

# Jewish Life

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ISSUED MONTHLY BY THE MORNING FREIHEIT ASSOCIATION

## *Third Anniversary Issue*

### Articles by

*Howard Fast*

*Chief Rabbi Asher Hananel*

*Louis Harap*

*William Levner*

*John Hudson Jones*

*A. B. Magil*

*Vito Marcantonio*

*Henry Wallace*

## CULTURAL SECTION

**Short Stories** by *Julius Butwin* and *Yuri Suhl*

**Articles** by *Dr. Adolf Berman*, *V. Platon* and *Morris U. Schappes*

## From the Four Corners

Edited by Louis Harap

### AT HOME

ECHOES OF PEEKSKILL . . . On Sept. 13 a gang of about 60 hoodlums attacked a street meeting of the American Labor Party in the Bronx with cries of "N—r-lover," "Abie," and "You're going to have another Peekskill here." The parked car of former Congressman Leo Isacson was stoned by hoodlums in several cars. Police arrested 5 ALPers and one mobster, but all were subsequently released. . . . On Sept. 19 an egg was thrown at people coming out of a meeting of the United Parents Association meeting at Stuyvesant High School in New York. . . . The national office of the Jewish War Veterans has ordered that all units of the organization refrain "from initiating or participating in any public demonstration which poses a potential consequence of riot or public disorder" and to apply a "quarantine treatment to public appearances of, or utterances by communists, fascists and all other subversive elements." . . . On being asked what he thought of the Peekskill riots, retired heavyweight champion Joe Louis exclaimed: "Everyone in the United States is guaranteed the right to speak his mind! That means Paul Robeson too. I don't know what songs Robeson sung or what he said. But right or wrong Robeson should be allowed to sing and speak for what he believes! The people who throw rocks—they're what's wrong with this country! They are the ones who are wrong, wrong wrong!" . . . In a statement "Rabbi" Benjamin Schultz, Jewish red-baiter extraordinary, asserted that no veterans were involved in the rioting or anti-Semitism at Peekskill, commended Gov. Dewey for his "investigation" and charged that "communist tactics" were responsible for this "first" manifestation of group tensions in the area.

MACY'S BOOK DEPARTMENT removed from its stock in August Paul Blanshard's *American Freedom and Catholic Power*, documented attack on the politics of the Catholic hierarchy. Macy's disclaimed that the withdrawal was prompted by pressure. Beacon Press, Boston publishers of the book, reported that two of its windows were smashed by stones on Sept. 6 (two days after Peekskill).

TWO HUNDRED DELEGATES representing Jewish youth and young adult councils and national Jewish youth organizations met for about a week in September at Narrowsburg, New York, in the second annual meeting of the National Jewish Youth Conference. They passed resolutions calling for non-discriminatory amendments to the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, for a Senate investigation of the resurgence of nazism in Germany, for the defense of the rights of all minorities and others and for the enlargement of educational provisions for training in Jewish social work and education and for the rabbinate. The Conference is sponsored and supported by the Jewish Welfare Board. The delegates came from 65 communities in 24 states.

CHRISTIAN FRONTIER William J. Goodwin was revealed in September as being the chief United States lobbyist for the tottering government of Chiang Kai-shek. The \$25,000 a year lobbyist has been feeding propaganda material to senators and representatives.

A PETITION on behalf of the *Nation*, which has been banned from New York school libraries, was filed on September 27 with the state Supreme Court. The petition was filed by the magazine and is intended to force lifting of the ban.

# Jewish Life

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NOVEMBER, 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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AN OBVIOUS ATTEMPT to reduce Jews to second class citizenship has been made in the St. Louis police system of criminal identification. As in the case of the Jimcrow policy against the

Negro people, Jewish criminals are classified separately from "white American." The system is expected to be adopted by police on a national scale.

(Continued on page 48)



# FROM MONTH TO MONTH

## STILL TIME TO VOTE

**R**ARELY does a municipal election in any part of the country arouse the interest of the nation. For in most cases emphasis is upon strictly local issues that are, in the main, the concern of the citizenry of the given municipality. The New York City elections this fall, however, constitute one of those rare examples where the outcome will leave its impress not only upon local, but upon national politics as well.

The basic issues, domestic and foreign, that face the American people have come to a head in the New York City elections. The issues are sharply drawn there not only because of the necessarily national and international significance of that city, but also because New Yorkers are being offered a genuine choice through the fighting American Labor Party. The leading candidates are Rep. Vito Marcantonio, who is running for mayor on the American Labor Party ticket, and New York City Councilman Benjamin J. Davis, who is running for re-election on the American Labor Party and Communist Party tickets.

What are the issues that these candidates and their whole ticket have crystallized? They are the interconnected problems arising from the threat to the well-being and security of America as expressed by control of our government, local and national, by agents of the big money interests. This control has meant inaction or worse on housing, unemployment benefits, the high cost of living, adequate education and medical care, labor's rights, and it has put civil liberties in the greatest danger since the founding of our country. The issues include police brutality and discrimination against the Negro people, rising anti-Semitism and the fascist-like attack on all progressives, communist and non-communist. The issues include exposure and reversal of a foreign policy that lends support to reactionary and fascist forces all over the world, that is rushing us headlong into an atomic war.

These issues in sum form an interconnected pattern executed by the two old parties with trivial tactical differences. Foreign policy issues have their domestic counterparts. Deliberate renazification of Germany and the threatened alliance with Franco Spain are matched at home by the Foley Square trial, the persecution of progressives and oppression of the Negro people, and the shameful attempt of Governor Thomas E. Dewey to whitewash the Peekskill fascists. The revival of German and Japanese cartels under American tutelage is paralleled at home by the old parties' sabotage of rent control, the civil rights program and the whole range of local and national welfare measures. On the side of the big money are the Democratic and Republican Parties, with the Liberal Party supplying a much-

needed "liberal" cloak to both parties; on the side of the people are the American Labor Party and the Communist Party. In New York City this opposition of forces has incisively drawn the issues.

A coalition has gathered around the candidacy of the fiery, principled Congressman Vito Marcantonio, head of the American Labor Party, who has already demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt his advocacy of the best interests of the common people in an unparalleled record in the House of Representatives. His single-handed frustration of the attempt to substitute the slave-labor Woods bill for the hated Taft-Hartley law was only the most dramatic demonstration of his intensely sincere and consistent work for the rights and interests of the anonymous millions.

### *Who Opposes Marcantonio?*

A look at the opposition to Marcantonio reveals the inevitably anti-people's character of the old parties—oh, yes, and the Liberal Party. The administration of Mayor William O'Dwyer, Democrat, has been strewn with broken promises equalled only perhaps by the record of his fellow-Democrat, President Truman. O'Dwyer promised that the fare would not be raised. Then he promised that the fare would not be raised without a referendum. He flagrantly and openly broke both promises. O'Dwyer has broken strikes with his police. He has refused to stop the shameful succession of killings and beatings of innocent, peaceful Negroes by his police. He lent his counsel to help the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company defend its Jimcrow policy in Stuyvesant Town. He raised a feeble voice against the Peekskill demonstration of fascism only weeks after it happened. And he has obediently supported the disastrous foreign and domestic policies of the Truman administration.

Marcantonio's other opponent is Newbold Morris, candidate for the Republican, Fusion and Liberal Parties. Morris is desperately trying to assume the mantle of Fiorello LaGuardia. But how can this mantle fit the man who is the candidate of Governor Dewey? And Senator John Foster Dulles? And David Dubinsky, who has not to this day spoken out against the Peekskill outrages?

Marcantonio has offered one hundred dollars to anyone, including Morris himself, who would prove that Morris will not vote for Dulles. Morris is allied with a governor who has lent comfort to the naked and outspoken Hitlerian, anti-Semitic, anti-Negro forces that erupted in Peekskill, by his disgraceful whitewash report, which even threatens to punish anti-fascists who had the courage to take measures of defense against lawless violence. Morris

is the party ally of senatorial candidate Dulles, the hypocritical leading Protestant layman who was a legal advisor to the Franco government and an American Firster. Dulles made the following un-American statement at Genesee, New York, in October: "If you could see the kind of people in New York City making up this bloc that is voting for my opponent [Herbert H. Lehman], if you could see them with your own eyes, I know that you would be out, every last man and woman of you, on election day." And Morris is also of the party of New York's Lieut. Gov. Joe R. Hanley, who said on September 29 of the Peekskill affair that "we ought to put a stop to free speech in these places."

Has Morris repudiated any of these leaders of his party or any of these statements? Of course, he has not. Or has Morris repudiated or in the slightest degree opposed the cold war policy and Dulles' leadership in the cold war strategy? Obviously, he has not. In local affairs has Morris pledged to push back the ten cent fare? On the contrary, the indication is that Morris will work for an even higher fare in 1950, if he is elected.

### ***Ben Davis, Candidate of All the People***

Another leading candidate is Councilman Benjamin J. Davis, active protagonist on all the greatest issues in the nation's greatest city. In the City Council, he has been the most vigorous voice for rent control, against segregated housing and discrimination of every kind and police brutality against Negroes, for labor's rights and against a witch-hunt in education. In his own person, as a member of the National Committee of the Communist Party, he is under indictment in the crucial test of the Bill of Rights at Foley Square. He has stood not only as a foremost protagonist for the rights of the Negro people, but of all the common people of New York and America. So formidable is his threat to the big money and Jimcrow interests that both Democratic and Republican Parties—oh, yes, and the Liberal Party—have all ganged up on him with a single Negro candidate, who, curiously enough, is an employee of that great champion of Negro and people's rights, Henry Luce. It is significant that no other Negro candidate has been put up by these three parties.

The election of Benjamin Davis would have far more than local significance. It would be a sign of profound popular rejection of the combination of forces which is prosecuting a policy of violence to civil liberties, labor's rights and the people's welfare and which is pursuing the cold war under forced steam. And the coalition of communist and non-communist progressives that is forming around Davis' candidacy has every chance of victory.

The issues are joined. On the one side, we see an uncompromising campaign to halt the decline in American living standards, to achieve genuine equality for every minority and to stop the drive towards an atomic war. On the other side we see the promotion of the big money campaign against the living standards of America, against the civil rights of Negroes and every minority group and for an insane, suicidal war. The latter is the policy of the

Republican-Democratic-Liberal combination. No demagoguery can erase the fact that the candidates of these parties, *all of them*, are adherents of the cold war policy. All their candidates, including Herbert H. Lehman, subscribe to the foreign policy of which Dulles has been a leading shaper. By repudiating these parties, the people of New York City have an opportunity to turn the reactionary tide.

**Make Marc Mayor!**

**Re-elect Ben Davis!**

## **THE FIGHT WILL GO ON**

**B**Y the time this issue reaches the reader, the verdict in the trial of the 11 communist leaders will probably have been rendered. Whatever the outcome, however, certain things are clear. The trial was only the climatic development of a cold-blooded campaign to bring fascism gradually on the American people. The communists were only the ostensible target of the campaign. Actually, the subjection of the whole American people is the objective of the big money conspirators, and the attack on non-communist progressives, on the Negro and Jewish peoples, as well as communists, has proceeded with breakneck speed. A systematic campaign to soften the brains of the American people by creating a hysterical anti-communist atmosphere, has had partial success. But only partial. For, despite the menacing implications of the eruption of naked fascism at Peekskill, the widespread revulsion against these events demonstrated that the pro-fascist program is far from a complete success. And a recent Roper poll showed that fully 95 per cent of the American people are not convinced that the civil rights of the communists should be abrogated. The deep-seated American tradition of freedom is not easily submerged in the swamp of deception and hysterical fear-mongering. The campaign has not reached its goal despite the attempt of the makers of this program of unreason to muffle their real intent with specious talk of "Americanism."

The trial itself had already constituted a deep breach of American freedom. Its very existence, which was an unprecedented placing of a legal political party in the dock not for any overt act, but for advocacy of certain *ideas*, was itself a grave violation of the Bill of Rights. And the venomous bias of Judge Medina, manifested at every stage of the trial, seriously hampered the presentation of the case for the defense. Five defendants were jailed in the course of the trial; relevant evidence was not permitted to be introduced; anti-Negro bias was manifested by the judge against the Negro defendants and witnesses and against Negro attorney George Crockett; one biased juror and one perjured juror were permitted to continue to sit on the case after exposure by the defense; and the "evidence" of stool-pigeons, a notoriously unreliable breed, formed the basis for the government's case. Such was the atmosphere of anti-communist prejudice and intimidation that pervaded the courtroom.

But just as the American people have not been com-



pletely cowed by the anti-communist hysteria, so the Communist Party and non-communist progressives will not cease the fight for the life of democracy in America. Whatever the verdict, the fight will go on. If the authors of the conspiracy to make America fascist think that this trial or hundreds like it will frighten the progressive movement into creeping into a shell of silence, they will find themselves much mistaken. The march of the common man, as Henry Wallace has pointed out, cannot be halted.

## STAR IN THE EAST

**T**HE proclamation of the People's Republic of China promulgated in early October is one of the great events in the history of the world. It marks an immense stride towards the liberation of all peoples of the world. For in our tightly knit world, the destiny of any group or any country is integrally dependent upon the strength of the progressive forces on a world scale. And this access of one third of the world's population to the camp of socialism has immeasurably strengthened those progressive forces. Conversely, this decisive removal of China from the reactionary powers of the world has dealt an irreparable blow to imperialism. The forces of progress—the Soviet and Chinese peoples, the new democracies and the many-million democratic people struggling against imperialism and reaction in their own countries, are strong. They are the guarantee of peace and security.

The significance of Chinese liberation to the Jewish people, as to all peoples, cannot be overestimated, even though a negligible number of Jews reside in China. For everyone knows that the welfare of the Jewish people is tied to the strength of progressive forces in the world, that the Jewish problem is not isolated from general problems. The complete equalization of the Jewish people with all others in the first socialist country is well known. In the Soviet Union the Jews have achieved full social, political and economic equality and anti-Semitism has been outlawed. The new democracies, which are travelling toward socialism, are following the same course. The addition of China to the camp of the liberation of all peoples brings closer the emancipation of the Jews on an international scale.

We hail the new people's China.

## HEAT ON ISRAEL

**T**HE Truman administration has started a triple-barrelled drive to shear Israel of its independence and to tag the Jewish state to its war plans. Prior to the opening of UN General Assembly in August, a "UN Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East" was designated as a sub-commission of the Palestine Conciliation Commission. The survey is headed by Gordon Clapp, former chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority, with vice-chairmen from Britain, France and Turkey. The function of the committee is to study plans for a settlement of Israel-Arab prob-

lems and to investigate the economic capacities of Israel with a view to rendering "aid" for development of the country. The latter objective is frankly seen as part of the Truman "Point Four" plan for the "development of backward areas." Secondly, at the General Assembly in September, Secretary of State Dean Acheson expressly indicated that the United States would support the internationalization of Jerusalem, which would in effect create an "American enclave" in Palestine. In addition to these public moves, pressure is being applied on the Israeli government behind the scenes both for acquiescence by that government to the Jerusalem plan and acceptance of several hundred thousand Arab refugees without assurance of a satisfactory peace settlement.

All this adds up to a new, thinly disguised version of the ill-fated Bernadotte Plan, which would clamp imperialist American domination on the Middle East and Israel in particular. *Al Hamishmar*, United Workers Party (Mapam) organ, has commented that the survey commission is not a genuine UN enterprise, since it has excluded the Eastern bloc. "Israel cannot oppose objective investigation by the UN," *Al Hamishmar* continues, "but she can and should object to her vital interests being dealt with by a one-sided political committee whose real aim is to take whatever measures are necessary for the consolidation of the western bloc and not to work for the good of the peoples of the Middle East." *Kol Haam*, communist daily, was more explicit: it pointed out that the survey group was intended to help locate Israel in the American anti-Soviet military strategy and to facilitate expansion of United States influence in backward areas.

What does all this mean? That the United States is determined to impose its policy on Israel and the whole Middle East—a policy of ruthless exploitation of backward areas to the advantage of American monopoly capital, and of ringing the Middle East into its war plans. These efforts to rob Israel of her independence and to make her into a semi-colony of the United States is an integral part of the over-all Truman policy of imperialism and war preparation. The plan for the internationalization of Israel must be rejected. It is clear that the fight for the independence and integrity of Israel demands unremitting struggle against the whole foreign policy of the Truman administration.

### GREETINGS

### TO THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

on the second anniversary of the UN  
decision to set up Jewish and Arab  
states in Palestine

NOVEMBER 29, 1947

# THE "NEW ORDER" IN GERMANY

By Vito Marcantonio

WHILE the world was still engaged in the war against nazism, millions of people in America and abroad were asking, "What is to be done with Germany?" What guarantees shall be established that the German bankers, militarists and Junkers, who had twice within one generation unleashed untold bloodshed and destruction, be deprived of the power ever to launch war again? What was to be done with the nazis and their collaborators, who were guilty of crimes against humanity, the like of which had never been witnessed by civilized nations?

Under the leadership of a wise and far-sighted statesman, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, America answered those questions. That answer was founded on a clear understanding of the international situation arising out of the war and of the role of America in international affairs, if peace was to be achieved and maintained. That answer called for international cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union as the very foundation stone of any durable peace. The declaration of principles on post-war Germany which was issued by the Great Powers at Crimea, derived from and was predicated upon this basic concept. The historic declaration at Crimea announced to the world the firm resolve of the Big Powers to destroy "German militarism and nazism," "To break up for all time the German General Staff," to "wipe out the Nazi Party, nazi laws, organizations, and institutions."

These principles were further developed and expanded at the meeting of the Big Powers at Potsdam in July 1945. Agreement was reached on the payment of reparations to the nations that had suffered at the hands of the nazi war machine. Precise directives were laid down for the punishment of war criminals, for the demilitarization, denazification, decartelization and democratization of Germany.

What has happened since those fateful days? Delbert Clark, *New York Times* correspondent, gives the answer in his recent book, *Again the Goose Step*. Says Clark:

"Four years after the surrender of Germany, American correspondents were writing dispatches about jack-booted young toughs, marching in political parades and singing *Deutschland Ueber Alles*; about the recapture of the school system by nazi teachers; about the restoration of Germany's highly integrated industry to its old managers; about the unashamed resurgence of anti-Semitism; about the nazis in key positions in the police force.

"These things do not 'just happen.' They have been the

CONG. VITO MARCANTONIO is the American Labor Party candidate for mayor of New York City. The above was delivered before the House of Representatives on Tuesday, October 4 and concluded with a resolution ordering a full and public investigation of the American Military Government.

result of a policy which ignored history, ordinary common sense and the national interests of the United States of America. Worse; they have resulted from a policy which was never publicly announced, but which went into effect piecemeal, undercover, almost furtively, while the nation and the world were being assured that nothing was changed."

We have betrayed our trust. We have made a farce out of denazification. We have allowed the German General Staff to go free. We have returned to power Hitler's bankers and industrialists who kept Hitler's war machine in high gear, who grew fat on the looting and enslavement of millions of people. We have permitted storm troopers and anti-Semites and Gestapo men to determine the future of the "new order." We have ripped to shreds the promise of peace held out at Yalta, Teheran, Crimea and Potsdam.

In the spring of 1945, General Eisenhower, standing amid the corpses of Buchenwald, declared to the newly appointed civilian administrator of the camp: "Please inform your comrades, we will right everything in which they have been wronged." What has happened to that promise? In the first flush of victory we made some feeble efforts on behalf of the victims of fascism. Some nazi property was turned over to anti-nazis and political opponents of the Hitler regime. Two years later, however, this property was returned to the nazis by decree of German courts.

In the first flush of victory and under the impact of the universal demand for the destruction of the armies that had wreaked such havoc upon mankind, we made some feeble efforts at bringing some of the military leaders to justice. But in 1948, not only were these nazis at liberty, but German legislative bodies were voting pensions to all ex-Wehrmacht officers and their widows. We were righting everything with a vengeance. The 27-year old widow of a nazi major since 1931, Landrat Hoellfritsch was granted a monthly pension of 500 marks. But the widows of German anti-fascists who had been murdered in concentration camps were granted a bounty of 80 marks a month.

## The Decartelization Farce

In 1947, former Secretary of War Kenneth Royall announced that the "pernicious cartels in Germany were abolished." But by the end of 1948 the evidence that German cartels were very much alive and flourishing had become such a scandal, that Royall was forced to appoint a three man committee, known as the Ferguson Committee, to investigate the decartelization program. The committee reported that: "The decartelization program, despite uncontroverted policies and clear directives, has not been



effectively carried out. After almost four years of occupation and two years of operation under an adequate law, the program has not proceeded very far."

This was a masterpiece of understatement. The fact is, and the testimony gathered by the Ferguson Committee proves conclusively, that the decartelization program was never implemented. General Draper, vice president of Dillon, Read, the firm that had helped to build up the Ruhr in 1926 by loaning Fritz Thyssen one hundred million dollars and which later helped finance Hitler's war machine, saw to that. And when Draper left to become Undersecretary of the Army, he was assured that his policies would be continued by the appointment of his son-in-law, Philip Hawkins, to head the decartelization division. "Within six months," writes Delbert Clark, "decartelization was interpreted out of existence, and the branch was largely broken up." These men made no bones about their opposition to the denazification and decartelization program. In fact, General Draper stated before the Ferguson Committee that General Clay knew his views on the subject. Yet General Clay did nothing to remove the men who were sabotaging the program for the establishment of a democratic Germany.

While American bankers in diplomatic frock coats or general's uniforms were ensuring that their nazi banker, and industrialist friends got proper treatment, highly respected and sincere Americans who had been appointed to supervise denazification and decartelization and who were naive enough to believe that their superiors really meant business, were driven to despair and either resigned in disgust or were quietly eliminated. Such was the case with James Stewart Martin, Russ Nixon, Johnston Avery, Heinz Norden, George Wheeler and a host of others.

### **War Criminals Go Free**

Decartelization was of course not the only field in which we manifested our feverish haste to be done with Potsdam. Equally revealing is what happened to our solemn promise to mete out punishment to those guilty of war crimes. At Nuremberg, we joined with the Big Powers in giving a name to the unspeakable crimes that had been committed by Hitler and his cohorts. We coined a new word—*genocide*—to describe the mass murder of millions of people. But what happened? Von Papen and Fritzsche were freed. Schacht, financial adviser to Hitler, was acquitted on the grounds that he was not the actual "trigger man" and because it had not been proved beyond doubt that he was aware of Hitler's plans. Justice Charles B. Sears of Buffalo, New York, who allowed three leading nazi industrialists to go free, ruled on December 22, 1947 that "a person cannot become guilty of a crime against humanity merely by exerting anti-Semitic pressure to procure . . . industrial property owned by Jews." In other words it was not a crime if one "merely" had a Jew killed in order to take over his property. This, by the way, is the same Judge Sears who ordered the deportation of Harry Bridges, West Coast labor leader, in 1942 on the grounds that he was a "dangerous alien."

Schacht had prophesied that he would go free. Captain C. M. Gilbert, United States psychiatrist who was attached to the Nuremberg prisoners awaiting trial, told in October 1946 of a talk he had one day with Schacht.

"Schacht laughed in his cell at the suggestion that German industrialists were to be indicted for rearming Germany.

"If you want to indict industrialists who helped Germany to rearm, you will have to indict your own, too.

"The Opel Works which did nothing but war production, were owned by General Motors. . . . You cannot indict industrialists," said Schacht.

But it was not only the bankers we freed. Having decided to reestablish a militaristic Germany and to resurrect the anti-Comintern axis, it was of course desirable to enlist not only bankers and industrialists but every storm trooper, Gestapo agent and nazi we could lay our hands on. Ilse Koch, who practiced the art of making lampshades out of skin of murdered persons, was certainly too valuable to allow to be sent to the gallows.

I have no idea where Hitler or Goebbels may be now but I am certain that wherever they are, they must have had a good laugh if they had heard the announcement of the American Military Government on August 15 that the denazification program was 99.8 per cent complete. How they must have chortled to read Drew Middleton's report



**Congressman Vito Marcantonio chats with New York City Councilman Benjamin J. Davis, who is running for re-election on the American Labor and Communist Party tickets.**

in the *New York Times* on August 24, that newspaper licensing had been abolished and that 80 pro-fascist papers, in many cases under the same names used during the Nazi regime and under the same publishers, would make their appearance again. Among the new publishers are such people as Max Willmay, formerly connected with Julius Streicher's pornographic, anti-Semitic gutter sheet, *Der Stürmer*. Another new publisher is Dr. Ottmar Best, who edited the *Allgemeine Deutsche Zeitung* under Hitler. According to Middleton, Best stated that "my paper will show the German people what they lost when they lost Hitler."

### **Renazification Policy**

These are only a few of the signs of the revival of fascism in Germany. They are no surprise to anyone who has followed events in Germany. They are a result of the policy which began as soon as American troops moved into Germany. That policy became evident when progressives and democratic Germans in the western zone were subjected to intimidation, when efforts were under way to suppress the trade union movement and to prevent it from playing a leading role in the democratization of Germany. The course of American policy in Germany, approved by the leadership of the Democratic and Republican Parties, was indicated by Allan Dulles in November 1946, at a meeting of the American Bankers Association, when he stated: "For us it is essential to participate in a leading capacity in the rebuilding of German economy in order to stabilize the economic situation in the United States through control of the German economy and to assure American firms suitable profits." And his brother, John Foster Dulles, similarly indicated the direction and the orientation of American policy-makers when he declared that with the enactment of the Ruhr statute, "the United States has now become a European power in western Germany."

No single incident, however, is as revealing of our determination to renazify Germany as the recent elections in Trizonia under the Bonn Constitution, which we hailed as "democracy in action." And more significant perhaps than the results of the elections is an event which took place in Munich during the course of the campaign. On August 9, a letter appeared in the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*. The letter was signed "Adolf Bleibtreu [remain true to Adolf]." The writer went on to say: "I work for the Americans and they say they can forgive us everything except that we did not gas all the Jews."

One thousand Jewish displaced persons who gathered in front of the newspaper offices to protest this scurrilous attack were assaulted and driven away by the German police, urged on by a rabid mob.

General von Wagener, U.S. Military Governor of Bavaria, took no action to prevent a recurrence of the letter and its shocking sequel but merely reprimanded the offending newspaper. And at a meeting held in the mayor's office on August 17, the police were cleared of charges of anti-Semitic conduct and their behavior was interpreted as action in the line of duty.

The pogrom in Munich on August 11 speaks volumes as to where western Germany is heading four years after the "destruction of nazism."

### **Electoral Victory for Fascism**

Not democracy but nazism was the victor in these elections. Dr. Konrad Adenauer, the American approved president of the constituent assembly which framed the Bonn Constitution, had been a servant of the coal and steel magnates of Germany as far back as 1919. His "reliability" was manifested very early when he proved to be one of the first German politicians to affirm: "We will never accept the Potsdam decisions." And the purpose he was serving was made perfectly clear during the course of the elections, when he stated: "One of the first tasks of the west-German state will be to demand admittance to the union of the Atlantic Pact nations."

If any further proof were needed of how the west German chancellor intends to "defend" western civilization and to rebuild democracy in Germany, one has only to study some of his cabinet appointments. As Finance Minister, Adenauer has appointed Fritz Schaeffer, who was prominent in Bavarian politics in 1923 and who in that very same year in a speech before the Bavarian Diet, passed off as mere jealousy any fears as to the menace of nazism.

Our policy in Germany has led to the revival of nazism, to the encouragement of anti-Semitism, to the rebuilding of a militaristic Germany. The fundamental principles which we accepted at Potsdam and which constitute the only basis for peace, have been violated by our government. James Stewart Martin, who headed the decartelization branch of the American Military Government in Germany from 1945 to 1947, expressed the matter quite clearly when he stated a year ago: "Hitler built his Nazi party on the slogan that nazism would save the world from communism. He might have vainly plotted forever had it not been for a handful of powerful financiers like Baron Von Schroeder, the Cologne banker, and powerful industrialists like Krupp, Thyssen and the I. G. Farben management. Their monopoly control was running Germany into bankruptcy; they had to find a scapegoat or risk losing control. Hitler was ready made for the job."

"The alliance of Germany's heavy industry trusts and cartels with the Nazis in a crusade against 'communism' fooled enough people once to help bring on the world's bloodiest war. It is now fooling them a second time."

"The U.S. is making Germany a 'bulwark against communism.' Reorganization of the heavy industry cartels in Germany has been called off; and Nazis are being allowed to slip back into their old grooves."

The Dulleses and the Drapers may be well satisfied with what they have achieved in Germany. For the reuniting of American and German cartels and bankers has paid off well. But for the American people, the policy we are now pursuing is disastrous and suicidal. Potsdam must be enforced and the shameful, undercover policy of rebuilding a Nazi Germany must be halted.



# I WAS THERE, MRS. POLIER

By William Levner

IN her voluminous 19-page effort to justify the American Jewish Congress leadership, Mrs. Justine Wise Polier finds it necessary to resort to ingenious devices. In her document, under Point IV entitled "Group Libel Legislation," Mrs. Polier says: "By November 1948 the Commission on Law and Social Action had completed the draft of a bill which legal experts believed was the only sound statute thus far drafted in this field. *There was no secret about it.* The principles of the bill were discussed and approved at an executive committee meeting in November." (Emphasis mine.—W.L.)

As a member of the executive committee representing the American Jewish Labor Council, I very well recall the "discussions" of that November meeting. I had looked forward to the group libel bill as the culmination of years of effort on the part of Congress members to force the preparation and introduction of a bill against anti-Semitism, despite the bitter opposition and obstruction of Congress leadership. Mr. Shad Polier, who exercises general jurisdiction over CLSA, took the floor and announced that a group libel bill had been drafted and was ready for introduction into Congress. After some vague inference to the "principles" of the bill, he moved approval of the measure. I was flabbergasted.

Here was the most important piece of legislation ever prepared by Congress and a three-minute announcement was deemed sufficient to introduce it. I recalled the bitter fight at the 1948 convention when Shad Polier, David Petergorsky, Rabbi Irving Miller and Mrs. Justine Wise Polier herself vainly tried to prevent passage of a resolution instructing CLSA to draft a group libel bill and to make progress reports at subsequent meetings of the administrative committee. I recalled the lengthy controversies over the Buckley Bill and the calumnies levelled against it by the Congress leadership. After all this, Shad Polier could stand there and blandly call for authorization by the executive committee of a group libel bill *sight unseen*.

I took the floor and, after emphasizing the importance of the announcement, requested that a copy of the drafted legislation be made available to every member of the executive committee. Mr. Polier refused to accede to this request on the fantastic ground that someone, presumably the Jewish People's Fraternal Order and the American Jewish Labor Council, might "steal" this precious document. I then proceeded to make a formal motion to pre-

vent introduction of the group libel bill until the executive committee had read the measure and approved its contents. Mr. Polier opposed the motion and after confusing the question with some fancy red-baiting, twisted the entire matter into a question of confidence in the leadership. Unfortunately, Mr. Polier's appeal to blind prejudice prevailed and the executive committee bought a cat in a bag when it authorized the unseen group libel bill legislation to be introduced.

The next time the group libel bill was heard from was in the form of an American Jewish Congress news release dated February 2, 1949, announcing that the measure had been introduced that day in the House of Representatives by Rep. Arthur M. Klein in cooperation with four other representatives. A few days later a mimeographed copy of the Klein Bill was circulated among Congress chapters and affiliates. Until that day no one outside a few people in CLSA and in the Congress leadership had seen the group libel legislation.

A reading of the text of the Klein Bill clearly showed why the Congress leadership had feared to expose it to the light of free discussion before its introduction into the House of Representatives. Despite the leadership's control of a majority of the executive committee, that body might have balked at approving this monstrous distortion of the will of the Congress convention. Since the Congress leadership were basically opposed to legislation outlawing anti-Semitism in the United States despite the explicit instructions of the last convention, they prepared a measure designed to frustrate any real effort in this field. The Klein Bill was so bad that no opponent of anti-Semitism could support it. The Klein Bill, as has been demonstrated in a previous analysis contained in JEWISH LIFE [April 1949], would actually legalize anti-Semitism, turn it into an instrument against the Negro people and against organized labor. It makes not the slightest reference to the evil of anti-Semitism. Its inherent contradictions have doomed the Klein Bill to a quiet death. In a discussion with Rep. Emanuel Celler, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, where the Klein Bill now rests, George Starr, of the JPFO, and I were informed that the measure "would never see the light of day."

Yes, Mr. Shad Polier had good reason to keep his monstrosity under cover until it could be sprung without any discussion. Mrs. Polier now compounds this chicanery by claiming "there was no secrecy about it." Facts are stubborn things and they will out, despite all the voluminous documents with which the Congress leadership seeks to bury them.

WILLIAM LEVNER is the executive secretary of the American Jewish Labor Council.

# WHICH WAY FOR AJ CONGRESS?

By Louis Harap

**D**URING the past few weeks two pieces of material were mailed out by the national office of the American Jewish Congress. The first was a 19-page, single-spaced memorandum signed by Judge Justine Wise Polier, with a covering letter signed by the national leadership endorsing the memorandum. This documents purports to be a detailed answer to the charges made in recent months against the Congress leadership. It was sent to all chapter and division presidents. In addition, a four-page printed brochure, containing little of the so-called documented material but practically all of the red-baiting, has been circulated to the entire membership.

The Congress leadership, which boasts so extravagantly of its unparalleled record, has never, to our knowledge, sent its membership any mailing urging it to become more militant and more energetic in the struggle against anti-Semitism, for denazification, in behalf of Israel, etc. But the leadership did not hesitate to use communal funds, entrusted to it for the above purposes, to mail out 40,000 to 50,000 circulars to red-bait and smear.

On the previous page we printed a statement by William Levner concerning one item in Mrs. Polier's memorandum. We hope that you have read this carefully. And we hope that, if Congress members have an opportunity to read this statement at their chapter meetings alongside of Mrs. Polier's document, they will do so. Let those who read the statement decide if any amount of red-baiting can cover up the facts given by Mr. Levner.

Personally, we feel that nothing has better exposed the bankruptcy of the bureaucratic misleadership of Congress than Mrs. Polier's document. Every page of it is an affront to any Congress member who has had to buck the Congress leadership to carry out some militant mass action.

We do not intend to make a page-by-page refutation of this document. We do not have the space for it, nor do we think it necessary. But we do believe it important to go into a few basic points raised by the memorandum.

## *Parallels With AJ Committee*

On page one, Mrs. Polier writes:

"Within the past four years, the entire Congress movement has been completely revitalized . . . as one of the most dynamic forces in the Jewish and general communities. Our impact . . . has been phenomenal. During these years, expansion has taken place in one area of work after another. . . .

"Now Congress has brought into the life of the Jewish community and the general community new and vitalizing concepts. A Commission on Law and Social Action

has been forged, recognized . . . as the outstanding body of its kind in the country. The Commission on Community Interrelations, less dramatic in its operations but no less fundamental in its contributions, has been built. . . . *Congress Weekly* has been developed into the most important and widely quoted journal of its kind in the country. The Office of Jewish Information was established as the only service of its kind. . . ."

All this sounds very impressive. But as we read this, it sounded very familiar. We finally remembered where we had read stuff like this before. In our files we found a speech made in May 1946 by Dr. John Slawson, executive vice-president of the American Jewish Committee, on the work of the Committee. The speech contains an elaborate and handsome chart showing a breakdown of the various Committee departments and their functions. Dr. Slawson then says:

" . . . The Legal and Fact Finding Department is one of the most effective operations I know of. I think you and I can sleep more soundly nights because of the existence of that unit. . . . Now I proceed to Group Discussions. . . . This is a unique experiment. . . . This is a daring experiment. . . . Now I pass on to the Scientific Research. . . . It has the function of a longer-range research into the basis of anti-Semitic sentiment in America. . . . Now we go on to Community Service, and I want to say that this is an unheralded, unsensational, but extremely vital service. . . ." Dr. Slawson continues to analyze the unique character of the Committee magazine, *Commentary*, and the role of the cultural, foreign and other departments.

The similarity between the two statements is striking. Congress has its Commission of Community Interrelations; the Committee its Community Service Department. Mrs. Polier describes her department as "less dramatic in its operation but no less fundamental in its contributions"; Dr. Slawson calls his department an "unheralded, unsensational but extremely vital service." And so on down the line. Both have expanded their departments of "experts." And, for that matter, so has the Anti-Defamation League. What then is the difference between Congress and the Committee?

## *But Where Is Mass Action?*

Now it may well be true that, if we were to make a detailed analysis of these organizations, we would find that Congress has entered more briefs in the courts and instituted court proceedings in a number of instances where the other organizations refused to do so. Yet it is a



fact that in many of the instances which Mrs. Polier cites, such as the Vashti McCollum case, and takes credit for, all of the organizations submitted briefs. But even granting the edge to Congress on such questions, is this the *raison d'être* for the existence of Congress? Was Congress founded to duplicate the work of other organizations, to become a committee of "experts"? Anyone who knows the history of Congress is aware that this is not so. In exactly the one field into which the other organizations have doggedly refused to venture, but rather have deliberately opposed and sabotaged, Congress was supposed to be outstanding. *And that was the field of mass action, of democratic mobilization of the entire community, without regard to political or religious belief, in the struggle for Jewish survival.* That was the reason for the creation of Congress. Without that purpose, Congress must inevitably become another American Jewish Committee. And there is no need for two such organizations. That is how Rabbi Stephen S. Wise envisioned Congress when he stated in 1916: "We have chosen the name Congress because no lesser name would measure the significance of an assembly of democratically chosen representatives of the Jewish people of the land." But strangely enough, while Mrs. Polier has much to say about "expansion" and about the numerous committees and "experts," she has little to say about this basic, vital aspect of Congress. For the truth is that the "progress" of which Mrs. Polier speaks is not in the direction of making Congress more democratic or of involving the Jewish community in greater activity in defense of the Jewish people and of democracy. As a matter of fact, anyone who tries to work thus in Congress today is either expelled or threatened with expulsion.

### By Their Deeds . . .

Mrs. Polier may red-bait as much as she likes and believe that thereby she is blinding people to the fact that the mass character of Congress is being destroyed. But she cannot evade the facts. And those who joined Congress rather than the Committee or the ADL because they wanted to fight for equal Jewish rights and refused to sit around with clasped hands while the "experts" decided what should and should not be done; those who are sick and tired of hearing the dictum—"Just leave it to us and everything will be fine"—will demand something more than evasion and red-baiting to justify this betrayal of the struggle.

Let us judge the Congress leadership and their activities, not on the basis of what we say, but of their own utterances. On March 16, 1947, Dr. David Petegorsky, in a speech delivered before the National Community Relations Advisory Council, affirmed: "Democracy has never been won anywhere unless there has been a mass movement behind the fight. There must be a mass organization and mass pressure if these rights are to be won."

"Let me digress here for a moment to comment on

some of the things that were said here this morning. I am somewhat amazed and amused. We talk about inter-group relations, about community relations. But most of us seem to be thinking only of a one-way traffic. . . . I am interested, not simply in a relationship between a group of professionals turning out a lot of material and working on projects *on behalf* of the Jewish community, and the non-Jewish community. I am interested in relationships between one community and another. And I therefore say that for the sake of the Jewish community, its strength, its self respect, its dignity, its awareness of what is happening to it, we must so fashion our techniques for improving community relations as to permit the community itself the fullest participation in the program. That is why I emphasize the need for a mass basis, for mass organization and mass pressure in this fight for democratic rights."

Bravo, Dr. Petegorsky! And for shame too, Dr. Petegorsky! Why has Congress membership grown smaller? Why are you so militant in words but so passive in deeds? Why can Mrs. Polier talk easily about everything under the sun but only falter and stammer when it comes to the issue of mass organization? Why was the organization department first hampered and then reduced? Why are there no mass membership drives built up around fighting programs of actions?

But let us return to the issue of the Klein group libel bill. Mrs. Polier exclaims with an air of injured innocence, "What secrecy?" Mr. Levner, we believe, has stated the facts. He has given the reason why progressives could not support the bill. But let us for the moment leave Mr. Levner's arguments aside. Congress leadership has piously affirmed its belief that it is "the only sound statute thus far drafted in the field." *What then did Congress leadership do to mobilize the community for the passage of this bill?* If the leadership felt that this was the measure that would do the job of helping to lessen the menace of anti-Semitism, why didn't they rally mass sentiment and action on its behalf? They have shown great initiative in getting out documents and folders to red-bait the opposition. They have sufficient money to send representatives to various parts of the country to destroy all opposition. Why couldn't they have shown at least as much initiative in organizing mass meetings, delegations, petitions on behalf of the Klein Bill?

### Why Red Baiting?

Congress members should recognize that there is an inextricable tie between the forsaking of mass action and red-baiting. The relationship is fundamental, as can be well illustrated from Congress experience. During the war and for a short time thereafter, Congress leadership followed the road of unity. During the war years, Rabbi Wise and other Congress leaders took the initiative in urging the admission of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order into the American Jewish Conference. These were

also the years during which Congress leadership was encouraging or at least allowing mass action. But the picture changed very rapidly. And the story of that change is familiar to most active Congress members. Mass action has been increasingly blocked and discouraged. More and more, authority and planning are relegated to the steering committee, the bureaucracy and the "experts." And the policy of exclusion and expulsion, all executed with great finesse (nothing political, you know—just technical), proceeds apace.

Some people may say: "Well, the communists and left-wingers have changed. They were going along with the Congress program, but now they are opposed to it." Suppose, for the moment, we were to accept the hypothesis. What has this to do with mass action? Whether you like communists or not, you will admit that denazification is one of the gravest problems facing mankind and certainly the Jewish people. Why has the leadership hindered mass action on this vital issue?

Or take the question of Israel. Suppose it had been the Soviet Union that had placed an embargo on Israel during the fight for its life against heavy odds. Suppose it was the Soviet Union that had attempted to impose a Bernadotte Plan and the internationalization of Jerusalem. One can imagine the tumult, the screaming headlines, the resolutions and the mass meetings attacking the Soviet Union. But it was not the Soviet Union but the American government that has done all these things. Does this by any chance explain why the Congress leadership have been so reluctant to tolerate action, are so determined to speak softly?

The logic of the situation cannot be avoided. The renazification of Germany is official American policy. The attempt to weaken Israel in one way or another, to rob it of its territorial integrity, is official American policy. Honestly and effectively to carry on a struggle for Jewish and American security demands a struggle against these policies. Congress leadership is unwilling to carry on such a fight, is afraid of such a fight. It therefore must not only sabotage all mass action on these issues, but also silence those who insist upon carrying through a real campaign. But if this is true, it is the Congress leadership that is sabotaging Congress, and no one else. Indulgence in red-baiting will not change these facts one iota.

### ***Necessity for Jewish Unity***

The fact remains that once you accept the proposition that many real dangers confront the Jewish people today, you must conclude that the Jewish community should mobilize and join with all American democratic forces in a fight to the finish. The Jewish community faces disaster. To fight against this danger, one must of necessity accept the principle that all available forces, regardless of political beliefs, must unite to fight this danger. For maximum strength is needed to achieve victory. And how can we achieve it, if our ranks are split even before

the battle has started? There are some who argue that they really favor such united struggles. But they fear that, if they join with communists and left-wingers at this time of great hysteria, such unity will handicap the struggle and make it harder.

This argument sounds plausible and very often comes from well meaning and sincere people. But if one studies the logic of this argument, one will find that it is based upon most dangerous illusions. For such notions arise from the idea that if one acts respectably, one will be able to convince the proponents of renazification, the antagonists of Israel, the fomenters of anti-Semitism to reverse or at least to modify those policies. The argument is predicated on the theory that if one can show that one is untainted by radicalism, one will convince the enemy that he is wrong. What is more, this theory supposes that somehow one can get the reactionaries to leave the Jews alone without abandoning reactionary views.

But the effect of this tender concern for what reactionaries will think, is to clear the road and make things easier for the reactionary, which is exactly what he wants. Why the hue and cry in America today, the hysteria and the loyalty oaths, the witch hunts, the communist trials, if not to silence all opposition, to put fear into the people, to intimidate them so that there will be no unified opposition? In this way those who oppose what is happening, will be bickering among themselves instead of working in concert against reaction. Congress members must therefore understand that the enemies of the Jewish people and of democracy can be successfully fought only by a united phalanx of all forces in common opposition to the encroachment of fascism.

### ***No Second-Class Jews***

The Jews of America are faced with a challenge no less serious than that which faced the German Jews in the thirties. That challenge faces Congress. But the Congress membership should ask themselves if the leadership is not giving us an American version of the German Dr. Max Naumann, organizer of a reactionary, exclusive Jewish organization, who said in 1934: "It would be nonsensical to assume that all of the Jews living in Germany are fit to be integrated into the German people on the merit of their right understanding of the concepts of German peoplehood and duty. . . . We must zealously advocate that by means of a careful screening, on the basis of the merit of length of family domicile and patriotism, certain groups of Jews be already now accepted into the German community." In our own day and situation, the red-baiting tactics of the Congress leadership aimed at creating second-class Jewish status for anyone who disagrees with their policy, is performing the same function as Dr. Naumann did in Nazi Germany. Congress must return to a path of unity on a common program. This unity is absolutely essential for the survival of the Jewish people.



# WE WILL NEVER RETREAT

I.

WHEN I first listened to the radio reports and read the stories and looked at the photographs on Peekskill, they all seemed ominously familiar. The unreasoning hatreds, the racial overtones, the violence—all were part of a pattern I had seen before.

It had happened in Germany when Hitler was on the rise. "Jew" and "communist" became interchangeable, and the first mass victims of Hitler's whipped up mobs were the Jewish people. At Peekskill, a so-called "patriotic demonstration" against so-called "communists" soon turned into as anti-Semitic and anti-Negro a lynch mob as any Nazi demonstration. From blind and unreasoning anti-communism to anti-Semitism in but one step. I think it is particularly fitting that the Committee of Jewish Writers, Artists and Scientists should organize a protest against Peekskill and I congratulate you on your alertness in recognizing the full implications of Peekskill.

I want also to pay tribute to a man whose fortitude and good heart and devotion to principle I shall never cease to admire—the man around whom Peekskill became a symbol—Paul Robeson. The verbal rocks thrown at Paul Robeson are really tributes to his effectiveness in the fight for world peace and full equality for the Negro people.

At Peekskill, those who hurled the imprecations and the rocks and committed violence, were puppets. Someone else pulled the strings. But the tragedy is that they did not and do not know this. They do not know that they are victims of an artificially created hysteria which is playing upon their lowest prejudices, just as Hitler appealed to the worst in his countrymen.

We do not have a controlled press in this country nor any of the other paraphernalia of a dictatorship, but we do have budding American fascism, and Peekskill is the story of it.

Peekskill is a Westchester by-product of the cold war. When the cold war was launched, Peekskills were inevitable. It is easy to blame the hoodlums who threw the rocks and their elders who created in their homes such an hysterical atmosphere, that the hoodlums thought they were fighting a holy war. But the real blame lies with those who are responsible for creating such an atmosphere of hatred that violence was bound to erupt.

For four years we have witnessed a sharp rise in un-

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HENRY WALLACE, 1948 presidential candidate on the Progressive Party ticket, sent the above message to a rally on Peekskill sponsored by the American Committee of Jewish Writers, Artists and Scientists, held at Town Hall in New York on September 29, 1949.

*By Henry Wallace*

American activities, activities which made Jefferson fight back in his day and which we must resist, if we are to be faithful to our heritage. Loyalty oaths, establishment of the principle of guilt by association, challenges to our basic American liberties of freedom of thought and assembly—these are the inevitable concomitants of the cold war. These are the weapons which the administration, with the approval of leaders of both old parties and the fervent endorsement of the press, have been using to wage the cold war in this country. They led to violence in Evansville, Indiana, and in the South during the campaign last year, and they led to Peekskill.

I think it is sheerest hypocrisy for those who generated these incidents to say they deplore them. For the responsibility lies directly at the doorstep of the administration and the bi-partisan architects of our foreign policy. It is like paying lip service to peace after we have shipped arms to Greece and China. It is like paying lip service to the United Nations after we have drawn up arms pacts which negate the United Nations. It is the inevitable end of supporting fascism and reaction all over the world so long as they are anti-communist. In its pursuit of the cold war the administration has made out of one-half the world a museum of outworn kings and empires, landed aristocrats, ancient hierarchies and international cartels. Is it to make here at home a museum of the Ku Klux Klan and the vigilante spirit?

Many newspapers have been willing allies with the government in the cold war against all reason and common sense. Day after day and year after year they preached hatred. They have portrayed Russia as such a monster as to make all the agencies of world-wide reaction seem like defenders of democracy and freedom. They have portrayed Eastern Europe and its peoples as little monsters. I do not know all the facts about the countries of Eastern Europe, but common sense tells me that all can't be as black as the newspapers portray them. Some solid social achievements are being accomplished. Yet not a line of this appears in the press. Nothing but hatred does appear.

I said before that responsibility for this is bi-partisan. Governor Dewey can claim his share. I vainly tried to reach him that Sunday night to warn him of what was going on. I told his assistant what was transpiring and the only answer seems to have been more violence on the part of the police who were there supposedly to protect the concert-goers.

Governor Dewey's report is one of the most shameful public documents I have ever read. It is based upon the obviously subjective and biased reports of those officers

responsible for maintaining law and order and who, like Governor Dewey, failed in their duty. It is a palpable attempt to excuse in advance more Peekskills and to absolve in advance further derelictions of his own police.

Now that President Truman has revealed that we have no longer a monopoly on the atom bomb, it is obvious that efforts will be made to step up the campaign of hysteria and hatred. At the same time, however, throughout America and throughout the halls of Lake Success, second thoughts are beginning to express themselves and the voices of reason are beginning to be heard.

The struggle between reason and insanity is reaching its climax. Our weapons in this struggle are the weapons of reason and truth. Our weapons are the principles of fundamental Americanism as taught by Jefferson in the political Bill of Rights, expanded by Lincoln in the Emancipation

Proclamation and carried forward by Roosevelt in the Economic Bill of Rights.

The power of ideas will prevail over the power of force—the force of rocks or night sticks—or even atom bombs.

It is to the everlasting credit of those who attended the concert at Peekskill that they did not allow themselves to be provoked into using the tactics of the enemy. Their discipline and restraint under the most difficult circumstances must serve as an example for us all. We must never yield to provocation—but we must stand firm and never yield to pressures, either. The cause of free speech and free assembly is the purest cause in which to fight. We must never yield in that fight an iota. If, because of attacks, we lose heart and retreat, then the cause of justice is lost. We must never lose heart. We must never retreat. When we are attacked, we must fight back stronger than ever before.

## II.

ON SEPTEMBER 6th, the *Berkshire Evening Bugle*, one of the unholy company of American newspapers which have brought such bitter shame on all our country stands for published an editorial which said, in reference to Peekskill:

"The only real regret of the Civil Rights Congress is that nobody was killed. Whether the Commies had agents provocateurs planted in the crowd is a question; all that can be said is that such a stratagem would be thoroughly characteristic. At any rate, the apparent lack of deaths must be a serious disappointment to Howard Fast *et al.* A couple of good, well-publicized martyrdoms would revive business and furnish propaganda material for years, if not decades."

What does one say to that? What can one say? Every dying society casts up a scum, human in form but inhuman in content, yet I cannot recall such a race of touts in our America as these creatures who sit in most newspaper offices and write the editorials and rewrite the news. What can one say to them? They have no hearts, no souls, and the little spark of what was once human is dead inside of them.

I can only think of the exhibition of soap that appeared in New York City last year—little cakes of green soap, good for hard water and soft water, but made out of Jewish flesh, a simple nazi byproduct of 6,000,000 Jews who went

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HOWARD FAST is the outstanding novelist and anti-fascist who played a noteworthy part in the two Peekskill affairs. The above address was made at the 30th Anniversary Celebration of the Communist Party at Madison Square Garden on September 6, 1949.

By Howard Fast

to the gas chambers. Would this miserable newspaper of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, charge that the Jews had sought this?

I hate fascism, not only because of what it does to quiet, peaceful people, not only for what it does to workers and other anti-fascists, but for the caricatures of humanity it makes of the fascists themselves. That was what we saw at Peekskill. I wish that some of the well-padded editors who wrote the editorials on Peekskill could have been there that first night, when goo screaming, drunken hoodlums took up the nightmarish thread of modern history and announced that they were there to finish Hitler's work. That was what made Peekskill different, unique, something new in these United States. The storm troopers were marching—not in uniform yet, not yet with the guns on their hips, but storm troopers none the less.

It wasn't pretty; it wasn't pleasant to have to fight for your life in a lovely valley in Westchester County, where you had come only to hear a great, brave man sing the songs of the people; it wasn't pleasant to listen to a Peekskill business man—whose name we know, incidentally—frothing at the mouth as he loosed obscene gibberish, as he told us that what Prosecutor McGohey had started at Foley Square, they would finish there in Peekskill.

Yet, Governor Dewey, who assured the audience of protection and whose police then trapped those whom Dewey's pledge had lured, now blames the victims of the trap, as Hitler blamed the Poles and Czechs.

What insanity dares to say that we provoked this! That we wanted this! That we welcomed this! There was a young Negro next to me in the line that night, and a rock



the size of a grapefruit struck him in the face, smashing his nose, knocking out his teeth, turning his face into a bloody mass of broken flesh—and then later in the course of that nightmarish evening, there was a woman with a seven-year-old boy in her lap, and she said, "I must take him out of here because he's frightened." And we had to tell her, "You stay where you are because it is better for him to be frightened than dead." And in each case, with the Negro lad, who was 16 or 17 years old, and with this woman, who had raised her child quietly in a peaceful land, there was the sudden, shocked hurt of the knowledge of fascism—that hurt which is like a terrible wound across the body of the whole human race. . . .

I, for one, have had enough of violence. Like so many of you here, my whole life is threaded with it, and like so many of you, I cannot remember when there was peace. But I know that some day—and not too far off—there will be peace, and I know that peace will not be handed to us. It will be fought for and won, and as with all good things, we will pay a price. But that will be a very small price compared to the price paid by those who did not resist.

It is asked in certain quarters why Paul Robeson had to go back to Peekskill a second time. I can't answer that question. I can only ask another—how could Paul Robeson not have gone back to Peekskill a second time? Let us keep the facts straight—Paul Robeson went back to Peekskill in the name of the United States of America, in the name of the Negro people, the Jewish people and the great American working class. He returned because if he had not returned, something would have been lost, something fine and precious and to be found only in the ranks of the people these days. He knew that, and we knew it—and the Negro people knew it better than anyone else. And now, he and the Negro people, and we and the Negro people, are becoming like a rock that nothing will ever smash.

No, we did not seek this rotten, filthy fascist demonstration at Peekskill; we did not invite it; we did not want it—but we will and have already begun to turn it into its opposite; and out of it we will increase our strength and our fury, so that there will never be fascism in our country. And with every Peekskill—for mind you, this thing they planned and organized so well is only the beginning—with every Peekskill, we will do the same.

This petty, dirty, evil handful of selfish men in America are sowing an awful wind—and if they persist, they will reap a terrible whirlwind. If they ever read history, they would know how well history has substantiated this; but they are enamored of their own lies and they dwell in their own paranoid world. They have built an altar to the only God they know, the almighty dollar, and they would lay down the whole human race as a blood offering. Gentlemen, we decline—even as we declined at Peekskill.

And gentlemen, we are neither frightened nor confused. We have 25,000 witnesses who will brand District Attorney Fanelli a liar; we saw certain things and we won't forget them easily. When there were 36 of us against 900 drunken hoodlums, we fought for two and a half hours and never

a cop was seen. But when the score was reversed, when we brought 4,000 trade unionists to protect the concert from the same 900 hoodlums, a thousand police were thrown in on the side of the storm troopers.

Well, we know now, and we've learned deeper lessons than the ten miles of road that were strewn with blood and glass. We've begun to learn the meaning of Negro-white unity. We have come to understand that when the Negro people and the Jewish people stand together, there are 20,000,000 Americans—and 20,000,000 Americans are something to be reckoned with. We have come to know that there is a Communist Party here in America that will not lessen the glory of the immortal Communist Parties of Russia and China and Greece and France and Spain and Brazil and all the other lands where men know the meaning of the word *communist*. And most importantly, we know now that for every worker who is taken in by the filth of fascism, ten others will stand in our ranks, the way they stood around that meeting at Peekskill.

Only one more thing before I finish. If I speak a good deal of Negro-white unity, it is because in the past weeks I have learned a good deal of Negro-white unity. You may remember that on the Sunday of the concert, at ten minutes to two o'clock, we moved the truck which served as a platform under a tree. This was done because we discovered that two snipers with high-powered rifles were on the ridge above us, waiting for a chance to pick off Paul Robeson. You may also remember how a group of Negro and white men stood shoulder to shoulder behind Paul Robeson while he sang. They stood there so that their own flesh should protect him. That is the meaning of Negro-white unity—and if those who made Peekskill think that such men as these can be frightened, they are mistaken. As mistaken as Adolf Hitler was when he invaded the Soviet Union. A fascist conquest of our good and beautiful land will be no easier.



Paul Robeson singing at Peekskill on September 4.



Above are reproductions of the covers of four of the seven Yiddish textbooks published in 1949 by the Rumanian Ministry of Public Education. Subjects are Yiddish reading primers (two) and school texts of arithmetic and hygiene. The publication of these books, as well as many other evidences of the

promotion of Jewish life in Rumania, give the lie to recent reports of "suppression" of Jewish life in Rumania. In areas of compact Jewish population there are Yiddish day schools. The Jewish State Theater played before 90,000 last year. And a second Jewish cabinet minister was recently appointed.



# CHURCH AND STATE IN ISRAEL

By A. B. Magil

AN AMERICAN Jewish woman, an active member of Hadassah, recently visited Israel. She went full of ardent anticipation; she returned bitterly disappointed. "Most of the children," she told friends, "aren't getting a Jewish education. They don't study the Jewish religion, they don't learn the prayers." And she added without irony: "When they grow up, how will they know that they're Jews?"

The fact is that about one-fourth of Israel's children are educated in parochial schools in which religious study occupies the central place. And in the so-called general schools, attended by more than half the pupils, instruction is also largely in a religious spirit, though specific religious practice is left to the home. Only in the schools of the labor trend, comprising somewhat less than one-fourth of the pupils, is instruction completely secular. Nevertheless, to those American Jews for whom being a Jew is inseparable from a certain quota of ritual and indoctrination, it appears that most of Israel's younger generation are being reared in a Godless and heretical fashion.

It is also true that the great majority of the adult population are not religious. My offhand impression after six months in Israel is that religious observance is less widespread than among American Jews. Despite this organized religion is a real power and has managed to elbow its way into a dominating position in the country's life.

In Tel Aviv every Friday night all busses grind to a halt and do not resume operation till the stars come out the following evening. But should you insist on going to another part of the city on *Shabat*, the Sabbath, do not despair: you can travel by taxi—for more money, of course. On Saturday, which is the day of rest, all theaters, movies and other amusement places close down, and with the exception of a few restaurants and a limited number of drug-stores (whose addresses are published in the newspapers), no places of business are open. This is of course no worse than Sunday in certain parts of the United States.

More serious are other encroachments of organized religion on secular life. During Israel's liberation war, despite a serious meat shortage, the import of non-kosher meat was forbidden. It was also made illegal to transport non-kosher meat from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem—unless you happened to be a Christian. Jewish dietary laws are observed in all government-operated hospitals, prisons and other institutions, as well as in the institutions of *Kupat Cholim*, the Sick Fund of the Histadrut, the trade union federation. Under pressure of the clerical hierarchy the dietary laws were also introduced into the army despite the hardships

and increased expense involved. A young Israeli soldier told me that in his unit it was found extremely difficult to keep meat and dairy dishes separate in accordance with Jewish law; the problem was solved by dispensing with meat altogether. And throughout the armed forces cooking on the Sabbath is forbidden: the Israeli GI celebrates his day of rest by eating his food cold.

## *Invasion of Private Life*

Another aspect of this problem is clericalism's invasion of private relationships. There is no civil marriage or divorce in Israel. For that matter, there can be no religious marriage unless it is performed by an Orthodox rabbi, the only kind officially recognized. The late Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, for example, ardent Zionist though he was, could not have performed a marriage ceremony in Israel because he was a Reform rabbi. This also means that a Jew cannot marry a Gentile unless the Gentile becomes a convert to Judaism. Recently a Jewish woman married a non-Jew at a registry office in Paris. The couple then decided to settle in Israel. An Israeli district court annulled the marriage. The offense had been double: marriage to a Gentile and failure to have the ceremony performed by the proper religious authorities.

This religious monopoly in the field of marriage, divorce and other "matters of personal status" has been inherited from the British mandatory regime under which religious courts were set up and given jurisdiction in this sphere. Israel's proposed constitution provides for the continuation of this system. Rabbinical law also imposes various disabilities on women. A woman cannot get a divorce or write a will without her husband's consent.

All this is contrary to the trend among the people. In the first election last January 25 the United Religious Front, a bloc of four parties, polled only 12 per cent of the vote. Taking into consideration religious persons who voted for other parties, it is probable that no more than 20 per cent of the population can be called religious. "For those who have come here during the last three decades, and they constitute the great majority," wrote Gene Curri-van, Tel Aviv correspondent of the *New York Times*, "nationalism seems to have a greater hold on them than practical religion. . . . Except among the orthodox, who are a minority, religious practice is on the wane, although the Sabbath and traditional festivals are still observed." (December 25, 1948.)

Recently the Central Conference of American Rabbis, representing Reform Judaism, reported that there were three Reform congregations in Tel Aviv and that their

A. B. MAGIL was *Daily Worker* correspondent in Israel last year and has completed a book on Israel, to be published soon.

rabbis were denied official status. The very existence of these congregations would be news to nine out of ten Israelis. For institutionalized religion is almost entirely orthodox and it brooks no competition from such modern heresies as Reform Judaism. There are two main currents in orthodox Jewry: Zionist, represented by Mizrahi and Hapoel Hamizrachi; and non-Zionist, represented by Agudat Yisrael and Poalei Agudat Yisrael. The former has been more modern in its outlook, less rigid in its orthodoxy and at the same time more aggressive politically. The Agudat Yisrael group is fanatically fundamentalist. For years it actively opposed Zionism, insisting that the redemption of the Jews must await divine intervention. And until recently it refused to be an official part of the Jewish community or to cooperate with secular organizations.

These four groups serve as political parties and together constitute the United Religious Front. The largest among them is Hapoel Hamizrachi, the labor organization of the Mizrahi trend. Poalei Agudat Yisrael is its counterpart in the non-Zionist trend. In addition, there are several minor sects even more extreme than Agudat Yisrael. The most important is Neturei Karta (Guardians of the City), a Jerusalem group whose resort to violence last June against citizens who infringed the Sabbath (including soldiers driving army vehicles under military orders) attracted international attention. Incidentally, while these zealots have waged war against Jewish girls who committed the sin of wearing light summer dresses or using lipstick, they felt differently toward the Arab invaders of Israel. At one point in the battle of Jerusalem they staged a demonstration demanding surrender to Allah's and Bevin's anointed, Abdullah. And like the Arab governments, Neturei Karta has refused to recognize the Jewish state.

### **Political Clericalism**

It is not however, these petty tyrannies, but the political activity of which they are a part that constitutes the real menace. Though religion has no great hold on the Israelis, institutionalized religion and the clerical hierarchy have a very considerable hold on Israel. In fact, it cannot be said that the Mizrahi-Agudat Yisrael dream of converting Israel into a theocratic state is without substance. When the social democratic Mapai, the Israeli Labor Party, formed the first elected government, Prime Minister David Ben Gurion chose as his chief partner the United Religious Front. In his cabinet of 12 sit two rabbis, Rabbi Y. L. Maimon (Fishman) of Mizrahi, Minister of Religious Affairs, and Rabbi Y. M. Levin of Agudat Yisrael, Minister of Social Welfare. A third leader of the religious bloc, Moshe Shapira, Minister of the Interior, Immigration and Health, is also a graduate of rabbinical seminaries, but he does not practice his profession and is presumably a lay representative of the largest religious party, Hapoel Hamizrachi. Though this party adopts a more liberal view than Mizrahi on some issues, in its fundamental approach it takes its cue from the latter.

What Mizrahi's leading position means politically, may be judged from the fact that until the rise of the fascist Revisionist Party in the twenties, it represented the extreme right-wing of the Zionist movement. Repeatedly that offspring of Revisionism, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, found in Rabbi Maimon and his colleagues sympathetic "friends at court." When the provisional government of Israel was compelled in June 1948 to adopt measures to put down an attempted armed insurrection of the Irgun, Rabbi Maimon resigned in protest. He was later persuaded to return.

A distinction should of course be drawn between the Mizrahi leaders, whose power is out of all proportion to their following, and the many religious workers in Hapoel Hamizrachi and Poalei Agudat Yisrael, whose social aspirations are closer to those of the members of the Histadrut.

Zionism itself, by drawing much of its ideology and political argument from the ancient religious nexus with Palestine, permitted the obscurantists to get one foot in the door at the outset. Before long the Mizrahi was acting as if it were master of the house, despite the fact that it was always a minority in the Zionist movement. By 1921 the Mizrahi had succeeded in getting the Zionist congress to vote that all institutions subsidized by the World Zionist Organization must observe Jewish religious laws.

But the theocrats could not have made the progress they did had they not found in Mapai an "opponent" ready to meet them more than halfway. When Ben Gurion made them his principal partner in the government, they stepped up the drive to make religious law the foundation of the Jewish state. "Aggressive secularism has been defeated," rejoiced the Mizrahi daily, *Hatzofeh* (March 4, 1949) when the new government was announced. "The Ministry of Religious Affairs has been placed into faithful hands which will see to it that tradition and religion have their proper place in the life of this country." And four days later: "The present government coalition will therefore hold firmly together so long as the majority within it cooperate in the application of the holy laws of religion in the daily life of this country. A pure Sabbath, the application of religious laws in court, the ensuring of kosher food, the granting of the proper powers to the religious authorities and to the religious schools are the minimum demands of the United Religious Front."

The encroachments of ecclesiastical reaction have led to sharp controversy in the Knesset (parliament), in the press and among the general public. The only parties in Israel which have insisted on full freedom of conscience and the separation of church and state are the United Workers Party (Mapam) and the Communists.

What is happening in Israel must be seen in the context of the larger world struggle between church and state. This developed historically as part of the struggle of the bourgeoisie against feudalism. The Roman Catholic Church was in the pre-capitalist era not merely allied with feudal reaction throughout Europe, but was itself the mightiest of the feudal powers. The orthodox Jewish rabbinate, while lacking state power, was down to the end of the eighteenth



century no less absolutist in its control of Jewish secular life. With the emancipation of Jewry in western Europe and America in the wake of the bourgeois revolution, with the rise of the secular Haskalah (Enlightenment) movement and its religious counterpart, Reform Judaism, the influence of Orthodoxy on Jewish life was greatly weakened.

In Israel today Jewish clericalism, with the aid of the capitalists and social democrats, sees an opportunity of recovering lost ground. Clericalism is not, however, an inde-

pendent power, but serves as an instrument of capitalist reaction and foreign imperialism. In its fundamental character the struggle for the separation of church and state in Israel is no different from the similar democratic struggle in other countries where it involves the Catholic Church. In Israel this issue is an integral part of the fight against the entire course of the government in foreign and domestic affairs, especially the subservience to Washington and London. It is part of the people's urgent thrust toward genuine independence and social progress.

## YOU CAN'T LIVE HERE!

**W**HEN Paul L. Ross, chairman of the Committee to End Discrimination in Stuyvesant Town, recently announced to a cheering Harlem street audience that "the Hendrixes are in Stuyvesant Town to stay," a woman asked a man standing next to her, "How on earth did they get a Negro family in that place?"

This would have been the first part of a good question to ask the top leaderships of some Jewish defense organizations like the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish War Veterans, and of Negro organizations like the National Association for Advancement of Colored Peoples and the Urban League. The fight against discrimination in housing is the vital concern of all democratic Americans, but these organizations of the groups most directly affected should certainly give militant leadership to the fight. Yet, if the matter were left up to them, not a single Negro would be anywhere on the grounds of Stuyvesant Town. But on August 11, the exciting news ran around New York that the Negroes Raphael and Hardine Hendrix and their five-year old child were living at Stuyvesant Town as guests of courageous tenants.

The second part of that question still faces the leaderships of these organizations of the Jewish and Negro people. What will you do *now* to see that more Negroes come to live at Stuyvesant Town, as accepted tenants with leases?

But how did Negroes come to live at Stuyvesant Town, after Frederick H. Ecker, the 83-year old Rockefeller satrap and Metropolitan Life Insurance Company head had declared that Negroes and whites shall not live together, and had hired high-priced former Judge Samuel Seabury to back him up in court?

How did it happen, when Mayor William O'Dwyer sent his corporation counsel to back up the Ku Klux Klan ban all the way from the lower courts to the New York Court of Appeals? How could it happen, when this court recently ruled in a four to three decision that the Metropolitan operators of the project are a "private landlord" and can act

*By John Hudson Jones*

like the KKK's Imperial Wizard or the Grand Dragon and refuse Negroes the use of something they pay taxes for?

It happened because a union organizer for Local 65, Wholesale and Warehouse Employees Union, Jesse Kessler, backed up by the militant action of the Committee to End Discrimination in Stuyvesant Town, decided it was time to make democracy work!

The committee was organized early this year with a handful of tenants who decided they wouldn't live with Jimcrow. They reasoned that if they were decent thinking people, there must be many others in the project. So they went out, polled them and found that 62 per cent would welcome Negro neighbors.

Then the committee asked for support and began holding public meetings. Among the many groups responding were the Harlem Branch of the NAACP, the United Harlem Tenants and Consumers Organizations, the Communist Party, the East Side Tenants Council, the Furriers Union, the white collar union, the American Labor Party and several other local unions.

### *Where Are Mass Organizations?*

Yet the powerful Jewish and Negro organizations named earlier, whose united active support could have long since forced democracy in the gigantic 8,700-apartment project, refused to cooperate with the committee.

According to Paul Ross, committee chairman, Shad Polier of the American Jewish Congress turned thumbs down on the idea of mass action. Like the NAACP national office, Polier claimed that mass action "would have a bad effect on our legal case." This was the case that the American Jewish Congress was prosecuting on behalf of three Negro veterans who had been refused applications to the project. And this is the case that has been lost repeatedly in the courts. Hadassah, Jewish women's organization, simply said, "No politics." B'nai B'rith wouldn't even answer the letter calling for their sponsorship of an initial city-wide conference on the issue. After an internal fight, the Jewish War Veterans decided to take independent action. They then sent a letter of protest to Metropolitan, and nothing

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has been heard from them since. Prominent Jewish individuals, however, like Rabbi Daniel L. Davis and Nathan Padgug of the Manhattan Division of Congress have consistently supported the committee's fights.

But the most telling development came in the East End Temple, whose militant Rabbi Isaiah Zeldin went on a delegation to Mayor O'Dwyer's office and who has denounced the project's Jimcrow time and again from the pulpit. At an emergency meeting an overwhelming majority of the congregation voted against Jimcrow at the project. But members of a large and articulate minority actually said, "If we let Negroes in the project, they'll devalue the property!" "It was just like listening to nazis talking about Jews in Germany!" a committee member has declared. There were those in the congregation who opposed this white chauvinism line, but opposition wasn't strong enough.

But the committee fought on, enlisting thousands of rank and file members of these groups behind its fight. And when the Hendrixes moved into Stuyvesant Town, one of the most fundamental struggles of American Negroes—for decent homes—was thrown into the high gear of mass action, which offers the only solution in the final analysis. In one swift stroke, the seemingly unbeatable combination of the Metropolitan's fantastic array of financial power, the tremendous and despotic authority of the corrupt O'Dwyer administration, all backed up by the courts, had been temporarily breached.

It was a high point in the campaign of the committee, which has rallied thousands to the cause of breaking down housing bias. Paul L. Ross comments on the Hendrix-Kessler action: "It was in the spirit of our campaign. It is particularly significant that Kessler, an active union leader, was the first to conceive of this idea and carry it into action. The fact that a Negro family now lives in Stuyvesant Town and has been received as a respected neighbor will lend encouragement and inspiration to the campaign, which we will continue. . . ." And it has been continued, for when Kessler's family returned from the country, the Hendrixes were invited to share the apartment of the fighting college instructor, Dr. Lee Lorch, who was fired from City College and is vice-president of the Stuyvesant Town committee!

### **Ben Davis Starts the Fight**

But what was the foundation on which the Kesslers, Hendrixes, and Lorches stood, when they grabbed hold of housing Jimcrow's tail and began plucking out his feathers?

The fight had been started by New York's Communist Councilman Benjamin J. Davis in 1943, when he fought against the \$50,000,000 tax exemption won by Metropolitan under the state's redevelopment law.

Backed up by the millionaires' friends Construction Coordinator Robert Moses, and betrayed by the then City Council President Newbold Morris, who remained silent, plus the big money-controlled Democratic and Republican

councilmen and members of the Board of Estimate—the Met naturally won. Subsequently, however, the City Council did pass a law, originally introduced by Councilman Davis, henceforth to bar Jimcrow from tax-exempt housing in New York City.

It was only after the publicly supported Jimcrow project became a scandalous reality in the nation's "most liberal city" that the American Jewish Congress, the NAACP, and subsequently the Anti-Defamation League and several other organizations began legal battles against the project. But experience has exposed the "legalistic" approach alone of these leaderships as inadequate. A mere scanning of the housing situation facing both Negroes and Jews today will prove that the legalistic tactic is only one part of the fight and by itself is totally ineffectual.

In May 1948, when the United States Supreme Court ruled that restrictive covenants were unenforceable, many Jewish and Negro leaders rushed to hail the decision as practically the final victory against housing Jimcrow. Undoubtedly the high court decision was a step forward, but that's all it was. In the first place restrictive covenants affect for the most part the *buying and selling of property*, while the overwhelming majority of the Negroes and Jews who need housing are wage earners and can't buy houses. At the time of the decision, the NAACP estimated that it was fighting some 300 cases in the various state courts. The high courts of 16 states and the District of Columbia had upheld injunctions enforcing restrictive covenants.

In May 1946, the American Jewish Congress joined the legal war to end covenants and subsequently the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith began court fights. Each submitted briefs in the Supreme Court cases which ended in the affirmative decision.

But has the decision broken down housing bias, even in the buying and selling of property? Hardly. A United Press survey of major cities from coast to coast in January 1949, revealed numerous instances of realtors, banks and other lending institutions upholding in actual practice the "White Gentiles Only" rule that can no longer be enforced by the court! Indeed, Councilman Davis pointed out in the *Daily Worker* (June 20, 1948) that "it's sheer double-talk for the court to hold that the covenants are unenforceable in courts, yet legal if owners desire to keep them." Then he sent a shaft right to the heart of the issue, when he wrote, "The struggle against the restrictive covenant challenges the use of realty—one of the bulwarks of our so-called free enterprise system—even though the abolition of these covenants would be only a minor regulation of private property in the interest of the public welfare."

### **The Key — Mass Pressure**

Councilman Davis pointed to the key in the lock of the door against decent housing for Jews and Negroes in the same article when he charged that the Supreme Court "hesitates in the absence of mass pressure to interfere with the special privileges of the powerful real estate barons.



But the Negro people and their allies compelled even privately run primaries to be banned by the court. Thus they can, through popular pressure and struggle, outlaw privately-enforced restrictive covenants." And who knows this better than the Metropolitan Life, Mayor O'Dwyer and all the other big money forces and their agents who put up the bars to Negroes and Jews? Isn't it about time the Jewish and Negro organizations realize that they can help win bigger victories, if they seize the initiative, organize mass community-wide support and blast away until democracy in housing becomes a reality?

In the Levittown housing project in Nassau County, Long Island, a committee similar to that at Stuyvesant Town is fighting against the restrictive leases covering the biggest housing development of its kind in the country.

In Bannockburn Heights, Maryland, a "restricted" suburb, a legal action was begun in 1947 by nine bigots demanding that Mrs. Aaron Tushin, a non-Jew, compel her Jewish husband to move out of their home on the grounds that his presence caused "irreparable damage" to the section and violated the restrictive covenant that barred Negroes, Jews and Persians from holding title to property. Among the nine racists who brought the suit was a \$10,000 a year official of the United States Bureau of the Budget, J. Otis Garber. Finally public indignation and the refusal of the majority of the 52 families in the development to join the suit, forced its withdrawal from the Maryland Circuit Court. The bigots' lawyer James H. Pugh cynically told the court that "in view of the fact that the defendant and others are attempting to make a racial and religious issue of a purely legal or contractual matter, we are withdrawing the petition until such time as it can be brought up as a purely legal issue."

This case indicates how effective mass protest can be. Thus, when the national leaderships of the American Jewish Congress, the NAACP and other Jewish and Negro organizations refuse to participate in the popular struggle of the Stuyvesant Town Committee, they weaken the fight for decent housing for all.

### **"Iron Ring in Housing"**

But what can we say of the leadership of the CIO Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union, which actually permits Jimcrow in its Bronx Amalgamated Houses? Or when the Jewish organizations in which William Levitt is a power fail to speak out against his "Caucasians Only" clause in the Levittown leases?

A 1948 report of the United States Housing and Finance Agency found that Negroes, who constituted 20 per cent of Baltimore's population, were confined to two per cent of the land area. The NAACP recently found that 80 per cent of all residential property in Chicago was covered by anti-Negro restrictions, while even Newton C. Farr, former president of the Chicago real estate board, admitted 40 per cent. An "Iron Ring in Housing," a *Crisis* article called the wall of covenants surrounding the Negroes of Chicago's

South Side, where the density in most sections is 80,000 people per square mile. Add to these figures the concentration of 3,871 men, women and children in Harlem's infamous "lung block"—at such a density ratio that every human being in the country could "live" in one half the area of New York City.

This summer in Chicago, a mob of over 2,000 attacked a Negro family who had moved into a "white" neighborhood. A citizens' committee immediately swung into action and planned an over all campaign against terror and for wider housing for Negroes.

In Birmingham, under the protection of Eugene "Bull" Connor, Commissioner of Public Safety, terrorists bombed several Negroes' homes, including those of ministers. Connor, a stalwart in the Democratic Party, had instigated a "zoning" law forbidding Negroes to live in certain areas. But to the glory of the Negroes, they armed themselves, fired upon the getaway cars of the dynamite throwers, and backed up their action by a tremendous mass rally of 5,000 that set up a committee to fight the terrorists and Connor's KKK-inspired zoning law.

Thus the critical housing shortage forced upon all the American people by the profit-hungry big money-makers and their peanut grafters in the Truman administration, is resulting in more and more bloodshed. And while Truman's friend General Vaughan and Housing Expediter Tighe Wood finagle scarce building materials for race track operators, explosive tensions born of inadequate housing grow throughout the land and are being used by reaction to stir up strife and divide the people.

The time is indeed growing short for the Jewish and Negro people to get together and struggle in behalf of decent homes for everyone.

### **Toward Negro-Jewish Unity**

The KKK is on the march, not only in Birmingham, but also 20 short miles from New York City. In Freeport, Long Island, an arrow bearing an obscene threatening letter was shot in the window of a Jewish family which had sold its home to Negroes, reading,

"Violets are blue, roses are red.

"Jews are better, when they are dead."

Yes, the time is short. And it calls for getting behind the Kesslers, Hendrixes, Lorches, the Stuyvesant Town Committee and all similar committees. And where no committees or movements exist, they must get started. If the Jewish masses organize, they will rally and fight bias against Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans and all other minorities seeking justice. Powerful mass demands must be made that the Truman administration stop the Federal Housing Administration from lending money for Jimcrow housing. Powerful demands must be made that Metropolitan either admit Negroes to all its projects or cease getting tax exemption. Jimcrow and anti-Semitism must be hit with the might of a united people, again and again, until it is dead.

# THE JEWS OF BULGARIA

By Chief Rabbi Asher Hananel

**I**T IS certainly no accident that Bulgarian Jews are our only community in Europe to have escaped the horrors of Maidanek and Auschwitz. Our forefathers, whether they fled from the Spanish Inquisition or settled peacefully as traders, have always found in Bulgaria much more than a mere haven of refuge. Among the hospitable and tolerant Bulgarian people the Jews have always felt completely at home and loyally shared their vicissitudes of fortune—the long night of the Turkish yoke, the two national catastrophes in 1913 and 1918 and, last but not least, the fascist régime which lasted from 1923 to 1944. We have, indeed, good reason to consider ourselves an integral part of the Bulgarian nation, whose religious and racial tolerance is almost proverbial and to whose mentality the very concept of anti-Semitism is absolutely alien.

Jews are no newcomers to the Balkans and to Bulgaria in particular. They first settled here during the Roman era, about 140 B.C. A Jewish community existed in Messemvria, on the Black Sea, where Apostle Andrew preached. More than a thousand years ago one of Bulgaria's greatest rulers, King Boris I, addressed a letter to the Pope Nicholas I, which reveals that a certain Jewish influence existed even then in court circles. During the 14th century there existed a Jewish community in the old Bulgarian capital, Tirnovo, and Ivan Alexander, one of Bulgaria's best educated kings, married the Jewish woman Sarah, who played an important role in Bulgarian history. After the expulsion of the Spanish Jews in 1492, some of them came to Bulgaria, bringing a much higher culture than that of the local population. They opened the first printing shops in the Balkans and some of them wrote important books of a religious and worldly character. These books, as well as many other documents, such as wills, letters, etc., are a treasure-house of data on Bulgaria's mode of living and trade during the early years of the Turkish yoke and the Bulgarian renaissance when some Jews actively assisted the revolutionary movement.

After the liberation Bulgarian Jews enjoyed the most sincere friendship of the Bulgarian people and this attitude lasted until 1923, when Prof. Alexander Tsankov organized a bloody *coup d'état* and established the fascist régime in Bulgaria. Together with fascism appeared its corollary, anti-Semitism. Although our constitution did not differentiate between Bulgarians and Jews, the latter no longer felt as equal citizens. Pseudo-patriotic organizations were formed which, encouraged by the anti-Semitic disposition of the governing circles, spread racial hatred and provoked numerous restrictions for the Jews. Although special laws

did not exist, secret regulations and orders hindered the access of the Jews to responsible state, military, social and administrative institutions. Later, during the rule of the so-called "democrats," fascist bands attacked Jewish homes and shops, undisturbed by the police, sometimes even silently abetted by the responsible elements. Nevertheless, Bulgarians and Jews remained by and large good and sincere friends as before.

## ***Bulgarian People Not Anti-Semitic***

The Bulgarian people realized from the very beginning that anti-Semitism was logically entirely unfounded and this theory was looked upon as a mental aberration. Bulgarian Jews loved Bulgaria as their own homeland, they had taken part in two wars like true subjects of their country and had always respected its laws and paid their taxes regularly. The friendly attitude of the Bulgarian people towards them was justified especially when they joined the struggle against the early attempts of Bulgarian fascism to hamstring the rights of the people. The resistance against this régime started immediately after it was established in the country. There were more than 30,000 victims during the rebellion of 1923 and the events of 1925. Among them were hundreds of progressive Jews, most active leaders and members of the resistance movement, such as Marco Friedman, devoted fighter for freedom and socialism, who was publicly hanged; Joseph Herbst, one of the best Bulgarian journalists, who boldly attacked the first attempts of Bulgarian fascism to push the country towards ruin, and who was burnt alive at police headquarters together with many other Bulgarians and Jews; Naim Issakov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, who died as a result of the miseries of a long exile.

Later, during World War II, after Bulgaria had joined the Axis at Germany's insistence, our anti-popular government started severe persecutions against all progressive Bulgarians as well as against the Jews. Stringent racial laws were passed which legalized anti-Semitism, and the fight against the "Jew-plutocrats" and "Jew-bolsheviks" became one of the most important diversions of the government, by means of which they hoped to distract the attention of the people from the events of the war and from their real enemies—the Bulgarian ruling classes, obedient tools in the hands of their German masters.

The government worked out a special plan for the expatriation of the entire Jewish population to the Polish camps for which a special agreement was concluded between the German and Bulgarian governments. The climax was reached when the first batch of 13,000 Jews from

ASHER HANANEL is chief rabbi of Bulgaria.



Thrace and the Aegean coast were dragged from their homes at night and took the road to the gas chambers of Poland. Not one of them remained alive, not one of them returned. Sofia Jewry staged a mass protest demonstration. As a result many of them were picked up from the streets and sent to one of Bulgaria's most dreadful concentration camps—Somovit—where long before the most distinguished representatives of the Jewish minority had been sent. Several days later all Bulgarian Jews were concentrated in certain provincial towns where they lived under a special régime, so that their deportation could be effected more easily. This anti-Semitic offensive, however, did not influence the great mass of the people and its intellectuals. On the contrary, they rose unanimously in defense of the suffering minority of Bulgaria's population. Not one public organization approved these measures. The associations of Bulgarian writers, physicians and lawyers, many artists, scientists and statesmen protested energetically. The Orthodox Church openly fought anti-Semitism. Even in parliament voices were raised, however few and far between, against these anti-democratic measures. The ordinary citizens gave no support, nor expressed any sympathy for the government. And now we are sure that it was the will of the people alone that saved us Jews from complete annihilation.

Meanwhile Bulgarian Jews were not inactive in their own and the people's defense. Many actively participated in the resistance movement, hundreds fought in the underground, filling the prisons; some were shot and 260 fought shoulder to shoulder with the Bulgarians in the partisan divisions, 133 of the latter were killed.

A broad resistance movement overran the country, which on the 9th of September 1944, due to the help of the Red Army, put an end to the sufferings of the whole Bulgarian nation as well as to the humiliation of the Jews. At one fell swoop, the Fatherland Front annulled all fascist and anti-Semitic laws, restored all human rights and our Jews once more acquired real and full equality of rights with all Bulgarian citizens. The damages caused to the Jews were very serious. They were homeless, they had neither means, tools, nor jobs. The government, did its utmost to solve these problems in the shortest period. All enterprises, goods, blocked accounts, confiscated properties, jewels, etc., were returned and their owners were compensated.

### ***Constitutional Guarantees Against Anti-Semitism***

The best guarantee for the equality of the Bulgarian Jews is the new republican constitution worked out by the Fatherland Front government, in which is introduced not only the principle of judicial equality of all Bulgarian citizens but also the principle that all preaching of any racial, religious and national hatred be punishable by imprisonment and strict confinement. Very characteristic in this respect is Art. 71 of the constitution which reads: "All citizens of the People's Republic of Bulgaria are equal before the law. No privileges based on nationality, origin,

religion and material situation are recognized. Every preaching of racial, national or religious hatred is punishable by law."

The best proof that judicial equality in this country is not a dead letter is the fact that the Jews have poured all their efforts into the realization of socialism and many of them occupy important and responsible posts in the state institutions. Jews are national representatives, deputy ministers, ministers plenipotentiary, members of the People's Councils, professors, officers, artists, writers, journalists, etc. The Consistory of the Jews in Bulgaria issues its own newspapers, the best hospital in the country is the Jewish one, erected and installed with means given by the state, the municipality and the American Joint Distribution Committee, the Jewish municipality organizes children's homes, summer camps, reading rooms. The Jewish schools are supported by the state. The Central Consistory and the government regularly grant special permanent subsidies to the religious institutes. Special steps are taken for the economic development of the Jewish population. The new socialist reforms which are changing the pattern of life in the country have brought the Jews into production. With the active assistance of our government and the precious contributions of the American Joint Distribution Committee, which supplied us with machinery we were not able to find in this country, tens of labor cooperatives were founded which gave work to a considerable part of the Jewish population. The Bulgarian Jews have entered a new life and shoulder to shoulder with their Bulgarian brothers have started an intensive struggle for the building of socialism in our country.

### ***Free Access to Israel***

With the emergence of Israel to nationhood, thanks primarily to the disinterested and unflinching support of the USSR, the spontaneous craving of the decimated European Jewry to go back to the land of its fathers partly also gripped our Jews. Bulgaria, which soon recognized the new state of Israel, gave its Jews complete freedom to decide for themselves whether they wanted to go or stay. Many old folk, whose sons and daughters had become pioneers in Palestine during the fascist era, were only too eager to join them. Others, mostly former businessmen who had been affected by the nationalization measures and felt unable to readjust themselves to the new conditions, joined the ranks of the emigrants. In all cases, the Fatherland Front government facilitated their exodus in every respect, even going so far as to lease its few ships for the purpose.

About 25 per cent of the former Jewish population now remain in Bulgaria. They well remember what they have passed through and who put an end to their golgotha. We Jews are faithful and loyal citizens of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, we know how to appreciate the freedom it guarantees us. We are ready and willing to take our place in the ranks of those who are engaged in the struggle for a better life.

## Third Anniversary

# CULTURAL SECTION

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### BUT HE LOOKED SO YOUNG . . .

A Short Story

By Yuri Suhl

**A**BE GELMAN was a fur operator and, when there was work in the trade, his 67 years were not in the way of his finding a shop. He managed to keep them well-concealed behind a tanned, smooth-skinned face which, in the winter, always looked as though he had just returned from a vacation in Florida; and, in the summer, suggested the classification of the rugged, outdoor type. And there was, of course, his hair—black, thick and shiny, from whose luster his face borrowed an appearance of exaggerated youthfulness. Small wonder, then, that in the fur market on Seventh Avenue they called him the “*boytchik*.”

Whenever he approached one of the teeming, milling groups of fellow furriers in the market, he was always assured of a rousing welcome:

“There goes the *boytchik*.”

“Look at him. He looks like a million dollars.”

“I’m telling ya, the guy is getting younger by the day.”

“I knew him when he still had gray hair.”

“Abe, tell us the secret. How do you do it?”

They knew, of course, how he did it. At least, as far as the hair was concerned. For there were some among them who, at one time or another, had either toyed with the idea, or had actually done it themselves. But they played the game of acting surprised, and he played the game of being highly flattered, as though Nature had singled him out for the special treatment of bestowing upon him the rare blessing of eternal youthfulness.

YURI SUHL is a well-known Yiddish poet who has published many stories and articles in English.

“And that’s not all,” he would say, beaming triumphantly, and he would draw himself up straight, throw back his shoulders and push out his chest. “Go ahead, go ahead, slap it,” he would challenge them. “It’s not cardboard.” He would not be satisfied until two or three of his audience actually slapped his chest.

“And what about the muscles?” he would continue. “They’re not cobwebs either, I can assure you. Here, take a look at that.” And he would crook his right arm and make a tight muscle. “Here, go ahead, feel it.”

The *boytchik*! He could still put it over! It was not a corpse they gathered around. They gathered around Abe Gelman, who forced them to count his years backwards. There were times when he believed that it was really so. But that was a long time ago. Now it was different. They didn’t know it in the market, maybe they didn’t even suspect it. So much the better. But he knew it. Thrice it had revealed itself in the form of sharp, fluttering stabs in the chest, as if the very needle of his operator’s machine had somehow found its way into his chest and had gone berserk for a fraction of a second. And thrice he had ignored it. “It’s nothing. It’ll pass. It passed the first time, didn’t it? And the second? So it’ll pass again.”

And he went right on with his routine. Rising an hour ahead of time to have his daily workout in his own private little “gym”—weight lifting, chinning, push-ups, everything the *Atlas Body Builder* prescribed. Sick? That’s a luxury Abe Gelman couldn’t afford; not with his ailing wife around, whose swollen feet were two monstrous money-eating jaws. Grow old? When? At 65? 66? 67?



You're crazy! And what will happen after 40, 45, 50 years in the fur shops! Relief? Charity? Old age pension? Abe Gelman couldn't afford to grow old even at the age of 67!

But now he knew that he had to; that the *boytchik* was just an outer manifestation. Internally his body kept a strict record of his years; and on his vital organs was the inexorable handwriting of his age; the indelible imprint of a half a century in the fur shops of New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and New York again; the deep scars of seasonal anxieties oscillating between the fear of not finding a job and the fear of losing one; and, of late, the added burden of living up to the reputation of being a *boytchik* at the age of 67.

One day the heart refused to go along with the face and the hair. Of late he had been struggling with the fear that just such a thing might happen. And his one wish was that if it had to happen, it should happen at home, far away from the market, where he would be able to call out to his wife and say: "Molly, give me a glass of water, please."

And Molly, bringing him the water, would say: "What-samatter, Abe, you don't feel well? You look white like a ghost. Maybe I should call the doctor?"

"What for the doctor? What does he know? Right away you have to pay for a visit, and then for the medicine, and then for another visit. They always come for another visit. To you they have been coming for 20 years and your feet are still swollen. It's nothin'. I'm just tired. I'll rest maybe for a few days and I'll be all right again."

"Shall I call the shop?"

"Yes, yes, call the shop. But don't tell them I'm sick. Tell 'em that a relative of mine suddenly died and I had to go to the funeral. I'll be back in the shop in a day, or two the most." Some people could afford to die. But not he, not Abe Gelman. He couldn't even afford to get sick.

But the heart didn't go along with these calculations. It makes its own decisions in its own sweet time. And that could be awfully embarrassing at times. As it was to Abe Gelman.

THAT SUMMER THE FUR SEASON WAS A POOR ONE AND whatever there was of it had already been in full swing for over a month before Abe had found a shop. He was convinced that it was the season and not his age that made it so difficult for him to find a job, because furriers much younger than he was were still making the rounds. And he, too, would be doing the same thing now had he not, by sheer chance, run into an old friend whom he hadn't seen in years. "Why don't you go and see Denkel?" the friend suggested. "Not the best guy in the trade to work for, but, if you're hard up, he'll do in a pinch."

Denkel? Denkel? he searched his mind. Who is Denkel? He had never heard of him. But that might be a serious admission. Imagine being 50 years in the trade and not knowing Denkel! Do you need a better indication than this that he is slipping? That he is out of touch with things? Fifty years in the trade!

"Oh, yes, Denkel. Where is he now?"

"Same place. 29th Street. On the other side of Seventh Avenue."

"Oh, yes, 29th Street."

"Sure, you know the place. Right near the cafeteria. Three flights up. Sure he's there. He'll die there. Good season, bad season; shops open, shops closed, but Denkel stays on. He's like a gnat. You can't get rid of him. He'll cry to you buckets of tears that he's going bankrupt. He's been going bankrupt that way for the last 20 years. I'm telling you before hand. If you got somethin' better, go there first. But if you got nothing and you're hard up, Denkel will do in a pinch."

Some introduction, Abe thought to himself. It could take away your appetite even to look at Denkel, let alone work for him.

"Oh, well. In my years I worked for worse bosses than Denkel and I wasn't afraid of them. Remember that cockroach on Houston Street we used to work for together? What was his name?" "Shipkin!"

That's right! Shipkin! Remember? That was how many years ago?"

"Every bit of 30 years ago!"

"That's right. Thirty years ago! Ach, how the years fly!"

"The years fly. That's the truth. But you, Abe, are getting younger instead of older. I look at you and you look like a *boytchik*, and I am a retired man awready! Every month I collect 50 *shmulliares* from Uncle Sam. Old age pension. And the rest, my two sons help me."

"You at least are fortunate. You have two sons who can help you. I have a son and a daughter. Both married. So my son, everything he touches is with the butter down. A good boy but no *mahzel*. Sometimes, when I have, I push a few dollars into his pocket. After all, I'm a father. And the daughter is married, so I don't have to tell you. But good children they are. That I must admit."

"That's life, Abe. Well, I'll have to rush along now. So long. I hope you make out awright with Denkel."

WHEN HIS FEET WERE TAKING HIM TO DENKEL'S SHOP, THEY were executing, reluctantly, a command which was contrary to his innermost wish. What he wanted most now was the bed, the sofa or a chair in the kitchen. Anything that would support his tired, aching body and shut out the roar of the shop, the whirl of the machine. A shop in motion is a roaring, whining, whirring orchestra which brooks no such discordant notes as an operator's sigh, a cutter's moan, a machine's sudden, unwarranted pause. And Abe, today, was a wheezing, rasping instrument with nothing but discordant notes in it; a sackful of fatigue, with black hair and a suntanned face.

From what his friend had told him he expected to be hired. After 50 years in the trade he knew that in shops like Denkel's there is always an empty chair in front of a silent machine, holding out for the highest bidder—a man made servile by need, a pair of hands driven by servility. That is why when he began climbing the stairs every step was a major conquest.

Denkel was a short, skinny man with a sallow face and small, alert eyes, which kept darting about in their sockets, as though they were trying to see in all directions at one and the same time. "*A klug tzu Colombusn*," Abe thought to himself. "This *shmendrik* is a boss, and I, after 50 years in the trade, am asking him for a job." Through an open door leading from the ante-room to the shop he saw the empty chair he expected to find. The interview was a brief one. "Here is the situation," Denkel said, in the best executive tone he could muster, "you know of course it's a lousy season. As they say in French—*bamacht*. But I can use a good man. If you can deliver the goods, you can put on your apron and go to work." He made a quick, parting gesture with his hands, as if to say: "That's final."

In his thoughts Abe said to Denkel, "I would like to deliver you two big boils, *goteniu*, one for one armpit and one for the other." For he knew quite well what delivering the goods meant. He was long enough in the trade to know a little sweat shop when he saw one. True, the first two weeks were the hardest and after that, if Denkel didn't fire him, his job was protected by the Union. And even a *shmendrik* like Denkel knew that you couldn't fool

around with the Furrier's Union. But these two weeks were a whip which Denkel would crack over him every minute of the day. And he was so tired!

But on the top floor of an old tenement house on Tremont Avenue, was an old woman shuffling a pair of swollen feet, back and forth, between the kitchen and the bedroom, to the accompaniment of "*Oi is mir*," and "*Vey is mir*." And in the top drawer of an old bureau, among his most important documents such as his citizenship papers, his passport on which he came to this country at the age of 17, a lapsed life insurance policy, was a perforated bank book which, on his side, gave evidence that he was not just anybody; that there was a time when he, too, had had money in the bank and on the bank's side it was irrefutable proof that the Immigrant Savings Bank had settled all accounts with depositor Abraham Gelman, down to the last 38 cents of the final quarterly interest; and that said depositor had no further claims on the Immigrant Savings Bank.

"Awright," he said to Denkel, "don't worry. I'm not in the trade since yesterday." And he put on his working apron.

It was a relief to find not a single worker in the shop whom he knew. Let the market not know to what depths he had sunk. But it was also surprising. "And I thought," he said to himself, "that after 50 years I knew everybody in the trade. And here are five operators whose faces I see for the first time." In another shop it would be an insult. Here it was a stroke of luck.

He thought there was something the matter with the needle, but it was his eyes. He took off his glasses and filmed both sides of the lenses with his breath. Then he wiped them thoroughly clean with a dollar bill and put them on again. For a few seconds the needle held to a straight course. Then it began to jump again and the stitch was as crooked as a country path. Denkel circled the machine, looked sideways at the stitch, then at Abe and shrugged. He also muttered something, inaudibly, to himself. But the meaning of the shrug was not lost. Denkel never shrugged in vain.

So it really was his eyes. Could it be that he needed a change of glasses? But such things don't happen suddenly. Usually there are warnings, signals of one kind or another. Why, only last night he read the Yiddish paper to Molly, and there was absolutely nothing the matter with his eyes. Now he commanded them to serve him and, for a while, they did. It was like the command of the whip that is cracked over the steaming hides of a pair of panting horses, harnessed to a loaded wagon, midway uphill. The whip ignites a new spurt of energy. They heave and pull and heave and, suddenly, they stop again, and the wagon begins to roll downhill, dragging the horses with it. Down, down, down, Denkel!

Now Denkel was towering over him, his eyes no longer darting about mouse-like, in all directions, but fixed in a cold, immobile stare. He was no longer the short, skinny *shmendrik* of a while ago. He was now monstrously tall,



Courtesy of Kraushaar Galleries

East Side

Drawing by William J. Glackens



and he was shaking him by the shoulder. "Whatsematter with you? Why aren't you careful? You are ruining my merchandise."

"That's a lie! A dirty lie! Abe Gelman never ruined anything! Abe Gelman is 50 years in the trade and his stitch is straight as a ruler." And, besides, how could he ruin the merchandise when the needle is not even in the machine. The needle is in him now, making stitches in his chest, running up and down and stopping, and running again. And he is not even in the shop. The shop is in him. The roaring, whining, whirring orchestra is playing inside his head now, and his skull is bursting with sound. "It's nothing, nothing. It passed before and it'll pass again, and nobody in the market will even know about it. Nobody. Maybe Molly. No. Not even Molly . . . down . . . down . . . down . . . Denkell!"

IN THE AMBULANCE, ON THE WAY TO THE HOSPITAL, HE HAD enough presence of mind to ask the doctor not to inform his wife about it, but to notify his daughter instead. Her address was in his pocket.

"Why not the wife?" the doctor wanted to know.

"She's a sick woman," he muttered, weakly, "very sick."

The daughter, in turn, wired her brother in Philadelphia: "Father seriously ill. Come at once to my house." When he arrived, his father had been dead for almost an hour.

"I'm telling you," the daughter kept saying, between sobs, "looking at him you wouldn't believe it. He looked like a young boy, with rosy cheeks and black hair. He was a picture of health."

"Yea, a piktsheh," Molly wrung her hands and shook her head distractedly, "outside he was a piktsheh, but inside? My heart told me plenty, don't worry. Abe, I used to beg him, enough with the exycise. After all, you're not a *boytschik* anymore. So he always had one answer, 'I am not doing it for my pleasure. I am doing it for the market.' Everything for the market. Busy . . . slack . . . always in the market. . . . whole life in the market. And now, in his old age he had to do yet exycise for the market."

When they came home from the funeral and sat down to sit *shivah*, the son said: "Ma, I'll sit only three days. Three is enough, eh, Ma?"

"Awright," she sighed, "let it be three." To herself she thought, "For an American boy three is plenty."

"I'll sit all the seven days with you," the daughter said.

"And what about the children?"

"They stay with my mother-in-law, and Jack will stay with them." Jack was the husband.

"Awright."

"You know," the son said, "It's a lucky thing Papa belonged to that *landsleit* society. They took care of everything. Funerals are very expensive. If you don't know anything about it, they gyp you right and left."

The daughter nodded agreement and the mother sighed. Throughout the period of the *shivah* and a long time afterwards, every remark she made was prefaced and suffixed by a sigh. "Yea," she said, "Papa paid up right away, as

soon as the bill came. And sometimes even before the bill came. He even used to joke about it. 'I don't know if the season in the market will be good or bad, but with my piece of ground in the cemetery I am sure awready. A hundred and twenty years from now I wouldn't be a burden to anybody.'"

"How old was he, Ma?" the son asked.

"In another two months would be his birthday, 68."

"He looked so young," the daughter said.

"That was from the outside, mine child, from the outside. Inside it was different. Not only the face and the hair. . . . When he came home that day, oh, a long time awready. Maybe 15 years ago, when everybody was on relief . . . and he took off his hat, I got scared. I didn't recognize him. His hair was black. I said to him, 'Abe, why did you do it?' 'For the market,' he said. 'They got plenty to pick from, so they pick the youngest. A young horse pulls better than an old one. I am young yet; only my hair is gray. So I'll fool them. You think I am the only one?' . . . And one day I hear a knock on the door. It was in the middle of the day. Papa was in the market someplace. 'Who is it?' I called out.

"'Dumbbells!' the man answered me.

"'You're a dumbbell yourself,' I yelled back at him. 'Imagine that,' I said to myself, 'a stranger climbing up four floors to call me a dumbbell! He must be crazy or something.' . . . But he knocked and knocked . . . so I said to myself, 'I'll open the door and I'll give him a piece of my mind he will never forget me.' . . . So I opened the door and what do you think it turned out to be? A nice old man with a package . . . a delivery boy maybe 50 years old. . . . 'What you want?' I yelled.

"'Mr. Gelman live here?' he asked.

"'I am Mrs. Gelman,' I said.

"'Will you sign here for the dumbbells,' he said, and pushed the package into my hands.

"'Since when they delivering dumbbells awready?' I asked.

"'It's all paid for,' he said.

"So I took the package from him and gave him a tip yet . . . and when Papa came home I found out awready about the dumbbells. . . . Every morning he got up an hour earlier to make the exycise . . . and sometimes, when it was slack in the shop, he would go into the small room in the middle of the day and play with the dumbbells like a little school boy . . . up and down . . . up and down. . . . And you think that's all? . . . The dumbbells are from wood . . . a few weeks later the same delivery man brought other dumbbells . . . from iron . . . everytime something else . . . the place became a regular junk shop. . . . And whatsematter with the lamp? . . . the lektrik lamp was for my feet so he used it for his face. . . . He roasted his face like a chicken . . . one day he even got blisters . . . for the market . . . a whole life for the market . . . and the big *yerusheh* that he leaves behind is over there . . . in the small room . . . dumbbells . . . iron dumbbells . . . wooden dumbbells . . . all kinds of dumbbells. . . ."

"But he looked so young . . ." the daughter said, absent-mindedly.

The son was silent. He turned and looked in the direction of the small room which, years ago, had been his bedroom.

AS USUAL, THE FUR MARKET WAS TEEMING WITH GROUPS OF furriers; and the groups were buzzing with talk.

"You know who died?" someone in a group said, casually, as though he had just happened to think about it.

"Who?" "Abe Gelman." "Who is Abe Gelman?"

"Whatsematter with you, you don't know Abe Gelman? The *boytschik*!"

"So why don't you say so? Sure, the *boytschik*. What d'ye mean I don't know him. He was here only a few days ago."

"Well, he ain't here anymore."

"He looked so healthy. He looked like he would never die."

"Evidently, the *malech hamuves* was not informed about that."

"What do you thing of that . . . only a few days ago. . ."

"Well, he certainly picked the right time to die—a lousy season."

This remark evoked a burst of laughter from the group. Then they all fell uncomfortably silent and, for a moment, avoided looking at each other.

## AUGUST BONDI, ANTI-SLAVERY FIGHTER

By Morris U. Schappes

WRITING his *Autobiography* at the age of 70, August Bondi summed himself up in this sentence: "I do not regret a single step or instance in my long life to further and to assist the realization of my devout wishes that tyranny and despotism may perish, and bigotry and fanaticism may be wiped from the face of the earth."

He requested that his tombstone should bear this inscription:

AUGUST BONDI	
Co. K, 5th Kansas Vol. Cav.	
First Sergeant of Co. K	
At Vienna	March 14, 1848
At Blackjack	June 2, 1856
At Osawatimie	August 30, 1856
Left in Field,	
Desperately Wounded	Sept. 11, 1864
Discharged	Dec. 2, 1864

Such is the bare-boned record, or part of it. What of the flesh that would turn this skeleton into a vital human being, in a real setting, with motivations, conflicts, and a progressive outlook on life? The *Autobiography* tells us much.

His known resistance to tyranny began even before the 1848 Revolution against Austrian despotism. It was February 1847, and he was in his fifth year at the Academic *Gymnasium* in Vienna, which was managed, like all the Austrian *Gymnasiums* then, by Piarist Monks. A professor of mathematics slapped a student's face. For a week all the 500 students simply stayed away from classes, and they did not return until the professor publicly apologized to the student and the class! What another Professor, Podlaha, was teaching them about Washington and Jefferson and the American Revolution was having its effect on the students, including August (Anshl was the Jewish name) Bondi, who was not yet 14. He was learning Hebrew,

Latin, German, French, Hungarian, history, mathematics—and revolutionary principles.

Therefore when the March 1848 Revolution began in Vienna, the Academic Legion composed of students and instructors was an important factor, and August Bondi was admitted as its youngest member, aged 14 years and eight months. His mother made no objection when he ran off to the fighting, so he was in time, he maintains, to lift "the first granite paving block to start the first barricade in Vienna." But on September 6, 1848, the Bondi family was fleeing the counter-revolution, first to Prague, then on and on, until on November 7 they were at Balize, in Louisiana.

Two days later August Bondi saw his first slaves. These Negroes were working a plantation sugar mill, "men and women clad only in coffee sacks, open at both ends, slipped on and tied around the waist." No, Bondi did not then and there become a firm and principled abolitionist. Nor, however, did he forget the scene as the family traveled up the Mississippi for two weeks to St. Louis. In fact, in St. Louis, he explains, "it was not sympathy with the negro [*sic*] slave, it was antipathy against the degradation of labor" that gave him his first orientation in American politics and interested him in political figures that later became organizers of the new, radical Republican party.

For a couple of years the boy, still only in his late teens, knocked about. With his mother and sister working in a shirt factory and his father making cigars, August tried clerking in a dry goods store, then a printing apprenticeship, a tavern partnership, and country school teaching, but was content with none of them. He enlisted in an expedition to "free Cuba" in the summer of 1851, but it disbanded. Late the same year, he went south to New Orleans and tried to sign up for Commodore Perry's expedition to Japan, but he came too late. More important was his second contact with southern slavery. In Galveston, Texas, in December 1851, "the howlings of the slaves receiving their morning ration of cowhiding waked me at 4 o'clock A.M."



## *Towards Abolitionism*

A few days later, Bondi was one of a duck hunting party. The young slave rowing the skiff accidentally dropped an oar and scared the ducks. "Young Morgan, his gun ready for the ducks, deliberately emptied the load into the shoulder of the colored boy. I loudly condemned such cruelty." For this rebuke he was denounced on the spot by a Rev. Roach with the standard stupidity, "we have no use for northern abolitionists." If Bondi was not yet one, he was learning. In February 1852, he witnessed three Boston sailors, free mulattoes, sold into slavery for having tried to run off with three slaves. Such was Texas law; Bondi did not like it.

In May something happened that made Bondi head north again, away from the center of slavery. He took on a job to direct the unloading of a cargo. The slave crew had already worked two nights running, and on this third night, "some, trying to skulk, I poked them with cord wood, when one of them, 'Ike,' turned on me and said, 'Massa, I didn't think dat of you.' This cut me to the heart." Three hours later, when the boat was unloaded, Bondi quit the job and headed back to St. Louis. What was it in young Bondi's bearing that had made the driven slave sense that Bondi was not just another slave-driver? In any event, Bondi decided not even to marry a Southern girl. "I disliked to marry a woman with slaves." He realized that his "father's son was not to be a slave driver," but he also knew that if he remained in the south, he might succumb to the slave-system.

So it was back to St. Louis and humdrum clerking. Then the Kansas Question exploded. Free state or slave state? From Missouri, Border Ruffians poured in to sway the elections and to terrorize Free State settlers. Still not an abolitionist, Bondi was already at least firmly opposed to the extension of slavery into the territories. When he read an appeal in Greeley's *New York Daily Tribune* for people to settle in Kansas and make it a Free State that would exclude slaves, Bondi decided to go. His parents were then in Louisville, his father working in a furniture factory for \$7 a week, his mother in a clothing store for \$3 to \$5 a week. On March 26, 1855, Bondi left St. Louis for Kansas. He was 21. Educated in an old world *Gymnasium* by Piarist Monks, he was going to become a soil breaking Kansas pioneer—and stop the march of slavery. He, and many like him, did.

Bleeding Kansas it was then called, and for good reason. To the ordinary hardships of individualistic pioneering under capitalism—backbreaking toil, scarcity of food and supplies, cold and hunger and illness—was added the offensive of the pro-slavery settlers, backed by the pro-slavery Federal government. In self defense the Free State anti-slavery settlers had to resort to guerilla warfare, for the Federal troops (with Jefferson Davis then as secretary of war!) afforded little or no protection. It was in this context that John Brown, the militant abolitionist, emerged as a guerilla leader in 1856. And among his company on many of his most famous Kansas engagements, were



*Photograph by courtesy of the Library of Howard Univ., Wash., D. C.*

August Bondi and two other Jews closely associated with him at that time. One was Jacob Benjamin, for whom Bondi had clerked in St. Louis. The other was Theodore Wiener, a burly 250-pounder from Posen in Prussian Poland, who had, after some years in Texas and Louisiana, come to Kansas "to trade and to make money." Although then not opposed to slavery, Wiener had tried to steer clear of politics, but the pro-slavery forces pressed him to take sides. When a notorious pro-slavery bully descended on Wiener one Sunday in February 1856 to thrash him, Wiener beat him until his arms were tired. "After that Wiener acknowledged himself Free State," and John Brown gained a good fighter.

### *A Fighter with John Brown*

After the Border Ruffians had sacked and burned the anti-slavery settlement at Lawrence, Kansas on May 21, 1856, John Brown's men got to work in earnest. On May 24, 1856, Wiener was one of seven men accompanying John Brown in the wiping out of a nest of pro-slavers in what came to be called the Pottawatomie Massacre. Bondi's mature judgement on this action reflects the firm, embattled

morality of partisan warfare: "John Brown and his handful of men only executed upon those scoundrels a just sentence of death for the benefit of many unprotected families."

A couple of days later, the Ruffians burned Bondi's cabin, stole his cattle, and plundered Wiener's store, and, Bondi adds, "all this had happened in the presence of the U.S. troops." On June 2, 1856, Bondi and Wiener were part of Brown's small band at the Battle of Black Jack Spring, which ended when "24 well armed cut-throats laid down their arms" and surrendered, after an equal number had run off, to a force less than half their number. Two months later, August 30, 1856, Bondi and Benjamin (who had for a while been imprisoned by the pro-slavery forces) fought in John Brown's company of 45 at the famous battle of Osawatomie, beating back a force that outnumbered them many times. When the cold weather set in (and on the prairie it came early), the company disbanded and the fighting subsided, but Kansas had been saved as a Free State, as the Topeka Constitution adopted the next year indicated.

Bondi's attitude to the abolitionist movement was still developing. Late in 1858, he was still opposed to the increase of the Negro population in the North, and John Brown, knowing this, avoided Bondi when he was transporting 11 Negroes from Missouri through Kansas and into Canada on the Underground Railway. A year later, when the news came of the raid on the Harper's Ferry arsenal, Bondi's sympathies were all with John Brown, although he did not "approve" of the raid. Yet in the winter of 1860-1861, with war imminent, Bondi was already an agent of the Underground Railway, and his place was a "station" where he "sheltered several runaways."

Bondi, Wiener and Benjamin all enlisted in the Union Army. When the news of the defeat at Bull Run arrived, Bondi already had a wife and infant daughter, but he set about to get the farm and stock in shape so he could leave in November. His mother, who had not held him back as a boy from the Vienna barricades, actively encouraged him to enlist. "My mother said that as a Jew I had the duty to perform, to defend the institutions which gave equal rights to all beliefs." His wife, Henrietta, kept quiet, thinking more of the hardships of managing a farm without a husband than of the country's need. Then "my mother arose up and said she would care for and protect and work for, and do all she could for my wife and child. I must go and fight for my country, and she would care for family and home. And my mother has faithfully, most faithfully, redeemed the pledge." Such was Martha Frankl Bondi! When August left for the army on November 26, he left behind 30 head of cattle, one mare, two spring colts, some pigs, and a farm for the two women to manage.

### ***Soldier for the North***

Already something of a veteran, Bondi quickly became sergeant of Co. K of the 5th Kansas Cavalry. There were two other Jews in that Regiment, Marcus Wittenberg, a Hungarian in Co. F, and Simon Wolff, sergeant of Co. E, but they both annoyed Bondi by refusing to admit they

were Jews, so he had little to do with them. Bondi was in every engagement fought by his regiment. One incident stands out from the battle of Pine Bluffs, in Arkansas, October 25, 1863, in which less than 500 Union soldiers were withstanding a Confederate attacking force of some 3,500. To prevent enemy sharpshooters from using them as cover, Bondi was ordered to effect the removal of some bales of cotton 150 feet from the line of defense. He called up 30 Negroes who had fled to freedom in the Union lines, and explained the mission to them. "At the word forward we fairly flew towards the bales left at the old barricade. Seven negroes [*sic*] were shot down around me, one right by me. Three dead, four died before morning. . . ." But the mission was accomplished.

His disabling wound came a year later, in a battle at Monticello, Ark., September 11, 1864. A bullet struck his left thigh, another his scrotum, and a third hit his belt plate and knocked him off his horse. His companions tried to carry him away on horseback, but the pain made him beg to be left behind. Confederates captured and then abandoned him. Finally a searching party found him, and although the doctors gave him up, he gradually recovered and after three years of fighting returned home.

For a time life was almost as eventful after the Civil War. In 1865, he tried his hand as a grocer in Leavenworth, but was forced into bankruptcy in a couple of years. In 1868, he was breaking 40 acres of prairie land for farming, and his wife was soon wading a river both ways to bring back a stray milch cow. In 1874, the grasshoppers destroyed his corn crop and 100 peach trees, but he still had 1100 bushels of fall wheat and almost 1,000 bushels of oats. The big cyclone in June 1876 destroyed his wheat crop, blew his out-houses away and badly damaged his dwelling, but he nevertheless got a fine crop of corn. Then in September a small cyclone blew him off a wagon load right behind the horses, who kicked two ribs into his lungs. Periodically, too, there were children born, two sons and eight daughters all told. And then there were minor political offices. Bondi was elected Township Trustee, Police Judge (three terms), and Clerk in the District Court, and was also appointed Register's Clerk in the Federal Land Office, Clerk of his School District, and so forth. In 1882 he joined the Anti-Papal League and became active in the Democratic Party. Twenty years later, he was observing that, "hating to rust out I keep on busy with Democratic politics trying my best to end the reign of Republican boodlers." When he died on September 30, 1907, the boodlers of both Democratic and Republican parties were still running the country.

Not the least interesting thing about Bondi is what started him writing his autobiography. In the 1880s, detractors began to misrepresent John Brown's Kansas career; to answer them, Bondi in 1884 began to write down and publish his own recollections of those days. Out of these grew the posthumously published *Autobiography* which, whatever its crudeness of style, reveals a figure made vital by the progressive history he helped to shape. What a historical novel could be based on this *Autobiography of August Bondi, 1833-1907!*



# WITHOUT TUMULT

A Short Story  
By Julius Butwin

THERE were two of us waiting for the streetcar when the little man came up. He looked at me and then he turned to the man in the overalls.

"Can you tell me where St. Luke's Hospital is?" he asked.

"Sure," said the man in the overalls, "that's where my boy was when he had tonsillitis."

He knew and he told him. It was two blocks back where the little man came from, and another two blocks to the right. That would bring him to the large old house with the pillars where the nurses lived, and the hospital was the brick building across the street. The little man thanked him, looked at me again, and went away.

Then the car came and I left the man in the overalls on the back platform while I went inside and found a seat. For some reason the little man had not spoken to me. Perhaps I had frightened him with my briefcase. But if he had asked me, I could have told him as well as the man in the overalls did.

"Sure, that's where my father was with his gallstones."

Or I could have been more dramatic: "That's where my father was when he died."

I could have told him how the large old house with the pillars looked at night, with lights in the windows and nurses running in and out. It must still look the same as it did that night when I walked around the block again and again because my father was in the hospital. That was the only time I went to see him, and the next day he died.

My mother wanted me to go before. She said that my father kept asking for me. Leo and Joe and Sadie went every day; even strangers stopped in to ask the nurses how he was getting along. He was my father and it wasn't right for me to sit home as if nothing had happened.

She said it as if I didn't want to go. I tried to tell her and then I turned away. I didn't know what to say to her. I wasn't afraid of the hospital or of my father, but I couldn't tell her how, my mouth went dry every time I thought of going there.

But I wanted to go. I hadn't even seen my father the day he left. Leo was going to come after supper and take him in the car, but in the afternoon they packed the things they needed and went alone. That was the way they did everything, without tumult.

The only fuss they made was the party they gave for the children who studied in his *heder*. My mother made root-beer and cookies and honeycake. Leo came over the night before with Minnie and they brought Richard and we all sat in the kitchen because my mother was working there;

JULIUS BUTWIN was co-translator with his wife, Frances Butwin, of Sholem Aleichem's short stories. He died a few years ago.

all except Leo and my father, who were on the front porch talking. Minnie said it was funny that Joe wasn't there too, then we all looked at each other, and Sadie said, "And leave Gladys alone?"

Richard was getting in the way, sticking his fingers into the dough, grabbing for a finished cake; then he backed into the stove and began to yell so loud that Leo ran in from the porch to know what Minnie was doing to him. My father came in after and still Richard yelled until they sent me out with him to get an ice cream at Mogals.

THE NEXT DAY HE HAD HIS THIRD ATTACK. IT STARTED WHEN the party for the younger boys was beginning. He walked from one to another because when he moved he did not mind the pain so much, but it became worse so he made a short speech and ran in to tell my mother to bring the cake and the rootbeer. He did not come back, and when the boys were through they crowded around his bed, where he lay doubled up, to say goodby.

That night he was better, but they had already decided not to wait any longer and the next afternoon they packed what they needed and went to the hospital.

When I came home and no one was there, I didn't know what to think. For a moment I thought my father was dead and I pounded on the door, feeling suddenly cold, but Mrs. Goldberg heard me upstairs and leaned over the bannister to tell me what had happened. I found the key in the mailbox and opened the door. The house was quiet. I had expected that much, but what I found was something more than just quiet. I went from one room to another, touching tables, chairs, beds. In my parents' room I stayed longer, ran my hand along the backs of the Hebrew books in the case by the wall. These books were my father's more than anything else in the house, even more than his clothes were his. A coat is a coat. Wear it and it's yours; hang it up and it's only a piece of cloth. But those books were my father's. His voice was in them, his gestures, his shining eyeglasses, short jetblack beard.

He wanted the books to be mine too. He said they weren't hard to read and with a little more study I'd be able to enjoy them. He had me read a few lines to see how easy it was and he offered to go through some of the books with me. I had promised to let him, but every time he was ready to help me, I had something else to do.

Fiercely I made up my mind that as soon as he came back from the hospital, I would begin again. We would read the books together, and talk together.

Then I heard Sadie on the porch and I ran out of the room in time to pick up the paper before she came in. She had been at the hospital.

I stared at the paper. "How does he look?"



*In Memory of Things Past*

*By Berta Margolies*

"How should he look?" "I meah. . . ."

She walked past me. "I'm going to get supper."

We had cold borsht. We had cold borsht almost every night during the hot weather; but I still remember that evening how I poked with my spoon at the small white pieces of cucumber that floated around in it, pushed small white cubes through the creamy surface and watched the fresh pink in their wake. I still had most of it in the bowl when Sadie asked me if that was all I was going to do that night. I didn't say anything and didn't look at her just then, but a little later when I had tipped the bowl for the last spoonful I looked up and she wasn't eating either. She had her hands cupped under her chin and she was looking out of the window and I noticed that her eyelids were red.

Then I helped her with the dishes, but neither of us said a word. She looked once to see if I had the right towel, and after that she kept her head low over the sink and she rubbed with a sort of fury.

When we were through, I dropped the towel on the nearest chair and went out on the back porch. Later I wanted to go in and ask if the operation would be painful, if it was a serious one, if people ever died of it, but I

thought of my father being cut open with a knife and I couldn't move.

THE NEXT DAY THEY OPERATED ON HIM AND AFTER THAT THERE was always somebody at the hospital. My mother was there all day and Aunt Gussie was with her most of the time. She brought chicken soup every day and told the nurses what to do. Minnie brought chicken soup. Some of the neighbors brought chicken soup. One day my mother said there were six glass jars of soup in the room and all of it had to be poured out.

Sadie went at noon and Leo and Joe found time for a few minutes during the day. In the evening they said sometimes the room was full and people waited outside. Everybody was there except Gladys and me. They said that Joe felt terrible about Gladys not coming, but Sadie said I was even worse.

It got so I could tell when they were going to bring me into it and I became so nervous I yawned; but I could never think what to say, and if I did, I couldn't get the words out. I just couldn't go. I didn't have the nerve to go in there and look at him lying in that hospital bed.

Every time someone went I said I'd go next time. I just lowered my head and said next time.

Sadie said if she was my mother she wouldn't let me have anything to eat until I at least stopped off at the hospital and asked how he was.

"It's all your fault, Ma," she said. "He thinks he can do anything at all around this house."

"Don't bother me, Sadie," my mother said. "I have enough troubles without starting more when I come home."

I left the table and went out and sat down on the back steps. The bread was tasteless in my mouth. I couldn't swallow it, I couldn't even chew it.

"There, that's all I needed," my mother said. "Come back, Max. Finish your supper. We have to clean the table."

"I'm not hungry."

"You're not hungry? What did you do all day—eat pancakes?"

"Don't bother with him, Ma," Sadie said. "It's time he understood he's not a baby. He's 14 years old, and what did he ever do? Nothing. And now just because he's got a job for vacation he thinks he can get by with anything. You're spoiling him. He's just being smart."

"Sure I'm smart. Don't you like it?"

It was all I could say. I had an empty feeling inside as if everything had been sucked out of me, and I could hardly breathe. I started to yawn, and I sat there looking at the back fence, yawning.

IT WAS NOT UNTIL THE FOURTH DAY AFTER THE OPERATION that I finally went to the hospital. Joe was going to come by after supper but I didn't wait. Sadie said it was funny that I could wait all these days and now I was in such a hurry. I told them I had to see someone on the way and ran out of the house. If Joe said right after supper, I'd still have time there by myself. Afterward they might all be there.

I ran the first block but it was too soon after supper and



my side began to hurt. So I walked a block and ran a block, walked a block and ran a block until I saw the red brick buildings in front of me through the trees.

I didn't have to ask where the room was. I had heard them talking about it until I knew just where it was: on the second floor near the elevator. There was the drinking fountain, and over it a picture of Jesus, and the next room was the one my father was in. The nurse at the desk looked as if she expected me to stop, but I passed her by, took the steps two at a time, not running, just stretching my legs, and then I was there. Another nurse was on the second floor, but I looked for the fountain and slowed down.

The door was open and I could see the foot of the bed, but I wanted to hear if anyone was with him. He was alone, and I walked in, scraping my feet.

"The others come in on tiptoe," my father said.

He was lying flat on his back in his pajamas, with his head turned toward me. I almost laughed, seeing him in pajamas instead of his nightgown, but the high white bed, the white sheets, white pajamas, stopped me.

"I wanted you to hear me," I said.

"You think I needed the warning?"

He sounded tired; the words were half-whispered. Then he held out his hand and I took it. I wanted to say something but I didn't know what, and I stood holding his hand and looking at him, at his short fleshy nose and dried lips and black beard.

My father moistened his lips. "I thought you would come before this," he said.

"I wanted to." He didn't answer. "Honest I wanted to." I was not looking at him now. My eyes were hot and I wanted to cry. I didn't care what he'd say. I didn't care what anyone would say. It was the first time I didn't care. But I didn't cry. I just held his hand.

"What was there to be afraid of?"

I shrugged my shoulders.

"But I'm glad you came now," my father said.

I sat with him until it was almost dark, not saying much of anything. I just looked around the room, at the bed, at my father, at the wall, and then before I knew it, we were both talking. I told him of the people around the house who had asked about him, and then we talked about them—about Hirschman the sexton, and Strimling the grocer, and the peddler Lechman who had six unmarried daughters. My father's voice was livelier; he didn't sound as if he was lying flat on his back.

A nurse came by and looked in. She had heard us laugh, but wanted to be sure.

"So we have been laughing," my father said, only now he was not laughing. We looked at each other and then I turned toward the door.

"That sounds like Joe," my father said, and I recognized the footsteps in the hall. I turned to my father:

"I'm going now."

"Go quickly, but come again."

At the door Joe barred my way. "What's your hurry? Wait a bit and I'll take you home."

"No," said my father, with the voice of a man lying flat.

"I want him to do something for me. . . . Remember, Max."

I RAN OUT AS IF SOMEONE WAS AFTER ME—PAST THE PICTURE of Jesus, past the fountain, down the stairs. But outside I stopped. I wanted to go back, but I couldn't, and I couldn't go away.

So I walked around the block, stopping a while near the corner to look at Joe's car. I walked around again. For several minutes I stood in front of the nurses' home, watching the girls running up and down the lighted steps; then passed Joe's car again. I don't know how many times I passed it. I just walked, remembering how it felt to hold my father's hand, how it felt not to be afraid any more.

And then I saw Leo's car, right in front of the entrance. In the light of the car behind I recognized the bent fender and then the license plate. I kicked the tire angrily and turned away.

When I came home they were sitting on the porch, the two of them in the darkness. Sadie wanted to know if it had killed me.

"Sadie," cried my mother. "He's here a minute and already you're fighting."

"Don't listen to her, Ma," I said. "She's trying to be funny."

Sadie looked at me. We made a face at each other.

My mother wanted to know what had happened, but I didn't know what to say. She wanted to know how he felt, but I hadn't asked. I stood on the steps facing them, scratching my head.

"A lot you'll learn from him," mumbled Sadie.

"Tomorrow I'll tell you everything," I promised.

But the next morning when Sadie called the hospital before we left for work, she found out that he had had a poor night. At noon I called home, but no one answered. Then I tried Joe and Leo and Sadie, without finding anyone. I wanted to call the hospital, but didn't have the nerve.

About the middle of the afternoon Joe came into the office. Usually he had a joke for all of us, but this time his face was white and he didn't see us at all. He talked to Mr. Slaven a few minutes. I was stamping envelopes but I couldn't do it straight. Joe had once told me not to stop working if he came in, but this time there was no use trying to do any work. I shoved the envelopes into a pile. Joe and Mr. Slaven were talking and they were not talking. I slid from the chair, stood staring at them. Finally Joe looked my way and beckoned.

When I came to him he put his arm around my shoulder.

"Have you talked to anyone?" he asked.

I shook my head. "Better get your cap, Max."

That was all he said until we were outside. When we were in the car he said he had been in the hospital since morning. The others had been there too, Sadie since a little before noon when they had called her.

He did not mention our father.

He did not say anything for a while, and then he began to whistle, a whispering sort of whistle. I looked straight ahead.

"And now he's home?" "Yes, he's home."

# THOUGHTS ON A DANCE IN PROGRESS

By V. Platon

AT THIS moment dancer Sophie Maslow is in the process of creating a production based on the tales of Sholom Aleichem. The problems she encounters in the course of this work, her solutions and goals, help to bring into focus some questions for dancers on Jewish themes and for dancers generally. In this sense, her work becomes important even now, before it has seen the light of the stage, even now when it is still in such an early form that the dancer discusses it reluctantly.

The mere fact that Sophie Maslow is concerned with a Jewish theme for the first time, is in itself significant. She credits as an impetus, Hitler's attempt to exterminate the Jewish people and Jewish culture. In this she joins other dancers and the many progressive artists in all media, who have turned to the new vast inspiration of Jewish themes in response to the same impetus, and have become more aggressive creatively, achieving a new quality, a new affirmation.

The form of the work (to be called *The Village I Knew*, with music to be composed by Samuel Matlowski) is a series of episodes. Each episode is a character sketch or a brief scene, in terms of solos, duets, trios, and group dances. The themes of some of the episodes: a Sabbath dance, Friday-night table, synagogue ritual. The orphan who considers himself lucky—everyone takes care of him! A skit in dance pantomime, "Advice of the Rabbi to the Woman." The celebration of Yom Kippur. "A Page from the Song of Songs," a dance of lyric young love. These and other stories from the Sholom Aleichem collections, are still in the thinking-through process. Problem one: to translate into dance terms the cruel poverty of the people of Kasrilevka. Problem two: to create in movement the profound and sad humor and the will to live of the people. And the most important: how do these qualities combine, and distinctively permeate every gesture?

All this is extremely pertinent. First, because it is concerned with the question of the choice of material, second, with its treatment.

Where and how does a dancer who is seriously preoccupied with Jewish themes, find her material?

## *Dance Via Sholom Aleichem*

Sophie Maslow dwells on a village in the Ukraine under the last tsars, via the eyes of Sholom Aleichem. Other works in performance today exhibit a variety of viewpoints and attitudes, all on this very large subject, Jewish culture. However, only a bit of the material issuing from the centuries and the continents has so far been touched.

V. PLATON is a dancer and a critic of the dance.

Geographically, this potential ranges from Israel to Birobidjan, from Poland to New York; the hamlets, the cities, the ghettos past and present, the great fields and farms. In time, this material stretches from paganism and ancient legends; from the great Biblical dramas, through the Crusades and the struggles of the Middle Ages, to life today. The terrible puissance of the epics and the poetry of the tiniest, homliest details.

It is not sufficient, however, merely to enumerate dates and places, for they in themselves are not a theme. Since a specific view of certain material becomes a theme for a dancer (or, of course, for any artist), then—to deepen a certain reality for an audience, to comment, and therefore to persuade, to move—is the direction beneath all the patterns on the stage.

Nevertheless the first of dancers' problems, that of choice, is comparatively simple. Where does she find her particle of the panorama? Usually where she knows it best. How does she find it? If she is a mature artist, deeply cognizant of life about her, of social forces of her own era, then the needs of her day, of her audience, will play an urgent part in her choice. But of course, this artistic-social maturity conditions not only her choice of material, but her treatment of it, functioning at every phase of her creative activity. This social-artistic understanding shapes not only the large outlines of her conception, but her every gesture on the stage, so any special isolation of it is artificial.

It is evident, as Sophie Maslow describes her work in progress and her approach, that the needs of our day and our audience were not an insignificant influence in her choice.

At first, Miss Maslow tells us, she sought a contemporary theme, but "was stumped." When, however, Sholom Aleichem's stories sparked her creative energies, she felt that this piece of cultural heritage was so clearly a part of our contemporary background, that its use in dance would have a very positive meaning for her audience. It becomes evident that Sholom Aleichem became for her a bridge to a life, to a reality. Of the impact of this material when transformed into a dance-work, Sophie Maslow says: "I want the audience to love the people depicted, and to understand them." It becomes apparent that this work will be in no sense a translation of Sholom Aleichem into merely a danced version. But that through the artist's way of realizing the potential of her material and the potential of dance movement, a new quality will emerge out of the familiar origin.

We get a glimpse of her method. Miss Maslow describes the one episode of her projected work which has already been finished and was performed at the Connecticut Dance Festival last summer. It deals with the *Simchas Torah*





Photograph by Walter E. Owen. Courtesy of Dance Magazine.

Scene from "Festival," an episode from a new Jewish dance by Sophie Maslow.

festival, and is a group dance, interspersed with several duets and trios. The episode is based on the story of "The Merry-makers," and Miss Maslow's purpose here is to give the feeling of intense participation in the secular holiday. To create this, she is utilizing the hora step in a speeded up tempo, with many frenetic variations. The choreographer has aimed at achieving a special kind of an ecstasy—"not broad but tight"—the ecstasy that is "peculiar to the merry-making of these people and grows out of their lives." The duets and trios are a delineation in dance of some of the individual participants.

### ***Some Common Pitfalls***

Here, in a sense, Sophie Maslow shares a theme common to many dancers. She is creating a "folksy" dance. And here, since these are thoughts on common problems, it is tempting to digress in order to examine some common pitfalls that lie in wait for dancers on such themes.

One is the danger of a one-sided or a surface treatment. The division between highlighting a bit of human beauty with its tragedy or comedy and the production of merely a quaint character dance, is very thin. The solution lies in an appreciation of the complexities of the character depicted, even when the main interest is in underlining or stylizing one facet of the character. This attitude on the part of the choreographer toward the characters she is creating, is obviously interrelated with all of the problems of her art; for it involves deep knowledge of her material, of her craft, her audience and her purpose.

Another danger (to which young dancers are susceptible) is in transferring wholesale what they have learned in the studio. Forms of habit are so inviting! How many times have we seen, as a case in point, dance-dramas on Biblical themes wrought in a style transparently and superficially smacking of Mary Wigman! Every cliché that the great dancer herself would probably have refused to use in such

context, was as if by rote, dragged on the stage. When as little available data exists on a historical style as in this instance, one must so soak oneself in the knowledge and feeling of the period, that the created movement thus born will carry with it the authority of reality. Anything short of such penetration is likely to result in a bunch of memorized classroom gestures.

Frequently much guiding data is available—but is so poorly evaluated and understood that superficialities are stressed and the essence ignored. The style is sacrificed to dance steps.

And worst of all: how often have we seen, hidden under the fig-leaf of the finest "folksy" intentions, the hackneyed, false, so-called "Jewish gesture." Dancers who cling to a trite and outworn stereotyped style, are not correctly interpreting that segment of Jewish culture with which they are concerned; and are presenting their audiences with a counterfeit instead of a gem.

None of these pitfalls will threaten the dancer who will not compromise with surface treatment.

But to really discover that specific and very beautiful kernel at the heart of "folk," which really is culture, is a goading necessity for an artist. To a dancer, it means to discover the real roots of a gesture. And it is this search for roots that is the preoccupation of Sophie Maslow.

### ***Search for Style***

She, who does not yet know how many episodes her work will contain, or how long it will be, or how she will solve the problem of creating monologues in movement, she who is still facing many unresolved questions—knows the most important aspect: how to begin to create a style for her work, where to find the origin of her gesture.

In the people's lives. In each character so fully created by Sholom Aleichem. "In trying to get the feel of what it must've been like to live in crooked streets, houses top-

pling over each other, confined in restricted quarters." In remembering all she has seen, the quality of the Jewish folk songs she has heard. And incidentally, in critically investigating the manner of other artists, specifically the manner in which the inspiration of his village, was revealed by the artist Chagall.

Illustrating the quality of the gesture she has thus created, Miss Maslow describes a moment of the festival episode, when three women sprawl resting. There is heat, happy fatigue and an intimate chattiness in their poses. One fans herself with her apron, another with a handkerchief. Immediately, the handkerchief becomes a dance prop.

"I have no feelings about making things not real, so they can't be called pantomimic or natural. If the natural gesture seems right, use it."

Another moment from this episode: Three slightly tipsy men, on meeting each other, lift their hats and fling them vigorously to the floor. The gesture is filled with the spirit of the holiday, the feeling of camaraderie each man feels for the other, and underlines a certain way typical of the natives of Kasrilevka.

"I want to use movement that is familiar. I want to find the truth."

This search for truth, for roots, then, is a labor of love—love of her material, her craft and her audience. For the people she is dancing about and the people she is dancing for are one here. This love is not blind. Whether its object



Courtesy of Dance Magazine.  
Another scene from "Festival."

is a Kasrilevkan of yesterday, or a Yemenite Jew of today, this devotion will discover the dancer's truth, or how each moves, and how to present them to the people who are our audience. This love will discover the subtle differences in the style of a Polish and an Israeli Jew. And the not so subtle differences in style of a rich and a poor Jew. It will find out how the new life in the Soviet Union has affected traditional dances there. This devotion will ferret out the differences not merely in the dance designs each uses, but in the dynamic culture patterns of each, that are the core of dance movement.

This deep search does not aim at a mechanical authenticity. On the contrary, it leads to a fuller, more inspired use of herself as an artist and of the potentialities of her art. To a dancer whose language is so potent, so magic, so special and at once so universal, to translate this truth into terms of her art, is the gist of her work. In her method with the people of Kasrilevka, Sophie Maslow is providing a clue. Movement, as stuff of the theater, possesses distinguishing qualities. One is its potential for evoking many things simultaneously: a single gesture may create an epoch, a mood and a character. We have seen dancers, who have in their best works accomplished this kind of a miracle: Sophie Maslow has herself on occasion achieved it in her non-Jewish dances. As an example in a Jewish theme, we need merely recall Anna Sokolow's powerful characterization of "The Bride." Here through just such an approach, the dancer not only revealed the complex character and her conflicts, not only created a dramatic situation and a mood, but opened our eyes to the whole status of the Jewish woman of an epoch. Out of the described type of approach, then, inevitably emerges a fuller use of the potentialities of dance art.

And since all this is directed toward that final theater miracle, that one purpose—to communicate, to heighten a reality, to move—then the dancer on Jewish themes, who today faces a progressive audience, must realize that of all the elements spotlighted here, one is primary and gives life to all. This cohesive ingredient is the dancer's social-artistic maturity. Such a maturity, such a dynamic understanding of history and of the workings of social forces begets a fuller comprehension of people's aspirations and lives; a fuller awareness of the necessary role and aspirations of art—and therefore of her art—that must be the motive-force of the dancer today.

And so since the final fruition of the love, the search, the understanding—is that moment on the stage, we wait for the curtain to rise on Sophie Maslow's work.

However, one dancer's goal and achievements, no matter how inspiring, are not a substitute for each dancer's posing of pertinent problems and engaging in active solutions. And since these thoughts are on widely encountered and interpenetrating problems, perhaps consideration of them merits a place as part of all our dancers' works in progress. A struggle for solutions in action would equip them to rise to the demands of Jewish themes, and to fulfill the responsibilities that their audience place on them.



# ESSAY IN PROPHECY

## *A Letter from Sholom Aleichem*

*The letter below gives an insight into the character of Sholem Aleichem and the inexhaustible depths of his humor. This little-known letter, written in 1914 a few weeks after the outbreak of the First World War, was addressed to Morris Meyer, then editor of the London Yiddish daily, Die Zeit (The Times), and published there. It was later reprinted in the New York Yiddish daily, Morgen Journal. Sholom Aleichem was seriously ill at the time. He died on May 16, 1916.—Eds.*

Copenhagen, September 22, [1914.]

My dear friend, Morris Meyer:

I am writing to you from bed. Troubles have made me quite ill, maybe rather seriously, if not too seriously. This time, I imagine, I will not squirm out of the hands of the Angel of Death without difficulty.

This means I think I am saying farewell to the world. Oh, what a time to die! Only a fool would pick a time like this. But what can I do? I am caught in a nasty mess. If the German has got the itch to conquer the world, is it my fault? As a person who thinks about the hereafter and talks to professors about operations and who feels in his heart that death is not far off, I'm inclined to act the fool and prophesy.

Whether the German conquers the world or not, it, the world I mean, is on the verge of rebirth. A new world is coming. New horizons are appearing. States will be destroyed—and states will be built. Nations will be rent asunder—and nations will revive. And along with all other nations our people will also enjoy deliverance. A new day will come for our Jewish people, a sort of Messiah's time. They will live to enjoy much consolation, much delight, much pleasure and honor after much suffering. "Be consoled, my people," our modern prophets will sing. The Zionists will sing their own song. . . . And where will I be then? . . .

Do I even know whether these lines will reach you? If you do receive them, have them printed and send me one copy of the paper here and one to Switzerland. The world catastrophe will end some time—let our children read these lines if I am not around by then. And if it is only I who is missing, then it will certainly be all right. Indeed the world

will lose nothing with my departure—but I will lose so much. At the very time of the Messiah, the long awaited Messiah, when true Jewish liberties will arrive, I will not be around. My eyes will not behold the liberated Jew. Well, may at least my children live to see it!

I am sorry about another thing. I have not finished my biography, and I imagine I will never get to finish it now, although I write fragments. I am also writing about these tumultuous days of world war, as you asked me, and I will send what I write to you, piece by piece, page by page. Print them. I can't send them home to Russia. It is difficult to send them to America, too. You, at least, shall print them. Only do not hesitate to send me the issues of your paper here. I have not seen a Yiddish word for a long time now, except for clippings of my articles that are sent along to me.

It is a bit of consolation that my whole family is here with me. And do you know, my friend, what my sickness is? I am dying of thirst. I drink water, but the sea is not enough to satisfy me. Thank God I am secure in the thought that, though I am a stranger in this country, abandoned, with a numerous family and without means of support (because at home I have been completely ruined), nevertheless I will not die of hunger—but of thirst!

Well, it's all for the best! No one shall say—Sholom Aleichem died of hunger! Oh, no. It is fancier to die of thirst. It is original. Many Jews die of hunger. But of thirst—only one, Sholom Aleichem. Attaboy!

We had a benefit here last week for the poor refugees of the world war, naturally with my participation. All the Jews of Denmark came! All workers. It also made some money and now a kitchen is being set up for the poor. I read from my works, the audience laughed as always, only it occurred to no one that the poorest and most unfortunate and loneliest immigrant—that was I.

I will write to you as you request from time to time. Let your newspaper be the only one in which I will be able to talk things over with my dear Jews. America is closed, Russia is dark and dismal. Let there at least remain with you the memory of a few words from your friend, the everlasting wanderer,

SHOLOM ALEICHEM.

# A LETTER FROM POLAND

By Dr. Adolf Berman

*The following letter was sent in May by Adolf Berman, leader of the left Poale Zion in Poland and a fighter in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, to a group of Jewish writers and scholars in America: Sholem Asch, H. Leivick (a leading Yiddish poet who is at present working with the reactionary Forward clique in the struggle against progressive Jewish culture), novelist I. Opatshu and Dr. Raphael Mahler, scholar and presidium member of the progressive cultural organization, Ykuf (Yiddisher Kultur Farband) and an adherent of the left Poale Zion.—Editors.*

FIVE years ago, in March 1944, I smuggled a letter out of Poland through the underground. It was a last will and testament depicting life and cultural creativity in the Warsaw ghetto and the death camps. This letter, written by my dear, immortal friend and comrade, Dr. Emanuel Ringelblum,<sup>1</sup> and myself was addressed to you, to our dear friend, Dr. Raphael Mahler,<sup>2</sup> to the YIVO (Yiddish Scientific Institute) and to the Yiddish Pen Club. A week later, Emanuel with his wife and son fell into the hands of the nazis. They were slain amidst the ruins of the Warsaw ghetto.

At that time none of us believed we would live to see the day of liberation. But fate decreed otherwise. I went through that hellfire and lived to join in rebuilding the ruins of Jewish life.

In those first, wonderful, stormy and historic days of liberation in January 1945, I felt certain that all the creative forces of our people, writers, artists and scientists, would, as soon as it was humanly possible, pour into our country, hallowed by suffering and sanctified by indomitable courage. I was sure that human and national impulses would drive people to Poland, to re-live both pain of the murder of millions and the glory of the uprising. How could one create new Jewish cultural values without intimate contact with these great events, without personally treading the soil of Treblinka, Maidanek, Oswiecim, the sacred earth of the Warsaw ghetto? How could one possibly create without some little familiarity with the huge mountain of documents and material, in which the pain and struggle were recorded? Is it possible to comprehend these events without direct contact with those who remained alive and are creating the new Poland?

<sup>1</sup> The martyred scholar Dr. Emanuel Ringelblum left behind a most valuable sheaf of historical documents in which he recorded the daily life of the Warsaw Ghetto during the nazi occupation.—Eds.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Raphael Mahler is a leading Jewish scholar and historian who came to this country from Poland before the war and was a colleague of Ringelblum.—Eds.

Hundreds of Jewish cultural workers and leaders from all parts of the world have already come to us. Dr. Raphael Mahler felt it his duty to visit us twice to study our documents and also to give a helping hand to the new Jewish cultural workers, teachers, social scientists and educators.

It is with deep regret, however, that I must report that the majority of Jewish writers, artists and cultural workers have felt no urge to come. It is particularly a source of regret that you, dear friends, to whom we sent our greetings at the gates of death, did not feel impelled to come to our soil, on which the greatest tragedy and most glorious event in the history of the Jewish people was enacted. You did not even inquire about a visit, you made no attempt to establish direct contact with Polish Jewry. It is an incredible fact. Perhaps there were personal obstacles. But for some of you the main reason was no doubt political. And of late these political judgments have beclouded the consciousness of many Jewish writers, have weakened the sense of national and human responsibility and have distorted historical perspectives. We cannot forgive those writers, who, for false political considerations, break their ties with our tragic, inspiring history, with our creative, nationally-conscious, socially progressive Polish-Jewish community.

This break with the living sources of history has of course taken its revenge on the writers themselves. When I read certain recent Jewish historical works, I am astounded. Is this a picture of what took place? To this very day, four years after the war, why is there not one novel or dramatic work that is capable of moving people profoundly? Many novels written outside of Poland about our war experiences are remote from historical truth. In Jewish literature on the other side of the ocean, not a glimmering of the super-human pain and heroism has reached expression. Does this imply the decline of Yiddish literature and its decadence? Some might say that perhaps the wounds are too fresh, the tremendous events are too close to be viewed in perspective. No! I feel that the answer lies elsewhere. I feel that Jewish writers are living superficially and are loath to immerse themselves in the incredible that was nevertheless real. They prefer to see these events in a vacuum, to cut them off from the surrounding world, from the great struggle going on everywhere.

## False Literature

In this recent Yiddish writing, we see only papier-mache people, not live beings. There is no genuine psychological experience here—only stereotyped thoughts. The horror of



six million dead then and the united urge now for struggle of the masses, the workers and the youth hardly ever are expressed.

I have just read a novel of that great writer, Sholem Asch, called *The Burning Bush*.<sup>3</sup> It hurt me deeply to find that this book did not express the real truth. For the thing as it happened is quite different. Another example is the description of the recent events by Joseph Opatoshu.<sup>4</sup> How reality is distorted in this writing. I read his novel about the death of Professor Meyer Balaban, who is presented almost as a saint. Unfortunately, the truth is very different. Professor Balaban certainly did not conduct himself like a hero in the Warsaw ghetto, nor did he serve the cause of his people. It is impermissible that Jewish literature should contain such a distorted account. For we must teach the people the truth and tell this truth with the greatest possible artistry.

In Argentina many Jewish literary people are trying to give heroic stature to Chernikov, chairman of the Warsaw *Judenrat*, because this man tragically committed suicide. This is an insult, a slap in the face to the whole Jewish underground movement in the Warsaw ghetto and to the

<sup>3</sup> Sholem Asch's *Brenender Dorn* is a short story volume in Yiddish on Nazi atrocities in Poland.—Eds.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Opatoshu is a well-known American Yiddish fiction writer.—Eds.

Polish-Jewish community who saved the honor of the Jewish people against the will of Chernikov and the *Judenrat*. Chernikov characterized the conspiratorial calls of the Jewish underground fighters as "*shmatkes*," filthy rags, on more than one occasion. He considered the underground fighters, who called upon the people to fight the Nazis, horrible criminals "who endanger our lives." Toward the anti-Hitler liberation movement in the Warsaw ghetto Chernikov felt only hatred. Surrounded by degenerates and Jewish Gestapo agents, he was opposed to the whole Jewish movement and particularly its progressive circles. *This is the truth.*

The Jewish writers on the other side of the ocean have not penetrated to the basic causes of our national catastrophe. They have failed to discern its organic connection with the fascist cataclysm and the degeneration of the capitalist system out of which came the poisonous growths of fascism and hatred of the Jew. Many of these writers would sever the Jewish tragedy from the great world drama of social progress against reaction, of capitalism against socialism, of the national liberation struggle of hundreds of millions of people against the enslavement of peoples by imperialism. Too many Jewish writers do not understand this world historical process, do not care to understand it. Very ingeniously they cut off Jewish national problems from world problems. They want to imprison Jewish literature in a



Yiddish writers of Poland: (left to right) Yuri Suhl, visiting American Yiddish poet; S. Kants, associate editor of *Nidershlesie*; B. Shlevin, novelist; Yakob Wasserstrum, head of *Yiddishe Kultur Gesellschaft*; Dr. David Sfar, literary critic; Yakob Egit, pres., Regional Committee of Jews of Lower Silesia; Moishe Shulshtein, poet; Binem Heller, poet and editor of *Literarische Shriften*; Y. Turkov, editor-in-chief of *Nidershlesie* and director of the Jewish Theater Collective of Lower Silesia.

spiritual ghetto. For them the tragedy of our people did not rise out of the reactionary storm throughout the world and of the social, economic and political abnormalities of the Jewish people in capitalist countries. These writers rather seem to believe that our tragedy is punishment for sins, an expression of irrational "eternal" anti-Jewish forces or of some other supposed profundities. Jewish literature in the capitalist countries is now dominated by mysticism, god-seeking, neo-messianism, irrationalism and other sorts of spiritual decay and regression. From these trends the way is short to raising that deep slogan, "Back to the synagogue."

### **Reality Must Be Faced**

From such writers we do not get a serious analysis of the social and psychological roots of Jewish heroism, of the reserves of power imbedded in the masses that were realized in the uprising and in the broad underground movement. Instead of educating our people today and tomorrow in the courageous spirit and the glory of this great tradition, many writers in the western countries sing neo-mystical choruses of woe and defeatism. Even the creation of Israel has not given them courage. Jewish literature totally fails to convey the feeling that our war is not yet won. Without raising false alarm and fear, it seems to me necessary for someone to say clearly that Treblinka and Maidanek are not geographical, but social and political concepts. The threatened rebirth of fascism, the spread of racism and anti-Semitism, can once again cause Jewish blood to be spilled.

It is unfortunately true, that not all Jewish writers try to understand the objective working of our national fate as bound up in great measure with the social, economic and political world processes. The fact is that they prefer not to understand the process out of which the anti-Jewish poison is secreted and spreads.

And at the same time these writers neither wish to know nor to recognize mighty progressive forces throughout the world, the forces of tomorrow which are the natural allies of the Jewish people. Many Jewish writers would like to forget the world-historical role of the Red Army, which purged the world of the Hitlerite plague. Certain writers want to forget the historic role of the Soviet Union in our struggle for national independence, for the creation of the state of Israel. The people, however, have a much better memory and a much more generous conscience. The people will never forget what they owe to the Soviet Union and to the progressive new democracies, who are building a new and just world.

Many Jewish writers in the western countries are dominated by the sentiment of "leave us alone; this great struggle going on in the world is none of our business. Let us not get involved in it." What rotten, decadent sentiments. What a horrible "neutrality." These attitudes are reminiscent of many German Jews who refused to understand what was going on around them, who did not want to get in-

volved, who wanted to be neutral—and who finally were killed en masse.

The Jewish people must get mixed up in these struggles between reaction and progress. We have already paid too dearly for the illusion that "they don't mean us." The fate of the Jewish people and of the Jewish state is dependent upon the outcome of this historic world struggle. And Jewish literature must think this through more deeply.

To our shame, there are Jewish writers who not only profess neutrality but who have even joined the anti-Soviet and anti-communist devils' dance and partake of the war hysteria. There are also renegade Jewish writers who are riding high on the anti-Soviet horse, men like Arthur Koestler, who have jumped from the camp of progress to the camp of fascism.

### **Peace and Our Future**

Throughout the world today the forces of peace are mobilizing. The great conference in Wroclaw warned that all progressive forces in world literature and culture are uniting to enable themselves to stand up against the imperialist warmongers. And now the whole cultural world is preparing for a peace conference in Paris which will carry on in the great humanist spirit of Romain Rolland and Maxim Gorki. This congress will represent hundreds of millions of people. But where is the voice of eminent Jewish writers? Why do we not hear a mighty *J'accuse* from Jewish literary figures against the forces of world reaction that are now preparing a new war and a new tragedy for the Jewish people, that either actively strengthen or at least tolerate the growth of anti-Semitism in practically all of the capitalist countries that are strengthening the spirit of revenge in western Germany, where the spirit of Hitler still rules? Why have we not yet heard your voice, dear friends? Why do we not hear the voice of Jewish writers in the struggle for a progressive and secular state of Israel? Do they not understand that the independence and sovereignty of Israel is jeopardized by the imperialist powers, who desire either to destroy the Jewish state or to enslave it, those powers who are now attempting to achieve by political and financial means what they could not accomplish by force? Is it not clear that our people must forge a mighty Jewish front for peace, for national renaissance and social progress, with the Jewish cultural workers at its head?

Hovering over us who have survived are unforgettable memories. In truth the burden of remembering what we lived through is heavy. But it would be much more accursed to forget. Many Jews now want to forget what happened to our people and why it happened. I feel it my sacred duty to warn them that we must not forget. The Jewish people dare not forget. The Jewish writers have no right to forget.

Forgive me, my dear friends, if I have expressed myself sharply in this letter to you. Please understand that my words rise out of impatience and a grave concern for the future of our people.



# Book Reviews

## JEW IN AMERICAN LIFE

By Morris U. Schappes

*Pilgrims in a New Land*, by Lee M. Friedman, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, and Macmillan, New York, 1948. \$4.00.

Despite its many limitations, there are useful materials in this latest collection of essays by Lee M. Friedman, president of the American Jewish Historical Society. For more than half of his 78 years, Mr. Friedman has devoted whatever time he could spare from his extremely prosperous law practice to his enthusiastic and indefatigable researches into the history of American Jews. Like his former collections, *Early American Jews* and *Jewish Pioneers and Patriots*, this volume is still, as Mr. Friedman concedes, "content with the presentations of isolated segments, single aspects, or even mere pertinent incidents of Jewish participation and Jewish achievements" in American life. In this heterogeneous assemblage of 28 articles (ten of which are reprints or revisions of essays published in various learned and general magazines), there are too many oddities and dead ends of little or unrevealed significance.

Welcome, however, more for their subject matter than for Mr. Friedman's none too illuminating treatment, are the seven essays making up the last section of the book, "Jews in American Economic Life." For some years now Mr. Friedman has been trying almost in vain to impress upon the members of the American Jewish Historical Society the importance of this aspect of Jewish life. Here he continues to exemplify in practice how fruitful a field of investigation it is. Thus in "David Lubin," Mr. Friedman affords us an introduction to a retail merchant turned agricultural reformer seeking vainly to protect farmers from being the victims of international finance capital.

In "Modern American Radanites," we have a sketch of the role of American Jews in extending the capitalist market in the United States by developing merchandising techniques from the primitive personal peddling to the modern methods of wholesale distribution. "Builders" provides an account of how Jewish immigrants 50 years ago in Boston turned to building homes, and affected both construction practices and building finances in that city. In "Children's Clothes," Mr. Friedman continues his description of the Jew in

the clothing industry, begun in *Jewish Pioneers and Patriots*, with an account of Louis Borgenicht, who created a capitalist market for it and became "King of the Children's Dress Trade." Here Mr. Friedman characteristically omits Borgenicht's relations to his workers and to union organization in the trade.

"The Tenth Muse" suggests a significant question: will the Jews, who pioneered in the development of the moving picture field when it was ignored, mocked and despised by non-Jewish capitalists, now be squeezed out of the industry by non-Jewish Big Business? In fact, Mr. Friedman underestimates the extent to which non-Jewish finance capital has already achieved dominance in Hollywood. In "A Village in Vermont," the author traces the career of Isaac Gilman from peddler to paper manufacturer and philanthropist. Granting even that Gilman was as generous as a capitalist can be, the impious question arises: what did the

Gilmans do to prevent World War I, or the American post-war reaction, or the appeasement of Hitlerism that led to World War II? Mr. Friedman's indifference to such problems will always leave the progressive reader dissatisfied with the author's approach and limitations.

These limitations become utterly disqualifying when Mr. Friedman turns, as he does in two essays, to labor relations. Mr. Friedman's very great enthusiasm for Samuel Gompers is more of a reflection on Gompers' claim to have led labor forward than a vindication of Mr. Friedman's belief that Jews ought to be particularly proud of him. Mr. Friedman sees Gompers' "Jewish idealism and altruism"

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combined with "Jewish pragmatism" as the "key to much of Gompers' thinking and action."

But Mr. Friedman makes no attempt to record, much less explain, the fact that Gompers began his career as a student of Marxism, and ended it as the favorite "labor leader" of American Big Business. Can one be "proud" of both these phases? It is with unintended irony that Mr. Friedman does observe that Gompers' qualities "were a combination of *middle-class English trade unionism* and the Jewish background of the traditional opposition to injustice" and that "as a trade-unionist, *middle-class reformer*, he accepted the capitalistic system and the *laissez-faire* economic viewpoint of free enterprise and individual initiative. He held no truck with communism and he would have none even of socialism. He believed in union-management cooperation." (Italics mine—M.U.S.) Mr. Friedman forgets that the Jewish *masses*, who founded certain unions, were militant in their practice and socialist in their outlook, and rejected Gompers' opposition to bringing working-class politics into the trade unions. The Jewish "traditional opposition to injustice" found deeper expression in their flaming resentment and strike struggles than in Gompers' "middle-class reformism," which often led him into bitter conflict with the very workers he was supposed to "lead."

**Mr. Friedman's essential hostility** to labor organization is revealed more shockingly in his essay, "Judge Moses Levy." Levy was the judge before whom, in 1806, there was tried the famous Cordwainers' Case, in which eight shoemakers were found guilty of a *conspiracy*—to raise their wages! Levy was a renegade from Jeffersonianism who served his new Federalist masters well by his prejudiced conduct of the first "conspiracy" case in American labor history. Levy's charge to the jury became notorious as an example of judicial prejudice, yet Mr. Friedman, himself a lawyer, praises it as "what must be conceded to be an able charge"! Why, in 1888, New York State Commissioner of Labor Charles F. Peck, in his *Annual Report*, scored this charge as "most improper. It was an argument, not a summary of the law . . . he drew on his imagination for most of his law." More recently, a legal scholar, Walter Nelles, in the *Yale Law Journal* (1931, pp. 165-200), made a professional and devastating analysis of

Levy's misconduct of the trial and of his highly prejudicial charge to the jury; Mr. Friedman cites this article in his bibliography, but pays no attention to its evidence or conclusions!

Among his other essays, the following are worthy of note. Dealing soberly with Haym Salomon, Mr. Friedman correctly begins to puncture some of the most dangerous widely-current exaggerations of Salomon's real role. Mr. Friedman demonstrates that Salomon was a broker who sold government securities (for a commission), that he therefore did very useful work, but that he did *not* lend large, or even small, sums to the government. Nevertheless, Mr. Friedman still repeats too many statements for which there is no basis in fact, such as that Salomon, when arrested, was ordered to be executed, and perpetuates the common exaggeration by calling Salomon "Freedom's Financier."

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One of Mr. Friedman's best essays is "An Invitation to America," in which he discusses a pamphlet published in 1819 inviting Jews to come to the United States, and relates the colonizing project contained therein to the many Utopian communistic colonizing experiments of the time. Slight but charming is the essay on Myra Kelly, the Irish schoolteacher who in the first decade of this century wrote stories about her Jewish pupils that contrast favorably with the sophisticated smirk and sneering about such themes that is exemplified in the Hymie Kaplan stories. Of special interest is "Our First Woman Reformer," Ernestine L. Rose, about whom Mr. Friedman writes with enthusiasm, but too often erroneously. Her married life was not unhappy and did not end in divorce; in fact she was happily married almost 50 years. Nor did she quite retire from public life when she returned to England in 1869; there she also took to the platform, even though her health did not permit her to be so active as she had been in the United States. Finally, I wish it were true that "she rushed into the vanguard of every fight against the exploitation of the underprivileged workers in the new industrialism of which she was then seeing the beginning," but I know of no evidence to support such a statement. Ernestine Rose was an atheist, abolitionist, and champion of woman's right, but she, unfortunately, appears to have had no contact with the labor movement.

It should be noted in general that the volume suffers from altogether too many errors in fact, carelessness in transcription of documents and quotations, and slovenly editing, which tolerated too much clumsy organization of materials, and which also allowed the usefulness of the copious documentation to be frustrated by the frequent failure to cite page references.

There are many passing comments, opinions, and formulations by Mr. Friedman, which, were there space, I should question and challenge. But I must note the serious underestimation of the Negro involved in Mr. Friedman's judgment that "sometimes the newcomers, such as the imported Negroes, by numbers alone changed the course of American society and economics." It was not by their "numbers alone" that the slaves wrought their changes. It was by their labor, by their unintermitting resistance to slavery, by their participation in the American Revolution, by their songs of protest, by their mass participation in the Civil War (not "the War Between the States" as Mr. Friedman calls it, Confederate-style)—it was in these and other ways that the Negro people made themselves felt in American history. It would be well for historians of the Jewish people, as well as for American historians generally, to pay more attention to the history of the American Negro. Such study would help rid them of the "white-superiority" stereotype that the Negro was only a passive, quantitative factor in American history.

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# Documents

## INTERVIEW WITH DR. SNEH

By L. Bruck

*While Dr. Moshe Sneh, a leader of the Israel United Workers Party (Mapam) and a member of the Knesset, was in Paris attending the World Jewish Congress meeting held there in August, he granted an interview to L. Bruck, of the editorial staff of the Neie Presse, Paris Yiddish daily. The interview follows.—Eds.*

**1. How would you evaluate the international position of the state of Israel at the present moment?**

Those in control of American policy are actually exerting strong pressure on Israel. American imperialism is striving completely to dominate the Near East, to eliminate British imperialism from its previous positions and to transform the countries of the Near East into a base for exclusively American domination from the political, economic and strategic viewpoints.

In the framework of this policy Washington seeks to make our young state one of its satellites. Pressure on Israel is expressed in a number of forms:

a) By the rearmament of neighboring feudal Arab states, which are incited to take revenge upon Israel, in order to force Israel to seek its security through a regional Middle Eastern pact under an American protectorate;

b) By the "internationalization" of Jerusalem. This means the creation of an American enclave in the country's heart;

c) By the annexation of the southern part of the Negev and of the outlet to the Red Sea near Akaba for the purpose of establishing an American base for the ports of the Indian Ocean;

d) By piling up for the state of Israel numerous economic and financial difficulties so that Israel should adopt the McGhee Plan, which is only a special edition of the Marshall Plan for the Middle East.

To make Israel its satellite, American imperialism is exploiting the tragedy of the Arab refugees in such a way that American banks can practically dominate the state of Israel, as well as the Arab states, under the pretext of "aid" for their rehabilitation. This is the real explanation of American pressure. Washington is trying to provoke an economic crisis in the state of Israel under the double burden of Jewish immigration and readmission of Arab refugees.

**2. What is your attitude on the question of Arab refugees?**

We have always demanded the right of peaceful Arab refugees to return to the country. We have connected this with our demand that in the Arab part of Palestine there should be created a democratic independent Arab state, which would be linked with Israel by an economic union and a treaty of friendship. In the framework of such a democratic solution the question of refugees could no longer be used as an instrument for foreign intrigues. It is characteristic that, when we proposed a year ago that the right of peaceful Arab refugees to return be proclaimed as part of a democratic *entente* between Jews and Arabs, the majority parties just about denounced us as traitors. Now, when America is demanding that we permit the return of Arab refugees, the government declares that it is ready to receive them. According to our proposal of a year ago, the return of Arab refugees could have been an act of good will on the part of Israel on the path to Jewish-Arab friendship; now it becomes an act imposed by the American government having for its purpose the economic subordination of the Arab states as well as Israel.

**3. How, according to you, can Israel defend itself against the pressure of American imperialism?**

Today we are an independent state and we are in a position to reject all American demands. It is evident that our resistance can only succeed if it is supported by help from sincere friends of our independence, that is, in the first place by the help of the Soviet Union and the people's democracies. We do not have the least confidence that the present government of Israel will put up effective resistance to the demands of American imperialism. The composition of the government—right wing social dem-

ocrats (Mapai), religious front, small bourgeois parties—determines in advance its political line of submission to the policy of the United States. That is why we are conducting a fight of unswerving opposition to the policies of the government inside and outside of the Knesset. The fight for the independence of Israel is tied to the fight for peace just as the act of dragging Israel into a regional pact under American control would be tied to the preparation for a new war by American imperialism against the Soviet Union, against the people's democracies and against the independence of all peoples.

We have just established in Israel a Committee for Peace which has affiliated with the World Congress of the Partisans for Peace. We are also in the process of enlarging the scope and strengthening the activity of the League for Friendship with the USSR. The popular masses have warmly—even enthusiastically—responded to the call of these two organizations. We hope to be able to create a mass movement in support of the fight to promote peace and friendship with the Soviet Union. Mapai recently attempted to split the League for Friendship with the USSR, but the result has been just the opposite. The League has been strengthened and the number of members doubled. Our view is that friendship with the USSR is a touchstone for every individual on the question of world peace; for every Jew who wishes to remain true to the real interests of his people and his country; and for every worker who wishes to remain faithful to the banner of genuine

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socialism. It is necessary to add that not only the Movement for Peace but also the League for Friendship with the USSR take part in and collaborate harmoniously with all progressive forces in Israel, both Jewish and Arab.

#### 4. Can you say a few words about the economic situation in Israel?

It is evident that our economic situation is difficult. We have to meet the normal difficulties of a state as well as the war budget as long as the armistice is not transformed into a peace treaty. We have to accept hundreds of thousands of new immigrants (260,000 in the last 15 months). I should also add what I have often declared in the Knesset: government policy is tending towards reduction of immigration, to lower the standard of living of the masses and to penetration of foreign capital into the country.

Our economic program aims at the following objectives: nationalization of the land, of water sources, of natural resources (the Dead Sea), of electricity, of oil refineries and of foreign trade; radical recasting of the fiscal system by increase of direct taxation and suppression of indirect taxation and creation of the tax on capital; increase in the volume of trade with the USSR and with all European countries which would replace imports solely from Anglo-Saxon countries, which inevitably lead to the increase in the deficit of our trade balance; democratization in general of the whole economic system, as closely as possible in accordance with the example of the popular democracies and in the spirit of the pioneers of our renaissance.

#### 5. What are the repercussions of governmental policies on the condition of the workers?

First of all the government is not capable of insuring employment for everyone, above all for the new immigrants. Secondly, we have already had cases of wages cuts (2.5 pounds per month). The Mapai majority in the Histadrut has accepted the reduction in salaries because, they say, prices have dropped. For the first time in Israel strikes have broken out against the will of the Histadrut leadership. At Tel Aviv the strikes included 4000 workers and at Haifa several thousands. Under pressure from striking workers, the Histadrut leadership has been forced to make a concession: it has set up a commission (with the participation of the opposition Mapam) to re-examine the cost-of-living index.

#### 6. How would you sum up your opinion of the general situation in Israel?

No confidence in the government, confidence in the people. And that means confidence in the future.

## Letters from Readers

### More on Psychoanalysis

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

George Stewart's articles *No Peace of Mind* in the March and April issues were stimulating and their basic theses irrefutable. Yet they raise points which must be challenged, at least to the extent of insisting that Stewart be called upon to amplify his attitude toward psychoanalysis and psychotherapy in general.

On two points, a progressive could hardly disagree with Stewart—one, his view that the attempt to wed psychoanalysis and religion is futile and dangerous, the other, his criticism of Freud's own attitudes on the nature of man and society. Further, progressives, or even mildly intelligent conservatives, could scarcely question the proposition that mental and nervous disorders, especially anxiety and insecurity feelings, are symptoms of a fevered age. Society is the basic cause of emotional conflicts, and in a double manner. Anxiety grows from the immediate troubles of our era, from fears of war, unemployment, loss of liberty. It grows also from reactionary methods of child training which inflict on the growing generation the outworn and unhealthy attitudes of the past.

Psychoanalysis is, of course, no cure for society's ills. Yet, the possibility of help through such treatment is a real question for many progressives.

While emotional conflicts have a deep root in society, they can often be resolved and channelized through a growth in understanding of one's self and one's environment. That understanding can grow through properly-applied analysis.

It is on that point that Stewart seems most unclear, and even slightly callous. To a layman, he seems to ignore the basic difference, one which is almost qualitative, between the neuroses of the age and the crawling, miserable anxiety pressures that afflict certain individuals.

The anxiety and nervousness of the age are something that all progressives feel with varying pressure. An understanding of these, coupled with work for civil liberties, better living conditions and a better world, is the best therapy. For such conditions there can be no cure-all.

But other difficulties go beyond. What of the young man worried sick about his sex problems? What of the frigid woman? What about persons whose lives are a morass of petty fixations, anxieties, worries, far beyond the normal reactions to a troubled society? Is it sufficient to give

them a volume of Marx and a bundle of leaflets? Surely, the purposeful existence of the good progressive will help, but the basic conflicts need special therapy.

That is what Stewart seems to ignore. For many individuals, such difficulties are subject to amelioration even within the framework of existing society. This therapy is expensive, yes, and the clinics are crowded. But, as is the case with physical medicine, the remedy is not less therapy, but more. A rational society would make the findings of neuro-psychiatry available to all who need them.

Does Stewart propose to junk psychoanalysis entirely? What are his views of psychosomatic medicine? What of the physicians who regard many physical ailments, such as coronary thrombosis or even defective vision as rooted in anxieties stemming from childhood experiences?

There are, indeed, obvious dangers for the progressive seeking psychiatric aid, and Stewart is quite correct in pointing them out. Through class bias, many analysts regard any left-wing viewpoint as *ipso facto* neurotic. Some analysts themselves are muddled. But others, while by no means progressives, have an under-

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standing of individuals that leaves political conclusions to the patient and allows him to review his political career only as part of his general personal development.

Yes, there are obvious dangers to which we must be alert. But these are the weaknesses of men, not of science.

As with other cultural matters, one does not throw out a complete body of knowledge. One takes it, adapts it, changes it to meet the needs of society's advance. Modern psychiatry and psychoanalysis is a growing, vital science, based on its most progressive development on a materialistic understanding of man and society.

I regret that Stewart was not clearer about these matters despite the excellence of his articles. I indeed hope that the editors of JEWISH LIFE can afford Mr. Stewart more space to develop his viewpoint. And if he is actually "agin" it all, I most certainly hope that a reputable and progressive psychiatrist will be invited to present his viewpoint.

My own views are merely those of a layman who feels that more elaboration is needed.

A. B.

Baltimore, Md.

### Rejoinder

The recent revival of Marxist criticism of psychoanalysis, which is a part of the general intensification of attention to questions of ideology since the end of World War II, has precipitated considerable debate in certain sections of the progressive movement. This debate has been needlessly complicated by a facet of psychoanalysis which is a little bit different from the problems raised in discussions of philosophy, biological science and so on. This facet has to do with the fact that psychoanalysis is not only a body of theory which makes the claim of explaining human behavior and social phenomena as well, but it is also a method of treatment for the care and cure of the mentally ill and the emotionally disabled.

Now it often happens that some of those who agree wholly with our assertions that the social implications of psychoanalysis are reactionary and obscurantist to a dangerous degree, yet argue that in our assault upon the theory we overlook the fact that many persons are helped by psychoanalytic therapy. In effect, they charge us with indifference to human suffering, claiming

that in our desire to alleviate the sufferings of the masses (they agree that only a fundamental alteration of society will accomplish this goal) we ignore the problems of the individual. Some psychiatrists, who find it possible to be adherents of Freudian psychoanalysis and at the same time wish to be known as Marxists, accuse me of denying them the right to practice what they believe to be the most effective medical therapy yet developed. Prospective or actual psychoanalytic patients accuse us of denying them the right to treatment.

At bottom, these objectors against thoroughgoing criticism of psychoanalysis accuse their Marxist critics of two things: (1) that we are callous and unfeeling toward the individual, and (2) that we mechanically do not distinguish between people who are merely insecure and worried as a result of current social and economic conditions and those who are actually sick and need medical help. These are the main points made by the writer of the "Letter to the Editor" above, and they have been made by others to me in personal discussions.

I think that the writer of this letter and those who make similar objections really do not understand what they are proposing to us. They start by saying that our basic theses are irrefutable but end up by expressing the fear that this "irrefutable" criticism is bad because it may prevent sick people from getting the help they need. They appear to distinguish most sharply between the theory of psychoanalysis and its practice, feeling uncomfortable about the former but eager for the latter. But Marxism tells us that theory and practice cannot be so rigidly separated, that in fact theory arises from practice, in turn reacts upon practice and is inseparably intertwined with it. So with psychoanalysis! If the basic theory is obscurantist, idealist and reactionary, the working out of the theory in the process of treatment cannot be free from objection.

The writer of the "Letter" asks if Stewart wishes to "junk psychoanalysis entirely." In its present form, the answer is "Yes!" But does this mean that Stewart is opposed to scientific psychotherapy? On the contrary! But this psychotherapy will have to understand that neuroses are social diseases, will have to comprehend the complex way in which a class society brings about human illness, will have to see that,

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Morris Marlin

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so long as capitalism exists, the individual cannot merely be "adjusted" to his environment but must learn how to change it.

The Marxist critics of psychoanalysis are not so naive as to believe that it is sufficient to give a compulsion neurotic "A volume of Marx and a bundle of leaflets" in order to cure him. We understand very well that an extremely sick society produces many extremely sick individuals. But it would be salutary if the psychoanalysts read Marx and, at the conclusion of their treatment, handed the discharged patient a bundle of leaflets.

**In other words,** the basic point we are making is that psychoanalysis as it is practiced today by the overwhelming majority of psychiatrists is simply not scientific, and cannot be so long as it uncritically reflects all the vulgar prejudices of bourgeois social thought. The writer of the Letter points to the defects of psychoanalysis as the "weaknesses of men, not of science." But he forgets the "weaknesses" of the social class which controls science in our society and determines what men shall think. It is highly improbable that a decaying, class society can produce a genuinely scientific

psychotherapy. Perhaps such a science will only flourish when class cleavages have been abolished, when it may not be quite so necessary. But it is ridiculous to think that men who are permeated with the obscurantist ideology of a dying social class can successfully treat what are essentially social diseases.

It is not that we need "more therapy." What we need is scientific therapy. It is a base calumny to suggest that Marxists are indifferent to the plight of scores of thousands who are twisted mentally and emotionally every day of the year by a rotting capitalism. But it is precisely our deep moral indignation that prevents us from turning these thousands over to men who are working in darkness. It may be extremely difficult to develop a truly scientific psychotherapy in the midst of a decaying class society. But those honest and progressive psychiatrists who are fighting for this goal deserve our support. Their task begins with criticism and will end with the demolition of much of what passes by the name of psychoanalysis today.

GEORGE STEWART

Chicago

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946, OF JEWISH LIFE, PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT 35 EAST 12th ST., NEW YORK 3, N. Y., FOR OCTOBER 1, 1949.

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Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared A. Lechowitzky, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of JEWISH LIFE, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily, weekly, semiweekly or triweekly newspaper, the circulation) etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations), printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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# FROM THE FOUR CORNERS

(Continued from page 2)

**FIFTEEN CITY COLLEGE** of New York students who were arrested in April during the student strike against college instructors William E. Knickerbocker and William C. Davis for anti-Semitic and anti-Negro bias, respectively, were convicted of disorderly conduct on Sept. 22. The judge suspended their sentences. Three students were ejected from the courtroom during the trial, one of them because he was ordered to remove a button protesting Peekskill and stated that he did so under protest.

**IN A REPLY** to a letter from Adolf Kohlberg, chairman of the red-baiting American Jewish League Against Communism, demanding an "investigation" of presumed communist influence in the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library because it published in its bulletin letters of Emma Lazarus edited by Morris U. Schappes, library director Ralph A. Beals on September 20 rejected the request. Mr. Beals disclaimed the right to "control the outside conduct or opinions of the staff," and described Dr. Joshua Bloch, Jewish Division director as "a scholar of great learning and integrity who spent a lifetime in developing in the New York Public Library one of the world's great and impartial records of Jewish life and culture." Mr. Beals also affirmed that Mr. Schappes' article "meets the high standards of bibliographical excellence and scholarly impartiality which the Bulletin has always maintained."

**DANIEL FRISCH**, president of the Zionist Organization of America, in a move designed to strengthen right wing political forces in Israel, announced on his return from a four-weeks trip to Israel that the ZOA would launch a \$2,000,000 fund to help the middle class of Israel, which he termed the "forgotten middleman." The fund would aid in building colonies of privately owned homes, a chain of small loan societies to assist the small trader and business man and housing for these "forgotten men."

## EUROPE

**POLAND WILL PERMIT** emigration to Israel of any Jew wishing to go there. The emigrants will be obliged to renounce their Polish citizenship and will remain stateless until they reach Israel, since the Israeli government refused to grant Israeli citizenship simultaneously with release of Polish citizenship. Unrestricted emigration to Israel will be open for one year. It is estimated that some 15 to 20,000 Polish Jews may go to Israel. Richard A. Yaffe reports from Poland that Polish Jews "laugh at reports that they are 'sitting on their baggage' ready to flee pogroms." He also quotes a right wing Zionist as having told him, "Warsaw has done everything in its power to lift the fear from our hearts. I have nothing but the utmost respect and affection for the people in power here."

**JEWISH LIFE IN POLAND** . . . Two Jewish cooperatives in the metal and chemical industries have been granted a subsidy of 23,000,000 zlotys for expansion. . . . The Ministry of Reconstruction has agreed to advance 20,000,000 zlotys toward the cost of rebuilding the two-century old synagogue in the Praga suburb of Warsaw destroyed by the nazis. . . . The 500 Jewish miners of Lower Silesia have been paid a tribute for doubling the standard coal output and for their brotherly, cooperative attitude toward the Poles. . . . The Polish government is spending over

\$100,000 for a modern Jewish Industrial Trades School in Wroclaw for training in trades ranging from advanced engineering to lathe operation and dress-designing. This school is one of a dozen Jewish industrial schools in Warsaw, Lodz and other Polish cities. . . . Rabbi David Kahane, chief rabbi of Poland, at a two-day conference of all Jewish congregations of Poland held in Warsaw in late August, expressed thanks to the Polish government for its guarantee of complete independence for Jewish religious bodies in their relations with other organizations, including the Central Committee of Polish Jews. The conference discussed problems arising out of the decree of August 5th guaranteeing autonomy and full equality in religious matters to all religious denominations, except for the prohibition of religious bodies tying themselves to foreign religious or secular bodies, although the chief rabbinate of Jerusalem may be consulted on purely religious matters.\*

**A GROUP OF FRENCH JEWS** from the predominantly Jewish resort town of Trouville, near Le Havre, were arrested by French police when they came to a newspaper office protesting publication of an anti-Semitic article. Police told them to "go to your own country, if you don't like it here." The Jews were later released.

**REPRESENTATIVES** of Salonika Jews called on Greek Deputy Minister Themistocles Venizelos in September to protest against a three-year old "ghetto" election law whereby Salonika Jews may not vote in the districts where they live, but must go to two special polling places for Jews. The minister said he would refer the matter to the ministry of the interior.

**JEWISH LIFE IN RUMANIA** . . . A second Jew was appointed to the Rumanian cabinet in August. He is George Gaston Marin, minister of the newly-created Department of Electrical Energy. Foreign Minister Anna Pauker is the other Jewish cabinet minister. . . . More than 90,000 persons witnessed performances of the Jewish State Theater of Rumania last year. Character of the audiences changed from bourgeois and petty bourgeois to working class, said B. Lebli, director of the theater. Aims of the theater, he said, were to "fight for the unmasking of Zionist nationalism" to help "fraternization between working people of all nationalities" and to depict "the Jew not as a passive victim of past regimes, but in an active role as a fighter, a hero of labor, a man of a new type who is now in the making in the Rumanian Popular Republic." . . . Seven new textbooks in Yiddish for elementary schools have been published recently. . . . An agreement between nationalized Rumanian firms and private Israeli companies providing for an exchange of \$3,000,000 worth of goods was concluded in August.\*

**RENAZIFICATION IN GERMANY** . . . On Sept. 1, the Municipal Council of Offenbach voted to appoint Dr. Herbert Lewin head gynecological doctor of the city hospital. An open rebalotting was demanded and Dr. Lewin lost. Deputy Mayor Karl Kasperowitz maintained that "You cannot entrust the women of Offenbach to Dr. Lewin." After an investigation by the American Military Government, the deputy mayor was removed. Dr. Lewin has not been appointed. . . . The World Jewish Congress in September protested to the British occupation authorities the eviction of six Jewish families in Junkerbors, near Cologne, to make place for billets for Belgian

troops. . . . "There are virtual pogroms in Germany with Jews being beaten and persecuted and what is happening there is renazification—not denazification," said Edward L. Sardi, executive director of the American ORT Federation on his return from a European tour in August. . . . From Munich came the assertion that the *Sued-deutsche Zeitung*, which published the anti-Semitic letter that precipitated a pogrom in Munich in July, is owned and edited by three Jews.

**ANTI-MOSLEYITE FORCES** prevented the holding of a fascist meeting in Lewisham, London district, in mid-August. A parade by the Mosleyites, well-protected by the police, was dispersed by demonstrators before the meeting took place.

## ISRAEL

**PREMIER DAVID BEN GURION** said in Tel Aviv early in September that now that Israel has been established, the next task of the Jewish state "consists of bringing all Jews to Israel." He further asserted that Jewish parents in the United States should send their children to Israel. "Even if they decline to help us," he went on, "we will bring the youth to Israel, though I hope that this will not be necessary."

**THE APPOINTMENT** of the UN Economic Survey Group for the Middle East in August evoked the comment from *Kol Haam*, Tel Aviv communist daily, that the group was "a purely western affair despite its UN label" whose purpose was to spy on the economic and military strength of Israel while simultaneously deciding how best to adapt it to the plans of the American war machine. The survey "is connected with the U.S. plans to expand its influence in backward areas under the guise of 'developing' them."

**UNEMPLOYMENT PEAK** in Israel was reached in July. Figures for past months were: January, 6,500; February, 8,700; March, 11,870; April, 12,250; May, 17,170; June, 23,600; July, 25,450. Since August employment figures have been rising.

**CRITICISM OF DR. HERZL**, founder of modern Zionism, was voiced by *Kol Haam* on the occasion of return of his remains to Israel in August. The communist daily declared that Dr. Herzl's approaches to the German Kaiser, the Turkish Sultan and the anti-Semitic tsarist minister Plehve for support were offered in exchange for help in persuading "the Jewish masses not to participate in revolutionary movements in which they played an important part. Dr. Herzl did not see the real cause of anti-Semitism or the connection between the Jewish problem and the social regime."

**THE KNESSET ADOPTED** an education bill providing for free education of all children between five and 13. Another measure was a universal conscription bill for men between 16 and 49 and unmarried women between 18 and 34. The Religious Bloc and several Arab deputies objected on traditional grounds to the conscription of women instead of voluntary service.\*

**ISRAEL'S SHOE INDUSTRY** will undergo revolutionary changes with the establishment soon of a large plant incorporating latest American machinery and techniques and representing an investment between \$700,000 and \$1,000,000 of American and Israel capital.\*

**SEVERAL HUNDRED** Tel Aviv bakery workers struck in August against the government order to reduce wages and to bake only simple bread. The Histadrut executive committee termed the strike "illegal and unreasonable."\*

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



