dollars), which is higher than the 5,000 workers in the trade earned for a year. Of the £2 million, a few large establishments gobbled up one half.

At the end of 1946 a crisis hit the trade. The fervidly nationalist employers of the diamond trade did not wait long to lock out the workers from the factories. It took place in December. They did not even wait till the first of the year, when the collective contract was to expire. Simultaneously they established “black factories,” where they offered work at lower wages. When I left Palestine at the end of February, the situation was very hard and the workers complained that the Histadruth was not defending them properly. I also read the same accusations in the newspapers *Mishmar* (organ of the Hashomer Hatzair), *L'Achduth H'Avodah* (organ of the left-wing labor party Zionists) and *Kol Haam* (organ of the communists).

The situation of the Jewish workers had considerably worsened as a result of the war. And once more the employers have shown that they make class interests appear as national interests as the bourgeoisie everywhere.

This is what we read in the Hashomer Hatzair organ, *Mishmar*, of March 11, 1947: “It has happened more than once that employers take advantage of bad times to reduce wages of workers; in times of trouble for the nation ways are sought to throw the whole burden on the shoulders of the laborer. And it is clear that this time also demands will be made on the worker in the name of a false patriotism to reduce wages.”

And yet, in spite of the difficulties of life, of worry over the next day's bread, the Jewish worker in Palestine makes every effort to live a cultured life. The majority of the Jewish workers' homes that I visited (except in the very poorest, and mostly of the eastern Jews) were very clean. The homes, that is, a single small room, are modestly but tastefully arranged. The working father and mother sacrifice so that their children should lack nothing, be properly nourished, clothed and educated. (Hardship no doubt accounts mainly for the fact that working class families of European descent rarely have more than one or two children.) The workers read a lot. A plant of 30 to 40 workers often subscribes to three or four newspapers, which are passed from hand to hand. Workers subscribe for books, save to attend the movies and theater.

The Jewish workers love the country which has taken so much of their toil, sweat and blood. Certainly there are some who would like to leave. The great majority, however, especially among the veteran settlers, are bound to the country. I was happy to meet communist workers, especially some who have lived in Palestine for a long time, and some of the youth who speak with love about *artzainu* (our land). *Artzainu* denotes for them a country from which the occupation power must be driven, and where both peoples of the country should live under a free and democratic regime. The communists are very proud of the fact that one of their leaders, S. Mikunis, has lived in the country for 25 years, and participated in the construction of a great number of houses and highways, first as a worker and for the last 12 years as a first class engineer.

The Jewish workers in Palestine defend their interests, often against the will of the Histadruth leadership. Of the 176 strikes in 1945, 86 were called by the Histadruth, and not a few of these 86 were forced upon the Histadruth by rank and file workers.

Patriotism and class struggle, national interests and friendship between peoples—the conscious working class of the whole world never separated these conceptions. The progressive sections of the Palestinian Jewish working class are struggling so that their country may find as quickly as possible the one correct road that will open new, bright perspectives for both peoples of Palestine.

WE MOURN

PETER V. CACCHIONE

Died November 6, 1947

Gallant anti-fascist fighter

Champion of minority rights

People's leader

WHAT DOES CHANUKAH MEAN?

A Short Story
By Mendele Mocher Seforim
Translated by Joseph King

"A GREAT miracle happened to me on Chanukah." "Why 'me,' Samuel? Why not 'us'? Isn't it *my* miracle, just like yours?"

"Yes, my dear Ignaz, a great miracle occurred on Chanukah, but it happened to *me*, not to you."

"Bah, go argue with an old bookworm! According to you we Jews today are not even Jews. The old Talmud professors had a sort of contract with the Lord Almighty, what you call a patent on Jewishness."

"What you say, Ignaz, has nothing to do with the story I'm trying to tell you. By the way, today is generally not the time for such debates. Today there is more important work to do: get a card game together, eat *latkes*¹ and spend your time with convivial friends. That's why I invited you, brother. But since the other guests haven't arrived yet, and since you've already touched on this difficult subject, I must answer you.

"Understand me, we are all Jews, the pious, the enlightened, the God-fearing, the free-thinking. I, for one, have sat since childhood and studied the Torah in *cheder*,² in rabbinical schools, while you went to secular schools and didn't know what it was to carry the burden of the Torah. Nevertheless we are both Jews. But isn't there a difference between us?"

"In my case, Jewishness has impregnated my heart, my mind, and every bone in my body. My kind finds in a Jewish custom a special quality. We feel it in our very marrow, whether we know it or not. After a while we may go astray, we may, God forbid, even become converted, but we can never forget the savor of Jewishness. But people like yourself—people who never devoted themselves to the study of the Torah and to the service of God, penitents who did not bear the burden of Jewishness from childhood—such people cannot really sense the true savor of a Jewish tradition, of a Jewish good deed, even if they were to become pious and fulfill all their duties with the greatest zeal."

"Now hold on there, Samuel. What are you saying? That's what all the idlers around the stove in the synagogue claim. But that's so much empty bleating, pure sophistry. You've got to prove this first."

"Prove? I should say so! I can prove it with a whole

¹ Pancakes.

² Children's school.

MENDELE MOCHER SEFORIM (Sholom Yankev Abramovitch) was the first great writer of Yiddish fiction. A master of satire and a lover of the Jewish common people, he was a critic of oppression and a satirist of Jewish institutions. Born in 1836 he died in December 1917. We publish *What Does Chanukah Mean?* not only for its intrinsic merit, but to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of Mendele's death.

pack of examples, with mountains of facts, ten, a hundred. . . ."

"Good evening! Good evening! . . . What are you two so hot and bothered about? What's all the racket for? Looks as if you're so deep in your quarrel about the rules of the game that you didn't even hear us come in. We've said good evening twice already!"

"Ah, hello—hello! Welcome, Mr. Todros, Mr. Zoruch, Mr. Gimpel, Mr. . . . Mr. . . ."

"What are you talking about so excitedly? Maybe we're interrupting you in the middle of something important, Reb Samuel. Don't let us disturb you. If it's a secret, we'll go in the dining room in the meantime and say good evening to the missus."

"Not at all. We have no secrets. Sit down, you can hear it too. I began to tell him the story of the miracle that occurred to me on Chanukah."

"Tell it, go ahead and tell it. We'll listen. But don't take too long. After all, it *is* Chanukah. And Jews play cards. How does the proverb go? 'On this night everyone plays cards.' A round a minute. . . ."

"THE STORY IS REALLY NOT VERY LONG. THE POINT IS NOT EVEN in the story itself, but in the results it brought me later. I've therefore made a habit of recalling it every year at Chanukah.

"At that time, and perhaps even now, there was no pleasanter season for Jewish boys than the eight days of Chanukah. The poor things were imprisoned in *cheder* like chickens in a coop from early morning until nine o'clock at night. But Chanukah was something! No school! Chanukah presents from father and mother, from uncles and aunts, from grandfathers and grandmothers. You play *dreidel*.³ You exchange things. And with God's help you split potatoes in half and make Chanukah lamps out of them for your father. You live like a prince!

"I remember that just then, at the eighth candle, I was cheerful in an entirely different manner. The eight Chanukah lamps that burned on a window-sill near the door seemed to me like the cups of the golden menorah in the Holy Temple; the wicks shone and twinkled like eight bright little stars. The house was bright and warm. Mama was rendering fat, the odor of fried chicken skin and onions got into my nose and tickled. Papa sat with guests around the table and argued about points in the Torah. They spoke with their whole bodies—they waved their hands, they emphasized with their thumbs, they made queer sounds. In a word, there was great joy. . . ."

³ Tee-totum.

CHANUKAH

By S. Alexander

ALTHOUGH the Rabbis placed Chanukah among the minor Jewish festivals, it holds a high place in the hearts of the Jewish people. It commemorates the revolt of the Jews, led by the Maccabees, against the Syrians under Antiochus. This revolt was a great national uprising of the Jewish people against foreign oppression, and resulted in a brief period of independence until Rome became the overlord of Palestine. In celebrating Chanukah the Jewish people remember the great Jewish traditions of struggle against the enemies of freedom.

The reconsecration of the Temple of Judas Maccabeus on the 25th day of Kislev in 165 B.C.E. recalled to the ancients the consecration of the first Temple of Solomon. But, they said, Solomon's Temple had cost treasure, whereas this had cost blood.

Jewish legend has a story about Chanukah and the ceremonial of lighting the candles. It is asked, why do the number of candles increase every night? Why are they not all lit on each of the eight nights? In reply it is said that the Chanukah candles symbolize the Maccabean victory. First, a single light, Mattathias standing alone, a beacon to the Jewish people. Then his sons join him. Supporters rally, they grow into an army. The army grows bigger and bigger. Battles are lost and won. Finally a glorious triumph. The small single flame has grown into a great blaze of light.

"And what were they talking about? Obviously, about the holiday. All the time you heard through the tumult one question: 'What is Chanukah?' They wrinkled their brows, they made wry faces, they bit the tips of their beards, but it was obvious that they couldn't answer the difficult question, 'What does Chanukah mean?' One of the guests stood up, gave the company a bit of 'Our rabbis taught us' type of discussion, got all tangled up in the problem, constantly found new meanings, lectured with great enthusiasm, whetted his mind.

"From all these beautiful, complicated lectures I understood only one thing: 'Gentiles had polluted all the oil in the Holy of Holies, and when the Hasmoneans were victorious and drove them out there was found a single little pitcher of oil which was sealed with the high priest's seal. The little pitcher should have lasted for only one day. But a miracle took place, and it burned for eight days.' Because I was very tipsy that evening, and because the Chanukah holiday was very dear to me, I, a shrimp, a pup, was not afraid of my father and of the visiting Jews with the beards, and I declared, like Messiah through the lips of an idiot:

"Some bargain! Eight days from one little pitcher is no kind of miracle. If the pitcher had lasted for a whole year and Chanukah was a whole year—that, I could understand, would have been a miracle. They you could get rid of the teachers who smack you and punch you. . . ."

"I did not have time to conclude before my father handed me a smack that was truly something to brag about.

"You savage! You yearn for fun. You'd like to run around like a tramp without ever doing a stitch of work.

You want to grow up to be a dope, that's what you want, huh?' That's what my father yelled. And I suppose I would have gotten a few more slaps in the face from him. But a miracle happened to me. The first slap knocked my hat off. But before I could bend down, before I could reach for it, I had to cover my bare head with the skirt of my *kapoté*.⁴ In the meantime, papa's anger passed. . . . Why are you smiling, Ignaz. Are you mocking me?"

"On the contrary! I see that I was wrong in my arguments. That's why I'm smiling now."

"Believe me, dear Ignaz, you're always wrong when you accuse me of such things. And do you know why? Because you, my good brother, are a penitent, and in every penitent there is a bit of the fanatic who always has a chip on his shoulder, looks for faults in everyone and is intensely happy only when he finds something of a defect in an older person—whether it be a father, a grandfather or anyone else of the previous generation. No one can judge a person so harshly as a penitent. I don't want to hurt your feelings, but precisely for the reason that penitents haven't an ounce of tolerance they get an ugly name and everyone fears to have any contact with them."

"Leave your dispute for another time, gentlemen," the guests interrupted. "Now finish the story, but make it short."

"THE SMACK ALONE," SAMUEL CONTINUED, "WOULDN'T HAVE been worth remembering if it had not made quite a change in me in time, and had it not set me to thinking. The slap I got from my father did not go to waste, you see. The whole conversation about Chanukah, papa's anger, the unexpected slap—everything remained in my mind and drove me even as a youth to study and concentrate on the question, 'What is Chanukah?' From the beginning I knew like all other youngsters that at Chanukah you say a thanksgiving prayer, and in the thanksgiving prayer, it says that at the time of Matathias, son of Jochanan the Hasmonean, and his seven sons, the priests, the tyrannical Greek state attacked the Jewish people to make them forget the holy Torah. And the Holy One, blessed be He, performed a miracle and delivered the strong into the hands of the weak, the sinners into the hands of the pious, the wicked into the hands of those who study His law. After that the Holy Temple was cleansed, the lights were lit and the eight days of Chanukah were instituted.

"I inferred from this that the strong were the Greeks, the weak were Matathias and his sons and all the other decent Jews, scholars, quiet folk, something like the teachers, rabbis and idlers who now sit in the synagogue and devote themselves to the Torah. The Greeks most likely entered the battle with horses and with chariots; we, with penance, prayers and alms. That there was a Judas Maccabeus in the world, and that he and his brothers were *good soldiers*, of that I naturally had never heard. My rabbi had never even uttered a word about it.

"When I later heard at home the arguments on the ques-

⁴ Long gown.

tion "What does Chanukah mean?" I came to realize that what is said in the thanksgiving prayer is apparently not altogether clear, and does not answer all the questions. The lecture about the little pitcher of oil that should have sufficed for only one day but which lasted for eight also did not seem to me very sensible. Because if the story were true then the miracle lasted only seven days. Why then do we celebrate for eight days?

"And so I moved from one thought to another, from one question to another, until I permitted myself to be consumed with an evil passion, and I peeked into one of the heretical books—into Jewish history, that is. Only then were my eyes opened and I found an answer to my question.

"Now, gentlemen, you see I know what Chanukah means!"

BRITISH JEWRY IS LEADERLESS

By L. Zaidman

AFTER two months' vacation the Board of Deputies of British Jews met for its September meeting. During those months very important events took place—events affecting the life and well-being of British Jewry.

These two months saw the beginning of anti-Jewish riots previously unknown in the history of Britain; fascist meetings being held up and down the country, under the aegis of various types of organizations, where anti-Semitism and Jew-baiting were the main line of propaganda; the development of anti-fascist feeling culminating in the forceful closing down of the fascist meetings on several occasions; the decision of many working class organizations, as well as local authorities, to take strong steps towards stopping the growth and spread of the fascist poison; the unanimous decision of the British Trades Union Congress to review the question of anti-Semitism and fascism; the London Trades Council's deputation to the Home Secretary, demanding the outlawing of the fascist organizations and the internment of Oswald Mosley—the protagonist of fascist ideas in Great Britain; and finally, the tragic plight of the passengers of the Exodus 1947 who ended their journey in a new German concentration camp.

It is regrettable to note that during this critical period neither the Board itself nor its executive committee deemed it necessary to meet. The leaders of the Board were satisfied that they could best tackle the problems of Jewry behind the scenes, without the assistance of the Jewish masses, and away from the view of Jewish public opinion. This deplorable attitude of the Board leadership was not criticized by members of the Board, who rejected a motion by Mr. H. Lubbock to refer back the report of the executive committee.

Neither did the Board show a sense of responsibility at its present meeting. Barely a handful remained at the end to consider the important problems of Jewish defense.

The full implications of this attitude of the Board of

Deputies become more obvious when one observes the manner in which some questions were treated. The Board was called upon to consider a proposal to launch an appeal for a defense fund, the purpose of which would be "the combatting of anti-Semitism in Great Britain and for the protection of Jewish civil and religious rights in Britain and if necessary abroad."

One would have expected members to concentrate on how to collect the finances and organize the most effective fight against the threat at home, of which the recent events are just a foretaste. Instead the opportunity was taken to indulge in an attack on the new eastern European democracies where, according to some speakers, anti-Semitism is likely to become virulent again because the peace treaties with Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary made insufficient provision for intervention from abroad. In doing this the members of the Board are parties to the same pernicious propaganda and activities which are evidenced so abundantly in the western world generally against the new democracies and which seriously impede the efforts towards reconstruction and rehabilitation in those countries.

"Defense Fund," With Strings

The Board's proposals for the launching of a defense fund are also vitiated by the anti-democratic provision that four trustees are "to adjudge" what is "to come within the province of defense." There was considerable opposition to this proposal as well as to one of the names proposed as trustee. Mr. J. Perry demanded that a leading Jewish working class representative be one of the trustees. He suggested that Julius Jacobs, who is secretary of the London Trades Council, would be a suitable person and would be viewed very favorably by the Jewish workers of East London. This proposal, together with one suggesting that a prominent provincial Jew be one of the trustees, was defeated. In the heat of the discussion the important point was glossed over—that the trustees would be permitted "to adjudge" on the purposes and scope of defense.

To cap the proceedings one of the members indulged in

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the baiting of the Soviet Union. The Jewish anti-fascist committee in the USSR, which had sent a message of sympathy, expressing its concern at the recent anti-Jewish incidents, was attacked. Allegations were made that Jews in the Soviet Union were prevented from being in the diplomatic services and barred from going abroad to attend conferences. After giving the slanderer unlimited time in which to make his accusations the president, Prof. Z. Brodetsky, refused to provide opportunity for these lies and allegations to be exposed for what they were in reality. Moreover, the president, in his statement, made clear that decisions of the Board of Deputies with regard to the Soviet Union are arrived at after consultation with and on the advice of the British Foreign Office.

The attitude of the Board towards the Foreign Office was evidenced again when the Board discussed the Reports of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine. The Board expressed satisfaction with the fact that the majority report concedes the principle of establishing a Jewish state in Palestine. In this connection the president was most concerned that Britain should not sever its connection with Palestine because the Jewish people, in his opinion, had no better friend than Great Britain. The fact that only a few days before had occurred the disgraceful landings of Jews in Germany made no difference to him or his docile hearers. The occasion did not even warrant, apparently, a resolution of protest against the treatment of the passengers of the three British transports. The opposition from a tiny group of deputies was not sufficient to influence the Board to a more reasoned approach.

The Workers' Circle urged the Board of Deputies to "record its serious concern for the plight of the 200,000 and more Displaced Persons" and to petition "H. M. Government, in common with other Governments of the United Nations, to open their respective doors to as many as possible of these Displaced Persons." The cringing attitude of British Jewish leadership explains why this resolution did not even reach the stage of a motion.

Composition of Board

What is the reason for this state of affairs?

The answer lies in the character and leadership of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, which prides itself on being considered the representative body of the Jews of Great Britain.

The Board of Deputies came into existence in 1760, many years before the United States had achieved independence. It concerned itself with watching over the interests of British Jews and Jews abroad. This latter activity was carried out in conjunction with the Anglo-Jewish Association, whose membership come primarily from the ranks of Anglicized Jews. This joint arrangement came to an end in 1943, when the Zionists' efforts to capture the Board succeeded. Within the past year the Association finally seceded from the Board of Deputies because it had become Zionist-dominated.

Amongst the members of the Board of Deputies were, and still are, to be found the most prominent men from all spheres of Jewish life. Old Jewish families, like the Rothschilds, Swaythlings, Montefiores, and Henriques, intermingle with the newcomers.

Actually the Board is changing its social composition, despite its overwhelming Zionist majority. The Board was originally composed of the old Jewish families who had not only integrated themselves in English life, but who were an integral part of British bourgeois economic life. Big merchants and bankers, capitalists and high civil servants were the original spokesmen of British Jewry in the Board of Deputies. In later years their position was assailed by the new rising elements from the petty bourgeois and professional class. In the heat of squabbles the problems of the masses of Jews—workers, small shopkeepers, etc.—were ignored, thus contributing to the isolation of the Board from its constituent organizations, the synagogues, which are overwhelmingly composed of those latter elements. And, also, the social composition of the Board and the interests of its members were so close to those of conservative Britain in general, that the Board invariably avoided adopting a policy which would be at variance with that of the British government.

Limited Voting Participation

The Board of Deputies which concluded its term of office in the middle of 1946 had a membership of 459, representing 115 London synagogues, 126 provincial congregations, 6 colonial communities and 27 institutions. These institutions, such as the Anglo-Jewish Association, Association of Friendly Societies, Communal Councils, Workers' Circle Friendly Society and others, are permitted representation at the discretion of the Board's executive committee.

The constituent organizations of the Board of Deputies consist of synagogues. The synagogues include a large number of members who belong to them primarily because of rituals and religious services concerned with birth, marriage and death. Because of this limited interest in the synagogues by the overwhelming majority of the membership, the ordinary functions of the synagogues, including elections to the Board of Deputies, are ignored or neglected. Thus the elections of members to the Board of Deputies, which takes place every three years, are usually participated in by very few synagogue members. Only rarely are representatives to the Board elected by more than a handful of synagogue members—very often the synagogue committee itself elects the representatives.

In addition, a practice was current whereby people with means who were prepared to pay a substantial annual fee of £9 could be chosen to represent the poorer synagogues. Only in recent years, with the "inroads" of the Zionists, was this practice, reminiscent of the "rotten boroughs" practice once common in British parliamentary life, gradually curtailed. Instead, an organized and planned capturing of positions was substituted, which the anti-Zionist organi-

zations resent and oppose but without avail. The new elections (May 1946) gave the Zionists an overwhelming majority. This finds its reflections in the personnel of the various sub-committees set up by the Board which are now nearly wholly composed of Zionists or their supporters. The position was characterized by the *Jewish Weekly*, the organ of the Aguda. It spoke of the Board's Palestinian Committee as being "Russell Square" (the British Zionists' headquarters), of the Foreign Affairs Committee as the "World Jewish Congress" and the Board itself as "The Jewish Agency."

Mr. Percy Cohen, a representative of the Anglo-Jewish Association, pointed out in a letter to the London *Jewish Chronicle* that the Progressive Zionist Group, whose chairman is Mr. A. L. Easterman (Hon. Secretary, British Section of the World Jewish Congress) and whose Hon. Secretary is Mr. L. Bakstansky (General Secretary, English Zionist Federation), recently captured the following committee positions: "Aliens Committee: on which it filled 12 out of 14 vacancies; Education Committee: 9 out of 12; Executive Committee: 4 out of 5; Finance Committee: 5 out of 8; Jewish Defense Committee: 7 out of 9; Foreign Affairs Committee: 12 out of 15; Law, Parliamentary and General Purposes Committee: 13 out of 18; and Palestine Committee: 14 out of 16."

Record During Fateful Years

What was the record of the Board of Deputies during the fateful years of the existence of fascism? What is its role during the present critical period for the *Yishuv* in Palestine? What part does it play as a fighter for the rights of the Jewish people in the face of renewed threats from anti-Semitism and fascism? On all these matters, just as on most other vital questions, its record is one of consistent failure to fight for the vital interests of the Jewish people. This absence of leadership and concern for the needs of the Jewish people explains why the Board of Deputies fails to receive the support of the Jews. It has not inspired the Jewish masses in Great Britain with confidence in its determination to fight for their needs. Its functions and responsibilities were constantly adapted to the anti-democratic and reactionary trends of the day. Throughout the pre-war period it resisted by all means the mobilization of the Jewish masses of Great Britain alongside the forces which were fighting the rise of fascism and anti-Semitism. On the famous Oct. 4th, 1936, when half a million London people barred the way to Mosley's attempted fascist march through the East End of London, the Board of Deputies urged the Jews of London to "stay indoors." To the continual rise of fascism in Europe and its uprooting of century-old Jewish communities, the Board's favorite refrain was, "It can't happen here."

Despite the demand from Jewish organizations and from many non-Jewish organizations for legislation against anti-Semitism, the Board sits tight, satisfied to wait until the Royal Commission, appointed to consider "Community

Libel," gives its report. It has not dawned on the Board of Deputies—or is it just pretense—that whenever the government intends to bury an issue it is handed over to a Royal Commission. The Commission (known in Britain as the Porter Commission) was set up in 1939. It is interesting to note in this connection that Lord Porter was the only prosecuting judge in the appeal made by William Joyce (Lord Haw-Haw), the ill-famed fascist broadcaster, who opposed the death sentence pronounced on the traitor by a lower court.

The Porter Commission adjourned for the duration of the war and is only now coming back to life. Meanwhile anti-Semitism is becoming more widespread and organizations aiming at its dissemination are being set up all over England under the guise of "Book Clubs," "Dissemination Groups," etc.

As regards the affairs of the Jews of Europe the record is bad. There is hardly a sympathetic word for the new democracies. On the contrary, every means is taken to magnify any "incident" arising in these democracies. On the one hand little help is given for the resettlement and rehabilitation of the thousands of "displaced Jews." On the other hand Zionist propaganda suggesting hopelessness and insecurity for the Jews of Europe, urges acceptance of Zionism as the only way out. This harmful policy endangers the lives and peaceful existence not only of the Jews of Europe, but also of their non-Jewish neighbors. At the Paris Peace Conference of Board representatives, alongside those of the Jewish Communities of the Western democracies, actually sponsored amendments aimed against the new Balkan democracies. This reactionary attitude was very severely criticized by some delegates. The Bulgarian representatives did not mince words. They flayed the Board as a tool of British imperialist interests.

Need for Mass Leadership

What of the future? Is British Jewry to go on being represented—or rather misrepresented—in this manner? As is well known, the Jewish masses have shown on one occasion after another that their stand on crucial matters differs from that of the Board. The support the Communist Party candidates have received from the Jewish electorate is an indication of this. Phil Piratin, Communist M.P., was elected from a heavily Jewish district. How can these differences of approach be resolved? How can the Board be made to change into a real instrument in the struggle for democracy?

With the present forms of election and representation to the Board it is not possible to conceive favorable changes in a short time. The few which are occurring within the Board are not of a character to influence it effectually. The affiliation to the Board of the Jewish Workers' Circle, the only body of organized Jewish workers, does help in this development.

It is obvious that the immediate perspective for a change

of outlook by the Board is not bright. But with the awakening of interest in the problems of the Jewish people, in which direction the Jewish communists are playing a very active role, and with the alarming increase of anti-Semitism, we may yet witness, before very long, a reversal of the present attitude of British Jewry. For the Board of Deputies to be able to play its part will require, in addition to the

broadest mass interest in its affairs, also its own reconstruction—the introduction of democratic forms of election and representation.

Only then will the Board be able to claim rightly that it is the true representative body of British Jewry. To effect these changes remains one of the most essential responsibilities of progressive Jews in Great Britain.

A JEW CONFRONTS THE UN-AMERICAN COMMITTEE

By Samuel Ornitz

Following is the statement which the House Committee on Un-American Activities refused to allow "unfriendly" witness Samuel Ornitz to read before being questioned by the Committee on Wednesday, October 29. Mr. Ornitz, author of Haunch, Paunch and Jowl and screen writer, was cited for contempt at the hearing on "communism" in Hollywood.

I WISH to address this committee as a Jew, because one of its leading members is the outstanding anti-Semite in the Congress and revels in this fact. I refer to John E. Rankin. I refer to this evil because it has been responsible for the systematic and ruthless slaughter of six million of my people. Nor were they alone to die. Thirty million others died, including American boys. It may be redundant to repeat that anti-Semitism and anti-communism were the number one poison weapon used by Hitler—but still terribly relevant, lest we forget.

In speaking as a Jew, I speak in a deeper sense as an American, as the one who has to take the first blow for my fellow Americans. For when constitutional guarantees are over-ridden, the Jew is the first one to suffer—but only the first one. As soon as the Jew is crushed, the others get it. Or haven't we been through this, the most horrible of wars to date!

Nor did this evil die with Hitler. He and his emulators like Rankin propagated it well. The current *Fortune* magazine poll shows that 36 per cent of the adult American people have become anti-Semitic and 12 per cent anti-Catholic. It reveals a more devastating fact, namely, that this anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic feeling tends to run highest where Jews and Catholics are the fewest, in remote American communities—how sad, to be able to hate someone you haven't even seen!

I am struck forcibly by the fact that this committee has subpoenaed the three men who made *Crossfire*, a powerful attack on anti-Semitism—and appalled by the fact that you characterized them as "unfriendly" witnesses before they were heard and thus prejudiced opinion against them.

Is it a mere coincidence that you chose to subpoena and characterize as "unfriendly" the men who produced, wrote, directed or acted in the following feature length pictures and short subjects, which attacked anti-Semitism or treated Jews and Negroes sympathetically—*Pride of the Marines*, *The House I Live In*, *Don't be a Sucker*, *None Shall Escape*, *Of Mice and Men*, *The Brotherhood of Man*, *The Commington Story*, *Freedom Road*, *Body and Soul*, *New Orleans*, *The Master Race*, and *The Jolson Story*.

On the front page of the Washington papers today we find reported that our Attorney General Tom C. Clark feels "humiliated" because the American Negro people have had to appeal to the United Nations for redress against lynching and discrimination, and as a result, Mr. Clark is going to enlarge the civil rights section of the U. S. Department of Justice.

The eyes of the world are on this committee. Let them not see that civil rights have become a mockery in America in a congressional caucus room, of all places!

Your committee and its so-called "friendly" witnesses have been unable to name a single line, let alone a picture, that is un-American or subversive by any stretch of the imagination.

Therefore, I ask as a Jew, based on the record, is bigotry this committee's yardstick of Americanism and its definition of subversive? Indeed, another member of Congress, Senator Glen H. Taylor, has described the conduct of your committee as "Fascist-minded . . . parallel to those pre-war leaders in Germany, Italy and Japan." I declare that the record bears him out.

Therefore, I feel that I stand here in the first line of the defense of our constitution and freedom. I must not fail—nor for one moment falter before the threat of contempt, which word sounds like the short way of saying concentration camp.

I am now ready for your questions. I shall answer them conscientiously.

ASPECTS OF PROGRESSIVE AMERICAN JEWISH CULTURE

A Discussion Article

By Samuel Barron

THE question of progressive American Jewish culture must not be reduced to the status of the weather, with everyone talking about it, but no one doing much about it. In the last analysis, what progressive American Jewish culture is, will be determined not so much in discussion as in its actual creation by progressive American Jewish cultural workers as they fight for the advancement of their people with the cultural weapons they have been trained to use. Our task is to speed the development of this culture.

It is essential, however, that the development of progressive American Jewish culture be consciously guided by the advanced elements in the Jewish community. And for this, a thorough and fundamental discussion is necessary. But we must be careful that this vital discussion does not become a hindrance to cultural development, that it avoids anything to discourage cultural workers, or frighten them, or throttle them, or disorient them. It is not only unwise to waste good ideological ammunition by aiming and firing at the wrong target. It is unwise to hit the wrong target too. And it is equally unwise to contrive ideological arms so defectively that they cannot be properly aimed, or that they invariably direct their fire wide of the mark. I believe some recent comments by Morris U. Schappes on the nature of progressive American Jewish culture fall into this category of defective ideological arms, both in their general principles, and in their specific application.¹

Mr. Schappes stresses the struggle against bourgeois nationalism and bourgeois assimilationism, and the building of Jewish progressive life and culture. These are vital and indispensable aspects of Jewish life, and particularly of progressive Jewish life in America. And Schappes' anxiety to steer "between the obliterating quicksands of bourgeois assimilationism on the one hand, and the stagnant unwholesome swamp of bourgeois nationalism on the other," should be shared by all thoughtful Jews.

The murder of six million of our people has begun to re-educate additional segments of Jews to the fact that we are a people whose right to exist as individuals is predicated

upon our right to exist as a people. And as a people we have not only the right but the duty to organize and fight as a people against our enemies, who are simultaneously the enemies of all people. A fundamental prerequisite for an organized, effective and consistent struggle is the building of a Jewish progressive life. And an indispensable instrument in the struggle is a progressive Jewish culture as a source of inspiration, of courage, of guidance, as a means of rallying and unifying our people, as an offensive weapon.

In Europe, where the main enemy of our people received a crushing blow, and because our people participated in delivering this blow, such a Jewish life is rising anew, and such a Jewish culture is flourishing again. But in America, which is today the center of world reaction and imperialism, Jewish progressive life and culture are still weakly developed, exposing our lack of preparedness for struggle.

Responsibility of American Jewish Intellectual

In this regard the American Jewish progressive intellectual has a very grave responsibility. He could stimulate the development of Jewish progressive life and culture. But to date he has played a negligible role. In the last decade and a half of Jewish martyrdom and struggle, the American Jewish cultural worker did not rally to his people as he should have. Can one point to even a single major progressive work by an American Jewish cultural worker reflecting the life of his people? Yes, we can point to the bombastic demagoguery of the unspeakable bourgeois nationalist, Ben Hecht, exposing the wounds of his people to the filth of imperialist politics in *A Flag Is Born*, just as he once exposed his people to ridicule in *A Jew in Love*. But where are the American Jewish novelists telling of the Warsaw ghetto, the dramatists depicting Jewish resistance, the poets singing of Jewish heroism, the historians recording the days that were centuries and the years that were ages, the cultural workers extracting from these unprecedented events the progressive kernel that would explain and guide? Those not betrayed into reactionary nationalism escaped into bourgeois assimilationism.

The awakening lately noticeable among Jewish intellectuals in America is to be welcomed. But this process must be stimulated and speeded up. There is little time to lose. The struggle to survive and build the new democratic life requires that these intellectuals express this awakening in a most concrete fashion by turning rapidly and increasingly to the problems of our people, in terms of our people, and from within our people, and not from the outside looking in. Our people can be their base, their source of strength, their hope of security, only if our people have developed

¹ "Commentary on 'An Epitaph for Sidney'" by Morris U. Schappes, *Jewish Life*, Feb. 1947.

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a progressive Jewish life that will make it possible for us to play a positive role in the critical days ahead.

The American Jewish intellectual must seek to contribute to the building of this life by stimulating it and reflecting it in a progressive American Jewish culture, not only by using Jewish thematic material, but by utilizing also progressive Jewish traditions and symbols, by expressing progressive content in Jewish form. In this way only can the Jews as a people really achieve survival, or contribute to general democratic advance. Only in this way can the Jews as a whole best be rallied for the necessary struggles.

That is why the progressive American Jewish intellectual must also conduct a struggle against bourgeois nationalism and bourgeois assimilationism which enervate the Jewish people. All intellectuals who aspire to progressivism must constantly struggle against reactionary nationalism—chauvinism—which is an instrument of national *expansion*. But the task of the Jewish intellectual is particularly difficult. For he must fight nationalism, which so many influential Jewish organizations offer as a guarantee for national and personal *existence*. And in addition, he must simultaneously fight against assimilationism which is also offered as a means of personal *safety*.

A Definition of Culture

But we must beware of pitfalls. In the course of this necessary struggle for the building of a progressive American Jewish life and culture, for the uprooting of reactionary nationalism and assimilationism, the Jewish intellectual cannot and dare not lead our people into a fatal trap. In an effort to pilot between nationalism and assimilationism, he must steer clear of the reefs of schematism, provincialism and obscurantism, which would wreck the very culture he seeks to float.

Mr. Schappes, it seems to me, tends to drift off course. In fact, he takes his first step in his very statement of principle when he speaks of a "contribution to 'general' Jewish culture" as differentiated from "American *progressive Jewish culture*"—a creation neither reactionary nor progressive apparently and therefore something out of this class-ridden world!

The fundamental question is the definition of progressive American Jewish culture—culture with all three adjectives in the order given or in any other order in which critical and philosophical ingenuity can arrange them. But Mr. Schappes' efforts to define it seems to me to result in placing as many limitations on progressive American Jewish culture as possible.

According to Schappes, as I piece it together, it must *always* express progressive American Jewishness in "a positive sense"; it must *always* be "the heir of, the embodiment and transmitter of the progressive values and traditions of Jewish life." American Jewish progressive culture must everywhere and always reveal the author as a progressive and a Jew; must reveal the character as a Jew and a progressive

(or take him to task for not being progressive); must show what bearing Jewishness has on the life of the character; must make the character conscious of his Jewishness (or take him to task for not being conscious); must make the character an expert in his Jewish fighting traditions; must "take up the struggle against the reflection of imperialist ideology: bourgeois assimilation and bourgeois nationalism"; and, having done all this, must undertake one final task: "begin to develop a progressive American Jewish life and culture." All this must be achieved in every cultural work, for when a simple and moving short story presumably failed to encompass the totality of this concept of progressive American Jewish culture, it moved Schappes to set down this catalogue in the sharpest terms.

But these demands reduce culture to no more than literature and the movies, for hardly any other form, not even the theater, could possibly qualify. What Schappes has detailed is not a blueprint for progressive American Jewish culture; but a straightjacket that would reduce our cultural workers to impotence, and would neither "strengthen" nor "enrich" the Jewish cultural contribution.

What is culture? It is, as Mr. Schappes states, "a reflection of life"—the life of a people. Since there is no "general" life, but life that advances a people or life that sets it back, there can be no "general" culture, but only a progressive culture or a reactionary culture. But Schappes considers that a story by a Jew about a Jew whose Jewishness "has a bearing on his life" enough to make a heroic fighter for progress out of him, can be a "contribution to working-class, anti-fascist, anti-imperialist American culture . . . to 'general' Jewish culture . . . to progressive American literature," but not to "American progressive Jewish literature." And the reason for this exclusion from the Garden of Eden is the author's cardinal sin of omitting parts of Mr. Schappes' design for progressive American Jewish culture.

Schematic View of Culture

The trouble is that Mr. Schappes has a tendency to see progressive American Jewish culture in a very schematic way. He would like every detail of culture to be a perfect replica in miniature of the culture as a whole, instead of an indispensable part contributing to the whole. But this means to place a false and impossible demand upon a detail, whose very nature as a detail permits only a limited scope as its arena.

How do geologists, mathematicians, astronomers, atomic experts contribute to the culture of a specific people? Is it only by virtue of the fact that their work is expounded in the language of the specific people and is taught in the specific educational centers of that people? In that case Albert Einstein must become a Hebraist, or a Yiddishist, or a cultural Zionist, or a political Zionist, if his work is to become a contribution to progressive *Jewish culture*—a thoroughly self-contradictory concept! Or we must insist that the Soviet Dr. Lena Stern become a Jewish bourgeois

nationalist before we recognize her scientific life-work as a contribution to progressive Jewish culture. Or we must reject the contributions of a Dr. Chaim Weizmann in the field to which he can best contribute, chemistry, and judge him solely by his reactionary contributions as a political Zionist.

This seems to me a most sectarian approach to human accomplishments and a complete waste of human beings. This position denies a place in progressive Jewish culture to an important section of Jewish professionals, intellectuals and cultural workers. This can only lead to the intellectual and cultural impoverishment of the Jewish people. Under conditions of such impoverishment, only philistinism, opportunism and careerism can flourish.

In guiding the development of progressive American Jewish culture we cannot mechanically apply principles of national culture studied in the abstract. It is necessary to bear in mind the peculiar development of the Jews.

Identifying National Culture

The fact that a people has a common territory and an integrated economy, in addition to other prerequisites for nationhood, facilitates identification of culture on national lines in all its manifold aspects. And these two characteristics of nationhood also make possible the direct contribution of every individual within the nationality to the national culture regardless of the non-national character of the specific field in which the cultural worker is engaged. Thus when they did not solve special problems raised by national geographic and economic conditions, Luther Burbank and I. V. Michurin contributed to their own national cultures as naturalists only by virtue of the fact that the former lived on American soil and the latter on Russian territory. The same applies in a great measure to other sciences, and to other contributors to a national "way of life," to the social superstructure.

This is today frequently true of even some art subjects, which in general can be more easily supplied with internal identification with a national culture. In a period when *schools* of art tend to blur national origin, what makes a still life or even a landscape American except that it was painted in America, unless it is an example of peculiarly American flora and fauna. How do we identify the picture of a Yugoslav, a Russian, a French, a Greek or a Jewish guerrilla, dressed in underground fighting regalia and not in parade uniform or religious accoutrements, or to which culture the picture belongs, except that we know where the picture was created, or are informed by a title?

But the Jews in America have no integrated economy nor common territory, and this is true of the overwhelming majority of Jews throughout the world, except in Birobidjan and Palestine. They must either find substitutes for these basic sources, and means of identification, of national culture, or exclude the creative contributions of the largest number of cultural workers among the Jewish people from the body of Jewish culture—a form of cultural excommunication. The one-time prohibition against the participation of Jews in graphic arts impoverished our culture,

until Jewish artists simply annulled the prohibition by non-observance. The inability to integrate all progressive cultural contributions made by Jews into American Jewish culture, can only lead to the slow death of that culture, and not to its upsurge and development.

But the Jewish people of America have found substitutes for an integrated economy and a common territory—just as have all other national groups in the United States. The first is consciousness on the part of the cultural worker of membership in a national group—consciousness of one's Jewishness. The second is public identification by the cultural worker with the national group—identification with the Jewish people. These two are the primary prerequisites for the identification of any cultural work with a *national group* culture—for judging whether any cultural creation is a contribution to American Jewish culture. They make up the primary base that sustains, encourages and nurtures the full flowering of a national group culture. And in the aspects of culture that lend themselves to national expression, this base helps develop national group forms to go with national content.

Jewish Contributions to Culture

Having acknowledged his Jewishness, a Jewish scientist, for instance, makes his contribution to progressive Jewish culture first of all through his scientific researches. He fulfills himself as a Jew and an intellectual by participating actively in Jewish life. But important as it is, fighting against bourgeois assimilationism or bourgeois nationalism, which cannot always be easily introduced into specific theories of natural science or other fields of cultural activity, must take a secondary and derivative position. For a Jewish cultural worker's influence among the Jewish people, as among the American people generally, which will make his fight in the interests of his people effective, comes first of all from his professional contributions.

Furthermore, the scientific researches, the advances of jurisprudence and other contributions of cultural workers, are a contribution to progressive Jewish culture also because the accomplishments in these fields give dignity and prestige to the Jewish people specifically, in addition to being of benefit to the world at large. If the Einsteins, the Brandeises, the Hank Greenbergs, the George Gershwins have not contributed to Jewish culture, we Jews cannot claim them. But if we cannot claim them, what claim have we as an equal among equals?

How important is this dignity and prestige to a people? V. M. Molotov, speaking in the Congress of Soviets in 1936, after Hitler had begun his campaign of annihilation against Jews, declared: "Regardless of what may be said by contemporary cannibals among the fascist anti-Semites, our brotherly feelings toward the Jewish people are determined by the fact that this people gave birth to the creator of the ideas of communist emancipation of mankind—Karl Marx; by the fact that the Jewish people, along with the most highly developed nations, contributed many of the outstanding geniuses of science, industry and art, many of the most

famous heroes of the struggle against the oppressors of the toiling masses; and in our country, the Jewish people brought forth, and are still bringing forth, amazingly talented leaders and organizers in all phases of the building and defending of socialism. All this determines our attitude toward anti-Semites and anti-Semitic outrages, wherever they occur."

Anything done by Jews that contributes to the security

of the Jewish people, either through helping establish the economic, political and social basis for their survival, or by winning, through prestige and dignity, powerful allies in their struggle for survival, is a contribution to progressive Jewish culture. Thus a short story by an acknowledged Jewish author, which is progressive in theme, is a contribution to progressive Jewish culture.

(Concluded in the January issue)

TWO POEMS

By Heinrich Heine

Translated by Aaron Kramer

With these new translations of two poems by Heinrich Heine we mark the 150th anniversary of the poet's birth on December 13, 1797. The poems will appear in The Poetry and Prose of Heinrich Heine, translations of poetry by Aaron Kramer and of prose by Frederic Ewen, edited with an introduction by Frederic Ewen. The volume will be published by The Citadel Press.

BELSHAZZAR

The deep of night is coming on;
In still repose lies Babylon.

But high in the castle of the king
The royal train is revelling.

High in the lordly chamber there
Belshazzar feasts on regal fare.

His courtiers sit in a glittering line
And empty their goblets of sparkling wine.

The goblets clink, the puppets applaud;
It rings like a song to the arrogant lord.

He drinks, and his cheeks begin to glow—
Within him the flames of mutiny grow.

And blindly he's carried away by the flame,
And he slanders God with a sinful name.

And he shamelessly struts, and savagely rants,
With a roar of applause from his sycophants.

Then haughtily the monarch cries
A slave flies out, and back he flies.

On his head are vessels of gold design
Plundered from Jehovah's shrine.

And with sinful hand the king takes up
A holy goblet, filled to the top.

And hastily he drains it dry,
And with foaming mouth he utters a cry:

"Hear how I mock you, Almighty One:
It is I that am King in Babylon!"

But scarcely died the dreadful word;
The breast of the king was strangely stirred.

The laughter ceased; and in the hall
A deathly stillness came over all.

And seel and seel on the wall of white
A hand like a man's began to write;

It wrote, and with letters of flame it seared
The wall—it wrote, and disappeared.

The monarch sat and stared ahead,
With shaking knees, and pale as the dead.

Cold sat the courtiers, chilled to the bone,
And made no sound, were still as stone.

The Magi came, yet of them all
Not one could interpret the words on the wall.

But ere the sun rose up again,
Belshazzar was murdered by his men.

PROLOGUE

To "The Rabbi of Bacherach"

Burst forth in loud complaining,
Oh mournful martyr-song
That I have been restraining
Within my soul so long!

Like flame the lyrics flower
In every heart that hears;
I've spoken, with all my power,
The pain of a thousand years.

The great and the small, and even
Cold lords begin to cry;
And girls and flowers are grieving;
And stars shed tears in the sky.

And the tears flow on forever,
Southward in silent ranks;
They flow to the Jordan River,
And overrun the banks.

THE NEW JEW IN THE SOVIET UNION: II

By Paul Novick

(Concluded from November issue)

AFTER World War II broke out, the foundations of the Jewish people in the USSR were shattered. It is estimated that by June 1941, when Hitler attacked, there were five million Jews in the USSR, the increase resulting from the return of Western Ukraine and Belorussia as well as Bessarabia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to the Soviet Union in 1939-1940. With the exception of Moscow and Leningrad, where large masses of Jews reside, the overwhelming majority of Soviet Jews lived in the territories which were in the course of the war overrun by Hitler. Nearly two million of them perished in the area which fell to the nazis in the first impact of the attack, primarily due to the difficulties of a sudden evacuation. If there are nevertheless now over one million Jews in the Ukraine, hundreds of thousands in Belorussia, Bessarabia, tens of thousands in Lithuania, etc., it is the result of superhuman effort on the part of the Soviet government, to evacuate the Jews from the territories to Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Bashkiria, the Kuibishev region, western Siberia, and other regions of safety.

It is worth remembering that almost *all* Jews now living in the USSR, over three million of them, were evacuated, including the Jews of Moscow and Leningrad, and were moved hundreds and even thousands of miles away from the battlefield. The story of this evacuation has yet to be told. It is a story of pain and sacrifice, of shattered families, of mothers and children "living" on trains for many weeks, watching other trains speed westward towards the front. It is a story of heroism, of enormous sacrifice on the part of the Soviet government, which needed the trains to move armies, factories.

All measures were taken to prevent Jews from falling prey to the hordes of Hitler. Nearly 200,000 Polish Jews, who flocked across the Soviet border when Hitler invaded Poland, were also evacuated into the interior of the USSR. After the war ended, 160,000 of these Polish Jews were helped to return to Poland, to look for the remnants of their families; many of the Jews who wanted to remain in the USSR were asked by the Committee of Polish Patriots to return home to help build a new Poland. The Ukraine and other areas temporarily occupied by Hitler, which practically had no Jews left at the time of liberation, again became the

home of teeming Jewish communities (Kiev and Odessa, over 100,000 each; Kharkov, 90,000; Dniepropetrovsk, 70,000, etc.).

The Soviet Jews, together with the Ukrainians, Belorussians, and other Soviet peoples, are now working at the hard, painful task of rebuilding their cities, towns, collective farms and mines devastated by the enemy. I saw the destruction on my recent trips through the Ukraine, Belorussia, Lithuania and central parts of the USSR. This destruction, this sacrifice on the part of the USSR, a sacrifice which saved the cities and towns of America and other countries, must be remembered—and not used to dominate the country that made the sacrifices. It must be remembered when questions of reparations are considered, when the subject of real, friendly relations between the USA and the USSR is approached. The *Jews* of the USA must not forget the sacrifices of their brothers and sisters, sacrifices for all of us, and the duties this places upon us.

Post-war Problems

Soviet Jews, together with all Soviet citizens, are now engaged in peaceful reconstruction, are bending their efforts for the success of the present, the fourth, Five Year Plan. Slowly their economic and cultural life is being restored. Conditions generally are by far not the same as they were in 1941. This naturally is equally true about facilities for Jewish culture. For instance, while the publishing house of National Minorities in the Ukraine before the war issued hundreds of thousands of Jewish books (over 840,000 in 1936, for instance), there is not one Jewish print shop in the whole of the Ukraine now. The building of the Jewish State Theater in Kiev was destroyed, and the theater company has its home now temporarily in the city of Chernovits.

The Jewish State Theater of Belorussia, which recently returned to Minsk from evacuation in Siberia, is minus a playhouse; it plays twice a week in the only theater left in the Belorussian capital which belongs to the main Belorussian state troupe. These examples indicate that it will take some time to restore cultural life to approximately what it was before the war. But Jewish life *is* being built.

There is vibrant Jewish life in the USSR. Cultural activities of broad scope go on. I witnessed these activities myself during my stay in the Soviet Union from the middle of September 1946 to the early part of January 1947. Upon my return to America I stated that these activities are on the upgrade, on the evidence of my own eyes and on what I knew about the plans of the various cultural institutions, the Jewish theaters, publishing houses, writers' groups,

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children's schools, etc. I also knew about the plans for the intensified building of Birobidjan.

Finally, and most important, I became convinced that in the Soviet Union, as everywhere, the interest of the Jewish masses in Jewish affairs was heightened as a result of the war. This estimate was proved accurate by developments this year, both in the building of Jewish culture in the USSR generally, and in Birobidjan.

Cultural Activity

During the two months I spent in Moscow in the winter of 1946, I witnessed more Jewish cultural events than are available in New York, with its over two million Jews. An evening of Yiddish literature took place in the most prominent concert and lecture hall of the Polytechnical Museum in Moscow. Posters in Russian throughout the city heralded "An Evening of Jewish Literature." David Bergelson, Itzik Feffer, Aaron Kushnirov, Leon Kwitko, Samuel Halkin and others read from their works, while Prof. Dobrushin read a short paper in Yiddish on the role of Yiddish literature in the present period. There was no musical program—only the reading of Yiddish literature. Over 1,000 people came, including many young people and students.

The Jewish State Theater in Moscow, where about 250,000 Jews live, is one of the best in the Soviet Union. It is a most important Jewish national institution for the entire Jewish people. It has an artistic and technical personnel of close to 400 people—which gives an idea of the scope of this amazing cultural organization. Attached to it and under its direction is a dramatic school with about 60 students which is training young people for the Jewish stage. The theater conducts courses in Jewish literature for the general public. On Mondays (when there are no performances) the theater organizes evenings of Jewish literature, Jewish folk songs and songs of modern Jewish poets and composers (I attended two such evenings).

The Jewish newspaper, *Einikeit*, which appears in Moscow, also arranges "literary Mondays" when Jewish writers read their newly created works, participated in by Jewish singers of the Bolshoi Theater (equivalent, say, to the Metropolitan Opera House of New York), or the cantor of the main synagogue (I attended several such evenings). The Union of Jewish writers (section of the All-Soviet Writers Union) arranges regular evenings when Jewish writers read their works.

It would take too much space to enumerate the Jewish cultural affairs I witnessed in Moscow, Kiev (capital of the Ukraine), Minsk (capital of Belorussia), and Vilna (capital of Lithuania). I attended a gathering in the Jewish children's school in Vilna, a state school, of course. During my stay in the USSR I also clipped from *Einikeit* items regarding Jewish cultural events in scores of cities in the Ukraine, Belorussia, Lithuania, as well as in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, outside of Moscow (Leningrad, Kuibishev, Gorki, Magnitogorsk,

etc.). It is impossible to list them here. I will, however, dwell upon one affair which is of particular significance. It will give you an idea of how differently Jewish culture is being developed in a socialist country. It will also answer the question about assimilation in the USSR.

In October 1946 the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee arranged a reception for the editor of the American *Morning Freiheit*. Present at this reception were, besides the above mentioned and other Jewish writers, the following: David Zaslavsky, one of the editors of *Pravda*; Dr. Lena Stern, physicist of international fame; Dr. Boris Shimelevitch, head of the largest hospital in the USSR, the Moscow Botkin Hospital; Academician Boris Zbarsky, hero of Socialist Labor (it was he who preserved Lenin's body); Aaron Trainin, internationally prominent juridical expert, member of the Soviet legal staff at the Nuremberg trial; General A. Wershigora, hero of the Soviet Union, a Russian; Colonel L. Linkow-Batia, a Belorussian; Maxim Rylsky, one of the foremost Ukrainian poets, deputy of the Supreme Soviet, and others. What was the particular significance of this gathering?

Fallacious Theory of Assimilation

1) Jewish leaders, cultural workers, are not isolated from leaders and cultural workers of other nationalities. It was for this reason that non-Jews attended a function of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee for the editor of a Jewish progressive newspaper in the USA.

2) At that gathering the poet and deputy, Rylsky, chided the Moscow Jewish writers for neglecting to send their writings to Kiev, where a Jewish Almanac was in preparation. I thought how unlikely it would be for some of the best known American poets to chide Jewish writers in New York for neglecting to send their writings to a Jewish publication in, say, Chicago. . . . I was able to see, as I saw afterwards in Minsk, Kiev, Vilna, that the development of Jewish culture is not merely the job of Jewish cultural leaders; that such Jewish leaders are being reminded by non-Jews about their tasks.

3) The theory of "assimilation through equality" is fallacious. An article in *Congress Weekly* prior to my departure for Europe, was thus captioned: "Assimilation Through Equality." The writer drew an analogy between the USA and the USSR and came to the conclusion that in both countries this type of assimilation is taking place. I remembered that article well while I observed the people at that reception and listened to the speeches. I saw and felt why the writer of that article was wrong.

That some Soviet Jews get assimilated, as is the case with many American Jews, is quite true, though, I am not sure that the term "assimilation" can be applied there. Who is an assimilated Jew in the USSR? Is a general of the Soviet Army who does not speak Yiddish, assimilated? Maybe. But you often meet such a general in the Jewish theater, and as a citizen of the Soviet Union, which provides for the development of the culture of the various nationalities, he

is interested in Jewish culture and in the development of Birobidjan.

Assimilation, in the USA and other countries, takes place because of inequality, because some Jews are afraid to read Jewish newspapers in public. A Jewish general in the American army (if there is one in peace time) would certainly be afraid to read a Jewish newspaper; or to go to the Jewish theater. That would be "improper" indeed! A Jewish general in the USSR (and there are many of them) is not afraid, *cannot* be.

At that reception there was present, as already mentioned, the head of the largest Soviet hospital, Dr. Shimelevitch. His counterpart in New York would certainly hesitate to come to a reception for an editor of a Jewish newspaper. It would most certainly have been "improper" for him to sing Yiddish songs in public. What would the trustees of his hospital say, and what would the non-Jewish people present think of it? But Dr. Shimelevitch was not afraid to sing for everyone to hear! *Teiere Malke, gesunt solstu sein* (dear Malke, keep in good health), and it was in "good tone," too. Nay, it was the *natural thing*! As to the non-Jewish participants, they not only consider Jewish culture one of Soviet cultures, they are interested in its development!

Aspects of Soviet Jewish Life

The position of the Jew in the USSR is different from that in our own country. The term "assimilation" does not exactly apply in the USSR though some Soviet Jews are removed from Jewish activities and do not speak or read Yiddish. Generally, however, there is an intensified national consciousness among Soviet Jews. And inasmuch as Jewish activities and Jewish culture are part of general Soviet life; and inasmuch as Birobidjan is being built by the government, by Jews and non-Jews, the interest among the Jewish people for these things is widespread.

The facts are that, although there are about the same number of Jews in the USSR as there were at the beginning of 1939, Jewish books are having a greater circulation. The fact is that Jewish theaters in Moscow, Minsk, Tchernovitz, Tashkent, Riga, Odessa, etc., are well attended and tickets for certain performances are hard to get. The same is the case in Kiev, Kharkov, Vilna, Kuibishev and other cities in which Jewish theaters tour. Traveling dramatic groups are organized by government cultural agencies to visit small towns, as are concerts of Jewish folk songs, literary evenings, etc. Sholom Aleichem affairs in the various cities and towns invariably turn into mass demonstrations for Jewish culture participated in by representatives of the government and the Communist Party.

Jewish life in the USSR is concentrated in, and is given expression by, the following institutions: 1) the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Moscow, which may be considered the leadership of Jewish life in the USSR. The Committee keeps in touch with the various Jewish cultural and other activities throughout the USSR both directly and through its newspaper *Einikeit*; 2) The Jewish State Theater headed by the Moscow theater and dramatic

school; 3) The Jewish Writers Association, one in each of the six republics: Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia, Lithuania, Latvia and Moldavia. Jewish literary magazines are now about to be published, or have been published already, in Moscow, Kiev, Minsk, Vilna; 4) Publishing houses headed by the Emes Publishing House in Moscow; 5) The Division for Jewish Culture at the Ukrainian Academy of Science in Kiev and the Jewish Museum in Vilna, both institutions of national scope; 6) Jewish children's schools which are to be found now in Vilna, Kaunas, Tchernovitz, and other places. This does not exhaust Jewish activities in the various communities and collective farms. There is Birobidjan, which is a chapter by itself.

Of course, there are Jewish religious activities. I visited the main synagogues in Moscow last Yom Kippur. They were overcrowded, with people outside listening to the cantor through loud speakers. I spoke to the Chief Rabbi Solomon Shliffer, and the then head of the Moscow *kehilla*, Samuel Chobrutsky. I visited synagogues in Kiev, Vilna, Berditchev, Zhytomir. There are about 300 organized religious communities in the USSR with a budget running into scores of millions of rubles.

There are no Jewish charities—because there are no charities in general. There are no separate Jewish hospitals because all hospitals are non-sectarian and non-religious. There are no relief activities. These forms of "Jewish activities" which dominate Jewish life in the USA were rendered obsolete in the USSR, as they will be in every country where unemployment and discrimination are abolished.

Jewish Statehood

However, the development of Jewish culture, the changes in the social composition of the Jewish people, and other achievements, tremendous as they were, were still not sufficient to place the Jews on a basis of full equality with other nationalities. The Jews still lacked—statehood.

On March 28, 1928, a territory in the Far East of the USSR in the general district of Khabarovsk, lying between the Amur River to the south and the Khingan Mountains to the north, was designated by the Soviet government for Jewish settlement. That territory came to be known as Birobidjan, a combination of the names of the two of the most important rivers in that territory, Bira and Bidjan. What was the underlying reason for this act?

By 1928, as we have seen, the free lands in the Ukraine and the Crimea were exhausted. If the collective farm element among the Jewish population was to be increased—and in the occupational redistribution of the Jewish population such increase was vital—some other part of the Soviet Union which was not settled, had to be opened for Jewish colonization. And such a territory had to be large enough so that the new Jewish collective farms would not be scattered over separate small districts, as was the case in the Ukraine and the Crimea. However, important as this reason for designating Birobidjan as a territory for Jewish settlement, it was not the sole reason.

The full meaning of Birobidjan was explained by the late president of the USSR, Michael Kalinin, on May 28, 1934, after the territory, having passed beyond the stage of a Jewish national district as it was termed in 1929, was proclaimed on May 7, 1934 as an Autonomous Jewish Region. M. Kalinin stated:

"The main reason for setting up the Jewish Autonomous Region is that there are many Jews in our country, but they have no state development. It is the only nationality in the USSR which with a population of three million had no state development. I think that the creation of the Region represents in our conditions the only means for the normal state development of this nationality. . . .

"On the one hand, Birobidjan now is absorbing the Jewish masses, those Jews who strive for a better living and wish to preserve their nationality. Birobidjan is simultaneously forming the Jewish nationality. I think that the Birobidjan Jewish nationality will not be a nationality possessing the characteristics of the small town Jews in Poland, Lithuania, Belorussia and even the Ukraine, because out of this nationality there are developing socialist colonizers of a free, rich soil, colonizers with powerful fists and strong teeth, who will give birth to a strong nationality in the family of Soviet nationalities. This, of course, requires time." (*Jews in the USSR*, a Symposium, Moscow, 1935, pp. 32-34.)

Stepped-Up Birobidjan Activity

The time was not the most auspicious. At first, from 1929 to 1934, there was the difficulty of settling the virgin land, in addition to other difficulties. There were no more than 30,000 people in the territory of over 36,000 square kilometers when it was designated for Jewish settlement in 1928. There were no roads, bridges, etc., not to speak of houses or any kind of communal development. Like our "wild west" a hundred years ago, Birobidjan needed the tough type of pioneer, the builder of "boom town," who would unlock the treasures of the earth and the forests. Many of the first settlers were not fit for pioneer life. There was no machinery for road and city building, for cultivating the virgin soil. The fruits of the industrialization of the USSR were yet to come. When the fruits began to appear in 1934, with Birobidjan turned into a Jewish autonomous region, Hitler had already assumed power in Germany and began to prepare for war. Across the Amur River, in Manchuria, there were the Japanese fascists. Soon, in 1937 and 1938, the first battles with the Japanese aggressors took place.

All this was not conducive to the settlement of Jews from other parts of the USSR in Birobidjan. Those other parts were flourishing as a result of the Five Year Plans. Jewish life, economically and culturally, had developed to unheard of heights. Jews were not forced to emigrate under the lash of "cold" (economic) or "hot" pogroms, as was the case in Poland, in Germany. It is for these reasons—actual war conditions in the Far East, Munich—that the develop-

ment of Birobidjan was retarded. When war broke out, or even some time prior to that, Jewish settlement in Birobidjan was not on the order of business.

Recently, however, hundreds of Jewish families from the Ukraine have settled in Birobidjan with the assistance of the government. I shall not go into details of Birobidjan's development.¹ I merely wish to quote from an editorial in the Moscow *Einikeit* of May 31, where the reasons for the present stepped-up Birobidjan activities are given. The editorial points out that Jews have equal opportunities in all parts of the USSR. Why, then, should they go to Birobidjan? The answer, *Einikeit* states, is as follows:

"The new settlers had their opportunities in Vinnitza, Bershad, Kiev, Bobruisk, but they, as Soviet patriots, feel that they are needed in Birobidjan . . . in the Jewish Autonomous Region. Thereby the sense of national dignity plays a great role; they desire to actively participate in the up-building of the only Jewish Soviet State in the world."

Actively participate. For in a general way all Jews in the USSR are interested in the Birobidjan development. Jewish statehood there will enrich their life, too, will give them a sense of full equality with other nationalities. Jewish culture throughout the USSR will derive strength from Birobidjan, where Yiddish is the language of the state and all its institutions. In the technicums and universities, in the laboratories, as well as in the mines, factories and fields of Birobidjan new terms for the Yiddish language are being coined. As stated in a recent article by the secretary of the Communist Party in Birobidjan, A. Bachmutsky, the goal is that Yiddish should in the immediate future be the language of institutions of higher learning. Already, Yiddish is obligatory for non-Jewish children as well.

A full-blooded Jewish nation is being developed in the USSR, a nation which will become a majority in a large territory, with its own language and culture, its own economy, participated in by Jewish workers in factories and mines and Jewish farmers. The circle of development begun with Lenin's and Stalin's declaration of the Rights of Nationalities, continued with the struggle against anti-Semitism and pogroms, the development of Jewish culture, settlement on soil, industrialization, is being completed. A Jewish nation—truly reborn—or born.

¹ This topic was treated by J. M. Budish, in an article, "A Jewish State Rises in Birobidjan," in the November 1947 issue of *JEWISH LIFE*.

CORRECTION

We wish to call attention to several errors in the poems of Jules Alan Wein, published in the November 1947 issue. The first poem, *Return of the Prisoners*, was intended by him to be a group of two separate poems called *Return of the Prisoners—I* and *Return of the Prisoners—II*. We erroneously published these as two parts of a single poem. In the poem, *Two Cemeteries*, the date "1944" should read "1945."

"THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS"

By Joseph King

(Continued from page 1)

This characterization of Rabbi Schultz as an informer is not my own. It is taken from a resolution passed unanimously by the New York Board of Rabbis on Oct. 22, 1947. In this resolution condemning the behavior of Schultz, the rabbis state: "He has used the smear technique of the scandal-monger. . . . He has endeavored to bring into question the loyalty and Americanism of religious teachers. . . . By insinuations, accusations, and the perverting of what he alleges to be facts, he had inflicted harm upon the individuals, organizations and institutions he has named. We hope . . . he will atone for the obvious infraction of the Commandment: 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.'"

Apparently the New York *World-Telegram*, which competes with the Hearst press for possession of the gutter, thought it had procured a great bargain in the person of Schultz. For it was executive editor Lee B. Wood who gave advance notice to all the ministers, rabbis and priests of New York on Oct. 10, that Schultz was writing a series of three articles which would expose the "foothold which Communists have gained in our churches." The religious leaders were asked to promote the sale of the papers, by announcing the series in their congregations, thereby introducing a commercial note.

Charles Schnall, president of Temple Emanu-El in Yonkers, of which Schultz is the rabbi, had reason to suspect the worst. He had been dissatisfied for some time with the services rendered by Schultz. Now an anonymous phone call, referring to Wood's letter, informed Mr. Schnall what his wandering rabbi was up to. This was the first Mr. Schnall heard about the series. He was no doubt acquainted with some of Mr. Schultz' previous journalistic excursions, including last year's series in the Hearst press. He tried to get from Schultz an advance copy of the *World-Telegram* articles. But Schultz insisted it was impossible.

In the Gutter Tradition

A good guess is that at the moment the series was being rewritten and edited by Frederick Woltman, who is informer extraordinaire for the *World-Telegram*, who for expert stoolpigeoning was awarded the Pulitzer Prize which decent people are apt to reject nowadays, and who, together with Westbrook Pegler, Upton Close and Victor

Riesel, make up the elite of the journalistic informers fraternity. That Schultz' series would need such expert attention was clear from a similar extremely badly written and ill-digested article of his that appeared in the July 19, 1947 issue of the *New Leader*, happy hunting ground of the most psychopathic Russophobes.

Finally the series appeared in the *World-Telegram* on Oct. 14, 15, and 16. Anyone who has paid even the slightest attention to such matters would guess, without the need of a paternity blood test, that the series was out of Woltman by Schultz. The content of the series does not merit attention. There is absolutely nothing new in it. The titles alone indicate how completely stale it is: "Red Fronts Find Dupes in Protestant Pulpits," "Red Crocodile Tears Ensnare Some Rabbis," "Reds Use Prominent Catholics as Bait to Lure Masses." Nor does one need to dignify the charges with a refutation.

How do you refute the charges Schultz makes against a certain progressive radio commentator? A rabbi should have understanding, kindness, compassion. But Schultz accuses this commentator of being an "ex-convict," who "stole autos during a nervous breakdown." The commentator has since been cured of his illness and has lived an exemplary life. Is there anything more callous, more cruel, more inhuman than for anyone, let alone a rabbi, to hurl such charges? One does not refute this, one merely exposes the character of the one who makes such charges.

Schultz tries to use the Hitlerian tactic of the big lie. But his mind is so small he cannot produce anything better than the mediocre even in that. He makes up in quantity, however, for what he lacks in size.

A Career of Lies

For five years, from 1938 to 1942, Schultz listed himself in the Yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis as a Doctor of Philosophy. Then his colleagues discovered he was perpetrating a fraud and exposed him, forcing him to withdraw a listing that he wouldn't spend honest sweat to earn.

Schultz was permitted, through a mistaken notion of freedom of the press, to conduct a column in the *National Jewish Post* of Indianapolis. The column was so irresponsible, slanderous and misinformed that after numerous complaints the column was dropped. The first two articles of the series, however, listed Schultz as "a columnist for the *National Jewish Post*," although, as that paper reports in its issue of Oct. 24, he had "severed his relations with *The Post* several weeks ago." The listing disappeared from the third article.

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In the series of articles in the Hearst press last year on Judaism in Russia, Schultz wrote that Jews could not become officers in the Russian army. Unless Schultz does not read, he could not avoid knowing about Gen. Grigori Stern, commander of the Far Eastern Soviet Army, of Gen. Lev Dovator, commander of the Cossak cavalry who died a hero's death in the war against Hitler, Submarine Commander Israel Fisanowitch, and thousands of others.

On October 17, *PM* published a story declaring that the Association of Reform Rabbis, among other groups, was investigating Schultz as a result of the *World-Telegram* series. On Oct. 19, *PM* published a wire from Schultz declaring: "With reference to your article today about my ethics being investigated by rabbinical bodies in connection with my Scripps-Howard articles, please run correction of fact. Rabbi (Max) Reichler, (president) of Association (of Reform Rabbis), just told me I am not being investigated and said: 'You have been invited to address the executive board of Association of Reform Rabbis on Oct. 28.' . . ." You would think from this wire that Schultz had been invited by the rabbis to deliver an academic lecture on the ethics of the *moser*. But on Oct. 22 *PM* reiterated the fact that Schultz had been requested to appear on Oct. 28 by the Association of Reform Rabbis, and this time it quoted Rabbi Reichler as saying, "*We felt it wasn't fair to him (Schultz) to take action without giving him a chance to present his side.*" (My italics—J. K.) That's some "address" Schultz is going to have to deliver at what is *not* an investigation!

Jewry Condemns

The reaction of the Jewish community to Schultz' provocative act is historic, and indicates that reason is asserting itself in the affairs of our country. At a time when the official heat is on through loyalty decrees, through the Un-American Committee, through the FBI, the State Department and assorted official and unofficial stooges to whip up a red-baiting, anti-Semitic, war hysteria, the Jewish community found the strength of mind, the moral courage to stand firm and refused to abandon integrity, decency and democracy. This is a credit to the Jewish community, an example to the American people, and a shot in the arm to the democratic forces of our country. It is an indication that the experiences of the Jewish people throughout the world during recent years have not been lost on the American Jewish community.

Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, the respected and courageous dean of American rabbis, whose patriotism, liberalism, independence of mind and concern for religion and the Jewish people can be questioned by no one but a fool or a rogue, was prompt in his counter-attack. "I brand him," said Rabbi Wise of Schultz, "as a professional and probably profiteering Communist-baiter, as unworthy to be even a member, not to say a rabbi, of a Jewish congregation. His column on rabbis and the Communist line is not only mendacious but utterly and inexcusably vicious."

Rabbi Louis I. Newman, rabbi of Congregation Rodeph Sholom in New York, one of America's most distinguished rabbis and a graduate of the Jewish Institute of Religion, was equally prompt in his comment. "To those non-Jews and Jews who have been grievously wronged by Schultz in his vicious articles," he said, "I, as one rabbi, wish to extend my apology for my Rabbinical colleagues, and to say we are ashamed that such a vilifier has arisen in our midst. . . . It is deplorable that a man having the title of rabbi should write in a metropolitan newspaper as if he were a paid investigator of un-American and espionage activities among his ministerial colleagues. . . . We repudiate the infamous attacks which Schultz has made. . . ."

In another statement to Marc H. Lebanon of the *National Jewish Post*, Rabbi Newman declared, "We may not agree with the opinions of some of the persons whom Schultz has singled out, but we will defend to the utmost their right under the laws of our country to hold such opinions and to engage in activities which are neither illegal nor un-American. If Schultz wishes to become an undercover reporter for a reactionary newspaper syndicate, let him divest himself of his rabbinical title. . . . No one, least of all a Rabbi, should bear false witness against his neighbor or his brother. The American public found a way to deal with Charles Coughlin . . . and our country is far better off for his silence. . . . Schultz should persuade himself that it is to his own good interest to refrain from any similar *mesirut* (informing) henceforth."

Even more significant are the actions of organized sections of Jewish life, which were prompt and decisive. The Association of Reform Rabbis, the Alumni Association of the Jewish Institute of Religion and the New York Board of Rabbis instituted investigations immediately. As this article is being written, the first two organizations have not yet arrived at decisions. But the Board of Rabbis has taken the first action in releasing the unanimously adopted resolution quoted above. The resolution also calls upon Schultz to "see the error of his actions and . . . publicly and promptly apologize to those whom he has wronged. . . ." "Should Rabbi Schultz fail to perform this elementary duty of a rabbi and a man," the resolution concludes, "the New York Board of Rabbis may feel impelled to take other steps necessary to protect the integrity of the Rabbinate."

In the meantime, on Oct. 21, the Board of Trustees of Temple Emanu-El in Yonkers asked Schultz to resign. This Schultz refused to do.¹

Shabby Defense

To all this Schultz has but one reply: he was "robbed"! Schultz claims he has received phone calls of support from many rabbis. That may be so, but he ought to inquire where these supporters are when the voting takes place. The resolution of the New York Board of Rabbis, we repeat, was passed *unanimously* with 150 in attendance. He

¹ According to the *World-Telegram* of Nov. 7, 1947, Schultz resigned his post as Rabbi of the Yonkers temple.

insists that the Board of Rabbis, Dr. Stephen Wise or any other critic nowhere "challenges or questions a specific fact in any one of the articles." But Schultz prefers to confuse the issue. The fact is that his articles are challenged and questioned *in toto*, in letter and in spirit, as the work of an informer should be challenged. The Jewish people want no part of an informer, even that iota that may contain a grain of truth.

As is usually the case with those caught with the goods, Schultz claims to be the injured one, the victim of a "red" plot and the object of persecution. According to Schultz, the resolution of the Board of Rabbis was "vicious and unfair," and the Board itself "made an obvious effort to intimidate" him. He called the Board's action "un-American," thereby exposing 150 of his colleagues to the next Thomas Un-American Committee inquisition. In a front page story in the *World-Telegram* on Oct. 23, Schultz declared, "The same forces have pressured the New York Board of Rabbis which succeeded in pressuring my own board of trustees and are now attempting to pressure my congregation as a whole." In other words, not the sense of decency of the Jewish people, communists included, but a "red - Kremlin - Moscow - fifth-column-Stalinist-inspired" plot is operating against him.

Only a few months back, Schultz acted the informer against a fellow-rabbi and used his connections in the Jewish community to oust that fellow-rabbi from a position in an educational institution. This disreputable fingerman now pits his word against that of Dr. Stephen S. Wise, Dr. Abraham Cronbach, Rabbi Abraham Bick, Dr. Joshua Bloch, Methodist Rev. John Darr, journalist B. Z. Goldberg, Rabbi Louis I. Newman, the New York Board of Rabbis. And he has the *chutzpah* of the *moser* to expect the Jewish people to give him credence. Schultz needs to smear respected Jewish figures in order to prove his qualifications for a job on the Hearst press, for which, it is reported, he is now angling. He wants to be a stablemate of Pegler in fact, as well as in spirit—at the usual *moser's* price.

Support from the Right

Of course, Schultz has some supporters. The *World-Telegram* went out of its way to publish letters in his support. As already noted editorially on Oct. 24 by the Jewish daily *Forward*, Yiddish example of yellow journalism, "Catholics have already warmly responded to Rabbi Schultz's articles." What the *Forward* does not indicate is what kind of Catholics responded "warmly" in the letter columns of the *World-Telegram*.

One of the supporters of Schultz is Matthew F. Kennedy, chairman of the New York State Catholic Affairs Committee of the Knights of Columbus. Neither Kennedy as an individual, nor the Knights as an organization is exactly prominent for liberalism. And these deputations were not enhanced by the 69th national convention held recently in Boston which slandered the Soviet Union as "an enemy power openly committed and aggressively working for the

destruction of the American nation." The convention also passed a resolution attacking the Protestant clergymen who recently visited Yugoslavia and reported back that freedom of religion was maintained there, and that the traitor Stepinac was not persecuted.

Another supporter of Schultz is Patrick F. Scanlon of *The Tablet*, organ of Father Edward Lodge Curran of Brooklyn, devoted disciple of Coughlin, and a reactionary that bows to no man. *The Tablet* has printed anti-Semitic material, and some of its best friends are Jews whom it quotes and reprints from the Jewish daily *Forward*. A "trade unionist" who came to the support of Schultz was Ralph de Toledano, publicity director of the Joint Board of the Dress and Waistmakers union, who is happiest when he can spill his anti-Soviet venom in the *New Leader*.

The only Jew I found among the letter writers supporting Schultz was Nathaniel M. Minkoff, secretary-treasurer of the Joint Board of the Dress and Waistmakers Union. This trade unionist is one of Dubinsky's most "reliable" stooges and red-baiters.

Forward Defends a Moser

And there is, of course, the Jewish daily *Forward* and its editorial support of Oct. 24. For the English reader who may not be familiar with the content of the *Forward*, it is simply necessary to note that a reasonable facsimile would be a literal translation into Yiddish of any Hearst newspaper, plus Pegler, Woltman and Riesel. Its editorial on Schultz is no exception, and there is no need to refute all the familiar slander in it. Suffice it to say that the *Forward* is deeply hurt by the reaction of the Jewish community to Schultz. The violence of this reaction augurs badly for the *Forward*, because Schultz said nothing that the *Forward* does not reiterate monotonously day after day.

That is why the *Forward* has gone all out in support of Schultz. It followed up the editorial with an eight column half page spread on Oct. 25, by one Jay Grayson, who gives a sentimental biographical sketch of Schultz, calls him a "highly progressive individual with socialist point of view," and declares all opponents of Schultz to be communists, communist followers or communist dupes. The article, however, makes no mention of the fact that the Board of Rabbis took action against Schultz. What is more, the article states that according to Schultz, Rabbi Nathan Perilman of Temple Emanu-El, Rabbi Joshua Goldberg who is a navy chaplain, and Rabbi David Seligson of the Central Synagogue, supported Schultz. We have it on what we regard as a trustworthy source, including a personal statement by one of the rabbis involved, that this claim made by Schultz is not based on fact. The fact is that these three rabbis have repudiated this claim.

One aspect of the editorial must be given attention. It attacks the Board of Trustees of Temple Emanu-El in Yonkers for trying to fire Schultz. It lays the main blame on Rabbi Wise because he stated that Schultz deserved to be neither a rabbi nor a member of a Jewish congregation.

In its frenzy to win support for the anti-communist Schultz, the "socialist" *Forward* makes this appeal: "We imagine that the majority of the Board of Trustees are businessmen, respectable Jews and good Americans, who in an excited moment did not grasp the harm they were doing to all Jews in America."

And then, completely hysterical, the *Forward* makes the following threat: "Especially at this moment such a thing should not have happened. Our country is now engaged in a bitter struggle against communism. . . . Imagine what an impression it will make on the whole of America when it becomes known that well-to-do Jews of a temple fired a rabbi because he dared to criticize communist penetration into religious groups. This will play into the hands of American anti-Semites. This will give them the opportunity to carry on propaganda that the whole of Jewish life in America is riddled with communism."

This is an accurate reflection of the despicable position of the Bevin-loving *Forward*. It tries to win support for its red-baiting by appealing to bourgeois class interests and to fear. It relies on anti-Semites to add pressure to help it win the Jews to red-baiting. And it exposes the ugly plot for which the Schultz articles are being used.

The idea is to get the Jews coming or going. On the one hand, the Jews, as a result of Schultz's "expose," fall for the hysteria and join the witch-hunt for alleged communists in the Jewish community, including all progressive, liberal and trade union elements so designated by informers. This would eliminate the best fighters against anti-Semitism, and make a field-day for the anti-Semites. Or, on the other hand, the Jews resist the hysteria, in which case the anti-Semites would accuse the Jews of harboring and supporting communism, and use it as an excuse for pogroms.

This was why anti-Semites opened their arms to Schultz's informing at this time. It is part of the anti-Jewish plotting inside and out of the Truman administration, which is reflected in the phenagling around the Palestine question—a policy which calls for the sacrifice of the Jews if necessary in order to achieve reactionary ends by whipping up an anti-communist, anti-Soviet campaign throughout the world and in our own country. This explains the invidious overtones of the front page headline in the *World-Telegram* of Oct. 23, "Rabbis' Board Hits Schultz' Commie Expose." And now the *Forward* adds its evil spirit and treacherous support to the anti-Semitic plot.

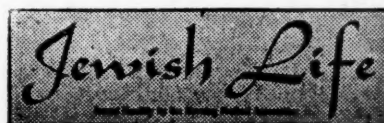
No Compromise!

It is therefore regrettable that the Board of Trustees of the Yonkers Temple capitulated to the threats of the *Forward* and decided to postpone the attempt to oust Schultz. We hope this will not lead to a face-saving way out for Schultz, or to another hush-hush maneuver on which anti-Semites feed. But we are even more disappointed in the reason given for the delay. "It was just bad timing on our part," *PM* of Oct. 26 reports Mr. Schnall as saying: "With

that series of his, it made it look as if we were defending Communists or might be Communists ourselves. Nothing could be more wrong." Apparently Mr. Schnall could not altogether follow in the footpaths of Rabbi Wise, Rabbi Newman and the New York Board of Rabbis who did not fear the accusations of *mosers* in order to defend decency.

It is apparent, too, that in capitulating to the worst elements in the Jewish community, and to anti-Semitic provocation, Mr. Schnall misses the point when he says, "That series of Rabbi Schultz had nothing to do with the trustees' decision to ask him to resign. We feel that for years he has neglected his duties, and that feeling just boiled over." Surely Mr. Schnall would not consider him neglecting his duties if Schultz were doing something in the interests and for the security of the Jewish people. If the "feeling boiled over" at just this moment, surely it was because of something that an important and distinguished section of the Jewish community considered Schultz' betrayal of his people.

There is no place in Jewish life for the likes of Schultz. He is himself by talent and by accomplishments of no account. If so much attention is paid to him, it is because he presents an object lesson to the Jewish people, that no sacred principles must be permitted to encourage or protect the operations of Jewish quislings, that anti-communism is their stock in trade, and that anti-communism is their unbreakable link to anti-Semites and the worst enemies of the Jewish people.



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BOOK REVIEW

WAR WORK OF ANGLO-JEWISH HISTORIANS

By Morris U. Schappes

THIS latest volume of the Transactions¹ of the more than fifty-year-old Jewish Historical Society of England is by its very existence a monument to the almost uninterrupted functioning of that Society during the war years, 1939-1945. Despite war-bred hardships that included the destruction of its great library in October 1940 by a German bomber, the Society maintained a level of activity that acts as a rebuke to the comparative desuetude into which our own American Jewish Historical Society lapsed under less exacting conditions. One index to this activity is that the Society met some 40 times in those six years, both to transact business and to discuss research papers.

Another index is the seven papers published in the volume, generally written in conformity with high academic standards of research and frequently with a grace of expression too rare among American Jewish historians. Appropriately, the leading article in such a volume is that of the Society's president, the famous historian, Dr. Cecil Roth, "The Jews in the Defense of Britain, Thirteenth to Nineteenth Centuries."

Summarily sketching the participation of Jews in British wars, Dr. Roth unwittingly confronts us with a basic methodological problem that he himself avoids, namely, the historic evaluation of the wars themselves. Not all the wars Britain fought were "in the defense of Britain." Many of them were wars of conquest in which other peoples had to fight in defense against Britain. What is the attitude of British Jews to Jews who fought not only in defense of Britain but in the cause of

conquering, oppressing, and subjugating other peoples and nations? Dr. Roth seems to reflect the imperial point of view that all British wars are for the defense and greater glory of Britain, and therefore of every Jew who fought in them.

As I have explained more elaborately elsewhere ("The Jews of Canada," *New Masses*, October 22, 1946), such an approach reduces history to nationalist apologetics. What comfort can Jews take in the careers Dr. Roth describes of the Jews who were in His Majesty's service in the British wars against the Indian people, the South Africans, the West Indian Negroes, the Chinese and others? Would that Dr. Roth had applied the sense of discrimination of the celebrated historian and past president of the Society, Philip Guedalla; in his eulogy (p. 196), Dr. Roth quotes the following statement of Guedalla's: "Freedom, which may be a luxury to others, is a necessity to us, because by the destiny of history we are, wherever there is a fight for freedom, to be foremost in that fight." As historians, as citizens of whatever country we inhabit, and as Jews, we shall do well to distinguish between Jews who fight in just wars and those who fight on the side of aggression in unjust wars. Else we shall be asked to be "proud" of whatever Jewish soldiers there may be in the British forces that are occupying and terrorizing the people of Palestine.

The sweep of centuries that the American reader encounters in examining Anglo-Jewish history is of course reflected in this volume, and is very instructive. Two of the papers, and portions of others, deal with the life of Jews in feudal England: "Elijah of London," by Dr. Cecil Roth, and "The Northampton Jewry and Its Cemetery in the Thirteenth Century," by A. J. Collins. In his valuable paper, Dr. Roth describes a contemporary of Rashi, Elijah of London (c. 1220-1284), "the most illustrious English Jew of the Middle Ages," a man who was a Jewish communal leader and money-lender, a Rabbi and a landowner, a mystic and a merchant, a physician and a *hasan*, a writer on Jewish law and a teacher. Such a chronicle impresses the American reader with two facts: first, that American Jewish history, which is only about 300 years old, is still one of the "newer" Jewish histories; secondly, that American Jewish history develops almost completely under capitalist relationships of society, with feudal relations operative only in the per-

sonal backgrounds of the immigrants themselves. A proper comprehension of the meaning of this fact is a key to American Jewish history.

In addition to "An Early Stuart Judaizing Sect," by Henry E. I. Phillips, describing a Christian sect of Jadaisers banned in 1618, and "Anglo-Jewish Causes Celebres," by Norman Bentwich, presenting leading cases from the beginning of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth centuries, notable articles are those by Lewis Edwards on David Mendoza (1765-1836), the Jewish prize-fighting champion of England, and by Beth-Zion Lask Abrahams on "Stanislaus Hoga—Apostate and Penitent." Hoga (1791-1860) was a Polish Jew, Yecheskel Aryeh, son of Abraham Hoga, Rabbi of Cashmir. He was also known as Chaskel Meshumad; "his was a journey of escape from life: out of Chassidism to the allure of enlightenment, thence to refuge in apostasy, only to seek peace of soul in repentance and the Judaism that he must have loved all along." Not only students of the history of the Jews of England, in which Hoga spent many years, will be interested in Mr. Abraham's resourceful research work into this strange figure, but also students of Polish Jewish history. Hoga was even reported living in New York in 1850 and may turn up in our own chronicles. (Students of American Jewish history, incidentally, will also perhaps want to note two other items of *Americana* in this volume "in the American plantations, Zacariah Cohen was a gunner in the sloop, *Queen of Hungary* in 1744"; the

¹The Jewish Historical Society of England, *Transactions, Sessions 1939-1945*, Volume 15. London, 1946, 201 pp.

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Major Danneberg, who we know was in the United States Army in the War with Mexico, also "held a commission in the British forces in the Second China War.")

Most encouraging in this volume is also that portion of Dr. Roth's Jubilee Address of 1943, celebrating the first 50 years of work of the Society. Not content with honoring creditable achievements, Dr. Roth points to things that have long needed doing. "New topics," he writes, "have been created, with the shift of emphasis in history to social and economic life: and these have barely been touched." Among areas that need exploration, he notes, are aspects of medieval Jewish life that might reverse the popular notion that Jews were usually money-lenders and possibly "demonstrate that in the Middle Ages there was a large Anglo-Jewish proletariat, who had little to do with the kernel of financiers in whom the King was interested."

In modern times, he calls for attention to the migrations of the 1860's and 1890's, to study of "what part Jews played in the development of modern English economic

life." He also remarks the greatest omission of all: "The history of the Trade Union movement among the Jewish workers of the East End, of Leeds and of Manchester, of some significance in the history of British labor as well as of the Jewish proletariat, has never yet been described. . . ." Such a work, it should be added, would help the student of the American Jewish labor movement, for many of its early leaders came here after experience in the Anglo-Jewish labor movement. These and many more tasks are suggested, but Dr. Roth also laments the lack of new historical workers to undertake these tasks.

There is room, in other words, and in fact an invitation and a challenge, for progressive English Jewish historians to turn to this field, to add to what has already been done validly in the Society, and to transform apologetics into objective historiography. History needs to be written as well as made. New progressive historians might well begin to take their place and show their findings in the next volumes of these Transactions.

tary Mission in Bucharest, writes in the May issue of the *Record*, organ of the American Jewish Conference, that "I have been reliably informed that Maniu's so-called National Peasant Party entrusted leading positions to well known anti-Semites and former collaborators. . . . The National Peasant Party has been repeatedly embarrassed by open anti-Semitic manifestations of its members."

The government has made every effort to overcome this pernicious agitation, which prevents the return to normalcy, and has recently had to take special measures against the National Peasant Party. This party has been declared illegal and it is hoped that one of the most virulent sources of anti-Semitism in the country will thus be closed for good. It is of course a matter of great regret to the Jews of Rumania that the British Labor Government has indiscriminately extended its protection to this organization—without realizing that by its intervention that it was adding further life and strength to the ill-fated policies of the party.

The Rumanian Jewish organization went on record in the early part of the year with a warning about the role and function of the old "Historical Parties." They pointed out in their statement to Stalin, Truman and Attlee that "our emancipation was prevented by the anti-Semitic state policy of the old parties of government." (See *JEWISH LIFE*, June 1947—Ed.)

The present government of Dr. Peter Groza, composed of the parties of the Democratic Bloc, is trying to end the pernicious anti-Jewish propaganda of the reactionary elements. Misu Benvenisti, leading Rumanian Zionist and vice-president of the Rumanian Section of the World Jewish Congress, writes in a re-

LETTER FROM ABROAD

BARRIERS TO RUMANIAN JEWISH RECOVERY

A GREAT deal of attention is being paid in the Jewish press outside Rumania to the unusually large number of Rumanian Jews leaving that country by legal, and especially illegal, means. In fact, the same publicity is given to Rumanian Jews as was given to Polish Jews at the height of the latter's wanderings. Unfortunately, disregarding the advice offered by the leading Jewish organizations of Rumania, among which the Zionists (A. Dascalu being their member of parliament) play a leading role, many young Jewish men and women have made their way over the border. The statement issued by these organizations attacks very strongly "the criminal agitation for anarchic clandestine emigration" which is conducted by "irresponsible organizations." The Rumanian Government has not taken any action to prevent any who wish to emigrate from doing so and is offering every facility to those who desire to avail themselves of the rights to do so.

The wisdom of those who leave Rumania—by legal or other means—remains yet to be seen. So far their lot has been very miserable, their emigration not having yet brought their trouble to an end. So far the result of their action has been to increase the number of Jews wandering in Europe and to prevent an end to the

use made in reactionary quarters of the "Displaced Persons."

Many of those choosing to wander are influenced in their decision by the difficult conditions prevailing in Rumania. Rumanian Jewry, together with the rest of the people of Rumania, have had to face very serious difficulties following the end of the war. Rumania had been for many years a battlefield and was subjected to fascist domination. These years of severe difficulties were followed by two years of drought which were among the worst experienced in Rumania. The severe drought ravaged the country and left desolate the land which is usually among the most fertile in Europe.

It was under these circumstances that despair overcame many Jews, who saw salvation only in leaving the country. The meager assistance coming from abroad, together with the mirage of Zionism, aggravated the situation.

Anti-Semitism played no small part in this too. Rumania had for many decades been steeped in anti-Semitic propaganda. In fact it is this Rumania which many of our enemies abroad hanker after. The old "Historical Parties" continued their "Historical" traditions and anti-Semitism flourished in their midst. Mr. Denis A. Cooper, who had been attached to the U. S. Mil-

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cent article: "The democratic government of Rumania is according unlimited liberty to the Zionist movement in preparing for emigration for which fact the Jewish population have thanked the government several times. It must be underlined that the present regime has restored to Jews the right and liberty to work, assuring them their corporal safety against all attempts to revive anti-Semitism."

Recently the newly elected parliament—which includes two Jewish deputies as representatives of the Jewish population—adopted a sweeping citizenship reform law that wipes out thousands of grievances, some of which date back 30 years. The new law provides that all persons who have resided on Rumanian territory since 1920 automatically acquire citizenship. The law also grants citizenship to all those who have returned from places of refuge or deportation. The new law also cancels all discriminatory legislation imposed by the Goga and Cuza pro-nazi governments. The government has given assurances that it will shortly propose a law which will grant pensions to all invalids, orphans and widows of the massacred, or persons otherwise made to suffer by the fascist anti-Semites. A recent decree of the Minister of Justice resolved that all assets left behind by those who did not return from deportation be passed into the custody

of the Jewish communities. This is not to say that all the grievances of the Jewish population have been satisfactorily settled. There is, for instance, the question of punishing those responsible for the various anti-Jewish pogroms, or that of paying damages to Jews and Jewish institutions who suffered from the fascist rule.

The resettlement and reconstitution of the Jewish communities is proceeding apace. Great strides have been made in the sphere of cultural development. Cultural activities both in Yiddish and Hebrew flourish. Cultural and social organizations are springing up all over the country. IKUF is doing a great deal of work and its theater, under the management of Jacob Mansdorf, is flourishing.

It must be pointed out, however, that assistance from abroad is far from being adequate. This is causing a great deal of concern because many believe it is a form of discrimination similar to that exercised

by the British and American governments against the new democratic governments in Europe. In the article by Misu Benvenisti referred to above he writes that "From American Jewry we expect more substantial sacrifices because only in that way can their good work become truly efficient and effective. The Jews in Great Britain too can do a great deal in this direction."

The Rumanian Jewish community, numbering 400,000 souls, is the largest European community outside the Soviet Union. With outside help it can in a very short time replace the destroyed Jewish centers of Central Europe and become an important Jewish cultural center. It is a task which Rumanian Jewry will proudly pursue anyhow, whatever difficulties and hardships it may have to meet.

Bucharest

L. BARLADEANU

FROM THE FOUR CORNERS

(Continued from page 2)

in my mother flesh. When I see discrimination against Jewish, Italian and other people I feel with them because I know what it is like. It is the same whip, held by the same hands, and I protest with them." . . . Many Jews have joined the picket lines thrown around Woolworth's at Delancey and Norfolk Streets, New York, in protest against Woolworth's refusal to employ Negro sales help. Petitions with thousands of signatures gathered by the East Side's Fair Employment Committee were not accepted by the store management.

☆

The Jewish War Veterans, meeting in October for their 52nd annual encampment, passed resolutions, among others, as follows: to bar federal funds from educational institutions practicing racial or religious discrimination; to urge intensification of army orientation courses for occupation forces so that they can better withstand Nazi propaganda; to extend naturalization exemptions which were granted to 140,000 World War II veterans; to urge immediate implementation of the UNSCOP report calling for partition of Palestine; to urge immediate withdrawal of British forces from Palestine and recognition of the Jewish Agency as the interim governing body of the projected Jewish state. Col. Julius Klein of Chicago, veteran of both world wars, was elected National Commander.

☆

The Jewish Labor Council announced a drive for \$500,000 for the rehabilitation of European Jews and to fight anti-Semitism in this country.

☆

First gifts of religious articles sent by the Jews of the United States to Soviet Jewry were dispatched in October by the American Jewish Council to Aid Russian Rehabilitation. Greetings to Soviet Jews on the occasion of the shipment were

signed by many prominent American rabbis including Rabbis Joseph H. Lookstein, Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, Dr. Stephen S. Wise, Dr. Israel Goldstein, Dr. David de Sola Pool and Louis I. Newman.

☆

Jewish Book Month, organized by the Jewish Welfare Board sponsored Jewish Book Council, will be celebrated this year from November 7 to December 7. The last day, designated as Jewish Book Festival, coincides with the opening of Chanukah. The Jewish Book Council has issued

(Continued on page 32)

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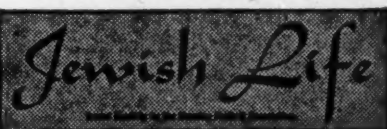
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FROM THE FOUR CORNERS

(Continued from page 31)

a list of books, plays and lectures to Jewish centers, synagogues and organizations.

EUROPE

A deputation from the British Jewish Board of Deputies headed by Prof. Selig Brodetsky visited Home Secretary Chuter Ede last month to voice their rising anxiety over the increase of anti-Semitic incitement and they proposed that more adequate legislation be passed to deal with the situation. Mr. Ede replied, according to the London Times (Oct. 3) that "He was not aware of any evidence of any general increase in anti-Semitic activities in the country as a whole." The London County Council staff association, representing the entire professional, technical and clerical staffs of the Council, passed a resolution asking the Home Secretary to sponsor legislation to meet the rising fascist threat. During the discussion it was revealed that there are at least seven fascist organizations in Britain, including one named Ku Klux Klan. The National Council of Labor, composed of delegates representing the British Labor Party, the Trades Union Congress and the Cooperative movement, has decided to seek a discussion with Prime Minister Attlee to urge wider action by the government to stamp out fascist activities. In addition to these protests, the influential weekly the *Economist* has declared in an unusually frank article that anti-Semitism flourishes in the highest circles of the British government, particularly the War, Colonial and Foreign Offices. Conservative leaders were embarrassed by an anti-Semitic speech made by Andrew Fontaine in a speech on Palestine at the Conservative Party's annual conference on October 3. The speech was enthusiastically applauded. Meanwhile arrests of both Jews and fascists are occurring at meetings in London. Jeffrey Hamm, chief deputy of Sir Oswald Mosley, addressed a meeting of German prisoners of war. For the first time since the war Mosley uniforms of black shirts or sweaters and ties are seen at meetings. According to the Trades Union Congress there are about 10,000 members of the Fascist British League in London and probably as many more in Manchester, Sheffield, Derby and Leeds.

☆ About 1,500 instructors and other personnel attached to Rumanian universities have been dismissed as a result of investigations of a special commission to eliminate fascists and anti-Semites from university faculties.

☆ The local authorities in the town of Nowy Sajoż in the Cracow district of Poland have ordered the removal of tombstones stolen by nazis from a Jewish cemetery in the town and used to pave the streets. The removal was ordered after an appeal by the local Jewish committee.

☆ Jewish circles in Prague report that American and British authorities in Germany and Austria are not heeding Czech requests for extradition from their war zones of war criminals who killed and deported many Czechoslovak Jews. It was pointed out that Anton Burger, one of the most brutal administrators at the former Theresienstadt concentration camp, has just escaped from an Austrian internment camp, where he had been held despite a Czech request for his extradition.

☆ At a meeting of the working executive of the provisional Association of Jewish Communities of the four zones in Germany, sharp differences of opinion were expressed as to the possibility for the rebuilding of the Jewish community in Germany. Seventy-five delegates from the four zones attended this second annual meeting.

The advisory council of the Jewish Central Committee in the British zone of Germany voted recently to make "strong representations" to the occupation authorities against the continued desecration of Jewish cemeteries. The council said that German vandals had damaged tombstones in more than 20 cemeteries since the beginning of the year.

☆ Several cases of typhoid fever were discovered last month among the Exodus refugees confined in the Poppendorf and Am Stau camps. Following a medical officer's report the British authorities took belated steps to improve camp conditions, sending in a water supply engineer and promising to fulfill requests made by the refugees several weeks ago, including placing an empty barracks at the disposal of families with infants. The British authorities have removed military guards from around the camps and torn down much of the barriers keeping the Jews inside the camps. The Jews, however, are afraid to leave the camp environs because they have no identification papers and hence are liable to arrest outside the camps. It was learned that only seven of the refugees volunteered to return to France.

☆ United States armed forces will not be withdrawn from Germany and Austria before all displaced Jews have had an opportunity to leave those countries, said Judge Louis E. Levinthal, advisor on Jewish affairs to the U.S. Command in Europe recently after a conference with top military officials.

PALESTINE

The ability of the Arab states and the Palestine Arab community to stage and maintain an armed revolt against any decision of the United Nations was challenged in a memorandum submitted to UN Secretary-General Trygve Lie by the Nation Associates. The 77-page memorandum on military, economic and political conditions in the Middle Eastern states affirms that these countries together can hardly muster 150,000 soldiers and that these would be for the most part ill-trained, ill-equipped, ill-disciplined and undernourished. They are without an air force to speak of or a navy, have few modern weapons, little military or combat experience, no arms factories or replacements of military equipment. Apart from military considerations, the condition of the largest section of the population makes revolt against a UN decision impossible. Two per cent of the population of 36 millions control the wealth and power; illiteracy ranges from 80 to 97 per cent in some countries; mass poverty is added to by an oppressive taxation system; the governments are corrupt and subject to no popular control, with 80 to 90 per cent of the Parliament coming from the upper two per cent of the people. In Saudi Arabia and Yemen slavery is recognized by law and in most Arab states women are bought and sold.

☆ Seven of nine Jewish youths arrested at the conclusion of the Yom Kippur services when a shofar was sounded at the Wailing Wall in defiance of a police order were imprisoned at the Latrun detention camp without trial. Among the reasons given for their imprisonment was refusal to submit to finger-printing.

☆ The Palestine government recently announced that two exploratory oil wells are being drilled in the Gaza area. The wells are being sunk by Petroleum Development, a subsidiary of the Iraq Petroleum Corporation. Only Arabs, and not a single Jew, are employed on the job. The Jews are suspicious of the motives for the announcement and term the operation "political drilling."

Although oil has been drilled for in Palestine for thirty years, no major deposit has yet been uncovered.

☆ A British Army court on October 2 quickly acquitted Capt. Roy A. Farran of the murder of Alexander Rubovitz, 16-year-old Jewish boy who disappeared on May 2. It was charged that Farran and his accomplices had killed Rubovitz during "questioning" concerning his alleged Sternist activities and turned his body over to a group of Bedouins for burial. The prosecution submitted as evidence a military cap bearing Farran's name found at the scene of the kidnapping. Farran left Palestine as soon as the trial ended. The Jewish community was cynical over the verdict, although legal proprieties were observed.

☆ Col. Bernard Ferguson, senior Palestine police officer who refused to testify at the court-martial of Capt. Roy A. Farran on the grounds that he "would incriminate" himself, has resigned from the Palestine police force. He is now stationed in Greece.

☆ The Palestine Communist Party is reported to have contacted leaders of the Arab League for National Liberation, its Arab counterpart, with the aim of reaching an understanding on current problems.

☆ Reorganization of the Haganah, Palestine Jewish defense force, has begun. It is being converted from an underground defense force into a peaceful Jewish army able to maintain order in the projected Jewish state, in case of the immediate withdrawal of British military forces from Palestine. The revamping of the Haganah follows a resolution adopted by the Assefath Hanivcharim, the Jewish National Assembly, urging the total mobilization of manpower, agriculture, industry and science, in readiness for a possible United Nations decision recommending the establishment of a Jewish state based on partition. Members of the Haganah who have been "demobilized" will be recalled to service. Former military officers will be placed in charge of special courses to prepare officer and non-commissioned officer cadres. At the same time steps are being taken to secure rapid effective mobilization of Jews of military age all over the country in case of emergency. No aggressive plans are being prepared and the operations are planned from a purely defensive viewpoint.

CONFERENCE ON JEWISH CULTURE

Twelve hundred delegates from Jewish organizations all over the country met in N. Y. Oct. 31, Nov. 1 and 2, to discuss many cultural problems facing the contemporary Jew. Panel discussions were held on Yiddish literature, theater, music, plastic arts and on youth, culture in the *landsman-shaften*, adult education and children's schools and education.

A new note was struck at this conference with the attention paid to problems of Jewish culture in English. Some of these problems were discussed before the conference as a whole, and more intensive consideration was given to them in a separate English-speaking panel. The latter presented resolutions approved by the conference for furthering efforts to hammer out a working Jewish culture in English. A full report of the conference will be published in the next issue of *Jewish Life*, as well as some of the material read before the meetings.

