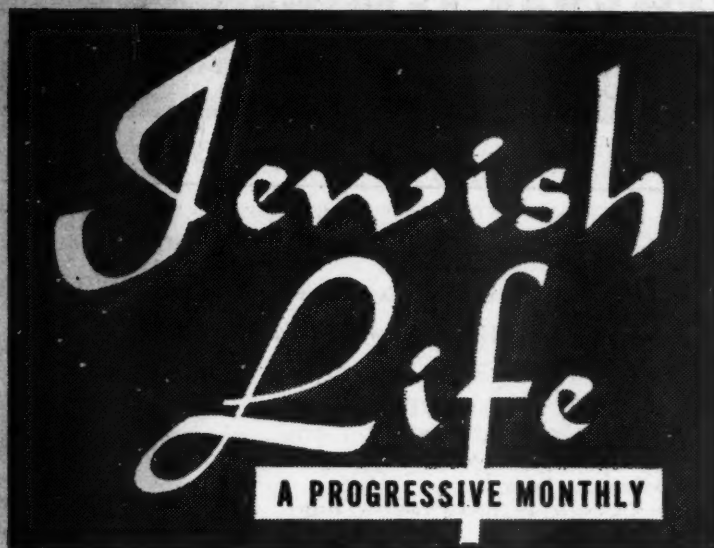


# Poland's Jewish Theater

*Eye-witness report by Paul Mann*



SEPTEMBER 1951 • 20¢

**JEWS AND THE PRESENT CRISIS**

*by Louis Harap*

**TO LIVE IN FREEDOM, DEFEND IT!**

*by Prof. Fowler V. Harper*

**WHAT NEXT IN IRAN?**

*by Hugh Deane*

**THE FURRIERS WIN A STRIKE**

*by George Kleinman*

**ISRAEL AND THE MURDER OF ABDULLAH**

*by I. Starvinski*

**TERROR IN CICERO**

*by Carl Hirsch*

## From the Four Corners

Edited by Louis Harap

### AT HOME

A grant-in-aid to Israel of \$23,500,000 recommended by the United States government, subject to approval of Congress, was announced in mid-July by Assistant Secretary of State George C. McGhee. At the same time announcement of a grant of the same amount to the Arab countries was made. This grant to Israel was far short of the \$150,000,000 that the Ben Gurion regime requested. McGhee made clear in the speech announcing the recommended grants that the money was intended for military purposes in building an anti-Soviet soldiery in the Middle East. This aid "will permit the United States," he said, "to assist those states directly in building up their defensive capabilities . . . and . . . to maximize the will of the Arab states and Israel to cooperate in resistance to any expansionist tendencies of the USSR." Representative Joseph W. Martin, Jr., was franker in his argument for such a grant: The Israeli army, he said, "can be an outpost of American strength and influence in the Middle East." In all of the talk around the grant, it is not disguised that this is another step in preparations for an anti-Soviet war, and Israel's industrial needs are no longer emphasized.

A friendly reception was given by President Truman in mid-July to Hussein Kamel Selim Bey, an Egyptian diplomat, who had one week earlier told an American radio audience that Arab peace with Israel, "was out of the question." . . . A few weeks later Edwin M. Wright, intelligence advisor to the Near East Division of the State Department, made a speech in Bloomington, Indiana, in which he took the position that Jews have no claim on Palestine because, as one account of the speech says, "their antecedents were allegedly not the ancient Israelites who inhabited the country but a nomadic Asiatic people who conquered Russia and supposedly adopted Judaism in the seventh century." This theory is being propagated in this country by reactionary Arab propagandists and by hate groups like that of Conde McGinley, notorious anti-Semite. . . . The State Department announced in mid-July that Saudi Arabia was the first Arab country to be included in the program for military aid. Saudi Arabia is thus permitted to buy military equipment in the United States. One reason for this development: the air field at Dahrhan, which can handle the army's largest strategic bombers, is the closest airfield of this size to the Soviet Union. . . . The purpose of these moves in the Middle East be-

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### CONTENTS

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Jews and the Present Crisis by Louis Harap                     | 3     |
| Jewish Workers in Rumania Learn Trades                         | 5     |
| To Live in Freedom, Defend It! by Professor Fowler V. Harper   | 6     |
| Terror in Cicero by Carl Hirsch                                | 10    |
| What Next in Iran? by Hugh Deane                               | 13    |
| The Furriers Win a Strike by George Kleinman                   | 15    |
| Poland's Jewish Theater by Paul Mann                           | 18    |
| The Israeli Elections  | 22    |
| Fighting French Jewry: 1790: They Win Citizens' Rights         | 23    |
| Fighting French Jewry: 1951: They Work for Peace               | 24    |
| Who Are "Deported" in Hungary? by I. Hirsch                    | 25    |
| Hungarian Jewry Protests Slanders                              | 26    |
| News on East European Jews                                     | 27    |
| Movie Commentary: Art and "Oliver Twist" by Nathaniel Buchwald | 28    |
| Letter from Abroad   |       |
| Israel and the Murder of Abdullah by I. Starvinski             | 29    |
| Book Review  |       |
| A Path-Breaking Negro Novel by Sidney Finkelstein              | 30    |
| From the Four Corners edited by Louis Harap                    | 2, 32 |

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comes clearly revealed as aggressive when it is recalled that not one item of evidence of any aggressive move or plan by the Soviet Union has been noted.

**Ending of** the state of war with Germany by Washington brought forth the following comment early in July from Dr. Israel Goldstein, chairman of the Western Hemisphere Executive of the World Jewish Congress: "We are proposing to end a state of war with a Germany which has not yet been purged of its Herrenvolk ideology, which gives strong indication of neither having retreated from nor foresworn nazism, which regards German criminals against humanity as national heroes and martyrs."

**The Ku Klux Klan** in the South has been particularly active in recent weeks. On July 25, at least 14 crosses were burnt in Alabama, Tennessee, Florida and Georgia. Grand Dragon Sam Roper said that the new anti-Negro campaign was a "fight against communism." . . . In Florida Klan activity is becoming increasingly anti-Semitic. Florida Grand Dragon Bill Hendrix is running for governor on a platform of anti-Negro segregation and also on elimination of "kikes" from Miami Beach. If elected, said Hendrix, he would "send every bulldozer in the State Road Department down . . . to rip out all the sea walls and take all the beaches away from the Jews." Anti-  
(Continued on page 32)

# JEWIS AND THE PRESENT CRISIS

By Louis Harap

**The future of the Jews in the United States grows more precarious as democratic safeguards disintegrate. What the Jews must do to defend their rights.**

**T**HERE is still time to break up the fascist glacier that is descending upon us. But time is short. We must do our utmost to alert the Jewish people to the lesson that the fate of German Jewry under fascism teaches us, that an anti-communist and reactionary program in these times means death to the Jewish people and democracy.... Jews must not permit differences in ideology to prevent their united action in the face of the common enemy. Only thus can we assure survival of the Jewish people."

With these words the present writer concluded a series of articles, "Lessons in Resistance," in *JEWISH LIFE* (December 1949-March 1950). There the writer attempted to indicate the lines which resistance to the trend toward fascism must take in the light of the experience of German Jewry under Hitler.

## ***Hysteria Has Deepened***

In the nearly two years since then, the United States has come dangerously close to a police state. How close, can be judged from an incident reported in the press on July 30. In Madison, Wisconsin, a local reporter told how he approached 112 ordinary Americans picknicking on July 4 to sign excerpts from the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. One hundred and eleven of them refused to sign because they feared "the consequences." Twenty asked him if he was a communist. One woman told him, "That may be the Russian Declaration of Independence, but you can't tell me it's ours!" *One man dared to sign.*

What more need one say? There is a mountain of evidence to show that the Truman administration is making headway in its campaign to terrorize and intimidate the American people by the anti-communist hysteria. And as in Nazi Germany, this technique has as its objective the silencing of the people into frightened conformity. The Communists are used as the stick with which to beat the people into line with the policies of the Truman administration. The Supreme Court majority decision upholding the Smith act made that stick even more menacing than before. In every phase of the spiritual and cultural life of

the people, thought-control is tightening and the democratic fabric is disintegrating before our eyes. Prices soar, real wages go down and profits reach unprecedented heights. Under cover of the anti-communist hysteria, the nation's "statesmen" are frantically whipping up fright with the communist bogey. They are fearful that a relaxation of international tension may expose their frenetic preparations for war and the piling up of war contracts to fantastic heights, just as Hitler tried to keep the German people on a permanent emotional jag. The outcome—unless the people stop it—is atomic war.

On July 30, the press reported a shower of anti-Semitic leaflets onto Detroit from an airplane on July 29. This was no freak incident. It is the direct consequence of the current fascist-like hysteria. We have in these pages shown many times that anti-Semitism is becoming ever more brazen and overt. For, as Hitler showed us, anti-Semitism is a rank growth in fascist soil, and this country is no exception, as we are learning every day. More and more anti-Semitism is linked with anti-Negro agitation and action. In Miami the KKK bombs a Jewish Community Center. Violence against the Negro people is growing, more Negroes are being killed by police, Negro homes are bombed and burned (the Cicero events are only the latest outbursts), the frameup of Negroes is an everyday occurrence. And as was demonstrated at Peekskill and the Chicago violence last year, the fascist-minded are associating anti-communism, anti-Negroism and anti-Semitism. In short, it should be obvious to all of us that the future of the Jewish people is very precarious.

## ***Hush-hush Rides Again***

Have the leaders of the Jewish community grasped these dangers? Have they learned the lesson of Hitlerism? Are they acting on these lessons and organizing the Jewish people to resist? Do they appreciate the absolute necessity of uniting all Jews to garner the enormous power that comes with unity? Are they guiding the Jewish people toward unity with the general progressive movement that is resisting? Have they learned from the experience of German Jewry that Jews cannot buy immunity from the fascists by joining the witch-hunting pack?

The fact is that in the past few months there has been an alarming re-invigoration of the hush-hush technique—the stratagem of the ostrich—among the leadership of the major Jewish organizations. This could be documented



from various parts of the country, but let us see how it is operating in California, where there has been a vigorous and united resistance among the Jews to the encroachment of fascism both at home and abroad. A number of effective mass meetings were held in California to protest renazification and remilitarization of Germany, for which the Truman administration must bear full responsibility.

But certain sections of the Jewish leadership, which, as everyone knows, is predominantly controlled by the wealthiest Jews of the country, have more blatantly been trying to buy immunity by keeping silent even on issues so vital to the Jewish people as renazification. By way of assuring the reactionary non-Jewish community that Jews were not "communists" or "communist-influenced" the leadership of the Los Angeles Jewish Community Council held a conference of Jewish "leaders" in March that virtually dictated abandonment of the struggle against renazification. This is how Milton Friedman, anti-communist Washington correspondent of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, described the result in his syndicated column in mid-June. "American Jewish organizations," he wrote, "are growing fearful of making too much protest [against German rearmament] because of fear that such protests may be construed as adherence to the Communist Party line. Jews have been urged by the Los Angeles Community Council to avoid meetings organized to protest the renazification and remilitarization of Germany if the meetings are in any way 'aligned with communist front organizations.'"

### Dissent "Verboten"

So far has this new hush-hush campaign gone, that this leadership takes it upon itself to attempt to clamp down on free expression in the Jewish community. Thus the San Francisco Jewish Community Council in May wanted to muzzle four local rabbis who had the temerity to join with ten non-Jewish ministers in issuing a statement to further peace. The council tried to censure the rabbis, among whom was Rabbi Saul E. White, president of the Board of Rabbis of Southern California, because they failed to "clear" the statement with the council. And what did these rabbis dare to sign their names to? A statement urging the easing of international tensions by recognizing the new China, opposition to German and Japanese rearmament and negotiation of differences between East and West. Are these objectives hostile to the interests of the Jewish people? Obviously they are not. But they do conflict with the position of the Truman administration and according to the new fascist-like dispensation to which the council "leadership" has yielded, this kind of dissent is *verboten* to Jews, as to all Americans. The nazis gave us a name for this type of appeasing Jew; they belong to the "*Judenrat*," the Jewish leaders in the ghettos who delivered Jews up to the gas chambers. Such "leaders" must be repudiated by the Jewish people while there is yet time to prevent the creation of new Maidaneks.

We have already seen the disgusting spectacle of Jews, eager to prove their reliability to their masters, sink to

the level of indulging in statements which undoubtedly please the anti-Semites and fascists. In this direction is a recent statement by Walter Winchell in his column in the Hearst New York *Daily Mirror* of July 13. In his comments on the arrest of the 17 additional Communist leaders, Winchell wrote: "The U.S. Marshals, all clean-cut people, looked like Americans should. . . . Betty Gannett, one of the arrested Reds, is actually named Rifka Yareshevsky." Here are two sides of the racist line: the "ideal" of the "clean-cut" Anglo-Saxon and the baiting of people with Jewish-sounding names. Another instance of the same type concerns Irving Saypol, United States District Attorney who is prosecuting most of the anti-communist cases. In the course of his cross-examination of Bernard Redmont, defense witness in the Remington "perjury" case, Saypol brought out that Redmont had changed his name from a Jewish-sounding one. When Redmont stated that he had changed his name to avoid the effects of discrimination, Saypol replied, "As a matter of fact, it is the communists who take false names, isn't it?" The irony of it is that Saypol's father, a Jewish immigrant, had changed his name to the one Saypol now bears. Here is another example of the *Judenrat* spirit.

### We Must Resist

We know from the nazi experience that *resistance* requires fortitude and a clear head, a refusal to be choked into the anti-communist straitjacket, which leads ultimately to the gas chamber, as German Jewry found out. But Jewish leadership today is not guiding the Jewish people into the path of resistance. Else how can one explain that to date, more than two months after the Supreme Court handed down its majority decision on the Smith act, the major Jewish organizations have not, so far as I know, said one word in protest against this staggering blow against the Bill of Rights, on which Jewish welfare depends. Nor have they protested the further application of the Smith act in the arrest of the 29 additional communist leaders. The major Jewish organizations were sufficiently aware of the dangers of the McCarran act some months ago to issue a statement demanding its repeal. But the situation has degenerated so greatly in the past few months that they are paralyzed in the face of the Supreme Court majority decision. The Jewish leadership would do well to emulate the far from left-wing Negro press, which has courageously spoken out against the Supreme Court decision, for they understand how this decision threatens all who are oppressed and objects of discrimination.

It should be evident by now how abjectly the greatest part of the Jewish leadership in our country has allowed itself to be carried along with the fascist wave. The masses of American Jews dare not tolerate this abject abdication of responsibility by their "leaders." The masses of the Jewish people must therefore press upon the leadership the absolute necessity of putting up a fight against the fascist threat.

That great potentialities for such a fight exist, is evident



from the insistence of a majority of the American people that the Korean truce be concluded and American soldiers withdrawn from Korea, despite the pompous incitations of administration spokesmen to more intense war preparations; it is evident from the militant strikes that are taking place in many industries despite administration pleas of "defense" requirements; it is evident from such acts as the statement of President Jacob Potofsky of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers against a military alliance with Franco; it is evident from such opposition to the Supreme

Court decision as that of *Unzer Wort*, New York organ of the left Poale Zion (see page 24).

The Jewish people must join with the general progressive movement, which is tenaciously resisting the advancing threat to our democracy. Time is getting shorter with every passing day. But it is even now not yet too late. In the interests of their own survival the Jewish people must join in the movement of resistance against the apocalypse of fascism and war that the present Jewish leadership is doing nothing to stop.

## JEWISH WORKERS IN RUMANIA LEARN TRADES

*We reprint the following from Romanian News (July 15, 1951), the official English weekly paper published by the Legation of the Rumanian People's Republic in Washington.—Eds.*

**Y**OUNG Desideriu Rosenberg, molder at the Sovrom tractor plant in the City of Stalin, in Rumania, learned his trade in less than a year, and now regularly overfulfilling his production norm, earns over 20,000 lei monthly; Herscu Edelman, a clerk until not long ago, is now a front rank lathe operator at the "Steaua Rosie" plant in Bucharest; Zoltan Schwartz, a foundry worker at the Timisoara "Electromotor" plant is now a foreman and earns 18,000 lei monthly.

These are a few examples of the 50,000 Jewish working people in Rumania who have learned skilled trades since 1949 and who are now working in heavy industry.

These facts are the fruit of the policy of the Rumanian People's Republic government for full equality between the Rumanian people and all other national groups.

Never before in Rumania's history were Jews admitted to official jobs and very few of them could participate in productive labor requiring special training because of the anti-Semitism in the schools, terror by fascist hoodlums supported by the authorities. This anti-Semitism was characteristic even of so-called "democratic" governments. The war and fascist dictatorship merely emphasized this trend. Thus, most Jews were practically compelled to earn their living by non-productive means.

After the war, under the people's regime, when productive labor became an honor and a duty, the essential task of the regime in regard to the Jewish problem was to make it possible for the Jewish working people to work side by side with their Rumanian brothers, to restore to them a full sense of dignity and equality.

To a large extent, this has been done, as can be seen from the figures above cited, despite the fact that the Zionists, representing the interests of the Jewish bourgeoisie and closely connected with internal and foreign enemies of the Rumanian people, tried to exploit the fact that the majority of the Jews could not at once enter productive labor, a situation for which they share responsibility with their friends, the former rulers of the country.

The measures enacted by the government were greatly aided by the Jewish Democratic Committee, founded six years ago.

The JDC has continually worked for the political education of the Jewish working people, mobilizing them in the struggle against reactionary forces and for laying the foundations of a socialist system in the Rumanian People's Republic, in the struggle waged by all people in the world to enforce peace.

Addressing the Jewish working people, the JDC showed them the nefarious role of the accomplices of the bourgeois-landlords and in the fascist Antonescu's regime played by the Jewish capitalists in Rumania.

Led by the party of the working class, on the basis of Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist teachings on the national problem, the JDC cultivated among the Jewish working masses affection for the RPR, a spirit of fraternal cooperation with the Rumanian working people and working people of other national groups, and at the same time acquainted them with the hostile aims of Zionist propaganda.

The achievements of the regime of people's democracy for the Jewish working masses—Jewish State theaters, schools in Yiddish, Yiddish press, broadcasts in Yiddish, etc., as well as the steps taken for the punishment of war criminals responsible for fascist terror against the Jews, the laws against racism, the assurance of citizenship rights, etc., demonstrate to the Jewish masses the deeply democratic character of the Rumanian state system, show to them that the Rumanian People's Republic is their homeland, in which they can lead a peaceful, free and plentiful life.

# TO LIVE IN FREEDOM, DEFEND IT!

*By Professor Fowler V. Harper*

**An eminent law professor sounds the alarm in defense of the Bill of Rights and the basis of American democracy. He calls for courageous re-affirmation of freedom.**

*The following address was delivered by Professor Fowler V. Harper at the great Carnegie Hall meeting to "Restore Free Speech" on July 25 under the auspices of the National Council of the Arts, Sciences and Professions. Professor Harper teaches at Yale Law School and was formerly general counsel of the Federal Security Agency, formerly deputy chairman of the War Manpower Commission and formerly solicitor of the Department of the Interior.*

*Our outlook is quite different from Professor Harper's and we therefore disagree with some of his interpretations of American history. Nor do we share his views about coupling fascist countries with the Soviet Union and the new democracies. However, we are heartily in accord with Professor Harper's passionately expressed view that the most precious features of the American heritage are in imminent danger of destruction by the attacks on the Bill of Rights.—Editors.*

**A**S WE look about us today and see a world which more nearly resembles the jungle than a civilized epoch, it is hardly necessary to remind ourselves that, if we are to live at all, we will live among great dangers. The world is divided into two adverse segments, both the product of world revolutions.

Our own revolution came first. The men who by rebellion won our freedom thought they were founding a nation on political truth and dedicating it to the continued search for truth.

Now all truth is dangerous and the "self-evident" truths of our founding particularly so. But the search for truth is more dangerous still for the plain reason that it may sometimes lead to error.

Actually our nation is founded on the most dangerous pattern of political radicalism of history. Beside it, the radicalism of Marx looks puny indeed. Ours is a system which political philosophers from the time of the Greeks to 1776 declared could never work. The sneers from nazi Germany and fascist Italy in the late thirties and from the Iron Curtain prophets today testify to the continued skepticism of the democratic experiment.

The object of the Founding Fathers was to insure life,

liberty and the pursuit of happiness to the individual. It is pretty clear that one cannot pursue happiness without both life and liberty. He can, however, have life with neither liberty nor the opportunity to pursue happiness. But for those with a passion for freedom, life on such terms is not worth living. Men who would buy their lives with their freedom are "beasts" indeed and Alexander Hamilton's judgment of people collectively is confirmed. But the Fathers insisted on life with liberty or not at all and they believed their descendants would be satisfied with no less a bargain.

To insure liberty, then, they sought to create the conditions which would make tyranny impossible.

Tyranny by whom?

Tyranny by kings, tyranny by politburos, tyranny by the many over the few.

Tyranny by the majority may be the worst of all because there are less who suffer and therefore fewer to resist.

"All men are created equal."

And so, to secure the rights of *every* man, not only was a government established for the first time among men deriving its powers from the consent of the governed, but a Bill of Rights was adopted to secure the liberty of the least of them.

## *The Right of Revolution*

But first of all, there is the solemn declaration of the greatest of all rights—the right of revolution, written, not on a sudden impulse in the fervor of great emotion, but penned carefully and painfully by the greatest draftsmen of the times.

"That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it. . . ."

"Any Form" of Government! Obviously, this includes our own.

"To alter or abolish it"! Obviously, this is not confined to altering it or abolishing it by the ballot or other peaceful means.

If there had been intended a qualification so vital the Jeffersons and the Franklins were not such sloppy thinkers as to omit it. And if confirmation of the right of revolution is needed, we have the best evidence in the subsequent testimony of the man who, better than anyone else, knew what was meant.

To be sure, this right was asserted some 13 years before

the adoption of the Constitution; but there are many, including some who have sat in the highest judicial councils of the nation, who believe that the rights proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence are as much a part of our constitutionalism as if they were expressly included in the document of 1789.

But the right of revolution is meaningless if it is a straight and certain path to martyrdom. A government cannot be "altered or abolished" unless the revolution is successful. It merely becomes worse.

A one-man revolution can never be successful. He must get others to share his conviction that his government has become "destructive of these ends" and join him in his revolutionary enterprise. Thus, he must have the right to advocate the alteration or abolition of the government by such means as may be necessary.

This right he is guaranteed in the First Amendment to the Constitution. "Congress shall pass no law . . . abridging Freedom of Speech and of the Press." And thus the right to advocate the alteration or abolition of the government is made secure.

### ***The Right to Advocate***

Here again, there is no condition; no qualification. The men who were responsible for the First Amendment were the same as those who drafted the Declaration.

They knew what they were doing and what they were saying. They could all add and subtract. They knew all the implications because they had just lived through them. They knew the dangers.

And what of the dangers? These men had overthrown their own government because it was a bad one. It had denied them their liberty. In its stead, they established what they believed to be the best possible government. Why would they secure to others the right to overthrow a good government because they had overthrown an evil one?

Why? Because first, although they *believed* they were establishing the best possible government, they recognized that they might be wrong. They did not have the illusions of fallibility which characterize leaders under *some* forms of government. Second, because if they were right, as they believed, such a government would *never* be overthrown by a free people. They put their faith in the People.

Were they wrong?

This was the chance they took and this the risk to which they committed us. They believed with Justice Holmes that the only truth on which the wishes of men can safely be carried out, is the power of thought to get itself accepted in the open market. They had confidence in the buyers.

"Congress shall pass no law abridging Freedom of Speech or of the Press."

Ours is the only form of government based on such a sweeping guarantee. There is to be no limitation whatever on thought or on advocacy of ideas, good or bad, because the only way we can tell whether they are good or bad is

by the test of the market place. There can, therefore, be no freedom of thought unless there is freedom for the thought we hate; no freedom of speech, unless freedom for dangerous speech. But if we have the faith of the men who founded this nation, the risk is one we cannot afford to avoid. We do not suppress ideas we think are bad because, if they are bad, they will not prevail. We do not suppress ideas we think are good because we want them to prevail. And so we suppress no thought nor speech. If the idea is evil it will be harmless when exposed although extremely dangerous if hidden. On the other hand, the good idea will spread when advocated, but is impotent when suppressed.

And so the market place is to be kept open. We match good ideas against bad ones. There can be no coercion, no force. The competition for the minds and souls of men must be free or man himself cannot be free.

### ***When Is Danger "Clear and Present"?***

The competition, of course, must be kept free on all sides. When he who advocates what most of us think is bad thought, there must be no accompanying force. He is free to hire a hall but he cannot compel us to listen or to believe. The majority is not to be terrorized by the minority. Freedom of speech is not a one-way street. However good our ideas may be, we may not force him to accept them. And however crackpot *his* may be, we may not force him to keep silent.

He is under the sane obligation to avoid force. If he does not, he ceases to be an advocate and becomes a criminal or a clear and present danger to the security of the nation.

But application of the clear and present danger test is a treacherous undertaking. The danger must be *clear*, not speculative, and it must be *present*, not remote.

How clear? How remote?

The line which separates speech from action is extremely difficult to draw, but drawn it must be. The general who sits at his desk 20 miles behind the front, directing his troops in battle, is as much a participant in the action as the man behind the gun at the front. The man at the head of a mob urging them on to lynch a Negro is *acting* as effectively as those who storm the jail and pull the rope. He is a clear and present danger and his speech may be stopped.

All ideas, of course, imply some kind of action at some time by somebody. But what kind? When? And by whom?

The clear and present danger test demands consideration of these questions. The mere advocacy of an idea can *never* constitute a clear and present danger. Any different position would require a judgment on the merits of the idea and the whole conception of freedom of speech is exploded. And it should be plain to all that the mere *agreement* to advocate an idea cannot possibly be a clear and present danger. Whether the agreement is labelled a "conspiracy" or not can make no difference, unless we are to become hopeless victims of semantics.

It is only when speech crosses the line into action that



the possibility of a clear and present danger arises. If we lose sight of this principle, we slip into a bog of dialectic clap-trap and the Palmer raids begin all over again. The principle of free speech must be kept clean.

Now it is clear that governments which function as dictatorships, whether of the extreme right or extreme left—for their techniques are identical—operate under principles which are precisely the opposite of ours. Under such governments, the first and most effective weapon is the suppression of all dissident thought and speech. There are no political minorities. There is no clash of opinion. There is not only no free market place—there is no market at all. Strict and complete conformity with the prevailing views, whether in politics, music or science, is the first and only law of survival.

And so governments are known by their tactics and forms of government by their principles. The principles on which our form is based are clear and the men who created it understood and believed in them.

### ***"How's Your Americanism Today?"***

But what of us today? How clearly does our generation understand and believe these truths? Are they still self-evident? And do the tactics of our government still reflect them?

It is true that everyone protests his Americanism. He tries hard to avoid the stigma of "Un-American."

I walk down the street and meet an acquaintance.

"How is your Americanism today?" I ask.

"Splendid," he says. "Wonderful. I am not now and never have been—."

Lawyers resign from bar associations because a Congressional committee calls it subversive. The fact that the committee had no proof is immaterial.

Movie studios and broadcasting companies fire actors if they are "listed" in any kind of scurrilous publication.

Labor organizations hold "purgés."

"How is our Americanism?"

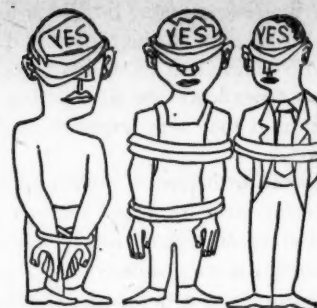
The government fires men of long service unless they can prove beyond a reasonable doubt that they are "American," if they are accused by an irresponsible senator or an equally irresponsible committee.

Colleges dismiss professors if they speak at a political meeting which is labeled by any Yellow Journal as "left wing."

How is our Americanism? We wear it on our sleeve so everyone will know.

We take loyalty oaths and fire others if they don't do the same.

Our Americanism is not only in good shape but we are going to make everybody subscribe to it. We won't associate with people who won't subscribe to it or even with those who *do* associate with such persons. And we take unorthodox magazines out of our schools so that the minds of our youth will not be subverted.



But wait a minute! What does all this mean? What is this "Americanism" everybody is talking about and tries so hard to be. What about the right of revolution in the Declaration of Independence?

Well, we've *had* our revolution. We have *got* our free government and we have to defend it against subversive elements which are trying to overthrow it.

What about the Bill of Rights, the First Amendment guaranteeing freedom of speech and of the press?

But certainly we can't allow freedom of speech to people who, if they ever get in power, will *destroy* free speech.

What about the right of peaceful assembly?

Not for people who are plotting and conspiring to do away with Americanism.

And so we are caught in the trap of which we were so carefully warned by the Founding Fathers and against which they tried so hard to protect us. We begin to doubt our premises. We begin to abandon our tradition of freedom and take on the very practices we have dedicated ourselves to oppose. We begin, in ugly, significant ways to resemble the governments we regard as destructive of the rights of man we once thought self-evident.

The memory of our great men comes under attack by little men. Tom Paine was an infidel who died in disgrace. Thomas Jefferson was a faker who prattled of the equality of men while he owned slaves. Justice Holmes was an agnostic and skeptic whose amoral realism is indistinguishable from Hitler's and destructive of the spiritual values of Christian ethics.

For those who have lost faith in democracy, this is perfectly logical. As Max Lerner has said, "in order to destroy the democratic idea you have to destroy democracy's dead heroes even more than its living champions." But the living champions do not escape and those whose democracy is only skin-deep are filled with terror at the unscrupulous brutality of the attacks on their hardier countrymen.

### ***A Nation of Conformists?***

We are becoming a nation of frightened people.

We are becoming a nation of conformists.

We tolerate suppressive legislation and that faint, feeble murmur you hear is the only protest.

We witness gross violations of academic freedom. Only

a handful of professors cry out against them.

We see reputations of decent men blasted and their characters assassinated but no effective voice is raised in defiance.

Something has gone out of us because we are a scared people.

Where is the bounce our democracy once had? Its vigor? Its virility?

Can it be true, as has been charged, that we *are* growing decadent?

Democracy is meant only for a strong and fearless people. It is not for the timid. If we are to retain the blessings of freedom, we have got to live up to them. Our liberty will atrophy if we do not exercise it.

Above all we must stop fooling ourselves. Let us stop trying to square the circle. It is a rational argument that times have so changed since 1776 and 1789 and the world has become such a tottering mess that we can no longer afford the luxuries of democracy. Individual freedom is obsolete. Freedom of speech, while possible after our own revolution, is no longer possible after *theirs*. Of course, we still shoot firecrackers on the Fourth of July and make lyrical speeches about the Constitution. But the Constitution doesn't mean what it says anymore. It means what world events make it mean. In other words, frankly, we have to modify our tradition of freedom to conform to the dangers of the Twentieth Century. We have to abandon the old Americanism in favor of Senator McCarthy's and Chairman Wood's vision. The old truths are not self-evident any more. We must recognize the wave of the future when we see it.

This, I say, is at least a rational argument. It has the virtue of letting us know what we are doing. But it is an argument which I won't buy because I don't believe it is sound either in fact or in theory. The Rights of Man seem to me to be just as self-evident today as they did in 1776. In fact, more so, in the light of what we have been able to do here since. Freedom of Speech still appeals to me as assuring the only truth on which the wishes of men can safely be carried out.

I believe the Supreme Court was right when, two years ago, it reversed the conviction of the fascist priest, Terminiello, for the evil ideas he advocated. But, by the same token, I do not believe the 11 Communist leaders should have been punished for the ideas which they advocate because I think their ideas are demonstrably wrong and never could become a clear and present danger to this nation. Let them stand unmolested, as Jefferson said, "as a monument to the safety with which error can be tolerated when reason is left free to combat it."

### ***Americanism Is Still Revolutionary***

The logic of this view seems to me inescapable. If these men are to go to jail for the ideas they advocated or *agreed* to advocate, then the ideas themselves should not be disseminated in any form. But the ideas are contained in

thousands of books in libraries from one end of the country to the other. If the 11 convicted communist leaders are a clear and present danger to the nation because of what they advocated, then surely the far more forceful presentation of the same ideas by the greatest communist leaders of them all is, much more so. We are, then, in immediate and grave danger until we eliminate the ideas by burning the books. If we are to save ourselves by suppression, we cannot afford to do it half-heartedly and ineffectively.

But when we start ransacking our college, university, public and private libraries to start bonfires, we *will* be on a one-way street—and it leads directly to fascism. The concentration camps will not be far away.

There must be many millions of people who are unwilling to exchange the old Americanism for what is offered as the new. The truth is that it is the *old* Americanism that is *new* in the world. It is still revolutionary. It is the contemporary brand that is old. Fear, conformity, suppression are as old as governments themselves and they have always destroyed the governments themselves and they have always destroyed the governments which relied on them. The Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights still reflect the vision of a society which, although imperfectly obtainable, still represents the one best hope of man.

Our generation has not advanced our country very far toward that goal. At times we are puzzled and confused, both by the demagoguery of charlatans and by our own obtuseness. We fall for a vile and phony thing which calls itself "Americanism." From time to time, we seem to be slipping. One of those times is *now*.

But I cannot believe that this blindness will not pass. It is certain to go if the American people hang on to their traditional right of protest and exercise it courageously, whether always wisely or not.

There are not many bright spots but there are a few.

A courageous columnist and a fearless editor refuse to compromise, whether circulation increases or decreases.

A great university confers an honorary degree on a teacher who would not sign a loyalty oath, with a citation for his fight for freedom of the mind.

A newspaper with a long and honorable past lives up fully to its tradition in the face of a Supreme Court decision.

And there are still dissenters on that court.

Amidst all the angry currents that surge up and down this land, there is still defiance and dissent.

That is the value of this meeting tonight. It is a gesture, to be sure, but it is a genuine protest against the abandonment of the first principle of our political faith. If this spirit is kept alive and healthy, we can join Justice Hugo Black when he said:

"Public opinion being what it is now, few will protest the conviction of these Communist petitioners. There is hope, however, that in calmer times, when present pressures, passions and fears subside, this or some later Court will restore the First Amendment liberties to the high preferred place where they belong in a free society."

# TERROR IN CICERO

By Carl Hirsch

**Negro-haters run riot in Cicero when a Negro rents an apartment there. An account of what happened and why it happened. Is this a "prelude to pogroms?"**

**F**OR a town of 65,000, Cicero, Illinois, has had its full share of notoriety. Al Capone once owned a hotel on the main drag. From that headquarters, his general staff directed the building of an empire of organized crime, based on systematic violence and political corruption.

By mid-July 1951, Cicero was again in the news. It was the scene of racist violence unparalleled in the North in the post-war years. It brought about martial law in the Chicago area for the first time since the "race" riot of 1919.

The facts in the Cicero case are disturbingly familiar. They are compounded of profit-greed and bigotry, of the high strategy of disunity and the momentary fascization of people who fail to realize that they are themselves the natural victims of fascism.

The Cicero case is part of a chain of mob violence in the Chicago area. Within months after the close of World War II, the first links in that chain were already being forged. Airport Homes, Fernwood, Park Gardens, Park Manor, Peoria Street, Emerald Avenue, Oak Park: these are names representing battles against fascism in Chicago. They cannot even be recorded as battles won or lost because there were elements of both in every case. These battles stemmed from one stubborn and dominant fact. That fact is the Negro ghetto of Chicago. Here more than a quarter of a million people live, many subjected to foul and dangerous housing conditions unequalled anywhere in America.

## *Escape from the "Kitchenette"*

The ghetto is characterized by the "kitchenette"—the subdivided cubbyhole, a family cubicle commanding an outrageous rent. Add together the rent from thousands upon thousands of thousands of these "kitchenettes" and you will understand that Chicago's South Side is a realtors' gold mine. It brings the largest return per dollar invested and per dollar expended in maintenance. From this, you will understand why, for the most part, the rest of Chicago and suburbs are restricted against Negroes. You will under-

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stand that this ghetto is in fact a prison, palisaded by discrimination. And you will understand the nature of the violence which is unleashed against the Negro family who "escaped" from this ghetto into a new community.

The family of Harvey E. Clark, Jr., attempted just such an "escape" in June of this year. Clark is a 29-year old Negro war veteran who drives a Chicago bus out to suburban Cicero. In Cicero the Clarks found an apartment to rent. And on June 8, they brought some of their furniture. Then the storm broke. Cicero police chief Ervin Konovski appeared on the scene with murder in his heart. He began by punching and kicking Clark, telling him to get out of town before he gets a bullet through his head. "We're not going to have any n...s living in Cicero," Konovski told him.

Clark's first recourse was to the law. He secured an injunction from Federal Judge John P. Barnes which appeared to be full protection. Judge Barnes even added his own words of warning to the Cicero police: "Exercise the same diligence to get this family into the apartment as you are now exercising to get them out."

By the time the Clarks reappeared in Cicero on Tuesday, July 10, a month of organization and incitement had gone into the preparation of the mob violence which was to follow. For four days, the mob grew in size around the Clark apartment. On the mounting flames of race hatred was thrown the gasoline of hysteria. In the key spots were the trained instigators, the members of the White Circle League, Chicago's version of the Ku Klux Klan. By Thursday, the mobsters were running wild. The Cicero police were present, but acting like good-natured ushers, maneuvering the crowd a bit but never disturbing it, seeing the violence but never stopping it, giving way willingly to the mob rule and adding a little quiet encouragement of their own.

## *Night of Terror*

A Chicago *Sun-Times* reporter, David Anderson, wrote this version of that night of terror: "The mob feels strong. It taunts the police. 'Go 'on back home, ya bums.' A businessman who later refused to give his name to reporters ('I hire Negroes in my business'), leads a flying wedge of youths into the building doorway. The police feebly try to block them, then give way. The hooligans surge in, shouting, yelling, setting off strings of firecrackers. The chortling mob, stamping on the grass, cheers them on.



Bricks fly, windows crash. One policeman gets conked on the head and other policemen take him to the hospital. Bonfires light up. Police searchlights shine on the building. A thin drizzling rain begins to fall but nobody notices it.

"Upstairs on the third floor—where the Clarks have moved some of their furniture and clothing into their flat—the mob's storm troopers, who by day are high school athletes, students, shipping clerks, begin chopping with clubs and slashing with knives. The broken furniture begins sailing out of the windows. Now and then a picture ripped from the walls hurtles down. The red drapes, slashed and in tatters, float out and snag in tree branches. One man, smirking, comes out of the front door with a rolled parchment. Chortling and laughing, he calls to some friends and unrolls it. It's the Clarks' marriage certificate. . . ."

It was that kind of thing. Not war—because there was no opposition. Certainly, there wasn't a Negro within miles while the anti-Negro riot mounted in fury and destructiveness for four hideous nights. By the time the militia arrived, the damage had been done.

It stood for the moment as the most substantial victory for fascism in this area since the end of our war against fascism. For here in Cicero, the mob seemed to have scored the kind of triumph that had been impossible elsewhere in the Chicago area.

They bombed and fired the home of world-famed Dr. Percy Julian, creator of a new method of producing life-giving cortisone, in nearby Oak Park. But Dr. Julian now lives there with a large part of the community rallied to his defense. They stoned and mobbed the home of Roscoe Johnson in Park Manor, but the Johnson family stood firm and never moved from that house. They tried to turn several veterans' housing projects lily-white, but they never succeeded.

### *Why in Cicero?*

But in Cicero, there were special elements which favored the mob and those behind them. Cicero has three parts which stratify the town. First is the fact that this is an industrial town—second only to Chicago in this state for the size, importance and diversity of its industry. Steel fabricating plants, forge shops, foundries, electrical appliance shops, machine shops of many types—this is Cicero's industry.

Second, it is a lily-white residential town, its entire west end made up of pleasant, tree-shaded streets, brick bungalows sitting on small but well-kept lawns. These are \$15,000 homes, owned in the main by workers, most of them first and second generation Czechs, Lithuanians, Poles.

Third, Cicero is still gangland's base. The successors to Capone are stationed on the east side of town, directing vast gambling, slot machine, prostitution, narcotics operations throughout the suburban area and metropolitan Chicago.

This last factor is important because the crime syndicate completely controls the politics of Cicero, its township officials, its police. From time to time, there have been abortive moves by the citizenry to clean up the town.

Since the beginning of World War II, several thousand Negroes have worked in Cicero plants, hired under the existing labor shortage and the FEPC. At the time, Negroes who worked overtime or late shifts had to carry a pass to explain their being in town after dark. Since then, many plants have forced Negroes out completely. Other employers would give their eye-teeth for a chance to smash the unity of Negro and white which has developed in their plants, the basis for strong unionization.

A central factor in the whole Cicero situation is the fanatical anti-unionism of Cicero employers. The two largest plants in town—Western Electric and GE Hotpoint—have thinly-disguised company unions. Many are out-and-out open shops.



Harvey E. Clark, Jr., and his wife, Jonetta, whose apartment in Cicero was wrecked by rioters. The Clarks are determined to move in as soon as the apartment is repaired.

## An Anti-Union Town

Since World War II, there has been repeated anti-union violence. The United Electrical Workers Union members at Elkay Mfg. Co. were assaulted by police and lead-piped by flying goon squads made up of local gangsters. No strike-breaker was even arrested, but 26 Negro and white UE members were arrested on frameup charges, narrowly escaping long prison sentences.

At the Sunbeam Corp., the company fired active UE members, broke off contract relations with the UE, taking the position that not even the National Labor Relations Board could force them to bargain with a "left wing" union. However, so-called "right wing" unions suffered as well under the post-war assault of Cicero employers, which was aimed at re-establishing industrial Cicero to its pre-war status as mainly a non-union, Jimcrow town.

To the backdrop of anti-Negro terror in Cicero add the existence of the White Circle League, which held mass meetings in the town as early as two years before the outbreak against the Clark family. This outfit provides the shock troops of fascism and it incites violence. It operates precisely like the KKK in the South and the Brown Shirts in Hitler Germany.

It was the inflammatory White Circle League leaflet which provided the slogan, "Go, go, go! Keep Cicero white!" It was this same chant that was picked up by the mob as its savagery mounted. The *White Circle News* sounded the cry: "We will fight to keep our neighborhoods white and we'll die if necessary..." This fascist organ was printed in the shop owned by *The Cicero Life*, the town's leading newspaper. It was *The Cicero Life*, owned by Republican Congressman Richard W. Hoffman, a Cicero political hack, which provided the spark in racist editorials and "letters to the editor" two days before hell broke loose in the town.

But what was it that made the Cicero residential community fertile for these seeds of hatred and violence? What was it that warped the minds of these townspeople, many of whom came to this country bearing the whip scars of tyranny and prejudice?

They allowed themselves to be convinced that their entire life's savings, their security, their homes were at stake in the movement of a Negro family into the town. They swallowed whole hog the myth that "property values" would decline as soon as the Clark family remained in the town



The Cicero anti-Negro rioters seem to enjoy vandalism.

overnight. It was a super-patriotic fervor, the fanatical conviction that they were acting in defense of Home and Family, which explains the blind fury of the Cicero mob. And it all became mixed in their minds with the fact that America is supposedly fighting a "patriotic" war against colored peoples abroad, that somehow "communism" was an issue here, that violence against the Negro is truly "the American way of life," that the basic rights of all Americans have become a dead letter.

## Sober Aftermath

In the soberness of the aftermath, many Cicero people experience a revulsion over what they had seen and even taken part in. Many suddenly came to their senses. Others who knew better at the time but were frightened by the passion of the mob began to speak out. Ministers and civic leaders, who found they couldn't be "impartial" in the face of this trampling of the holy writ and of the American heritage of freedom, were moved to a condemnation of the violence. A Czech paper headed its editorial with the pointed question, "From Cicero to Lidice?"

The Jewish community joined in the protest and in the activity which, it is hoped, will restore the Clark family to Cicero to live in peace. The Chicago B'nai B'rith Council called upon all of its lodges to join in a program of action to end the temporary victory of mob violence in Cicero. The Chicago *Sentinel*, Jewish weekly, ran a full page editorial headed "Prelude to Pogroms?" "American Jewry had better pause long enough in its rather dubious pursuit of a multitude of meaningless activities to reflect upon the significance of this critical state of affairs," was its solemn warning. "This time it was a Negro veteran seeking a place to live. Next time, it may well be a Jewish businessman opening a store in a non-Jewish neighborhood."

A large part of the Jewish population here has learned that racist rioting is directed against them as well as the whole fabric of American freedom. The Peoria Street riot of November 1949 became anti-Semitic as well as anti-Negro, as one indelible example. That disgraceful mob attack put the Jews on the alert against the misguided "hush-hush" policy, which has persisted among some leading Jewish organizations.

The battle of Cicero is in flux—and may continue so for months to come. But as there is no end to the courage of the Negro people in their fight for freedom, there is also no let-up in the determination of their white allies that fascism must not long remain in possession of any newly-won ground. Even in this year 1951.

In the words of the Chicago edition of the *Pittsburgh Courier*: "It would be a tragedy for the Clarks to bow and humble themselves to suit the fascist desires of thugs and hoodlums who defy the rights of man and defame the mandates of the Almighty. The case of the Clarks involves more than their personal prerogatives. The rights and privileges of all American citizens are interlocked."



# WHAT NEXT IN IRAN?

By Hugh Deane

**The oppressed, poverty-stricken people of Iran decide to expel the British oil magnates and take over their own oil riches. They will not be stopped.**

ON the surface the question in Iran is whether or not W. Averell Harriman, American financier-diplomat, can bring about an agreement between Britain and the right-wing nationalist cabinet of Dr. Mossadegh. Behind the apparent question are real questions: What is the balance of political power in Iran? Is there a danger of war and, if so, wherein does it lie?

The entire world will be vitally affected by the answers. What has taken place in Iran, a country thrice the size of France bordering on Arabia, Iraq and Turkey, is one chapter of the new book being written in the Middle East. Strategically, as well as geologically, moreover, the Middle East is an oil field; if the fire of war touches off one oil well, there is the danger that the fire will engulf the whole world.

## **Background of Crisis**

The landlords, commercial entrepreneurs, courtiers and generals who dominated Iranian politics put Mossadegh's numerically small National Front in office. Under pressure from the Iranian people they nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company not primarily to shake down the British but to try to head off a revolutionary challenge to their power from the resurgent Communist-led Tudeh (Masses) Party.

This March, half-defeatist and half-desperate, ever more acutely aware of economic and social disintegration, of problems getting out of control, of the broadening of the movement for peace and reform, of the steady growth of the Tudeh Party, the rulers of Iran turned to oil as a means of propitiation and concession. The pressure of the people for nationalization was too great to be resisted.

Over a year ago, the Moscow magazine *New Times* wrote that, in part because of the influx of American manufactures into Iran: "Dozens of factories in Isfahan, Yezd, Bushire, Tabriz and other places have shut down or are about to do so. Hundreds of small and medium-sized handicraft establishments have been ruined or are on the verge of bankruptcy, thousands of Iranian workers, small artisans and clerks are without jobs." On April 2, 1950, C. L. Sulzberger reported to the *New York Times* that

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this Soviet description was "accurate." He himself described the state of Iran as "creeping chaos." Sulzberger quoted a veteran observer: "For the first time in almost 30 years I find top politicians talking in a defeatist way—in terms of revolution. . . . Nobody has appeared clever enough to hold the country together. . . ."

In February the official newspaper *Ettelaat* declared that "the workers are overburdened with all kinds of duties and taxes, without counting what is stolen from their daily wages by means of indirect taxes," and that, "If we take no heed of the conditions of our fellow citizens who create wealth and live in poverty, their discontent will take on more and more dangerous forms, finally becoming uncontrollable," the government organ warned.

## **Pressure from Iranian Masses**

Thus resentment over the long-pending oil issue had sharpened, the lesson of Korea had expanded the peace movement, and the Tudeh Party, campaigning on the issues of oil and peace, had continued to grow.

"Beneath events of the last weeks and months lies one solid fact, that of the deep popular revulsion against the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, symbol of foreign oppression, intrigue and plunder," Michael Clark reported to the *New York Times* on June 3.

The conservative Paris newspaper *Le Monde* reported in May that, "The Stockholm Appeal had a substantial resonance in Iran. The president of the chamber, the highest magistrates, the dignitaries of Islam and thousands upon thousands of persons in all walks of life signed it. The appeal for a big five pact had by the end of April obtained 200,000 signatures. . . ." By June 900,000 had signed the pact appeal.

The majority of correspondents in Teheran agreed that the Tudeh Party had become the largest and best-organized in Iran. *Le Monde* reported: "Toughened, purged and idealized by illegality, the Tudeh is today a real force; its newspapers hardly conceal their position; its mass meetings have on many occasions proven their discipline and power."

By March 7, when Prime Minister Ali Razmara, originally the choice of the American embassy, hailed as a "strong man" and the "last hope," was assassinated, the ruling Iranians had already begun to propitiate the left. Between November and January they signed a trade treaty with the Soviet Union, shut up the Voice of America, allowed a handful of Tudeh leaders to escape from prison



and ousted the 11 American engineering and management firms working on a seven-year plan designed to provide the underpinnings of militarization. The final offering, nationalization of oil, was but hastened by the gunpowder which killed Razmara.

But the act of nationalization, voted unanimously by the parliamentary organ of Iran's thousand families, gave new impetus to events of the sort it was designed to preclude. In April the oil workers struck, shutting down the refinery at Abadan for the first time. Great demonstrations filled the streets of the cities. Each speech and promise made retreat more difficult. "The popular movement in favor of nationalizing oil and ending the British concession has grown in size and scope far beyond the intentions and plans of the conservative National Front leaders who started it, and they now feel rather as though they had a bull by the tail," Edmund Stevens reported.

### ***What Harriman Plans***

What has happened so far in Iran is the early phase of a revolutionary crisis in the making. Now Prime Minister Mossadegh faces a hard choice and whatever his choice is, it will bring the crisis nearer its zenith.

On the one hand, Harriman has made him realize that neither the United States, which he had hoped to play off against Britain, nor the seven great oil corporations which make up the world oil cartel will tolerate a real nationalization of Iranian oil—however sharp may be their internal rivalries.

Harriman has brought home the "facts of life" to Mossadegh, Michael Clark reported to the *New York Times* August 5. Harriman himself made the point that "Iran could not be allowed to come between Britain and the United States," and Walter Levy, the veteran American oil man who accompanied Harriman, "was able to dispel many illusions about the world oil business."

Confronted with a stoppage of oil production, an emptying treasury, the prospect of further economic dislocation and unrelenting United States-British pressure, Mossadegh is under great temptation to take what Harriman and the British will give him: a larger share of the profits and the right to set up a nominal company behind which the British (perhaps with open or concealed United States participation as the price of mediation) will continue to operate and control the black gold of the oil fields.

Already, in the exchange of notes between Britain and Iran preliminary to the reopening of negotiations, Mossadegh has agreed to negotiate outside the relatively rigid framework of the April 28 nationalization law.

But on the other hand, the aging spokesman of the nationalists must consider the strength of the domestic opposition. He knows that the great numbers of people under the influence of the Tudeh Party will never ratify the sort of agreement which would be acceptable to Harriman, and he has already had evidence that at least a portion of his nationalist followers are fearful and suspicious.

He must ask himself what the balance of political power is now and what it is likely to be following announcement of a Harriman-approved agreement. He must ask if there are enough Sherman tanks on hand to preserve the status quo; he must ask if revolution and nationalism are likely to merge.

### ***The People Will Decide Outcome***

Whether the crisis ends in another counter-revolutionary triumph or in the final destruction of the regime which has kept Iran a rich country inhabited by an impoverished, cramped people, it has made clear that United States policy-makers regard the issue as decisive, that they may go to war to ensure a victory for counter-revolution. It has provided a forewarning of how a war could be touched off—a war which would be described as a defensive war against Soviet imperialism—without the movement of a single Soviet soldier.

The Soviet Union has neither intervened in the Iranian affair nor given any indication that it intends to do so. (By virtue of the Irano-Soviet treaty of 1921, it could send troops into northern Iran in the event of intervention by other foreign powers.) The Soviet Union's influence on Iranians is a consequence of the fact that it exists—that the people of Iran are able to contrast their status with progress made since 1917 by kindred peoples across the 1,000-mile Irano-Soviet border. And "there is no evidence to support the theory that the Tudeh Party is abundantly subsidized by the Soviet Embassy," Michael Clark reported in the *New York Times* of June 10. "... The party as a whole is extremely poor. Its wealth—and this is of utmost importance in a country like Iran—lies essentially in the faith, devotion, and discipline of its members."

Yet the failure of Moscow to intervene in Iran did not elicit statements of satisfaction from the statesmen of Washington and London. On the contrary, they pointed to Iran with alarm. "We believe that the situation in Iran is one of the greatest seriousness," Secretary of State Dean Acheson declared at the MacArthur hearings, "and might easily deteriorate into a situation out of which war could grow."

Wherein lay the danger of war? "Aggression from within in the form of a possible Communist uprising in Iran has Britain worried," the *New York Times* reported from London on March 2. "The possibility has been discussed privately for some time. So has the question of what the West should do if there is no direct evidence of Soviet intervention."

Iran is the world crisis writ small but writ clear. In the great arc from Korea through southern Asia to Finland, in the Middle East, in Africa, in Latin America, there are many Irans—communities of people who are trying to get control of their history and in whose path stands not only the failing power of their rulers but the power of United States reaction. The strength developed by the common people will determine the outcome.

# THE FURRIERS WIN A STRIKE

By George Kleinman

**The militant, progressive furriers' union carries on its tradition and wins a strike. Their unity and working class leadership defeat the bosses and anti-union press.**

ONCE again the Furriers Joint Council, known throughout the country as one of America's most progressive unions, has emerged victorious in a strike against the New York fur manufacturers' association.

This union of 14,000 is predominantly Jewish. Hence this strike is of special significance not only to the labor movement but also to Jewish trade unionists, for it marks a continuation of the fighting traditions of the Jewish sector of the American labor movement.

The strike began on June 25. After three weeks of militant strike—the shortest in the union's history—the union won a \$6 a week (17 cents an hour) wage increase for the fur workers. The floor workers (unskilled) won a reduction in the work week from 40 to 37½ hours and a \$3 increase on their weekly pay. In addition, other provisions of the collective agreement were improved and all previous gains of the workers were retained.

Substantial as these gains are in themselves, they take on added significance because economic conditions in the

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industry and the repressive atmosphere in the country made victory harder to achieve.

The fur trade, like almost all soft-goods and consumer industries, was hit this year by a sharp slump reminiscent of depression days. The illusions spread by big business that the Korean war and armaments would bring "prosperity" to labor were quickly shattered for millions of workers. With the sharp rise in the cost of living and taxes and the government's wage freeze, millions of American families found they couldn't afford many bare necessities of life, let alone fur coats or even necessary low-priced winter garments. The earnings of working families today are rapidly being exhausted by the increased cost of bread, milk, meat, vegetables, clothing and every basic need of the household.

In contrast to the militant, advancing policies of the fur union, the unions of other hard-hit industries, particularly in the needle trades, are in retreat. The right wing leadership of the needle trades unions, putting employers' profits first, have publicly renounced even the intention of asking for wage increases. But under the progressive leadership of the fur union the increase in the cost of living spurred the union to obtain a raise for the fur workers in spite of the fact that thousands of fur workers have been unemployed for many months this year.

The strike was marked by the militancy, discipline and democratic rank and file organization characteristic of past struggles of the fur workers. Mass picket lines ringed every



Some of the women strikers on the picket line in the last week of the strike. Some 500 women strikers participated in the picketing, singing and shouting slogans of their demands.



building in the fur market from the first day of the strike. Like a seasoned, disciplined army, the fur workers reported each day for active duty on the picket line and at the strike hall. Hundreds of rank and file committeemen staffed the hall committees, building committees, block committees, general picket committees, women's committees, night committees and many others. The Strike Committee itself, numbering about 100, was headed by Fur International President Ben Gold, who has led the struggles of the fur workers for the past quarter of a century.

The current war hysteria and political repression create difficulties for strikes by any union, but particularly unions with progressive leadership. The strikers are often charged with hampering "national defense" and the Truman administration itself has broken strikes under the excuse of the "national emergency." Militant union leaders are being hounded, persecuted, held for deportation and imprisoned under the Smith and McCarran acts and under Taft-Hartley. Scores of unionists have been grilled and cited for "contempt" by the Un-American Committee and other congressional bodies. Many have been held under prohibitive bail and even denied the right to counsel.

But the fur union was not intimidated by these anti-union threats. The fur union was determined to go ahead and to win the just demands of its members. Even the fact that Furriers Joint Council Manager Irving Potash was under a harsh prison sentence as one of the 11 leaders of the Communist Party and that another top union leader, Jack Schneider, is under deportation charges, did not daunt the Joint Council. For the fur workers were united, determined and convinced that only by striking could they defend and improve their conditions. So they struck—and won.

In the first week of the strike the fur workers gave their answer to the efforts of the enemies of the union to split their ranks. By an overwhelming vote the fur workers re-elected Potash, Schneider and Winogradsky to their top positions in the union.

In the second week, when Potash was wrested from them and hurried off to begin serving his prison sentence, the fur workers answered by grimly tightening their picket lines and stepping up every strike activity.

By their solidarity and union-consciousness, the strikers—Negro and white, men and women, youth and old-timers, workers of every race, creed, color and political belief—forced the employers to capitulate by the end of the third week.

### ***The Strike Is Won***

The extent of the fur workers' victory is measured not only by their new gains, but also by the fact that they succeeded in retaining their previous working standards, which the employers sought desperately to tear down. Most of the fur workers have a 35-hour week. Their wage rates—the highest of any industry—average well over \$100 a week. Many earn as high as \$140, \$150 and more. They have one and two weeks' paid vacation, 8 paid holidays and health

insurance and retirement plans all paid by the employers.

The employers demanded a change from the full pay to a percentage pay vacation plan and the elimination of the second week's vacation after 3 years of work under the contract. In the right-wing-led needle trades, where percentage vacation systems are in effect, the workers get \$40 or \$50 or at most \$60 vacation pay after the deductions made by the union. But the fur workers, who won retention of their full weekly pay vacation system by this strike, get double, triple and even more, than needle workers—and without union deductions of any kind whatsoever. The furriers also defeated the bitter fight of the fur bosses to eliminate the second week vacation after three years of the agreement.

Another demand of the fur employers was the right to give out contracting, that is, to parcel out their work to "contractors," usually small sweatshops. Under such a setup it is virtually impossible to enforce working standards in the union shops. In addition, by hiring a new "contractor," the employer can actually discharge the whole shop of workers of his previous "contractor." Hence the contracting system destroys wage and job security. In the needle trade unions under right wing leadership, however, contracting is not only permitted, it is legalized by the agreement. But the fur workers defeated this demand of the employers and retained the complete outlawing of contracting with fines for employers who violate this provision.

The fur workers also outlawed the piece work system of payment. In the other needle trades the piece work system is widely practiced. This leads to continuous under-cutting of wages by both "re-pricing" of rates and terrific speed-up. But the fur manufacturing workers' agreement bars piece work altogether. All wage rates are by the week. As a result, hourly earnings of fur workers have gone steadily higher, according to official government figures, in contrast to the much lower and even declining rates in other needle trades since the war's end.

Although lasting only three weeks, the strike followed six months of arduous negotiations in which the union exerted every possible effort to secure a satisfactory settlement without a strike. The policy and strategy of the union prevented the employers from engaging in their usual tactics of lockout in February, when the old agreement expired. Instead of striking through months of slack period, the union waited for the busy season, holding out for months without any agreement. The workers, fully united and informed at every step of the course of the negotiations, understood that the bitter resistance of the fur bosses to their demands meant that nothing but a strike would bring the employers to terms.

The employers, on the other hand, were split wide open. The union struck only 650 Association shops employing about 7,000 workers. Several hundred independent shops, employing the rest of the workers, quickly settled on the union's basic demands and remained at work. Pressure of seasonal orders and competition from the independents



forced over 100 Association shops to settle independently with the union during the three weeks of strike. The unity and determination of the workers and the defection of many employers from the ranks of the Association forced the remainder to capitulate.

### **The Anti-Union "Forward"**

Thus a united and militant union defeated the employers, who have tried by every means to break the union. At a hearing of the Congressional Committee on Labor three years ago, which "investigated" the fur industry, the fur manufacturers implored the congressmen: "Why don't you make the Taft-Hartley law stronger? Why can't we have a right wing union like other needle trades?" The recent strike revealed very clearly both the reasons for their pleas and the defeat of their hopes.

The fur workers' victory, which has strengthened the union and cemented its ranks, brought consternation to a small clique of stoolpigeon elements within the union and the anti-labor press. Since the conclusion of the strike the Jewish daily *Forward* has led the wolfpack, venting its rage by printing vicious lies and slander against the leadership of the Furriers Joint Council. Consumed with hatred for everything decent and progressive, this paper has dredged up filth and lies, borrowed from stoolpigeons, to attack the progressive leadership of the workers. In its July 18 issue, for example, the *Forward* charged that the decision to strike was made not by the fur workers but by the Communist Party. This is the usual canard of union wreckers who choose both to ignore and insult the mass meetings of the fur workers, local meetings, shop chairman meetings and Joint Council meetings, all of which authorized the strike.

Another lie in the *Forward's* tirades against the furriers' union is that the fur workers have "inferior conditions" to workers in other needle trades, that is, to workers under right wing leadership. How far can such fabrications go? According to the latest government statistics on New York

needle trades workers (April 1951), the hourly earnings of textile workers in this area were \$1.40; men's clothing, \$1.62; dress trade, \$1.86; women's coat and suit trade, \$2.13; the highest for any other needle trade was in millinery, \$1.91. But for the fur workers the average hourly earnings in April were \$3.29. Does the *Forward* write on the Hitler theory that the bigger the lie, the more people will believe it?

Despite the *Forward's* frantic appeals in support of the handful of stoolpigeons and bosses' stooges, the fur workers remain solid as a rock. The masses of the fur workers respect and love their leaders with the same intensity that they despise the union-wreckers and their anti-labor press allies.

Moreover, fur workers have long memories. They recall that in every step of their fight to win their present wages and working conditions, the *Forward* helped the fur bosses against the union. They know only too well that those right wing leaders, particularly in the needle trades, who collaborate with the employers against the workers and put the profits of the bosses ahead of the interests of workers, have been hailed by the *Forward* and other anti-labor newspapers as "labor statesmen." To be attacked by such enemies of labor is a mark of honor for the Joint Council leaders, the workers say. Their unflinching support of the leadership in every crucial struggle is proof that these are more than words.

The stoolpigeons' cry that the strike was "lost" is a mark of their frustration. The echoes of this cry of "lost strike" in the *Forward* is further proof that the fur bosses and their stoolpigeon allies have suffered a telling defeat and that the fur workers have won a substantial victory.

The fur workers, united in a powerful, democratic and militant union under consistent, progressive leadership, have again set an example for the labor movement. In a time of economic depression in the industry and reactionary political hysteria, they not only held on solidly to the gains achieved through years of bitter struggles, but actually moved forward with wage increases, shorter hours for floor workers and an improved agreement.



International President Ben Gold addresses a fur workers' meeting. Seated at table, left to right, are Joint Council Assistant Manager Jack Schneider, Manager Irving Potash and Assistant Manager Joseph Winogradsky.

# POLAND'S JEWISH THEATER

By Paul Mann

**An American theater worker gives his first-hand experiences of the Jewish State Theater of Poland. He gets acquainted with a theater that belongs to the people.**

**A**FTER 18 years of work in the American theater as an actor, director and teacher, I felt a deep need to see at first hand the theaters of Europe and to acquaint myself with the culture, the people and the way of life that produces that theater. I wished to study not only theater of which I already knew something, like that of England and France, but also the Polish theater, with which I, like most American theater people, was completely unfamiliar. . . .

The General Directorate of the Polish theater welcomed me to Warsaw as a visiting American theater worker. They offered to do everything possible to help me in the six weeks of my visit to become acquainted, if only briefly, with Poland's theater—its actors, directors, playwrights, its theater schools and students, its stage and costume designers, its repertoire and the way of life that produced and supported this theater.

I wished to see these people as informally as possible, to speak with them privately, personally. All this was arranged for me. I saw every play that I wanted to see, spoke with everyone to whom I wished, went wherever I wanted whenever I wanted, and had all questions satisfactorily answered. I was assisted by a translator who, when we went to the theater, painstakingly would buzz the text of a play into my ear as it was going on and who served as intermediary in talks with the Polish theater people. . . .

Hundreds of questions were hurled at me to answer; questions about our cultural life in general but mainly about the American theater. "In which theater do you act—and do you also direct this theater?" It was almost impossible to make them understand that New York had not even one permanent professional theater. "Are American theaters subsidized?" "Are your theater people permanently employed?" "Are theater schools free and are

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students supported while they study?" "Our theater students now will have a four year course—what about yours?" "Is there a special school for film actors?" "What efforts are made to develop new playwrights—and are they supported while they study?"

## *A Lively People's Theater*

Recently there had been productions in Polish theaters of plays of Eugene O'Neill, Lillian Hellman, Arthur Miller, Clifford Odets, Tennessee Williams, Maxwell Anderson, Chodorov, of D'Usseau and Gow—and prior to my visit to Poland I had never seen or read the work of even one Polish playwright! The plays of Bernard Shaw were produced by almost every theater—three of Shaw's plays had had their world premieres in Poland! And the classics of every land—particularly Shakespeare—constantly in repertory! All this excitement about theater in a land where millions of people had been destroyed.

When Poland was liberated, the nazis had almost achieved their goal of the virtual destruction of all Polish art and culture. On a nation-wide scale the theater artists of Poland, deprived of many of their leading people—with most of their theaters destroyed—set about to develop a new national theater that would maintain their great traditions and also reflect the great social changes in Poland.

This tremendous activity concerned itself with every aspect of theater: schools for new actors, directors, playwrights, scenic and costume artists and technicians—the reconstruction of old theaters and the building of new ones to house newly developed theater companies and to accommodate the new audience who now flocked to a theater that they could afford for the first time (theater tickets prices range from approximately 20 cents to \$1.50 with 50 to 75 per cent discounts to students, trade union members and various organizations)—the production of new plays that would be of immediate concern to these new audiences, that would reflect their lives and experiences and vital productions of classic Polish plays and the classics and major plays of all lands.

In my experience the only somewhat similar period of creative excitement in the theater in America existed in the short-lived but promising days of The Federal Theater.

Judging by the 28 productions that I saw in Warsaw, Lodz, Krakow, Katowice, Wroclaw and Posnan, I can say that the new Polish theater has already achieved an extraordinarily high level of production, that, in acting, directing and in the interest and maturity of the plays presented,

clearly indicates promise of a theater of even greater vigor and healthy creative development.

### **Jewish Theater's "Three Friends"**

One of the major theaters of Poland with an extremely high level of artistic personnel is the Jewish State Theater, whose artistic director, Ida Kaminska, has been honored with Poland's highest award, the Order of the Banner of Labor. It was in Lodz that I first saw the work of this theater. The play was a Soviet comedy, Andrei Ouspensky's *Three Friends*, which had been translated into the Yiddish and directed by Yitzhok Grudberg. The story is a simple one about the romantic involvements of two aeronautical engineers, who are developing a new plane, with a woman flying ace and an actress. The story is presented in a very charming and humorous vein—aptly described in the program as a lyric comedy. The play has many weaknesses in construction. But if one is concerned with giving an honest estimate of the effect of this play on the audience, one cannot help but recognize its optimism and affirmation of human values.

The play has a very special quality. One loves it. One wishes that everyone could see it because one develops a very deep affection for the people involved in the action. There is a genuine feeling of deep and true friendship, of real comradeship in the relationships of the people, of respect for each other and of respect for the work that they do. Above all, we get a feeling of the value of the individual, of the dignity of work. We are very happy that everything is resolved satisfactorily.

Essentially the playwright gave us an opportunity to view the ethics and morality of a generation of young people who were raised under socialism and he has written with compassion and tenderness of people that he understands and loves. The production given the play by the Jewish State Theater fully captured this quality, this feeling of love. The actors played with warmth, humor and with unaffected simplicity. The directorial scheme of the gifted actor-director Grudberg brings out those elements in the play that deal with the importance and value of productive work that is a central reality of Polish life today.

The audience was enthusiastic in their reception. I went backstage, happy to be able to thank the artists for their work and excited by the opportunity to speak to the members of the Jewish State Theater. Later on at the Theater Workers Club, a charming, homey place where actors, directors, playwrights, all theater workers come together to eat and talk, they explained to me that this production was now playing its last few performances. Most of the audience had already seen it. There is no question of profits involved, since the Jewish State Theater, together with all of the theaters in Poland, is (like every cultural and educational institution) fully supported by the government. The plays just keep on being performed until everybody has seen them.



Scene from Jewish Theater's production of *Sender Blank*.

We stayed up late—"actors' hours"—talking. They asked questions about the American theater and specifically about the Jewish theater in America. And as I answered them, I was shocked by the contrast. Here in Poland, with approximately 75,000 Jews, there was a Jewish State Theater with two theater buildings, one in Lodz and one in Wroclaw, a full company of actors, technicians, scenic artists, directors; while in New York City, the largest Jewish community in the world, there is not one permanent professional Yiddish theater.

### **A Production of Sholem Aleichem**

My next view of the Jewish State Theater's work was in Wroclaw. There I saw a dramatization of Sholem Aleichem's *Sender Blank*, called *The Blank Family*. In *Sender Blank*, one of his earliest works, Sholem Aleichem with great humor and satire pictures the rising middle class of the 1880's.

The play was hilariously funny, the actors played with great enthusiasm. The sets and costumes were attractive and the audience which jammed the beautiful theater received the performance with tumultuous applause. Many notables of the city of Polish and Jewish cultural life were present, for this was a premiere performance. I later learned that Polish workers had great admiration for the work of the Jewish State Theater and many came to see its performances. This explained for me the reason for the Polish synopsis, which formed half of the program.

The performance over, a representative of the Jewish Culture Committee of the city invited the audience to remain if they wished to participate in a discussion of the production they had just seen. I had heard that this was a common procedure at premiere performances of all plays in the Polish theater.

### **The Audience as Critic**

There was a short interval to permit a brief rest for the performers; then the curtains parted, most of the actors came and sat in the audience. On stage were the actor



Meyer Melman, who had brilliantly played Sender Blank (Mr. Melman is also the manager of the Jewish State Theater), the director Jacob Rotbaum and the representatives of the Jewish Cultural Committee. The first speaker to ask for the floor was a trim young lady. After paying her sincere respects to the artistry of director-adaptor Rotbaum and the cast, she proceeded to deliver a scathing denunciation of the entire production. She seriously questioned whether the dramatization and the direction of the production were really representative of Sholem Aleichem's meaning and point of view. She felt that the leading character, Sender, had been presented in such a humorous and almost sympathetic manner that Sholem Aleichem's criticism of Sender's basically immoral social outlook was minimized and in fact almost completely forgotten. She was followed by a young woman who paid tribute to the work of the theater and the contribution of its artists but who felt compelled to agree in part with the opinions of the previous speaker. Speaker after speaker criticized and evaluated the play, many offering constructive suggestions. Finally, an old bearded man got up to speak.

"As you see," he said, "I am an old man and I must tell you that I have not gone often to the theater. First for religious reasons and then too, I must confess, because the theater always used to be very expensive in the old days and it was very easy therefore for me to resist temptation. But now I feel that I must change my old-fashioned ways because this theater is after all my responsibility, that is,

not mine solely, but it is our joint responsibility, and so I am concerned to see how things are going.

"I must say that I think that some of the speakers have been much too harsh with our director and with our actors and with the play. That, of course, is only my opinion, but that's how I feel. I am very grateful, I have enjoyed this play very much and so I would like to thank the artists for their work. In doing that, I don't want you to think that I am making too much of myself, for after all, who am I as an individual to say 'thank you'? But as a member of the audience as a whole I become, I think, quite important, and so I want to thank the artists very much. They have given us great pleasure; they have made us laugh and if they have made some mistakes in their work, our criticisms will help them. But mostly we must be sure to thank them. For to get pleasure, to have enjoyment from something—that belongs to us, that is part of our culture, to be able to laugh again after the terrible days we have gone through, that is a thing to be treasured."

### ***The Production Is Improved***

The director was a vital participant in the discussion. He said in answer to some of the criticism that he had tried in every way to be truthful to Sholem Aleichem's thinking. But, since Sholem Aleichem was a middle class writer, the director and adaptor could not help but reflect this view. One of the leading artists of the theater took sharp exception to this. "That is not so," he said. "Sholem Aleichem is not a middle class writer; he is a folk artist writing about the middle class." This view received strong support from the members of the audience.

I was in complete agreement with this criticism. I also felt that the inability of the adaptor-director to analyze correctly the meaning of the play, led him, in the staging of it, to indulge in empty, formalistic, so-called "theatrical" effects. And his error was further reflected in the disunity of style in the acting, in the *mise-en-scene* and even in the scenery.

The criticism went on, sharp, direct, honest. It was not only because some of the speakers said so, that one felt the life and welfare of this theater was the mutual concern of the audience and the artists. One felt it in the sincerity of the entire discussion and in the earnestness of every speaker. It was their concern to make this theater, which now belonged to them, the finest that it could possibly be.

Based on the audience criticism in Wroclaw, another major discussion of a similar nature took place when this same production had its premiere in Lodz. Such sharp criticism of the play was given and so many constructive suggestions for improvement offered, that basic changes were made in the production as a whole, which finally emerged as one of the most successful productions of the Jewish State Theater.

This to me was a remarkable example of the meaning of people's theater. How grateful the artists of the Jewish



Ida Kaminska in Sholem Aleichem's *Menshen* (People).

State Theater and at all the theaters in Poland must feel for assistance they receive and for the atmosphere of social responsibility in which they work. It cannot help but produce better artists and better art. . . .

### ***Theater for the People***

*Sender Blank* and *Three Friends* were the only productions of the Jewish State Theater that I was able to see. I especially regret that I had no opportunity to see Ida Kaminska act, or a play that she had directed. For I had heard high praise of her talents by all the Polish theater people, who recognize her as one of the country's greatest theater artists.

I was very happy to have the opportunity on a number of occasions to have conversations with Ida Kaminska and Meyer Melman about their theater. They are both very warm and outgoing people. They spoke with devotion of the work that had gone into building the theater. Though the Jewish State Theater had achieved its present position based on only one year's work, the artistic director and manager of the theater seemed far from satisfied. They were justifiably proud of their achievements but they spoke of constant efforts to improve work methods, to raise the artistic level, to find directorial methods that would more meaningfully reveal the content of a play, to find new plays, to develop new playwrights.

The Jewish State Theater plays not only to the audiences of Lodz and Wroclaw, but tours other large cities as well as some smaller communities. The artists of the theater also participate in special concerts because there are some very tiny communities that cannot be visited by the theater because they lack proper theater facilities. But individual artists of the theater or teams of artists come to perform one-acters, monologues and readings.

The Jewish State Theater of Poland is to me one of the most exciting manifestations of the wonderful theater of Poland. The very existence of this theater cannot help but have special meaning to all the people of the country in which there stands the memorial to the heroic fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto.

But the major significance of this theater lies in the fact that it is an integral, active part of the Polish theater of today, devoted to its job of serving the people of its land, of helping to build a new life for people who have been liberated from the tyranny of fascism and who look forward to a future of peace. . . .

### ***Unity Against Fascism***

A few days before I left Poland there was an important theater conference in Warsaw. I again met many of the theater people gathered there whom I came to know while visiting the theaters of Poland. One evening my wife and I went walking with Ida Kaminska and Meyer Melman, Jagusz Warminski and Dejmek of the wonderful Teatr Nowy of Lodz and a young actress of Warsaw's Teatr Polski. I was walking arm in arm with Ida Kaminska and we soon found ourselves close to Teatr Polski.



**Meyer Melman in the title role of *Sender Blank***

"It's strange," she said, "I haven't walked along this street since the occupation. My father's theater, the famous Kaminski Theater, is along this way. That is, it was. I know there's nothing there now, but I haven't gone to see. Tonight all of us together, let's go."

We walked slowly a few hundred yards past the newly reconstructed Teatr Polski and finally came to a gaping hole in the ground. All that remained to suggest the Kaminski Theater was part of a little twisted circular staircase well known to anyone who has ever been backstage. It twisted crazily out of the hole in the ground for a few feet and then broke off.

"Look," said Ida Kaminska quietly, "there's nothing there, nothing. Just as I expected." She pointed to a beautiful green tree that stood at one side. "You see that tree?" she said. "When my father built this theater she was very concerned about that tree. The theater was built in such a way that the windows of the actors' dressing rooms faced out to it. He felt that it was very important that actors should be able to look out on something green, alive and beautiful. The theater is gone, but the tree still stands."

No one spoke. We walked away slowly together, seven theater people, five from Poland, two from America, united in our hatred of fascism, united in our love for our art and for the people for whom it is meant—dedicated to a world of brotherhood and peace.



# THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS

**Tel Aviv**

**Before evaluating** briefly the results of the July 30th elections to the second Israeli Knesset (parliament), let us survey the number of seats to be held by each party in the new Knesset.

Once again Mapai (Labor Party) emerged as the largest single party with 45 seats; the General Zionists, party of the big industrialists and landowners, came second with 20 seats; Mapam, the left wing "socialist"-Zionist party, was third with 15 seats; and the Communist Party received five seats. The Hapoel Hamizrachi, religious workers, have eight; Herut ("Freedom"), extreme right wing party, eight; three Arab parties affiliated with Mapai, together won five; Progressives, a "liberal" party, four; Agudat Israel, ultra-Orthodox religious party, three; Agudat Israel workers, two; Mizrachi, religious party, two; Sephardim, two; and Yemenites, one.

**The most important** and striking fact that emerges from these results is that *all workers' parties together received an absolute majority of the votes*. This is undoubtedly an important achievement in view of the tremendous efforts made by the bourgeois parties to win the elections.

A second significant fact is the considerable increase in the vote of the Communist Party in the large cities. In the three large cities of Israel, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv-Jaffa and Haifa, the Communist Party doubled its vote over its vote in the municipal elections about one half-year earlier, in November 1950. This indicates a strengthening of the party in the most important urban and workers' centers in the country. Overall, the party increased its vote over that received in the first Knesset elections in January 1949 about 80 per cent, from 15,000 to 27,000 votes.

A third significant fact is that the General Zionist Party, which is the party of the big industrialists and land-

owners, which had recently assumed leadership of the bourgeoisie in Israel and was straining to win power, was unable to become the leading force in the state in spite of their expectations and confidence in the outcome. In the municipal elections of last November the General Zionists received 26 per cent of the votes, while they fell down to 16.4 per cent in the Knesset elections.

This loss was to some extent suffered in the large centers after the promises made by the General Zionists during the November electioneering failed to be fulfilled. Many of the disillusioned petty bourgeoisie in the cities therefore did not vote for the General Zionists in July. At the same time, one should not minimize the dangers from the strengthening of the General Zionists, who increased their representation in the Knesset from seven to 20.

**Another important** development was the drop in the percentage of the vote for Herut, from 11.3 in January 1949 to 6.6 in July, and from 14 seats to 8. This extreme right wing party had in the two and a half years between elections sufficiently exposed itself as being in the service of the big bourgeoisie. This led to Herut's isolation from certain parts of the population who had earlier allowed themselves to be persuaded that Herut was a patriotic and anti-imperialist force.

Although Mapai came out on top of the vote, that party did not receive the "stable majority" that it hoped for. Mapai carried on an intense anti-Soviet, anti-communist campaign, telling the voters that they must choose between "Israel and Moscow." But Mapai's success was in part owing to its use of public funds and power as the ruling party to intimidate the new immigrants. "Economic and social terror" were used against the new immigrants and the Arab inhabitants, both groups living under desperate conditions. This terror was unleashed many weeks before the elections and increased in intensity

as the day of the elections approached.

One must understand, however, that many thousands of workers who voted for Mapai, did so in the sincere and wholehearted belief that they were thereby strengthening those forces which could presumably be relied upon to oppose the big bourgeoisie and whose interest is in defending the workers.

**The left wing** Zionist party, Mapam, lost its place as the second largest party to the General Zionists and dropped its vote from 14.54 per cent and 19 seats in the first Knesset to 12.2 per cent and 15 seats in July. A certain number of Mapam votes were lost in the large cities because certain elements were dissatisfied with the ideological confusion and sharp internal conflict evidenced at the second national conference of Mapam a few months ago.

But the predominant fact emerging from the elections was the absolute majority won by the workers' parties. This opens up the possibility of forming an entirely different kind of coalition government from that which governed for the past two and a half years. The conditions exist for the setting up of a people's government under the leadership of the workers' parties. Such a government would be based on a program of peace and independence, defense of the democratic liberties of the people, humane treatment of the Arab minority and day-to-day defense of the interests of the workers and the people.

The Communist Party has called for the setting up of such a people's regime. In this coalition, propose the Communists, would be included the 45 Mapai deputies, 15 from Mapam, eight from the Hapoel Hamizrachi workers, five from the Arab Mapai parties and five Communist deputies. This would bring the government majority to 78 of the 120 deputies in the Knesset. The program of such a coalition is a profound need for Israel. The independence of the country is threatened; living standards are falling; the conditions under which the new immigrants live are most severe; and the peace of Israel and of the world is in danger. A people's coalition in Israel would do much to solve these problems.



# FIGHTING FRENCH JEWRY

## 1790: THEY WIN CITIZENS' RIGHTS

**The Jews of France greeted the French Revolution by winning their rights as citizens. This tradition is continued today as they fight in unity for peace.**

**I**N 1789 and 1790 the Jews of Paris played an active role in the fight to win their rights as citizens. Residence in Paris had been forbidden to the Jews in principle. Nevertheless, some Jews lived in Paris under the perpetual surveillance of the old regime but the situation in some provinces was better.

At the time of the convocation of the Estates General the Jews of Bordeaux and Bayonne were admitted to participation in it. The Jews of three eastern provinces, Alsace, Trois-Evêchés and Lorraine took part officially in one convocation and drafted their catalogue of grievances. The Jews of Paris had no voice in this meeting.

Nevertheless, Parisian Jews seized the initiative in August 1789 and organized a common action. The Bastille had fallen and the National Assembly was adopting a declaration of the rights of men and citizens which was to appear at the beginning of the Constitution. On August 26, the day on which the Assembly completed the vote on the declaration, the Jews "residing in Paris" presented it with a letter signed by a committee composed of the following: J. Goldschmidt, president; Abraham Lopès-Lagouna, vice president; M. Weill, J. Benjamin and J. Fernandès, electors; Mardoche, Levi, Lazard Jacob, Trenelle, Sr., Mardocheé Elie, Joseph Pereyra Brandon and Delcampo, Jr., deputies. The Jews of Paris then formed a political committee at the invitation of their fellow-citizens.

Their letter in form as well as in substance is a document of the first order: it belongs to history. Following are some excerpts:

"In restoring to man his basic dignity, in restoring to him the enjoyment of his rights, you did not intend to make any distinction between one man and another man; this status belongs to us as it does to all other members of society; the rights which belong to them belong to us equally.

"A single aim dominates and presses on our souls: the good of the country and the desire to consecrate all our strength to it. In this regard we do not yield to any inhabitant of France; we shall match the zeal, the courage and the patriotism of all citizens. . . .

"The past must be responsive to the future. We have never disturbed nor we do now disturb society by the peaceful practice of our religion. We shall in the future remain what we have been and what we are still. Depreciated by public opinion up to the present; harassed on all sides; persecuted for our name, for which people seem to wrong us; and finally, segregated from society and not participating in any of its advantages, although the common burdens have been imposed upon us—such has been our fate in this empire and such is that of all our brothers in the majority of countries of the world in which they are scattered. . . .

"We have suffered all this without grumbling; we have suffered without complaining; the kingdom has never been troubled by our protests; and this long resignation on our part is perhaps the most genuine proof, gentlemen, that we are finally worthy of other treatment. . . .

"We are thus convinced of the necessity for all the inhabitants of a great empire to be subjected to a uniform system of police and jurisprudence, to which we alike demand to be subjected like all Frenchmen, to the same police, to the same tribunals. Consequently we renounce the privilege that we have been accorded of having special leaders drawn from our own midst and named by the government, for the public good and our own advantage, which we have always subordinated to the general interest."

The proposal of the Jews of Paris seems to have decided the deputies of the Jews of Alsace and Lorraine, who had arrived in Paris several weeks earlier with their respective statements, to withdraw their own and to draw up a common statement and also to present it themselves in their letter to the Constituent Assembly on August 31.

When the question of the admission of the Jews to the rights of citizens had been debated at the end of December 1789 by the Constituent Assembly, the letter of the Jews of Paris was put forward by the defenders of the Jews. The discussion, which was extemporaneous, ended in an adjournment voted by a small majority. The Jews of Paris were not discouraged. They rallied their co-religionists of the East and with them signed the Petition of January 1790. They found an advocate, Gogard, to plead their cause and conceived the idea of interesting the Commune, that is, the municipal government of the capital, in their case. The Commune decided to proceed to a referendum. Four Parisian Jews, Mardocheé Polak, Trenelle, Goldschmidt and Lazard in February 1790 visited the districts of the capital to win them over to their cause.

This campaign was crowned with success. The Commune intervened officially before the Constituent Assembly in favor of the Jews, whose emancipation was voted a little later at the demand of Abbé Gregoire.

The history of the Jews of Paris during the Revolution

shows that they were faithful to the position which they had held since August 1780: by their "*Civisme*" [civic spirit], they took their place among the patriots, the revolutionaries, those who created "the year of 1789," which no Goebbels could "remove from history."

## 1951: THEY WORK FOR PEACE

**F**RENCH Jewry is responding to the crisis of 1951. Strong pleas for peace have come from the French Rabbinate, from Jewish intellectuals, artists and professionals and from landsmanshaft leaders of Paris in recent weeks.

At their annual General Assembly on June 18, the Rabbinate of France approved the following resolution:

"Considering the gravity of the international situation,

"Moved by the proposed rearmament of Germany, which is incompatible with the respect owing to the memory of millions of victims of nazi barbarism,

"Anguished by the frenetic course of rearmament,

"Convinced that the people desire peace and refusing to believe in the inevitability of war,

"We, the French Rabbinate, recall once more that the basis of peace cannot be laid beyond social justice and human dignity, a truth which was proclaimed in the Bible more than 3,000 years ago,

"And we affirm that war would be banished forever, if the appeal of the prophet Zachariah is heard:

"Fear ye not. These are the things that ye shall do: speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates: And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor; and love no false oath; for all these things are things that I hate, saith the Eternal.'" (*Zachariah*, VIII, 15-18.)

Early in July, 1951 noted Jewish intellectuals and artists in France joined in sponsoring a call to their Jewish colleagues for full support of the campaign for a pact of peace among the five great powers—the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, France and the People's Republic of China. "This would be," said the appeal, "the surest way to guarantee the will of the people for peace, for which the government is responsible to the people. Those governments—no matter which—that reject this appeal thereby reveal themselves as decided to avail themselves of war."

Among the signers were many distinguished writers and journalists, painters and composers, doctors and scientists, lawyers and engineers, teachers and cultural leaders—all of varying shades of opinions and convictions. They furnished an inspiring example of united action for a common goal and of meeting their responsibilities to their fellow-Jews and fellow-countrymen. It is expected that many more

Jewish intellectuals and professionals will sign the call.

A conference held in July of 50 prominent leaders of landsmanschaften in Paris passed a resolution approving the call for a pact of peace to be signed by the five great powers. They also pledged to obtain signatures to the appeal for a five power peace pact from the greatest number of Jews.

### *Left Poale Zion Condemns Smith Act*

**S**HARP condemnation of the Smith Act and the Supreme Court majority decision upholding the act and the conviction of the 11 Communist leaders was expressed by *Unzer Veg* (Our Path), organ of the left Poale Zion in America, through an article in the July issue by F. L. Goldman. This article is particularly significant because Mr. Goldman is known to be bitterly anti-communist.

Goldman supports the dissenting opinions of Supreme Court Justices Hugo Black and William O. Douglas. He warns that "Today the decision is applied against the Communists. Tomorrow this can happen to the social democrats and not long after that it can happen to the trade union movement." He expresses his concern that "It has become possible in our country, where we pretend to hold the freedom of speech and thought sacred and to present the Bill of Rights as the symbol of American democracy on every occasion, that our highest authorities, both executive and legislative, should as a result of social pressure, suffering, fears and hysteria be responsible for the destruction of these freedoms and of the Bill of Rights."

Goldman shows that not a single one of the convicted Communists was in fact accused of committing "a crime of such a nature as to present a clear and present danger to the peace and security of the state." He comes to the conclusion that true liberals and, more basically, the organized workers, dare not stand by silently at the result of the trial of the Communists. "Today," he says, "the Smith Act is applied to the Communists and tomorrow it is likely to be applied against the organized workers in general and, most important, their organized political sections."

# WHO ARE "DEPORTED" IN HUNGARY?

By I. Hirsh

**The answer to the current campaign of slander against the new Hungary. Who are being "deported" and why? The Jews of Hungary defend their people's state.**

Paris

FOR some weeks now the reactionary press of France and abroad have broken out in a revival of the agitation against the people's democracy of Hungary. This time the theme is not the "drugs" by means of which confessions were supposedly forced out of the anti-Semitic Cardinal Mindszenty; nor is it the "tortures" of priests who turned out to be simply spies and smugglers. This time the theme is the "deportations from Budapest." In one chorus the entire press is chanting, "They're deporting masses of people from Budapest and requisitioning their property. Why? Simply because they're not communists."

But what has really happened? The fact is that the "deportations" are actually the removal from the capital city of outspoken reactionary and fascist-collaborationist elements. The "poor deportees" for whom the reactionary press has set up a wail in the name of "freedom and democracy" are none other than six princes, 52 counts, 41 barons, 10 cabinet ministers and 12 under-secretaries of state of the Horthy regime, 85 generals and 423 high officers of the former fascist army, 83 big industrialists and 93 big merchants, 105 wealthy landowners and, finally, 67 leaders of the former fascist forces of Hungary. It should be added that these "poor souls" were for years the mainstay of the fascist regime in Hungary. Most of them were active collaborators of the nazis.

None of these journals has protested the imprisonment of communists in America because of their political beliefs. None of these journals has protested the fact that anti-Semites and racists in America can freely propagate hatred against Jews and Negroes. But to remove the fifth columnists from Budapest, who shamelessly encourage fascist hooligans and who would like to bring back the "old times" and to be once more in a position to oppress the people and agitate against Jews—for such journals, this is outrageous. To them this constitutes the "destruction of democracy" and a "serious measure against human dignity."

What is so sad in all this is that even Jewish journals

which pass themselves off as "national" and never stop talking about their "concern for Jewish interests" are taking part in this reactionary chorus and are quick to help the fascists and anti-Semites. They say that they are doing this because there are also Jews among the magnates and bankers removed from the capital city. But it is easy to imagine what "fine Jews" these bankers and magnates are. They are the same elements who cooperated with the hangmen in all fascist regimes and from whom the *Judenrat* and collaborators were recruited. But such facts bother the anti-Soviet journals very little. What interests them is that here is a good excuse for developing hysteria and heaping calumny on the Soviet Union and the new democracies for their "persecution of the Jews."

The Bundist *Shtimme* (Voice) of Paris has even discovered that "5,000 Jews in Budapest have been ordered to leave the city." Five thousand—even though, as we saw, the total number moved out of Budapest does not amount to one-fifth of the number. As for *Unzer Vort* (Our Word), it sheds crocodile tears over the removal of the Jewish friends of the hangman Horthy. Is it true, as the journal is forced to admit, that by far the greater number of those removed are non-Jews and that this is not an anti-Semitic action, but—but—and here *Unzer Vort* insinuates that Jews are being included "as victims of the anti-Semitic claws of the Hungarians." And they end up with the incredible cry, "Free our people!"

"Free our people!"—this is their response to a measure to cleanse Budapest of certain fascist elements who are enemies of the people, as if the several Jewish friends of the anti-Semites and fascists were the symbol of the Jewish people! And such defenders of Jewish reactionaries, of fascists or friends of fascists, dare to represent themselves as "concerned for the Jews" and to shed tears over the "sad fate of the Jews of Hungary." They overlook the fact that the Jewish masses in Hungary, the workers and intellectuals, just as in all the people's democracies, receive great help from the state and that for the first time in the history of the country, all vocations, all jobs up to the highest in the state, are open to Jews.

This agitation against Hungary is a familiar technique. It exploits the situation as a cloak behind which to besmirch the Hungarian people's democracy in the eyes of the Jewish people. Its purpose is the usual one for which the warmongers use the Jewish anti-Soviet press—to press the psychological preparation for an anti-Soviet war.



## A "DEFENDER" OF THE JEWS

*New York*

**A**N avalanche of slander against the Hungarian people's democracy has been let loose in the United States, both in the general press and in the Anglo-Jewish press. It is revealing to look into a letter, published in the *New York Times* on July 9 by Bela Fabian, born a Jew in Hungary. Fabian's letter viciously distorts the current resettlement of a small number of persons now taking place in Hungary into "deportation" and tries to insinuate that this is an anti-Semitic move.

Who is this Bela Fabian, who is so solicitous about the Jews? This is the same Bela Fabian who was repudiated by Hungarian American Jewry, for whom he professed to speak over two years ago. On January 16, 1949, Fabian

appeared at a mass meeting in a Roman Catholic church where he spoke in defense of Cardinal Mindszenty, the convicted Hungarian anti-Semite who had just been arrested on charges of treason. Fabian was then promptly discredited by the Hungarian Section of the World Jewish Congress, which said that his effort to make Mindszenty "appear as one who heroically tried to rescue the Jews of Hungary during the German occupation," was "misleading." "We Jews of Hungarian origin," said the statement, "note with shock that a Jewish person could be found who undertakes the role to mislead American public opinion. We also protest that Bela Fabian dares to make statements in our name here in our adopted country."

Fabian signed his letter to the *Times* as a member of the executive committee of the Hungarian National Council. Another member of this council is Tibor Eckhardt, who was formerly the leader of the anti-Semitic terrorist Hungarian organization called "Awakening Magyar."

### HUNGARIAN JEWS PROTEST SLANDERS

*The following statement was issued on July 15 by the leaders of the Jewish organizations of Hungary in reply to the current slanderous agitation against the Hungarian people's government.—Eds.*

**T**HE supreme organs of Hungarian Jewry deem it to be their conscientious duty to raise their voices in protest against these calumnies which the Western press and radio, and the inciters in back of them, have been disseminating concerning the attitude of our People's Democracy towards the Jews of Hungary.

In the name of both our Rabbinical Councils and the National Administrative Committee of Hungarian Jews, we solemnly declare that, pursuant to the complete religious liberty guaranteed in the Constitution of the Hungarian People's Democracy, there is nothing to hinder our brethren in the free exercise of their religion.

Throughout the territory of Hungary, our religious congregations and institutions are functioning without any disturbance. In no respect whatsoever does anyone apply denominational discrimination toward our fellow Jews. There is not a single person of the Jewish faith who, in the current process of resettlement, has been so transplanted on grounds of being an adherent of our religion.

Contrary to all rumors, we assert that all those resettled were affluent merchants, industrialists and landholders, as well as those who in unison with these had been participants in and beneficiaries of that Horthy regime whose relations to Hungarian Jewry are notorious the world over—a system to which those now being resettled gave their financial and moral support at the time.

We raise our voice in protest and reject the slanders spread by the Western Powers and their satellites. We shall not tolerate the attempt to make these resettlements appear to be anti-Jewish persecutions in order to undermine the prestige of our People's Democracy before our brethren abroad and to bring it into disrepute. We reject

most emphatically the machinations of these unsolicited defenders of our people. We despise their stupid attempts, the malicious falsehoods with which they would exploit us Hungarian Jews in a scheme to vilify our country.

Our message to them is: if they must find anti-Semitism or racial discrimination, they had better seek it at home. These calumniators are none other than the revivors of fascism, that fascism which plucked 600,000 victims from Hungarian Jewry. We want none of such protection. This protest and rejection apply equally to the attitude and activities of the representative of the State of Israel in Hungary.

In solemnly rejecting the baseless rumors in connection with Hungarian Jews, we declare that Hungarian Jewry stands loyally beside our People's Democracy which, after decades of oppression and persecution, assures us a free and peaceful life.

*In behalf of the National Administrative Committee of Hungarian Jews: LAJOS STOCKLER, president; DR. ISTVAN FELDES, LEO CSENGLEI and MENYHART SAIGEL, co-chairmen.*

*In behalf of the Rabbinical Council of Hungarian Israelites: DR. BENJAMIN SCHWARTZ, chief rabbi; DR. SANDER SCHREIBER, DR. ERNO ROTH, DR. LASZLO HALOO and DR. MOZES RILHTON.*

*In behalf of the Orthodox Rabbinate of Hungary: Chief Rabbi JOZSEF CZITROM, president; MARTON GRUNFELD, senior rabbi of Nyiregyhaza; BOSIAS GOLD, senior rabbi, Benyhad; NANDOR LEMBERGER, senior rabbi of Mako; BERNATH MOSKOVITS, senior rabbi of Paks.*

*In behalf of the Rabbinate of Budapest: DR. BERNAT FISCHER, chief rabbi, president.*

*In behalf of the Orthodox Rabbinate of Budapest: JOZSEF CZITROM, senior rabbi; SANDOR JUNGREIS, JENO SCHUKK SR.*

*In behalf of the Chevra Division of the Jewish Community of Budapest: MARCEL STEINER, president.*

# NEWS ON EAST EUROPEAN JEWS

## Poland

**P**OLISH Jews were recipients of prizes and various forms of recognition in July. At a meeting of the national council in Lodz on July 22 to celebrate the seventh anniversary of the rebirth of Poland, the chairman marked out for special recognition in the name of President Boleslav Beirut a number of workers who had distinguished themselves in productivity. Among these were the Jewish workers of Lodz, H. Vaksman and M. Urshtein of clothing cooperatives, J. Frishman of the leather cooperative and M. Morgenshtern of the "Levartofsky Cooperative." . . . The jury of the festival of contemporary Polish theater decided to award second prize for acting to Meyer Melman for his role in the new play of the Jewish State Theatre, *Dr. Anna Leshna*, by I. Kzhitzki, and for a role in S. Diamond's Jewish play, *On a Winter's Night*. Ida Kaminska, artistic director of the Jewish State Theatre, received third prize for her direction of *Dr. Anna Leshna*. . . . Among the recipients of the top national awards for 1951 in the arts were Julian Tuwim, outstanding poet, and Grzegorz Fitelberg, conductor of the radio symphony orchestra of Katowice.

The Jewish Social and Cultural Union has actively been working to eliminate illiteracy among the Jews and has increased the circulation of Jewish books and newspapers. In April, May and June, circulation of the Jewish press rose by 40 per cent. About 25 per cent of the Jewish population—about 10,000—are members of the union. Under the union's supervision are 30 Jewish cultural clubs, 20 of which are in Lower Silesia, which has 6,000 members in the union. Also directed by the union are 15 houses of culture, 30 libraries containing over 20,000 books, 10 dramatic groups, seven choruses, eight orchestras, three ballet groups, two reading circles and 40 evening educational courses. In the month of March more than 100 cultural affairs were attended by 20,000, and 5,000 Jewish books were sold. Total circulation of the Jewish press is now 25,000 apart from Jewish readers of the Polish press.

The first Jewish collective farm in Poland was formed at the end of June by a group of Jewish farmers in the Dzierzonow region. The farm covers about 400 acres.

The newly appointed Israeli minister to Poland, Arie L. Kubowy, presented his credentials to President Boleslav Beirut

at the end of July. A reception was held in honor of the incoming minister. President Beirut told the reception that the Polish people would respect the independence of Israel and assured the Israeli minister of Poland's desire to strengthen friendly relations with Israel.

The Nazi commander of the bloody crushing of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1943, Lieut. Gen. Jurgen von Stroop, was sentenced to death at the end of July by a Warsaw District Court for his extermination of the ghetto. The trial lasted four days. Stroop pleaded not guilty on the ground that he was acting under orders from Gestapo chief Heinrich Himmler. Stroop admitted having ordered making a "wilderness" of the ghetto. He also admitted having ordered the level of the water in the Warsaw sewers to be raised so as to drown the several thousand Jewish fighters who had taken refuge there. Captain Franz Konrad, an accomplice of Stroop, was at the same time sentenced to hang for killing large numbers of Jews and participating in atrocities.

## Rumania

**T**HE Jewish State Theater of Bucharest has just produced a new play, *Home Again*, by S. Keri and G. Vineski, which has become a hit. The premiere was held in Ploesti on June 28 at the Ploesti State Theater. The play depicts the new life of the Jew in the people's Rumania. The Jewish Theater had just completed a successful run of the play, *In the Shadow of the Palm Trees*.

The Bucharest Ikuf (Yiddisher Kultur Farband) recently held a meeting of Jew-

ish writers, members of the Writers Union of Rumania, with their readers. The writers read from their works, followed by a musical program by the Bucharest Ikuf People's Chorus.

A Bucharest court in July sentenced to eight years in prison Adolf Flum, who was convicted of having spread anti-Semitic propaganda and extorted great amounts of money from Jews during the war.

## Bulgaria

**T**HE Central Committee of Bulgarian Jews unveiled a memorial in July to Jewish fighters for freedom against the Nazis side by side with Bulgarian heroes. The ceremony was attended by representatives of the Jewish community of Sofia and delegates from Jewish communities in the country and by representatives of the army, the government and political organizations.

Diplomatic relations of Bulgaria with Israel were established in June. A. Likov was appointed chargé d'affaires in Tel Aviv.

Many distinguished Jewish builders of a people's culture in Bulgaria join their general work with special activities in the Jewish community. Among these are Armand Baruch, chairman of the Screen-play Commission of the Bulgarian Film Society; Chaim Benadov, editor of the newspaper *Sterchel*; Yasha Rosanov, artist of the National Youth Theatre; and Leon Karfati, artist of the National Theatre.

## Czechoslovakia

**A**MONG the many Jews who were awarded Stalin prizes in Czechoslovakia this year in science and art were: Dr. F. Gelia in physics, E. Cohen, in cinematography, Dr. I. Frid in chemistry, Dr. V. Blau in dentistry and F. Stein in music.



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## ART AND "OLIVER TWIST"

By Nathaniel Buchwald

The greater the number of people who will see the film *Oliver Twist*, the more will be the number of those who will view the Jewish people through the eyes of Hitler and Streicher.

The film, as is well known, is based on Charles Dickens' novel of the same name. Certain critics have praised the film on the ground that it is faithful to Dickens' original and that it is almost a masterpiece of the film art.

Both assertions are unfounded. Whatever one may say about the ugly portrait of the Jew Fagin in the novel *Oliver Twist*, one cannot say that Dickens was an active anti-Semite. In his vicious portrait of Fagin he slipped into the stereotype of the anti-Semitic concept of the Jew. The critic's first answer to the objections to such a portrayal of the Jew is that Dickens did not intend to present Fagin as typical of the Jewish people and that he had only depicted one Jew thus. But later Dickens understood that his portrait of a villain who preyed on poor children and taught them to steal for his own profit, was an insult to the whole Jewish people. He tried "to make good" his mistake by later writing the novel *Our Mutual Friend*, which contained a sympathetic picture of a Jew possessed of all the virtues.

In the film, however, the anti-Semitism is calculated, conscious, deliberate. The aim of the director, David Lean, and of the actor, Alec Guinness, who plays the role of the Jew Fagin, is not fidelity to Dickens but fidelity to nazism and despicable anti-Semitism, which reached its "apex" in the crematoria and the death camps of Auschwitz and Treblinka. In Dickens' novel, Fagin is a portrait among portraits, a character among characters. In the film Fagin is the main character. The entire movie is built around Fagin. His is the leading role in the film.

The actor who created the part knew what he was doing. He did not intend to be "true to life" or even to Dickens' spirit. He took as a model the evil caricature of the Jews drawn by Cruikshank and imitated in Julius Streicher's *Stürmer* and nazi pogrom "literature" and "art."

In viewing this film, it is not necessary to follow the story, which is drenched with anti-Semitic insinuations, or even to listen to the dialogue. It is enough to

look at Fagin with his great beak of a nose, his greedy, cruel eyes, to make one's blood boil. It is enough to hear Fagin's "Jewish" manner of speaking and to catch the note of ridicule in the audience's laughter, which echoes centuries of anti-Semitic hatred.

Dickens was a sentimental writer with a yearning for social justice. He took the side of the oppressed and the suffering but he was not a deep thinker. He uncritically accepted all sorts of erroneous ideas. He took for granted the false view that the blame for all sins committed against the poor people should be put on "bad" individuals with hearts of stone. In *Oliver Twist* and other works he offered a patent medicine for social evil—"good," kindhearted people. He did not understand the social system that caused so much sorrow to so many people and he had no quarrel with it. "Substitute" the "bad" social providers with "good" and everything will come out right. Thus it was easy for him to resolve his melodramatic situations of social evils with a "happy ending" in which accident and coincidence played the main part.

According to Dickens, Fagin is a type of "bad" person who brings all sorts of trouble on the world. In *Oliver Twist* the novelist presented other bad, heartless people in addition to Fagin, but he drew them from current British life, which he of course knew well. But in depicting Fagin, Dickens simply copied the anti-Semitic caricature.

The film's director, who also adapted Dickens' novel for screen, however, rewrote Dickens, changed the emphasis and focussed the story so that Fagin the Jew became the main villain, the embodiment of all evil.

This could not be an "artistic" mistake. It is a calculated distortion. David Lean from the outset conceived the film as an anti-Semitic movie. This was also clear to the actor Guinness, whose interpretation carried out the director's basic idea.

Well, some people say, since the film is "artistic" and in the tradition of high art, one may overlook such "trivialities." We do not wish to get involved in the "eternal debate" about art for art's sake versus art for the sake of life and of

truth. For us it is enough to point out that the film *Oliver Twist* is not a work of art, because art is the beauty of truth, art is elevating, art calls forth the best in people.

But such works as this film have the opposite effect. When one actually sees the way in which many people in the audience react to Fagin, one realizes what an ugly, repulsive "masterpiece" the film is. The audience can be said almost to wallow in its hatred of the Jew; they are delighted with Fagin's "Jewish" accent; they absorb the insinuation of the film that Fagin the Jew is a composite portrait of the Jewish people; and if Jews have been persecuted and burned and murdered in the millions—it serves them right. Fagin deserved no better fate. Yes, the film arouses such sentiments among those spectators who are not armed against anti-Semitic pogrom-propaganda through their own knowledge and understanding.

The film can be called "artistic" only in the technical sense that it is well done in direction, scenic effects, filmic sweep and scope, as well as in the representation and portrayal of local British types.

Under certain circumstances, however, things which are well done are especially dangerous precisely because they are well done. Goebbels' propaganda was also "well done." Streicher's pogrom caricatures of the Jews were also drawn by "clever" and "gifted" "artists."

There is therefore no sense or logic in approving the film *Oliver Twist* because it is well done. It is an anti-Semitic film in intent and essence. If this is art, then Auschwitz was art and the gas chambers were the greatest masterpieces of all time. Although the form is different, in spirit and "inspiration" the film *Oliver Twist* is of a kind with these "masterpieces."

### Oliver Twist is Protested

The current showing of the anti-Semitic film *Oliver Twist* was picketed for the first time in this country at a Los Angeles theater in mid-July. Led by the Progressive Party, pickets included members of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order, American Jewish Congress, B'nai B'rith and Hadassah. The local Jewish Community Council deplored the picketing and adopted a hush-hush attitude, saying that this "silent treatment" was the policy of national Jewish "defense" agencies toward the film. In Chicago, American Jewish Congress officials turned down a request from a local chapter to call for a boycott of the film.



# Letters from Abroad

## ISRAEL AND THE MURDER OF ABDULLAH

By I. Starvinski

### Tel Aviv

The murder of Abdullah disclosed that the sharpened conflict of economic interests between American and British imperialists has boiled over in Transjordan. It shows further that murder has become a significant weapon in the hands of the imperialists. For the recent period has witnessed political assassinations in Syria and Iran, and now it has happened in Transjordan.

It has been quite obvious for several years that American economic interests are straining to take over Britain's economic and strategic positions in the Middle East. In order to advance this aim, American diplomats either buy off or do away with the feudal lords who faithfully serve British interests. We have seen this happen to Riad-el-Suleh, former prime minister of Lebanon, who was known to be working with the British, and now to Abdullah, who became and remained king of Transjordan through British military and diplomatic support, as well as an annual financial subsidy.

Washington has for some time been trying to align the Middle East into its anti-Soviet strategic plans. Turkey and Greece have been officially taken into the Atlantic bloc and war bases are feverishly being constructed in these countries. The project to transform Franco Spain into an anti-Soviet military arsenal is public knowledge. These measures are signs of the increasingly bitter struggle of American interests to eject their poor British relations from positions previously held and to control these in line with anti-Soviet war preparations.

American "aid" for the Arab lands and for Israel is being used as a lever to strengthen the financial and strategic interest of American capital in the Middle East. This fact is hardly even disguised. Recently, for instance, Assistant Secretary of State George C. McGhee declared quite openly that "The aid which has been allocated to the Arab countries and Israel should be applied only for military purposes. . . . Events in the Middle East are moving rapidly. . . . The United States cannot afford the

forces of neutralism and anti-Western sentiment to gain further ground nor to allow these forces to be captured and exploited by International Communism."

The pattern of American interests in the Middle East thus emerges clearly. The Washington diplomats are working in the direction of mobilizing the Arab peoples for an anti-Soviet war. In order to succeed, however, it is necessary for Washington to fight actively against the communist and peace movements in these countries.

But Washington is also carrying on a continuous intrigue against its partner, Britain, in the Middle East. This was manifested, for instance, in connection with the assassination of Abdullah in this way: Washington sent its message of condolence to Emir Tallal, Abdullah's oldest son, who is in Switzerland, while Britain sent its message to Emir Naif, the second son. The difference here is more than one of etiquette: it signifies that the two imperialist powers are seeking to influence the selection of a ruler of Transjordan who will be under the thumb of one or the other power.

The Israeli press reacted in various ways to the assassination of Abdullah. The Mapai leaders wished to use the murder and the ensuing unrest in the neighboring states to create a feeling of panic. This unrest, they said, demands a "stable" government in Israel, by which they actually meant that people should vote for Mapai.

Other western-oriented newspapers

wept over the death of Abdullah, the bloody oppressor of his people, as "the most faithful exponent of peace." The Israeli ambassador in London declared that "The murder is a severe blow against the peace and stability of the Middle East."

These statements express the desire of the ruling circles in Israel to make clear to the keepers of the exchequer in Washington that Israel can provide the most reliable base for them in the Middle East. *Davar* [organ of the Histadrut] wrote that "The great powers will not be content with condemning the murder but they will also seek ways of making the situation healthy in this part of the world." These words sound suspiciously like an invitation to military intervention in the Arab countries.

However, it is hard to conceal from the Israeli people the failure of Ben Gurion's foreign policy. The Communist Party of Israel was the only one that fought against the inclusion of the Arab part of Palestine into Abdullah's kingdom. The Communist Party was the only one that maintained that the concessions to Abdullah did not insure peace. The Communist Party was also the only one to point out that the only policy that would lead to peace was to help the fight of the Arab masses for their liberation. The demonstrations for peace in Transjordan after the death of Abdullah showed the unpopularity among the masses of those upon whom the Ben Gurion government had built its policy toward the neighboring states.

This policy has now collapsed.

The citizens of Israel must draw the appropriate conclusion that the security of the Israeli borders is not guaranteed by the Anglo-American imperialists. To build a foreign policy for Israel on co-operation with Anglo-American agents like Abdullah, who are hated by their people, does not guarantee peace. Only a policy based on cooperation with the anti-imperialist peace forces of the Middle East, can secure the peace and the borders of the country.

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# Book Reviews

## A PATH-BREAKING NEGRO NOVEL

By Sidney Finkelstein

*Iron City*, by Lloyd L. Brown. *Masses and Mainstream*, New York. Cloth edition, \$3.00; popular edition, \$1.50.

It stands to reason that under present conditions, when commercial publishers have given up, along with their honesty, even their literary taste, such a book as Lloyd Brown's new novel would have to be published by somewhat unusual methods. It was put out by the working class literary publication *Masses and Mainstream*. The money was provided by hundreds of readers and friends of the magazine who subscribed to the book in advance. The book has up to now been ignored by the editors of the literary departments of the major newspapers. But this deliberate censorship, which in the present case is also a glaring example of white chauvinism, only indicates that these edi-

tors are in the ignoble tradition of their predecessors, who ignored Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*. And like the, above books, *Iron City* will remain around a long while to haunt them.

*Iron City* is far more than a first rate working class novel. It is a historic book, which heralds a new stage of development of United States literature. It takes up the best tradition of the proletarian literature of the thirties and raises it to the new level, demanded by the era following the Second World War. For Lloyd Brown treats the problems of the novel with theoretical clarity, with a sense of the sharp lines between the forces making for human destruction and those making for human freedom that are drawn today.

This novel succeeds in creating Communist characters. And most important, the novel speaks for the present thinking, temper, fighting spirit and rising struggle against every form of oppression of the American Negro people. There is no contradiction between this and the fact that the story takes place in 1941. Lloyd Brown has been absolutely faithful to the circumstances of the period, but he has treated the theme with the deeper knowledge afforded by the war and postwar years.



Lloyd L. Brown.

The name "Iron City" has two references. It is the city itself in which the story is set, a city dominated by the steel and iron works of Adam T. McGregor. McGregor donated the courthouse and jail to the city. His corporation, both when he was alive and after his death, owned and ran the police and courts. It connived at the beating, jailing and framing of Negro people. To show his goodness of heart, it built a "Foundation" which carried on long surveys, never put to any use, of such subjects as the "statistics of Negro infant mortality."

And "Iron City" is also the jail in which all the action takes place, a little community, a "city" of its own. Into this jail ten Communists are thrown on a charge of criminal syndicalism. Three of them are Negro men, Jimcrowed from their comrades. They find in the jail with them a young Negro, Lonnie James, who has been framed by the police and convicted of murder. The procedure is only too familiar. They pick up a Negro, find some crime that can be fitted, beat a "confession" out of him and plant some flimsy evidence that would be thrown out by any honest court. The confession is repudiated, but the judge knows his job, to convict. This helps to keep the corrupt police in their place and the Negro people in what is presumably theirs.

Lonnie James, alone, without family or friends, has never resigned himself to this legal lynching. He has been busily writing letters to one organization after another, explaining the frame-up but getting polite disavowals of interest. Only when the Communists hear of this case, does real action start. How a letter explaining the true nature of the case is smuggled out of jail, how a movement is built up in Lonnie's defense even from the jail itself, makes for tremendous drama. In the course of the story Lloyd Brown works in the past life stories of a half-dozen characters: Lonnie, the three Communists and two other inmates of the jail.

It is a book extraordinarily rich in people. And in these life stories the writing takes on the most moving poetic character. It is lovely and tender when dealing with the childhood and loves of the characters. Sometimes it flames with anger, as in the remarkable prophetic section telling how one Negro, Harvey Owens, will leave the jail for the army, win honors fighting the fascists in Europe and then be shot to death on a Georgia road. The novel is full of lessons that are an inescapable part of these life stories. Perhaps the most important theme, which appears over and over in the most varied clothing, is how people slowly discover and build the resources of courage within themselves.

### MASSES & MAINSTREAM

AMERICA'S LEADING CULTURAL MONTHLY

#### CONTENTS FOR

September

Henry Luce's Revolutionaries  
Doxy Wilkerson

"Mussorgsky": A Film Masterpiece  
Sidney Finkelstein

Has Franco Changed His Spots  
Herbert Aptheker

No Hiding Place  
Lloyd L. Brown

The Masses Tradition  
Joseph North

A Cast for Hamlet (story)  
Afim Dorosh

Three from Hawaii  
Liu Pungju

TV's Amos 'n' Andy  
John Hudson Jones  
International Film Festival  
Eleanor Wheeler

Commentary by Samuel Sillen; Books in Review by Irene Epstein and Sydney Finkelstein

Drawings by William Gropper and others

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**The story does not end with victory.** Brown is interested in nothing but the truth and there are innumerable such cases that have gone both one way and the other. As we know too well, four of the Trenton Six were saved but the Martinsville Seven and Willie McGee died. Yet the book ends magnificently. Its climax is the cracking of the walls of the Iron Cities, both of them. The tissue of lies has been torn apart. The challenge has been raised. The racists have been suddenly thrown on the defensive. They are screaming with fear and indignation, shoring up their crumbling case. The fight is on. And the very last note the book strikes is a quick comparison of two people; one, the oldest of the three Communists, to whom life is dear, for it holds so much affection for the people in it; the other, a jail guard, waiting for retirement, to whom life is meaningless, for it is so completely drained of love.

This deep and partisan understanding of the common people, as much as the outright politics, makes *Iron City* the kind of book that anyone of the working class knows immediately is meant for him.

A most important achievement of the book is that, in portraying the Negro people so truthfully, and in so many different characters, it takes on the quality of a national epic. It shows some poverty-stricken, living on odd jobs; some who have fought their way to a union-protected job; some utterly uneducated; some forced to become petty criminals; some with an academic education; and some, leaders of America in thought and struggle. And it makes no apologies for anybody. It says, here we are, to some extent as you have made us, and to a greater extent as we are making ourselves in spite of you. We don't want to lynch, frame, or murder anybody. We exploit nobody, we want to work and live in peace. We want an America where we can develop ourselves. And we will get it.

**This novel** is but a sample of the rich creative artistic resources among the Negro people of this country, resources kept from development by a direct and indirect discrimination which can be called national cultural oppression. It is hard to think of a single more important cultural task in the United States than to fight for the fruition of this great culture of the American Negro people. Such a development must be a triumph for realism itself in United States literature, militant, partisan, full, devoted to every part of American life. If, on the other hand, this culture is allowed to be stifled, it is hard to see anything but flight from reality and further desolation in United States literature as a whole. A major achievement like *Iron City*, gives us confidence in the future of American culture.

AUGUST, 1951

## Readers, Listen:

**L**AST month we appealed to you for funds and told you that "the future of *Jewish Life* is in your hands."

A small number of you responded generously. But not nearly enough of you.

We do not disguise our serious financial situation. The cold fact is that the survival of our magazine is endangered.

Can you conceive of the enormity of the loss if the necessary voice of *Jewish Life*—particularly in these dangerous days—were stilled? Many of you have told us how valuable you find the magazine in making your way through Jewish life in America today.

Can you afford to dispense with *Jewish Life*? We know your answer. You would profoundly deplore its shut-down.

Therefore, you, our readers, have a special responsibility to keep the magazine alive. And only you can do it. This is how.

*If each reader sends us his or her contribution, the magazine will be saved.*

It's up to you. Please fill out the form below and return.

THE EDITORS.

### JEWISH LIFE

22 East 17 Street, Room 601, New York 3, N. Y.

Enclosed please find check (money order); my contribution of \$..... to keep this important magazine alive,

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# FROM THE FOUR CORNERS

(Continued from page 2)

Semitism is the focus of his campaign and he identifies "kike Jew" with "Red" or "communist."

**Released-time** program of New York City was declared constitutional by the State Court of Appeals on July 11 by a 6-1 decision. Under this program, which breaks down separation of church and state, children may be excused from public school for religious instruction an hour a week. The decision will be appealed to the United States Supreme Court by the two Jewish and Protestant parents fighting the issue.

**Anti-Semitic vandals** wrecked the 15-room house near Poughkeepsie on a farm used to train halutzim (pioneers) for Israel. The destruction was done while all the trainees were attending movies in town. Police are investigating.

**The Midwest edition** of the Jewish daily *Forward*, published in a Chicago plant, was shut down early in July. It was thought that a drop of 10,000 subscribers in the area was responsible for the shutdown. The *Forward* is one of the most reactionary papers in America.

**Josephine Baker**, noted Negro singer, made a "citizen's arrest" in Los Angeles in mid-July, when she heard a man in a hotel grill make an anti-Negro remark. A policeman refused to make the arrest. The man was fined \$100. "The hours he spent in prison," said Miss Baker, "will, I hope, make him understand that people are fighting for justice all over the world."

**Approximately 120,000** Jewish immigrants entered the United States since the end of the war.

## EUROPE

**Israeli youth** were denied exit visas to attend the Third World Festival of Youth and Students in Berlin held in August. *Kol Haam*, communist daily in Tel Aviv, said that "this step was taken after Ben Gurion's government consulted with the British and American ambassadors." The paper affirmed that "the voice of Israel's youth fighting for peace and against the remilitarization of Germany must be heard." . . . The festival was a stupendous demonstration by the youth of Germany and the world against German rearmament. Erich Correns, chairman of the National Council of the German National Front, attacked General Eisen-

hower's statement that the German soldier's honor had not been tarnished by nazism. This statement, said Correns, "gave the murderers of civilization and the gas chamber specialists American absolution. He wants them to repeat tomorrow what they did yesterday."

**The Swedish Section** of the World Jewish Congress will initiate legal action against Einar Aberg, operator of a center in Sweden from which anti-Semitic pamphlets are sent all over the world.

**A rally** early in July attended by 500 Jews from Munich and the surrounding area and addressed by Dr. Aron Ahrenstein, chief rabbi of Bavaria, resolved to take a firm stand against the "injustice and arrogance" which Jews are once more experiencing in Germany.

**Otto Skorzeny**, who rescued Mussolini from prison in 1944 and who performed many special missions for Hitler, has come out of hiding and returned to Germany in July. Apparently he thought he was now safe from prosecution as a war criminal in western Germany. Skorzeny will undertake propaganda work.

**A wreath** was laid on the tomb in Hanover in July of Otto Ohlendorf, one of the mass murderers recently executed at Landsberg prison, by fascists in the daytime, who marched up to the tomb in military style.

**The trade unions** of Lower Saxony sent a delegation to the minister of the interior early in July to demand strong measures against increasing provocations from neo-nazis.

**The West German Bonn regime** at the end of July banned the anti-nazi organization of the victims of nazism because their activities for peace were regarded as "unconstitutional" and because the organization is under "communist influence."

## ISRAEL

**The Israeli Peace Committee** in July passed a resolution demanding a pact of peace among the five great powers and opposing the rearmament of Germany and the revival of the nazi army. The petition campaign for a five-power peace pact will be initiated in Israel on August 10.

**A law granting** "equal rights" to women was passed by the Knesset in mid-

July. Main provisions of the law grant to women the right to retain property acquired by them before or after marriage and equal rights to inheritance and equal rights in the guardianship of children. However, the law leaves undisturbed the former law that marriage and divorce come exclusively under the jurisdiction of religious courts. A Communist amendment proposing that all matters of personal status be taken out of the hands of the religious courts was defeated.

**A ban on stage** performances in Yiddish by Israeli citizens imposed by the Cinematographic Censorship Board was challenged by the Jaffa Avraham Goldfaden Theater, which gave two performances in Yiddish until they were stopped. They appealed the ban to the Israeli supreme court, which ruled that the ban was illegal.

**An extremely revealing** story about the Israeli war of liberation is told by I. F. Stone (reported by Hugh Deane in the *Daily Compass*, July 22). While Stone was visiting Israel, a high ranking Israeli official told him that on the eve of the war, this official was summoned to a secret conference with Abdullah. Abdullah told the official that he didn't want to wage war against the Jews. "But the British have left me no choice," said Abdullah.

**Mrs. Tova Lerner**, 73, from Bessarabia, arrived in Haifa on July 23. She got a passport from the Soviet Union after she wrote a personal letter to Premier Josef Stalin asking for permission to join her son in Israel.

**Several demonstrations** were held by new immigrants in July demanding work and bread. One demonstration of 1,400 new immigrants protested government indifference to their plight.

## Verdict Against Kol Haam

**T**HE verdict in the libel case of Premier Ben Gurion against *Kol Haam*, communist daily in Tel Aviv, was announced on July 29 (one day before the elections). *Kol Haam* was found guilty and fined 150 pounds (\$420). Judge B. Ginossar ruled that the defense had not proved that Ben Gurion was a tool of American imperialism.

Readers of JEWISH LIFE will be able to make up their own minds on this matter from the extensive testimony of S. Mikunis, general secretary of the Communist Party of Israel, published in the July issue of the magazine.

