

APRIL 1951 • 20¢

# Jewish Life

A PROGRESSIVE MONTHLY

EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY

## Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

THE GHETTO WAS NOT ALONE

by S. Zachariash

"PPR" AND GHETTO RESISTANCE

by M. Edin

JEWS IN THE NEW POLAND

by Nathan Samaroff

VIGIL IN RICHMOND

by William Mandel

LETTER TO JACOB POTOFKY

by Elmer A. Benson

POLITICAL TRIAL OF THE IWO

by Hershl Hartman

WITCH-HUNT IN THE AJ CONGRESS

by Louis Harap

## From the Four Corners

Edited by Louis Harap

### AT HOME

PROTESTS AGAINST the rearming of Western Germany and the freeing of nazi war criminals continued to mount. Late in February, the National Community Relations Advisory Council, coordinating agency of the major Jewish organizations, condemned the clemency to nazi war criminals in a letter to Secretary of State Dean Acheson. The commutation of sentences, said the letter, represented a "mistaken tenderness toward the perpetrators of mass murder and other heinous crimes against humanity and democratic society . . . (and) tend to throw into doubt the entire basis of procedure and judgments of the 12 trials conducted by six United States Military Tribunals at Nuremberg." . . . The administrative committee of the American Jewish Congress at its quarterly meeting on February 25, sharply criticized the recent mitigation of sentences of the nazi war criminals and adopted a resolution calling for abandonment of plans to reararm Germany . . . Rabbis Elliott M. Burstein, Alvin I. Fine and Morris Goldstein, of San Francisco, joined 11 non-Jewish religious leaders of that city on March 4 in signing a six-point peace program which, in addition to deploring the rearmament of Germany, called for negotiation of differences between East and West, respect for the Chinese and colonial liberation movements and peaceful co-existence of different social systems. . . . Hundreds of Jewish farmers of varying political opinions joined on February 4 at a meeting at Toms River, N. J., in condemning the release of nazi war criminals.

MANY JEWISH DP's will be denied entry to this country before June 30, expiration date of the present DP act, because of "petty and bureaucratic" inquisitions by intelligence and immigration agents in Europe, charged Arthur Greenleigh, executive director of United Service for New Americans in January. He said that many DP's who were persecuted by the nazis complained of similar attitudes by some American intelligence agents. Homeless families after passing all sorts of rigid screening have been hauled off ships about to sail because some immigration official in Munich hears "gossip and malicious rumor" about them. A government official, who feared to be quoted because of McCarthyism, was interviewed on this matter by Milton Friedman, JTA Washington correspondent, and said, "Between you and me, some of the army and immigration people have the typical prejudices of the rest of the country. The Red smear is a useful gadget for anti-Semites in a position to use it."

WHILE QUESTIONING Bernard Redmont, defense witness in the Remington perjury trial, United States Attorney General Irving Saypol brought out that Redmont had changed his name. Redmont replied that he had changed his name to avoid the effects of anti-Semitism. Said Saypol: "As a matter of fact, it is the communists who take false names, isn't it?" It has been revealed that Saypol's Jewish immigrant parents had also changed their name.

HOMER LOOMIS, a leader of the fascist "Columbians" of Georgia, was released on parole on February 11, after serving five months of a one to three year sentence at Atlanta. There are reports that a campaign is afoot to obtain a pardon for Emory C. Burke, Jew-baiting founder of the Columbians, who is now serving a year term for instigating a riot.

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A PROGRESSIVE MONTHLY

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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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GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR sent a message on February 26, to the "Fourth Anti-Communist Convention" of "patriotic" groups in New York urging that a "communist victory in Asia" would "menace" America. The meeting was organized by White Russian George Djarnaroff and one of the speakers was Rev. Edward Lodge Curran, president of the International Catholic Truth Society and an erstwhile supporter of Father Coughlin.

THE JEWISH PEOPLE'S Fraternal Order was ex-

pelled from the Fall River, Mass., Jewish Community Council late in February on the ground that the JPFO is on the attorney general's "subversive" list. The JPFO has recently been expelled from the Jewish community councils of Los Angeles and Washington, D. C.

FOUR NEGRO GI's, who had been sentenced to ten years imprisonment for "misconduct before the enemy" in Korea, were exonerated, it became known on February 11. About a week later, 21

(Continued on page 32)

# FROM MONTH TO MONTH

## THE WAY TO PEACE

**W**HAT does the ordinary American think about the Korean war? A United Press correspondent at the front reported on March 12 how the soldiers feel. "The American infantryman in Korea," he wrote, "... does not understand why he is fighting. ... The average American here can see very little worth fighting for." And Corporal John B. Moulette, 24, of Camden, N. J., wrote in his now famous letter from an army camp in California: "The needless waste of life in Korea, on both sides, is shameful to the human race. ... The morale of the fighting man is very low. Mainly because the American people are not behind him. ... These men aren't afraid to fight, it's just that they have no cause to fight." That the majority of the American people share these views, is quite evident from various Gallup polls and all registers of public opinion.

Premier Stalin was right, therefore, when he said in his interview of February 16, that the Korean "war is very unpopular among the American and British soldiers. ... It is difficult to convince the soldiers that the United States of America is entitled to defend its security on the territory of Korea and at the frontiers of China."

What did Corporal Moulette say about the Truman foreign policy? "I can't help but think," he wrote, "that the American people, Democrat and Republican alike, are 'fed up' with the administration and its foreign policy. ... Everyone [at the camp] seems to have nothing but unfavorable thoughts and remarks about the foreign policy. ... I believe that the people of our level want peace but that the leaders (including Truman) are afraid to admit they are wrong and are ashamed to admit it for fear they will lose face."

This opinion, shared by most Americans, tends to confirm the statement of Premier Stalin in the same interview that the rulers of the United States and their lieutenants in France and Britain "are afraid of their peoples who do not want a new war and stand for the maintenance of peace."

Thus if one reads the Stalin interview without the blinders of hysteria, it becomes a simple and reasoned statement and an honest appraisal of the international situation that is amply confirmed by the facts. And on the basis of the facts, Stalin concludes that war is not inevitable *fyet*. War can still be prevented, he says, "if the people will take the cause of preserving peace into their own hands and will defend it to the end." That peace sentiment is universal in the world, including the United States, cannot be doubted. But this sentiment must be organized and articulated. This is the only way that the peoples can assure that

the maintenance of peace is "in their own hands." And the organized peoples must force their reluctant rulers to *negotiate* outstanding international differences, or as Corporal Moulette put it, that they must be "settled at the round table."

Representatives of the four powers are seated around the table as we go to press. They are exploring agreement on an agenda for a four power foreign minister's conference. The history of the past 40 years demonstrates that the key to peace is prevention of German rearmament, which has been at the hub of the past two world wars. And German rearmament is the question that the Soviet Union proposes that any conference must tackle, if it really means to avert war. But the American representative is resisting placement of this question at the center, since Washington is proceeding full speed in its attempt to rearm Germany, despite the antagonism of the peoples of Europe and of Germany itself for this plan. For the peoples know that a rearmed Germany will mean war, and this they are determined to resist. In this crisis the path of the American people is clear. They must transform their sentiments for peace into a consolidated force that will compel the war-bent administration to abandon plans for German rearmament. Only by negotiation of this central issue and other critical questions can peace be won.

## MIDDLE EASTERN PACT?

**W**ITHIN the past few months there has been a flurry of negotiation on the military and diplomatic levels in the Middle East. A military pact seems to be in the making. In February, United States diplomatic envoys in the Near and Middle East conferred for a week in Istanbul with George C. McGhee, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and African Affairs, and war strategy expert Admiral Robert B. Carney. Although the specific topics discussed were kept a close secret, one can guess that "defense" problems were at the center of the talks, such as the questions of air bases in the area and the coordination of military aims of Turkey and the countries of the region with the global anti-Soviet strategy of the Anglo-American bloc. Then there was the "courtesy visit" of the British Middle Eastern commander, Lt. Gen. Sir Brian Robertson, in Israel the third week in February. The general consulted with top Israeli officials and military leaders "on the facts and probabilities of regional security." "I certainly did not come here," General Robertson said coyly to correspondents, "to suggest that Israel should do anything she does not regard as in her best interests." This activity is not unconnected



with the recent loan by the United States of \$35,000,000 and inclusion of Israel in the "Point Four" program, as well as talk of an additional half billion dollar grant-in-aid to Israel under a Marshall Plan arrangement.

What does all this add up to? Obviously, pretty intense dickering is going on between Israel and the Truman administration about some sort of Middle Eastern pact with Turkey and Greece on the model of the North Atlantic Pact. The Israeli government is trying to work up to an open alignment with the Anglo-American anti-Soviet bloc in a full military sense. And as Sidney Gruson reported in the *New York Times* of March 13, an attempt will be made to reach "an agreement whereby Israel would become a workshop for Western defense forces in the Middle East in the same way that Palestine served as supply center during World War II."

The Israeli people are alarmed at these developments. On February 20, 3,000 people in Tel Aviv demonstrated under Mapam and Communist auspices against the visit of General Robertson, shouting, "Robertson, go home!" Demonstrations also were held in Jerusalem and other cities. Police arrested some demonstrators and treated others roughly and the government came in for severe criticism on the whole matter in the Knesset. For the Israeli people are rightly apprehensive at the prospect of an alliance with such pro-fascist countries as Greece and Turkey, not to mention Franco. And, most disturbing of all, such an anti-Soviet alignment of Israel would place the people in the position of being allies of a rearmed and renazified Germany. Nor do the Israeli people want to have anything to do with an anti-Soviet war.

The mass revulsion against these plans can be judged from the fact that when Mapam deputies in the Knesset on February 21 subjected the government to severe attack for the visit of General Robertson as an indication that Israel was preparing to give over air bases, ports, supply bases and troops for an anti-Soviet war, Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett was obliged to disclaim such charges as "exaggerated and unfounded." Mass pressure in Israel has up to now prevented an outright anti-Soviet alliance. Any such course would put Israel under subjection to the Anglo-American bloc and deprive the country of whatever independence it now possesses. And it would put Israel in the front line of the war that the Anglo-American imperialists are preparing. The only hope for Israel, as for the whole world, is support of the movement for peace so as to prevent the outbreak of a war that would destroy the country.

### MCGEE FIGHT GOES ON

FOR the fifth time the fight for the life of Willie McGee has won him a stay of execution. With his legal lynching on a framed-up charge of rape in Laurel, Mississippi, set for March 20, an international fight was led by the Civil Rights Congress for a stay of execution. Mass meetings were held and thousands of letters and telegrams from all

parts of the United States and abroad went to President Truman and Governor Fielding Wright of Mississippi. Although affidavits showing that new evidence existed were presented to Federal Judge S. C. Vize of Vicksburg on March 13, that arrogant judge refused to grant a stay. A battery of Civil Rights Congress attorneys then applied to United States Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black. They presented affidavits showing that the innocence of McGee could be established by the new evidence. Justice Black then granted the stay until the Supreme Court would decide whether or not to review the case after a writ of certiorari (petition for review) was submitted to the court by March 20.

Thus the fight for Willie McGee's life must now go on with redoubled energy. It should be remembered that the Supreme Court refused to grant a stay to the Martinsville Seven. Of especial importance is that an irresistible wave of protest should be addressed to President Truman. If the people speak loudly and energetically enough, the life of Willie McGee can be saved and a great blow dealt at the whole Jimcrow system.

### "GLEICHSCHALTUNG" OF THE MOVIES

A FOREIGN policy that frees nazi war criminals has its reflection in the movies, too. Recently there have been developments that should lead to sharp protest from Jews and all democratic Americans. On the one hand, production of *The Wall*, John Hersey's documentary novel of the Warsaw ghetto, has been removed from Selznick's 1951 schedule. The stated reason was that "financial backers see dim commercial possibilities in the light of current world affairs." The real reason is rather that an authentic film about the inhumanity of Hitler does not conform to the current foreign policy of rearming the nazis. At the same time, it was decided to make a film that would please the nazis—a glorification of nazi General Rommel. According to Harry G. Green, past commander of a Chicago American Legion post, Rommel "violated all rules of warfare and was a bitter enemy of America and American institutions." Then there was another development, the clean bill of health given to *Oliver Twist*, the British film containing a viciously anti-Semitic portrait of Fagan, one of Dickens' characters. After a two years' ban of the film by the Production Code Administration, the film was approved after some cuts of close-ups and profiles of Fagan were made. But Fagan's "big, unattractive nose" still remains. The revised version will be shown first in the far West, the Midwest or New England, but not in New York, for the time being. Unless vigorous protest is made immediately, this anti-Semitic film will be shown. One additional disturbing development was the banning of Roberto Rossellini's *The Miracle* by the New York State Board of Regents on the ground that it was "sacrilegious." The Roman Catholic hierarchy was thus successful in dictating to New Yorkers what they could and could not see.



The reactionary manipulation of this most gigantic mass medium of communication that emerges unmistakably from these incidents, is profoundly disturbing and should alert the people to protest. For they mean that the reactionary and war-making policies of the Truman administration are leading us toward a police state, where the movies, like all means of communication, will be coordinated towards suppression of every progressive and decent idea. The specific affronts to the Jewish people, together with the tender feelings for nazis and with censorship, demonstrate once again the integral link of anti-Semitism with assaults on democratic rights. It is therefore the obligation of all Jewish organizations, as well as democratic organizations generally, to protest this ominous trend toward coordinating the movies into the plans of American reaction.

### ARREST OF PAUL YUDITCH

THE latest application of the deportation provision of the pro-fascist McCarran act hit close to home on February 20. On that day Paul Yuditch, labor editor of the *Morning Freiheit*, was arrested for deportation while at

work at the *Freiheit* offices and taken to Ellis Island, where he was held without bail. Mr. Yuditch is 63, has lived in the United States for 42 years and has two American born sons, one of whom served in the United States army as a lieutenant during World War II. Twice Mr. Yuditch's applications for citizenship remained incomplete. Immediately after his arrest, application for a writ of *habeas corpus* was made for him by the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born, which was represented by Carol King, able chief counsel of that fighting organization. After 17 days at Ellis Island, Mr. Yuditch was ordered released on \$5,000 bail by Judge Samuel H. Kaufman.

Thus the Department of Justice continues its illegal practice of violating the elementary American right to bail. Since last October, federal court judges have granted bail in 41 deportation cases which the American Committee of Foreign Born took to court. And there is another disturbing element in Mr. Yuditch's case. He is the sixth non-citizen associated with foreign language newspapers to be arrested in the current deportation hysteria. This threat to the freedom of the foreign language press is one more indication of the anti-democratic character of Department of Justice activities.

## VIGIL IN RICHMOND

By William Mandel

THE white doctor placed his stethoscope to the chest of the limp Negro youth in the electric chair. His eyes widened in disbelief and he shook his head glumly. But three white youth sitting in the witness box—there were no Negroes—nudged each and grinned and one of them laughed out loud and said:

"Sure hard to kill them, ain't it?"

A Negro clergyman present, spiritual adviser to the young man in the chair, whispered to another without turning his head and hardly moving his lips:

"They couldn't make him sign a confession, even when they threatened to give him to a lynch mob outside. And those court-appointed white lawyers never even called him to the stand to testify in his own defense."

His neighbor lowered his lids ever so slightly to indicate that he had heard.

Meanwhile the attendants who had been ready to loosen the straps stepped back and the executioner was signalled to

WILLIAM MANDEL is the author of *A Guide to the Soviet Union* and *The Soviet Far East*. He is presently at work on a biography of Vito Marcantonio.

pull the switch again. A couple of minutes later the doctor nodded his head in relief, and the body was released from the chair and dumped onto a double-width stretcher next to that of another young Negro, still warm. Another stretcher was nearer, but the corpse of the murderer occupying half of it was that of a white man.

When all four of the Martinsville Negroes had been killed—the remaining three were to go three days later—the bodies were removed and the chamber emptied of guards, witnesses, reporters and clergymen. Out of hearing of the whites, one of the four spiritual advisers said to his fellows:

"I sure hope the families can get the bodies for a decent burial."

"What do you mean?" asked a second, for whom this was a new experience.

"There's a rule here that rapists' bodies are given to the university medical school."

"Lord have mercy!"

"That white man they electrocuted really committed rape, didn't he?" a third clergyman asked.

"Yes, but no white man has ever been executed for that,

regardless of the color of the woman. He died for murder."

"And murderers' families get their bodies?"

"Yes."

"My God!"

I HAD JUST WALKED BACK TO THE NEGRO YMCA FROM THE mass prayer vigil on the Capitol lawn. It was a beautiful, sunny morning and the architecture of the government buildings that had loomed so ominously over us during the night watch seemed graceful — and peaceful — with the dawn. And as I passed through the downtown streets, with people shopping and climbing on and off busses like any other day of any other week in Richmond, Virginia, I thought of the meaning of this. So I said to the group discussing the execution—the clergyman, the North Carolina lad and the slender son of the Virginia aristocracy:

"I am a Jew. And now I understand, for the first time, how the Germans went their way and acted as though everything was normal, when a people was being wiped out before their eyes."

The descendant of the "best families" burst into wracking sobs. Aside from his profound political convictions, he was fighting for the future of the South, which he loves, and for what is honorable and decent in the white South. But he knew that he and his comrades had suffered another defeat and he knew the burden of guilt on the class from which he had come.

But the Martinsville fight was by no means all defeat. For the families got the bodies of their murdered sons. And their churches, including the Roman Catholic church, of which Francis Grayson was a member, gave them the rites and burial accorded to the innocent. These were merely symbols of something much more important. *For the ghetto had risen, and the rulers of the State of Virginia had seen something which they hoped the very executions would have terrorized out of the realm of possibility.*

Until the evening before the first executions, it had been difficult to believe that they would take place. The Civil Rights Congress and the Committee to Save the Martinsville Seven had felt that the mass protests from all over the world, plus the huge Crusade to Richmond of 517 people from the entire country, would stay the hand of the executioners. The leadership of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, on the other hand, had refrained from giving the word that would have set its great and loyal membership into mass protest action and had taken its customary stand of urging faith in the courts and an able legal presentation.

BUT ONE FEDERAL JUDGE AFTER ANOTHER, FOLLOWED BY Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson of the United States Supreme Court demonstrated for the thousandth time that their job is to maintain the oppression of the Negro people and refused to intervene. And the president of the United States continued to ignore the picket line maintained before the White House 24 hours a day. The Martinsville Committee decided to turn to the people of Richmond. A step

was taken that would have seemed adventurous in the extreme a day earlier. We put out a leaflet. It appealed to the conscience and pride of Virginians and it said, in effect, that if they failed to act to save the men, they could never deem themselves good Christians or true Americans again. We urged them to phone or wire the governor.

We sent small teams of two, three or four men out to factory gates with them and others down to Broad Street, the main shopping center in the heart of town. One of the distributors on Broad Street was a young man from North Carolina. A Negro soldier passed by, took the leaflet, came back, said: "That's a very nice thing for you all to be doing," folded the leaflet and put it in his pocket.

At the Philip Morris and Lorillard plants, where the workers were mostly Negroes, every single leaflet was kept or read, folded and put in pocket. At Liggett and Meyers, where the workers were mainly white, the majority took the leaflet, and thrust it deep inside their pockets. There was no verbal response at all. Only one strawboss stood outside the door and heckled.

LATER THURSDAY EVENING, TWO DIFFERENT EFFORTS WERE ORGANIZED. Everyone available, Negro and white, local and out-of-town, scattered to phone booths to call down the alphabet at random, asking people—overwhelmingly white—if they believed in one standard of punishment for whites and another for Negroes and if they would communicate with the governor. A Catholic Negro girl, 18 or 19 years old, one of the most devoted members of the local committee, called about 15. Four thought the men should die. Three didn't care particularly. Eight favored our view and five of them said unequivocally that they would wire the governor.

Eighteen people were called by a man with a New York accent. Three turned him down, but of these, one was an employer of 70 persons and a second was a well-established lawyer. I stood near an open phone booth and listened to one conversation.

The caller dialed the tenth name in the Richmond phone book under the letter "A."

Somebody picked up the telephone at the other end and said with a Virginia mountain twang: "Hello who's this?" The caller said: "I hope you'll excuse me for calling you so late at night. I'm sure you've been reading about the Martinsville Seven in the *Times-Dispatch* and *News-Leader*. Four of these men are supposed to die tomorrow morning, only about eight hours from now. You know that no white man had ever been executed for rape in Virginia. Do you think that Negroes who have been convicted of that crime should die, particularly when so many people think they are innocent?"

"Well," said the Virginian, slowly, "I only know about that case what I read in the papers. I know the papers don't always tell the truth, but, as near as I can tell, I think those men are guilty. However, I believe in equal justice. I think they should be punished, but I don't think they should die."

"Sir," said the caller again, "would you call Governor



Battle right now and tell him so? Only he can save their lives."

The voice came back, "I think so. Just let me talk to my wife."

There was a long pause of terrible suspense, while the caller heard the man repeat the story to his wife. Her answer was indistinct, but a moment later the man spoke into the phone again: "I sure will. Thank you for calling."

While the phone campaign was on, handbills were passed out in the Negro neighborhood. Negro movie owners stopped their shows and band leaders interrupted their music to ask their patrons to phone the governor. Men in the Negro section grabbed fistfuls of handbills from us on the streets to distribute in bars, restaurants and hotel lobbies. Taxi drivers ran out of hotel lobbies to get five-dollar bills changed into nickels for our phone campaigners. Men stood by to read off numbers in the directories. People lined up in mass in front of telephone booths.

THESE REPORTS CHANGED OUR WHOLE OUTLOOK. THE IDEA WAS put forward of ignoring the police limitation to four at the Capitol Square vigil and call for a mass turnout before dawn, for the executions were set for seven A.M. Some of the white delegates and some of the out-of-town Negroes were hesitant. Would the people respond? We turned to the Richmond Negroes.

James Smith, the militant young drugstore clerk who was chairman of the Virginia Committee, said: "Sure they'll come out." The elder of a small church agreed. A middle-aged woman who runs a driving school and her son, who owns a repair garage and gas station, agreed. A young Catholic girl agreed. We reached a decision at two A.M. *On four hours notice, 100 people showed up*, roused by phone calls and informed by radio announcers, whose sense of news value momentarily overcame any thought of the silent treatment. Talk of your "backward" South!

The vigil did not accomplish its immediate purpose. The first four men were executed Friday morning.

We returned to the "Y" and met. It was agreed without argument, simultaneous with an identical decision by the Civil Rights Congress in New York, that we would fight for the remaining three men to the last possible moment. We would not go home. But there were two immediate problems for us as a group. One was that of those who had to leave, or thought so. These people, who had no bond to each other but that which had been forged during the past three days and had pressing problems at home, were exhausted and dirty: they behaved like soldiers in an army. Five of those who originally thought they must go, agreed to stay. One of them, a Negro structural steel painter from Detroit, is a man who cannot afford to be sleepy as he paints the spiderweb structure 200 feet up on the outside of the General Motors building. But he decided to take that chance, and leave at the last possible minute.

On Saturday, Mrs. Francis D. Grayson and her five children came to town to see their husband and father for the last time. Apparently he was as remarkable a person as we

have come to know his wife to be. Death was 48 hours away—and it came—but he was neither resigned nor despondent, but actively sought a last expedient. He asked his wife to take the children to see Governor Battle. Whether Francis Grayson knew of the worldwide effectiveness of such a move, I do not know. But we do know from the clergymen who were with the men at the end, that they were all aware of the scope and significance of the campaign on their behalf. They received the Richmond papers, which gave our activities a great deal of space and prominence and reasonably factual coverage, complete with large pictures of Negroes and whites together in our many activities. The men's families also understood the worldwide protest movement, even in the pine hollow settlement outside far-off Martinsville, as I learned when a young Negro steelworker from Detroit and myself made the 500-mile round-trip there between Friday night and Saturday morning to offer our sympathy on behalf of the committee.

MEANWHILE, IN RICHMOND, THE DEFIANCE OF THE NEGRO people continued to rise. Three of our people returning on Sunday morning from a shift at the Vigil encountered a man carrying a black suit, for which he had paid \$59, just so as to be properly attired to pay his respects to the dead at the memorial service. A young Negro woman from Chicago, 19 years of age, had spent the previous night talking to soldiers in town on a 24-hour leave. Of course, they would come to the meeting! Of course, they would wear mourning armbands. One middle-aged Irishwoman was invited into the church to which she had been assigned to give out handbills announcing the memorial meeting, her leaflets were distributed for her and she was given coffee to warm up. Another white woman, a recent arrival in this country, had a five-dollar bill pressed upon her by a Negro soldier in the street, although we had made no attempt at a collection in the community.

Back in the headquarters we had bought black material and pins on a Sunday, somehow, for armbands. A Negro florist down the street volunteered much time to cut the yardgoods down to size, and a photographer's wife got out of bed to taxi downtown and bring us her husband's paper-cutter, so I could cut the crepe paper.

Meanwhile, a tall Negro Catholic youth, returning from Mass, had come into our room in the "Y." We asked his opinion about the armband.

"Sure I'll wear it." "Everywhere?" "Everywhere." "Will others?" "I think so." "Will you hand them out on the streets?" "Yes." "Do you think you can get someone to help you?" "I'll be right back." In five minutes he was back with a half dozen young men, each of whom took a handful of bands and a paper of pins, and went out to cover the streets.

That afternoon, 900 people showed up at the memorial meeting *on two hours notice*. Match that anywhere in the "progressive" North or West! After the prepared remarks, a Negro businessman rose in the balcony, asked permission of the presiding clergyman to say a few words and tendered a glowing tribute to the delegation that had come from

afar and worked so hard for these men. True as his words may have been, they pictured us somewhat as knights in shining armor and he was critical of his own people for not having responded soon enough.

A VOLUNTEER SPOKESMAN ROSE FOR THE DELEGATION AND SAID:

"I came because there can be no true freedom for the mass of the white people in this country when the Negro people are downtrodden. If you could vote freely and your people were elected to Congress, they would never have allowed this country to be taken into a war against another colored people. Therefore, the young men of my race would be spared years in the army and numberless dead, if all your people could vote. That is why I am grateful to you for being here today. You are standing up not only for your people but for mine, when you assert that you must have an equal right to life and liberty.

"I admire your courage. You have to stay here and face the music. We can go home, away from Virginia justice. When we go North and West and South again, we will not forget this. You have taken us into your hearts and homes. I welcome you, for all of us here, to be our guests and friends when you come to our parts of our country."

Every sentence was greeted with applause, particularly those about the war. The speaker paused for a moment and continued:

"I want to say one more word. Several of us are Jews. My grandmother can recite from memory over 50 members of my family who were done to death in Hitler's gas chambers less than ten years ago. (The audience gasped.) I know that so long as the idea of racial inequality exists, I face the same fate as the men of Martinsville, for the Jews of Germany were of the same white race as Hitler."

The key moment at the meeting came when Father Parker, a venerable white Protestant Episcopal clergyman from Chicago, who had been with us the past four days, working as hard and sleeping as little as those one-half his age, proposed that the entire body proceed in procession to Capitol Square to lay wreaths on the capital lawn in commemoration of the four men who, in the eyes of Virginia law, had been branded the worst kind of common criminal. There was no disagreement. Without even thinking of asking the police for permission, we marched through and out of the Negro ghetto and down Broad Street—Richmond's main thoroughfare.

On the Capitol lawn there stands a great tree, under which the Prayer Vigil had been kept. It was dedicated as a living monument to the Martyrs of Martinsville. But perhaps the highest moments were those when the block-long procession, its white minority scattered through the great body of Negroes, crossed Broad Street and the traffic stopped. The traffic, Virginians out on Sunday afternoon for a drive, paused on Broad Street for long minutes to let the procession pass, a procession of arm-banded mourners headed by a work-worn Negro mother and a tall, beautiful, auburn-haired white coal miner's daughter, a Negro mother and a white mother of three

carrying a wreath to the memory of Negroes accused actually of *Rassenschande*. The seven innocent Negroes were the victims of a legal lynching that is achieved by a frame-up of charges of "rape."

That night we called upon each Negro church to provide a minister and congregation for one hour of the final vigil. One clergyman and his flock were taking their first part in the movement. When he arrived, he was reserved and cautious. But before he left, he said, "Wonderful that Russia sent that telegram. Now they'll know down here that we have friends in the world."

LATER I WAS LEAVING MY FINAL TURN ON THE VIGIL. I STOPPED to talk with a white free-lance photographer, resident of Richmond, who had snapped the scene. He was angry with himself for not having seen the commercial possibilities of pictures bearing on the Martinsville case a year ago.

"That's all right," he said, "my pictures will be good for ten years."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"This is one lesson Richmond will never forget," he said. "Never."

The bodies of the Martinsville Seven were not yet cold when white supremacy took another victim in Virginia. The day after the last three executions, a Negro dentist in the furniture and textile town of Pulaski was murdered by white hoodlums for daring to protect two Negro girls of 14 and 17 from being molested. No white man has ever been executed for killing a Negro in the entire history of the State of Virginia and the usual official action in such a case would have been, at most, delayed arrests, booking on a minor charge and a minimum of publicity.

But there is nothing "usual" about the situation in Virginia since the Martinsville protests.

Negroes are only ten per cent of the population of Pulaski town and county, and it is 200 miles from Richmond. But the killers of Dr. Santa Cruz were seized promptly and charged with murder. The largest white church in town was offered for the funeral. The 600 mourners included 150 whites. Even the mayor, the two judges, the district attorney and most of the police force felt it necessary to attend the services. And the mayor announced with a flourish, that he wanted contributions to a fund to engage a Negro attorney from out of town to assist in the prosecution.

Lest anyone misunderstand this behavior, the church audience was strictly segregated, and a newspaper reported candidly: "The swift action of the police in apprehending suspects in the slaying did much to prevent an outburst of racial violence, many citizens of Pulaski said."

Such, then, is the fear and respect won, at least for the moment, by the Negroes of Virginia as a result of the Martinsville demonstrations. So it may well prove true, as Rev. R. S. Anderson told me he said to John Taylor, as Taylor was being led to execution:

"The whole world knows about you men. You will save the lives of dozens of others."



# WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING

*EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY, APRIL 19, 1951*

## CALL TO RESISTANCE

*An Editorial*

**N**OT since 1945 has the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising been freighted with as great meaning as on this eighth anniversary. At the first post-war anniversary commemoration in 1946, not long after the full extent of the tragedy suffered by the Jewish people had come to light, grief at the immeasurable loss was still fresh. Hope for the future was still high after the decisive victory over the Nazi murderers. But with each succeeding commemoration the clouds of fascist revival have grown darker. Under the slogan of "containment of communism" the Truman administration propped up one reactionary and pro-fascist regime after another—Chiang Kai-shek, Greek fascism, Syngman Rhee, Franco.

Deliberately the Truman administration resuscitated the very murderers of six million Jews and millions of other peoples. Renazification of Germany became more blatant each day. In recent months many Nazi war criminals have been freed in order to facilitate the rearming and recartelization of Western Germany. Nazi generals are now brother officers of General Eisenhower in this project. The Potsdam agreement to denazify, decartelize and democratize Germany has been scrapped by the Truman administration and in its place is the policy of renazifying and recartelizing Germany. The direction of this program is evident—war against the Soviet Union and the new democracies. The Roosevelt program of preserving peace by settling differences with the Soviet Union by negotiation has been rejected in favor of a relentless drive to prepare a third world holocaust. And at home the Truman administration has prepared the ground for such a war by a gradual paring away of civil liberties until today the very structure of American democracy is in danger of destruction.

On this eighth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, therefore, the peoples of the world are again faced with the issues of democracy or fascism, peace or war. Have the heroic dead of the uprising died in vain? Have the peoples of the world failed to learn the lesson of the uprising? Surely the rising should have taught us that the people's resistance is the only way to prevent the realization of such plans for fascism and war.

The hour is not yet too late. The necessary resistance to war plans can still be organized in our country. And this

anniversary of the ghetto uprising should remind the Jews that they must surely join in this effort. For the lesson of the ghetto rising is that there will be no more ghetto battles if the people resist, and the Jewish people have good reason to heed this lesson. But the leadership of the Jewish people in this country have certainly not given evidence that they have learned this. Everywhere the Jewish masses are restive at the dangers in which the signs of a reviving fascism place them. One need only realize the protest by Jewish bodies all over the world against the renazification of Germany and the plans for rebuilding the Wehrmacht to perceive the disquiet of the Jewish masses. But the Jewish leadership is not organizing the masses to unite and resist the threat which this revival of nazism signifies.

Nor are the Jewish leaders learning the lesson of the absolute necessity of unity of all elements in the community to resist fascism that the ghetto fighters finally achieved. Shall we wait until it is too late to attempt such unity? Jewish people of the most varied political views face a common danger and can face it successfully only if they apply their united strength. Do we need to be reduced to the desperate plight of the Warsaw ghetto Jews before we realize this necessity? If the ghetto dead could speak, they would urge us to consolidate our forces into one force, as they did, that can, in conjunction with all people organized for peace and democracy, defeat the trend to war and fascism. They would warn us that we must resist the plans of the Truman administration, that we must reject attempts to unite us with fascists and the murderers of our people in the name of anti-communism. The Jewish masses all over the world are profoundly uneasy over this attempt to form an unholy alliance with fascism. These masses must force their leadership to organize the people actively to prevent the final formation of this alliance, signalized by a rearmed Western Germany.

The ghetto heroes call to us: unite and resist; this is what our martyrdom should teach us. The greatest honor we can do to the ghetto heroes today is to heed this teaching and to organize the will to peace of the common people and resist the drive to fascism and war.

# THE GHETTO WAS NOT ALONE

By S. Zachariash

**J**EWISH reactionaries both in Poland and abroad never tire of repeating that no one was concerned with the horrible plight of the Jews in the ghetto, that the ghetto Jews were left isolated and that the Polish people remained indifferent to the ghetto fighters. There is agitation, especially abroad, in America, England, France and Israel, against the Polish people and the democratic forces of Poland for their supposed indifference (it is said) to the Jews during the occupation and the heroic Jewish resistance.

But one must realize that the reactionary segment of Polish society, as of Jewish society, did not wish then, any more than they do now, to fight for the freedom of their own people. The Polish reactionaries, not unexpectedly, remained indifferent to the heroic struggle of the Jews during the occupation. These Polish elements were the Falangist-Endek forces and the Sanatzia-fascists who had spread the seeds of anti-Semitism and organized pogroms in pre-war Poland. Indeed, when the Hitler bandits exterminated Jews, these groupings not only stood aside unconcernedly, but even expressed gratification that their work was being carried through by the nazis. In fact, these Polish groups helped the Germans in this respect as much as they could.

In the April 1943, issue of *Sanietz*, the organ of the Falangists, anti-Semites and fascists, one reads that "they [the Jews] are being liquidated better than could be done by others, namely ourselves." This expresses the attitude of the "Home Army" and its London government. For although the Home Army had ammunition, not only did it fail to give any to the Jewish fighters; it even helped to murder Jews in the ghettos and in the forests.

And what of the reactionary segment of the Jewish population? Is it not a fact that the *Judenrat* and the Jewish police helped to murder and gas Jews? For every people has two parts, the democratic-progressive and the fascist-reactionary. Cosmopolitans, that is, those who know no genuine national loyalty, insist that the Polish nation in its entirety lacked any interest in and did not help the Jews and the heroic Jewish fighters. Such people are animated by the old and ever-new purpose of separating the Jewish masses from the Polish working class. They malign the Polish masses in the eyes of the Jewish workers in the hope of keeping the Jewish people on the path of Jewish nationalism. They try to put across the idea that Jews cannot expect help in their liberation from anyone and that the

S. ZACHARIAH was a fighter in the underground resistance movement in Poland and is now a leader of Polish Jewry.

Jewish slogan must be "We are alone against the world."

## Aid by Polish Democratic Forces

By now documentary proof is abundantly available to prove the leading role played in the resistance by Polish democratic forces during the occupation and the great help given by the Polish Workers (Communist) Party (PPR) and the People's Guard to the fighting ghetto. Ber Mark has told in his book, *Tales of the Ruins*, how hundreds of Polish workers, peasants, intellectuals, members of the Polish Workers Party and the Polish Socialist Party, as well as non-party democrats were martyred in the course of helping the Jews.

We cite only one example from Dorka Goldkorn's memoirs of the Warsaw ghetto uprising:<sup>1</sup>

"We did not lose our bearings. In the worst moments our 18- and 19-year-old girls gave little thought to themselves. They devoted all their strength to maintenance of broken contacts. In those stormy and troubled days Comrade Gina, an old acquaintance of mine from 'Spartakus' came to us. I don't really know where we got our strength. Surrounded by despair, we managed to reweave the torn fabric of our organization. At this time Gina brought us our orders: to organize the remnants of all the self-defense groups in the ghetto immediately into a ghetto detachment of the general Polish People's Guard.

"I still remember Comrade Gina's words: 'The People's Guard is not a narrow party organization; the People's Guard unites all those who honestly wish to participate in struggle against the Hitlerite occupation. Among you in the ghetto the People's Guard must include not only PPR people, but also all friends and sympathizers from other groups who are ready for struggle.'"

This Polish girl, sent to the Warsaw ghetto by the Polish Workers Party, helped to reorganize the Jewish fighting forces after the first liquidation. She gathered together the scattered forces and directed the work, thereby helping to lay the foundation for the armed uprising on April 19, 1943.

We also know that the general anti-fascist committee and Soviet and Polish partisan divisions gave great political, moral and material aid to the Bialystok ghetto.

And this was the spirit of the progressive part of the Polish nation, the democratic forces and the People's

<sup>1</sup> Dorka Goldkorn's "Memoirs of a Ghetto Fighter" was published in *Jewish Life*, April 1950.—Eds.



Guard, the working class and its vanguard, the Polish Workers Party. All these Polish elements gave material help to the Jews.

### **Aid from Underground Press**

We can cite here only a few quotations from the patriotic underground press of 1941-1944 to indicate that this segment of the population not only sympathized with, but gave active help to the ghetto-fighters.

The magazine *Freedom Barricades*, in Number 30, January 19, 1941, said: "The Polish nationalists under the aegis of *Ozon*, *Endetzia* and *Falanga* fed Polish society with racial antagonism, just as the Hitlerites did the German population. German propaganda had regarded *Ozon* and *Falanga* as worthy pioneers of fascism. But Polish nationalists by no means include all of Polish society. Polish Jews should remember that together with the Polish people, Jews were among the first to put up opposition to the Hitlerite forces. Jews fired the first shots in the struggle against fascism, in the struggle against their enemy, which is also the enemy of the Polish people. . . . Let us not create the illusion that the Polish bourgeoisie will struggle in behalf of the Jewish population. It is the Polish proletariat which fights to drive the occupant from our land, and at the same time to break down the shameful ghetto walls."

This article ends with the words: "The Warsaw worker can not remain indifferent to the fact that the Jewish worker is starving and that he is oppressed and beaten, just as he cannot be indifferent to the plight of other proletarians. The Polish worker will stretch out his hand in fraternal aid through the ghetto walls. The struggle of the Polish and Jewish peoples is a common struggle for freedom."

The central organ of the PPR, *Freedom Tribune*, wrote in Number 25, January 15, 1943:

"We appeal to the remaining persecuted Jews in our land to join with us in taking revenge for the death and martyrdom caused by the Hitler beast."

### **PPR Call to Jews of Lodz**

The PPR issued a call to the Jews in Lodz in September 1942, which read:

"Jews! In order to prevent the murder of millions of people, Jews, Poles, Czechs, Frenchmen and others, who are being shot daily by the drunken bands of Hitler devils, we must sharpen the struggle, we must take into the movement all the forces of the anti-Hitler freedom front and speed the liberation of the peoples of Europe from the madmen's rule."

The call summoned the Jews to active struggle, and warned against passivity and the tendency to "wait it out."

"Jews! Every people must pay its toll in blood in the struggle against Hitlerism. There is no place in the present-day struggle for traitors to the freedom front! There is

only one path—struggle against the invaders. He who intends to wait passively until the end is a traitor and will die a coward's death. . . .

"The Jews in the Soviet Union are fighting in the ranks of the heroic Red Army and call upon the whole Jewish people to the struggle, to arms, to deeds. Nor are Polish Jews absent from this struggle. The Jews in the Warsaw ghetto are escaping through the walls and the cordons of Lithuanian devils. Scores of Jewish boys and girls are fighting shoulder to shoulder with Poles in the ranks of the People's Guard, the Polish partisan organization, under the proud slogan: 'For Your Freedom and Ours.'"

"Jews! You have a fine tradition of struggle for the freedom of Poland. The names of your heroes are recorded in the history of Poland in letters of gold. Today, bound together by a common tragedy, we go forth once again in common struggle against our common enemy. Let this be a sacred struggle not only for life but until death. Only our united struggle can wipe away the shame of the human conscience. Break down the walls of the ghetto! The Polish Workers Party stretches its brotherly hand over the barbed wire and police cordons and calls you to the struggle!"

Can there be a better affirmation of brotherhood and internationalism or a more rousing call to struggle for the honor of the Jewish people? This call was issued by the Polish proletariat, by its vanguard, the Polish Workers Party.

The call goes on: "Jews! Danger hovers over the Jewish people. Hitler wants to uproot us. Don't let yourselves be taken away. Certain death awaits you. Let every home become a fortress. Only your struggle and blood can prevent Hitler from carrying out his criminal plans. Let the whole world know of your heroism. And if one of you falls in the unequal struggle, he will die like a hero. Falling in struggle, he will cover the Jewish people with eternal glory and will leave to future generations an honorable page in history, a page of heroism, and valiant deeds."

The call ends with an appeal to the Jewish youth: "To arms, to battle in the ranks of the partisans! Blood for blood, death for death, grave for grave!"

It should be recalled that this was written in September 1942, when the occupying forces began the liquidation of Polish Jewry.

The PPR organ in Lodz, *People's Tribune*, addressed the Polish population on November 12, 1942, thus:

"The Gestapo has begun the liquidation of the Lodz ghetto. It is deporting masses of children up to the age of ten and adults to the age of 40. Help the Jewish population to escape from the ghetto."

"This appeal was made not to the Jews but to the Polish population, who were called to do what they could to prevent Jews being taken to Maidanek, Treblinka and other death camps."

The organ of the People's Guard wrote: "Let us help the Jews to escape! Let us help them join the partisan detachments!"

### **Fighting Allies of Jews**

Help to the Jews was by no means limited to propaganda and agitation. The anti-fascist organizations in the ghetto received great material and moral help from the democratic section of the Polish people and particularly the Polish working class.

The former chief of the general staff of the People's Guard, General Wytold, has said to the Jews: "Struggling in the memorable days of April 1943 on the barricades of the ghetto, you fought for our common cause, for the cause of peace and democracy for Poland. Every shot you fired at a German soldier was aimed at our common enemy, every victory of yours was our common victory, every heroic death of one of you diminished our ranks. These were our thoughts, of the fighters for Poland, freedom and the people. These were the thoughts of the People's Guard, of every true Pole."

While the London clique and its Falangist and fascist groups in Poland refused to supply the Jews with arms, the People's Guard, through its staff leaders Wytold, Genkmaleski, Skripia and the secretary of the Warsaw PPR, provided the Jewish uprising group with the last 25 rifles in its arsenal.

While the reactionary parties and organizations were calling for participation in pogroms, while the organ of the extreme reactionary *Placówka* group mocked the resistance, while *Polska*, organ of the Endeks, called upon the Polish bourgeoisie to prepare to inherit the goods left by the Jews, only the PPR, the People's Guard, the *Rada Pomocy Żydom* (Council for Aid to Jews) and other democratic elements extended their hands to the ghetto fighters.

### **Military Aid During Uprising**

On the second day of the uprising the PPR led an attack

on a German battery on Nowiniarska Street. By the 22nd of April, they had sabotaged the railroad so as to impede the transports of Jews to Treblinka. On the 23rd of April, the People's Guard attacked the Germans on Freta Street in order to divert the Germans from bunkers in which Jews were hiding. That same day two groups attacked the Germans in the neighborhood of Kerceli Place, at Leshno and Powonzek Streets. On May 27th, the People's Guard carried out a major attack on Miodowa Street. Sorties by Polish units also were made in the vicinity of Muranow and Sapiezińska Streets.

These actions of the People's Guard were organized under the leadership of Wacek Bartoshek, Durac, Henryk Stenel, Tetmeier, Leczek Rabe and others.

Significant help was given by the democratic Polish resistance movement in leading Jewish fighters through the sewers in broad daylight and conducting them to partisan detachments in the woods near Warsaw. One of the leaders of this action was the communist Franciszek Lencicki.

### **The Jews Are Not Alone**

Neither the Warsaw ghetto nor the organizers of the uprising were in any sense isolated. The struggle in the ghetto was part of the overall underground liberation struggle. The blood shed by the Jewish people and by its fighting heroes was mixed with the blood of Poland's heroes and Poland's people.

Neither the Polish nor the Jewish nationalists in pre-war Poland succeeded in isolating the Jewish workers from their Polish brothers. Nor could these nationalists destroy the brotherhood of the Polish and Jewish masses which was created through their common fate and united struggle against the Nazi occupation. So, too, in the building of socialism in present-day Poland, their road is one of unity, common aspirations and common achievement.

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## **THE "PPR" AND GHETTO RESISTANCE**

**By M. Edin**

**J**OSEPH LEVARTOVSKY and Andzhei Schmidt were the representatives of the PPR (Polish Workers (Communist) Party) and the People's Guard (anti-fascist military unit) in the Warsaw ghetto. Their first important act was to issue a call for unification of all groups into one organization. This call for unity made a profound impression on the ghetto underground. Both communists and non-communists felt that a force had at last emerged on which they could and must depend.

The second important act of Levartovsky and his com-

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M. EDIN is a Polish Jewish writer.

rades was to take the initiative in creating an anti-fascist bloc into which Poale-Zionists, Shomrim and Halutzim were drawn. That the creation of this bloc was the political achievement of the communists was substantiated by the fact that the Halutz, Tenenbaum-Tamaroff, referred to it as the "People's Front." Further, the anti-fascist bloc adopted not only the political form, but also the ideological viewpoint on unity projected by the PPR. This can be confirmed by acquainting oneself with the contents of *Der Ruf* (The Call), which was the organ of the anti-fascist bloc and which has come down to us in the Ringelblum Archives in Warsaw.



## "The Call"

It is interesting to note the respect in which *The Call* differs from all other illegal publications of the socialist-Zionist parties. The Zionist-socialist press (*Oifbroiz* (Up-surge) of the Hashomer Hatzair, *Naie Vegn* (New Paths) of the Poale-Zion, and the Hebrew *Yediot* (News) of the Hechalutz) published many articles dealing with Zionist ideology along with articles against the Nazi occupants and articles about Poland of the future, a Poland that would be just for all its citizens. The Zionist articles emphasized that the only solution of the Jewish question, which was so acute during the occupation, was the creation of the Jewish center in Palestine. But *The Call* spoke only of resistance and struggle: it urged solidarity of the whole anti-fascist camp, and unity with the progressive sector of underground Poland.

"The liberation of the masses," said *The Call*, "can and will come as a result of the victory of the Red Army and of all those forces which stand together with it in the bloody struggle against fascism." *The Call* also devoted much space to the analysis of the historical past of Poland. The paper certainly was not affected by the agitation carried on by the Revisionists (extreme right wing Zionists) in the ghetto. The Revisionists persisted in putting forward the liquidationist slogan that there was no place in Europe for Jews. On the contrary, *The Call* maintained that the Jews in the ghetto must fight not only in defense of their rights, their honor and their lives, not only to help throw off the yoke of fascism: the Jews must also fight for Poland. This organ of the anti-fascist bloc affirmed that "A struggle is being carried on for a strong, independent and free Poland!" This was the answer given by the anti-fascist bloc to the anti-Semites and also to those in the ghetto who took refuge in the "exodus" theory that all Jews must leave Europe for Palestine.

### Beginnings of Fighting Units

In addition to its publishing activities, the anti-fascist bloc began to organize fighting groups. Andzhei Schmidt, who had fought with the International Brigade in Spain, was the leader of this responsible work. At the outset he began to store ammunition in the as yet modest arsenals, to give military training to the fighters and to organize the first groups of the People's Guard in the ghetto. Among those who began to train for battle under Schmidt was Mordecai Anielewicz, who later became the military commander of the ghetto uprising. The shameful betrayal which delivered Schmidt and his comrades Zimmerman-Meretikan, Tadek Vlosta, Pinya Kartun, etc., into the hands of the Gestapo, robbed the ghetto of this talented and fearless anti-fascist fighter. The fascist terror also deprived the ghetto of other fine fighters such as the Shomer Joseph Kaplan.

Nevertheless, the movement was not crushed. Others appeared to take the places of the murdered activists.



Mordecai Anielewicz, commander of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

Meanwhile the anti-fascist bloc tried to draw more diverse elements into the movement and to broaden the framework of the People's Front. In June 1942, which was a period of heightened terror, the bloc called a conference of all activists in the ghetto and representatives of all parties, except the Revisionists. There the representatives of the bloc took immediate steps towards building the resistance movement.

### Which Strategy for the Ghetto?

But what was the response of the right wing Zionist groupings and right wing Bundist representatives? We can learn their attitude from the report by the Halutz, Tenenbaum-Tamaroff: "Menachem Kirschenbaum, leader of the General Zionists, said: 'In Lithuania the Germans have liquidated the Jews. It is possible that the same will also happen in other places. But we must assume that in Warsaw, in the heart of Europe, the Germans will not dare to do such a thing. Let's stop playing with fire. The ghetto must accept collective responsibility. Let us not bring misfortune upon ourselves with our own hands.'

"Mauritzi Ozhech, right wing Bund leader, said: 'At the present time it is enough for us to maintain a psychological self-defense. The Jewish masses will get the call to collective struggle through the Polish underground movement (that is, through the London government-in-exile) when the proper time comes.'

Through Kirschenbaum's words one can detect the perpetual fear of action on the part of the Jewish middle class. Ozhech represented the viewpoint of "VRN" and "AK" — "stand with weapons at your feet." ("VRN" stood for "Freedom, Equality and Independence," the organization of the right wing elements of the Polish Socialist Party, which had close ties with the fascist Sanatzia groups and which participated in the London emigré government. "AK" was the London government's underground "Home Army.")

Tenenbaum continues that Finkelstein (then the pseudonym of Levartovsky), who represented the anti-fascist bloc, took a position favoring immediate struggle. The only one of the non-party activists who decided to go along with the resistance movement was Yitzhok Gitterman. Tenenbaum does not understand why Gitterman was an exception among the right wing activists—and he interprets Gitterman's stand simply as a manifestation of his character and personality. But it is necessary to explain that the dignified behavior of Gitterman was determined by the fact that while the Sanatsia reigned in Poland before the war, Gitterman had worked with the communists in the cultural sector of the People's Front. The old activist had reestablished the links with his past.

### **Communist Leadership of Resistance**

What was the tradition and ideological character of the group which emerged at the head of the resistance movement not only in the Warsaw ghetto, but also in other ghettos, in concentration camps and partisan detachments?

The same pattern appeared everywhere as in the Warsaw ghetto, where the organizer and initiator of the anti-fascist bloc was Joseph Levartovsky, a veteran communist activist and for years a political prisoner in pre-war Endek-Sanatsia Poland.

The man who set up and trained the first battle groups in the Warsaw ghetto, the man who was the spiritual father of the Jewish Fighting Organization and the teacher of the latter-day leaders of the uprising was Andzhei Schmidt (pseudonym of Elya Moses of Minsk-Mazovetski), officer in the Dombrowski Battalion of the International Brigade in Spain.

The commandant of the self-defense group in the Byalystok ghetto in August 1943, was Daniel Moskowitz, a Warsaw communist and a former political prisoner.

One participant of the resistance movement in Krakow gives the following description of Gole Mirrer, of the PPR, who was a member of the leading group of the Jewish fight-

ing organization of Krakow. "Gole Mirrer (pseudonym Lydia)," says that writer, "was a prisoner in pre-war Poland on a five year conviction. She was a fanatical fighter and an idealist. Her face always simultaneously expressed pain and an inner strength. At meetings of the *Kommanda* she was always in the forefront. Thanks to her, other members of the *Kommanda* from Akiba and Halutz—Dodek Liebeskind, Lovon Lebevitch, Samek Drenger—became fighters."

The pioneers of the Jewish resistance movement in the upper Silesian coal region were members of the PPR Marxist group operating under the name Dimitroff—Lieber Brenner, Yisroel Kleinman, Yankev Friedmani, David Brot, etc.

The founders of the battle groups in the Tchenstokhov ghetto were the communists, Henyek Tentser, Daniel Warshawski, Vila Tselnik and Samek Abramovitch.

The first call for resistance and struggle to the Jews of the Lodz ghetto was issued in the middle of 1942 by the PPR of Lodz, which pointed to the Soviet Army as the example to follow. And in Vilna the leader of the united partisan organization of the ghetto was the communist Yitzhok Wittenberg.

The leader of the partisan groups in the Galician region was the communist Horovitch.

The pioneer of the Jewish partisan division in the woods of Bialystok was the former political prisoner Maxim Slapak.

The pioneer of the partisan movement among the Jews of the Lublin area was the PPR member, Shmuel Yager.

Also among the organizers of the partisan movement among the Jews were the communists Rivka Voiskovska, Hersh Smoliar and Gershen Aleph (Bolek).

### **Workers' Tradition Among Jews**

We can draw a profound conclusion from these facts. What was true of the resistance movement among other peoples—Poles, Frenchmen, Czechoslovakians, Belgians—was also the case with the Jews. Only that part of the people which had a tradition and training in uncompromising struggle and had been reared on Marxist-Leninist ideology was capable of initiating immediate resistance and of drawing others into the struggle. These people followed the example of the Bolshevik man, who in pre-war years had no fear of illegality, prison, courts, trials, gallows, who had always manifested an inner strength. Only such people were able in the conditions of manifold terrors under the German occupation to lead the ghetto struggle to a higher level. Some naive researchers and publicists discovered the potentialities for heroism among the Jews for the first time in the ghetto barricades. These writers say that the Jews had not fought since Maccabean times, but that only in the presence of death in the ghetto did the Jew take to arms. This is not true. We shall not discuss here the fighting traditions of the Jewish masses of the 19th century, beginning with exploits of Berek Yosselevitch's division. [Yosselevitch was the Jewish commander of a Polish unit in the Polish war for inde-



**Andzhei Schmidt**  
(pseudonym of Elya  
Moses) Spanish war  
veteran and military  
trainer of ghetto  
fighters.



pendence.—Eds.] But only a superficial acquaintance with the participation of the Jewish workers and the Jewish intelligentsia in the labor movement of Poland and Russia from its inception down to the Nazi attack is enough to refute this view. For the Jews manifested heroism not only in case of individuals like Shulman, Leckert, Botwin, Engel [Jewish working class militants of Poland—Eds.], but, even more important, on the part of the Jewish working masses as a whole. From this working class tradition and from the intellectual and moral training and ideology of the working class movement did men and women like Levartovsky, Schmidt and a legion of Jewish resistance heroes, known and unknown, draw strength in this most tragic period. From this tradition and discipline did these heroes and heroines of the resistance and of the uprising derive their slogans and strategy, which were lacking among those who did not possess this consistent anti-fascist education, ideology and battle experience.

### **Portrait of Levartovsky**

This truth is also acknowledged by non-communists. Yosef Sak, a Zionist, gives us the following characterization of Levartovsky and of his significance for the underground movement in the ghetto:

"I was present at a meeting at which I met and got to know Levartovsky for the first time. This was a peculiar gathering. It was pervaded by mutual mistrust. Difficult as this gathering was, it was nevertheless productive. In addition to Levartovsky there were present also Schmidt, Sagan, Kaplan, Tsivye, Yitzhok, Anielevitch, Berlinski and Morgenstern. That this was the first meeting to yield concrete results, was undoubtedly due to Levartovsky. He was not a flaming speaker and did not strive after oratorical effects. He spoke so quietly that one could hardly hear him. Not once did his face betray his inner feelings. There was a wonderful magic in his calm and masterful control, acquired



*Joseph Levartovsky,  
communist founder  
of the anti-fascist  
People's Front in the  
Warsaw Ghetto in  
1942.*

in the course of many years of suffering in prison. Each word, uttered apparently without passion on the surface, tore itself into the mind with mighty power. First of all, Levartovsky convinced us how close to each and every one of us were the principles that he expounded. A world view separates us, he said, the past separates us. We would each fight for our own truth in the future, if we survived. But everything in the present reality united us. We were united by our determination to avert the common danger, imminent mass death. We were united by the same aims, struggle and resistance. As simple and comprehensible as this was, Levartovsky made it clear to us for the first time and he continued to do so later."

Levartovsky did not erase differences. He did not adopt any position alien to his ideology. But he sought out that which united all of ghetto Jews in the given concrete situation. Because this was the policy of the Polish Workers Party, this party became the leader of the ghetto struggles.

### **ON A NOTE OF REARMAMENT**

Raise up the black and shrouded ghost,  
Raise up the twisted cross,  
Fling high the flag of hate and death,  
Bring back the tiger's gloss.

Call forth the serried ranks of filth,  
Cry out for the scum of the earth,  
Assemble the column of Aryan might  
that smashed all life and birth.

- Point out the open graves of dead,  
Point out the gallows high,  
Reveal the smoking furnaces,

Then dare to raise your cry.

Notice well the stench of flesh,  
Remember six million burned,  
Upon the fire of Nazi lust,  
And now have you not learned!

Build high the walls of silence,  
Crush every sad refrain,  
Yet you cannot crush forever  
The cry of millions slain.

(Reprinted from JYF Youthbuilder, March 1951.)

*By Larry Shain*

# JEWS IN THE NEW POLAND

By Nathan Samaroff

UPON my return to the United States after a year in the new Poland as a teacher and conductor of Jewish singing and choral groups, I was surprised and angered to read lying articles in the Yiddish press about the Jews in Poland. One article, particularly, by Jacob Lestchinsky in the Yiddish daily *Forward*, which asserted that the Warsaw ghetto commemoration gatherings in Poland had no Jewish content, I knew to be false—because I was there.

From April 15, 1950, to May 1, 1950, I participated in 12 concerts commemorating the uprising of the Jews in the ghetto against the nazis. The program of April 19 in the People's Theatre, largest hall in Warsaw, is enough to answer Lestchinsky's slander. Representatives of the government, unions, cooperatives, the military and partisan veterans were present. On the stage were partisan fighters, all members of the Central Committee of the Jews of Poland. The stage was decorated with pictures of the Jewish heroes of the ghetto resistance, flowers, flags and appropriate slogans. A few introductory remarks were made by Hersh Smoliar, a hero of the Jewish resistance in the Minsk ghetto and at the time chairman of the Central Committee of the Jews of Poland. Then the director of the Jewish Historical Institute, Ber Mark, spoke on the contributions of the Jews of Poland in the fight for democracy and for a free Poland and the heroic contribution of resistance in the ghettos.

The Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra then played the partisan hymn, "*Zug nit kaimol az du gaist dem letzten veg*," during which the audience stood in silence. The orchestra followed with one movement from Tchaikowsky's *Pathétique* and the funeral march from the Beethoven Third Symphony, the *Eroica*. Ida Kaminska, daughter of the famous Jewish actress, Esther-Rochel Kaminska, recited appropriate poems in Yiddish. Then Frederick Portnoy, a visiting pianist from Israel, played compositions of Mussorgsky, Chopin, Tchaikowsky, etc. One of Poland's finest actors recited a poem in Polish by Bronefsky on a Jewish theme. Finally, a choir of 175 Jewish singers from cooperatives in Lower Silesia, accompanied by the orchestra under my direction, sang the cantata, *Lublin-Maidanek*, with words by L. Miller, which I had composed in the United States in 1944. Is it any wonder that articles like that of Lestchinsky angered me?

FROM THIS EVENT ONE CAN GATHER HOW THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP in Poland esteems the Jews. The government is carry-

ing on an intensive educational campaign among the Poles to eradicate anti-Semitism. With this in mind the government, in cooperation with the Central Committee of the Jews of Poland, invited Polish workers and the whole Polish people to pay homage to the struggles and heroism displayed by the Jews in the fight against fascism and reaction before and during the Hitler occupation and the contributions being made by Jews in shops and factories and in cultural life towards building the new democracy and laying the foundations of socialism in Poland. By helping to build socialism the Jew is also improving his own lot as a Jew and as a citizen of free Poland.

My wife and I will never forget the first day of our sojourn in Poland. We arrived in Warsaw on June 18, 1949, and from the airfield we were taken by car to the hotel. After a rest we went to the place where the Warsaw ghetto had been. We saw the monument to the ghetto fighters. All around as far as the eye can see was—rubble, rubble, rubble. A short distance from the monument was a stone, inscribed in Yiddish and Polish, which served as a natural monument to a hero who had fallen at the spot where the stone stands. This stone made a very deep impression on us, for it made us ask ourselves why we hadn't done more for the Jews under Hitler.

We felt emotionally drained and walked back to our hotel with a deep feeling of guilt. In the hotel restaurant we sat down at a table covered with white fresh linen, napkins white as snow and fine polished silverware. A dance orchestra played and young men invited young women to dance. Tears of joy started in our eyes at the thought that in the shadow of the Warsaw ghetto, people cling to life and are ready to fight for life. Just as flowers are growing over the ruins of the Warsaw ghetto, so the Polish people, the Jews among them, are building their lives anew.

IN WARSAW, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE of the Jews of Poland worked out with me a program of 12 concert-lectures to be given in cities of Lower Silesia over a period of two weeks. But first I gave a lecture in Lodz at which Jewish cultural representatives of cooperatives and factories were present. I also gave a lecture at the Jewish theater of Praga, a Warsaw suburb. At this lecture the hall was packed with people from cooperatives, offices and government bureaus. On the tour of Lower Silesia, I learned how hungry the Jewish people were for instruction and enjoyment. Although my lectures and programs did not have what we in the United States would call popular ap-

NATHAN SAMAROFF is a choral director and teacher.



peal, since I am not an entertainer or a singer but a conductor and a teacher, the theaters and halls where I lectured were crowded to capacity. The Polish Jews were eager to make up for lost time. For six years they had been absorbed in the task of fighting fascism and remaining alive. Now they wanted to resume their educational and cultural life. Every factory and cooperative conducts classes, which are packed, as are the lecture halls, concerts and theaters. I came to the conclusion that, although only a small Jewish population now exists in Poland, the government is doing all it can to encourage the education and development of the surviving Jews. The "Jewish question" in Poland has been basically solved. The government is striving to make every human being a better and more qualified person, and this applies to the Jews through the development of the language and culture of the Jewish people in a socialist society.

AFTER MY TOUR, WE WENT TO WROCLAW TO BEGIN THE ORGANIZATION of Jewish singing societies, children's choruses and orchestras. The first chorus we organized was in Dzhierzhonov with my wife, Sylvia Samaroff, as conductor. The second chorus was organized in Wroclaw with myself as conductor. After a short time we had 120 singers in both choruses. During the auditions we had a moving experience that was repeated a number of times. When some of the prospective singers were asked to sing or repeat a sound

that I struck on the piano, they held back. I was under the impression that they were bashful. But this was not the reason. One singer told me: "I know, Mr. Samaroff, that it is important to build the choruses. I personally like singing very much. But I lost 33 members of my family and emotionally it is hard for me to open my mouth to sing. Please, let me stay aside for the first few rehearsals. After I hear others sing, I'll get used to it." To help overcome this feeling, we decided at first to teach the chorus simple songs in two voices. When the singers heard the one melody sung while they sang another, they were fascinated and little by little their reluctance to sing was broken down.

After a few months of rehearsal, the Central Committee invited us to sing at a national conference in Wroclaw on October 16, 1950, which was to discuss problems of cultural activity among the Jews of Poland. The chorus received this invitation with enthusiasm. My wife and I were hesitant, thinking it was a bit too early and that the choruses were not ready. But we realized that it was important to demonstrate the possibilities of a choral movement among the Jews in Poland, so we accepted and began work on the program. We prepared five songs, three in Yiddish, one in Polish and one in Russian. The singers loved the Russian song because they felt a great love for the Red Army, which had saved them. On the night of the concert the singers were a little nervous. All of us were anxious to do well.



*Jewish children's home in Poland*

*By William Cropper*

When the curtain opened, tremendous applause greeted the chorus. For the people had not seen such a mass of singers at a time on one stage for some years. After the singing the audience again responded with enthusiastic applause. When the curtain closed, the singers fell on my wife and myself with tears of joy, thanking us for this experience.

THE SUCCESS OF THE FIRST APPEARANCE RESULTED IN AN INVITATION to bring our 120 singers of the Wroclaw and Dzherzhionov choruses to Warsaw. The occasion was to celebrate the integration of the Jewish with the non-Jewish cooperatives which signalized the full acceptance of the Jews into the Polish community. The singers were paid for the full time off their jobs while participating in this event. Once again the hall was crowded with Polish and Jewish workers

and we were again received with great enthusiasm. A Jewish ballet group, dramatic groups and various soloists also performed at the affair. All were non-professional artists who worked in the cooperatives.

After the concert a Jewish worker said to me: "Thank you for bringing Jewish folk songs back to Warsaw. In spite of the nazis and fascists, the songs of our people and our class are heard once again in Warsaw." A Polish citizen, who sat next to one of our singers in the audience after our appearance, told her, "I wonder that, after what your people has been through and such a short time since the creation of our democracy, you have achieved this outstanding accomplishment. When I get back to my cooperative, I shall tell the people there about it and convey to them the enthusiasm that your people have shown here."

## LETTER TO JACOB POTOFSKY

March 6, 1951

Mr. Jacob S. Potofsky, President  
Amalgamated Clothing Workers  
Union Square  
New York, N. Y.

Dear Jack:

**I** AM *very much concerned* about the enclosed article that recently appeared in the *New York Times*; that the Jewish Labor Committee, of which you and David Dubinsky are members, are calling on the United Nations to investigate anti-Semitism in Russia and other socialist countries.

Your committee charges for example that there are no more than 50,000 Jews left in Poland, that anti-Semitism is rampant there and that Jewish culture has been destroyed. I visited Poland just a year ago and I would like to comment on your charges.

First let me ask you: are you suggesting that there are only 50,000 Jewish people left in Poland because of the actions of the present socialist government? Was it not the old pro-Hitler landed aristocracy of Poland that ruled before the war along with the representatives of the Vatican who cultivated anti-Semitism? Was it not the nazis and the Polish quislings who reduced the Jewish population to 50,000 with their unspeakable crematoria, their torture chambers, their vile experimentations and their concentration camps?

While in Poland I visited an Orthodox synagogue and cultural center and not on a conducted tour that we so often read about. I had lunch with Dr. Hirschfeld, dean of the University Medical School and his two young assistants; I talked on several occasions with the vice minister of justice and with the leading child specialist of Poland; I had dinner and talked with the director of the Polish radio and several of his assistants; I traveled with representatives of the Polish Information Service, the foreign service and with members of parliament. Here were these men and women of Jewish ancestry *all in responsible positions* in the govern-

By Elmer A. Benson

ment and they convinced me that the present government of Poland was not encouraging anti-Semitism but on the contrary it is doing all in its power to stamp out this evil.

Are you of the Jewish Labor Committee certain that you know what you are doing? What have you to say about the recent meetings of General Eisenhower and the military leaders under the Atlantic Pact with the nazi generals of Hitler's staff and some of their statements at the time which are as follows: "We meet as equals," "Let bygones be bygones," "You have done nothing for which you should be ashamed," "Let us form one big gang." What they were saying was, let us welcome these wicked, unspeakable nazi generals of Hitler's general staff as comrades-in-arms.

What, if anything, are you doing to defend Secretary Henry Morgenthau and his plan for the control of Germany since the recent attacks on the plan by the administration, the Republican machine and Republican Congressman Walter Judd?

It seems to me that you and David Dubinsky have serious problems of anti-Semitism *here at home that deserve your attention*. What are you men doing to eradicate the open anti-Semitism that is known to exist in both the CIO and the AFL?

Judging from my experience in Poland it seems to me you are *taking an untruthful position about anti-Semitism in the Socialist countries* and I feel *you are doing this to mislead the people of Jewish ancestry* in this country to join with General Eisenhower, the nazi generals, the Big Business crowd and the militarists in support of the Truman war program.

I hope that you are not going to continue to be fearful of peace movements as the *Wall Street Journal* has stated that we are in this country.

Sincerely,

ELMER A. BENSON

Chairman, Progressive Party



Back home in Lower Silesia we organized two more choruses, one in Lignitzia and one in Walzbich. Our four choruses with 240 singers began to organize a festival of choral music in Wroclaw. Another chorus had also been organized in Klodzko under a local conductor. All five choruses took part in the festival. By that time we had developed two assistant conductors, who also conducted at the festival. Each chorus sang five compositions. The concert ended with all the choruses united in the singing of three numbers, "*Roit-Armaier*," "*Hoib Oif Deine Oign*," both by the American Jewish composer, the late Jacob Schaeffer, and for the finale, the *Stalin Cantata*, by Alexandrov. The Polish press reviewed the concert very favorably. Polish workers were present and enjoyed the concert a great deal. They were hearing Jewish folk songs and classic songs probably for the first time. I am sure that this will help to bring about understanding and better relations between Polish and Jewish workers.

After the festival many non-Jewish organizations invited us to sing, as in the affair on International Women's Day which was held in one of the largest halls in Wroclaw. On one occasion a representative of the militia (police) asked my wife if our chorus would sing at a Lenin evening for the militia. My wife told him that the chorus sang mostly in Yiddish and had a limited Polish repertoire. "I know it," said the militiaman. "I should like the Polish militia to get acquainted with the progressive traditions and the folklore of your people. It won't hurt them; they will probably be better militiamen for it," he jokingly added.

IN FEBRUARY 1950, THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE JEWS OF Poland asked the choruses of Lower Silesia to participate in the ghetto commemoration in Warsaw on April 19 which I described earlier. While the singers and we accepted with great enthusiasm, we were a little apprehensive about the short time for preparation of my own cantata, *Lublin-Maidanek*, which we were asked to sing. The answer was: "The whole country is involved in tremendous work. We

need engineers, we need specialists of all kinds and many young people are studying at the universities. But because of the shortage of professional people, we have to hurry things up. For instance: certain six-year courses are being completed in three years, and three-year courses are cut down to one year. Not only do we have a shortage of qualified people: we also have competent specialists who have not yet shaken off the prejudices acquired under the old system of education and who are tied to the old ways. Hence we are eager to bring new, young elements, who are heart and soul for the new Poland, into important positions. So we are getting used to the idea of accomplishing tasks in shorter time than we were accustomed to before. We would like you to understand this and we are sure that you and the members of the chorus will work hard to prepare this cantata in half the time that you required in the United States." At the last rehearsal of the cantata a young woman singer got up before the chorus and said: "Dear friend Samaroff, I was born in Warsaw, where the ghetto used to be. I spent my childhood there. I lost over 50 people of my family in the ghetto. Since I am not a religious person, I don't say *Kaddish*. But when I sing this cantata in the shadow of the ghetto, I feel that I am raising a monument in my soul for my dearest ones."

Something of the spirit of the Jew in democratic Poland was brought home to me at a farewell banquet given in our honor by the choruses and the Jewish Culture Alliance. There one singer, a worker at the Olgin leather factory, said to me: "Friend Samaroff, when I was young, I was a shoemaker patching up shoes. Our whole family of eight lived in one room. Under the old order I spent time in prison. But now I live in three rooms with my wife and three children. I have curtains on my windows. I have a good job operating a machine in a factory which makes many shoes. I work with Polish workers who respect me for my good work and I likewise respect them. I sing in your chorus, I enjoy the Jewish theater. A new life is opening for us in the new Poland."

## AGAIN THE BIG LIE

By Jeremiah Lesser

THE slanderous campaign on "Soviet anti-Semitism" of the past few years has largely stemmed from a parallel operation of the American Jewish Committee and the Jewish Labor Committee. The campaign was resumed in January by the American Jewish Committee (see "The Big Lie: New Phase," by Nathaniel Buchwald, *JEWISH LIFE*, March 1951.—Eds.). The Jewish Labor Committee took its turn at bat during the week-end of February 16, when the national executive committee of the Jewish Labor Committee at its annual meeting went on an anti-Soviet spree, making

the wildest charges concerning the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union and the new democracies. The climax of the whole affair was the resolution empowering a committee to demand that the UN investigate these "charges" against the Soviet Union and the new democracies.

The Jewish Labor Committee purports to "represent" half a million Jewish trade unionists. In actuality, however, it is a small clique of embittered and pathologically anti-Soviet trade union "leaders" who are obsessed with the aim of destroying the Soviet Union. It is well-known that the

workers whom they "represent" have absolutely no voice or influence in the committee's affairs. David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, is treasurer and Adolph Held, Nathan Chanin and Jacob Pat; who are leading members of the Jewish daily *Forward* circle, hold executive positions. These people will stop at nothing to vilify the Soviet Union.

Even during the anti-fascist war, when the Soviet Union was rescuing hundreds of thousands of Jews from the nazis and shedding rivers of blood to defeat fascism, this clique carried on its anti-Sovietism as usual and anticipated the cold war strategy in some detail. Shortly after Pearl Harbor, Chanin wrote, "The last shot has not yet been fired from free America—and from that shot the Stalin regime, too, will be shot to pieces." With the hundreds of thousands of dollars collected during the war for aid to Jewish "refugees" the committee imported an assortment of professional anti-Sovieteers from Europe. One of these, Raphael Abramovitch, hated the Soviet Union with such virulence that he wrote in the *Forward* on July 16, 1942 (note the date), shortly after his arrival in this country, "The only chance for the democracies to win this war and not to be defeated is to struggle that the war should be a long one." In other words, he was advocating Munichism in the midst of the war itself. As for David Dubinsky, his inaction on anti-Semitism in the United States is only too evident, as is his repeated association in many pro-fascist, anti-Soviet activities with the country's worst reactionaries.

But one needs to go no farther than the February meeting of the Jewish Labor Committee to judge how shameless they are. This convention nodded its head in the direction of criticizing German rearmament and the freeing of nazi war criminals. But this resolution was only a perfunctory concession to overwhelming mass sentiment on the issue. No campaign whatever was planned. Nor did the meeting go into the enormous dangers of rising anti-Semitism in Western Germany and renazification. In other words, the sources of extreme danger to the Jewish people in the present critical world situation were hardly, if at all, touched upon by this organization, which receives about a million and a half dollars from Jewish welfare funds each year.

Instead, the meeting slandered those very countries in which the Jews have received full equality, social, political and economic, for the first time in two thousand years, the socialist countries. For in the Soviet Union and the new democracies racism and anti-Semitism are crimes against the state. Every visitor to these countries attests to the fact that the distorted vocational distribution of the Jews is being effectively dealt with and that discrimination against the Jews in all professions is a thing of the past. And all observers have pointed out that the Jews freely practice religious worship in these countries. But facts do not hinder Chanin from making the most shocking assertions. According to the *New York Herald Tribune* (February 17), Chanin "noted a close similarity between the tactics of the Soviet government and the nazi government in fighting the Jews. He said that the Soviet government was using Jews

as the official scapegoat." In other words—if you can follow the logic—a government which gives full equality to the Jews is using the same tactics as one which exterminates them physically. The word "pathological" in describing the Jewish Labor Committee's hatred of the Soviet Union is used advisedly.

Jacob Pat's contribution to the meeting was the revelation that "once again we have been forced to set up underground machinery" in Eastern Europe. During the war the Jewish Labor Committee had an underground to rescue Jews—not only from the nazis, but also from countries liberated by the Soviet Union. Today the committee is "saving" Jews from socialism. The caliber of those "rescued" during the war and those it is planning to bring here from Eastern Europe is evident from the quotation above from Abramovitch. In other words, this "rescue" policy is a means of strengthening their corps of anti-Soviet propagandists and "specialists" in this country. It appears, however, that the Soviet Jews have no desire to be "rescued" by Mr. Pat and Company. According to the *New York Times* (February 18), "Mr. Pat said that in Russia itself the Jewish underground is not operating its rescue network because, among other reasons, it is felt that there would be very few trustworthy agents to help with the work." Soviet Jews, it appears, like socialism too well to partake of the treacherous plans offered by the Jewish Labor Committee.

When one considers the multitude of real problems confronting the Jews in these critical times, the obsession of the committee with this supposed "Soviet anti-Semitism" reveals that the Jewish Labor Committee is not really concerned about the Jews at all. Whatever real "concern" they may show, is only the occasion for sharpening their anti-Soviet instrumentalities. For the record of the committee on fighting anti-Semitism here in the United States is dismal. In fact, it could be shown that they are actually helping the forces of anti-Semitism. One typical instance: a certain L. Vogelmann, who belongs to the inner circle of the Jewish Labor Committee, delivered a vitriolic attack in the *Forward* of February 22, 1944, upon all movements in this country fighting the anti-Semites. He called the fight against anti-Semitism "a communist maneuver" directed against the Catholic Church and he criticized Rabbi Stephen Wise for his leadership in the struggle against anti-Semitism. This article was duly reprinted in the *Tablet*, Christian Front organ of Father Edward Lodge Curran, who was the Eastern representative of the fascist priest Father Coughlin.

Or take another example: in November 1949, David Dubinsky was named as a board member of "The Committee to Defend America by Aiding Anti-Communist China," along with Clare Boothe Luce, Matthew Wohl and others. Later in November this organization held a meeting chaired by anti-labor columnist Victor Riesel. Pictures of Hitler and Mussolini flashed on the screen brought forth applause from a section of the audience. A picture of Franklin D. Roosevelt evoked the cry, "Insane cripple!" from a woman. When Riesel asked her, "Where's your



Communist Party card?" she responded, "Red rat!" Such typical instances of the kind of fight the Jewish Labor Committee is putting up against anti-Semitism could be multiplied.

Nor has the committee moved a finger to form an alliance with the Negro people of America. In this respect, these labor "leaders" are even behind other Jewish "defense" organizations like the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League, which recognize in words and to a limited extent in action that Jews must fight together

with Negroes against discrimination and racism.

If any investigation of anti-democratic groups and tendencies should be made, the Jewish Labor Committee would be among the first to qualify. And such an investigation should be made by organizations of the people, so that the Jews and others in this country will come to realize that the Jewish Labor Committee is in reality an ally of the most reactionary elements of this country. For the effect of the committee's activities is to divert the attention of the Jewish people from their real problems and dangers.

## WITCH-HUNT IN AJ CONGRESS

By Louis Harap

THE witch-hunt is becoming more and more disturbing to the national leadership of the American Jewish Congress. They are alarmed over the fact that it does not stop with the communists, but extends also to "anti-communist liberals."

Early in February the national executive director of Congress, Dr. David Petegorsky, urged the newly-appointed Commission on Internal Security and Individual Rights to investigate "the campaign of intimidation now being carried on throughout the country against people who had ever been remotely associated with any form of liberal activity." Petegorsky suggested that the commission should help "to arrest the growing challenge to individual freedom and constitutional rights." According to one report, Petegorsky complained that "legitimate hostility to communism was being extended by important elements to include an assault on all forms of liberal activity, 'past, present or future'" and that the methods employed by the Un-American Activities Committee were infringing upon civil liberties. Petegorsky's position was reiterated by the national administrative committee of Congress at its quarterly meeting on February 24, when the committee called for repeal of the McCarran Act.

Anyone who honestly cares for the preservation of democracy will surely welcome these protests. Every voice added to the chorus against the McCarran Act will help make it so loud and insistent that repeal will be forced. Yet it is not only ironic but threatening to the interests of the Jewish people and of democracy that the national leadership of Congress is guilty of carrying on within its own organization precisely that same undermining of democratic process of which it is justly complaining in the country at large.

For the past few years the national leadership has been ruling Congress under its own McCarran Act. We have presented the evidence abundantly in these pages.<sup>1</sup> The facts show that the national leadership has tried to stifle

every bit of initiative in Congress to implement the Congress program with vigorous mass activity. Every individual, officer, chapter and division that has tried to carry on effective work to give substantial meaning to the basic Congress program has become the target for red-baiting and intimidation by the national leadership. In the past few months the national leadership has embarked on a campaign of wholesale expulsions against the local leaderships in Southern California, Manhattan, Queens, Long Island and Philadelphia. As a consequence, the Congress membership is being systematically decimated, the organization is losing its effectiveness and the cause of the Jewish people that Congress is pledged to protect, is becoming correspondingly weakened.

### The Congress Predicament

Many level-headed Jews, who can hardly be accused of left wing tendencies, have manifested alarm at the situation. Typical of this sentiment is the following characterization of the situation in an editorial in the *Examiner*, Brooklyn English-Jewish weekly, in the issue of February 2:

"Most of the 'grass-roots' opposition to Congress leadership," said the editorial, "is the result of widespread discontent with the reportedly dictatorial attitude of the national leaders and their increasing 'accommodation' to the forces of appeasement and prudence. It is notable that the alleged 'trouble-makers' in the AJC just happen to be the more militant and able chapter and division leaders—those who want Congress to retain its forthright program, its tradition of mass action against discrimination and the extension of democratic rights. . . . Instead of concentrating on eliminating bias and racism in American life, the Congress national administration now focuses on keeping community officials and members in line as it frantically seeks to root out as heresy all opposition to its directives. Like many another organization in these days of mounting hysteria, it seems bent on scouring the country for alleged 'Reds,' a designation now often conveniently used to stig-

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, this writer's series of articles prior to the Congress national convention in November 1949, in *JEWISH LIFE*, July-November 1949.

matize liberal causes and welfare work unrelated to political ties."

The *Examiner* opinion was based on substantial current evidence, as well as past performance of the national leadership. Let us get down to the cases of Philadelphia, Southern California and Manhattan.

The Philadelphia situation was succinctly stated in the *Examiner* editorial. "In Philadelphia, where a typical witch-hunt is being conducted, membership fell from 3,200 to about 1,300 as the general division dissolved and a new constitution was adopted; one chapter is said to have dissolved when 11 executive board members resigned in disgust and membership declined from 118 to 32. One women's division dissolved; other units are reportedly meeting irregularly or not at all."

### ***Witch-Hunt in Southern California***

The case of the Southern California Division is even more serious because this unit is one of the most vital and active in the whole country. On January 30, Congress President Irving Miller sent a letter to every Congress member in the Southern California Division in which he made vague, red-baiting charges against "the character assumed by the American Jewish Congress in Southern California and the complexion of its leadership." On February 12, a statement was issued under the signatures of the six top leaders of the division: Harry Bowman, president of the division; Meyer Pransky, president of the Pacific Region; Mel Springer, division administrative committee chairman; Sara Harris, president of the Women's Division; Lou Kerner, president of the Men's Division; and Anne Pollack, president of the Pacific Region Women's Division.

The charges made by the national leadership, says this statement, are "false, undocumented, unproved and blanket the entire Southern Division membership. These 'charges' constitute a group libel upon a great group of men and women who have voluntarily joined the American Jewish Congress and have given years of devoted service to the principles for which Congress stands." The statement asserts that "at no time has there been disagreement between the Southern California Division and the national officers on basic stated American Jewish Congress policy. We have opposed national's retreat from mass action on the issues of the day—and national has attempted to silence our dissent." The statement reaffirms the desire to end the quarrel with the national leadership and to get on with the urgent work that Congress needs to do, "for such internal strife can result only in the decimation of a courageous and vital organization. . . . Only the enemies of the Jewish people can profit by internal disunity."

Thus in its own backyard the national leadership is doing exactly what it is warning against in the country at large—intimidating those with progressive views with charges of "guilt by complexion"—the national leadership's version of the widespread use of "guilt by association" that

is corroding democratic process all over the country. The Southern California leadership has challenged the national office to hold a democratic election at an annual convention of the division and to accept the results. But the national office is not concerned with democratic procedures within its own organization: its objective is by any means to silence dissent from its dictates, to prevent implementation of the basic Congress program by the utmost mass participation.

### ***Inquisition in Manhattan***

Finally, there is the case of the Manhattan Division. The national leadership hauled up the local Manhattan leaders and several members for a "hearing" on February 18. The story of this hearing has the distressingly familiar ring of Un-American Committee "hearings." The national leaders had designated a committee of three to conduct the inquisition. A few weeks before the hearing, the chairman of the hearing committee, Bronx County Judge Harry Stackel, who is also president of the Bronx Council of Congress (which is favorable to the national office), resigned when the national leadership made it clear that it would not permit the "trial" to be conducted in accordance with fair standards. A second member of the original committee, Miss Zelna Shapiro, was forced to withdraw a few days before the hearing after repeated protests that she had been among those who had voted to prefer charges against the division and was therefore acting as both prosecutor and judge.

Despite these violations of elementary democratic practice, the hearing itself continued these tactics. The Manhattan Division had engaged as counsel the noted attorney, James Lawrence Fly, former Federal Communications Commission chairman. Mr. Fly was shocked. He charged that the national leadership had "violated basic American principles of due process." At the hearing Mr. Fly demanded, as is required by due process, a bill of particulars on the charges, instead of the vague and general charges offered by the national leadership, "so that," he said, "we may know who is accused, with what they are charged and have information from which we can adequately prepare our own proofs. Obviously the vague charges of 'failure to carry out Congress program in good faith' or 'the violation of Congress directives,' to cite but a few examples, mean nothing or everything." The hearing committee, now reduced to two, rejected this elementary request and Mr. Fly led the defendants out of the hearing.

Mr. Fly issued a statement to the press in which he stated: "In my opinion this proceeding is nothing more or less than a drive by the national hierarchy to liquidate the forces which opposed it in the last national convention. It is no accident that similar action has been taken from coast to coast in each of the most populous and powerful divisions of Congress. It is to be deeply regretted that at this time when the need for united and harmonious cooperation of all Americans of good will is so vitally necessary, that the



national leadership of the American Jewish Congress has chosen to conduct a fratricidal war. . . . It is unfortunate that the national Congress leadership has not made it possible for us to preserve our fundamental rights within the Congress forum."

### *What Is "Legitimate"?*

The conclusion from these cases is inescapable—the national leadership of Congress is carrying on a witch-hunt in order to intimidate and suppress those elements in Congress which have taken the Congress program as a basis for genuine and effective action. The chapters under attack have carried on a more active campaign and have involved more organizations outside of Congress than any other in carrying on the fight against renazification and remilitarization of Germany and against anti-Semitism in the United States. The methods used by the national leadership to harass these militant chapters are, as the above documentation shows, the very ones at which Dr. Petegorsky and the national administrative committee raised an alarm, the methods of the Un-American Committee and of the McCarran Act.

Why does the national leadership of Congress find itself bedevilled by this contradiction? What are its implications? In the statement quoted earlier, we saw that Dr. Petegorsky warned that "legitimate hostility to communism" was being exploited to smear everyone with the slightest tinge of liberalism and to deprive him of his rights. Petegorsky and the other leaders, who are "liberals" themselves, are apparently hearing the bloodhounds of the witch-hunters baying at their own doors and they have good reason to be alarmed. Perhaps the national Congress leadership hope that if they participate in the witch-hunt within their own organization, they may keep the bloodhounds away from themselves. But they should know by now that such tactics are pathetically futile and cannot save them from a smear or worse. Their situation reminds one of the cartoon of a cop belaboring a man who is protesting, "But I'm an anti-communist!" while the cop continues to lay to with his billy, exclaiming, "I don't care what kind of a communist you are!" Loud protestations of anti-communism did not save Alger Hiss, William Remington, Mrs. Anna Rosenberg, to name only a few of the innumerable anti-communist victims of this fascist technique.

For what is the essence of the anti-communist technique? To suppress the communists? Yes, but this is only one facet of its objective. For the primary goal of this Hitlerian technique is to intimidate and eventually to suppress the rights of labor and every democratic right, to drive out of circulation every vestige of dissent.

No one today would question that this accurately describes the methods used by the nazis. Yet the Hitlerian technique is precisely the same as that used by the Truman administration and the ruling elements of the country, ultimately for the same objective for which the nazis used it. While communists have indeed been subjected to all

forms of persecution in this country since the end of the war, the American people themselves have been primary victims of this technique. Lowered living standards, restrictions of democratic rights, clamping down of an ever-tightening thought control, imposition of a war economy and incitement to a war psychology—these are some of the consequences to the American people of the fascist trend whose cardinal method is "anti-communism."

### *A Vital Congress Is Needed*

The national Congress leadership, by its opposition to the McCarran Act, is pleading for the right to dissent. But it is the Truman administration that is intimidating every form of dissent and dubbing it "subversion." It is on the basis of support of the Truman administration that the national Congress leadership is conducting its own witch-hunts—even though an uncompromising implementation of the basic Congress program demands militant dissent from the policies of the Truman administration. What the national leadership's conception of "legitimate hostility to communism" is, can only be judged by the actions of that leadership. And we have seen quite clearly from the evidence presented here that there is essentially no difference between its own "hostility" and that of the witch-hunters against whom it is warning.

Whom are the national leadership ready to accept as the arbiter of what is "legitimate" dissent? Do they accept the Truman administration as that arbiter? Do they agree—as their past behavior would indicate that they do—that Secretary of State Dean Acheson's red-baiting of the American Peace Crusade as soon as this event was announced, was "legitimate"? Does the Congress leadership agree that Americans should be hampered by the witch-hunting technique from petitioning for peace, even though every gauge of public opinion shows the unmistakable American sentiment for it?

The national leadership of Congress is contributing its share to the deepening danger to the Jews and to democracy by applying the same technique of intimidation in its own organization as is being used by the Truman administration. The defense of the Jewish people is by that much enfeebled. The national leadership is entombing Congress in its plush new headquarters, the former home of Ogden Reid on 84th Street off Fifth Avenue, recently purchased for \$235,000. The leadership is haunted there by anti-communist hobgoblins. Faced with such grave issues as renazification and remilitarization of Germany and the threat of fascism at home, the leadership is dissipating its time, energy and funds in hysterical organizational suicide. Congress has in the past performed a vital function in Jewish life and the need for militant fighting forces among the Jewish people was never greater. It is therefore imperative that the Congress membership all over the country and the Jewish community as a whole call a halt to this deliberate destruction of this important organization and put an end to its "Commiphobia."

# FOUR POEMS

*Translated from the Yiddish by Aaron Kramer*

## THREE SISTERS

*By Morris Winchevsky*

In England there's Leicester—the city;  
In London there's Leicester—the square;  
and daily three sisters, three pretty  
young sisters are known to be there.

The youngest is out selling flowers;  
the second cries "Laces!" all day;  
the oldest comes by in dark hours,  
and bargains her body away.

The younger ones look at their sister  
not hatefully, not with a frown;  
all three curse a world that is twisted;  
all three curse the street and the town.

And yet when those two, after hours,  
return to the hole that is "home"—  
they moisten the laces and flowers  
with tears that will never be known.

## PIOUS HYPOCRITES

*By Morris Winchevsky*

They come along and ask you to  
be worshipful and good,  
and smile at every task you do  
—as pious people should.

They carefully admonish you  
to keep your brain at rest.  
When bosses drive and punish you  
it's really for the best.

They have a way of kidding you  
about the World-To-Be  
where nothing is forbidden you  
and every soul is free.

You listen to them, little dunce,  
and while your blood is shed  
you honor every little prince  
who sits upon your head.

## A TEARDROP ON THE IRON

*By Morris Rosenfeld*

Oh, cold and gloomy is the shop!  
I press and press and never stop.  
My heart is weak, I cough and groan, —  
my chest is heavy as a stone.

I cough and press and dream and doubt;  
my eyes well up, a tear drops out.  
The iron glows—my little tear,  
it seethes, and does not disappear.

I have no strength, it's all used up.  
My fingers let the iron drop.

And still the tear seethes on and on  
as though it never will be gone.

My heart is heavy—and my brain  
is wracked; I ask in grief, in pain:  
"Oh friend in need and sorrow—say,  
oh tear, why don't you boil away?"

"Oh silent tear, oh silent tongue,  
will others like you come along?  
Are more of my hot friends to fall,  
or will you be the last of all?"

"Are you the herald, to proclaim  
that there are more from where you came?  
I want an answer—tell me, friend,  
when will the lamentation end?"



Still other things would I have asked  
the fiery tear of my unrest—  
but all at once began to pour  
tears without measure, more and more;  
—and it was very plain to see  
how deep my well of tears must be.

## MY PLACE

By Morris Rosenfeld

Look for me not where myrtles green!  
Not there, my darling, shall I be.  
Where lives are lost at the machine,

that's the only place for me.

Look for me not where robins sing!  
Not there, my darling, shall I be.  
I am a slave where fetters ring.  
That's the only place for me.

Look for me not where fountains splash!  
Not there, my darling, shall I be.  
Where tears are shed, where teeth are gnashed,  
that's the only place for me.

And if your love for me is true,  
then at my side you'll always be,  
and make my sad heart sing anew,  
and make my place seem sweet to me.

## POLITICAL TRIAL OF THE IWO

By Hershl Hartman

IN 1933, Adolph Hitler ordered the dissolution of the *Krankenkasse*, German labor-fraternal organization, as one of his first official acts. On September 15, 1950, Governor Thomas E. Dewey had his Insurance Department apply to New York County Justice Henry Clay Greenberg for an order to liquidate the International Workers Order, Inc., an American labor-fraternal organization composed of 16 national group societies. Justice Greenberg proceeded to take "evidence" in support of the Insurance Department's application.

The proceedings showed that a liar doesn't need a good memory any more. Just provide him with a witness stand at a political witch-hunt trial, a \$25 per diem "expert's fee" and he's ready to swear with the greatest of ease—unencumbered by facts or the need to remember today what he said yesterday.

*Item:* George Powers, vice chairman of the Liberal Party of Queens County and Liberal Party state committeeman, testifying at the liquidation proceedings:

"What I say on one day is not exact. . . . I wouldn't say the same on Wednesday as I did on Monday. . . ."

*Item:* Louis F. Budenz, professional convert, lecturer and finger-man, testifying at the same trial under direct examination on Tuesday, February 27:

"He [Rockwell Kent, president of the IWO] was introduced as 'Comrade Kent'."

Same witness, same trial, one week later, under cross-examination:

*Question:* "Wasn't there an item on the agenda which read 'Introduction of Mister Kent?'"

HERSHL HARTMAN is a reporter for the *Morning Freiheit*. He covered the entire trial of the IWO for that paper.

*Answer:* "Yes. We didn't use the word 'Comrade,' because someone might divulge it outside."

There are eight notebooks lying beside the typewriter as this is being written, and each is crammed full of items like those above. The temptation to laugh would be overpowering except for the one basic and overwhelming fact—that on testimony such as this depend \$110,000,000 in insurance savings, belonging to 162,000 men, women and children throughout the length and breadth of America.

### What Is on Trial?

The decorum of the County Supreme Court on Foley Square doesn't reflect the fact that on trial before Justice Greenberg is the sick-benefit of a tubercular miner in Western Pennsylvania; the thin thread of security for an eight-year-old dodging trucks on the streets of Harlem; the hope of a Gold Star Mother to be laid to rest beside her soldier-hero son; the dream of a Jewish cloakmaker, who stands in the marble corridor outside the courtroom and says: "For years we sweated and built up our own organization—and now they come with their ready-made lies to tear it down."

"They" are the bought and paid-for witnesses and the suave, Yale-graduated state's attorney. "They" are appearing on behalf of Alfred J. Bohlinger, Governor Dewey's insurance superintendent, in support of his petition to liquidate the 20-year-old International Workers Order on the grounds that its further existence "will be hazardous to its policyholders and to the public." This hazard, Superintendent Bohlinger charges in his petition, stems from the fact that IWO "officers and members . . . advocate . . . teach . . . persuade . . . subscribe to . . . espouse . . ." political doctrines which the superintendent regards as "commu-

nist sponsored, inspired and controlled." The superintendent is, of course, entitled to his opinion, but wherein lies the "hazard to the policyholders and the public?" Because of "the likelihood . . . (of) the deterioration of relations with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. . ."

This, then, is a political trial, a cold war proceeding clearly labeled by its initiators. This is why lying is free and easy on the witness stand. But is it a *legal* proceeding? Justice Greenberg has permitted the trial to drag on while he ponders just that question—another one of the ludicrous situations with which the whole trial abounds. In effect, Justice Greenberg will decide whether the trial should have been allowed to take place after it is already completed.

The defense is in the able hands of Raphael Weissman, IWO counsel, and Milton H. Friedman and Thomas R. Jones. These lawyers for the IWO Policyholders Protective Committee contended that the insurance superintendent had no grounds on which to ask liquidation of the admittedly solvent and secure fraternal organization. Their array of facts was impressive: The State Insurance Department has the right, under certain sections of the Insurance Law, to conserve, rehabilitate or even liquidate an insurance company whose finances are such as to make its continued existence hazardous to the policyholders. By 1936, this right had been exercised in regard to some 210 insurance companies and numerous others since then. In every case without exception the cause had been fundamentally a financial one.

### **Unprecedented Insurance Trial**

*Never has a proceeding been brought against a legitimate insurance company or fraternal benefit organization on anything remotely resembling political grounds.* In fact, in the one recorded instance where such a suggestion was made, it was rejected by the Insurance Department on the ground that "there is no direct prohibition against political activity in the Insurance Law" nor should there be. This statement was made in 1941, following the presidential election campaign of 1940, during which such insurance companies as Guardian Life, Aetna, Prudential and Mutual were shown to have "permitted the use of the companies' facilities to further political interests" in opposition to a third term for Franklin D. Roosevelt. "There can be no question," said the insurance commissioner at that time, "but that the president or any other official of a life insurance company has an absolute right to express his political opinions and even enter a political campaign if he believes it in the interests of the public and the country. *No limitations on this right can or should be or is here intended.*" (Emphasis mine—H.H.)

The insurance superintendent violated that section of the Insurance Law which requires evidence to be composed only of "facts, appearing on the books, records or other documents" of the company under investigation, the defense contended. The "evidence" presented by ten professional witnesses has substantially supported the superintendent's own admission that the bulk of material used in the inves-

tigation was "gleaned from sources other than books, records and documents" of the IWO. Rumor, gossip, hearsay, perjury—all have been tossed into the hopper.

The IWO attorneys also protested the proceedings on a number of other grounds. For instance, the fact that by including in his petition allegations of violation of the Federal Smith Act and the State Criminal Anarchy Act, the superintendent had arrogated to himself powers belonging exclusively to the federal and state attorneys general.

Implicit in the arguments of the IWO is the fact that the entire proceeding stems from political motives, particularly the kind of politics now in vogue in Washington and Albany. In addition to the blatant witch-hunting aspects of the trial, the stench of official corruption permeates the atmosphere when one realizes that if liquidation is approved, some commercial insurance outfit is in line for a plump political plum—the 97 per cent liquid assets of the IWO, totaling over \$6,000,000. Superintendent Bohlinger has made it quite plain in his infamous letter to all IWO members, that he intends to "re-insure" them with some commercial company "at about the same rates." IWO members are sure that this company will be far more under the control of a political party (Republican) than the organization which now provides them with protection at rates lower than any commercial company could possibly match.

### **IWO and the Negro People**

Most members of the IWO, and particularly its Negro members, see a connection, too, between the fact that the IWO is the only insurance firm in the country offering protection to Negroes without discrimination and at equal rates and the fact that the giants licensed by the New York Insurance Department have been increasingly under fire for their Jimcrow policies. Insurance rates for Negroes are 208 per cent higher in the commercial companies, while the rate on cash surrender values is 372 per cent higher. Most companies are as lily-white in their hiring practices as in their insurance policies. Metropolitan Life, of course, has developed Jimcrow into a fiscal science: charging Negroes higher rates, using the money to keep Southern sharecroppers in peonage on its plantations, building ghettos from which it excludes its own policyholders and the taxpayers whose money helped build them. To date, neither Governor Dewey nor his Insurance Department have bothered even to answer a demand by a conference on February 10 of representatives of some 353,000 New Yorkers for an investigation into charges that the 1941 law forbidding discrimination against Negroes is being violated by the insurance trusts. "There is reason to believe that the superintendent of insurance . . . is covering up discriminatory practices," declared a resolution of the conference, called to discuss the threat to people's organizations inherent in the liquidation proceeding.

The Negro people—members and non-members of the IWO — can also wonder just what is the meaning of the great stress laid by the prosecution on the activities of IWO



officers and members in connection with the campaign to save the Scottsboro victims in the 30's. Almost every stool-pigeon on the witness stand has had his own lurid tale of "communist fraction meetings" at which "directives" were handed down "ordering" the IWO to join in the nationwide and worldwide movement to free the framed victims of Southern justice. A Negro woman, a member of the IWO for 15 years, summed up the reaction of all the observers in the packed courtroom: "Nobody had to tell us to fight for the Scottsboro boys. And if anyone needed telling, it's good that they were told—no matter by whom."

### ***IWO Deprived of Rights***

Testimony in the trial began on January 29—two weeks after the date scheduled for holding the eighth regular convention of the IWO. Under the conditions of the injunction imposed by Justice Greenberg in mid-December, the IWO was forbidden to carry on any "new business" except with the concurrence of the superintendent, who had sent a virtual occupation army into the IWO offices. Superintendent Bohlinger refused to grant permission for the convention, despite the fact that some \$25,000 had already been invested in deposits on meeting halls, etc. When the IWO attorney asked Justice Greenberg to relax the injunction in order to permit holding the convention, the judge seemed quite disposed in favor of the idea. He even suggested to Special Assistant Attorney General Paul W. Williams, representing the superintendent, that "you would be in a better position, it seems to me," if the convention were held. There was a disquieting note of pleading in his voice, which took on added significance when he denied the application. In doing so he rejected the arguments of the IWO and the Policyholders Committee which pointed out that the members of the IWO had never been presented with the charges or the opportunity to act on them.

The application was again renewed, and after the trial had proceeded for over two weeks, Justice Greenberg again raised the question. He had been severely criticized by friends of his, he said, for not having permitted the convention to take place. He seemed to be troubled by the denial of free speech and assembly which the ban included. Again courtroom observers were taken aback to hear a judge pleading with a litigant, asking Williams whether the insurance superintendent might not reconsider his opinion. On the following day the judge again denied the application. Obviously, Superintendent Bohlinger had declined to change his mind.

In any other type of proceeding the state's position would have been rejected as ridiculous. Here was the superintendent charging an organization with what amounts to undemocratic practices—submitting to the "control" of an outside group—while at the same time he denied to the accused the right to hold a democratic convention of democratically-elected delegates. He was deciding for himself, in advance, that the decisions of the convention would be "deceptive" and "meaningless."

But it was not any other type of proceeding. It was a

political witch-hunt trial, taking place in a period of unprecedented war hysteria. The McCarran Law had been on the books for some five months. The "loyalty" purge had been in effect for two years. The deportation drive against the foreign born had already served as a dress rehearsal for the liquidation trial; with two exceptions, every one of the witnesses to appear before Justice Greenberg had told the same stories last summer, at the deportation "trial" of Andrew Dmytryshyn. (See "The 'Trial' on Columbus Avenue," by Hershl Hartman, *JEWISH LIFE*, September 1950.) So the show went on as scheduled, without the "complications" of a convention to disturb the carefully rehearsed lines of the well paid witnesses.

### ***Defend the IWO—and Democracy***

At this writing, the state has rested its case after having called 11 witnesses and entered in evidence dozens of Marxist-Leninist pamphlets in the best Foley Square book-burning tradition. It is impossible to review the five weeks of testimony; the evasions, the glaring contradictions, the downright lies and outright perjury engaged in by the witnesses, many of whom were never even members of the IWO. It is impossible to even list the lies, exposed on the record and sufficient completely to discredit both the witnesses the allegations they claimed to support.

Here is one example of the testimony. One Joseph Zack Kornfedder charged that the IWO was the product of an international Jewish-communist conspiracy. His story ran like this: at the end of 1929, the Anglo-American secretariat of the Communist International in Moscow ordered a number of Jewish-speaking Workmen's Circle branches to "split off" from the Workmen's Circle and to organize a new "mass revolutionary" fraternal organization. At the Dmytryshyn deportation hearing last summer Kornfedder had placed the alleged decision in the middle of 1929. This time he was obviously moving the date forward to jibe with the founding of the IWO in 1930. Cross-examination also revealed that in 1948 at another deportation hearing Kornfedder had failed to mention the story at all when asked to describe the founding of the IWO.

So we have come full circle. From the dissolution of the German workers' *Krankenkasse* by Hitler we come to its parallel in the action of the New York State insurance department. The lesson to be drawn from the proceedings against the IWO fairly shouts from the blood-soaked pages of recent Jewish history. Collaboration with the liquidators of democracy—always cloaked in the mantle of anti-communism—hastens the liquidation of the Jewish people, including the collaborators among them. Silence on the part of those who find it more comfortable to "deplore" privately while offering no resistance or protest publicly, serves only to leave free the path leading from the "mere" confiscation of an organization's assets and its members' savings to the mass murder of peoples. This conclusion is neither novel nor original. It has been stated many times before the Jewish community. The time has come for the community to act by defending the democratic rights of the IWO.

## RABBI SILVER INDICTS THE WAR POLICY

By A. Strauss

For some months, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver has been subjecting the policies of the Truman administration to severe criticism. Once again, before a large audience at Ansel Temple on Sunday, March 4, Dr. Silver criticized Washington in a lecture entitled, "Hitler Rides Again." The Truman administration, Rabbi Silver said, "has taken upon itself the leadership in remilitarization and recartelization of Western Germany with the conscious and premeditated intention of attacking the Soviet Union and inciting a third World War!"

Rabbi Silver read to the audience that part of the Potsdam agreement which affirms that it is the obligation of the victorious Allied powers to end forever the military and cartel institutions which constituted the basis for aggression in the last two world wars for world domination by the German cartels. Rabbi Silver pointed out that "this historic document, which was created and signed by the chiefs of the victorious Allies and was the only guarantee and hope of the world for a secure peace, was annulled and turned into a scrap of paper by the Truman administration. The horrible panorama of post-World War I is being repeated," Rabbi Silver exclaimed. Just as we planned and organized the militarization and cartelization of Germany after the first world war and prepared Germany for a second world war, so we are doing today, only this time with greater impetus and more brutal speed and against the will of the masses of the German people. We are practically crawling on all fours with pleas and prayers and we stop short of no compromise to foist Hitlerization and cartelization upon Western Germany.

Rabbi Silver presented evidence from conservative sources to show that there is practically no limit to which the administration is prepared to yield to the renewed appetites of the nazis and militarists of Western Germany and that High Commissioner John J. McCloy is falling over himself to meet nazi demands. Dr. Silver unfolded a gruesome picture of the clemency shown to 89 nazi war criminals. "The worst war criminals in the history of modern civilization," he said, "who gave leadership to and participated in the greatest racist mass murder and the enslavement of the peoples of all Europe, are now freed."

Backed up with facts, Dr. Silver showed

that the whole educational system of Western Germany is continuing along the old path of German chauvinism under the slogan, "Deutschland Uber Alles." "Just as we prepared for the second world war," exclaimed Dr. Silver, "with the aim of saving the world from communism, so today we are uniting with the same partners, Tito, Franco and the Hitlerite scum in Germany, to save the world from communism!"

"The tragic irony of this bloody farce is that the Soviet Union, from which we were supposed to save the world, became the very country which was our vital partner in the greatest war for our survival. Now we are trying to talk the Germans into a war with the Soviet Union. But it is my humble opinion that the Germans will do a lot of thinking before they allow themselves to be drawn into a second adventure against the powerful Soviet Union. Simple logic leads me to say that the arrogant Germans will not forget Stalingrad for a long time. All our trickery to rebuild a military base for a war against the Soviet Union is in every way destined to catastrophic failure."

Rabbi Silver pointed out that "the whole freedom-loving world is looking forward to the historic meeting of the foreign ministers of the four great powers. A peace program should be forged at this meeting that is based on the Potsdam agreement to demilitarize, decartelize and democratize Germany. But even before this historic meeting opens," Dr. Silver continued, "sinister forces are already working to assure that it will not be the Potsdam program but the present war program of the new Hitlerized and cartelized Germany that will guide the agenda and spirit of the conference. Consequently, the fate of this meeting is already sealed because our leaders in Washington know very well that the Soviet Union can never identify itself with such a program, aimed in the first place against itself."

"If we have learned anything from the past, especially from the fiasco in Korea and China, the meeting of the foreign ministers of the big powers must seriously consider the present situation and agree to the following three points: 1) United States, England, the Soviet Union and France should withdraw their armies from Germany; 2) Eastern and Western Germany should be united; 3) the Potsdam agreement must be thoroughly implemented with full demilitarization and de-

cartelization, thus realizing the program of democratization!"

Rabbi Silver concluded his speech with this program of action for all freedom and peace loving peoples. He ended with the following statement: "This program of mine is based on the thesis, which I have pronounced from the pulpit of this temple in several lectures, that there is room in the world for the existence of both systems, which can and should compete side by side in the atmosphere of peace and of the friendship of peoples. If the foreign policy of our government would agree to this thesis of peace, then the meeting of the council of foreign ministers would and should be a victory for peace."

Dr. Silver's speech made a deep impression on the audience. Long after the conclusion of his speech, people stood around in groups discussing it.

The stand taken by Dr. Silver in this speech is of great importance. For he is no doubt expressing the opinion of the majority of Jews in America who, together with the majority of all Americans, are opposed to war. While one may differ with Dr. Silver on many general and Jewish issues, the fight for peace and against the war policy of Washington is an issue which unites and must continue to unite people of varying opinions, Democrats and Republicans, Communists and Socialists, Zionists and non-Zionists. Every honest person, regardless of political affiliation, is interested in peace. Dr. Silver could make an important contribution to peace if, as a leading figure in the American Zionist movement, he exerted his influence on the American Jewish Congress, as on the Zionist movement as a whole, to participate in the fight for peace and to mobilize the Jewish masses against the administration policy of Hitlerizing and cartelizing Germany. Above all, however, the Jewish masses must draw their own conclusions from the position of Dr. Silver, as well as that of other personalities, Jewish and non-Jewish, who have come out for the Roosevelt program of cooperation with the Soviet Union and for the Potsdam agreement.

As recent Gallup polls have shown, the great majority of the American people have begun to realize that Washington has dragged the country into a dangerous adventure in Korea. The majority of the Jewish masses is for peace. But it is not enough to be for peace, one has to fight for peace. One must be heard. Otherwise, the men of war will drag us to the catastrophe against which Dr. Silver has warned.

(Quotations from Dr. Silver are not in his own English, but are re-translated from the Yiddish.)



# Letters from Abroad

## JEWISH STATE THEATER IN POLAND

By Ida Kaminska and Meyer Melman

Warsaw

When the Jewish State Theater was beginning its work a year ago, certain people exclaimed, "What's the sense of using up all this energy? It's a pity that all this effort and money is being poured in by the government. At best, the whole venture will fall apart within six months." It is not hard to guess what kind of people these prophets were. Some of them already had their bags packed and one foot across the border.

But a year has passed and the Jewish Theater has a solid year of achievement behind it. In one year the Jewish Theater has succeeded in becoming an integral part of the Polish theatrical scene. The Jewish Theater has won an important place for itself, as public opinion has amply confirmed.

When we produced *Glueckel of Hameln* two years ago, a certain Yiddish actor (since departed from our country) told some of his colleagues rather sarcastically, "Do you see these (stage) settings? Well, say goodbye to them! You'll never see them again, not in the Jewish theater in Poland!" Well, what happened was that our scenery and settings have continued to improve until today our productions command the respect of the connoisseurs. The prophets of disaster were mistaken.

Today the Polish Jewish Theater is moving ahead. Every step forward is the outcome of a great struggle between the old and the new, of new methods and old, ingrained habits. Although our group is not entirely free of the "old habits and old ways," we are overcoming them and moving ahead.

We began the 1950 season with two productions, a social drama, *My Son*, by Gergely, and a psychological study, *The Great Test*, by Robles. Both were very successful. And when the Polish theater also produced *My Son* (under the title, *The Case of Paul Esterog*) a few months later, it became clear that the Yiddish stage had reached a high level.

Of special interest was the production of three one-act plays by Sholem Aleichem (*Yaknehoz*, *The Other World* and *People*), which demonstrated the critical realism of Sholem Aleichem's treat-

ment of Jewish social development. Our production of Sholem Aleichem's *The Blank Family* gave a retrospective critical analysis of social relations in Jewish life in the 1880's. As a result of discussion and criticism of the play after the premiere, the director and the whole theater group worked out important constructive changes and today this play is in the permanent repertory of the Jewish theater.

The new types of human relationships in the Soviet Union were illustrated in our production of *Three Friends* by the Soviet writer Ouspensky. The play is alive with youthful enthusiasm and the joy of work.

The season ended with a successful production of Ivan Popov's *Family*. In this play the Jewish theater presented for the first time the figure of Lenin, who is represented with his family at the beginning of his revolutionary career.

All these plays were warmly received not only by the Jewish public but by the Polish public as well.

The Jewish State Theater is today approaching more closely the method of socialist realism. For we recognize that this method is the only one in which the full content of drama can be revealed. This method seeks out causes and gives perspective to human relationships according to the scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism.

What about attendance in the Jewish theater? Although a certain small section of the public has stopped coming, other large new groups have been added to the Jewish theater-going public. This was owing to reduction in the price of theater

tickets and to the development of the Jewish theater itself. These new additions to the audience are Jewish workers who never went to the theater before, as well as groups of Polish intellectuals and Polish workers.

Another new phase of the work of the Jewish theater is touring of plays in the cities. This is not easy to do. Yet, in spite of all the difficulties, every play produced this year was shown in nearly all of the larger cities of Poland.

Just now we are awaiting the opening of a splendid new building in Lodz, which will be the official center of Jewish theater in Poland and is equipped with the latest theater devices. Its opening was scheduled for January 19, the anniversary of the liberation of Lodz by the Red Army.

At the end of 1950 we commemorated the 25th anniversary of the death of the "Mother of the Yiddish Theater," Esther Rachel Kaminska. The Jewish Social and Cultural Union of Polish Jews arranged memorial affairs in all the larger cities of Poland.

For 1951, the Jewish State Theater is preparing a full season. We shall probably open with Sholem Aleichem's *200,000* and Belotserkovsky's *Life Calls*, to be directed by Jacob Rothbaum. Next we shall present a contemporary Soviet drama by Korneichuk, to be directed by Chavel Buzgan. In the first half of 1951, we shall also produce a Polish play and a revival of S. Diamond's *Winter Night* in connection with the Polish Writers' Festival.

Probably one of the happiest events of the new season will be the completion by Y. Turkov and N. Meisler of a Peretz play in the form of a legend based on Peretz' own themes and dialogue. The play will be presented in the first half of 1951 in honor of the Peretz centenary. Our theater will assuredly treat this Peretz production with due reverence and understanding.

The Jewish State Theater also has under consideration *Uriel Acosta*, Ozheshkova's *Meyer Ezefovitch*, Gogol's *The Inspector General* and Ibsen's *Doll's House*.

If not for the resources which have been

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made available to us by the Polish people's democracy, it would have been fantastic for us to expect to bring our entire repertory to all the large cities of Poland. But this plan of ours is quite concrete and will be our contribution to the Six Year Plan of the Polish people.

In order to raise the level of professional technique and ideological awareness of the entire Jewish State Theater group, we have

begun an educational program that will involve every member of the theater. We are making a critical evaluation of our past work, for the success of our theater demands that we examine all the obstacles in our path. Only in this way can we meet the grave responsibilities of a Jewish theater in a country which is working toward socialism.

(Trans. from the Yiddish by Nat Green.)

## Book Reviews

### NEW HISTORY OF AMERICAN JEWS

By Morris U. Schappes

*Pilgrim People*, by Anita Libman Lebeson. Harper, New York, \$6.

There is need for a one volume narrative, descriptive and analytical history of the Jews in our country. Isaac Markens pioneered in 1888. Peter Wiernik made the second attempt in 1912. Paul Masserman and Max Baker tried again in 1931. Now in 1950, we were given Mrs. Lebeson's effort.

Because of her previous performance in the field, Mrs. Lebeson's work seemed to promise much. In 1931, in her book, *Jewish Pioneers in America, 1492-1848*, she had given us a variety of lively biographi-

cal sketches and several useful essays on historical themes. Basically, however, the book was saturated with the values and evaluations of the middle class liberal.

In a certain sense, Mrs. Lebeson has in this new work fulfilled the promise of her earlier work, but in doing so she has revealed the serious limitations that make *Pilgrim People* quite a disappointment.

For this book differs from her earlier volume mainly in its length and scope. Instead of 300 pages we have 500; instead of stopping in 1848, she stops with the birth of Israel in 1948. But the method is exactly the same: she tells many tales and outlines many, too many, portraits—but these do not add up to a history. To the extent that these tales and personalities have been ignored by a historical profession which still sees American history as a reflection of Anglo-Saxondom, there is a certain value in retelling and re-sketching these materials. Furthermore, Mrs. Lebeson does this work with a not unsuccessful intentness on readability, in a style that is sprightly, although too much given to gasps of admiration and too often choppy. Nevertheless the general reader, particularly the progressive one, needs more than stories and biographical sketches in the study of history.

As if to underscore the fact that the method of this book is the same as that she used almost 20 years earlier, Mrs. Lebeson practically transferred most of the former work into the first 250 pages of the present, with only occasional changes. Sometimes, as in the early chapters up to the voyages of Columbus, the changes are caused by her further study of more recently published or discovered data. In at least one interesting and important case, changes are made because Mrs. Lebeson has in the intervening period revised and clarified her point of view. It is to Mrs. Lebeson's credit that, unlike most of her colleagues in the field of American Jewish

historical research, she is willing at this late date, at least part of the time, to come out flatly as opposed to slavery, and to judge some of her favorite historical figures partly in relation to their stand on slavery.

Thus, Mrs. Lebeson has added significant sections to her original sketches of the lives of Judah Touro, Rebecca Gratz and Penina Moise, in each instance noting sharply their stands on, or indifference to, the basic issue of their time, slavery. It is to be presumed that, had she known the facts of Mordecai Manuel Noah's dirty record of hostility not only to the Negro slaves but to the free Negroes in the North, a hostility that evoked the sharp opposition of Negroes as well as of white abolitionists, Mrs. Lebeson would also have added this dimension to her over-enthusiastic portrait of Noah.

Yet one must also observe that Mrs. Lebeson's commitment to the cause of anti-slavery is, even in 1950, not deep-going enough to influence her treatment of the relationship of American Jews to the Civil War. No matter how unclear one may be on the difference between just and unjust wars in other cases, surely here, one would think, it is now possible, and even safe, to see the difference between the unjust cause of the Confederacy and the just cause of the Union. But Mrs. Lebeson, like all her colleagues in facing the Civil War, becomes over-benevolent, embraces both the Confederate and the Union causes, indifferent to, or unaware of, the fact that such "benevolence" excludes the Negro slaves entirely from her consideration.

So Mrs. Lebeson, adopting even the Confederate formulation of the "War between the States," speaks even-handedly of "parties" on both sides in the blue and the gray (omitting from this color-scheme attention to the decisive black). She defines her "task" as "to present the record" so that pro-slavers and anti-slavers "can be known as people and their performance recalled with justifiable pride" of both sides! But the Confederacy was not a patriotic movement and secession not an act of patriotic devotion, unless loyalty to slavery is to be confounded with loyalty to the nation. Bourgeois Jewish historians properly lament the slighting of the Jews by bourgeois American historians. But how long will these Jews continue to accept these same historians' distortion of American history with regard to the Negro people, a distortion that expresses itself sharply in this indiscriminating embrace of both Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis? This blend of bourgeois Jewish nationalism and American national chauvinism produces an evil distortion not only of history but of the values of those who read such history.

#### Masses & Mainstream

AMERICA'S LEADING CULTURAL MONTHLY



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By way of contrast, it is worthwhile citing the way in which, in the East German Democratic Republic, this matter of the approach to unjust wars on the part of Germany is being handled. Recently the Ministry for Popular Education, Art and Science of Saxony-Anhalt issued the following instructions to its teachers: "The term 'military heroism' must take on quite a different form from that which prevailed hitherto. Our soldiers are not heroes, for they fought neither in defense of their country nor in support of the high ideals of the noblest in man. Every German war has been one of conquest, including the war of liberation in 1813-15 and the wars of unification, 1866, 1870 and 1871, for they were not limited to the defense of the fatherland and led to territorial acquisitions. Therefore, those who fell in these wars are not to be honored as heroes and no memorials are to be set up in their memory.

"They may only be pitied as the unfortunate victims of the false policies of a false tyranny. Men like Bismarck, Moltke, Hindenburg and Frederick the Great do not deserve to be looked upon as heroes." (*New York Times*, Nov. 15, 1950.)

In the second half of the volume, which tries to cover the past hundred years of American Jewish history, there is an utter lack of proportion and a bewildering absence of systematic presentation. Some 80 of these 250 pages are given to the Civil War and to a useful but over-elaborate sketch of two editors and their Anglo-Jewish periodicals, Robert Lyon and *The Asmonean* and Isaac Leeser and *The Occident*. Thus the period from the end of the Civil War to the present, in which you have the masses of Jews appearing for the first time as a factor in American history, is crowded and jammed pell-mell into 175 pages. Mrs. Lebeson deplores that editorial requirements forced her to cut down her manuscript by about half, but she would have been better advised had she wielded the knife on the first part and given herself room for study of the period when Jews are to be counted in the millions and not in the tens or hundreds of thousands.

The labor movement? One comes hopefully to a 45-page chapter entitled "Jewish Workers and Farmers," only to find less than ten pages given to the labor "movement" (consisting of sketches of Samuel Gompers, Abraham Cahan, David Dubinsky and Sidney Hillman), about 15 pages to the comparatively small number of Jewish farmers and the remainder to the Zionist movement! And to the socialist aspirations of hundreds of thousands of Jewish workers there is one solitary and, at that, unclear reference! Yet it is her method, as well as her bias, which is at fault. For while Mrs. Lebeson is a zealous

Zionist, her exposition of Zionism is no more illuminating, no more even barely informative than her skimpy pages on the Jewish workers. Glitter of style and enthusiasm are no substitutes for historical exposition and analysis.

**Equally unenlightening** if not downright confusing is the treatment of anti-Semitism in a 40-page chapter entitled "The Anti-Semite and the Philo-Semite in America." It seems that somehow there are Jew-haters and Jew-lovers! The cause of anti-Semitism? Mrs. Lebeson manages to reflect and express most of the confusing latter-day theories of the bourgeois sociologists and psychologists. "Somewhere in each man there lurks prejudice. . . . It is a form of psychic allergy. The organism reacts with antipathy toward an unlike object." This is her basic theory, but she also bows to "countless reasons" for anti-Semitism, including "nationalism," the increase of Jewish peddlers, depressions and wars, and the increasing number of Jews in the United States, and so on, "but most of them [the reasons] are due to failure—failure of self and failure of groups to meet the challenge of reality successfully."

With such an outlook, Mrs. Lebeson is saved from despair only by illusions about the effect of the birth of Israel, which she describes thus: "Within a few brief months the miracle of world-wide acceptance had come to pass. Status had been achieved. Instead of pogroms there were triumphs to record. . . ." Yet she is not really hopeful, for she points with pathetic vagueness to what impress her as the "over-all destructive trends to which the twentieth century is obviously committed. . . . Man has declared war on himself. He is both the aggressor and the thing destroyed." How pitiable is the floundering of the middle class intellectual, abounding in good will but untempered by historical and scientific judgment!

#### Theater Review:

### VITAL PLAY, GREAT ACTING

IN THE small theater at the Czechoslovak Workers House in New York a group of social dramatists have been putting on a series of significant plays this year. The current production, *Candy Story*, by Barnard Rubin, carries forward the stimulating start in revitalizing social theater being made by New Playwrights. While leading American dramatists like Lillian Hellman, Clifford Odets, Arnaud D'Usseau and James Gow are deserting the social theme, New Playwrights are providing an off-Broadway stage on which the dramatist can come to grips with the realities of American life.

And this is what *Candy Story* does. The play deals with a strike in a chain store that is tied with the destinies of a Jewish family. The family has eked a precarious livelihood out of a candy store until the chain store, which is across the street, snuffs their business out of existence. The play vividly brings out the necessity for petty bourgeois people like the Jewish family to ally themselves with the workers. Amidst the grim seriousness of these happenings, Barnard Rubin has woven telling and amusing bits of local color. The play is continuously interesting and presents important issues confronting the American working people of which the Broadway stage hardly seems aware.

In addition to providing a stage for important themes like those treated by Rubin, the New Playwrights are doing their part to break down Jimcrow in the theater by casting Negroes in the parts of whites. In *Candy Story* this policy gives the occasion for one of the finest acting performances of the season. Alice Childress, distinguished Negro actress and dramatist, plays the role of the Jewish mother with fidelity. With the finest perception and nuance of feeling she has caught the essence of the character of the Jewish mother. Although it is very hard to achieve this, Mrs. Childress succeeds without a false note. Her intonation, gesturing, subtleties of facial expression and feeling add up to a fully realized portrait. The Jewish mother lives in Mrs. Childress for every moment on the stage, whether she is speaking or being spoken to, or when intense feeling well up in her.

Dolph Greene's direction of the play was competent and the acting was good. Although the play seems to this reviewer to have structural defects in that the various plot situations are not completely integrated, the play has a spark of life that is only too rare in recent drama. Barnard Rubin has made a distinct contribution to our social theater.—L. H.

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## FROM THE FOUR CORNERS

(Continued from page 2)

other Negro GI's imprisoned on the same charge were refused exoneration but had their sentences reduced. All these cases were among those investigated in Korea by NAACP special counsel Thurgood Marshall. On his return to this country, Marshall revealed that the Negro GI's were the victims of anti-Negro bias. He said that the majority of Negro court martial cases were the result of low morale caused by segregation, which Gen. MacArthur has failed to abolish; that inadequate time had been allowed for preparation of defense; that some of the trials were less than an hour long; that accused men were sent to the front for punishment and then returned to stand trial; that no Negroes were assigned to general headquarters in Tokyo or to the honor guard; that while only two white GI's were convicted of "misconduct before the enemy, 32 Negroes had been convicted of that charge and while the white GI's received five and three year sentences, one Negro got a death sentence and 15 got life sentences and the others 50 years and less.

**CLIMAXING A LONG FIGHT** to outlaw discrimination in publicly-assisted housing projects in New York City, the City Council and the Board of Estimate passed the Brown-Isacs bill on February 17. The measure makes Jimcrow at the Metropolitan Life project, Stuyvesant Town, illegal. The bill has not yet at this writing been signed by Mayor Vincent Impellitteri. The vote was unanimous in the Council. The one nay vote in the Board of Estimate was cast by Queens Borough President C. Frank Reavis, who asserted that the bill "stems right out of the communist line" and that he could produce "six feet of dossiers to prove that the *Daily Worker* and the Communist Party made this bill possible." Much of the debate on the bill centered about efforts to minimize the contribution of the communists to the victory. The bill outlaws discrimination because of race, color, creed, national origin or ancestry for future tenants of city-assisted projects and violation carries a \$500 fine.

**ONLY SEVEN STATES** have laws outlawing racial discrimination in employment, according to an Associated Press survey made public on February 26. The states are New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Washington, New Jersey and Oregon.

**WAGE INCREASES** of \$4.00 a week, reduced hours for maintenance workers, social security coverage were won in February by 200 members of Distributive, Processing and Office Workers Local 39, in four Chicago social service agencies, Jewish Family and Community Service, Jewish Vocational Service, Jewish Children's Bureau and Jewish Community Centers, which work under a joint contract.

**CONDEMNATION OF BENJAMIN SCHULTZ** by major Jewish organizations for his red-baiting of General George C. Marshall and Admiral Chester W. Nimitz brought a statement in reply from Alfred Kohlberg, national chairman of Schultz's American Jewish League against Communism. Kohlberg asserted that the attacks on the League were motivated by alleged domination of the professional staffs of the civic defense agencies by "pinkos" and that the American Jewish Committee had tried to shut down the League by offering a job to Schultz, the League's executive director. In an editorial comment on

this statement, the *National Jewish Post* (March 2) called the League "a disgrace to the Jewish group."

### EUROPE

**DR. WLADISLAW DERING**, who was responsible for the murder of many Jews whom he used as guinea pigs in "medical experiments" at Auschwitz, was revealed in March to be serving as head of a British hospital in British Somaliland. Protests were sent to the Colonial Office and Jewish Labor M.P.'s by the Workers Circle Friendly Society on March 7. Britain had refused extradition of Dr. Dering to Poland, Czechoslovakia and France in 1948.

**AN ANTI-SEMITIC SPEECH** was made by British fascist Oswald Mosley in London in February during which anti-Semitic outcries were hurled by the audience. Mosley proposed to make Britain *Judenrein*. . . . Mosley's fascist British Union is exploiting the recent reduction of Britain's meat ration for anti-Jewish propaganda by pointing to export of meat to Israel.

**149 BRITISH LEGION** branches in the London area, representing 60,000 veterans, unanimously protested clemency to nazi war criminals as "an insult to our fallen comrades and to the ideals for which we fought."

**SIR HARTLEY SHAWCROSS**, British attorney general and chief British prosecutor at the Nuremberg war crimes trials, expressed opposition late in February to "interference with the Nuremberg verdicts" on the ground that this would vitiate the warning of those trials against mass murder. . . . Richard Crossman, Labor M.P., late in February characterized the rearmament of Germany and the release of nazi war criminals as an insane policy.

**CLEMENCY WAS SHOWN** in February by Queen Juliana of Holland to two German war criminals who played leading roles in the deportation of Jews from Holland during the nazi occupation. The Ashkenazic and Liberal Jewish congregation in Amsterdam have protested to the Queen.\*

**ABOUT 44,000 "VOLKSDEUTSCHE"** will soon get visas to enter the United States, now that "involuntary" nazis will be permitted to enter the country, said American officials in Munich in February. ("Volksdeutsche" are persons of German origin who lived in East European countries.) About 10,000 Volksdeutsche have already been admitted to the United States. . . . John W. Gibson, chairman of the DP Commission, arrived in Vienna late in February to expedite transfer of 14,000 Volksdeutsche to the United States.\*

**CRIES OF "Hang the Jews" and "Oust the Jews"** were heard at a meeting in Munich in February of the "Protective Association of German Soldiers," led by ex-Col. Ludwig Gunbel, a member of Hitler's old guard.\*

**ABOUT 100 JEWS** from Bratislava who went to Israel in 1949 have returned to Czechoslovakia. . . . There is no interference in ordinary religious activities, including Shechita, in the Jewish communities of Prague and Bratislava, reported Henri Landau, of Brussels, to a conference of the Euro-

pean executive of Agudath Israel in London in February.\*

**20,000 FRENCH WORKERS** demonstrated in Paris on February 12 against the re-creation of the nazi army. Jacques Duclos and other French communist leaders headed the demonstration.

**HUNGARY HAS GIVEN** exit visas to 1,200 Jews who wish to go to Israel. A London *Jewish Chronicle* correspondent in Vienna who interviewed some Hungarian Jewish emigrants there said that "the main reason for the desire of Hungarian Jews to emigrate was the fear of a revival of anti-Semitism on an unprecedented scale in the event the communist regime was overthrown."

### ISRAEL

**NEW ELECTIONS** will be held in Israel not before June at the earliest because three months must elapse between the passage of election laws and the holding of an election. All persons who reached the age of 18 on December 30, 1950, and who had residence in Israel on March 1, 1951, are eligible to vote. Until a new government takes office, the present government will rule.

**THE FOUR-WEEK STRIKE**, which involved 260 metal plants and 7,000 metal workers, was settled on February 19 with an agreement signed by the Israel Manufacturers Association and the Histadrut granting a 14.8 per cent wage rise and improved conditions. The parties also agreed to discuss means of increasing productivity. Cost of the strike to the Israel economy was estimated at at least \$100,000 a day. On February 12, 70,000 workers in Israel staged a half-hour sympathy strike.

**REFUNDS OF ABOUT \$25** per person will be given to thousands of Israeli workers for cuts they have been taking in cost-of-living allowances over the past 18 months. It was decided to grant the refunds after an investigation urged by Mapam that showed that the cost-of-living index, on the basis of which the wage cuts were made, was 13 points too low.

**PREMIER DAVID BEN GURION** was summoned as a witness for the defense by the communist daily, *Kol Haam*, which is being sued by the premier for calling him a "traitor" because he personally ordered the defense minister to withdraw troops from the Suez Canal area in 1948 during the Israeli war. Late in February, Yitzhak Sadeh, former army officer and a founder of Palmach, testified that Ben Gurion's withdrawal order prevented the crushing defeat of the Egyptian army. Defense counsel told the court that the order was prompted by a foreign power and thus constituted an act of treason.

**THREE KIBBUTZIM** were fined in late January for profiteering on the black market.

**BIRTHDAY GREETINGS** to Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois were cabled from Israel in February by M. Avishav, Hebrew poet and playwright, and S. Eisenstadt, historian and scholar.

**ONE-THIRD** of the publications in Israel are issued in languages other than Hebrew. Of the 75 non-Hebrew periodicals, 24 are in English, eight in Yiddish, three in Ladino, nine in French, six in German, five in Bulgarian, five in Hungarian, four in Rumanian, five in Arabic, four in Polish and two in Czechoslovak.

**ISRAEL'S POPULATION** today was given as 1,400,000, of whom 120,000 are Moslems, 35,000 Christians and 15,000 Druze.\*

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



