

Jewish Life

Issued Monthly by the
Morning Freiheit Association

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JANUARY 1949

WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY GO?

United Palestine Appeal

By Moses Miller and Max Levine

IS SAMMY LEVENSON FUNNY?

By Louis Harap

I MEET THE ARAB PROGRESSIVES

By A. B. Magil

GERMANY REVISITED

A Short Story by Henrietta Levner

FACT AND FANCY ON BIROBIDJAN

By Itzik Feffer

ARAB AND JEWISH COMMUNISTS UNITE

A Declaration of Principles

From the Four Corners

Edited by Louis Harap

AT HOME

The American Jewish Conference, organized in 1943 as the all-inclusive democratic national body of American Jewry to deal with post-war Jewish problems, will wind up its affairs and cease to function on December 31, 1948.

☆

The admission of a Negro to the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity chapter at Amherst College recently precipitated the whole problem of discrimination in national fraternities at the National Interfraternity Conference held in New York November 26-27. The Amherst chapter had in consequence been suspended from the national body for "unfraternal conduct." After a hot discussion at the conference votes were taken on discrimination. On the proposal to admit Negroes to all-white fraternities, 12 undergraduate fraternities voted to remove the bar to Negroes, 25 voted against any change and 18 chapters abstained. On the question of admitting all students regardless of color or religion, a proposal to leave the question to local determination was rejected 44-19. On the second day a resolution on racial and religious discrimination was offered, but the delegates voted to defer the vote for one year in order to allow full discussion of the question.

☆

The newly-established Brandeis University, founded by Jews but non-sectarian in policy, located at Waltham, Mass., has a Negro teaching in the French Department.

☆

In a report prepared for the national medical committee of the NAACP, Dr. W. Montague Cobb of Howard University observes that some progress has been made in breaking down discrimination in medical schools, but that Negroes are unable to take full advantage of available opportunities because of the "dual system" (separate schools for Negro and white) and because of "economic handicap." The medical school of Washington University, St. Louis, has voted to admit Negroes.

☆

The New York Supreme Court in mid-November upheld the New York State law for released time for religious instruction. Joseph Lewis, president of the Free Thinkers of America, who had started proceedings, announced that he would appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. The decision stated that the law did not conflict with the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision in the *Vashti-McCollum* case.*

☆

The State Department announced on November 5 that the Czechoslovak government had turned down its protest against shipment of arms to Israel. It was learned that in effect the Czechoslovak note argued that the arms traffic was none of the United States' business.

☆

Ten persons were indicted in Miami in late November by a Federal Grand Jury for allegedly attempting to deliver warplanes to Israel by way of Czechoslovakia.*

☆

More on Knickerbocker-Davis case . . . Paul Brown, City College student, is on probation for distributing *Free and Equal*, an "unauthorized" campus publication demanding the ousting of Knickerbocker and Davis, teachers accused of anti-Semitism and anti-Negroism, respectively. . . . On the basis of the mass student protest against the two teachers, the New York branch of the NAACP, after hearing bias charges from the

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VOL. III, No. 3 (27)

JANUARY, 1949

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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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ANNOUNCEMENT

Owing to the rise in production costs the price of JEWISH LIFE is increased, beginning with the current (January) issue, as follows:

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FROM MONTH TO MONTH

EVASION AND ACTUALITY

An Editorial

IT is hard to decide which is more shocking—our government's policy of betrayal of Israel or the attempt of the majority of the Jewish press and of the Zionist leadership to cover up this betrayal. On November 26, 1948, the organ of the Zionist Organization of America, *New Palestine*, stated editorially that the speech of Dr. Philip Jessup before the UN Political Committee was a reassuring sign that the UN delegation of the United States "clearly and deliberately followed Mr. Truman's stand of no modification of the partition boundaries without Israel's consent."

It is apparent even from the editorial itself that this statement is soothing syrup to allay suspicion and divert people from struggle against the American policy on Israel. A few sentences later the editorial points to the "one big loophole" in the American position. It is difficult, says the editorial, "to reconcile (Dr. Jessup's) support of the partition program with his sympathetic approach to the sharply divergent British-sponsored Bernadotte plan, which he said his government had adopted as a basis for the solution of Arab-Jewish differences."

Despite headlines and newspaper interpretations of the latest maneuverings in the UN, the United States has not renounced the Bernadotte plan, whose essence is reduction of Israel's territory in order to provide imperialist bases against the Soviet Union. The *New Palestine* continues to ignore this crucial fact and construes what is basic to this imperialist policy as a "loophole" in an otherwise commendable plan.

The latest maneuver is the formation of a Palestine Conciliation Commission, which was pushed through the UN Political Committee by the Anglo-American combination. The Jewish press takes comfort in the fact that the resolution authorizing this commission took no position on revision of the borders of Israel. Analysis of the resolution itself, however, makes one wonder why comfort can be derived from this equivocal stand.

The Jewish press needs to be reminded that there was a November 29th decision which established the borders of Israel. Can the press find comfort in the fact that the American delegation shamefully and brazenly continues to flout this UN decision? Or that the UN, except for the Soviet Union and the new democracies, continues to disregard the November 29th provision for the establishment of an independent Arab state? Or that the Anglo-American tricksters are trying to saddle the Arabs with a puppet, state pleasing to imperialism, a state that would hamper the growth and independence of Israel? Or the provision

of the resolution instructing the commission to investigate the possibilities of turning the Port of Haifa and the airbase of Lydda into "free" areas? This last provision would remove Haifa and Lydda from the jurisdiction of the Jewish state and would make them pawns of imperialist intrigue and adventures.

If the American delegation is so anxious about the freedom of Israel, why did it vote against the Soviet resolution calling for the immediate evacuation of all the invading armies? Certainly the threat to peace comes not from those who defend their homes and the territory internationally assigned to them through a UN decision, but from those who invade the sovereign territory of another country under imperialist auspices.

Some Jewish leaders, aware that the actions of the American UN delegation cannot so easily be withewashed, take a more devious tack. Thus Dr. David Petegorsky, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, who has just returned from Paris, declared: "At the United Nations, people talk so openly and freely of the manner in which members of the U. S. delegation are flouting the spirit and letter of President Truman's directives on Israel, that a formal investigation by the president might well be in order."

Whatever we may think of Dr. Petegorsky, we certainly do not believe that he is so naive as to fall for this nonsense. For he must know that there is no contradiction between the general foreign policy of the Truman administration and the position of the American UN delegation on Israel. Is it likely that a government bent on rebuilding a Nazi Germany, propping up fascist Greece and the decadent and corrupt leadership in China, bringing Franco Spain into a military alliance, a government that has already betrayed Israel in a hundred forms, would be likely to further the establishment of an *independent* Israel?

Whatever such men may say, they are in fact promoting American imperialist expansion, a policy incompatible with independence of Israel. Pious phrases do not negate objective realities.

It is time that the Jewish masses realized that their leadership has been playing a compromising game. The struggle for an independent Israel cannot be won through acceptance of present American policy. It can only be won by combatting that policy. The masses of Jewish people in Israel won statehood by a bitter struggle against this very policy. Only by continuing this fight can that statehood be guaranteed.

THE 81st CONGRESS

THE elections have come and gone and so have the promises. Nothing was too good for the common people of America, said the president, in his appeal to the voters. The New Deal of FDR was kid stuff compared to the New Deal he would put into operation, if he were elected. Civil rights, labor's rights and all other rights would be fully assured if he were returned to office.

Now that the elections are over, every day brings fresh proof that the election promises were given to pull votes, and for no other reason. There never was, nor is there now, any intention of fulfilling them. Mr. Forrestal, of Dillon Reed, is still our Secretary of Defense. Herbert Hoover, damned by the president before the election, now receives fulsome praise. And Lovett and Dulles, Harriman and Taylor and a host of other top Wall Street men are still *persona grata* as they were before the elections. These are the leaders of the "people's party" of Philip Murray, Jacob Potofsky, David Dubinsky and Walter Reuther.

If labor leaders can accept a Marshall Plan, which shoots down strikers and imprisons trade unionists in Greece and fosters the rebuilding of a fascist Germany, they can also accept the Democratic Party as a "people's party." Such labor leaders will justify and cover up the administration every time Truman betrays the best interests of the American people and its working class.

As we plan for the 81st Congress, we must be alert to such attitudes towards the administration. For one's attitude to the administration will be decisive in relation to a people's program for the 81st Congress. Many Americans of varying views will no doubt participate in limited struggles on specific issues. And such united action should of course be welcomed and encouraged. But in the final analysis the overall struggle for peace, democracy and civil liberties demands a growing awareness by large sections of the American people that the administration is the servant of Wall Street. The administration's aims and policies accord fully with the aims and interests of America's industrialists and financiers. Without a sustained, militant legislative program for which mass support is mobilized, without exposure and repudiation of the foreign and domestic policies of our government, no decisive changes can be effected.

There are many issues on which the people must wage an effective campaign—labor, civil rights, denazification, DP laws, housing, high prices, Israel. But *JEWISH LIFE* wishes to bring to the attention of its readers one legislative campaign which must not be neglected—the struggle to outlaw anti-Semitism. We need only to point out how urgent the struggle for such a law has become in American life. The signs of growing anti-Semitism are too obvious and ominous to view with complacency. The danger to the Jewish community of America today arises not so much from the anti-Semitic lunatic fringe, but from the intensification of American imperialist policy, which necessarily

brings in its wake attacks upon minority groups and intensification of chauvinism in all its forms.

What happens to a great, fighting labor movement, when it departs from its defense of the working class and becomes the apologist for imperialist expansion, was clearly evidenced at the recent CIO convention. Once again it was demonstrated that acceptance of imperialist policy causes the outcropping of bigoted attitudes necessary for the operation of imperialism. Albert J. Fitzgerald, president of the UERMA, felt obliged to comment on this at the convention. "For the life of me," he said, "I can't understand why you people, with the kind of organizations you represent, that have done so much against bigotry and intolerance, should carry on as you have in the past couple of days. . . . It made me sick to my stomach yesterday, as I stood at the back of the hall, and heard a few delegates remark, 'Why doesn't the dirty Jew sit down?' when Abe Feinglass was speaking."

Last year the American Jewish Labor Council was instrumental in having the Buckley bill introduced in Congress. Instead of greeting the efforts of the American Jewish Labor Council, the National Community Relations Advisory Council and its constituent members such as the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish Labor Committee and the American Jewish Congress, did everything in their power to sabotage the campaign for this bill. Every pettyfogging legal argument was brought forth to stall the campaign and persuade the Jewish community to have no part of it.

A law against anti-Semitism becomes more imperative every day. The broadest unity and the most effective campaign are necessary to guarantee success. Any one who stands in the way of the introduction of such a bill and obstructs its passage, must be exposed as an enemy of the Jewish people, as an enemy of the democratic struggle.

BEIGIN BALLYHOO

IT is fitting that the anti-labor, adventurist Irgun should be masters of that unique art of decadent capitalism, public relations ballyhoo. Once again it has exhibited its brilliance in this unprincipled art by its creation of a riot of publicity around the arrival in this country of Menachem Beigin, *Fuehrer* of the now-dissolved Irgun and head of its latest front, the "Freedom" Party. Many liberal and even progressive Americans were buffaloes into lending their names to his "Committee of Welcome." If the American people knew the truth about this proto-fascist Irgun, they would greet its leader with unmistakable disapproval. In the past few issues *JEWISH LIFE* has published an article by Esther Vilenska, secretary of the Israel CP, exposing the ties of the Irgun with fascist Italy, its anti-labor activities in Israel, its chauvinism, its unabashed invitation to American imperialism to take over in Israel, and its reactionary role in Israel.

Several statements made by Beigin at a press conference in New York on November 25 betray the reactionary na-

ture of his party. He reaffirmed the refusal of the Irgun, and now of the Freedom Party, to accept the UN decision for setting up independent Jewish and Arab states in Palestine. The Irgun has never moved from its imperialist position that all Palestine "on both sides of the Jordan" should belong to the Jews, thus refusing to recognize the national aspirations of the Arab peoples and even entertaining fantasies of Jewish empire. Characteristically he gave expression to corresponding anti-Arab chauvinistic ideas. "Fighting spirit and brains," he blustered, "are the way to fight a modern war. We drove out the invaders—with our 4000 years of thinking and education" (*New York Times*, Nov. 25, 1948).

This notion of Jewish superiority is of a piece with the ruthless massacre by Irgun forces of the Arabs of Deir Yassin, which Esther Vilenska described as fanning Arab fear of and hate for the Jews. Concern for their brothers in Israel should prompt American Jews decisively to repudiate Menachem Beigin.

ARAMCO'S JEWISH DEFENDER

BY sheer accident a pregnant, if not unexpected, fact came to light on the last page of the *New York Times* on November 27, 1948. In a report of a suit against the Arabian-American Oil Company, the *Times* noted that a witness was late and the attorney for ARAMCO apologized to the court. Here the name of the attorney slipped out—Judge Joseph M. Proskauer, chairman of the American Jewish Committee.

We have in previous issues gone to great lengths to establish beyond peradventure that the American Jewish Committee, organization of America's wealthiest Jews and so-called Jewish "defense" group, is far more interested in the defense of its class interests than in the "defense" of the Jewish people. Could more decisive evidence be offered than that the head of this organization is the attorney for the oil company that is one of the most direct and intense enemies of the Jews of Israel as of the oppressed Arab masses of the Middle East? Millions in royalties paid out by ARAMCO to Saudi Arabia are the main support for this member of Arab League, which is warring on the infant Jewish state. Proskauer and his committee pretend to support Israel. American Jews should draw their own conclusions from this kind of support.

THE CASE OF RICHARD G. MORGAN

THE case history of Richard G. Morgan casts ugly, revealing light on the extent to which the current reactionary hysteria has corrupted American institutions. This man was Curator of Archaeology of the Ohio State University Museum. He believes very strongly that intolerance of minority groups, of Jews and Negroes, is un-American and inhuman. What is more, he acted on this conviction. His wife shared his convictions and kept a large stock of interracial material, particularly about the Negro people, in the bookstore she operated. But these beliefs and actions,

it appears, are unhealthy in the United States today.

Mr. Morgan is vice president of the Anthropological Section of the Ohio Academy of Science. He was instrumental in arranging a symposium on racial problems at the 1944 meeting of the Ohio Academy of Science. The following year he arranged for a session of the Academy meeting on "Social Prejudices or Stereotypes," which dealt with anti-Jewish and anti-Negro stereotypes. In connection with this occasion he prepared an extensive exhibit on Negro history at the museum, the first of its kind at Ohio State University. For the first time in the history of the museum he hired a Negro girl as laboratory technician for two years. Mr. Morgan is also active in organizations fighting for Negro and minority rights.

The active defense by Mr. Morgan and his wife of minority rights was considered "subversive" by the local Reserve Officers Association. Lt. Col. William Warner apparently complained to Mr. E. C. Zepp, director of the museum. On March 25, 1948 Mr. Zepp announced to the *Columbus Citizen* that Mr. Morgan had been dismissed. The latter had received no verbal or written notice of this and learned of it from the press. A period of "investigation" and deliberation by the museum's Board of Trustees followed. Mr. Morgan was finally notified that his appointment would terminate on July 31, 1948. The grounds for the discharge were that Mr. Morgan had violated the board's "Stated Policy of Employment," of which Mr. Morgan had never heard. Specifically he was discharged, as he later learned, under the provision prohibiting employment of communists or anyone who associates with communists. Never was Mr. Morgan's competency challenged.

Mr. Morgan submitted the case to the executive board of the American Anthropological Association. After reviewing the evidence this group decided on August 26, 1948 that "the handling of Mr. Morgan's case was a violation of his rights as a citizen." Many scholars have condemned the dismissal.

The gross injustice to an individual here is serious enough. But more ominous are the implications of this case. We have reached the stage in this country where militant defense of the rights of the Jew, the Negro and all minorities is ground for depriving a man of his civil rights and means of livelihood. This case, all of whose shocking details we have not space to recount here, is all too reminiscent of the Nazi pattern. It is of a piece with the the loyalty boards, the Un-American Committee, the contempt citations, the murderous assault on Robert Thompson, New York State communist leader, and his seven year old daughter and, most critical of all, the impending trial of the 12 Communist Party leaders. This last is in fact the focus of the whole struggle for democracy and civil rights in America today. The American people still have time to ward off the danger of fascism. In self-defense they must exert the maximum pressure to effect the dismissal of the case of the 12 communist leaders. Nothing less than the freedom and security of the whole American people, and especially the Jews, hang in the balance.

WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY GO? I

UNITED PALESTINE APPEAL

By Moses Miller and Max Levine

The fund raising apparatus of American Jews is large, intricate and ramified. In future issues we plan to analyze the separate parts of this structure. Following is the first part of a study of the United Palestine Appeal.—Eds.

FUND raising in the American Jewish community has become an efficiently organized big business. No effort has been spared to reach every single Jewish community and individual and to make them conscious of the need to contribute to the annual campaigns for Palestine and other Jewish communities abroad. High powered staffs, nationally and locally, operate on a 365-days-a-year basis, organizing business and community committees to comb the community so that every single individual is canvassed. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent annually on publicity and advertisements, which dramatically present the urgency for immediate financial response. Public figures in all walks of life are made honorary officials and spokesmen for these campaigns so that the public accepts these drives as practically official state projects. (Readers may recall the universal resentment aroused by the United Jewish Appeal when it solicited and used a public letter from Secretary of Defense James Forrestal in an advertisement appealing for funds at a time when he was openly sabotaging the UN decision.)

The Jewish community has always responded generously, particularly since the war, for obvious reasons. Few in the Jewish community have remained indifferent to the tremendous upheaval of the war years and its tragic impact upon the Jewish people. And the inspiring struggle of the *Yishuv* in Palestine for statehood and freedom close on the heels of this catastrophe aroused a tremendous response. The desire to reaffirm one's sense of belonging, for which the feeling was largely lacking until recently, has expressed itself mainly in financial contributions.

One of the strange facts about American Jewish life has been that comparatively few Jews have gone beyond the fund-giving stage in their process of reaffirmation. Few have done any critical thinking about such basic problems as Jewish survival and the forces, within and outside the ranks of our people, that menace the Jews. Few have given thought to the question of Jewish continuity and to equipping themselves to answer such questions through proper education. Unfortunately one must add that the leadership, which has promoted fund raising as the major objective of American Jewish community activity, has done little to help answer these troubling questions.

Hence one can understand why our generous Jewish community has been almost completely indifferent to the way its immense contributions are being spent. When one

has no clear idea of objectives, indifference and apathy are necessarily manifested in relation to expenditure of funds as in any other activity.

The average Jewish individual to whom an appeal for funds for Israel is made, is moved by the struggle in Israel and wants to do his share. He contributes a dollar or two or ten. This, he feels, is his contribution to Jewish survival. Ask him detailed questions about the *organization* to which he has contributed, and in nine cases out of ten he will answer hazily, or will tell you quite frankly that he knows nothing about it. If you tell him that there are various political groupings in Israel and that his contribution is a political act in support of a political group, whose program he might disapprove if he knew the facts, and you will see a hurt look appearing on his face, and often even feel his resentment. He considers that you are impugning his sincere humanitarian motives. After all, he will say, Israel needs help, doesn't it? I gave to Israel. So what difference do these political questions make?

Funds and Politics

Those in control of the major fund raising organizations in this country have deliberately and assiduously based their appeals on humanitarianism and fighting solidarity with Israel. They themselves are extremely politically-minded and fight tooth and nail to maintain undivided control over allocation of funds because they know what political power the mastery of fund distribution gives them. But they are very careful to keep this essential political aspect of fund raising from the public. They have been most successful in concealing their political motives from the general public. Now and then questions have been raised about the autocracy of those who allocate funds. In most cases such questions have come from progressive Jewish organizations and trade unions, but they have been few and far between. Progressive organizations are quite well aware that discrimination is practiced by some of these fund raising groups against progressive movements and organizations and that some of the funds are used for undemocratic purposes. But the truth is that progressive organizations, who should certainly know better, often continue to give uncritically.

The problem of democratic control of fund raising organizations has always been an urgent problem. Recently the issue was highlighted by a controversy in the United Palestine Appeal which has been long brewing and which finally broke into public view towards the end of October. On October 21, Henry Montor, executive vice president of the United Palestine Appeal, tendered his resignation

and charged that the Zionist Organization of America, through its control of the UPA, was using its funds "as a lever with which to change or dominate the social structure of Palestine."

Simultaneously with Montor's resignation, a "Committee of Workers and Contributors," composed of welfare fund leaders throughout the country, was constituted and demanded that local welfare fund groups be given "50 per cent representation on the reconstituted United Palestine Appeal."¹

Although the issue of democracy in administration was bandied about during the controversy, this issue was never at the heart of the conflict. For even a superficial analysis of those welfare fund groups proposed for membership on the UPA board indicates that these groups have always been composed of big business elements in the local communities. Democratic processes and controls have been as deficient in these groups as in the UPA. A subsidiary element in the struggle was a contest for power by competing Zionist groups. But the major conflict was precipitated by non-Zionist groupings with leanings toward the American Jewish Committee crowd, who were attempting to take power away from the Zionist leadership. The fact that the ZOA so readily compromised, even though it fought hard and succeeded in holding on to majority control, shows that the fight was a struggle for power rather than democratization.

Inside the UJA

However, this quarrel has brought to the surface the autocratic nature of these organizations and the intrigues that have festered within them for years. Now that the storm has blown over, the need for democratization still remains immediate and vital. In order to convey an understanding of the scope of the problem and to expose the real objectives involved, we must give a brief survey of the United Jewish Appeal and of the contending elements within it.

The major fund raising organization in the American Jewish community has been the United Jewish Appeal. Since 1939 the UJA has combined fund raising for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), the United Palestine Appeal (UPA) and the United Service for New Americans (USNA). Since World War I the JDC has been the main Jewish overseas relief and rescue organization. The UPA was established in 1936 as the joint fund raising arm in the United States of the two Palestinian funds—the Jewish National Fund (*Keren Kayemeth*), whose function was the purchase of land in Palestine, and the Palestine Foundation Fund (*Keren Hayesod*), the financial arm of the Jewish Agency. The United Service for New Americans (formerly the National Refu-

gee Service) was established in 1939 as a central agency for the reception and resettlement of refugees in the United States.

Except for minor joint ventures, the JDC and the UPA or its component bodies had conducted independent campaigns up to 1939. Although considerable sums were raised, they did not approach the figure required for the vast needs that had emerged in the middle thirties.

When the United Jewish Appeal was constituted in 1939, it was not created as a permanent but a temporary agency re-created each year to conduct a unified campaign and allocate the funds raised to the three constituent agencies. For a few months in 1941, and again in 1945, the two chief agencies—the JDC and UPA—failed to agree on a distribution formula, and separate campaigns were again carried on, until the UJA was again reconstituted for the 1946 campaign. UJA fund raising became a central pool into which the proceeds of 1200 local campaigns, taking in 5000 communities, were poured. Some 300 of these communities had a permanent local welfare fund or federation apparatus which managed the campaign; in the rest the UJA sent in a staff. This combined fund raising apparatus raised sums of money broken down in the following table:

| | Total Allocated | JDC | UPA | USNA (NRS) |
|------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1940 | \$12,514,695 | \$ 6,093,103 | \$ 2,921,592 | \$ 3,500,000 |
| 1941 | 12,670,652 | 6,125,407 | 3,670,245 | 2,875,000 |
| 1942 | 13,246,631 | 7,095,911 | 4,150,720 | 2,000,000 |
| 1943 | 17,665,000 | 9,479,000 | 6,686,000 | 1,500,000 |
| 1944 | 26,391,954 | 14,542,558 | 10,797,442 | 1,051,954 |
| 1945 | 33,079,000 | 18,325,500 | 13,824,500 | 929,000 |
| 1946 | 84,443,500 | 46,597,500 | 35,152,500 | 2,693,500 |

The allocation of funds raised was in the proportion of approximately two-thirds for JDC and one-third for UPA in 1939 and 1940, and about 36 per cent for the UPA in 1941 and 1942. These proportions were arrived at by a process of bargaining each year and followed a complicated formula, which, though worthy of analysis, is not relevant here.

A substantial change occurred in 1943 in the direction of increasing the UPA allotment to a little over 41 per cent and decreasing that of JDC to some 59 per cent of the sum. This trend toward equalization continued in 1944 when the final division resulted in 52.3 per cent for the JDC and 47.7 per cent for the UPA. In 1945 and 1946 net proceeds (after allocations to the USNA) were allocated on the basis of 57 per cent for JDC and 43 per cent for UPA, the rise in JDC's share representing primarily costs of relief work in DP camps.

In 1947, the United Jewish Appeal set its highest goal—\$170,000,000. Although not all pledges for 1947 have yet been reported and the division of funds therefore still remains tentative, the total sum raised was probably \$133,000,000. In 1948, with a \$250,000,000 goal, it appears that some \$160,000,000 will be collected. Thus in eight years the vast sum of more than half a billion dollars has been raised with a 1200 per cent increase in proceeds in 1949 over 1940. (The

¹ This controversy was publicly aired during weeks of attack and counterattack. According to information available at this writing, a tentative agreement was reached giving 40 per cent representation on the UPA board to local welfare fund groups and 60 per cent to the Zionist groups. Certain other questions have not as yet been resolved.

figures cited here are drawn from *What is American Jewry's Responsibility to the UJA?* (1947).)

Division of Funds

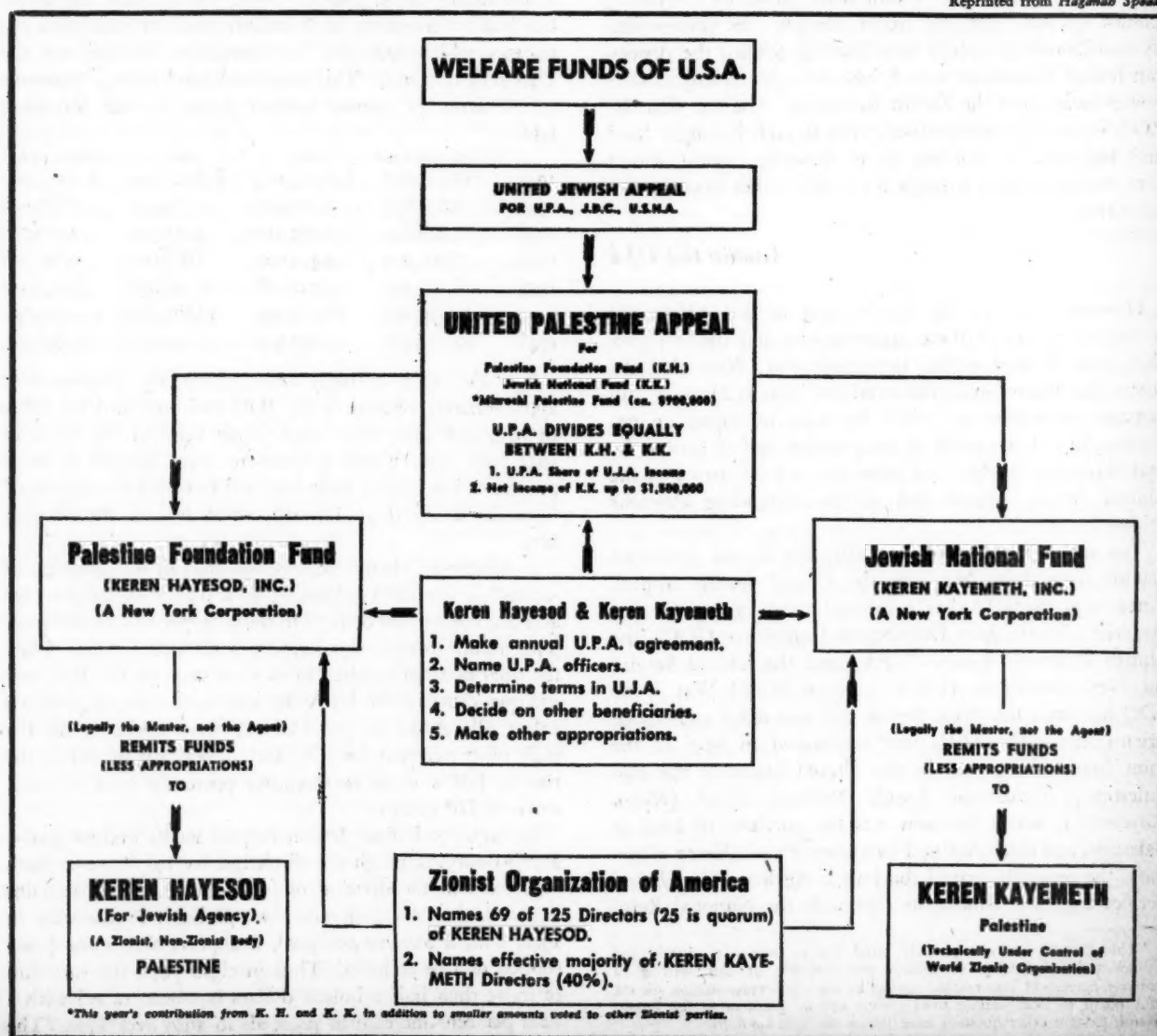
While this appeal was made to the whole Jewish community on behalf of the UJA and its constituents, it is important to note that never in UJA's history has the contributing public been allowed a look-in on the allocation of funds. The formula for division of funds arrived at among the constituent organizations was always worked out by a small (originally as small as five persons) committee representing the JDC, UPA and USNA. Division of any surplus above the campaign goal was also at the sole discretion of this small group. The JDC and the UPA agencies, while rendering all manner of financial statements after the money was spent, did not submit their programs, goals or plans for administrative functioning. They never revealed

the basis for distribution of funds to the scrutiny of any democratically selected groups in the community.

This self-perpetuating, undemocratic and closed-circle nature of the policy-making groups is the fundamental criticism made by progressives of these joint fund raising efforts. (In some larger cities there has been much criticism of the arbitrary manner in which UJA has included a number of national "civic-defense" organizations such as the reactionary Jewish Labor Committee and the Anti-Defamation League without even notifying the public that its money was being used for these purposes.)

It is evident from the proportion of funds assigned to the Joint Distribution Committee that this group was historically the larger organization. It was operating in a broader field, and therefore received the greatest share. JDC came into this position after World War I, when it was organized by the wealthy German-Jewish group of American capitalists, led by such families as the Warburgs,

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Lehmans, Schiffs, Guggenheims and Baerwalds. For many years, the direction of "Joint" has been in the hands of this small, tightly-knit group of bankers and industrialists, whose great fortunes were established relatively early and who represent, on the whole, the most socially conservative and assimilationist elements in the Jewish community. There was an interlocking directorate between the JDC, which was the relief arm of this group, and the American Jewish Committee, which was its political and ideological arm. While money for the support of the program of JDC was raised from community appeals, there was no provision in its self-perpetuating governing body for any democratic representation from other groups or sections of the community. The political orientation of JDC leadership was that of the American ruling class generally. Its distribution of funds was guided by the attitudes and foreign policy of the State Department. This has become particularly apparent in the post-war years, with the advent of the Marshall Plan and the increasing hostility of Wall Street and the government towards the Soviet Union, the new democracies and the progressive forces in Europe generally. It is no secret that the JDC leadership has, in accord with the Marshall planners, increasingly tended to discriminate against progressive Jewish communities in Europe.

Ever since the UJA was constituted, the Joint Distribution Committee has competed with the United Palestine Appeal for a larger share of the funds raised, although working agreements were reached annually, with the exceptions noted. In contrast with the JDC group, the UPA was primarily the creature of the American Zionist movement, representing on the whole a newer group of upper and middle class elements, primarily east-European in origin and nationalistic in political outlook. In contrast to the

JDC, the UPA had connections with membership organizations and with a constituency embracing the various shadings of American-Zionist life—General Zionists (a conservative group), Mizrachi (orthodox), Hadassah (Zionist women), various labor-Zionist groupings, etc.

At present the UPA is limited by its charter to the collection of funds, which are distributed equally to the American offices of its two main constituents, the *Keren Kayemeth* (Jewish National Fund) and the *Keren Hayesod* (Palestine Foundation Fund). The *Keren Hayesod* is the financial instrument of the Jewish Agency, which, before the establishment of the Israeli government, was responsible for a broad program relating to immigration, urban and agricultural settlement, trade and industry, education, national security and political affairs in Palestine.

In addition to the funds divided between these two major beneficiaries, the UPA also makes grants for organizational purposes to American Zionist bodies, such as the American Zionist Emergency Committee, the Zionist Organization of America, the Mizrachi, Poale Zion, etc., and some grants to other American agencies operating in Palestine, such as the Mizrachi Palestine Fund.

Organizationally there has always been a close interlocking of officers between the UPA, the ZOA and the American branches of the *Keren Kayemeth* and the *Keren Hayesod*. The boards of each of these organizations consist of some 50 persons, and each board appoints its national officers and its successors.

But a new situation has arisen since the end of World War II. New elements have arisen that are demanding the reorientation of Jewish communities throughout the world to Palestine Jewry and realignments within Palestine itself.

(Continued in next issue)

FACT AND FANCY ON BIROBIDJAN

By Itzik Feffer

For many years Jacob Lestchinsky has been paraded by the Jewish press as the leading authority on economic and population problems of the Jews, and especially on Soviet Jewry. The value of this "authoritative" work can be judged from the following article by Itzik Feffer, noted Soviet Yiddish poet and officer of the Moscow Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, exposing a recent effort of Lestchinsky to slander Soviet policy on Birobidjan. Last spring the Secretary of the Communist Party of Birobidjan, A. Bakhmutsky, stated that over 20,000 Jews had arrived in Birobidjan in the previous 18 months. And since Feffer wrote this article, news has come of a new migration of Jews to Birobidjan from Middle Asia, where they had been evacuated during the war.—Editors

THERE was a time when enemies of the Soviet Union shouted from the housetops that Jews were being forced to go to Birobidjan, where they would starve. But this

fabrication was short-lived, for almost immediately the facts showed that the migration was entirely voluntary. As a matter of fact, when some Soviet Jewish leaders suggested the mobilization of a hundred thousand young Jews for settlement in Birobidjan, the government made short shrift of this idea. In a talk with Solomon Mikhoels and myself, the late Soviet President Mikhail Kalinin, a great friend of Birobidjan, said that, like all Soviet citizens, Jews are free to decide where they should live.

But the scotching of this fabrication did not diminish the zeal of the anti-Sovieteers and enemies of Birobidjan, particularly the New York Jewish daily *Forward*. The existence of Birobidjan has always been a bone in their throat. Had the Soviet Union not created a Jewish Autonomous Region, they would have bewailed the fact that all Soviet peoples have their national republics and regions except the Jews.

However, the Soviet Union has firmly adhered to the course charted by Lenin and Stalin. At no time did the

Soviet Union fail to exert itself to the utmost in response to the needs of the Jewish Autonomous Region. If funds were needed for a new factory, a Jewish theater building, a new Jewish library, the necessary funds were made available. And now a Birobidjan Yiddish journal is appearing regularly. Many Jewish authors are being published.

The enemies of the Soviet Union would have been quite pleased if Birobidjan had no Yiddish theater, library, schools or newspapers, for they would then have more ammunition for their anti-Soviet arsenal. The right wing Yiddish press has carried not a single word about Jewish cultural achievements in Birobidjan. Let someone spread the rumor that Birobidjan has no Yiddish newspaper, and the bourgeois Jewish press is elated. Then, as word gets around that Birobidjan does have a Yiddish press, a deep silence ensues in this "free press."

How could these men, who have shouted so loud and long about assimilation of Jews in the Soviet Union, give even an inkling of the rich Jewish cultural life in Birobidjan? How could these men, who kept insisting that Jewish culture is dying in the Soviet Union, report the renaissance of all aspects of Jewish cultural life in the Soviet Union in the post-war years? Have they reported that Yiddish magazines have begun to appear in Moscow, Kiev, Birobidjan, Minsk? Has there been even a single notice in these papers of the work of Yiddish theaters, schools, writers' organizations and scholarly institutions in the Soviet Union? No such notices appear in these papers, which are not interested in the life of the Jewish masses in the Soviet Union. They are interested solely in grist for their anti-Soviet mill.

I always knew these things. But they became clear once again when I read the article on Birobidjan by the anti-Soviet journalist, Jacob Lestchinsky, in the *Forward* of June 26, 1948. Lestchinsky disapproves of an article on Birobidjan printed in the Information Bulletin of the Soviet Embassy. He faced a serious problem. He just couldn't find anything to criticize. Birobidjan exists. New mills are being built. Cities are expanding. Jewish culture is growing. Honest Jews would be happy over this and impressed by the fact that one can find such solicitude for the Jewish people in the Soviet Union. In what other country does the government assign colossal sums for Jewish theaters, libraries, newspapers and other cultural institutions, for the settlement and rehabilitation of the Jewish masses?

What then was Lestchinsky's complaint? The figures on Birobidjan, it appears, are quite bad. The rich and colorful life of the Jewish Autonomous Region he dismisses with a cheap remark about the "Birobidjan Paradise." Then he goes to town on those statistics on Birobidjan which do not satisfy him. What troubles him? He cannot learn the precise number of Jews in Birobidjan. In any event, he comes to the conclusion that Birobidjan still has very few Jews. Correct. There are not enough Jews in Birobidjan. There are not yet a hundred thousand. *If there were, Birobidjan would already have become a Soviet Socialist Jewish Autonomous Republic.* There was a time when Lestchinsky

was feeling quite well. There were few Jews in Birobidjan. But the post-war Soviet Union has witnessed the migration of thousands of Jews to Birobidjan. This is a fact.

Before me is a report of the chairman of the Birobidjan Regional Committee, Comrade Levitan. According to this official report, nine migrations totalling 1770 families arrived in Birobidjan during 1947 alone. Of these, 830 families settled on collective farms. In the light of this report one can only be roused to anger by Lestchinsky's question, "Why do the Jews remain in the cities and the non-Jews settle on the land?" Such unadulterated hogwash and venomous questions appear frequently in the anti-Semitic press. Lestchinsky's questions come from just these anti-Semitic arsenals. It seems that if one wants to attack the Soviet Union, even such sources and techniques are kosher.

Well, we are ready to leave the whole business to Lestchinsky's conscience—that is, if he still has one.

It seems, however, that Lestchinsky is still bitter. If Jews are going to Birobidjan, things can't be bad there. And this means that Lestchinsky has been deceiving his readers for 10 years. It means that the poor man is disappointed once again. We believe that the Soviet Union and the Jewish Autonomous Region will keep on disappointing Lestchinsky and his friends. More migrations are being prepared, the number of Jews in Birobidjan is growing and the base of Lestchinsky's "disappointment" grows ever broader.

For all honest people it is quite clear that migration to Birobidjan was previously kept down because this land was close to imperialist Japan, whose empire was continuously menacing the Soviet borders. In view of this danger, it would have been a crime to encourage immigration to Birobidjan. It is therefore quite natural that the defeat of imperialist Japan should be followed by a growing interest in Birobidjan. As a matter of fact, post-war immigration to Birobidjan has exceeded all expectations. *If this immigration continues at the present rate, an autonomous Socialist Soviet Jewish Republic will be set up in the Far East in a few years.*

What will Jacob Lestchinsky do then? I'm certain that even when there will be many Jews in Birobidjan, he'll manage to find something to complain about. In that case he probably will pull out of the archives the first anti-Soviet slander, that Jews were forced to go to Birobidjan.

At any rate, Lestchinsky won't be without work. Like the *Forward*, he can always concoct some fantasy that he believes will lead him out of difficulties. But we can assure him that his situation will grow worse and worse, even though he may try to strengthen his position with the aid of certain renegades like Schmerke Katcherginsky. This man is still alive only because the Soviet Union rescued him from the nazis. Instead of gratitude to the great free country that saved him, Katcherginsky feeds Lestchinsky with nonsensical anti-Soviet slanders.

But the world has begun to smell out rotten goods and one cannot do business for long with such commodities. This certainly applies to the discredited political market of the *Forward*.

I MEET THE ARAB PROGRESSIVES

By A. B. Magil

WALK down Khoury Street in the Arab section of Haifa, and you will come across a four-story house with a sign hung from the top story. On the sign, black letters against a red background, are words in Arabic and Hebrew. They read: "League for National Liberation."

Any one of the Arab families living on the lower floors will direct you up to the large room that is the office of the League. There you will not be received by a secretary at a switchboard. The League can't afford such accessories. But you will face directly, sitting behind an orderly desk, Tawfiq Toubi or Emile Chabibi or Issam Abassi or some other of the leaders of what has become the most influential Arab organization in Palestine.

When I say "the most influential," I must add that this organization has no influence at all among the Arab effendis, wealthy business men and priests, who swarm around either Abdullah of Transjordan or the ex-Mufti and ex-nazi agent, Haj Amin el Hussein—depending on whether the feathering in their nests is British or American. Nor does the League for National Liberation have any standing with the United Nations, which recognizes the Mufti's hand-picked Arab Higher Committee as spokesman for the Palestine Arabs. And unfortunately it cannot be said that the League has the ear of the government of Israel, despite the fact that it is the only Arab organization in Palestine that supports the United Nations partition decision, fights the foreign Arab invaders and works for friendship and cooperation between Arabs and Jews.

It is among the ordinary folk of the Arab population—the peasants and workers for whom the war of aggression has been an even greater disaster than for the Jews—that the League has won wide confidence and support. Some four hundred thousand of these working people are today refugees, homeless and wretched. They are sick of a war they didn't want and in which, with few exceptions, they took no part. They are disillusioned in leaders they looked to in the past who have so heartlessly betrayed them. That is why the voice of the League is for them increasingly the voice of hope—a voice that calls for ending the war, for driving out the foreign mercenaries, for setting up people's fronts throughout the Arab sector of Palestine, for the creation of an independent, democratic Arab state, for peace and cooperation with Israel.

I recall that when the first news came in June that an Arab organization, the League for National Liberation, had distributed thousands of copies of two anti-war leaflets, one addressed to soldiers and the other to civilians, many Jewish men and women in Israel were filled with wonder

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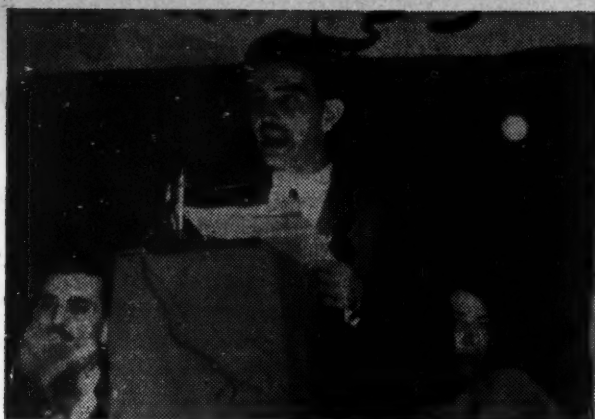
and half incredulity. Some said: "Communists. They don't amount to much." A few weeks later came news of anti-war demonstrations in Nablus, Gaza, Majdal, Nebrow, the Old City of Jerusalem and other Arab areas—demonstrations organized by the League for National Liberation in the teeth of terror. United Nations officials in Haifa reported that the League was gaining new adherents among war-weary Arabs, and the Beirut Arabic radio testified to the scope of these struggles by mentioning them in at least one broadcast.

Who are these Arabs whose courage and remarkable work have won occasional praise even from conservative Jewish quarters in Israel? They are the Arab communists of Palestine. And now they have taken a further step to fulfill the implications of their work: in the state of Israel they have united with the Jewish communists and have entered the Communist Party of Israel; in the Arab sector of Palestine, where they must work underground, they are transforming the League into a separate Communist Party to which Jewish communists living in that sector will also belong. And when the first elections (now scheduled for January) take place in Israel, among the communists who will undoubtedly be elected to the constituent assembly there will be Arabs as well as Jews.

Thus the fight for the realization of the UN decision of November 29, 1947, dividing Palestine on the basis of democratic self-determination for both its nations, has resulted in the *unification* of the vanguard of these nations. October 22, when the unification formally took place at a mass meeting in Haifa, was a great day for Israel, a defeat for the Anglo-American cabal who want to keep Jews and Arabs divided and fighting each other instead of the common imperialist enemy.

"This is something we should have done two years ago," said Tawfiq Toubi as we sat sipping coffee on the terrace of his home a few days before the October 22 meeting. In the distance lay the blue Mediterranean, and rising out of it, sprawling in the sun, that Haifa which he loved so well. This tall, handsome Arab, who speaks fluent, cultured English, has become at the age of 26 the leading political figure among the Arabs in Israel.

"Some people who have been very friendly to us don't like it," Toubi continued. He was referring to certain leaders of the United Workers Party who sought to dissuade Toubi and his colleagues from uniting with the Jewish communists. "But we are convinced that the interests of both the Jewish and the Arab peoples of Palestine will be best served by a single international party. We want our Arab members not only to fight for Arab rights, but to concern themselves with all the problems that affect the citizens of Israel."



Emile Chabibi addressing the unification meeting

One man was missing at that meeting in Haifa, a man whose name I had often heard but whom I never met: Emile Touma, the head of the League for National Liberation. Early this year Touma was arrested by the Lebanese authorities and sent to a concentration camp from which he only recently won his release (though not his complete freedom) through a hunger strike. But the spirit of Touma was there and his closest comrades were carrying on his work. And beside them stood their Jewish comrades: Samuel Mikunis, general secretary of the Communist Party of Israel, who in years of work as a civil engineer had come to know intimately the Arab peoples in the Middle East; those two gifted youngsters, Meyer Vilner and Esther Vilenska, each aged thirty, who share with Mikunis leadership of Israel's communists (Esther Vilenska is also editor of the party daily, *Kol Haam*); that tiny dynamo, Ruth Luvitch, who is secretary of the party organization in Tel Aviv; and others.

The Jewish communists are not the only progressives in Israel who advocate Jewish-Arab cooperation. But they are the only ones who consistently practice what they preach. And when Mikunis, the sole Communist representative in the Provisional State Council (the temporary equivalent of parliament) recently arose and asked Prime Minister David Ben Gurion to order an investigation of certain acts committed against the Arab population in several villages in the Nazareth area, he was defending not merely the interests of the Arab people, but of the Jewish as well. For such acts are a discredit to the Jewish state and a danger to it.

In our country it is not generally understood that the Arab policy of the Israeli government is harmful and foolhardy: its price is being paid in Jewish blood and eventually perhaps even in a large part of Jewish independence. It is a fact at one time freely admitted by official Jewish sources that, in contrast to the disturbances in 1936-39, very few of the Palestinian Arabs have participated in the war against the Jews. Instead of converting this into an asset for the Jewish state, the government leaders have done everything to turn it into a liability. The Jewish authori-

ties did not instigate the flight of some 400,000 Arabs from their homes. That was done by the Arab reactionaries and the British, playing on the fears of the ordinary folk. But it should be frankly said that Jewish looting, officially deplored but unofficially condoned, and the later action of Jewish military commanders in driving men, women and children out of Arab villages, contributed to the flight and seemed to confirm the fears of the Arabs.

At the same time all reports indicate that the experiences of the last few months have deeply embittered the refugees against both native and foreign Arab reactionaries. That this bitterness has in some places taken the form of open demonstrations against the war, is an indication of the latent reservoirs of strength that exist among these much abused people. One would think that this offered a golden opportunity to the leaders of the Jewish state to acquire a major ally and deprive their enemies of a major issue against the Jews. One would think that even realistic and patriotic conservatives, let alone people who profess to be socialists and democrats, would lose no time in seizing this opportunity.

Instead, Foreign Minister Moshe Shertok, playing what he no doubt regards as astute politics, has repeatedly announced that not even after the war will the refugees necessarily be allowed to return to their homes, that this is a matter for horse-trading in negotiating the peace settlement. Thereby of course he proclaims the hollowness of Zionist promises that in the Jewish state Arab citizens will have equal rights with Jews. But what is more important: he multiplies Israel's enemies, renders more difficult and costly its war of liberation, and strengthens the hand of the Arab rulers and their Anglo-American mentors and pay-masters.

The same folly, the same chauvinist blindness characterize the provisional government's attitude toward the implementation of the other half of the original UN decision, that which provides for the creation of an independent democratic Arab state. While eager to seize bits of that projected state on the ground that the security of the Jewish state requires an extension of its frontiers, the government has shown itself strangely indifferent to the Anglo-American scheme for annexing the Arab sector of Palestine to the synthetic kingdom of Britain's puppet, Abdullah. It would be difficult to make out a case that western Galilee would provide an adequate counterweight to British bases and British troops at the very doorstep of Israel.

That is why it is so important that those among both Jews and Arab who support *the whole* of the November 29, 1947 resolution and who recognize that without the whole there can be only *partial* peace and *partial* independence in Palestine, are now united in one party. The veterans of the underground fight against Arab reaction and its imperialist masters have clasped hands with the best anti-imperialist fighters among the Jews. That is an augury of the future: the unity of the vanguard is the prelude to the unity of the peoples that must be won in struggle. This alone can guarantee freedom and democracy for Israel and all of Palestine.

JEWISH AND ARAB COMMUNISTS UNITE

On October 1, 1948, the Central Committee of the League for National Liberation, the organization of Arab communists, proposed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel the unification of Arab and Jewish communists into one party. On October 14 a public announcement of the successful conclusion of negotiations was made, and on October 22, a great Jewish-Arab public meeting in Haifa celebrated this momentous event. Below are the statements of the Arab and Jewish parties stating their respective positions concerning unification.—Editors

STATEMENT OF THE LEAGUE FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION

B RITISH imperialism, aided by the (Mufti) Arab League and Arab reaction, precipitated a war of intervention to thwart the independence of the peoples of Palestine as authorized by the United Nations on November 29, 1947.

Race hatred, nourished by British imperialism for the past 30 years with the help of Arab and Jewish reactionaries, is one of the main causes of the national antagonisms and disturbances in our countries.

Since its appearance five years ago, the Arab League for National Liberation has fought consistently and stubbornly against the traditional imperialist policy of "divide and rule" and against the policy of race hatred pursued by the Arab and Jewish reactionaries. . . .

II

The struggle of the League against the plans of British imperialism (for example, the plan to divide Palestine by merging the Arab sector with the British colony of Transjordan, and to transform the Jewish sector into a British dominion), was always oriented on joint anti-imperialist cooperation between the Arab and Jewish masses. . . . However, the fact that Arab communists, organized in the League for National Liberation, and Jewish communists, organized in the Communist Party of Israel, were separated organizationally and politically, helped the Arab and Jewish reactionaries. This separation deprived the Jewish and Arab masses of a living example of that unity which both communist groups were urging the people to achieve. The League for National Liberation now recognizes very clearly the danger of organizing a communist movement on a separate national basis.

III

The organization of the League for National Liberation on a separate national basis deprived it of the ability to estimate correctly the new conditions as they unfolded in Palestine.

During the last 30 years a new nation developed in Palestine—the Jewish nation, growing and maturing through the arrival of hundreds of thousands of immigrants

who were being welded into one nation despite different languages and origins. This nation is establishing its own industry, agriculture, language and culture.

The new nation began clearly to emerge even before the war, and even more so in the course of war. The growth of the new nation required a change in the method of struggle for a united Arab-Jewish front. It was the responsibility of the vanguard party, the party of the working class, to fight for the rights of both peoples for national independence and for statehood in accord with the Marxist principles of the right to self-determination, and to view this fight as an integral part of the struggle against imperialism. Failure of the League for National Liberation to carry on this fight had its effects upon the joint struggle of the Arab and Jewish workers in their mutual interest under communist leadership. . . .

The separation of national organizations in the communist movement of Palestine for the past five years explains why there were right deviations in the policies of the League for National Liberation. This separate national organization of Arabs, the League for National Liberation, created illusions among the Arab people in Palestine that they could alone free the country from the imperialists, without taking into consideration the revolutionary forces of the Jewish people. This mistake in orientation became very obvious in the policy of the League for National Liberation to create Arab "national unity" among the bourgeoisie, the neo-feudal leadership and the new people's forces. The victory of the forces of freedom in the Second World War changed the relationship of forces in the entire world and in the colonial countries as well. The local bourgeoisie of the colonies have attached themselves to the imperialist chariot. How, then, could imperialist agents participate in the front against imperialism?

Finally, this policy of the League for National Liberation led to a denial of the importance of exposing the bourgeois and neo-feudal leadership. Such exposure would have prevented this reactionary leadership from taking over the national liberation movement. Failure to undertake this exposure made it impossible to create a militant, fighting united front of Arabs and Jews. For such a front could

have been created only if the Arabs had engaged in a dual, simultaneous struggle against imperialism and against the attempt of the Arab and Jewish bourgeoisie to assume leadership of the masses.

IV

The League for National Liberation is proud of the fact that its central committee has courageously recognized and decisively acted upon the necessity of ridding the party of serious mistakes made in the recent past.

The League for National Liberation greeted the UN decisions of November 29, 1947, which provided for the liquidation of the British mandate, the evacuation of British troops and the creation of two independent states in Palestine bound together by economic unity. The League considered the UN decisions a real basis for achieving independence for Palestine and for liquidating antagonisms between Jews and Arabs and for insuring peace. It saw in the UN decision the means by which unity in Palestine could be realized by the recognition of the right of each people to self-determination and sovereignty.

Previously the League for National Liberation had felt that the best solution would be the creation of an independent Palestine, unified politically and economically. Such unity could only be realized through a free, democratic understanding between Arabs and Jews. But Arab and Jewish reaction, supported by Anglo-American imperialism, ingeniously and stubbornly obstructed the path to such understanding. The military adventure of the Arab League in Palestine since the UN decision meant continuation of its old racial policies, which serve the interests of imperialism. The results of this military adventure give the best proof of the correctness of our evaluation. Today it is clear beyond any doubt that fulfillment of the UN decision of November 29th is the only way to liquidate imperialist rule and to achieve peace. Consequently, the League for National Liberation accepted the UN decision and consistently carried on a struggle for peace and freedom in all of Palestine.

In the course of the heroic struggle carried on by the League for National Liberation against armed reaction and in defense of the interests of the common people under conditions of terror, persecution and arrest, all

differences between Jewish and Arab communists disappeared. . . .

In the Arab sector of Palestine, occupied by the invading armies of the Arab League, the League for National Liberation was declared illegal and was forced to go underground. We commend the Central Committee for its competence and skill in affecting this change rapidly and with minimum sacrifice of people. The League for National Liberation carefully preserved its organizational entity and continued its work and its mass activities. It even strengthened its organization and activity. Despite the outlawing by the Arab occupation armies of all organizations, the League for National Liberation continues to operate, although it is doing so under the most trying circumstances.

V

With full cognizance of all these facts, the League for National Liberation will fight for the achievement of the UN decision on the Palestine question. This is a fight for the establishment of an independent Arab state, free from foreign occupation within the borders fixed by the UN. This is a struggle for democracy in the proposed Arab state, for peace, friendship of peoples and for the establishment of economic unity between the Arab and Jewish states. This is a struggle to uphold the independence of the state of Israel and for a democratic order in Israel.

The League for National Liberation, in cooperation and full agreement with the democratic Jewish forces, voices its opposition to the policies of the present Israeli govern-

Speakers' platform of Haifa unification meeting. One of the slogans in Hebrew reads: "For the independence of Israel, for the safeguarding of democracy, for the unity of the peoples."



ment with respect to the Arab population, a policy of oppression and racial discrimination. This policy creates hostility on the part of the Arab population in the state of Israel. By this policy the Israeli government gives aid and comfort to the Arab reactionaries, who are thus enabled to continue to mislead the Arab masses and to keep them saddled to the further continuation of the war. The League for National Liberation fights for the rights of the Arab refugees to return to their homes. This will fortify the struggle of those actively fighting for cooperation and understanding between the two peoples. When the League for National Liberation in Israel defends the interests of the Arab masses and fights against racial discrimination, it is actually fighting for democracy in Israel. This fight is not only in the interests of the Arab masses, but of the Jewish masses as well. The League for National Liberation struggles against the expansionist tendencies of certain ruling circles who are ready to sell out their independence to Anglo-American imperialism.

The efforts made by the present Israeli government to negotiate with the British imperialist agent, Abdullah, and the hostility thus engendered among Arab democratic circles who strive to create an independent and democratic Arab state in Palestine, will not help to bring the peace so greatly desired by the Arab and Jewish masses. This Israeli activity can only help strengthen the despised imperialist rule not only in the Arab sector of Palestine, but also in Israel itself.

The League for National Liberation affirms that its policies are identical with those of the Communist Party of Israel, which has proved by devoted struggle that it is the loyal defender of the rights of both the Arab and Jewish masses.

VI

Since the policies of the League for National Liberation and of the Communist Party of Israel are in full accord, the communist movement of Palestine can be reconstituted on internationalist principles and on a territorial basis rather than one of national separatism. Nothing now stands in the way of reestablishing a united Communist Party, a

party which will stand in the forefront of the struggle for freedom, social justice, peace and full independence.

Therefore, the Central Committee of the League for National Liberation proposes to the Communist Party of Israel the immediate reestablishment of a united Communist Party. In the opinion of the Central Committee of the League for National Liberation, such a party in the Jewish state can be organized on the basis of the already existing institutions of the Communist Party of Israel. In the Arab sector of Palestine, a united party can be built on the basis of the organizations of the League for National Liberation that presently exist there. . . .

VII

The League for National Liberation considers the historic decision for the reestablishment of a united Communist Party a blow against the Anglo-American imperialist plans in the Middle East. This decision confirms theoretically and practically that Arabs and Jews can work together in one united front against the common enemy—imperialism—and for their common aim—political and social independence.

This decision is witness to the strength, solidarity and correct policies of the anti-imperialist camp, the camp of freedom, democracy and world peace, the camp which is headed by the bastion of freedom—the Soviet Union, that great country which gave the world a stirring example of the way to solve the national question on a democratic basis. This is the camp which unites the forces of all freedom loving peoples, which creates everywhere, under the leadership of communist parties, the possibility for the achievement of peace and democracy. Our own decision will open up new horizons for our people, will free them from reactionary, imperialist tendencies, and will fill the hearts of the Arab people with hope and faith, as it will for thousands of Arab refugees, who are wandering about aimlessly in the Arab countries. It will reveal to the Arab people the true character of the Palestine problem, and will brand the shameful intrigues of imperialism and the ruling Arab reactionaries as hostile to the interests of the Arab peoples, their freedom and their future.

STATEMENT OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF ISRAEL

I

THE Communist Party of Palestine was international in make-up from its inception until May 1943. As a result of weaknesses of party leaders at that time and of the absence of democratic centralism, a crisis arose in the party. The Arab comrades then organized themselves into a separate group known as the League for National Libera-

tion. The Jewish comrades continued their activities within the framework of the Communist Party of Palestine. In this way the genuinely international character of the party ceased to exist.

This organizational separation was in complete contradiction with Leninist-Stalinist principles of party organization and hampered greatly the struggle of the Communist Party

and all progressive forces in Palestine in the struggle against imperialism and Arab-Jewish reaction.

II

The Communist Party of Palestine (and, after the establishment of the Jewish state, of Israel) never ceased to consider itself international in quality, ideology and policy, despite the fact that for the last five years it included only Jewish comrades. The Communist Party of Israel continued to develop its party cadres in this spirit and carried on a stubborn, unswerving struggle to reestablish organizational unity with the Arab comrades organized in the League for National Liberation.

At all three Communist Party conventions in the past five years this problem stood at the center of their deliberations. The party realized that the main source of strength of the anti-imperialist forces is political and organizational unity, even as the imperialists derived their main strength from their policy of divide and rule.

The Eighth Convention of the Communist Party of Palestine in May 1944, affirmed: "It is impossible to separate the struggle for the democratization and independence of Palestine from the struggle for the unity of the peoples. Similarly, it is impossible to separate the struggle for unity of the peoples from the struggle for democracy and independence."

The Ninth Convention of the party in September 1945 made the same affirmation.

Once again, the Tenth Convention of the party in December 1946, affirmed: "This Convention commends the Central Committee for its efforts between the Ninth and the Tenth Conventions to transform the party into a genuine international organization. The Convention reasserts that the success of the struggle against imperialism necessarily requires Arab-Jewish unity. . . . The cornerstone of Arab-Jewish unity must be a united Communist Party whose very existence will demonstrate the possibility of cooperation between Jews and Arabs in the country based on the social and national interests of both peoples."

A section of the Jewish-Arab unification meeting.



III

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel heartily greets, and expresses its full agreement with, the proposal for reuniting the Communist Party. In order to carry through this unification immediately, the Central Committee, in agreement with the League for National Liberation, has decided as follows:

1. To broaden the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel by coopting comrades from the Central Committee of the League for National Liberation who live in Israel; to accept into the ranks of the Communist Party of Israel all local organizations and comrades who are members of the League for National Liberation.

2. To convene a plenary session of the broadened Central Committee in Haifa on October 22, 1948.

The agenda of this plenary session shall be as follows:

1. The policies of the Communist Party of Israel.
2. Reconstitution of the united Communist Party of the state of Israel.

3. Agreement on a date for the Eleventh Convention of the Communist Party of Israel.

IV

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel greets the changes in the political position of the League for National Liberation with respect to the national problem in Palestine. The old position of the League on this question prevented the unity of the Communist Party.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel sees in this change an important contribution to the achievement of unity.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel greets the decision of the League for National Liberation to organize a Communist Party in the Arab sector of Palestine, and expresses its firm belief that cooperation between the two communist parties will be strengthened.

In the area of the proposed Arab state, comrades of the Communist Party of Israel will join the Communist Party of the Arab states, which will be organized on an international basis.

V

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel sees in this decision a tremendous victory for the forces of progress and independence in the state of Israel, in the Arab sector of Palestine and in the Middle East, and a blow to Anglo-American imperialism and its retainers in the state of Israel and in the Arab countries. The unification of the vanguard of the working class in the state of Israel is a great achievement that will advance the class struggle of the working class.

The principle of peoples' friendship thus celebrates its first important victory in the state of Israel. This marks the first step towards rooting out the consequences of the "divide and rule" policies of British imperialism over the past 30 years.

IS SAMMY LEVENSON FUNNY?

By Louis Harap

A NEW quality has appeared in the American Jewish community in the past few years—a deep, unsatisfied hunger for Jewish content. Aside from translations of Yiddish writers and the work of folk singers like Ruth Rubin and numerous religious and secular records, there is very little to which American Jews, who do not read Yiddish, can turn. This condition is an indictment of the scores of Jewish intellectuals who have separated themselves from their people and left a rich and varied human experience lie fallow. By their neglect they have left the Jewish people in a cultural void, bereft of artistic forms which recreate, interpret and deepen the experience of our people. It is therefore understandable that a people hungry for such cultural forms will often respond to whatever is available regardless of its quality. Thus, when a humorist like Sammy Levenson turns up with humor based on the relations of immigrant parents with their children and grandchildren, he meets with a welcome response from younger Jews. Levenson has performed before the most diverse Jewish audiences and enjoys great popularity with progressives. Recently some of his work has been published¹ and the publisher's blurb informs us that he "is widely regarded as the foremost American-Jewish humorist."

Has Levenson succeeded in reviving a connection with the past that gives us a better understanding of it, that helps us to derive from it healthy elements that we can integrate into our own experience? Is Levenson funny—in the sense that his humor can evoke laughter based on sympathetic understanding rather than a sense of superiority? I, for one, cannot answer in the affirmative. As a matter of fact, far from being amused, I was pained and at times shocked by the "humor."

Humor is a spontaneous, immediate reaction in the psychological sense. But it cannot be isolated from the whole view of life out of which it springs. Just as a reflex depends on the physiological structure of the body, so humor depends on a whole background of consciousness, the system of information, customs, attitudes, values. Things and situations are funny always from a certain point of view. The nazi stormtrooper was vastly amused at the sight of bearded Jews being clubbed to death. The racist and southern bourbon will be amused by the lynching of a Negro. And the male with delusions of superiority over women will gleefully listen to a joke upholding this viewpoint. But decent human beings, and certainly progressives, see nothing funny in such humor. On the contrary, they see this type of humor as a perverse manifestation based on a reactionary view of life and as an integral part of the superstructure developed to perpetuate oppression of women and minority groups.

¹ *Meet the Folks: A Session of American-Jewish Humor*, by Sammy Levenson, Citadel Press, New York. \$2.00.

The illustrations mentioned are of course extreme and can easily be recognized. But equally dangerous—perhaps, in a sense, more so—are those subtle forms of humor which seem innocuous on the surface, while in effect they are part of that process of disarming people, morally and politically, of desensitizing them, of making them susceptible to ideas of racism and superiority. Any one who dismisses such caution as "over-seriousness," would do well to ponder the great tragedy of our age, the mass murder of Jews, the daily atrocities and persecution against the Negro people, the prevalent callousness and smugness with respect to other minority groups. It should be remembered that men are not overnight turned into beasts of prey, sadists and perverts who can take delight in the murder of a Jew or the lynching of a Negro. This condition is the end term of a process of dehumanization, a process in which the ruling class uses every weapon and resource at its command, propaganda mediums, radio, screen, etc. In this process humor plays a large part.

The Deep Shaft of Prejudice

It is important to bear in mind that the ruling class uses these weapons to desensitize not only its stormtrooper material, but also its victims. If the victims can be infected with a sense of inferiority, their morale and power of resistance can be weakened to that extent and reaction can win a victory even before the final battle has begun. In America one of the strong weapons of the ruling class has been the dogma of Anglo-Saxon superiority—the notion that Anglo-Saxon culture is the only culture worthy of the designation American, and that all other cultures are inferior. It is a grim fact that many in the minority groups have succumbed to this racist dogma in one form or another. They have consciously or unconsciously adopted the view that the culture of their national group is inferior. In few places in the world have jokes or jibes against a person of another color or national origin sunk so deeply into the cultural pattern as in America. Many jokes told by Jews or Negroes among and about themselves can be traced to an earlier anti-Semitic or anti-Negro version. Of course, whether or not they are oppressed, people laugh at themselves. But it is a different thing, if they tell jokes which affirm the ruling class judgment of their inferiority.

In analyzing Levenson's humor we must explore it from the viewpoint of these values and objectives. Levenson himself has progressive sympathies, as he intimates. He disclaims humor of the anti-Semitic stereotype in his Foreword. The material of his humor is the childhood experience of the second and third generation Jew in relation to the immigrant and "ghetto" life of the East Side. This back-

ground is shared by many in his audiences, as it is by this writer. What aspects of this life has Levenson chosen to regale his audience with? He tells us of the maladjustment of child-parent relations because of the parent's lack of comprehension of American life; the assumption of the small shopkeeper's attitudes; the use of violent cursing; the movement of Jews from the East Side proletariat to the Bronx or Brooklyn petty bourgeoisie; assumption of attitudes of male superiority.

He finds the severe corporal punishment of children by the older generation funny. "We were murdered for small crimes," he writes, "to make sure that we would not commit big ones. We were hit (by our parents) without explanation. . . . How many times my sister Dora was hit on the head for squirming." In one of his records he expects gales of laughter (supplied by a compliant chorus on the record) from his elaborate distinctions between the various Yiddish words for striking children. In his records he makes merry with the violent Yiddish cursing prevalent in the ghetto. He ridicules the incongruity between the Jewish parents' ideal of the scholar's or professional's life for their children and the actual interests and ambitions of the young in the American environment. The parents disapproved of their children's absorption in athletics or the theater. Levenson expects his audience to laugh when he remarks that the older generation considers that "To become a professional athlete was to be labeled a *bum*." Or their view that "A girl, no matter how successful in show business, was a *bumerkeh* and a boy a *trempe*." But this parental attitude was pathetic, rather than comic. It represents an outmoded ideal which our parents held because of their forced isolation from modern life, and one does not laugh at people for backwardness resulting from oppression.

In prefaces to several sections of the book Levenson has recognized at times by inference and at other times directly that he is writing what is at worst chauvinism and at best vulgarization. Having said his *mea culpa*, he then commits the sin in the actual jokes. He gives us nothing of the complexity, richness or travail of the life of a people torn from their moorings and attempting to build a life in a strange country. Certainly people spoke as he says they did and did the things he said they did. Why? His failure to give an answer to this all-important question robs that life of all its meaning of courageous struggle and sacrifice and even turns it into its opposite.

Which East Side?

The East Side was not a homogeneous mass. There was the East Side of those who had the ambition to become storekeepers and dress manufacturers to escape from the working class. This is the East Side depicted in Abe Cahan's *The Rise of David Levinsky* in which bourgeois respectability and a high income are considered the ultimate goal. But there is also the East Side of struggling workers, who underwent great hardship to build the great needle trade unions. This was the East Side of the socialist tradition that envisioned new social horizons. This was the East Side of

Bovshover, Edelstadt, Winchevsky, Rosenfeld, worker-poets who depicted the life and struggles of the Jewish masses. In his *Jews Without Money* Mike Gold did not mitigate the sordidness and backwardness of that life. But he also saw that this life was in flux, that elemental forces were at war within it. Above all, he never lost sight of the full humanity of these people.

But Levenson has given us an extremely limited and superficial picture of that life. The humanity and dreams of the people are lacking. Certainly the immigrant generation was in some respect backward. In their anxiety to learn English they sometimes mixed their English and Yiddish, and this was sometimes humorous. While some children laughed at their parents' efforts to learn English, many laughed *together with* their parents as the latter went about the painful process of learning the new language. But it is quite a different matter when one, who knows the language well, tries to laugh at and vulgarize the language by distorting it, as Levenson does. This is Anglo-Saxonism.

To those who may argue that I am unfairly asking the humorist for a political analysis, I hasten to say that I ask no such thing. But I do have the right, as anyone does, and as certainly the progressive movement has, to ask the artist, whatever his branch of art, to depict human beings with dignity and to bring forth their essential qualities and aspirations. Nor is it possible to "laugh not at but with these people," as Levenson claims to be doing, if one distorts and misrepresents the problems and essential character of these people.

Male Superiority

Perhaps the most obviously retrograde attitude in the book is that of male superiority. This is involved, for instance, in Levenson's statement that "Every family is entitled to one good gossip"—female, of course. The title of one section, "For Men Only," is another manifestation, somewhat in the tradition of the "stag party." In his preface to this section Levenson tries to reassure the reader that, "Although the stories in this section tend to 'kid' the ladies, they are not to be taken as the accepted or acceptable attitude toward women." In other words, he is saying that the jokes really exemplify male superiority but he nevertheless expects us to find them funny. Levenson then makes the assertion of male superiority, "This is a man's world and every people, including the Jews, love to complain, in humor and otherwise, about the opposite sex and its weakness." Despite his feeble disclaimer about unacceptable attitudes, Levenson is obviously helping to perpetuate male superiority by his talk of "a man's world" and by inviting the assent that these jokes demand for their effect.

Levenson's attitude of male superiority is in fact a giveaway to the insensitivity and vulgarity that unfortunately pervade the book. This vulgarity turns up most pointedly in his "Guide to Basic Yiddish," which consists of "translations" of Yiddish words and phrases into English. But this is actually a form of contempt of the Yiddish language, as is his exploitation of Yiddish in the whole of his humor.

His attitude stems from the feeling, often unconscious, that Yiddish is a mark of social ineligibility. This feeling is quite common among second generation Jews who are slightly ashamed and afraid of betraying their Yiddish background in an American environment dominated by Anglo-Saxon culture. Levenson is inducing his audience to laugh at Yiddish and one can explain this only by assuming that the mere use of Yiddish is funny. Actually, this is a form of the anti-Semitic stereotype, for it depends for its effect on the tacit recognition of the superiority of the person who finds it amusing.

Yiddish in Caricature

Levenson has made phonograph records of "classes" in "Basic Yiddish," that are, to speak frankly, a disgrace to the Jewish people. Music used in these records is either painfully banal or, in the case of Yiddish folk songs used, a degradation of folk song. These records comprise a mixture of the most tasteless aspects of both Jewish and American life. The publisher's blurb finds the presumed folk quality of this "Basic Yiddish" a "celebrated reservoir of wisdom and folk humor." It would be more accurate to say that it is an extreme vulgarization of that folk tradition. Levenson is quite proud of the "belly laughs," as he says, that he, in common with other Jewish American comedians like Eddie Cantor and George Jessel, have contributed to American culture. But Levenson does not appear to grasp the distinction between genuinely earthy humor and the furtive violation of taboos. For instance, here are some of his "translations": "*Moch schnell*: gentle knock on the bathroom door"; "*A chootsbeh*: a man under 35 who uses Serutan"; "*Efsher*: monkey glands"; "*Schadchen*: Jewish Manpower Commission"; "*A fargenigen*: front row at the follies." Levenson vulgarizes whatever he touches in his "Basic Yiddish." For instance, "*Bubba*: a pensioned-off baby sitter"; "*Kasheh*: the Jewish version of Serutan"; "*A mikveh*: a kosher aquacade," *ad nauseam*.

No doubt I shall be accused of trying to take the joy out of life, to stifle laughter. Far from it. Humor is very much a part of the Jewish tradition and has always been used as an effective weapon in the struggle against the anti-Semites and against the reactionaries among our own people. If one wants to learn how funny and yet warm, sympathetic and self-critical Jewish humor can be, let him go to Sholem Aleichem. In a rather different context from Levenson, Sholem Aleichem had a similar problem: he was an emancipated Jew who was aware of the retrograde aspects of his people in the Russian Pale. The New York ghetto in the first few decades of this century was a transmigrated European ghetto. Yet Sholem Aleichem loved his people at the same time that he saw its shortcomings. He drew humor from its backwardness, but not patronizingly or unkindly. For at the same time he felt deeply the fine qualities of the Jews of Kasrilevka and brings them out in his stories. In Sholem Aleichem we have an example of a writer who was establishing continuity with his past in a progressive way. He mocks the retrograde and arouses

sympathy for the progressive. He could do this only because he was totally immersed in the life of his people. He did not criticize or laugh at his people in order to be an effective jokester with an audience. Nor did his humor grow out of a vulgar play on words. His was a humor based on the realities, both great and mean, of his people.

From Levenson one gets the idea that the New York ghetto Jew was a brutal, stupid, insensitive, vulgar person. Levenson pokes fun at the consequences of poverty. Sholem Aleichem's Jews are human beings, possessing both nobility and fatuity. He depicts their poverty with a tender humor. "Among us Jews," he wrote, "poverty has many faces and aspects. A poor man is an unlucky man, he is a pauper, a beggar, a *schnorrer*, a starveling, a tramp or a plain failure. . . . But a *kasriliik* is not an ordinary pauper, failure in life. On the contrary, he is a man who has not allowed poverty to degrade him. He laughs at it. He is poor, but cheerful." In his story, "Modern Children," Sholem Aleichem tells a tale of Jewish parents who wanted to marry off their daughter to a rich man. But the girl was in love with a poor tailor and love finally wins out. The story ends, "So go on complain about modern children. You do everything for them! And they tell you that they know better. And . . . maybe they do." To Sholem Aleichem there was an essential dignity in these people. He chided and criticized not to destroy but to build a finer reality. But one cannot build unless one grasps the essentially healthy in the past and links it with the future.

Continuity and Progress

One cannot expect from Levenson the greatness of one of the world's greatest humorists. Sholem Aleichem is mentioned rather to show that it is possible to laugh at the weaknesses of one's own people without vulgarizing them or adopting a position of superiority. Sholem Aleichem further shows how the progressive viewpoint can be exemplified in humorous treatment of the relation of the ghetto and emancipated generations. Levenson, on the contrary, has failed to see the possibilities for humor in this aspect of American Jewish life because his knowledge of that life is superficial.

The quest for continuity embraces many forms of activity. It means the revival of progressive traditions of struggle and resistance in Jewish history. Howard Fast's novel, *My Glorious Brothers*, tries to give contemporary significance to the Maccabean war for liberation. This effort means the assimilation of the spirit of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Continuity in a progressive sense means a fresh interpretation of Jewish history, including the history of American Jewry, as Morris U. Schappes is trying to do. It means, above all, convincing American Jewish intellectuals of their responsibility to the Jewish community to provide it with healthy and progressive artistic expression. It means working our way to modes of Jewish education for our children.

Humor is a powerful weapon in this effort to reestablish continuity in Jewish life. In the past it has been used

to great effect to slough off outmoded mores and for political and social criticism. In the case of the Jewish people, humor can not only light up the present predicament of the Jews, but it can also serve as a vehicle for self-criticism. Sholem Aleichem's work typifies this function with especial clearness. Many people have had their great humorists, who have helped their people to move out of reactionary or obsolete positions. A few names will serve to illustrate the point—Aristophanes, Cervantes, Bocaccio, Voltaire, Swift, Sterne, Mark Twain. Humor can be an aid to the full emancipation of the Jews by helping to fortify the people against anti-Semitism and to reveal some of the fetters to progress in their own tradition. Humor can help

to reestablish continuity in Jewish life by reawakening the almost forgotten ties with the past.

But Sammy Levenson has not pointed a valid direction. While he has undoubted appeal for the lost Jewish generation which is trying to recapture the progressive values in their past, it is unfortunately true that he has not yet supplied this need. The target of his humor is not the reactionary trends in Jewish life, but in great part the victims of class struggle among the Jews. His failure, however, can serve as a challenge to Jewish talent to respond to the large and growing audience for a genuine Jewish humor that will span the gap between the Jewish tradition and the emerging progressive Jewish life.

GERMANY REVISITED

A Short Story

By Henrietta Levner

WHEN I signed up for an accounting job with the Army Exchange Service, I had no idea where I'd be sent. Germany was the last place I wanted to work in. I'd been there during the war, been through Buchenwald before it was tidied up. I can still remember the six coal-burning furnaces used to cremate Jews. The charred bones of the last victims were in the furnace grates when we got there.

Germany reminded me that I was a Jew. Growing up here in New York, I'd forgotten. Many of us had forgotten, I guess.

I didn't want to go back. Except for the debt I was saddled with, I'd have torn up the contract. But my mother's recent illness had cost some 5,000 dollars, borrowed from relatives and friends. I couldn't get a good job in the States with just a few months of accounting school. This overseas job, with high pay and maintenance besides, seemed the only solution for me.

I was assigned to W—, a small, shabby German city. The Army Exchange Service building, formerly a department store, rose above the rubble like a landmark.

My superior, Major Conklin, was not in when I called, and I had to wait in a large outer office, bustling with activity. Clerks were typing, filing, figuring—the usual paper work of a department store. I observed a sprinkling of American personnel; the military were in uniform, of course; and even the civilians wore some khaki. What struck me was the predominance of German workers. I heard German spoken all over the place.

My attention was arrested by a huge, square-faced, swaggering Prussian. His bearing would have made him stand out in any group. He moved from desk to desk, overlooking the work, sometimes chatting amiably, occasionally barking an order. With the Americans, however, he assumed a polite and ingratiating air.

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When he stopped to talk to a typist near me, I followed their German easily. They were gossiping about some mutual acquaintance and I caught the phrase, "*Wie ein judische Schwein.*" It nettled me, but what did I expect? This was Germany.

The Major finally arrived. A small, dour-looking man of about 45, he examined my papers impatiently. "An auditor!" he sniffed. "What will they think of next?"

I felt uncomfortable but there was nothing to say.

"I'm a soldier," he explained, "and they expect me to run a business. Luckily, I've got one man here who knows the score." Picking up the telephone, he called for a Herr Schindler.

Somehow I wasn't surprised when the big Kraut from the outer office appeared.

"Otto, show this man around," said the Major. "He's our new auditor, Saul Lazarus."

I expected Schindler to react to my Jewish name but he didn't bat an eye. Maybe he didn't realize I was a Jew. I was itching to tell him.

My opportunity came later, when he was taking me through the place. "For an American, you speak German very well," he observed.

"I took it in school," I told him. "I found it easy, being a Jew."

He said nothing. It was as though he hadn't heard me. But after that, he confined his remarks to business.

IT DIDN'T TAKE ME MANY WEEKS TO SIZE UP THE SITUATION. The exchange posts were operating as big department stores. American and European goods were sold dirt cheap. Naturally, a good deal of the stuff got to the black market. If I'd played ball, I suppose I might have cleaned up too. But I wanted none of it. I was content to work and save. Somehow I felt as though I were in a prison camp, counting the months toward my freedom.

I had no trouble with the work itself. What I didn't

know, I looked up in an army manual. It tells you everything.

The trouble was, I took my job seriously. If I'd done a lick of work now and then, and sent in phoney figures, nobody would have cared. But I insisted on doing what I was paid for. I wanted records kept right; I wanted inventory figures that could be checked; I wanted to be able to trace every entry.

Of course I got no cooperation. I was continually put in a position of signing for figures I couldn't account for. When I kicked up a fuss, the Major told me I was working too hard.

He himself hardly put up a show of work. He was always drinking. I heard him brag once that with a little nerve, an army officer could live like a millionaire in Germany; in his case, it was the truth. His family lived in town, but he had a mansion in the suburbs where he kept his blonde Brunhilde and entertained his friends at wild, scandalous parties.

I realized the Major was in the black market; but he couldn't work it alone. His partner in the enterprise was Schindler. It was not unusual to have Germans and other Europeans on the posts, but Schindler ran the place and everyone knew it. With Americans, of course, he remained on guard—courteous, correct, even bowing and scraping when necessary—but he wasn't cowed by anyone. He used to put in long hours of work and I suspect he was getting more out of the deal than the Major.

I was the only Jew on the staff, and Schindler hated me for it. I could feel the loathing in his cold blue eyes. Still, he was careful not to give offense. When I complained that he made it impossible to do an auditing job, he hinted that I might be happier elsewhere.

Once, on a three-day weekend, I met a friend of mine who had a similar job in another city. I told him about our set-up.

"So what?" he said. "It's probably the same all over."

"Can't we do something?"

"What are you going to do? Fight the army?"

"Isn't there someone to take the evidence to?"

"What evidence? Have you got anything concrete?"

I shook my head. It's one thing to be aware of graft, quite another to prove it.

"Get wise to yourself, Lazarus. Mind your own business. Do what you're expected to, no more. You're not going to reform the army."

"You don't understand. It's just that I can't bear to see this nazi getting away with everything."

"If you don't like him, go some place else. It's easy to get yourself transferred."

I knew that. Schindler would have been glad to see me go. But there was a stubborn streak in me. I wouldn't quit. I wouldn't let a damn nazi run me out.

I MADE UP MY MIND TO GET SOMETHING ON SCHINDLER. We used to be off Saturdays, but I started coming to the office then in the hope of finding some evidence.

One Saturday morning, I was working on a monthly

report. There were only two file clerks present, a German girl and a Czech. Schindler was out. I needed inventory figures and couldn't find them on file. On a hunch, I went to Schindler's desk. The drawers had been locked with a key, but due to carelessness or a defective lock, one of the drawers was open. I looked in, and sure enough, found an inventory report.

As soon as I started to work with it, I realized this was an uncorrected report—not intended for me—showing actual stock on hand. I got excited. My idea was to copy it out and return it. On Monday, I'd ask Schindler for inventory figures, and he'd give me the usual doctored report. The discrepancies would show exactly what had gone to the black market. I didn't stop to think what I'd do with the information—where I'd take it—but I felt I had something!

I was halfway through the copying when Schindler arrived at the office. He greeted me with a curt "Good morning," and went on to his desk. With a kind of fascination, I watched him try the drawers, discover the open one, and check the contents. Then, after a moment's hesitation, he started back to me. I quickly slipped the report into my top drawer.

He came close to me. "What are you doing with my papers?" he asked under his breath.

"I don't have to answer to you."

He was glaring mad. "Give me those papers!"

Instinctively, I stood up with my back against the drawer. The room became absolutely still. The two file clerks had stopped work and were watching us.

Schindler's face turned a bright red. "Give me those papers," he repeated, "or I'll have you court martialed."

Somehow this struck me as funny—a defeated enemy threatening me with court martial. I laughed out loud.

He couldn't stand that. "*Judische Schwein!*" he cried. "*Judische Schwein!*"

My fists were clenched. I was about to swing for him when a phone rang. With this distraction, I realized how stupid it was to let myself be provoked before two uncertain witnesses; the minimum sentence for assaulting a German was six months.

One of the girls picked up the phone and he turned to me again, calling "*Verdamte Jude!*"

Then without thinking, I did something I'd never done before—I spat in his face.

His fist crashed into my eye. I struck back and we fell to the floor, grappling. He managed to pin me down and pounded my face relentlessly with short hammer blows. I heard the girls screaming. When I tried to break loose, his knee dug into my chest. At last my eyes closed under his fists and I blacked out.

I was rescued by two M.P.'s the girls had called from outside the building. Schindler was standing over me, snarling. When I got to my feet, I noticed the desk drawer was pulled out; the papers were gone.

In the next few hours, I swore out a complaint against Schindler. He was booked, then released on bail. Trial was set for Monday morning.

Sunday I remained in my hotel room all day, nursing my tender, swollen face. In the evening Major Conklin visited me. For once he was dead sober.

At the sight of me, he whistled low. "You sure look a mess, Lazarus. What a beating you must have taken."

"I'm afraid, Sir, I didn't come properly prepared for the job. I should have studied boxing, not accounting."

He laughed. "Not a bad idea. As an army man, I approve. . . . But seriously, you've got nothing to worry about. I just checked the hospital report. In two weeks, you'll be as good as new. Meanwhile, I'll speak to the hotel management about making you comfortable. I'll have them send up your meals, ice for your compresses—."

"Thank you, but I'm getting all the service I need." His friendly overtures annoyed me. I wanted to finish the preliminaries. "Right now, what concerns me is the trial."

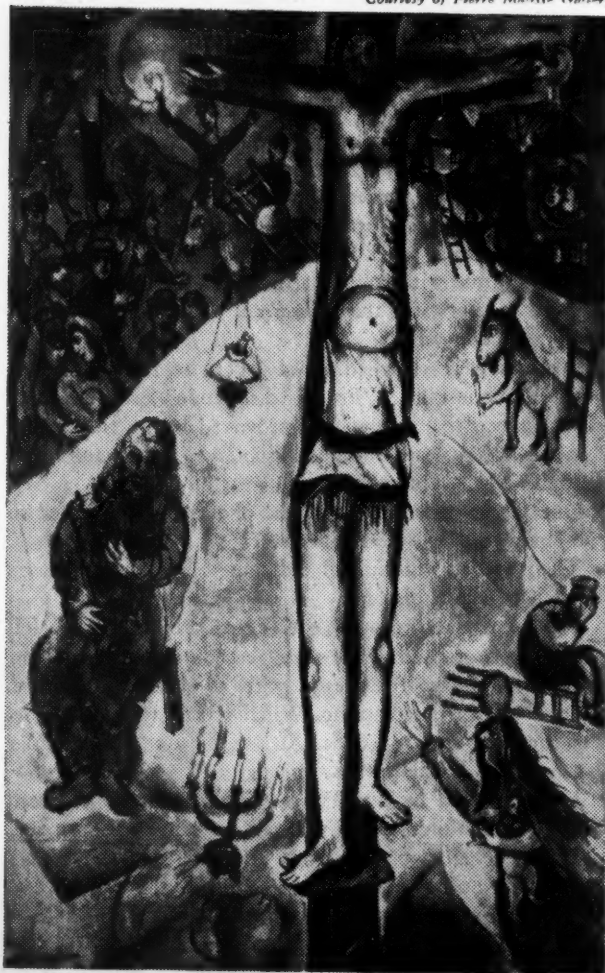
"Oh yes, the trial," he repeated, as though he had never given it a thought. "Too bad it's come to that. Too bad you can't get along with the Germans. The war is over, you know, and we've got to learn to live with them in peace."

"Schindler is a nazi," I replied:

CRUCIFIXION 1948

By Marc Chagall

Courtesy of Pierre Matisse Gallery



"Don't you say that," warned the Major, wagging his finger at me. "He was cleared by an American tribunal."

It was my turn to laugh.

The Major looked disconcerted, but he went on: "I came here expecting a certain amount of bitterness on your part. It's natural. Still, you've got to understand there are other things involved besides your personal feelings. We've got a job to do and Schindler is a key man. He can't be spared. So I'm asking you, for the sake of the organization, to drop your complaint."

I must admit that I enjoyed my position. I wondered how far the Major would go.

"In other words," I said, "you want me to sacrifice my dignity and principles for the sake of the organization."

"Why talk of sacrifices? You can easily make something out of the situation."

"What do you mean?"

"You might decide not to work here any longer. In that case, another job would be found for you, maybe a better job. What do you say, Lazarus?"

"Sorry," I replied, smiling, "no dice."

"It was a painful experience, of course, and you want some satisfaction. I can understand. But you're not going to a civil court. You won't collect damages for pain and suffering. On the other hand, if you cooperate, I might be able to arrange a little personal bonus for you."

"The only satisfaction I want is seeing Schindler in jail."

His fist came down on the table. "For Chris' sake, use your head. If you go looking for trouble, you'll find it."

"I'm not afraid."

"Okay!" He scraped back his chair angrily as he got up. "We'll see who wins."

MONDAY MORNING, ON SCHEDULE, THE TRIAL TOOK PLACE BEFORE an American judge. In telling my story, I said nothing about the inventory report. There was no point bringing it up without proof. Besides, I knew that if I involved the Major, the case would go to a higher court and I'd be licked. I simply stated that Schindler had cursed me for my Jewishness and assaulted me physically. My battered face was eloquent proof.

Schindler also said nothing about the report. With a big show of innocence, he claimed that he was struck first and fought back in self-defense. He had a lawyer who asked a lot of irrelevant questions and did his best to confuse the court.

When the two file clerks gave conflicting evidence, I became worried. "That German girl is lying," I called out. "Schindler is her friend, and she's trying to protect him."

The judge rapped for order. "I'm handling this case." He turned to the girl. "How many persons are you supporting with the pay you draw from the Americans?"

Schindler's lawyer protested, but the judge waved him aside.

"Well, how many?" he repeated.

"Four," she whispered.

"Who will support them if you go to jail? Lying under

oath is a serious offense. You can be locked up for it."

Again the lawyer bobbed up with objections. The girl burst into tears. "Please, your Honor, my parents are old—"

"I'm going to give you another chance. Begin all over."

This time the girl corroborated my story in every detail.

The judge ruled in my favor. Schindler got six months, the minimum term. When he was led out by the M.P.s, he gave me a killing look.

After the trial, my position at the office became impossible. The books and files were closed to me. I'd check in every morning and go back to the hotel. There was absolutely nothing for me to do.

This went on for about two weeks. As soon as my face looked normal again, Major Conklin sent for me.

"Here's your ticket back to New York," he said, tossing an envelope across the desk. "You leave by plane tomorrow morning."

I'd heard through the grape-vine that he was pulling

strings to free Schindler, but he couldn't do it safely with me around. He must have decided to get me out of Germany first.

"My contract isn't up," I protested. Much as I hated the job, I couldn't afford to lose it.

"Your contract can be broken at the convenience of the government," he said coldly.

"And suppose I refuse to go?"

"You'll be court martialed."

"On what grounds?"

"Dealing in the black market." He folded his hands and smiled smugly.

"You've got no case against me."

"That's for the courts martial to decide." He pretended to rummage through some papers. Suddenly he turned his small, blood-shot eyes at me again. "Well, are you taking the ticket?"

I knew the jig was up. "Yes, Sir," I said quietly.

JEWES OF THE USSR: III

THE FUTURE BEGINS

TWELVE years separated the census of 1926 from that of 1939. Twenty-two years of Soviet power had elapsed. Socialism had triumphed in all spheres of economic and social life. The historic achievements of the country were particularly reflected in the national republics, especially in the formerly extremely backward border regions. While the gross production in heavy industry of the whole of the USSR between 1913 and 1940 increased 10.9 times, it increased 22.2 times in the Kazakh SSR, 26.4 times in the Georgian SSR, 160 times in the Kirghiz SSR, 242 times in the Tadjik SSR.

With the help of the Great Russian nation and mutual aid of all the nationalities in the USSR, the backward nations and nationalities developed a working class, a collectivized peasantry and an advanced Soviet intelligentsia. A culture, national in form and socialist in content, flowered. The former distrust by one people of another disappeared. Friendship of the peoples of the USSR was deepened and confirmed—one of the greatest achievements of the October Revolution. The Jewish people like all other peoples of the USSR was fundamentally affected by these changes. This was clearly confirmed by the census early in 1939.

According to this census, there were over 170,000,000 persons in the USSR by 1939. This marked an increase of almost 16 per cent over the end of 1926. The natural increase within the Jewish population in the same period

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By L. Singer

Translated from the Yiddish by Joseph King

was somewhat smaller, only 13 per cent, because of the urban character of the Jewish population.

Following are figures showing the ratio of the Jewish to the general population of that period:

| USSR (within the borders of Jan. 17, 1939) | 1926 (in thousands) | 1939 (in thousands) | 12-yr. increase (in thousands) | Per cent |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| General population..... | 147,028 | 170,467 | 23,439 | 15.9 |
| Jewish population..... | 2,672 | 3,020 | 348 | 13.0 |
| Per cent of Jews in entire population.... | 1.82 | 1.78 | | |

The distribution of the Jewish population among the various Union Republics was as follows:

| Union Republic | Jewish pop. (in thousands) | Per cent of the total Jewish pop. | Per cent of pop. of the Republic |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Russian SFSR | 948 | 31.4 | 0.9 |
| Ukrainian SSR | 1,533 | 50.8 | 4.9 |
| White Russian SSR.... | 375 | 12.4 | 6.7 |
| Azerbaijan SSR | 41 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| Georgian SSR | 42.5 | 1.4 | 1.2 |
| Armenian SSR | 0.5 | 0.01 | 0.05 |
| Turkmenian SSR | 3 | 0.09 | 0.2 |
| Uzbek SSR | 51 | 1.7 | 0.8 |
| Tadjik SSR | 5 | 0.2 | 0.3 |
| Kazakh SSR | 19 | 0.6 | 0.3 |
| Kirghiz SSR | 2 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Total for the USSR.. | 3,020 | 100.0 | 1.8 |

Thus by 1939 almost 40 per cent of the Jewish population lived outside the former Pale. Significant numbers were concentrated in areas where few Jews, or none at all, had previously lived. During this period the Jewish population had increased more than 60 per cent in the RSFSR, Kazakh

and Kirghiz Union Republics, almost 65 per cent in the three Transcaucasian Republics, almost half in Turkmenia, more than a third in the Uzbek and Tadjik Republics and had proportionately decreased in White Russia and the Ukraine. But White Russia and the Ukraine still remained most thickly populated with Jews. An absolute majority (50.8 per cent) of the Jewish population in the USSR lived in the Ukraine.

Fully Productive People

In an analysis of the class structure of Soviet society made to the VIII Congress of Soviets of the USSR on November 25, 1936, Stalin declared: "The capitalist class in the sphere of industry has ceased to exist. The kulak class in the sphere of agriculture has ceased to exist. And the merchants and profiteers in the sphere of trade have ceased to exist. Thus all the exploiting classes have now been eliminated. There remains the working class. There remains the peasant class. There remain the intelligentsia."¹

This analysis was confirmed by the 1939 census. Almost half (49.73 per cent) of the entire population of the USSR was composed of workers and salaried employees, less than half (46.9 per cent) of collective farmers and artisans in cooperatives, an insignificant number (2.6 per cent) were independent peasants and individual artisans. A negligible 0.04 per cent comprised the non-working population.

| <i>Social groups within the Jewish population of the USSR (within the USSR as of Jan. 1, 1939)</i> | <i>Per cent of total Jewish population</i> |
|--|--|
| Workers and salaried employees..... | 71.2 |
| Collective farmers | 5.8 |
| Artisans in cooperatives..... | 16.1 |
| Independent artisans | 4.0 |
| Others | 2.9 |
| Total | 100.0 |

¹"On the Draft Constitution of the USSR," by Joseph Stalin, in *Leninism*, International Publishers, N. Y., 1942, p. 382.

On the eve of the war the number of Jewish workers in industry and in construction had reached between 600,000 and 650,000. The greatest increase in the number of Jewish workers occurred in the regions and republics outside the borders of the former Pale.

The following table pictures the relation between the number of Jewish workers and salaried employees in industry and construction in the Ukrainian and in White Russian Republics:

| <i>Republic and economic branch</i> | <i>Workers</i> | <i>Students</i> | <i>Engineers, Technicians, Professionals</i> | <i>Salaried Employees</i> | <i>Young Service Personnel</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Ukrainian | | | | | | |
| Industry | 64.2 | 3.5 | 13.7 | 15.0 | 3.6 | 100 |
| Construction | 51.2 | 0.7 | 19.0 | 22.4 | 6.7 | 100 |
| White Russian | | | | | | |
| Industry | 73.8 | 3.3 | 9.8 | 10.2 | 2.9 | 100 |
| Construction—no figures | | | | | | |

The above figures show that workers comprised the overwhelming majority of Jews engaged in the particular branch of the economy in the industry of both republics. Half the Jewish workers in the USSR were skilled, about 40 per cent were semi-skilled and only about 10 per cent were unskilled. The Jewish workers at that time had among their number many enthusiasts of socialist construction, shock brigaders and Stakhanovites, who became famous for their work records.

Equality of women with men in all spheres of life in the USSR resulted in a tremendous increase in the number of women workers which also affected Jewish women. According to statistics for 1934, Jewish women engaged in industry in the Ukrainian SSR reached 40 per cent and in the White Russian SSR 45 per cent of all Jews engaged.

A similar development occurred in the Jewish Autonomous Region. The limeworks, the Birobidjan wagon shop, the clothing factory, the wood-working shop, the furniture factory, the electric station, the machine workshops, rail-

Scene from Moscow Art Theater production of Bar Kochba, by Samuel Halkin. People's Artist Benjamin Suskind (center) plays the role of Rabbi Akiba.



road depot and other establishments built in those years made possible the increase of Jewish workers, who formed the vanguard in building the Jewish Autonomous Region.

Resettlement on Collective Farms

What of the Jewish peasantry of the Soviet Union of this period? At the beginning of 1939, the number of completely collectivized Jewish peasants had reached about six per cent of the entire Jewish population. The overwhelming majority (more than 70 per cent) of the Jewish collectivized farmers were located, before the Patriotic War, on land especially assigned to them and in the old land colonies. Of the latter, more than a quarter lived in the suburban collectives. The example of Crimea will quickly show how resettlement progressed and how the Jewish collectivized farmers lived before the war.

During the 12 years from 1926-38 the resettled Jewish population on collective farms in the Crimea had increased five-fold. On an area of 158,000 hectares² of the steppes of Crimea before the war there were about 5,000 Jewish peasant families united in collectives. Available figures covering the end of the first Five-Year Plan (1932) give us a comprehensive picture of the former status of the Crimean settlers.

| Previous occupations of the Jewish settlers on Crimean land | Percentage of total |
|---|---------------------|
| Workers | 11.3 |
| Salaried employees | 5.1 |
| Peasants | 7.8 |
| Artisans | 27.0 |
| Small shopkeepers | 30.5 |
| Free professionals | 1.7 |
| Others | 16.6 |
| Total | 100.0 |

These figures show that the majority (50.5 per cent) were former merchants and artisans who had become peasants. The number of small shopkeepers among them was probably even higher than the figure in the table because they also certainly formed the majority of the group designated as "others." It is no exaggeration that former merchants and artisans were about three-quarters of the entire number of Crimean settlers.

The resettled Jewish collective farmers in the Crimea took firm root on the basis of mechanized agriculture. In 1938, 94 per cent of the grain crop was harvested with combines. The provision of tractors, combines and other agricultural machinery and the application of agronomic science on the basis of collective organization increased the yield of the land from year to year. The harvest of winter wheat increased during the period from 1935-38 from nine to 14 *centners*³ per hectare.

The settlers were not only engaged in grain production, but also developed other branches of agriculture. They grew orchards with great speed. In 1938, the Crimean resettled

collective farmers gathered a harvest of a million *pood*⁴ of grain. The Jewish settlers were the first to cultivate vineyards on the steppes of Crimea. In 1938 they harvested about 200,000 *pood* of grapes worth four million rubles. Outstanding for its vineyards was the *Leninweg* Collective, which exhibited its produce at the first All-Union Agricultural Exhibit. Begun in 1926 on five hectares, the vineyard grew in the 12 years up to 1938 to 900 hectares.

Cattle raising was an important activity of the Crimean Jewish collectives. By January 1, 1939, there were about 5,000 animals in the milk plants, about 56,000 sheep and goats in the sheep ranges.

What has been said about the Crimean resettlers was also true of the resettlers in the other republics and regions. The old colonies in the Ukrainian SSR had even earlier advanced to a high economic and cultural level.

Farming in Birobidjan

In the Jewish Autonomous Region also the agrarian economy had grown significantly on the eve of the war. Under Far Eastern conditions, which required clearing of the taiga and plowing up of virgin soil, an outstanding role was played by the advanced technique with which the state had generously provided the settlers. Eight machine and tractor stations guaranteed the mechanization of agricultural work in the Region. The number of tractors and combines constantly grew in the Region. In 1934 there were 61 tractors and four combines. By 1937 these had increased to 214 tractors and 64 combines.

Grain production forged ahead in the Region. The settlers were successful in cultivating gardens and cereals. Cattle raising also kept increasing in the Jewish Autonomous Region. The natural riches of the Region are favorable for the development of fisheries, the bee industry and other agricultural pursuits. Many collectives have reached high production figures in a relatively short time under difficult taiga conditions. Many of the settlers became brigaders and Stakhanovites in agriculture.

In its declaration of August 29, 1936, the praesidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR noted the historic meaning of the creation of the Jewish Autonomous Region, where "the heroic work of the Jewish settlers concretely refutes the generations-old bourgeois lie that the Jewish people are not able to master agricultural work."

Artisan Cooperatives

The social group known as "artisans," which up to the revolution had been among the most numerous in the economy of the Jewish population, had during the years of Soviet power gone through several stages of development. In the reconstruction period the chief method of drawing the declassed, impoverished Jews into productive work was employment in artisan workshops, as well as settlement on the land. Hence, the number of Jewish artisans increased. The percentage of Jewish artisans and handicraftsmen among the entire Jewish working population at the end of 1926 was 22.6 in comparison with 18.4

² A hectare is equal to 2.471 acres.—J.K.

³ A *centner* is a hundredweight, or a bit over 100 pounds.—J.K.

⁴ A *pood* is approximately 40 pounds.—J.K.

at the end of the previous century. The number of artisans grew so rapidly in two or three years that workshop co-operatives in the cities and towns were transformed into production artels on a mass scale.

The number of artisans and their ratio to the Jewish population began to fall in the period of the first two Stalin five-year plans. Many Jewish artisans then went into big industrial state enterprises and some into agriculture. At the beginning of 1939, the Jewish artisans amounted to about 17 per cent of the entire Jewish working population, and the overwhelming majority of artisans were members of cooperative organizations—production artels.

According to the statistics of the All-Union Council of Cooperative Workshops, the number of Jewish artisans organized in production artels reached 122,000, or 80 per cent of all Jewish artisans, by January 1, 1939. If we compare this figure with the 10.5 per cent of Jewish artisans in cooperatives in 1926, we get some idea of the progress in bringing small Jewish producers into cooperatives during these years. A new type of artisan emerged, a socialist worker, whose material well-being and culture improved tremendously.

These historic changes in the social and economic life of the Jewish population in the Soviet Union, inevitably recall the *stetle* (Jewish town)—the typical *yishuv* with its typical economy, customs and culture of the Jewish masses in tsarist Russia. We use the term *stetle* only in its special meaning, denoting a type of small town community in the former Pale. The former small town figures in Jewish literature, especially in the work of Mendele Mocher Seforim, Sholom Aleichem and Peretz, as a synonym for Jewish poverty, economic rootlessness and backwardness.

During the civil war the small town Jewish population suffered most from pogroms by the gangs of Denikin, Petlura and other counter-revolutionary forces and organizations. The Soviet state devoted much effort and means to heal the wound inflicted on the Jewish population by these pogroms. For years Soviet officials occupied themselves tirelessly with the problem of normal small town life. As a result of socialist construction the small town changed completely. Industrial establishments, various artisan artels, collectives, machine and tractor stations, state and social institutions, schools and cultural institutions grew up in the small towns. They were transformed into regional administrative centers, into cultural centers. At the same time the social composition and cultural standards of the Jewish population changed basically.

Jewish Intelligentsia Changes

Finally, a word about the Jewish intelligentsia. It too increased in the years under review, and its living conditions and intellectual outlook were radically transformed. According to the census of 1897, ten per cent of the self-

supporting Jewish population belonged to the category of salaried employees in intellectual occupations. In pre-revolutionary Russia there were among the Jews about 500 attorneys, 1,500 writers and artists and 4,500 people engaged in medicine. But there were also about 10,000 religious functionaries, including rabbis, judges, slaughterers, etc., and about 16,000 in "pedagogic" work. Considering that in the territory of the Pale (minus Poland) there were more than 14,000 Hebrew schools, it is easy to understand that the great majority of these "pedagogues" were elementary Hebrew school teachers.

The Soviet Jewish intelligentsia is entirely different. A majority are engaged in state and cooperative establishments. Among those in state posts are teachers, doctors and artists. Writers, composers and painters are united in social-professional organizations. And the religious ritual servant also has ceased to play any role in the life of the Jewish population.

The growth of Jewish intellectuals during this period occurred largely among the youth who had completed middle and high school. Before the war the number of Jewish children who had studied in primary and middle schools reached a half million, and the number of Jewish students in high school increased threefold during the first two five-year plans. According to incomplete statistics, at the beginning of 1939 the Soviet Jewish intelligentsia was divided according to number and profession as follows: engineers, architects and builders (less the directors of the enterprises and trade unions)—25,000; semi-technical personnel—60,000; agronomists and other agro-technical personnel—2,000; scientists—7,000; teachers in primary and middle schools—46,000; cultural and educational workers—30,000; artists—17,000; doctors—21,000; semi-medical personnel—31,000; bookkeepers, accountants—125,000.

The Jewish intelligentsia has produced a good number of scholars, creators in the arts and literature, a number of outstanding leaders in production and the state. The Soviet Jewish intelligentsia received a high evaluation in Molotov's speech at the extraordinary Eighth Congress of Soviets, in which he said that "the Jewish people, like the most developed nations, has produced a large number of the greatest representatives of science, technology and art . . . has brought to the front, and is bringing to the front today, larger and larger numbers of remarkable and gifted leaders and organizers. . . ."

We have given a general picture of the Jewish population of the USSR on the eve of the war. The above statistics clearly show:

1. That the non-productive, non-working and parasitic elements of the Jewish population of the USSR disappeared;
2. That the majority of the Soviet Jewish population of the USSR is composed of industrial workers and intellectuals, with a significant number of cooperative artisans and collective farmers.

The Jewish population of the USSR, composed in the main of socialist workers, has become an equal among the peoples of the great Union.

⁵ *The Constitution of Socialism* by V. M. Molotov, translated by J. Fineberg, Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR, Moscow, 1937, p. 24.

REVIEWS

LABOR LEADERS AGAINST LABOR

By Morris U. Schappes

"IT is a strange anomaly that the three American unions best-known for their cooperativeness with employers are all organizations which were once completely saturated with Socialistic 'down with the Boss' theories," is the sentence with which Donald B. Robinson opens a chapter jeeringly entitled "Class Collaboration" in his book¹ dealing with one of these unions. The three anomalous unions are, of course, the International Ladies' Garment Workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and the cap and millinery workers. Mr. Robinson puts it simply: "Confronted with a situation in which employers did not seem competent to make a profit, all three of these unions moved to help, even to force, their manufacturers to make money" (p. 245).

Mr. Robinson's equipment for his task is impressive. His first sentence reads: "We American liberals stand in desperate need of a faith."

His "liberalism" first manifested itself as a journalist in such periodicals as *The American Mercury*, *Liberty* and *The American Legion Magazine* and as labor editor of a New York daily newspaper, which the publishers coyly refuse to name. His publishers are particularly proud of Mr. Robinson's recent articles, on account of "one of them even drawing the fire of Andrei Vishinsky, Deputy Foreign Minister of the U.S.S.R., in a speech before the United Nations."

Mr. Robinson's syncopated style, patterned after the twitchy prose of the magazine *Time*, is informative about details but often uninformative about essentials (such as the annual wage in a trade in which weekly wages mean little when the work-seasons are so short). Mr. Robinson is especially interested in how a socialist-saturated union got to the point where he can declare that "over the years, employers had found it one of the most cooperative of all American unions" (p. 13).

The millinery workers, the militant immigrant Jewish men and women who fought the sweatshops, appeal to one phase of Mr. Robinson's liberalism. Of these workers, he writes: "The story of these 22 years [1910-1932], of the generations

that went before them—endless years of industrial chaos, of exploitation, of starvation wages, of labor-management warfare—is one indigenous to the American needle trades" (p. 140). The grueling task of organizing the workers was such that on one page Mr. Robinson can say, "only the typical Russian-Jewish Socialist of the time was able to endure it" (p. 144), while a few pages further on he can refer contemptuously to "their Russian-spawned revolutionary fervor" (p. 148). Yet you can infer the bitter class struggle from his fleeting accounts: "The manufacturers brought in thugs, won injunction after injunction from friendly judges, and had the cooperation of the police" (p. 147). "The strikers had to contend with 'scabs,' with thugs (two gangsters confessed that they had been offered \$1,500 to shoot up the picket lines!), with hunger" (p. 157). Anti-Semitism plagued the hatters for several years, but when the exclusion of Jews from the union weakened the struggle against open shop employers, the decision was finally reached to close ranks and admit the "Hebrew Hatters."

But Mr. Robinson's "liberalism" revealingly rears its head, for instance, in his description of the cap makers' general strike in the winter of 1904-1905, when 2,000 workers were out for three months rather than accede to the bosses' demand for the open shop. "Police and boss-hired thugs" harassed the strikers. Says Mr. Robinson (p. 114): "It was hell. It was hell for the strikers who were evicted from their homes, who went hungry, who had to pace the picket lines in snow and sleet. It was hell for the employers who lost a season's production." Unfortunately, he does not stop to tell us how many bosses went hungry and how many were evicted.

Not without an anti-Semitic implication, Robinson proudly asserts that Zaritsky "took his 'Jewish union' and made it even more than an American union. He made it an integral part of constructive, militant United States liberalism" (p. 122). Of course Zaritsky had no easy job, since he had to deal with "cap makers, by temperament Socialist and by history antiboss" (p. 133), but he succeeded by continuing to talk socialist. Mr. Robinson is cynically candid (p. 132): "Thirty-four-year-old Max Zaritsky was still giving with wild-eyed Socialist speeches when he assumed the union presidency in 1919. . . . The radical references he made were, it is

obvious, solely to placate the union's old revolutionary elements."

But many were not "placated." They wanted really to improve working conditions even if they had to fight for the changes. This left-wing opposition began to forge ahead, to the dismay of employers and the Zaritskys. But Zaritsky was by then the union boss. When that other old "Socialist," Max Zuckerman, had in 1917 proposed creating the office of president (for Zaritsky to fill), he had told the convention: "I do not want to have a hundred men rule. I want to have one-man management" (p. 130). The workers got just that, and the one man was Zaritsky. Unintentionally revealing is Mr. Robinson's account of the methods used by Zaritsky in crushing the left-wing, without regard either to the union constitution or the needs of the workers. For instance (p. 185): "when the [left-wing] Boston cap-makers, members of his old local, threatened a general strike solely, in his opinion, for political purposes, he intervened. At the last moment, he overrode the local administration, worked out an agreement with the manufacturers and forced its acceptance" (my italics—M.U.S.).

Mr. Robinson would have us believe that all this was really for the good of the workers. Thus he says (p. 247): "It was . . . in 1912 that Zaritsky for the first time cast away his old mantle of social revolutionist and put on that of a man who fights for boss as well as worker." It is the "as well as" that can be questioned, and on the basis of some very informative statistics that Mr. Robinson himself presents. He points out (p. 254) that in the millinery trade, net profits rose "from 7.7 per cent of sales in 1935 to 9.5 per cent in 1944" but "the ratio of labor costs to net sales had fallen from 29.7 per cent in 1935 to 27.1 per cent in 1944." In other words, the workers were getting a smaller share of the consumer's dollar spent on millinery and the employer was getting a larger share!

In 1946, when other unions were fighting for, and getting, their first round of substantial wage raises to try to overtake the galloping cost of living, Zaritsky refused to ask his employers for wage increases for his workers because: "We did not want to burden the trade" (p. 17)! Consequently, 2,000 Stetson workers had to have an unauthorized strike, and "it must be admitted that there was a number of spontaneous stoppages in the millinery markets, usually of only a few hours' duration. In each case, the union took immediate steps to return the workers to their benches. The loss in production was microscopic" (p. 233). So the milliners went without raises in 1946, have as yet received no raises, and not until the June 1948 biennial convention did Zaritsky agree to

¹ *Spotlight on a Union, The Story of the United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers International Union*, by Donald B. Robinson. The Dial Press, New York, 1948. \$3.50.

begin to think about asking for pay increases! The wages of class collaboration are low in more than one sense! Incidentally, Mr. Robinson asserts that in 1947 the union membership was about 40,000; yet in 1948 the convention figure was 31,748. That convention heard its lawyer, Louis Waldman, praise the Mundt-Nixon bill, and amended the constitution to exclude communists from holding union office.

Without mentioning the words "social democratic" and "class collaboration," another writer, in a sober and academic volume, sets forth the theory, practice, and economic results more elaborately as experienced in the men's and women's clothing industry and through the agency of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.² After extensive consultation with union officials and employers (but not with a sampling of workers themselves), Mr. Braun summarizes his findings for the benefit of those chiefly serviced by the Brookings Institution, business executives and professional scientists. Progressive workers, even those with direct experience with such co-operation, could also derive a valuable overall picture from Mr. Braun's book.

It is significant that both Mr. Robinson and Mr. Braun practically omit from consideration the experience of the furriers' union, led by communists. Now that union has made of collective bargaining, backed by mass mobilization and militancy, an instrument of the class struggle. The union has won for its members better conditions, in every possible respect, than those won by the cap and millinery and men's and women's clothing unions following policies of class collaboration. But collective bargaining is *not* union-management co-operation. Mr. Braun writes (pp. 21-22): "Collective bargaining thus differs from union-management cooperation in that the former is nothing but a technique whereas the latter is an economic and social concept." And that social concept has to do with whether or not there is basically a "community of interest between labor and capital" (p. 12). The idea that the worker depends upon the employer and therefore needs capitalism is meaningful only in the sense, as Lenin once remarked, that a hanging man depends upon the rope and thus has a community of interest with it. Collaboration with the rope is fatal, even though the hangman is paid for doing his job.

A particular kind of union leadership was necessary to impose class collaboration ideas upon the workers, at one time mostly

² *Union-Management Co-Operation, Experience in the Clothing Industry*, by Kurt Braun. The Brookings Institution, Wash., D.C., 1947. \$3.00.

Jewish, who had socialist ideals and who had fought the sweatshop in some of the bitterest struggles in American labor history. Mr. Braun realizes this obstacle of "reluctance and resistance to co-operation with management on the part of workers" (p. 55) and acknowledges that "union leaders of course cannot disregard the opinions of the members even if they do not share them." Such leaders "not infrequently . . . have to wage a two-front war against employers and members before they can embark on the new course" (p. 12). That two-front-war against bosses and workers is a pregnant image, is it not? It reminds me of Lenin's description of another two-front-war "labor-leader" named Skobelev, who "used to brandish his fist in the face of the Tsar—and bring it down on the head of the working class."

The clothing industry employers are not unworried about the future, however. In a footnote, Mr. Braun records (pp. 244-45) that "some manufacturers . . . are doubtful whether the unions will be able to control the workers in case of a serious business recession. . . . The majority of employers . . . do not know what will happen when new men replace the present exceptional leadership." Some of the services rendered the employers were really exceptional: "Top union leaders have made confidential arrangements with manufacturers in some exceptional situations in which it would have been inexpedient to submit all the details to the rank and file" (p. 249). Apparently union democracy does not mix well with class collaboration.

Employers have made other fundamental inroads. Traditionally, the workers have fought for a week-work system instead of piece-work. The reason piece-work triumphed is this: "The gradual recognition of the manufacturers' point of view by union leaders and members is directly traceable to the development of union-management co-operation" (p. 98). For similar reasons, "scientific management methods" and "efficiency" techniques were imposed upon the workers, presumably to serve the interests of employer and worker "alike." But here again, as in Mr. Robinson's book, the facts on wages and profits compiled by Mr. Braun contradict the theory. Thus the average annual wage per worker in the men's clothing industry declined from \$2,322 in 1923 to \$1,707 in 1939; in the women's clothing industry the decline was from \$2,546 to \$1,824 (Table, p. 211). It is true that weekly wages increased in the men's clothing industry from \$13.78 in the crisis year of 1932 to \$31.99 in the war-prosperity year of 1944; in the women's clothing industry the increase was from \$18.33 in 1932 to \$37.07 in 1944 (Table, p. 212). Mr. Braun understates the case when he



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observes that these unions "have succeeded in bringing up average [weekly] wages in no small measure. But they have not raised them to a point out of proportion to wage levels in other industries" (p. 213). Moreover, Mr. Braun admits (p. 214): "the growth of earnings came in a higher degree from increases in the number of hours worked and units produced than from increases in wage rates."

But what about profits under union-management cooperation? Mr. Braun cautiously but definitely concludes (p. 218): "The data tend to show that union-management cooperation has not prevented profits of corporations [producing 72.1 per cent of clothing products] from rising, especially after 1938." Profits rising while annual wages fall! Incidentally, latest figures issued by the New York State Department of Labor on ladies' garment workers' earnings in the area which has the highest rates show a *decline* in weekly earnings from June 1946 to July 1948 of \$3.21—this at a time when the length of the season is shrinking and the cost of living is increasing. And Dubinsky is loath to enter the struggle for wage raises at least equal to those gained by other unions! What *would* the employers do without such exceptional union leadership?

Although the two volumes reviewed here, particularly Mr. Braun's, stick chiefly to the economic advantages of class collaboration, it would be a mistake to assume for a moment that the services of Zaritsky, Dubinsky & Co. are rendered only to the employers of the clothing in-

dustry. On the contrary, for decades now these union leaders have been serving the entire capitalist class and its dominant imperialist section. And big business interests have begun to acknowledge the Dubinsky type of loyalty to its welfare. Thus an Eric Johnston, in his new book, *We're All in It*, written on his return from Europe, recommends that Dubinsky be made the United States ambassador to Italy so that as an agent of the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan he can help deceive, divide, and crush the working class there!

I admit Mr. Johnston's logic. Only Herbert Hoover, I believe, has been more consistent than the Dubinskys as a red-baiter and Soviet-baiter. They capitulated to the Taft-Hartley law and exacted non-communist affidavits from layers of union officials not even mentioned in the law. The reactionary social-democrats heartily approved the Mundt-Nixon bill and have abetted the drive against communists and those that can be called communists. They have made the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine their own. By their own efforts they have helped to split the World Federation of Trade Unions and the labor movements in France and Italy. They support the re-nazification of Germany, and work so that the Schumacher social-democrats in Germany may become leading partners of this nazism. They scold the distant Bevin occasionally for his policy on Israel, while they support the American imperialist machinations in Israel, which are more dangerous. They are, in short, one of the

mainstays of American imperialist reaction abroad and at home. They extend the principles of "union-management cooperation" into the field of union-imperialist cooperation. Imperialism with a union label is still imperialism; but a union with an imperialist label hardly serves the craft, class or national interests of its members.

Yet I suspect that the tens of thousands of these union members who crowded the streets to hear and cheer Henry Wallace in his campaign, even though they misguidedly voted for Truman, are waking up to the fact that class-collaboration with the bosses is good for the bosses, but not for the working-class. The facts in Mr. Braun's book help clarify this issue.

CORRECTION

Two regrettable typographical errors turned up in Morris U. Schappes' review, "Contribution to American Jewish History," in the December 1948 issue. (1) The reference to Voltaire's "Ribaldray Against the Bible" should not have been in italics, as the title of a work by Voltaire, but as a quotation from John Adams' letter to Van der Kemp. (2) It was not Haym Salomon who freed one of his slaves in 1812, for he was long since dead then, but Haym M. Solomon, his son.—Eds.

BIALIK IN ENGLISH

By Isidor Schneider

TO the review of this first volume¹ of what is to be a complete translation of the poetic works of Bialik I can bring no specialist's knowledge. I have no command of the Hebrew language and no familiarity with the history or range of the literature in it. I can only report on the book as one who, with a latent interest in Hebrew literature and the work of Bialik as one of its modern masters, has waited for an occasion like this to satisfy that interest. For that reason I may have allowed myself undue expectations in this volume and therefore have some disappointments to record.

The editor notes, in his introduction, that, at best, reading a translation is like

seeing a face through a veil. Now one's eyes may become accustomed to the pattern and mesh of the veil and, after a time, see a good deal of the face. But if one is obliged to look through veils of many different patterns and meshes, the obstacles to a clear image are multiplied. So it proves in this volume which presents translations from no less than eighteen hands.

Perhaps circumstances made this the most expedient way to bring out the volume; but it is hardly the best way. On a first reading Bialik, seen through so many translator's personalities, takes on a bewildering variety of literary personalities. In some versions he impresses the reader as a poet of bard-like simplicity, but as a complex and subtle poet in others; as gushing and sentimental here and grave and measured there. Only after a re-reading which few may be able to give it, does an integrated literary personality emerge.

Apart from their diversity the translations are of uneven value. From some it would be impossible for a reader like myself, who does not know the original and therefore cannot eke out deficiencies in the rendering with prompting memories, to conceive Bialik's stature. There are lines of almost excruciating banality in some versions; while lines of real grandeur in other versions make it apparent that Bialik's stature is high indeed. It is to be hoped that in later volumes, which, I understand, are in preparation, the editor will be more rigorous and secure re-translations of certain traditional sing-song renderings.

It is to be hoped, too, that the editor will see his way to supplying more comprehensive and detailed critical and biographical material on the poet for the sake of interested but uninformed readers like myself. The informed may not need it; but they are not likely to be a majority of the audience the book will reach.

Specifically what is needed are a study of the backgrounds of modern Hebrew literature, a clearer estimate of Bialik's

¹ Complete Poetic Works of Hayyim Nahman Bialik, Vol. I, translated from the Hebrew, edited with introduction by Israel Efros, illustrations by Lionel S. Reiss. Histadruth Ivrit of America, New York. \$4.00.

place in it, a discussion of its links with its medieval and Biblical antecedents, an analysis of some of the qualities of the language as a literary medium, a study of Bialik's prosody and an inquiry into Bialik's sources and influences and the inter-relations of his life and his writings. There is little to satisfy one's interest in these aspects of Bialik and his social and cultural context, in the introduction and in the prefaces to the separate sections. They are largely encomiums which, I am convinced, are justified, but are inadequate as a guide to the uninformed reader.

What I got, after a time, from this collection of translations, is that Bialik is a poet of strong feeling and energetic mind endowed with fresh and perceptive imagery. What I sense, though such a variety of versions cannot give any certain evidence of it, is that his melodic gifts are great. There can be no doubt, despite the veils of translation, that Bialik is a poet of stature.

I have seldom read a poet so steeped in a national tradition. No wonder the Jews, whose national self-fulfilment was so restricted and precarious, love Bialik. No poetry that I know of, is such a loving evocation of a communal heritage. A great number of his poems touch directly on objects or characteristics of the old Jewish life. And where the subject appears to be of the traditional and even the conven-

tional stuff of poetry, how often a special intimate reference gives it a Jewish overtone, makes it a Jewish poem and gives it a sudden special poignancy. An example is the poem, *To a Bird*, a bird that the poet imagines has flown over Palestine on its northward flight into Russia. I quote two stanzas:

Does your singing bring me greeting
From the land, its glens and valleys,
Mountain height and cleft?
Has her God compassioned Zion?
Is she still to graves deserted,
Only ruins left?
Tell me, are the Vale of Sharon
And the Hill of Incense flowing
Still with nard and myrrh?
Does the oldest of the forests
Wake from sleep? Is ancient, slumbering
Lebanon astir?

It has often been objected to proletarian poetry that it has chosen unpoetic subjects or that political emotions are all right in their place but their place is not poetry. Bialik's poems provide further proof, if it be needed, that of itself no subject is unpoetic, that if a man's consciousness of anything reaches a pitch of exaltation his expression of it will be exalted; that if political emotions are felt deeply (and the emotion in many of Bialik's poems is political) poetry becomes a natural expression for them.

Were the devotion and indefatigability of a trade union organizer, for example,

as palpable to a proletarian poet as the Talmud student was to Bialik—whatever different values may be put on their vigils—we would have as impassioned a poem on the organizer. I can recommend Bialik's *Talmud Student* to proletarian poets as a model.

Bialik's complete and effortless identification with his suffering and persecuted people made him a social poet in one of the most basic senses of the term. It is not surprising that one of his poems should be an apostrophe to toil and another should deal, with intimate and affectionate humor, with the characteristic livelihoods of his people in old Russia. A man in such close communion with his people would of course know the "Jews without money." In other poems, relating to the historic past of the Jews and to the persecutions and pogroms, Bialik can serve as a model to poets who wish to serve their people in their verse.

Despite the shortcomings of this volume it serves many valuable purposes. It is good to have Bialik in English. No one who wishes to gain the special spiritual knowledge of a people that can be acquired only through its culture, can afford to miss this book. And no one who wants to understand the conditions of Jewish life and the reaction of a proud and gifted people to those conditions, that were the motive impulses in the building of Israel, can afford to be without this book.

LETTER FROM ABROAD

DO-NOTHING REPORT ON ANTI-SEMITISM

GREAT Britain is among those countries which have so far refused to pass any legislation prohibiting anti-Semitic propaganda. During the last few years, considerable feeling was shown against the refusal of the Labor government to act against the fascists and anti-Semites in Britain. Many working class and other organizations have expressed their views quite strongly on the subject. Following the ugly disturbances of August 1947, when anti-Jewish incidents occurred in many parts of the country, even the *Daily Herald* (Labor Party paper) in a leader on "Fascism" wrote: "The theory that it is better to ignore such developments and that any attempts to check them invests them with an importance which they do not deserve, has surely been sufficiently disproved. . . . The deep uneasiness shown by the Trades Union Congress this week should convince the government that a way out must be found to prohibit anti-Semitic provocation" (June 9, 1947).

In the eyes of many—and particularly among the leaders of the Jewish community—the existence of a commission reviewing the law on defamation offered great hope in this direction. This commission was appointed by the Chamberlain Munich government in 1939 to investigate and report on the law and practice of libel and defamation.

The existence of this commission was used to point up the problem of anti-Semitism and racial propaganda. The Jewish Board of Deputies, the World Jewish Congress and the National Council of Civil Liberties presented memoranda and tendered oral evidence in amplification of their views. The published report refers to this evidence: "It has been suggested by various witnesses that the law of defamation ought to be extended so as to bring within its scope, either as the subject of criminal proceedings or a civic action . . . the defamation of groups of persons, such as those distinguishable by race, color, creed or vocation."

The commission suspended its sittings during the whole period of the war and resumed its labors only at the end of the war. It has now issued its report, whose conclusions are staggering. The report states: "Much as we deplore all provocation to hatred or contempt for bodies or groups of persons with its attendant incitement to violence, we cannot fail to be impressed by the danger of curtailing free and frank—albeit hot and hasty—political discussion and criticism. . . . The law of seditious libel still exists as an ultimate sanction and we consider that the law as it stands affords as much protection as can safely be given. We do not, therefore, recommend any general change in the existing law to deal with Group Defamation."

The commission considers that it has disposed of the matter. For fear of "curtailing free and frank—albeit, hot and hasty—political discussion and criticism" anti-Semitism and racial hatred are to be given a free hand in this country despite the price which has been paid in Europe for this license. This recommendation has received the blessing of the *London Times*, which writes: "While conduct of that kind is to be deplored, the present law of seditious libel affords as much pro-

tection as can safely be given' since an extension might savor too much of political prosecution and seriously hamper free and legitimate discussion."

The *Manchester Guardian* also gives its blessings to the commission's "wise line that it ('false statements vilifying groups or classes distinguishable by race, color, creed or vocation') cannot be made an offense without curtailing free and frank political discussion."

The commission's report follows the line of and shows complete agreement with the Labor government's accepted policy on this subject. To all requests that the propagation of anti-Semitism be prohibited the government has replied that it has no intention of interfering with "freedom of speech" or "freedom of thought." This is particularly the line which is being taken towards the political retraining of the German people.

Do the conclusions of the report square with the facts? Is there no danger for the people of Britain from the spread of anti-Semitism? No other than the former chairman of the Labor Party, Prof. Laski, admitted to a meeting of Jewish ex-servicemen that anti-Semitism could become dangerous if "there was large-scale unemployment in Great Britain." That unemployment is likely to grow before long is no longer in doubt. The "Marshallising"

of Britain will lead to unemployment and to a development of anti-Semitism, while chairman of the Labor Party, Prof. Laski, made no effort to assist the drive for legislation against the propagation of anti-Semitism and racial propaganda, because his hatred of communism and working class democracy blinds him to the real facts.

Anti-Semitism now is not only the prerogative of the followers of Mosley. Today anti-Jewish feeling is engendered and spread by the most "respectable" organs of the press and by speakers in the House of Lords. The *Times* recently published a letter from a gentleman which was full of anti-Semitic threats—all made in his capacity as a friend of the Jews. He wrote on the occasion of the assassination of Count Bernadotte that "in this hour of Jewish shame it is hard to remain objective and to fight the virus of anti-Semitism. . . . It is almost enough to turn a saint anti-Semitic. If civilized Jewry does not take drastic action now, when the iron is hot, I fear universal horror at Bernadotte's assassination must crystallise into a new and lasting wave of anti-Semitism."

Thus is being built up the anti-Jewish atmosphere which needs only a spark to let loose a similar—or much worse—outburst of anti-Jewish feeling as was seen last year in Britain. Sporadic incidents

occur from time to time. During the New Year festivities attempts to set alight two London synagogues were reported.

The commission is prepared to accept the risk that "the law as it stands affords as much protection as can safely be given." Can the Jewish community and the democratic and progressive movement in Britain accept the same view? The government can still be convinced by mass pressure that to accept the commission's recommendations would be an affront to the efforts being made to eradicate anti-Semitism and racial hatred from the "rights" of free men. It is hoped that the Jewish communal leaders, who had placed great hopes in the commission and held back every attempt at mass action in support of the demand for legislation against anti-Semitism, will now mobilize the Jewish community to action.

Since the end of the war Great Britain has, under the leadership of a right-wing Labor government, conducted a policy both on the home and foreign front which is placing the future of the British people in jeopardy. The attitude toward fascist propaganda, anti-Semitism and racial hatred is an example. The fate of the commission report will show whether a halt has been made in the dangerous path pursued at this moment.

London

L. ZAIDMAN

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

"HOLD IT!"

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

For some time now I have been reading the pros and cons of a polemic in the pages of *Jewish LIFE* concerning Jewish American culture, and I feel impelled at this point to yell at the top of my voice, "Hold it!" It's time right here and now to pause a moment and attempt to clear away the debris. It is time to see whether everybody understands what it is that all the shooting is about. For there is no sense in continuing the offensive if each gunner has his ideological weapons trained on a different objective.

Now I am just a simple everyday reader who is not too sophisticated about art, music and literature, and I suppose there are a few more readers just like me. We read Schappes, Fast, Barron, Rubinstein, Morgenstern *et al*, and each bangs away with both barrels on this all-edged subject. One talks about Jewish music, the other about the Jewish novel, the third about Jewish culture generally, but the only clear point that comes through is that nobody seems to have agreed on the problem nor has anyone defined its terms. How in the world can we discuss the works of Jewish American writers or composers or artists when we don't know what it is we are looking for in them? Rubinstein devotes three pages to the Jewish American novel, clears up nothing and winds up with a big question mark. (No bigger than the one in my own mind.) Morgenstern discusses music and at least he starts out with the confession that he is not sure about what it is we are talking

Schappes hacks away at everything with a double-edged sword, cutting down everything that "isn't," but doesn't give us a real clue as to what it is he is using as his guide.

This all may sound terribly irreverent, but I honestly feel that unless *JEWISH LIFE* and its contributors do restate in simple terms just exactly what it is we are seeking, then you will go on tilting your lances at windmills and the energy consumed will shed more heat than light.

New York City

L. Z.

NAME-CHANGING

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

Displayed in the window of a Sixth Avenue print-shop is the following sample card:

"GERALD M. ABRAMOWITZ has switched his name to

GERALD M. MONROE because it's easier to pronounce! it's easier to spell! it's easier to remember!"

Without in the least desiring to point the finger of scorn, may we remind the gentleman that it was not the stuttering of illiterates, but rather the hot breath of anti-Semitism on his neck which caused his streamlined switcheroo? Also, that when the issue is squarely faced, it will be found that nothing is so easy to pronounce, spell and remember as that simple, proud, one-syllabled word: *Jew*.

Brooklyn

HERMAN SPECTOR

SAVE THE DATE!

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FROM THE FOUR CORNERS

(Continued from page 2)
college's Frederick Douglass Society, decided to investigate racial bias at the college. . . . William C. Davis, City College economics teacher who was dismissed from his post as administrator of Army Hall for enforcing Jimcrow practices, has received a pay increase of \$1,392 and been promoted over three other instructors. . . . The New York State education authorities have agreed to hold hearings on the Knickerbocker case, although a date has not yet been set.

A burnt cross was discovered on the site of a projected new building for Temple B'nai Sholom in Rockville Center, L. I. Police officials, who have begun to investigate, recalled that the synagogue's offices were damaged by unidentified vandals two years ago.*

For some time vandals have tampered with the project to build a temple in Westwood, Los Angeles. When a tent was set up for services last year, attempts to enter it required the posting of night guards. A few hours after a lot for a synagogue was purchased in March 1947, the broker who handled the sale received some half dozen phone calls condemning him and threatening to prevent the building of a "Jew Church." Several signs announcing the project were removed. A temporary synagogue in a store had its windows broken. Rabbi Meyer Mereminsky of the harassed congregation has promised that "we shall meet the challenge."

National Jewish Music Month this year falls between February 12 and March 15.

Dr. Judah L. Magnes, 71, president of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and leader of the Ichud Association in Palestine, which has advocated a bi-national state there, died in New York, on October 27. Dr. Magnes was born in San Francisco in 1877, was educated at the University of Cincinnati, the Hebrew Union College, the University of Heidelberg, and held several leading rabbinical posts in New York. He participated in many liberal causes, served as impartial chairman of the Fur Workers Reviewing Board and worked in East Side reform movements. He organized tremendous protests in this country against the Kishineff pogroms between 1905 and 1907, led a great parade down Broadway in protest and addressed many mass meetings. He was among the founders of the American Jewish Committee in 1905. During World War I he opposed our entry into the war on pacifist grounds, but he was an advocate of war against Hitler. In 1922, he moved to Palestine and became the chancellor of the Hebrew University in 1925 and president in 1935.

At a recent conference of foreign language professors it was revealed that 500 universities and colleges in the United States now recognize Hebrew as a modern language requisite for entrance. Beginning next June, Hebrew will be an examination subject in the New York State Regents examinations.

EUROPE

A United Press survey of Eastern European capitals in November revealed that at least 5,000 Jews would leave for Israel by the end of the year from each of those countries, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Rumania.

Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, Hitler's finance minister, who was freed by a "denazification" court recently, has published a book, *My Break With Hitler*, in an edition of 100,000 copies, which is selling widely in Bizonia. The book attacks denazification.

More on "denazification" . . . An American war crimes court on October 27 cleared 13 top German generals of all responsibility for Hitler's wars of aggression. The court held that the generals had only followed orders as "instruments" of top nazis. Among the generals cleared were Field Marshals Wilhelm von Leeb, Hugo Sperrle, F.F.W. von Kuechler and Gen. Herman Hoth. . . . Fritz Heffler, one of the richest men in Germany, former nazi SS member and director of a film company which produced some of the worst anti-Semitic films under Hitler, was fined 5,000 marks as a minor war criminal. . . . Captain Fritz Weideman, one-time personal adjutant to Hitler and later nazi consul general in San Francisco, was fined 2,000 marks by a German denazification court. He had been charged as a major offender but the court ruled him a Class Four offender, i.e., one who was a nazi party member without being active.

A recent article in the British liberal weekly, *New Statesman and Nation*, reports that "Munich 1948 is more like Munich 1938 than Munich 1945." The article asserts that Jews have once again become scapegoats for housing and food shortages and black marketing and that anti-fascists fear to give evidence against nazis at denazification trials.

Of the 501 Stalin prizes announced in the Soviet Union recently covering the year 1947 for scientific, literary and artistic work, 51 recipients were Jews.

News from Poland . . . Beginning with the school year 1948-49, schools which use the Yiddish language are to be incorporated into the network of state schools. About 22 Jewish elementary schools qualify for nationalization. . . . The Jewish Theater of Lower Silesia is rehearsing D'Usseau and Gow's *Deep Are the Roots* for performance this year. . . . The Central Jewish Committee has decided to ask the Polish government to apply to the United States for return of 260 cases of books from Jewish libraries in Poland stolen by nazis and after the war shipped to America. . . . At present there are over 200 Jewish cooperatives in Poland employing over 7,000 persons. . . . The Jewish Association for Jewish Culture and Art now has 36 branches in Lower Silesia and 5,900 members.

The offices of the Jewish National Fund and the *Keren Hayesod* of Rumania were shut down in early November on charges of engaging in large scale black market operations.

ISRAEL

In October in Damascus a joint declaration by the Communist Parties of Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and the Arab League for National Liberation branded American and British imperialism and their Arab stooges as the enemies of the Arab peoples. The declaration called for a united Arab struggle to halt military operations in Palestine, establish an independent state in the Arab part of Palestine and to end all foreign domina-

tion of Arab countries. The joint statement was distributed by the thousands in Arab countries.

In early November Israeli Prime Minister Ben Gurion won a political victory over the United Workers Party when he finally succeeded in dissolving the Palmach, which spearheaded most of the biggest victories in the war. The Palmach was largely built and commanded by adherents of the left-wing United Workers Party and is considered a left-wing influence in Israel. Although Palmach units will continue to operate in the field, it was feared that the next step would be scattering of Palmach personnel among various army units. The United Workers Party is demanding a full Council debate on the question and is boycotting the Histadruth executive until a hearing is held on the Palmach dissolution.

Israeli oil men reported in late November that oil had been discovered in the Negev.

Israel charged in November that it has documentary evidence proving that the British have been shipping and continue to ship arms to Arab forces. The evidence is said to show that two cargoes including aircraft, tanks and a large number of guns were en route from British bases in Libya to Amman, capital of Transjordan.

The Israeli State Council has approved the proposed flag for Israel which is similar to the present Zionist flag except that the stripes are vertical rather than horizontal as at present.*

The Provisional State Council has decided that the Constituent Assembly to be elected (in January?) will consist of 120 persons.*

BIROBIDJAN

Last autumn a new migration of 200 Jewish families arrived from Samarkand, in Uzbekistan, where they were evacuated during the nazi invasion. This is the first large group of immigrants to come to Birobidjan without first returning to their former homes in the USSR. Thousands of families in evacuee centers are now registering for immigration to Birobidjan. The new arrivals are settled in jobs.

Of the 1,770 Jewish families that arrived in Birobidjan between January 1947 and July 1948, 830 are on collective farms, 180 in factories, 125 in light industry, 100 in cooperatives, 165 in commercial enterprises, 50 in railway work, 25 in health services, 100 in building trades, 35 in teaching and 203 in other occupations. Nearly 10,000 persons are involved.

The local farm library at Waldheim contains more than 6,000 volumes and is believed to be the largest Jewish farm library in the world. Of the total, 2,600 of the volumes are in Yiddish. The library lends books, maintains a reading room and organizes literary evenings and concerts and sends books and newspapers to field workers during the harvest season.

When the schools resumed in September, there were 118 schools of all grades and 625 teachers. There are 48 Jewish kindergartens.

The Region has cultural institutions as follows: 39 reading rooms, 21 village libraries, 14 village clubs, 6 district houses of culture, 5 district libraries, a children's library, a city library and a district museum. Eighty independent artistic circles operate with at least 1,000 members.

(All items marked with an asterisk (*) were drawn from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency news service.)

