

Jewish Life

A PROGRESSIVE MONTHLY

FEBRUARY 1953 • 25¢

last hours to save the Rosenbergs

by Morris U. Schappes

NEGRO HISTORY WEEK

TWO POEMS *by Aaron Kramer and Lucy Smith*

NEGRO LABOR ADVANCES *by Eugene Gordon*

ALSO: *Frederick Douglass, C. Young, W. R. Hood*

Bernardo Cohen

Maurice Rauch

Tiba G. Willner

and

ARGENTINA'S JEWISH COMMUNITY

JEWISH WORKING PEOPLE SING

"THOUSAND DOLLARS," *a short story*

MORE ON PRAGUE TRIAL

From the Four Corners

Edited by Louis Harap

AT HOME

Resistance notes. . . . In his sermon in the Cleveland Temple on December 28, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver urged President Eisenhower to confer with Premier Stalin in the interests of world peace. He said that this would open a door to a fresh start in ending the war in Korea and thereby calm the war atmosphere. The sermon was broadcast. . . . An editorial in the Los Angeles *B'nai B'rith Messenger* of December 19, recalled General Eisenhower's statement in 1945 that "Nazism must be destroyed and all members of the Nazi Party and its affiliated organizations must be eliminated from its positions," and hoped that Eisenhower will "recall and reiterate (these words) at the earliest possible moment." . . . Among the sponsors of a two-day conference at the end of January on "The Bill of Rights—Sublime Risk of Free Men" under the auspices of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee are Albert Einstein, Rabbi Michael Alper, of Hebrew Union College; Rabbi Ira Eisenstein, editor of *The Reconstructionist*, and Rabbi Joachim Prinz, of Newark.

Notes on Anti-Semitism. . . . The Highbridge section of the Bronx has become an area of increasing anti-Semitic tension. Jews are assailed with anti-Semitic epithets and even with stones; Jewish boys are beaten up by non-Jewish hoodlums; Jewish storekeepers are pressured to buy monthly ads in the Catholic parish paper. Msgr. William C. Humphrey of the local Catholic church told a reporter who asked for comment on the situation, "You people ought to use more common sense and not advertise matters which will only aggravate the situation." . . . Fascist Gerald L. K. Smith plans to set up a fancy lobby in Washington for which he claims he will have cooperation of past and present congressmen. . . . After the Jewish War Veterans of Chicago complained to police that acts of vandalism had been committed against a Chicago synagogue without action by police, a 24-hour police guard was finally placed at the synagogue. . . . Chicago mails have been sullied with postcards urging Americans to "free America from the Jews" and to vote "anti-Jewish." . . . Officials of Beachwood, a suburb of Cleveland, were ordered to issue a permit to a Jewish congregation to build a \$2,000,000 temple. Last January the town had denied the permit in accordance with its zoning law, which was attacked as arbitrary.

(Continued on page 32)

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LAST HOURS TO SAVE THE ROSENBERGS

By Morris U. Schappes

THIS is being written on January 14, a few hours before the Rosenbergs were to have been executed at 11 P.M. If they are still alive when you read this, the rising tide of clemency appeals alone will have saved them thus far,

This month, there have been five notable developments in the Rosenberg case: the impact of international opinion; the reaching of the clemency campaign into significant sections of the Protestant clergy and into small sections of the trade unions; the expanding of the unity of Jewish public opinion; the grave doubts about the evidence expressed by top scientists like Urey and Einstein; the opinion of the Circuit Court of Appeals that the Rosenbergs would have been entitled to a retrial if their lawyer had, during the trial, demanded it at a certain point.

About international opinion, in France, Italy, England, Canada, Brazil, Guatemala and a score of other countries, so perturbing has been the impact that even Judge Irving R. Kaufman took note of it in his ruling of January 2 denying clemency, when he wrote: "It may be that such questions merit careful consideration, but they are properly addressed to the Executive Department."

But opinion abroad about American justice is not a matter only for presidential consideration. The American people are deeply concerned with what others think of us and they have been speaking up in ever-increasing volume for a commutation of sentence. It would take pages merely to list the individuals of prominence who have *publicly* expressed themselves. By way of example only we may cite the plea of 1,500 Protestant ministers released by Dr. Jesse W. Stitt of the Village Presbyterian Church in New York, or the plea of 157 conservative or liberal notables released by Rev. A. J. Muste. Moreover, trade unions, headed by the powerful Ford Local of the CIO United Auto Workers, and including locals of AFL and independent unions, have recently begun to intervene for clemency.

In Jewish opinion, nothing that some of the Judenrat misleadership has been able to do can stop what is virtually a clamor among the Jewish people for a commutation of sentence. In London, the *Jewish*

Chronicle (January 2) urged the president editorially to grant clemency. The same day *The Jewish Chronicle* of Pittsburgh advocated a commutation of the unprecedented sentence. The labor Zionist *Jewish Frontier* (January), also joins the clemency parade. Similarly, *The Reconstructionist* (January 9) agrees to a commutation on grounds of humanitarianism and a comparison of this extreme sentence with that of others. Like Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, these organs affirm their belief in the guilt of the accused and their faith in the fairness of the trial, but they still object to the sentence. Our view is that in this united front it is not the "whereases" that are important, but the resolve: that the Rosenbergs should not die.

Yet just this matter of the trial has been raised anew by, of all people, Judges Swan, Chase and Frank of the Circuit Court of Appeals. While *denying* a petition for a re-trial, the judges declared (January 1) that a certain statement to the press by Prosecutor Irving Saypol "was wholly reprehensible" and that had counsel for the defense at that point moved for a new trial, the judge should have granted it. Are the Rosenbergs to die because counsel did not make a motion at the right time? This may be "due process" but Americans cannot believe it is justice.

To top it all, Nobel Prize Winner and nuclear physicist Harold C. Urey and Albert Einstein have stated that the trial record has not convinced them of the guilt of the Rosenbergs. In a letter to Judge Kaufman, reprinted in large part in the *New York Times*, January 8, Urey declares that "I found the Rosenbergs' testimony more believable than that of the Greenglasses," and Professor Einstein, in a public letter to Truman, specifically associated himself with Urey's opinions.

It is therefore possible to bring ever new forces into the clemency campaign. Those who turned away a year ago, a month ago, or yesterday should be asked to voice their opinion, privately or publicly, giving whatever reasons their conscience or understanding dictates, but uniting in the appeal that the Rosenbergs must not be executed.

RESISTANCE TO McCARRAN-WALTER LAW

An Editorial

IT DID not take long for the anti-Semitic bias of the racist sponsors of the infamous McCarran-Walter law to come to the surface. In a speech before the House on January 14, Rep. Francis E. Walter attacked the opponents of the law with the remark that "so many professionals, including professional Jews, are shedding crocodile tears for no reason whatsoever"—and he was roundly applauded by many House members. Even though Jews have the right and duty to protest, every schoolboy knows that the sharpest condemnation of this racist law has come from the broadest cross-section of the American people of all religious faiths and political convictions, the mere listing of whom would take many pages.

It is in fact one of the most encouraging features of these hysterical days that the most vehement condemnation of this fascist legislation has been aroused among so many American organizations and public figures. For the police state mentality of the McCarrans and McCarthys emerges with painful clarity from "America's First Nuremberg Law." As the Commission on Immigration and Naturalization, appointed by President Truman to investigate the law, appropriately asserted in its report on January first, the law is "an arrogant, brazen instrument of discrimination based on color, creed and national origin." It recommended the law's revision "from beginning to end."

The fascist mentality of the law's sponsors was also shockingly indicated by the red paint smeared over the members of this investigating commission by Senator Pat McCarran on Christmas day, which is the familiar police state tactic that places anyone to the left of McCarran and McCarthy among "subversives." In its editorial of January 2, the *New York Times* gave a forthright reply to this unscrupulous attack: "millions of other Americans . . . will not be deterred in opposition to the McCarran act by the infantile argument that because the Communists say they are against it, therefore no good American can be against it." The law is so brazen in its racism and police state intentions that every decent American, from right to left, must voice his unrelenting opposition to the law and demand its repeal.

This omnibus monstrosity of a law takes up 120 pages of small type and 123 pages of regulations for its execution. The racist and fascist provisions are many. Senator Herbert H. Lehman called the law one which "bristles with hostility against the alien and foreign born." It proceeds, he said, on the underlying assumption that "every alien is a potential saboteur and criminal and every potential immigrant must remain so branded unless he can prove otherwise." The law, he went on, "sets forth a triple

standard of justice—one standard for native born American citizens, still another for naturalized American citizens and still another—and the most arbitrary and high-minded of all—for aliens and immigrants."

We cite only a few of the provisions that give substance to this apt general description. The immigration quota system it perpetuates favors Anglo-Saxons from England, Germany and Ireland and makes almost impossible entry of nationals from Eastern Europe. According to Boris Smolar, columnist of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, this will mean that "Jewish immigration into the United States will practically come to an end." Immigration of Negroes from the West Indies will be reduced to about 100 a year. The act is so vague that it virtually gives any consular official abroad absolute and unreviewable power to decide to whom he will issue a visa. The attorney general has practically unlimited power to arrest and hold without bail and begin proceedings for denaturalization of any naturalized citizen on any excuse. The attorney general can also arrest for deportation and hold without bail virtually any non-citizen at his own discretion. While "communists" are excluded under the law, fascists of all kinds are admissible because the law is interpreted to hold that fascists do not advocate "totalitarian dictatorship" in the United States. And contrary to our basic law that every man is presumed innocent until proven guilty, the McCarran-Walter law demands that the burden of proof that a non-citizen is admissible is on the accused non-citizen.

A conference held in Detroit in mid-December by the hard-fighting American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born emerged with a number of proposals for a new immigration and citizenship law. A nationwide struggle to halt the application of the law by curbing the acts of the attorney general was urged. The new law should be based on points like the following: an end to the racist quota system; any resident should be eligible for citizenship after two years in residence after taking the oath of allegiance; after five years of residence no citizen should be deportable for any reason whatever and non-citizens should have the same constitutional protection as citizens.

It should be possible to obtain these and other revisions that would dislodge this foothold of fascism in our country. It is necessary to do so and the extremely broad area of opinion that has expressed detestation of the law should be organized into an irresistible force to repeal it. Finally, the presidential candidates of both parties pledged revision and the people should remind President Eisenhower in no uncertain terms that this law must no longer disgrace America and infect the nation further with the fascist poison. Our precarious democracy demands this.

THE PEOPLE TALK PEACE AT VIENNA

ON December 19, 1952, the historic Congress of the Peoples for Peace, begun in Vienna on December 12, ended with an appeal to the governments of the Big Five nations to negotiate a pact of peace and urging an immediate cease fire in Korea. As the venerable Giuseppe Nitti, Liberal Party member in the Italian parliament, pointed out in the concluding speech at the congress, representatives of all nations and races, of various creeds, political beliefs and parties met in common desire for peace. They spoke for all the common people of the world and were a harbinger of an ever widening demand that peace can and must be won by action of the people.

A few figures on attendance are significant. A total of 1,857 persons, of whom 1,604 were delegates, from 85 countries were present. The Americas were represented by 293 persons in 23 delegations. Our own country had 27 delegates.

The keynote of the struggle for peace was sounded by the call to the congress and remains the keynote of the continuing fight: "It is necessary for us to seek out the points of agreement on peace, not accenting disagreements

upon questions not directly related to maintaining peace." In the peace movement in our own country, we too must learn the lesson that differences on many other issues should not be permitted to deter the formation of the widest possible united action on this most universal and elementary need and desire of the people—a peace won by negotiation.

Just as all peoples of the world participated in the Vienna congress and in the world movement for peace, so the Jewish peoples of many lands were present at the congress. On the next page we print a report of a meeting of Jewish delegates at Vienna by Rabbi Abraham Bick, one of the United States delegates, in which the interest of the Jewish people in peace received expression. It is also significant that, while the congress was in session, the Stalin peace prizes for 1952 were announced. Among the prize winners were Paul Robeson and Ilya Ehrenburg. The award to the latter, who is Jewish, is in itself a refutation of the hysterical campaign about "anti-Semitism" in the socialist countries.

Following are an excerpt from the speech by Madame Sun Yat-sen, head of the Chinese delegation, and Rabbi Bick's report. —Eds.

"THE CAUSE OF PEACE CANNOT FAIL"

By Madame Sun Yat-sen

PEACE-LOVING people throughout the world are hoping that the people of the United States will assume a special responsibility in this vital work (for peace). . . . I am speaking of those Americans, the majority of Americans, who desire peace in their minds and hearts but have not yet lifted a finger to get it. These do not yet see that their own well-being and future are intimately connected with the napalm raids and saturation bombing and other murderous acts of the United States Armed Forces in Korea, with the machinations of the United States politicians in both Europe and Asia. . . .

You must certainly have thought as you paid your taxes, accepted cuts in the purchasing power of your wages and saw your sons put into uniform, that all these things were necessary for some good purpose. But in fact you did not know, nor did you really inquire where your money was going or how it was being used. You did not dig into the real meaning of the Marshall Plan, the Atlantic Pact, the Mutual Security act, the "police action" in Korea, etc. . . .

The fact is that the direction of the affairs of the American

people has been allowed to fall into the hands of the war-makers. . . . And where has all this led? As many of your leading businessmen, trade unionists, church leaders and scholars have said, it has put the United States on the road to disaster and threatens the rest of the world as it has never been threatened before.

This does not mean the threat cannot and will not be met, and decisively, if the need arises. What it does mean is that the political and military leaders of the United States are attempting to spread havoc which is bound to engulf your own dear home and loved ones while you have not done anything to prevent it. . . .

We hope that the American people will put a stop to the war policy of the United States government and its encroachment on the national independence and national rights of other peoples. In this struggle, so important to the peace movement, the people of the United States will not be alone. They should always keep in mind that the cause of peace has behind it the decisive mass of mankind, that it is a cause which cannot fail.

A MEETING OF JEWISH DELEGATES

From the four corners of the world, spokesmen of the Jewish masses who desire and demand peace met to pledge renewed energies for peace

By Rabbi Abraham Bick

THERE were a number of Jewish delegates from various nations at the Congress of the Peoples for Peace at Vienna in December 1952. Jewish delegates from the United States, Canada, Israel and Argentina together issued a call to all Jewish delegates at the congress to hold a gathering. The meeting took place in the hall of the Vienna Jewish Community under the chairmanship of M. Bentov, former Israeli labor minister and the head of the Israel peace delegation.

The peace activities of the Jewish masses all over the world were discussed at the meeting. It is of some interest to note the Jewish representatives who reported at this meeting on peace activities of their respective countries:

H. Itkin, chairman of the peace committee in Tel Aviv; D. Wasserman, representative of the Jewish peace committee of the Workmen's Circle branches in England; N. Massey, delegate of the Jewish People's Order of Canada; Miriam Weissberg, delegate from the Sholem Aleichem Cultural Society of Santiago, Chile; Maria Greenblatt, of Chile; Mishka Kaven, delegate of the Jewish Solidarity Organization in Brussels, Belgium; Norman Rothfield and S. Levine, delegates of the Jewish peace committees in Melbourne and Sydney, Australia; a representative of the Jewish People's League of Mexico; Michael Cohen, of the Union of Jewish Unity of Vienna, Austria; Rivkeh Wolansky, from the Ykuf and the Jewish Peace Committee in Buenos Aires, Argentina; Herdka Berkowitz, of Rumania; H. Shatz and M. Harris, from the Jewish merchants and Jewish women in Toronto, Canada; P. Katz, representing Argentina and Montevideo, Uruguay; Aydeluk, from the League Against Anti-Semitism of France; H. Meyer, from Leipzig, German Democratic Republic; H. Rachmanov, from Sofia, Bulgaria.

Reports on the growth of the Israel peace movement, which already embraces 43 per cent of the adult population, were given by Bentov of the Mapam Party and by Dr. Shmuel Eisenshtat. In spite of the fact that the Ben Gurion regime has aligned itself with those who support United States war policies, the peace movement in Israel is growing. Dr. Eisenshtat paid particular attention to the broad national front for peace which is developing in all the Arab countries, and to the unity between the Jewish and Arab

masses in Israel in the fight for peace. The Jews and the Arabs fighting for peace see the friendship of peoples as the only guarantee of harmonious co-existence of both peoples in the small country along the Mediterranean coast.

Pinyeh Katz, veteran Jewish journalist of Argentina and honorary chairman of the Ykuf, stated that "the Jews in the capitalist countries are the objects of special attention on the part of the warmongers," who are trying to spread race hatred and anti-Semitism. The Jews of the world, he said, must be particularly vigilant against the dangerous policy of reconstituting the Hitlerite army in Western Germany.

There were many Jews in the peace delegation from England, said D. Wasserman. Among the hundreds of thousands of British signatures for peace, many thousands were Jewish.

With great warmth the representative of the Jewish Unity Union of Austria, Michael Cohen, greeted the Jewish peace delegates of the world. Only peace can assure the future and security of Jews everywhere, he said. In the name of the several thousand surviving Jews of Vienna, not too long ago a community of over 200,000, the representative of the Viennese Jewish community sent his greetings to Jewish communities all over the world.

A high spot of the meeting was the presence of Abraham Shlonsky, noted Hebrew poet of Israel. This poet is an active leader in the peace movement of Israel and his poetry continually emphasizes the idea that the fate of Israel is inseparably tied to the struggle against imperialism. He was warmly greeted by all the Jewish delegates.

Norman Rothfield of Australia reported that special Jewish peace committees were active in the larger Australian cities. The writer delivered the closing address, stating that the delegates were returning to North America, Latin America, Australia and the European countries with the firm resolve to strengthen the peace movement among the Jewish masses regardless of political conviction.

The Jewish peace meeting manifested the close ties of the Jewish communities all over the world with the world peace movement. Thousands of Jews spoke through the voices of the Jewish peace delegates of the Americas, Europe, Israel and Australia.

MORE ON PRAGUE TRIAL

IN SEARCH OF A "POGROM"

By Dr. Leo Katz

Vienna

Among the newspapers in Austria that are seeking to create the impression that "anti-Semitism" reigns in Czechoslovakia, as manifested in the trial of the Slansky group, is *Die Presse*, descendant of the former Jewish *Naie Fraie Presse*, organ of the now deceased liberal Jewish community in Austria. This legacy was "Aryanized" by a certain Molden, a leading member of the nazi old guard in Austria. Owning half the stock in the paper and sharing ownership of *Die Presse* with this "new democrat" are Americans. This paper is the organ of the "Aryanizers" who have formed a "protective union" against the return of Jewish possessions to their owners. In its columns one finds agitation for a "Greater Germany" and concealed and half-concealed anti-Semitism.

During the Prague trial this paper raised the cry that "Jews are being beaten in Czechoslovakia." It was obvious that this propaganda was being directed from a central agency. For all newspapers — Social Democratic, Christian Democratic and nazi—were all pitched in the same key.

Suddenly *Die Presse* ran a news item that aroused great public interest. Bratislava (capital city of Slovakia), said the paper, had had a pogrom. Bratislava is only 60 kilometers (about 37½ miles) from Vienna and despite stringent visa regulations, it is possible to find out what is happening there.

I decided to go to Bratislava to find the "evidence" of a "pogrom," even though I knew that pogroms had not, nor could they ever happen in the new Czechoslovakia. The newspapers had reported that the "evidence" of this "pogrom" could not be concealed.

I got my visa immediately and a few

days later I was walking the streets of Bratislava looking for the "pogrom." First of all I sought out the Jewish stores. But I confess that I could find not a single one, nor could I find non-Jewish stores, either. For there are no private stores in Bratislava, since all stores are nationalized.

I stopped a militiaman and asked him where I could find the broken windows? He couldn't understand what I was talking about. Jews in Bratislava with whom I spoke about the matter laughed at me when I asked them about "anti-Semitism" and "pogroms." One Jew said to me: "Such an idea could only arise in a diseased mind."

Looking for a "pogrom" in Czechoslovakia today is just like looking for Nineveh, ancient capital of Syria, in contemporary Mesopotamia. It exists in the debris, not in reality.

If the hearts of the powers-that-be in Washington, as in Vienna, really bleed for the Jews, why don't they demand that the thousands of nazi war criminals freed by the Americans be put on trial?

A LETTER FROM PRAGUE

By Rabbi Abraham Bick

Prague, December 21, 1952

I am writing this letter at the Prague airport where I, together with other delegates to the People's Congress for Peace in Vienna, am waiting for a plane to take us to Berlin.

I spent 22 hours in Prague and was able to visit the historical "Old-New Synagogue" on 18 Maizl Street. There I attended morning and evening prayers and spoke to the cantor and both secretaries of the Jewish community in Prague. Both Dr. Fisher, a secretary, and Bauminger, the director of the Jewish Historical Museum, which is

maintained by the government, are responsible leaders of the Jewish community and are aides to the Chief Rabbi of Prague, Dr. Sichel.

Both of these men hurled back with infinite scorn the insane charges made by the foreign capitalist and warmongering press concerning a supposed wave of anti-Semitism in Czechoslovakia or that the Slansky trial was in any way anti-Semitic.

"In the Czechoslovak People's Republic," these leading representatives of the Prague Jewish community stated, "anti-Semitism and racism are sternly punished. Everyone who gets acquainted with the life of the country will be convinced that Jews participate in heavy and light industry, in the intellectual professions, in government institutions, frequently in a higher proportion than the Jews are to the non-Jewish population."

The secretary of the Jewish community, Dr. Fisher, denounced as false the so-called rumors that the population of the ancient city of Bratislava had called for pogroms. This lie, said Dr. Fisher, which was apparently fabricated in the American zone of Austria, is belied by the fact that only a short time ago, the city government of Bratislava helped to cover the expenses of construction of the new synagogue which the Bratislava Jewish community has just built. This community consists of some 400 people and their religious needs are supplied by the city government.

The community secretary also told me that the Prague Jewish community consists of some 8,000 people. An active religious-cultural life is carried on. Aside from the Old-New Synagogue, the historical museum of the now desolate Czech Jewish communities and the historical cemetery which is maintained by the government, the community also has a religious Jewish periodical and a library.

On the basis of all these facts, Dr. Fisher concluded, we can describe as ill-intentioned lies all those rumors which claim that these enemies of the people, these spies, were tried because they were Jews.

WHAT M. OREN SAID AT PRAGUE

THE testimony of M. Oren at the Prague trial of the Slansky group last November is of interest for several reasons. Not only does it add to the weight of evidence under which the conspirators were compelled to confess their part in the conspiracy. It also shows how unfounded is the persistent reiteration of Mapam, "left" Zionist party in Israel, that one of their leaders, Mordechai Oren, is innocent of involvement in the conspiracy, even if everyone else convicted was guilty.

According to Oren's testimony, his function in the conspiracy was that of contact man and transmitter of espionage information.

This leader of Hashomer Hatzair confessed to having been an agent of British intelligence since 1934 and later of Israel intelligence. In recent years, Oren said, he had served his intelligence function as liaison between Rudolph Slansky and Konni Zilliacus, former British Labor M.P. and ardent Titoist. (Zilliacus had been a British intelligence officer in Siberia in 1919.) Oren also maintained contact with Moshe Pijade, one of Tito's chief lieutenants.

Oren testified that Ehud Avriel, former Israeli ambassador to Czechoslovakia, was the contact man between Slansky and Tito's foreign minister, Ales Bebler. Bebler in turn maintained contact between Slansky and Moshe

Sharett, Israeli foreign minister. This information, said Oren, he had received from Raphael Ben Sholom, former consul and secretary of the Israel embassy at Prague.

Oren described the meeting which took place between Slansky and Sharett. He also detailed a conversation which he had had with the former British Labor foreign minister Herbert Morrison, who expressed the hope that developments in Yugoslavia would be speeded up and who admitted that Zilliacus was playing an important role in this speedup process. Oren also testified that Morrison had told him that elements similar to Tito existed in the other people's democracies such as, for example, Czechoslovakia, and Morrison mentioned Slansky in this connection.

As to the connection between Slansky and Pijade, Oren said as follows: "Pijade told me to contact Slansky through the Israeli representative in Czechoslovakia, Ehud Avriel. This was later confirmed by Avriel himself when I arrived in Czechoslovakia in 1949 from Yugoslavia. I then gave Avriel a message on behalf of Bebler that he, Avriel, must go to Yugoslavia in connection with the procurement of arms. Pijade had asked me whether I knew Slansky personally. At the same time I was asked to deliver to Slansky with my own hands a number of documents on the

position of the Titoites regarding the resolution of the Cominform and workers' parties."

Oren also revealed how it was that he came to Czechoslovakia at the end of 1951. He explained that he had been sent there by Israeli Foreign Minister Sharett himself in order to cover up all trace of the relationship between Sharett and Slansky and also to find out the circumstances of Slansky's arrest. It was in the course of carrying out this assignment that Oren was arrested in Prague.

In reply to the prosecutor's question as to who gave Oren instructions on the last visit to Prague, Oren said Avriel, and then added immediately, "I meant rather Arich L. Kubovi." When the prosecutor asked Oren if he hadn't mixed up the names and meant Kubovi instead of Avriel, Oren answered, "Yes, I meant Kubovi." Before uttering the name of Kubovi, Israeli ambassador at Prague whose recall was recently requested by the Czechoslovak government, Oren hesitated a moment and then said the name in a trembling voice.

The statements of Oren and of his cousin Shimon Orenstein, former Israeli employee at the Israel consulate at Prague, who also testified, were confirmed by several of the accused, such as Slansky, and also by the former Czech ambassador to Israel, A. Goldstuecker. Slansky testified that he knew that Avriel was an intelligence agent. Slansky also testified that "through the medium of Zionist organizations, links were strengthened with the American imperialists who carried on espionage activities in Czechoslovakia." Goldstuecker also testified that he had been sent to Israel as ambassador "in order to establish close ties between Slansky and the Zionist government organs."

MOSCOW CHIEF RABBI SAYS . . .

By Joseph Clark

Moscow, January 15

QUERIED about discovery of the plot of nine Soviet doctors to murder Soviet leaders, Rabbi Solomon Schliefer, Moscow chief rabbi, said yesterday: "These doctors who are Jewish are not accused as Jews but as Soviet citizens. Anti-Semitism has been rooted out by law and by will of the people but any Soviet citizen who is proved to harm the Soviet Union must be

punished irrespective of religion or national origin. Similarly all persons meriting reward are rewarded without bias. Jews are active in all facets of Soviet life. Many recently were awarded famed Stalin prizes."

The rabbi's statement was supported by other leaders of the congregation. Schliefer is also president of the Jewish community of Moscow. He made the statement after evening prayer.

In the next issue

As we went to press, a new hysteria about "anti-Semitism" in the Soviet Union broke loose over the arrest of nine Soviet doctors, six of them Jewish, for murder of Soviet leaders.

We shall discuss this in our next issue.

Negro History Week

February 7-14

I: TWO POEMS

A MEETING AT VESEY'S

By Aaron Kramer

Welcome brothers, to my house
where lamps are not lit, where blinds are drawn,
where deeds instead of names will be known,
where friends greet friends with half a voice!

Beware of the informer moon!
Beware of trees that tell for a price!
Liberty now has no public place—
it is an outlaw in this town.

Brother Vesey, I am sent here by three hundred rebel slaves.
In your hands they rest their hope, and in your dream they
place their lives.

Here are coins from harassed fingers—give them rifles in
return!

Gabriel is what they call you—they are listening for the
horn. . . .

Brother Vesey, I bring pennies, and a prayer from six planta-
tions:
neither meat nor wine can fill us—we are hungry for
munitions.

Do you need the angriest hundred? do you seek the most
courageous?

Here's your list: my men are lions pacing back and forth
in cages. . . .

Just like a wind with seeds to sow
whisper, whisper the word!
All through the cotton from row to row
whisper, whisper the word!
Wherever the whip has worked its woe
whisper, whisper the word!
Wherever no tears are left to flow
whisper, whisper the word!
Some will not answer though they're near you,

near enough to run and hide;
some, miles away, will hear you:
hear you and run to your side.
Some will rebuke and hound you,
hound you for the trouble you bring.
Some will put their arms around you
as though you are everything.

To all you know, wherever you go
whisper, whisper the word!
The trumpet of freedom is about to blow—
whisper, whisper the word!

This poem is reprinted from Aaron Kramer's latest volume of poems, Denmark Vesey. This book is reviewed by Morris U. Schappes in this issue, page 29.

AMERICAN TRAGEDY IN THREE ACTS

By Lucy Smith

I: THE CRIME

Walking the streets one morning,
Couldn't sleep for the blues.
I saw a white whore murdered
By a white man full of booze.

Walking the streets that morning,
Should have stayed in bed.
My crime was being black—and near
When they found that white whore dead.

II: THE CONFESSION

confess
sure he confessed
blinded by bright white lights . . .
burned by hot white hate
ringed about by hostile white faces
with the white lights glaring

with the white hate searing
with the white faces repeating
confess
sure he confessed.

III: THE TRIAL

Lynch Law sat in the jury box,
Ran cold in the judge's veins,
Ranted and raved in the courtroom,
Lynch Law rattled the chains.

Lynch Law's voice was strong.
Loud its hate was sung.
Lynch Law's power was great—
And the black man swung.

This poem is reprinted from the volume of Lucy Smith's poems, No Middle Ground, published by the Writers' Division of the Philadelphia Council of the Arts, Sciences and Professions in 1952. Lucy Smith is a young Negro poet of Philadelphia.

II: THE LABOR QUESTION

NOT the least important among the subjects to which we invite your earnest attention is the condition of the laboring class at the South. Their cause is one with the laboring classes all over the world. The labor unions of the country should not throw away this colored element of strength. Everywhere there is dissatisfaction with the present relation of labor and capital, and today no subject wears an aspect more threatening to civilization than the respective claims of capital and labor, landlords' and tenants. In what we have to say for our laboring class we expect to have and ought to have the sympathy and support of laboring men everywhere and of every color.

It is a great mistake for any class of laborers to isolate itself and thus weaken the bond of brotherhood between those on whom the burden and hardships of labor fall. The fortunate ones of the earth, who are abundant in land and money and know nothing of the anxious care and pinching poverty of the laboring classes, may be indifferent to the

appeal for justice at this point, but the laboring classes cannot afford to be indifferent. What labor everywhere wants, what it ought to have and will some day demand and receive, is an honest day's pay for an honest day's work. As the laborer becomes more intelligent he will develop what capital already possesses—that is the power to organize and combine for its own protection. Experience demonstrates that there may be a slavery of wages only a little less galling and crushing in its effects than chattel slavery, and that this slavery of wages must go down with the other. . . .

The above is drawn from a speech made by the great Negro leader Frederick Douglass at the National Convention of Colored Men at Louisville, Kentucky, on September 24, 1883. It is as pertinent today as the day it was spoken. The excerpt is reproduced from Herbert Aptheker's A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States (Citadel Press, New York, 1951) p. 662. —Eds.

By Frederick Douglass

III: NEGRO LABOR IS ADVANCING

The second annual convention of the National Negro Labor Council discusses progress and perspectives in the fight against Jimcrow

By Eugene Gordon

A brother boomed though the loudspeaker at the National Negro Labor Council convention on November 21 in Cleveland: "There're some things we've got to see very clearly. One is that we mustn't let our enemies get us flustered. That's just what they want. Another thing to remember is that we Negroes are a big roadblock on the

EUGENE GORDON is a veteran Negro labor journalist.

way to fascism."

William R. Hood, secretary of Ford Local 600 and president of the Council, later emphasized that fact. "Big Business is cooking a pot of poison stew for all workers," he said. Referring to the white supremacist by the derisive name common among black workers and farmers. Hood shouted above applause: "Mr. Charley, you shall not pass!"

It was a year since NNLC's founding convention in

Cincinnati, "and we return to Ohio as though our forefathers and mothers—those great freedom fighters of the underground railroad, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglass—had called us back to warn us that democracy in the United States is in its twilight zone." President Hood continued: "We have come back to Ohio to say that we will keep the pledge we made last year—that the fight for economic, political and social freedom which they began will not be in vain. Yes, we are back to say that *the walls of Jimcrow will come tumbling down. WE WILL BE FREE!*"

The Price of Jimcrow

Fewer white workers say today—as many once said: "What have we got to do with the Negro problem?"

Fewer Jews say—as many used to say: "There's no relationship of the Negro question to the Jewish question."

Both non-Jewish white workers and Jews—all Jews, and not just workers—got the right answers in Cleveland.

Let me explain, before we go into those answers and the reasons why they are right, why I emphasize the point that *all* Jews—workers and employers, those who sell and those who buy, religious and non-religious, reactionary and progressive—have a stake in the Negro's liberation. It is that the whole mass of the Jewish people in the United States, regardless of their class or other differentiations, is an object of discrimination, all alike standing in danger of the gas chambers if fascism triumphs.

The Negro people in the United States under the present rule of brutal, rapacious imperialism, are all oppressed. And in South Africa under the Malan tyranny. The Negro's and the Jew's enemy cracks down without regard to class, sex, age or physical condition, when he no longer can afford to allow any expression of dissent.

How do we know that the answers given in Cleveland were right? Who authorized those Negroes to speak for the majority of United States citizens?

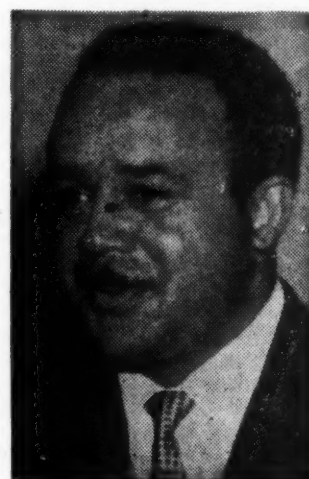
Fewer white workers today believe the Negro "problem" means nothing to them. That is because experience has taught more white workers that their prejudice—as a fact sheet given to delegates by a union research bureau showed—"can be boiled down to profit and loss—four and a half billion dollars of profits to the boss, four and a half billion dollars of loss to the workers—both black and white."

I asked a white woman and a white man why they came to a convention dedicated to Negro liberation. She wanted to see discrimination in employment ended, "especially against Negro women." Why? Wasn't she getting along all right? She was young, pretty and white.

She was serious. "Discrimination against Negro workers," she said, "pays off the boss in very high dividends. Profits are even higher when the Negro is a woman. Say she works in his laundry. Well, she gets less money than I'd be getting and he saves by hiring her. His wife, at the same time, saves him money by hiring a Negro woman and paying her half of what she'd pay me as a domestic."

"I used to work in a sawmill," the white man said. "I'm better off than those Negro sawmill workers," the white fellows would say. "They do that dirty, hard work and they don't get but 90 cents an hour. But I get ten cents more." Now, those white fellows felt superior. What they didn't think about—till somebody set them wise—was that *all* the sawmill workers doing that kind of job out West get \$1.93 an hour. That Negro's 90 cents was pulling all the other sawmill workers down."

A Negro delegate from Savannah said that the minute CIO started backsliding on the race question—not taking in Negroes on an equal footing with whites—it weakened itself down South. The CIO was strong when it united all workers, black and white, on a basis of complete equality on the job. It was one great big clenched fist under the boss's nose, not one little black hand and one little white hand.



William R. Hood

Bill Hood was applauded as he said: "We declare further that no official of, any union nor any power on earth, will keep us apart from the millions of white workers in mine, mill and factory with whom we share the common burden of a brutal and unlicensed exploitation. The National Negro Labor Council was founded—and exists today—to help further unite, not separate, all sons and daughters of labor, whatever their race, creed, color or national origin."

Against "The Fascist Man"

A young Negro woman from Greater New York's Negro Labor Council brought up the savage official persecution of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg. "We must fight for their lives as a part of our efforts to keep our closest white allies from being separated from us."

The Negro workers, Hood said, would have to stand out against every move of "the Fascist Man" to limit the democratic rights of all Americans. And there was wild applause of approval when he warned: "If The Man I'm talking about ever gets the power to put us in jail for

opposing his ideas, then few of us will ever see the light of day outside of prison. . . . The Smith act and all its little cousins, including the Taft-Hartley, McCarran and McCarran-Walter acts, must go!"

Every Negro there supported Hood's declaration that "If 30 million Americans—15 million Negro people and 15 million workers—join with the Jewish people to say there shall be no more anti-Semitism, and mean it, then there will be no more anti-Semitism!" I knew that at least 15 Jewish delegates attended the convention. Their presence signified that they understood the necessity of

Negro-white unity. But I wondered why they did not discuss the question of Negro-Jewish relations there.

A Detroit delegate declared everybody must come to see—so there could be united action of Jews and Negroes—that "the campaign of discrimination against the Jewish people is waged by the same crowd that has so long carried on the terror campaign against the Negro people."

"I'm Puerto Rican and I and my people know the same man that persecutes us discriminates against the Jews," a young hotel worker from New York said. "I know how the big man's hand feels on their shoulder, because I've felt it

ONE YEAR OF THE NEGRO LABOR COUNCIL

The following record of achievement was noted by Coleman A. Young, executive secretary of the National Negro Labor Council, in his speech before the Cleveland convention on November 21, 1952. —Eds.

I AM here to boast a bit, and justly. It would be reason to boast if we accomplished no more than simply being here despite the obstacles hurled against us. But, I have more, much more, than our mere survival to report. For not only did we survive: we grew stronger. Not only did we struggle. Our recorded victories in which we of the National Negro Council and its 35 local councils can glory. Victories that point the way to still greater accomplishment in the year to come and the years to follow.

Brothers and sisters, I report from across the country.

Dateline Brooklyn, 1952—the Brooklyn Negro Labor Council has conducted a successful campaign against Brooklyn Union Gas Company and against the F. M. Schaefer Brewing Company, brewers of Schaefer beer. In both cases the campaign resulted in the hiring and up-grading of Negro workers.

Dateline Oakland, California, 1952—the East Bay Negro Labor Council, located in Oakland, has succeeded in cracking the Jimcrow hiring policy of the Key System Railway and winning jobs for 90 Negro workers. The East Bay Council also recently won placement of Negro women as operators in the Pacific Coast Telephone and Telegraph Company. At last report, seven had been employed and that's only the beginning.

Dateline Detroit, March 1952—Following an interview last week with officers of the Greater Detroit Negro Labor Council, Max Shay, general manager of the Big Bear Markets Inc., stated that he will hire Negro women as cashiers in the West Grand Boulevard and Woodward Avenue store.

Dateline Milwaukee, September 1952—the Milwaukee Negro Labor Council waged a successful fight to place two Negro women in the Wagner Electrical Company, cracking through the firm's tight policy of discrimination.

Dateline Louisville, March 1952—the Louisville Council has achieved one of the most significant victories of any council to date in breaking down the Jimcrow job training practices of a municipal board of education and welding together white and Negro workers in support of the struggle for Negro rights. In anticipation of the opening of a big new General Electric plant hiring

16,000 persons in Louisville, the local council fought through an agreement from the board of education to make available special courses allied to the electrical field in the Negro public high school. The Louisville Council secured 5,000 signatures on FEPC petitions in the downtown area with at least half the signers white workers.

Dateline Chicago, March 1952—The Drexel National Bank has hired a Negro to the post of administrative assistant for the first time in its history, yielding to pressure from the Chicago Negro Labor Council, which continuously picketed the establishment. While the hiring of just one Negro represents only a partial victory, members of the Chicago Council pledged a continued fight to win through to more positions for Negroes in top categories.

Dateline Los Angeles, 1952—The Los Angeles Negro Labor Council has won jobs for Negro women in the radio industry here. Jobs for 14 Negro workers were won at Columbia Steel works in L.A.

Dateline Flint, January 1952—The Flint Negro Labor Council conducted a picket line in front of Zerka Rassa Super Market protesting the Jimcrow hiring policy of that store. After two days of picketing, not only did Zerka and Rassa Super Market hire a Negro worker but two neighboring super markets hired Negroes as the result of the campaign. (Three Jimcrow birds with one picket line.)

Dateline San Francisco, 1952—A militant fight against the discrimination in hiring practiced by Sears Roebuck and Company throughout the nation was won here by the Negro Labor Council when the Sears management employed Negro women as clerks for the first time in the firm's long history. The victory signals a major breakthrough in one of the most powerful department store chains in the country.

These dynamic victories in San Francisco are paralleled by similar breakthroughs at Sears stores in Newark, New Jersey and here in Cleveland where a Negro woman has been placed behind the counter, another as an office worker in the local Sears outlet. The Cleveland victory also included an agreement by Sears that Negro applicants would be hired in all categories in the future and that special steps will be taken to guarantee the inclusion of Negroes in all special job training courses.

on mine. I couldn't turn round and hit him, but all of us together can hit him."

Long, loud applause indicated the convention's feeling.

Who gave the Negro authority to take charge of the Freedom Train?

Perhaps the question is better put as *what* gave the authority?

Their position in society gave it. Booker T. Washington used to characterize the Negro as "fartherest down" of all the people. The delegate from Alabama told me: "When we heave The Man off of our back and stand up and stretch ourselves, everybody will be up, because there aint anybody underneath us."

Or, as a Southern white delegate said: "The white man can't keep the Negro down in the ditch unless he stays down there and holds 'em. Because if he gets up and goes off, the Negro'll get up, too. So the thing to do is make it so both of 'em can get up."

All of which seems to place the center of the struggle in the South.

"I want to speak to the people from down home," said a young Negro woman who had left there for the North. "I know where my liberation is coming from."

The Tri-State delegation—South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia—led by a Negro woman from Virginia—demanded a resolution "pointing to, or turning eyes toward, the South." "Too many of us," another woman delegate said, "have forgotten where down home is."

Some Achievements

Local 397, Packinghouse Workers, CIO, meanwhile, spurred forward by the NLC organization among them, forced into their contract a pledge by Armour's to remove Jimcrow signs from all its shops in the South, including White and Colored from toilets, restrooms, elevators and watercoolers or fountains. The national body is tackling the question of Northern industries shifting South in order to eliminate Negroes.

The convention cheered Asbury Howard, Negro vice president from Alabama, when, interrupting his speech from the platform, he waved to his delegation to stand. "These are they who are going to liberate you! These are they you call the New Negro!"

An elderly menhaden fisherman striker-delegate with the Tri-State Council said: "It's up to us to save democracy and to save the Negro people. But I contend that all the Negroes, South as well as North—with the help of our good white brothers and sisters South and North—will have to do it. The Negro, naturally, will have a big share in leading this fight."

But will white workers follow Negro leaders?

"I . . . say that when white workers join in campaigns for the liberation of their fellow freedom-fighters, the white workers are helping themselves," Maurice J. Travis, secretary-treasurer of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers and vice president of the NNLC, had said at the 1951 founding

convention. "Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the deep South. And for two very important reasons. One reason is that when the fight for the elementary right of Negro workers to vote in the South is won—and it will be won—there will be an immediate change in the political balance of power, not just in the South, but all over the nation. Because when the poll tax goes, the stranglehold of the poll-tax congressmen on our government will be broken. That will open the doors for a whole series of changes in the political complexion of this land."

Whites followed Negro leadership during the past year in Brooklyn, Oakland (Calif.), Milwaukee, Louisville, Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Flint and in New York's Manhattan. White members of Brooklyn's Council helped get Negroes hired or upgraded at Schaefer Brewing Company and at Union Gas. They contributed, in Oakland, toward cracking Jimcrow in the Key System Railway for 90 Negro workers. There, also, they did their part in winning placement of Negro women operators in the Pacific Coast Telephone and Telegraph Company. They, with the Negro delegates in Cleveland, thrilled at breaking the press and the radio conspiracy of silence on the convention. Together they threw a surprise picket line of 1500 around the great passenger airlines headquarters. ("Look at the white people in the line!" I heard one cop exclaim to another.)

Why did they participate in struggles for Negroes?

NNLC's white vice president-at-large, Maurice Travis, answers: "First of all, a white worker has a responsibility to join the fight for placing the same tools in the hands of his Negro brother as he himself has. One of those tools is a job. Another of those tools is membership in a trade union—full membership. Still another tool is the right to advance into positions of leadership in the union."

"Let me tell you white delegates something," said white delegate John Bojack, from Detroit. "This question tests you on whether you're a real ally of the Negro worker. If you're not going out of your way to get Negroes jobs, you're not an ally."

NNLC Program

The 1,256 delegates and observers from 26 states—45 from the South—adopted this program for 1953:

- Build the National Negro Labor Council into a mass organization "mainly of Negro workers willing and capable of financing its struggle for freedom" in the Negro community, "an organization capable of leading all fights facing the people and withstanding all storms that may blow our way."

- Continue the campaigns to get jobs for Negroes in all industries, with concentrated effort on the Sears Roebuck chain, hotels, railroads and airlines.

- Continue the campaign to get one million signatures on the petition for FEPC and efforts for inclusion of FEPC clauses in union contracts.

- Fight for repeal of the Smith, McCarran and McCarran-Walter laws and defense of victims of those laws.

- Reaffirm solidarity with liberation movements of colonial peoples, especially against the South African white supremacists.

- Take special actions in the interests of Negro women workers.

The keynote for these campaigns was sounded by Council Executive Secretary Coleman Young: "Our Freedom Train is rolling, brothers and sisters. Let us go among the people—the workers, Negro and white—singing, 'Get on board, little children! There's room for many a more.'"

A Negro GI Writes from Korea

Below is an excerpt from a letter written by a Negro GI in Korea to a Jewish couple who own the small grocery store in Washington, D.C. in which the GI worked as a clerk before going into the army. Notable in the excerpt is the contrast between the Jewish GI in Korea who speaks contemptuously of the Jewish people and the Negro soldier who gives him a lesson in human relations. —Eds.

December 14, 1952.
"Hell hole of the World"
Korea

Dear—

... I've got a guy in my squad whose ego or morale needs building up. He's a little jumpy and a little slow catching on to things. Consequently the guys tease him a lot. Now, he thinks it's because he's Jewish. But I know better and told him so. As you well know I wouldn't let anybody catch "hell" for that in my squad. So one day he was looking at my dog tags and he saw the "Star." [The writer of the letter had asked his Jewish friends to send him a Star of David, which they had done. —Eds.] I'm telling you, he could have been knocked over with a feather. He asked me how come I was wearing it. Also he asked me something using an expression I've only heard once in my life. Please forgive me for repeating it. Quote: Are you a "kike"? I said, "a what?" His turn, "a Hebe?" Well it was my chance to be knocked over. I took him aside and very patiently explained to him what I thought of him using these expressions. I let him in on the fact that it was either Jew, Jewish or Hebrew.

We then had a long conversation about food, you know, bagels, sour cream, etc. Again I ask forgiveness. I told him I was part Jewish. [The writer of the letter is of course not Jewish at all; he apparently felt it would be reassuring to his Jewish fellow-soldier to invent a bit. —Eds.] So now he feels better knowing there's two of us in the platoon. Especially since the other one is his squad leader (me). Favor: If you ever get a chance, how about writing him a letter or two as he is still a little mixed up. Incidentally he thinks I'm one of the smartest Jews he's ever met also the first "dark one" although he's heard of them. So how do you like your new relative? ...

JIMMY

World Fight Against Jimcrow

The following is excerpted from the speech of William R. Hood, president of the National Negro Labor Council and secretary-treasurer of Ford Local 600 (UAW-CIO), at the Cleveland convention of the NNLC on November 22, 1952. —Eds.

BROTHERS and sisters, even as we meet here to plan ways and means to bring down the walls of Jimcrow, we are not fighting alone. In the streets of South Africa thousands of men and women challenge the Malan fascist policy and defy all Jimcrow laws. Many of them have been shot down in the streets. The battle still continues. When Malan's latest Jimcrow laws were introduced, the African women in one large area persuaded all of the men to stay home from work in protest. The African people mean to run their own business from here on out.

Yes, in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Puerto Rico, the cry is the same—End White Supremacy Rule.

We have a special responsibility in the present South African crisis. First, because of the close parallel and links between the 8½ million South African people's struggle for democratic rights and the similar struggle of 15 million Negro people in the United States. Second, because the American banking interests such as Morgan-Rockefeller and Morgan-Guggenheim have large investments in South Africa and have loaned huge sums of money to the Malan government. Other American companies share in exploiting South Africa's resources and labor, such as Standard Oil, Socony Vacuum, Standard Vacuum, the Aluminum Corporation of America, Ford, General Motors, Chrysler, Studebaker, Goodyear, General Tire, Firestone, and U.S. Rubber. Also in South Africa are International Harvester, American Cyanamid, General Electric, General Foods, Kellogg Company, Coca Cola and so forth.

These are companies which have taken the record profits wrung out of our labor and multiplied them many times on the basis of the almost unpaid labor of our African brothers and sisters. In the United Nations the United States representatives, speaking for big business as usual, have sided with Malan and the British and French colonialists in trying to keep the question of discrimination in South Africa from coming up. But just two days ago a bloc of Asian, Arab and Latin-American nations—tired of Anglo-Saxon arrogance—voted to set up a committee to investigate South African Hitler-like racism and for once the "white is right" boys in our State Department find themselves with their votes down. They're probably very embarrassed but it doesn't embarrass us at all. In fact, if the UN would look into some situations, not merely in South Africa, but in the South, U.S.A., we're sure they'd find almost every violation in the book of the Charter of Human Rights.

We can do no less than extend greetings to these brave people and at the same time take heart in our fight at home. These are the walls that must and will come tumbling down—but the people look to us for leadership. The masses in the South are ready to fight for full democracy. History has given us this grave task, for we have looked the fascist man in the eye and we know him for what he is.

JEWISH WORKING PEOPLE SING

The choruses of the Jewish Music Alliance carry on the finest cultural traditions of the Jewish workers' struggle for democracy

By Maurice Rauch

SOMEHOW, I am unfailingly taken aback when people ask me, "Just what is the Jewish Music Alliance?" I know how natural it is for one whose energies are largely devoted to the work of a specific organization to feel that it enjoys only a small measure of the recognition it rightfully deserves. Yet it seems to me that the largest Jewish choral organization in America, comprising some 35 choral groups with a combined membership of approximately 2,000 singers, appearing year after year for the last 28 years in the largest concert halls in the country before an annual audience upward of 100,000, should by now have made its existence more generally known. That the general public should be ignorant of the nature, history and activities of the Jewish Music Alliance is, in a measure, understandable since the most effective means of publicity like press, radio, etc., are beyond its financial reach. This is no excuse, however, for the fact that even in immediate cultural circles there exists much vagueness about the work of the Jewish Music Alliance.

A visitor to the office of the Jewish Music Alliance on the seventh floor of 1 Union Square in New York City finds two small rooms whose physical appurtenances reveal much of the story. On one overflowing bookcase rests a bust of Jacob Schaefer, the founder of the Alliance. Another bookcase displays prominently the newest publication of the J. M. A., a beautifully designed collection of 22 of Jacob Schaefer's choral works entitled, *Ich Her a Kol*. [See the review of this book by Sidney Finkelstein on page 28 of this issue.—Eds.] Among the photographs of various choral groups hanging on the wall is a framed document attesting the participation of the Jewish Music Alliance in the first world congress of Jewish Choral Groups in Israel last summer.

The visitor would be sure to find the office humming with one activity or another. One part of the office might be busily mailing out the new monthly bulletin of the J. M. A. called *Resonance*, a four page publication in English and Yiddish dealing with musical subjects and

MAURICE RAUCH is conductor of four choruses of the Jewish Music Alliance, including that of New York. He has also composed choral works which have been widely performed, including the recent *Peace Cantata*. He was selected to conduct the J. M. A. chorus at the international choral festival in Israel last summer.

events within the Music Alliance as well as in the world of music in general. In another part of the office, the visitor might find the music committee in session with the national secretary, Chaim Suller, discussing the program of the Alliance's Annual Jewish Music Festival, which will take place this year during Jewish Music Month. A singer or two or a conductor from out of town, interested in finding new repertoire, might be browsing through the music files. A secretary might be busy answering inquiries about music from all parts of the world.

Origin in Workers' Needs

This picture, so far, might be the picture one would find in any small music publishing office or concert bureau. The uninformed visitor would soon become aware, however, of an atmosphere of dedication and decided purpose in all this activity that could never be found in any commercial enterprise. Born out of the musical needs of the Jewish working class, the J. M. A. has never swerved from its original purpose to sing of the workers' struggles, to commemorate their triumphs and to preserve and enrich their musical culture. Today this purpose is being realized by the devotion of the choruses to the cause of peace and the preservation of democracy and for a better life. Everywhere the choruses serve at meetings and concerts to further these ends.

Immediately after the great influx of Jewish immigrants in the early part of the century, many such musical and choral organizations were founded more or less on these principles. The Jews who migrated to this country brought more than a rich heritage of folk music. They also brought a militant working class tradition, a hunger for social and economic justice, a desire to see their children grow up in a land that promised acceptance, equality and security. And if, they found, as they did at first, slums and sweat shops, unemployment and prejudice, it was nothing new. They organized and fought against these conditions. They dreamed in their poetry and song about a better life, a better world, a better America. The unions grew strong, fraternal organizations appeared, workers' clubs arose. Because cultural life was an integral part of the dream, they gave birth to dramatic, literary and musical organizations.

The Creative Jacob Schaefer

Upon this turbulent creative scene of cultural activity there emerged in the early twenties the figure of Jacob Schaefer. Since he himself was an immigrant and worker, it is hardly surprising that his life and work should have become synonymous with Jewish labor music in America. It was comparatively late in his short life that he came to practice music as a profession. His formal musical education practically coincided with his years of musical activity, in organizing workers' choruses and orchestras, conducting them and composing for them. In 1925, he founded the Jewish Music Alliance and until his death in 1936 at the age of 48, he served as editor of its publications, trained and inspired its conductors and tirelessly composed, arranged and collected.

Since that time many musicians have pored over the hundred or so songs, the oratorios and cantatas that Jacob Schaefer composed and have puzzled over the reason for the vigor and endurance they have already demonstrated. They point out undeveloped themes, passages naively influenced by other composers from Verdi to Wagner, inexpert writing for instruments and shake their heads in wonderment, while missing the point of his greatness completely—his complete identification with the Jewish working class. Its struggles were his struggles, its poets were his poets, its aspirations were his own. His musical language, flowing from Jewish traditional and folk sources, spoke directly and clearly to his audience in warm, personal and completely comprehensible idiom. It is for this reason that his work has not only endured but has grown in stature with the passing years.

It is for this same reason that the Jewish Music Alliance has endured and even grown in prestige and influence during the years while other Jewish musical organizations, growing away from the people, have dwindled to the vanishing point. There have been instances where a Jewish musical organization has been set up, liberally endowed by one or more people, with an ambitious and even grandiose program to further the cause of Jewish music. For a while, it makes a splash. Beautiful brochures are printed, great artists are engaged and, from the technical standpoint, good musical results are achieved. Yet, when the money is gone, they vanish from the scene without a trace.

I remember going to one of a series of concerts given by one such organization. There were no tickets to be bought since the entire series had been sold out in advance to supporters of this project. I went backstage and was courteously passed into the auditorium by the conductor. Imagine my consternation when I found I could have my pick of seats in any part of the hall. I think this incident is extremely revealing. Here was an organization purporting to speak musically for the Jewish people but without actual roots in the real needs of the masses. It remained a sterile idea from above. That it must always be so is axiomatic, it seems to me. The steady, if unspectacular growth and vigor of the Jewish Music Alliance, proves this point.



Jacob Schaefer

On a Firm Foundation

Like a pyramid, its architecture is a sound one. It derives support from the broad base on which it rests and its height and strength are determined by the broadness of its base. Organizations without this mass base may, like an inverted pyramid touching the earth with its point only, be propped up for a while by money and publicity, but must eventually topple.

Arising out of the cultural needs of the Jewish working class, the choruses are supported by it. The choruses, in turn, out of their need for coordinated leadership, both musical and organizational, created and support the Jewish Music Alliance. To the extent that, and as long as the Alliance and its choruses remain the true expression of the needs of the Jewish working class, in that measure and for so long will it endure and flourish. That it has done so for 28 years through periods of hardship, war and depression, is evidence of the validity of its principles.

The path has never been easy. There were times when the leadership was weak. There were times when musical creativeness flagged. Sometimes the organization was slow to adapt itself to changing times as every living organism must. While the choruses have many songs in their repertoire of struggle against the sweatshop in this country, the choruses are still inadequately supplied with songs about

more recent Jewish life in America. The J. M. A. is now grappling with this problem as it is with other weaknesses. The past shows that such problems can be met. In the past, when things seemed at their lowest ebb or when times seemed least propitious for cultural activity of any kind, fresh energies were always available to give new impetus to the work. This couldn't have been pure chance. It must have been inherent in the character of this organization to be able to attract these new energies. The necessity for it to exist and function must be powerful and basic.

The Human Element

What are the human elements of this organization? Let us consider the singer, the musician, the man in the audience. The great majority of singers in a chorus are working men and women with no technical knowledge of music. The individual voice quality ranges from the minimum requirement of being able to carry a tune to voices of surprising natural timbre. The singer brings to the chorus his great desire to sing, to sing with others and to serve a purpose with his singing. To satisfy this desire the chorus imposes quite a burden on him. Not only must he come regularly to the one weekly rehearsal (they become two or three before a major concert). He must also help to keep the chorus financially solvent by paying dues, selling tickets for the concerts and taking part in various money-raising affairs. Besides this, he or she may be a member in this or that committee requiring additional time and energy. All this after a day's hard work.

His or her reward lies in the results of all this work. The excellence of the performance, the size and enthusiasm of the audience, the growth of the chorus itself—these are his rewards. Though the work itself is arduous, there is much joy to be found in its doing. The new song, the difficult passage mastered, the balance achieved are a constant source of deep-felt gratification to the singer at every rehearsal. Especially so, when the material itself expresses his own ideas, his own hopes, his own being. When his voice is raised along with others and he feels its power to convey, to stir, to solace and to enthuse, he partakes of the deep joy that only creativeness can give.

This is very much the same for the musician, conductor or composer who dedicates himself to this work. Dedication is the proper term. For without that he could never bring to his work the imagination, inventiveness and painstaking patience it requires. He must bring to the people's chorus his firm conviction of the important role it plays in the life and struggles of the people. He must love the people and their music if his labors are to bear fruit. Without all this the merely well-schooled, competent craftsman is doomed to disappointment and failure. For he can never achieve the rapport between himself and the chorus, between the chorus and the music from which emerges the pulsating, vital performance that is the distinguishing mark of the people singing.

For the conductor the problems are many and difficult.

The small or unbalanced chorus, poor voice material, limited rehearsal time, physical tiredness of the singers, great variation of choral experience encountered among the singers of one chorus, can only be met by ingenious planning, foresight and much tact. His rewards are also great (except financially). The sensitive, expressive instrument he creates becomes the envy of the conductor of the professional choir. The deep belief of his chorus in the songs it sings, the love for its own folk music transcends its vocal limitations and evokes spontaneous recognition and response in its audience. In this age of commercialism in music and of the general low estate to which culture has been relegated in America, it is to the people that the musician must come to practice his craft with dignity and a sense of achievement. The feeling of being needed, the gratification in doing honest and important work are rewards that only too few fields can offer to musicians today.

Advent of Youth

The audiences for the choruses of the Jewish Music Alliance are in most cases growing from year to year. In varying degrees, depending upon the activity and excellence of each individual chorus, there is an increasing interest in and demand for the work of the choruses. More and more has the voice of the Jewish folk chorus singing its folk-songs, its workers' songs, classic and contemporary works, songs of the Negro, songs for peace and freedom, songs of the Israeli worker, become the brightest spot in the cultural life of the entire community. Broadening out and incorporating elements of the theater and the dance in its work, it has attracted wider audiences and an ever greater percentage of Jewish youth.

In the last few years, the advent of Jewish youth choruses in many cities either in conjunction with an already established chorus or entirely on its own gives great promise for the future. In New York, on February 21 there will appear a chorus of some 200 youthful singers at the Jewish Music Alliance Annual Concert at Hunter College Auditorium. Sharing the program with two adult New York choruses, the Jewish Young Folksingers (as they are called) are an augury for the future. In Detroit, Chicago and Los Angeles, similar events are taking place and give added proof of the continuing vitality of Jewish working class music in America as represented by the Jewish Music Alliance.

50th BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

from the Editors to

CHAIM SULLER

National Secretary of the Jewish Music Alliance

A devoted worker for a progressive Jewish people's culture in the service of a democratic and peaceful world

PEOPLE'S FRATERNITY THROUGH SONG

An inspiring choral concert of a Canadian Jewish workers' group before a multi-national audience in the Mine and Mill Union Hall

By Sam Lipshitz

Toronto

A YOUNG boy of about 15 came out to service our car, when we drove up to a gasoline station on the outskirts of Sudbury, last Sunday afternoon.

"Where is the Mine-Mill Hall?" we asked.

"The Union Hall, you mean," the boy replied. "It's just down the way. You can't miss it."

"Do you know what's doing there tonight," we inquired, anxious to see how well the affair, which we came to attend, was known in town.

"Oh, yes," the young boy answered. "They have a concert. A group of singers. They are singing the songs of all nations. My dad and mom are going. I may be there too."

He was referring to the concert of the Folk Singers Group which culminated their Canadian tour. The Sudbury concert was the twentieth performance of the group in the last four weeks. In Sudbury they were the guests of the Mine-Mill Workers' Union, Local 598.

We were sitting in the magnificent new hall of the union, one of the most splendid labor halls in Canada. The crowds were streaming in. Simple, solid, sturdy, hard working men and women, miners and their families, who came to hear a group of Jewish folk singers, members of the United Jewish People's Order. Among them were French-Canadians, Slavic workers, Anglo-Saxons and others. There were few, if any, Jews in the audience. Most of those present had never heard a Jewish song in their life. To some of them the conception of a Jew was based on prejudiced tales heard from anti-Semitic sources. Others figured that the only Jews living are the storekeepers, whose shops are down on the Main Street, and who—so they were told—were responsible for the high prices on clothes and other necessities. To many, this was the first time they ever came in contact with Jewish workers.

Over 600 came to the concert.

The very fine leadership of Local 598 and their program committee are making a great effort to elevate the social life of the union and its membership to a new high plane. The splendid building, which was completed a few months ago (and which is fully paid for) was erected not only for the purpose of housing the offices of the local, but mainly to serve as a recreational and cultural center for the membership.

When Fagel Gartner and the singers came out on the stage the reception was cordial, but at first quite reserved.

You could sense a feeling of critical anticipation. What kind of a concert can these simple Jewish working girls (and young man) render? What are their songs like? Was it worthwhile to come here and spend a whole evening listening to a Jewish choir?

But with every song the spirit in the hall rose. The wonderful working class songs in all languages, the fine solos were finding their way straight into the workers' hearts. You could see almost before your own eyes, how the distance between the stage and the hall was vanishing; how the love and admiration for the performers was growing among these hard-working, Canadian proletarians.

It was a particularly moving experience to see the tremendous applause given, for instance, to Claire Klein when she sang the baby-sitters' song in Yiddish. Here was an audience, none of whom understood a word of Yiddish, and yet Claire's beautiful singing and her truly artistic interpretation overcame the language barrier. One could only marvel at the joy and amusement among the crowd during the excellent rendition of the Yiddish duet "*Bistu Mit Mir Broiges*" (If You are Angry With Me), done so well by Jerry Gray and Claire Klein. No less applause was accorded to the Israeli song "*Zum Gali Gali*," than to the lovely Russian song "*Kak Im Ti Bil*" (Sylvia Minerka, soloist) the words of which were understood by the very great number of Slavic workers who were present.

By the time the concert was over, the spirit in the hall was so enthusiastic, that the mere mention of the possibility of a return performance was met with a hearty cheer.

A new friendship between Jewish workers from Toronto and nickel miners from Sudbury was cemented by the Folk Singers' concert; a unity forged through the weapon of Canadian people's culture.

The Sudbury concert which we were privileged to witness was one of the many great events that our young people's artists were responsible for. The enthusiasm and appreciation of over 6,000 Canadians—of all nationalities and walks of life—for whom the Folk Singers performed across Canada was really indescribable. Remembering that the group was organized only a comparatively short time ago (their first performance took place ten months ago), one can appreciate the great potentialities of building our own Canadian culture, towards which the United Jewish People's Order through its institutions has already made a considerable contribution.

PERLO SERIES: SERVICE TO ISRAEL

Victor Perlo's factual and documented economic analysis of the crisis in Israel and his proposed way out shows the path to real aid to Israel's people

By Louis Harap

IN the last issue we concluded Victor Perlo's five-article series of solid, unassailable economic analysis of the critical situation facing Israel and his proposed way out of the crisis. What do these articles accomplish?

We know that already this series has been a revelation to many Jews. Many, we are aware, would have regarded with skepticism both Mr. Perlo's conclusion that the Ben Gurion regime is ruining Israel and his proposals for putting Israel on the road to prosperity. Certainly Mr. Perlo's analysis clashed with accepted and widely-propagandized Zionist approaches to the problems of Israel. However, that skepticism should have changed to agreement under the battering of hard facts and documentation with which Mr. Perlo presented his view. At the least, many Zionists were disturbed by these articles. Why is this so?

The attitude of Jews toward Zionism and the settlement of Jews in Palestine has undergone deep changes since the thirties. It could hardly be said prior to the thirties that Zionism was of much immediate concern to the majority of Jews. Only in the post World War II period have large numbers of the Jewish middle class and many Jewish workers considered themselves "Zionists" and manifested interest in Palestine and subsequently Israel. In the past eight years they have contributed something over a billion dollars. The reason for this change is that Zionism becomes a mass movement only as a result of some major catastrophe to the Jewish people. It is therefore not surprising that the greatest of all catastrophes suffered by the Jewish people, Hitler's extermination program, aroused deep and active sympathy for the survivors and sharpened the sense of Jewish identification all over the world. It was the slaughter of one third of the world's Jews and Palestine's anti-imperialist war of liberation that caused such large numbers of Jews to consider themselves "Zionists" and to place their confidence in the Zionist movement as the vehicle for making Israel a refuge for homeless and persecuted Jews.

Illusions About Zionism

Yet it is doubtful if many of the hundreds of thousands in this country who actually joined Zionist organizations (perhaps the majority have already left in the past few years) really knew the precise nature of the ideology with

which they felt agreement. The Zionist movement has encouraged the assumption that Zionism is the same as belief in the right of Israel to exist as an independent nation. But this is a baseless assumption. JEWISH LIFE, for instance, from its inception in 1946, has never disguised its anti-Zionism and yet has supported to the utmost the right of Israel to exist as an independent nation. This attitude toward self-determination in Israel was not special pleading for Israel because we believe in this self-determination for all nations, including the Arab nation of Palestine. Thus Zionism is only one of several possible attitudes toward the state of Israel and not by any means synonymous with the right of Israel to exist as an independent state, as the Zionists have tried to make the people believe.

Together with this erroneous belief, the Zionist organizations have subjected the Jewish people to a multi-million dollar propaganda barrage in order also to persuade the Jewish people that there is only one way to put Israel on its feet economically. That way is by complete dependence on investment of foreign capital (chiefly American), by tremendous loans from Washington, private financial contributions and, more recently, by purchase of Bonds for Israel. An advertisement in the *New York Times* of January 11, for instance, states that "United Jewish Appeal dollars are the lifeblood of Israel's new, dynamic society. They are vital to Israel's growth." So intense has propaganda of this kind been that the ordinary Jew not only fails to see any other conceivable alternative to assure the development of Israel, but even resents criticism of current plans to "help" Israel.

The Real Zionist Program

This was the problem to which Mr. Perlo addressed himself in his series: is the program of the middle class Jewish organizations, Zionist and non-Zionist, really the only way by which Israel can develop economically? Is this way even helping the people of Israel to achieve that happy, prosperous and peaceful life which the masses of Jews are concerned that Israel should realize?

After his sharp analysis, rigorously supported by undeniable facts of economic life, Mr. Perlo demonstrated that the program of dominant groups among the Jewish

people of the capitalist world, especially in the United States and Israel, was not carrying Israel into healthy economic channels. More, the program of financing has actually worsened the conditions of the workers and people of Israel. Mr. Perlo showed that in reality the program of those groups was no different from the techniques of those who exploit colonies anywhere for tremendous profits. He found that Zionist economic policies were in fact no different from those in other countries who collaborate with imperialist bleeders of colonies for profit at the expense of the welfare of the majority of the people of the country thus victimized. American Jews who invest in Israel on the surface seem charitable friends of that country. Beneath the surface, however, Mr. Perlo's very specific and concrete analysis shows that monopoly capitalists, predominantly American, through the medium of Jewish capitalists among them, are making Israel a colony of the United States, with the subjection in the political and social, as well as economic, spheres, that this implies.

Of course, this view is not easy for the ordinary Jew, who is inundated with Zionist propaganda, to accept. Yet, if the ordinary Jew really cares for the welfare of the people of Israel, Mr. Perlo's analysis is a challenge to him. If Mr. Perlo's facts and figures are correct and irrefutable, as we believe they are, then there is something radically wrong with the program and parties governing Israel. By the same token, Mr. Perlo's study throws great doubt on the professions of the dominant leadership of the Zionist movement, who propagandize and execute this policy among Jews in Israel and elsewhere, of concern for the welfare of the Jewish people.

Mr. Perlo tears the mask of benevolence off the drive of the Zionist leadership—with the State Department at their back—to make Israel an economic, political and social dependency of the United States. The price that the dominant Zionist leadership is making Israel pay is impoverishment and lowered standard of living. And more, this program falls in with the policy of Washington of making all countries within its economic sway—including Israel—a pawn in the global anti-Soviet strategy.

Results of Ben Gurion Policy

The workers and farmers of Israel know well enough how much "benevolence" has resulted from the millions of dollars in "aid" in various forms from American Jewish capitalists and from Washington. As a result of dollar imperialism they have experienced a steady decline in their standard of living since the establishment of the state. Israel has persisted in a state of chronic crisis that not only shows no signs of abating, but grows more aggravated each day. Mr. Perlo showed that present methods of financing can only result in worsening conditions and colonialization. For Mr. Perlo shows that financiers behave no differently when Israel is involved than anywhere else. One example of such financing—told to me by a business man who had visited Israel—should suffice to make the

point. An American cement company, which received a concession to build a cement factory in Israel, was able to do so at no cost whatsoever. It was done this way: until the factory was finished, the company was allowed to import cement; this cement was sold in Israel at such profiteering prices that sufficient excess profits were derived to pay for the plant without bringing in a cent from the United States. Business is strictly business, even in Israel.

The upshot of Mr. Perlo's series is that, as a result of the penetration of American capital in Israel through Washington "aid," through Bonds for Israel and the various fund raising organizations, the Ben Gurion government has become completely subservient to Washington. To one who had studied Mr. Perlo's analysis, therefore, the revelations of the Prague trial, which showed that the Ben Gurion regime and Zionist organizations had lent themselves to espionage and economic sabotage under the aegis of United States intelligence to weaken the economy of Czechoslovakia, should not come as too great a surprise. For complicity by Zionist agencies in this conspiracy is only another phase of the policy of placing the country at the service of American capital and serving its purposes. Just as one is compelled by hard facts to accept Mr. Perlo's analysis, so one is also forced by the demonstrated facts concerning the Prague trial to accept the fact of Zionist involvement in that conspiracy.

The Alternative for Israel

But Mr. Perlo's analysis was not wholly negative. He showed in his last two articles that there does exist an alternative to dollar subservience in Israel. Prosperity is possible in Israel, he showed. "The main requirements," he said, "are the energy and skill of the people, access to natural resources, people's control of industry, foreign trade on an equal basis [with both socialist and capitalist countries—*Eds.*] and coordinated development with . . . neighboring Arab states, application of the principles discussed to Israel's agriculture . . . and peace."

Concern of the ordinary Jew for Israel also carries responsibilities. Among the first of these is the obligation to face facts. Not to face facts is to do the people of Israel a profound disservice. For it is only on the basis of realities that the well being of Israel's workers and farmers can be realized. Every sincere Jew must ask himself whether he prizes his prejudices more highly than the genuine welfare of Israel's people. The facts presented by Mr. Perlo can be ignored only at the price of the bread and lives of the working people of Israel. The masses of Zionists, as well as non-Zionists, must therefore weigh Mr. Perlo's conclusions very carefully.

An opportunity to study the Perlo series and to pass it on to others is afforded by New Century Publishers (832 Broadway, New York City), who are bringing out these articles in a pamphlet shortly. We urge our readers to take advantage of the availability of this valuable study to inform themselves and others of the facts about the crisis in Israel.

"THOUSAND DOLLARS"

A Short Story

By Tiba G. Willner

FOR years the economic fate of my family rode on the back of the horse that pulled our bread wagon through the streets of a small town in upper New York State. My father was the only Jewish baker in town and daily deliveries were the heart of our business. No horse, no bread delivery. No delivery, no livelihood.

We always dealt with a horse-trader named Nathan, not because we liked him particularly or had illusions about the quality of the horses he could offer us; but because, being Jewish, he presented no language difficulties. Then, too, Nathan always let us pay for the horses in installments.

My mother's amply justified mistrust of Nathan's horses and my father's ability to choose among them were a daily burden to her. She respected my father, who had been a student in old Russia before he became a baker, but she recognized that his awesome learning cast no illumination whatever on choosing horseflesh. My father admitted nothing but we all knew that he never bought a horse without consulting Max, the Idler. My father was interested in horses because he was always in need of one; Nathan was interested because he always wanted to sell one; but Max, astonishingly, was interested in the horses themselves, individually and as a breed.

Max, the Idler, was a broad, strapping man who liked to throw out his big chest, flex his muscles and bellow, "You feel my strength?" It was said of him contemptuously that he loved horses instead of people, since he never made really serious efforts to support his family. He did odd jobs now and then, preferring to be around wherever there was some excitement. When someone was needed to lay out a corpse, wash and dress it, Max was the man. He was the extra handyman who readied the synagogue before the high holidays. Between times he pursued his study of horses.

My mother was morally outraged by my father's consultations with Max, the Idler, before buying each horse. She could not forgive Max's pretense that his knowledge of horses could save us from the fatal combination of inferior horses and lack of money. Max kept alive an illusory hopefulness that made the inevitable disappointment in each horse harder to bear.

Again and again, before we were finished with the installments, the horse was too old or sick to be useful and my

father went back to Nathan with Max, for a fresh horse and fresh consultations. Some of the horses were so old and plodding to begin with that they took half a day to cover a route that should have taken two hours. Then my father complained:

"A fire under his tail, nothing else will help! A whole day dragging his feet. It takes so long to cover the territory that by the time the last customer gets his pumpernickel, the bread is stale."

My mother worried with him but sometimes she answered, "Mine is dark laughter, try your bitter jokes on Nathan. Maybe he will laugh."

THE GAMBLE WENT ON. AT TIMES WE DREW THE RUNAWAY kind. While we had the horse that we called "The Wild One," not a week went by without a crisis. Either The Wild One pulled so hard on the whipple tree, held together with pieces of wire and rope, that he disengaged himself from the old wagon, or else he would be frightened by an auto horn and gallop uncontrolled through the quiet streets. Twice the morning newspaper reported: "Local Baker in Runaway Accident."

But even The Wild One was not spirited enough for my oldest brother Saul. When he covered the route, he brought the slow horses back sweating and heaving and, given opportunity he reduced the runaway kind to skin and bones.

Saul's handling of the horses was a recurrent topic in our family. My father would remonstrate unhappily, "Where are you running? Where do you have to go that you have no time? It's my luck to have an eldest son who doesn't understand our circumstances. Haven't we enough troubles without your adding to them?"

"All right, all right," Saul said once, "I'm sick of hearing this talk. Leave me alone. There are other things in life besides horses, rye bread, customers and unpaid bills."

"Listen to him!" my father exploded. "He just woke up to what living is. Do you think we don't know there's a world outside? Why do *you* think we struggle? The arrogance of the young! Parents from the old country, they think, are blind and unknowing and they have discovered the sweetness of living for the first time." My father climbed heavily up the stairs to his room to bury his cares in a Peretz novel.

Throughout my childhood our house seemed never

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to be free of trouble. I always said a prayer in my own way when I was lying in bed. I prayed that we would get through the week without some new misfortune with the horses and I prayed that whomever my mother asked to exchange a current check for her post-dated one would do so. When I walked to and from school, I would never walk on the cracks in the sidewalk because to me they meant nameless disaster. When my father or brother were late coming from the route, my heart would pound so that I felt everyone in the house could hear it. I was tortured until I heard the creak of the wagon or the sleigh in winter coming up the incline to the back yard.

One bleak evening, my brother Saul came home from the route early—on foot. My mother gasped when she saw him and clasped both hands to her face. "What happened to the horse?" she asked hysterically. Without waiting for Saul to answer, she ran to the bakery about three hundred yards to the rear of the house. "Aaron! Aaron! she called. "Saul is here—in the kitchen." It was unnecessary for my father to hear more. His hands dripping the "sour" that he had been mixing, he ran into the house to receive what he already knew was devastating news.

"This time it wasn't my fault," Saul explained in a rush. "The horse tripped over a rock—and broke his leg. I swear to you I wasn't making him run!"

"So if you swear from today until tomorrow, what good will it do?" my father asked bitterly. "Go away! Or better still, make yourself useful. Call the city to have the horse shot."

My father finished mixing the "sour," washed his hands, and prepared to go out.

"I suppose you are going where I think you are going," my mother commented, heaving a deep sigh.

"Where else?" he asked.

AS MY FATHER APPROACHED NATHAN'S BARN, MAX, THE IDLER, jumped up from a three-legged stool at the door and called to him in excitement: "Baker, this is the one!"

"What are you talking about?" my father asked.

"The horse that Nathan just brought in. He was born for you! A treasure. A beauty. Your troubles are over. You buy this horse and you buy a good future."

"Again?" my father asked. "Well, let's have a look."

Max led the horse from the stall without waiting for Nathan.

"See," he said happily, "didn't I tell you? A dream!"

An hour later my father was home again, not nearly so upset as I had feared.

"Ida," he said to my mother, "I just saw a real beauty of a horse!"

"How much does it cost?" my mother asked.

"A young one too. I counted his teeth. . . ."

"How much is the horse?" she demanded.

"This time it's the real thing. A prize animal. Of course it isn't cheap. . . ." His voice trailed off.

Controlling her impatience, my mother asked, "Well, how much isn't cheap? For a prize animal with all virtues

and no faults? You're talking a lot but saying little I want to hear."

"Max made a very interesting point," my father continued thoughtfully. "He said this one might have an Arabian strain."

"Max! A man well worth quoting!"

"Why not? Don't take away from him what he knows. Horses he knows."

"All right, so according to you horses he knows, and like him I don't. I have still to find out how much this horse with a halo costs."

"Well," my father said slowly, "I think Nathan will let him go for about 300 dollars."

"Three hundred dollars?" she shrieked. She sat down suddenly and the room was silent. She sighed heavily.

"My husband has lost his reason," she said.

"I'm trying to make you understand that this is a wonder horse," my father persisted.

"Wonder horse," she mused. "He thinks he's become a specialist in horses. An expert. Three hundred dollars—why don't you say a thousand?"

"Nathan says . . .," he began mildly.

"Also well worth quoting," she said, nodding her head and looking away from him. "Has he become an honest man over night? What do you want from my life? Horses! When will we see the day when we are rid of them? My back aches. My head aches and the man wants to shorten my life!"

"Listen, Ida," my father said gently. "Let's not look for a bargain this time. It's a poor man's lot to buy what he needs at a low price and it ends up costing him twice as much. Just once let's buy a good thing for a good price. We'll have a horse that doesn't run away and at the same time one that doesn't have to be coaxed to move."

WE ALL HAD TO ADMIT THAT THE HORSE MY FATHER BROUGHT home that night was a magnificent animal. He had a beautiful brown glossy coat and held his head high. His legs were as graceful as those of a race horse.

"A regular Man o' War!" Saul exclaimed.

My father, taking this to be a military reference, frowned momentarily. He was wholly gratified, however, by the reactions of the rest of the family.

We named the horse "Thousand Dollars," for what subject had a more persistent hold on our family's consciousness than money—not for love of it but for lack of it. The name "Thousand Dollars" had a warm, safe sound for us.

"Thousand Dollars" became the prize of the baker's household. We saw the horse as a good omen, a symbol of the good fortune we had never had before. Others had it but not the baker's family.

For three months Thousand Dollars lived up to our most extravagant dreams. He was reliable and intelligent. He was neither too fast nor too slow. He quickly learned my father's route and stopped at the right houses without being told. Saul was not allowed to use him. For the time being at least, he was willing to grant that only my father

should be trusted with this substantial investment.

There was no need to discuss the sacrifices we would all be expected to make to pay for Thousand Dollars. My mother tried to budget the household needs but rather unsuccessfully. She said flatly, "Sweet butter, one has to have." She posed the rhetorical questions: "What kind of a Sabbath is it without chicken and fish?" and "What can one put in one's stomach if not meat?" However, such luxuries as new socks, shoes and sweaters were frowned upon until Thousand Dollars was all ours.

A sense of well-being pervaded the house. My mother read the "Advice to the Lovelorn" column in the *Jewish Daily Forward* and was moved to sadness. We all discussed the dilemma of the young girl who asked the editor's opinion on whether she should marry a widower with five children who owned a growing business or choose the penniless young man she truly loved.

The children played "Old Maid" together in the evening, and my father, who had a violent dislike of gambling, did not threaten to tear up the cards as he used to. He now entered into leisurely discussions with customers about the meaning of the new social order that was beginning to take shape in the country that they had run away from.

I HAD GIVEN UP MY SECRET PRAYERS AGAINST DISASTER AND HAD been stepping boldly on cracks in the sidewalk for a long time, when a shattering blow fell. Thousand Dollars became desperately ill. Early one morning, when it was time to hitch him up, he was unable to rise. My father tugged and pulled at his bridle but Thousand Dollars only moaned and lay motionless on his side.

The veterinarian came. He examined the horse's legs, looked into his mouth, poked his stomach, and finally pronounced the dread word—colic. He poured a dark brown fluid into Thousand Dollars' mouth and said he would come again that evening.

He came three times but Thousand Dollars got no better. As the veterinarian was leaving for the last time he said, "I've done everything I possibly could. I'm sorry, it's up to nature now."

The pall of despair that descended on the family was heavier than any that the children could recall, heavier even when my little sister Anna had diphtheria. Everyone had worried about Anna, my mother had not been able to eat or sleep, but work had gone on as usual. Now, not only work but all hope seemed pointless.

The fire in the bakery oven was allowed to die out. The unbaked bagels floated untended and waterlogged in the huge tank. The yeast-filled sour rose, exploded and overran the bread troughs. Neglect and chaos ruled us. Thousand Dollars' illness was positive proof to everyone that any easing of the life we led was an empty dream.

All during the night neighbors came in and out. No one went to bed. The smaller children, who had bedded themselves down in the warm corners of the kitchen, were lulled to sleep by the incessant talk.

Several times during the night my mother made tea but

each time the tea grew cold; someone would start for the barn and the rest would follow without a word being spoken. They returned to the kitchen shivering and another kettle would be put on but I cannot recall that anyone drank tea that night.

Toward dawn my father placed his hands on the kitchen table as if to rise once more to go to the barn. But he didn't get up. He just sat there with his head lowered. My mother watched him with heavy-lidded eyes. His weariness was hers. She recognized that he was almost defeated. She knew that any further move would have to come from her.

Taking a deep breath, she said, "Well, it's time to try something else!"

My father raised his head in surprise. He could not believe that he had mistaken their silent understanding of a moment before.

"Why are we sitting here?" my mother asked severely. "What do you mean?"

"We have to try everything!" She strode back and forth in the kitchen as if she were making a search. "Not a thing must be left undone. We have absolutely nothing to lose. Even if it fails, we must at least try."

"I agree with you we have to try, but in Heaven's name, what?"

Although she had been dismissing Max from the back of her mind for hours, she said firmly with only an instant's pause, "Max!"

"In all seriousness, Ida?"

She nodded.

"Of course, Max! Where was my head?" He grabbed his mackinaw and ran out of the house.

MY FATHER DID NOT COME BACK ALONE. MAX STRODE MASTERFULLY into the kitchen, caught the eyes of everyone present and announced, "It is necessary to work fast! Half the battle is to give the horse warmth." Then he clapped his hands, rubbed them together competently and bellowed, "Come on, boys! First we must make room to work in this kitchen!" He grasped the kitchen table and with a mighty shove, slid it across the linoleum to thud against the wall.

Everything movable was shoved into one end of the room, even the wooden ice-box, spilling the pan of water under it. No one would have thought of stopping to mop up the puddle at a time like this, but Max pointed his finger fiercely at me and shouted, "Hey, you! This one! Wipe the floor, I want it completely dry!"

While he stacked the last chairs, Max called to my mother, "A pail of oil, baker's wife. Hot but not boiling." My mother hurried to the bakery for a can of oil. Max stopped and surveyed the room critically. "Everyone else to the barn!" he ordered.

In the barn he filled everyone's arms with straw, giving instructions to place it in the middle of the kitchen floor. Max came back to the kitchen last with two horse blankets slung over his shoulders. He spread the mound of straw carefully and patted it down. Over it he laid the two horse

blankets. "All right, baker, now it is time for the patient to be moved!" My little sister Anna tittered as she realized that Thousand Dollars was about to be brought into the kitchen.

With Max supporting Thousand Dollars' head, my father lifting from behind and my two oldest brothers helping on each side, the horse was finally able to stumble to his feet. Shivering under our last horse blanket, supported by the four men, Thousand Dollars was led slowly across the frozen, rutted yard. It seemed to me that he would never be able to get up the three steps leading to the kitchen door. I kept my eyes shut until the door slammed behind him.

Thousand Dollars was tenderly pushed down to the blanket-covered floor. His head touched the wall and one of his hooves stretched under the stove. Saliva dripped from the corners of his mouth. From nowhere my mother's blue comforter found its way onto Thousand Dollars' back.

Max went about his work with an assurance that was deeply comforting to us. He lifted the heavy pail of oil from the stove and with a great show of competence and speed he rolled up one sleeve of his shirt to the shoulder. He held out his arm, flexed it once and submerged it in the pail

of oil. With a sureness that took the onlookers by surprise, he inserted the full length of his arm into the anus of the horse and cleansed him. Max repeated the process six or seven times. At the conclusion of each operation he directed the children to remove the newspapers that he had provided. Thousand Dollars moaned and neighed but gradually his eyes lost their dullness, it seemed to us, and he lifted his head to look directly at his benefactor.

My mother stood close by and clenched and unclenched her hands. My father was already smiling. "Relax, Ida," he said. "It seems a thoroughbred doesn't die so fast. Maybe he came from Arabia, after all."

She turned her face to the wall. We didn't need to be told that her eyes were brimming with tears. "Children," he said softly, "go outside, leave us in peace for a while." We did as we were told.

My mother turned to Max. "Forgive my tears. I don't want the children to see. To cry over them is natural, but it's a bad world when one must shed tears over a horse."

Thousand Dollars stayed in the kitchen for two days. Of course, the house smelled for many more days but nobody seemed to notice.

JEWISH ACHIEVEMENT IN RUMANIA

AS the hysterical press campaign about "anti-Semitism" in the socialist countries continues unabated, facts that expose this fallacious charge continue to come from these lands. The issue of *Ykuf Bletter*, Yiddish literary-social weekly published in Bucharest, Rumania, during the Prague trial (November 28, 1952), reports that a substantial number of Jewish workers, scientists, artists and technicians received government awards from the Rumanian people's Republic. The prizes were awarded by the Council of Ministers of Rumania for especially valuable work achieved during the years 1950 and 1951.

The magazine reports: "Among the names of scientists, technical worker and artists from the ranks of the Rumanian people and of other nationalities who are winners of government prizes we find the names of Jewish research workers in science and technology as well as names of Jewish artists. Some of these are: Professors M. and A. Haimovici, for their work in geometry; Sigmund Haimsohn, chemical engineer; Martin Bercovici, engineer; Alfred Mendelsohn, composer; Gady Grubeya, violinist; Moni Gelerter, theater director, and many others."

It is interesting to observe that the leading article on the first page of the same issue of *Ykuf Bletter* is entitled "Jewish Working People Vote for a Happy Life." The article was written by Berku Feldman, secretary of the Jewish Democratic Committee and a candidate of the People's Democratic Front in the parliamentary elections of November 30, 1952. Feldman points out that the national question in Rumania has been solved in a democratic way. "In the past, minorities were oppressed and insulted," he writes. "Today they are free and are sum-

moned to a new life, to participation in the fullest sense in the life of our country. They are working together shoulder to shoulder with the Rumanian working people. Abraham Lekechman is a Stakhanovite worker just as are the Rumanian Stakhanovites Vasu Nikolae, Capetin Geza and others."

This leader of the Jewish people goes on to say: "Formerly the Jewish working population never had a government-supported theater. Today they have two government theaters, one in Bucharest and the other in Jassy. They have government-supported Jewish schools. Today the children of Jewish workers study at institutes and universities of our country without fear that any *numerus clausus* (quota system) is being applied against them. Today newspapers are published in all three languages of the Jewish working population. . . .

"Thanks to governmental support, over 50,000 Jews have been absorbed into industry and government employment in the last few years. From their ranks have risen new human beings—workers who live honestly by their own work, shock workers, Stakhanovites of whom there are already 55 today. A number of Jewish workers have received the highest decorations and awards. . . . Jewish writers, composers and artists today enjoy the same rights and are as well known as those of the Rumanian people or of the national minorities. . . .

"In the elections for the People's Councils of 1950, over 500 deputies were elected from the ranks of the Jewish working population. . . . The Jewish people of Rumania have the same voting rights as the Rumanian working people and the workers of the national minorities."

ARGENTINA'S JEWISH COMMUNITY

Alignments in the past few decades of this South American Jewish community in the local and international struggle for democracy

By Bernardo Cohen

THE Jewish community in Argentina has a democratic foundation, thanks to the populist traditions of those who created it. The large Jewish community, which now numbers about 450,000, grew out of an influx of immigrants mostly from Eastern and Central Europe—from Russia, Poland, Rumania and Lithuania. A minority from Germany and Western Europe increased especially in recent years, until they now number about 50,000. Argentina also has a Sephardic community of about 100,000 Jews from Arab countries and Turkey who have lived relatively separated from the rest of the community and exerted little influence on it.

Up to 1943

Jews immigrated into Argentina in three stages. The first began in the 1890's on the initiative of Baron de Hirsch with colonizing immigrants, mainly from Russia. The second began in 1904 and included those who were trying to escape the economic misery and political persecution of Russia and Rumania, among them working class elements and revolutionary intellectuals. The third group arrived after World War I (1920-1930) and included militant workers influenced by the revolutionary struggles in Europe following the Russian revolution.

From the opening of the century up to 1943, Jewish organizational life developed intensively along two parallel lines: one, petty bourgeois in character and in the main non-religious; and the other, under labor leadership. The latter built workers' clubs, workers' schools, theater groups, libraries, etc. They carried on intense activity in the labor unions, especially among wood, clothing, textile, metal and leather workers. Many Jewish workers became leaders of unions, including the federation of all unions, the General Confederation of Labor (CGT). Jewish workers were among the first to publish newspapers in Yiddish with a political orientation.

In 1930, Argentine reaction began to persecute the labor movement in general, as well as Jewish labor organizations. After September 6, 1930, the workers' clubs and

schools were closed and many of their leaders arrested. In 1932, reaction abated somewhat and various institutions were re-opened. However, these institutions ceased calling themselves "workers' centers" and took on the character of mass organizations mainly devoted to cultural activities, although they continued to be progressive. During this period the Jewish People's Theater came into being, as well as a number of schools (shut down by the police in 1936), an institution for medical care with thousands of members (also closed within a few years), etc.

In 1937, progressive cultural organizations sent a delegate to the cultural congress in Paris at which the world-wide Yiddishe Kultur Farband (Ykuf) was established. In 1934, a special organization was formed under progressive influence for struggle against anti-Semitism and nazifascism which was the first of this kind in the country. During the Spanish civil war and World War II, great solidarity movements in sympathy with all anti-fascist forces developed, in which large sections of the middle class, including many Zionists, participated.

After Peron's 1943 Coup

Before and during Peron's *coup d'etat* of 1943, almost all progressive Jewish organizations were liquidated. Among others, the newspaper *Di Folkshtime* was shut down and its editors jailed. New cultural and educational institutions have since been created in various districts of the capital and its environs.

Significant changes had occurred in the social composition of the Jewish community from about 1935, when approximately 50 per cent of the Jewish workers entered the ranks of small and big capitalists. Organizational life accordingly became less strictly working class and took on a more general character. Many Jewish progressives began to get organizationally involved within the big institutions created by the middle class, economic and banking institutions and social and mutual aid organizations. Improvement in economic conditions permitted the progressive forces within a few short years to set up imposing buildings for school and cultural centers in the

BERNADO COHEN is the pseudonym of a Jewish Argentinian journalist.

capital and in the interior and more recently the extraordinary *Yiddishe Folks Teater* (Jewish People's Theater), built at the cost of several million pesos.

Despite the attacks of reaction, the progressive movement resumed operation of its press. After 1945, *Der Veg* (The Way) was its organ until it was closed down by the government in 1948. Then *Haint* (Today) was published, but this paper too has ceased publication. The government suppressed the paper on the excuse that the printing plant was not in good condition, but actually because of the newspaper's struggle for peace and against the resurgence of nazism.

The progressive movement steadily widened its influence, particularly after 1945, when a period of relative freedom began. The Jewish community responded to the call of unity as necessary to meet most effectively the difficult situation faced by the Jewish people as a result of the war and the problems raised by the great massacres. Broad unity in defense of democracy was achieved among the masses of Argentina, including the Zionist sectors.

Progressives and Zionists of both left and right participated in the World Jewish Congress in 1945. The various Jewish groups in Argentina issued a joint declaration on September 12, 1945, agreeing to work jointly for the following objectives: a) fraternal aid to the Jewish war victims in the devastated countries of Europe; b) solidarity with the people of Israel; c) struggle against anti-Semitism and for the democratization of the Jewish organizations in Argentine. To carry out this program, a United Committee for Aid to the Jewish Victims of the War was formed.

Zionists Attempt Domination

When intensive aid to Israel began in 1948, this organization was dissolved. The Zionist sections had never fulfilled that part of the program which called for the democratization of Argentinian Jewish life and for struggle against anti-Semitism and reaction. In 1948, the Zionists tried to capitalize on the sympathies of the Argentine Jewish masses for the independence of their brothers and sisters in Israel to achieve domination of all organizational life.

The first clash came in relation to the United Campaign (Argentine United Palestine Appeal). Notwithstanding the united character of the organization and active participation of progressive elements in its fund raising, the Appeal was dominated by partisan and reactionary politics of the Zionists without genuine democratic control by the popular masses. To this day no accounting has been made of the tens of millions of pesos collected. Unity around aid to Israel was ended and the People's Campaign for Aid to Israel was set up to collect funds solely for constructive purposes in Israel and to express solidarity with the popular forces there in the struggle for democracy, peace and progress. One concrete result of the work of this Popular Campaign was the sending of a people's delegation to

Israel in 1950, after which some 50 housing units were constructed. A recreation hall called "Yishuv Argentino" will soon be completed in Israel.

Reactionary Zionist elements were indignant at the success of the popular forces in breaking their monopoly on aid to Israel. The Zionists launched a relentless campaign to eliminate the progressives from Jewish organized life. A resolution was passed by the Zionist parties, including those of the "left," and the DAIA (Delegación de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas), the organization which represents the Jewish community before government authorities and the World Jewish Congress, stating that all Jews who did not contribute to the United Campaign, that is, the Zionist campaign, were to be excommunicated. This measure was enforced in the synagogues during the religious celebrations and in some cases also at funerals and *brises* (ceremony of circumcision). In addition, progressive representatives were not permitted to participate in any community function, such as the "kehillah" (mutual aid council of all Jews which administers the cemetery, gives aid to the needy and subsidizes the schools), the DAIA and others. This prohibition was applied as much in the capital as in the interior.

Attack on Progressives

But the progressive movement initiated a struggle against these reactionary and medieval policies with the help of all honest and democratic elements. Despite the ferocious campaign against them, the democratic sentiments of the Argentine-Jewish masses were demonstrated in two successive elections to the Buenos Aires Kehilla, in which the progressives won 35 per cent of the 11,000 votes cast.

But the reactionary offensive was not limited to the question of Israel. Reactionary Jews and their press systematically carried on a ferocious propaganda against all progressive manifestations in Jewish life. This attack was focussed upon the people's democracies and the Soviet Union under the pretext that these countries practiced anti-Semitism and culturally persecuted the Jews. At the same time propaganda was carried on in support of the war policy of North America and exaltation of its "democracy." Responsibility for the present international tensions was attributed to the Soviet Union.

This activity was furthered by such United States groups as the American Jewish Committee, the *Jewish Daily Forward* group, the Workmen's Circle and the Jewish Labor Committee, and by representatives of the Joint Distribution Committee, which finances these activities. Jewish "personalities" from the United States like Jacob Pat, Jacob Shatzky and others were brought down to Argentina and helped to form a new affiliate of the Jewish Cultural Congress, in opposition to the Ykuf, which for the past 15 years had been the sole cultural organization, possessing great prestige, and which had spread progressive Jewish culture throughout the country. In addition, many

Jewish writers and journalists were imported from France, people who were refugees from the people's democracies and notorious for their hatred of the people's democracies and for anti-Sovietism.

The OIA (Organización Israelita Argentina), the Jewish Peronista organization actively working to win the essentially democratic and progressive Jewish people for the cause of reaction, has had little success in winning many followers among progressive Jews. It is therefore resorting to intimidation and blackmail, as in the case of the secret extortion of contributions from Jewish tradesmen to gain favor with the government for Jewish causes and defense against anti-Semitism, which is becoming more aggressive and open. The shut-down of *Haint* was one sacrifice that these people gladly offered to Peronismo for "friendly" declarations toward the Jewish people. Yet, neither the OIA nor the DAIA nor other reactionary organizations have been able to get the government to punish nationalist-fascist elements who freely carry on their anti-Semitic activity. Nor have they been able to prevent these elements from exhibiting literature such as *Mein Kampf*, by Adolph Hitler, *International Jewry*, by Henry Ford, the forged *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and other anti-Semitic books on the newsstands. Neither have they been able to prevent the opening of the doors of the country to Nazi war criminals like Dr. Walter Schreiber, who was forced by protests to leave the United States and whose arrival in Argentina has been announced.

The Jewish masses of Argentina have consequently not allowed themselves to be carried along the road marked out by Jewish reaction. They have carried on a strenuous struggle in defense of their culture and their democratic tradition. This resistance was also evidenced by the repudiation by the DAIA of the "reparations" negotiations between the Ben Gurion regime and the Bonn government in a unanimous resolution. The Jewish masses are actively participating in the struggle for peace and democracy in the country.

NOTES ON A VISIT TO BUENOS AIRES

IN the course of my visit to Argentina last year, I was impressed by the use of Yiddish as a living language not only by old-timers or by those who cling to the language as a banner of their religion. I found it spoken by the very young and the very irreligious. And everywhere I encountered a real sense of shock that I, an American Jew, could not speak it. In the cafes of the Jewish *barrio* (center) called "Once" (eleven) a pleasant district of Buenos Aires with wide, tree-lined streets and apartment houses that are neither elegant nor tenements, I found Yiddish spoken perhaps more than Spanish though everyone of course spoke Spanish as well.

I toured the Jewish People's Theater building just as it was about completed but not yet occupied. I saw its fine revolving stage, well equipped dressing rooms, and upstairs, its meeting chambers. One of these was decorated with a mural (painted collectively by a group of artists, some Jewish and some not). The mural covered an entire wall of perhaps 30 feet or more. At one end were Old Testament figures of Jews with prayer shawls and so forth. At the other end were the Indians. The mural then depicts on the Indian side the coming of the Europeans, the conquest—on the Jewish side the coming of pioneers; then advanced to modern times, the Indians fighting for the freedom of their country, the Jews tilling the land, while in the background are the figures of other Jews battling in the Warsaw ghetto. The two themes meet in the middle, a panel of Argentina's poets, writers, scientists: Jew, Indian, Argentines of all descents.

I thought the mural significant.

The theater group itself is very widely respected by most Argentines. The repertoire this season includes *Deep are the Roots*, by Arnaud d'Usseau and James Gow, in Yiddish.

A word about Peron and the Jews. The Jews have never forgotten Peron's original flirtation with official anti-Semitism. Last year a Jewish political leader, conspicuously Peronist, running for a local legislative post was soundly defeated in the Jewish *barrio* by a non-Jew known for his mild dissent from Peronismo.

Anti-Semitism is not widespread in Argentina but held in reserve by Peron. Its propaganda is carried on chiefly by an avowedly Nazi group that once was in favor and now is ostensibly disowned by the Peron administration. It has no mass following but obviously enough funds to keep a modest headquarters staff going and to see that newsstands are well stocked with *Mein Kampf*.

ELMER BENDINER

Growing "Revolt" of British Jewry

FOR several months a significant "revolt" has been going on among British Jewish leaders against the "economic and political imperialism" of American Jewry," as one Jewish Press report put it in December. We have already noted the protests of British Jewish leaders like Dr. Selig Brodetsky and Zionist leader Israel Cohen (see November issue, p. 22, and December issue, p. 24) against the tendency of American Jewish leadership to "swallow" world Jewry.

This "revolt" gained momentum early in December when another British Jewish leader, Harry Goodman, in a talk on "The Rise and Fall of Anglo-Jewry," stated that the Jewish community in England is "suffering from a form of creeping paralysis." He attributed this "disease" to domination by American Jewry, just as Washington is trying to control general world affairs. Goodman stated that "We may become a suburb of Tel Aviv culturally or a suburb of New York politically. I hope that we shall become neither."

Book Reviews

THE MUSIC OF JACOB SCHAEFER

By Sidney Finkelstein

Ich Her a Kol, Twenty-two Selected Songs of Jacob Schaefer. Published by the Jewish Music Alliance, One Union Square West, New York 3, N. Y. \$2.50.

In this handsome volume of 22 choral songs of Jacob Schaefer, the Jewish Music Alliance has brought forth a worthy and long-awaited tribute to the memory of one of the greatest cultural figures of the American Jewish community and one of the best composers of any background and nationality to adorn United States musical life. Let us hope that this volume is only one first step in making Jacob Schaefer and the heritage of people's and working class music, in which he was so outstanding a creator, better known to the public.

Jacob Schaefer was born in the Ukraine in 1888, came to the United States at about the age of 22 and died in 1936. In his 24 years on these shores he wrote 11 large-scale oratorios and cantatas and over a hundred original songs and settings of Jewish folk songs. It is a telling example of the racist and Anglo-Saxon chauvinist attitude permeating so much of our country's cultural life that a composer of so extensive an output and one containing so many musical beauties, should not even be listed today among the two or three hundred "American composers" of the century in the books on the subject. The truth is that he is among the very few of these composers whose works will remain and be cherished.

Schaefer arrived here among the last of the wave of immigrants who were needed by a flourishing capitalist industry. Their labor was necessary to build the country. However, since they were working people, they had to be convinced that they were not quite "Americans." They were told they had to go through the "melting pot" process before they could regard themselves genuinely "American." In this process they and their children were supposed to forget or be ashamed of the cultural riches of their past, which in fact could have brought so much that was worthwhile and necessary to a genuine American culture. Perhaps the reason for the neglect of Schaefer by "official" musical circles was that he refused to go through this "melting pot" process.

Schaefer addressed himself to the Jewish working class community. His music dealt with the past folk heritage and great masses of people and in fact his music is being studied abroad today. He not only created his own audiences but made them musically active, organizing workers' choral societies which are still flourishing today, as well as groups of amateur instrumentalists. For such groups he wrote some of his most profound and large-scale works.

In a remarkable way he foreshadows the future of music in his combination of melodiousness with depth of thought, his attention to contemporary themes and struggles and his breakdown of the barriers between the artist and the people. And he foreshadows a great United States culture in which the varied artistic riches brought by the peoples who make up the country will be enabled to strike solid roots, intermingle and produce fresh blossoms.

This volume of 22 selected songs, comprising 163 pages, takes its name, *Ich Her a Kol* (I hear a voice), from one of Schaefer's last "choral spectacles," based on the works of the American Yiddish working class poets, Rosenfeld, Winchevsky, Boshover and Edelshtat. It brings together some of the most enduring of Schaefer's short works as well as presenting his varied styles. The arrangement is as originally written for chorus. Consequently, this book will be of great use to present choral groups.

The typography, layout and music printing are exceptionally beautiful. Texts are both in Yiddish characters and in phonetic transliteration in English for those

who understand but do not read Yiddish. There is a foreword by Chaim Suller, national secretary of the Jewish Music Alliance, and an introduction, "The Schaefer Tradition," by the outstanding *Freiheit* critic, Nathaniel Buchwald, who was a close associate of Schaefer.

It is not a weakness of this volume, but nevertheless a limitation, that it is aimed largely at the public which already knows Schaefer. There is a need for further productions of this type, which will present Schaefer's large-scale works. There is also a need, however, for publications, and let us hope, recordings as well, which will bring Schaefer's works to the attention and knowledge of the broad American musical public, which will find in it so much to live. Musicians will also find in it inspiration for new works that will make use of the varied national cultural backgrounds and restore music to the people as a meaningful art.

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POPULAR PROGRESSIVE POET

By Morris U. Schappes

Denmark Vesey and Other Poems, including translations from the Yiddish, by Aaron Kramer, published by the author, 23-20 28th Avenue, Astoria, L. I., N. Y. 75 cents.

Since I obtained this volume last summer, I have read portions of it to audiences numbering many a hundred. I read these poems not because I was talking about Kramer's poetry, but because, at rallies, meetings and lectures, a thought, a feeling, an attitude I wanted to convey had been expressed with point and eloquence by Aaron Kramer. And always the impact was immediate, the audience enthusiastic.

Kramer's great strength lies in that his themes are deeply a part of the problems and anxieties that absorb the people. I had almost written that the main problems of the people are his main themes, until I noticed that in all this volume there is no reflection of the people's struggle for peace.

Nevertheless, all the subjects he has chosen are vital, important and movingly rendered. Most impressive, and revealing Kramer in this his ninth volume as a poet of new stature, is "Denmark Vesey," a sequence of 26 narrative and lyrical poems.

Do you know the name? Have you heard the story?

He was fourteen summers old—

cradled in a slave-ship, kissed by a slave-whip,

his beauty bought and sold.

Do you know the name? have you heard the story?

He bought his liberty back—

but even in freedom he couldn't feel free while chains bound those who were black.

It was in 1822 in Charleston, S. C., that Vesey organized the slave uprising that terrified the plantation owners even though they hanged Vesey and 36 of his comrades, otherwise severely punished almost another 100 Negroes and fined and jailed four white sympathizers. In Kramer's hands this flaming subject loses no brilliance. "The hot word, Liberty," possesses the slaves as Vesey's men "whisper, whisper the word." The defeat does not drown the historic triumph. Faced with death, Vesey affirms:

Ten thousand guns will sing our mass when we no more can hear it— and those who dread us in the flesh may dread us more in spirit. . . .

"Denmark Vesey" is Kramer's proudest

achievement, and since he is only 30, holds forth a dazzling promise.

"October in 'Freedom' Land," first published I believe in October 1950, when the McCarran law was passed and federal prisons were filling with heroes in contempt of legislative inquisitions, shakes the fist of defiance in the face of persecution. Parts 3 and 4 are excellently fashioned lyrics, the last one already put to music and widely sung:

Build high, build wide your prison wall! that there be room enough for all who hold you in contempt. Build wide! that all the land be locked inside. . . .

"Monticello, A Jefferson Cantata," ends with a superb lyric:

We are the tribe of Jefferson: his rage is in our veins. We follow still his sacred will: never to live in chains! . . .

Tenderly chiseled are the tiny quatrains in which he holds aloft the heroism of "Efstrata Nikolaidu," 15-year-old Greek girl who died defiant of the fascist rifles that killed her in Salonika.

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Although there are no poems here on Jewish themes, Kramer gives us, however, something especially valuable: 22 poems translated from the Yiddish of Morris Winchevsky, Morris Rosenfeld, David Edelshtat and Joseph Bovshover, four American proletarian poets who inspired the preceding generations of Jewish workers here and in Europe. These translations appeared first in *JEWISH LIFE*; they are a welcome cultural bridge for Jews who know no Yiddish.

In this book, Kramer uses a greater

variety of "traditional" forms than in any previous work, and exhibits an increasing mastery of them. He is still at his best, however, in the form of the ballad quatrain, or some modification of it. To those who have, it seems to me carpingly, questioned his adherence to rhyme and "traditional" forms, Kramer gave a proper answer some years ago in a letter resenting a slighting review in the *Daily Worker* (Sept. 14, 1949): "In my own work I have decided to reject the experimental forms, feeling that they would hamper my ef-

fort to immediately reach a large audience." As one who has read these poems to large audiences, I may testify that his forms are a growingly expert vehicle for instant and effective communication.

CORRECTION FROM MR. YAFFE

Dear Mr. Harap:

In Section IV of the article in the January issue, "The Truth About the Prague Trial" subheaded "What the Trial Revealed", you quote something I wrote in *Israel Horizons* which I would like to set straight and would ask that you print:

1. *Israel Horizons* is not the organ of Mapam in the United States. There is no Mapam here. It is a magazine of and for progressive Zionists.

2. I did not have in mind Czechoslovakia or any of the other people's democracies or the Soviet Union when I wrote of the Joint Distribution Committee's activities "in countries hostile to Jews which must of necessity be kept secret at this time . . .". I was referring to countries with which Israel is still technically at war and where efforts are being made to arrange migration and care for the health of the Jews in a hostile atmosphere.

My article was written before the Prague trial and therefore could have no reference to it. It is unfortunate that you added "sic!" to the phrase "hostile to Jews" which give the impression that I was judging nations and judicial processes when, in fact, my article had nothing to do with the context of your article or the nation under discussion in it.

I can't help what you might have to say about anything I write, or how you interpret it, of course, but I do protest a twisting out of sense and context. I am perfectly capable of saying what I think about any subject without equivocation or the need to write into what I say, thoughts I may not have had or what someone thinks I didn't have the guts to say.

RICHARD YAFFE

Note by Louis Harap: I regret my erroneous use of the quotation from Mr. Yaffe's article and I apologize to him. However, I should like to point out that I had designated *Israel Horizons* as a "Mapam organ" in the loose sense that this journal supports Mapam policies. And it should be noted that the fact that Mr. Yaffe's statement was not intended to apply to the socialist countries in no way affects the truth of the charges made against the Joint Distribution Committee at the Prague trial.

In Memoriam

SALLY BLOOM, of Brooklyn

Died, January 3, 1953, at the age of 49

For over 20 years she was a tireless, devoted and exemplary worker for the welfare of the people and for a better future.

Thousands of her friends and co-workers will never forget her. She will always be their conscience and inspiring example.

Our \$25,000 Fund Drive is on—

Have you started your campaign?

Although the campaign is now one month old, we have not had signs of sufficient activity. And we need money!

Jewish Life Committees, organizations, subscribers—
all Friends of the magazine—

Get your campaign off the ground!

Send in money as it comes in. We need it!

THE EDITORS

OBSERVATION POST

By Sam Pevzner

Let There Be Light

The JEWISH LIFE forum on "The Truth About the Prague Trials," held on December 22 at Webster Hall, New York, was a most interesting event. From the moment it opened to the close the audience was so attentive that you could hear a pin drop. This was natural because the press of this country had polished up its already tarnished weapon against the socialist lands, tipped it with the poison of falsehood and misrepresentation and went to town on the "anti-Semitism" issue. Thus serious-minded individuals, who know how much you can trust the commercial American press when it comes to matters pertaining to the Soviet Union and the people's democracies, were eager to get at the facts. And the JEWISH LIFE forum was a sober, cumulative presentation of facts and analysis which was truly devastating in its exposure of the latest attempt to drive the Jewish people into the camp of war. The material presented at the Forum was printed in Louis Harap's article last month. This article, plus some added material, has been published in a pamphlet by JEWISH LIFE. Every organization and reader should be equipped with this pamphlet in large numbers. It sells for 10 cents, bundle orders over 100, at six cents.

And He Huffed and He Puffed

One columnist dropped in on the JEWISH LIFE Forum on December 22 and wrote it up in his column in the next day's issue of the *New York Post*. Thus the "labor" columnist Murray Kempton, who is getting to sound more and more like Victor Riesel, dropped in at the tail end of the main presentation just in time to "cover" the question period. What's the difference if he missed the major presentation by three speakers, all of whom marshaled fact upon fact to destroy the Prague "anti-Semitism" myth.

So, "labor" journalism's greatest gift to the American press printed the answers to a number of questions asked at the forum, using the simple expedient of tearing a phrase or two out of context, eliminating 90 per cent of the answer and finishing up with a bon mot that would simply floor Westbrook Pegler.

One should ask the oh-so-clever Mr.

Kempton why he was so fearful of reporting the full answers to the questions and even more, why didn't he report on the main presentation by the three speakers? Elementary ethics would prompt a reporter at least to hear the main body of facts and arguments on a question of such vital importance as the Prague trial.

A letter was sent by Morris U. Schappes and Louis Harap to the *New York Post* showing the distortions in Kempton's report of their answers, and of course, the *Post*, being an example of the honest "free," press printed it—in invisible ink.

Which leads us to a natural conclusion. If you want to get the truth about the trial, as well as the truth about all significant events affecting the Jewish people, you *have* to read and spread JEWISH LIFE. Why are the Murray Kemptons and their colleagues in the big business press of this nation too scared to report a forum honestly? They know that their whole case for the warmakers and police states rests on the shaky foundations of falsehood and distortion—and even a forum attended by 160 people presents a challenge which necessitates the scraping of the very bottom of the journalistic barrel for counter-offensive. And, brother, little Murray scraped it. He's had plenty of practice.

Our Editors Get Around

There has been an overwhelming demand for the participation of the editors of JEWISH LIFE in forums and meetings on the Prague trial—which is another indication of the clarifying role this magazine plays in these turbulent days. Harap spoke before the Dorchester, Mass. forum a few weeks ago, collaborated with Alice Citron in a forum for the Jefferson School on January 11, and is headed for a forum in Brooklyn in the coming period. Morris U. Schappes, our itinerant lecturer, has already covered Newark and Washington, will have visited Cleveland, Detroit and Pittsburgh early in January, hits Philadelphia on January 17th and Lakewood on the 25th. In all these cities the Fund and Circulation Drive of Jewish Life holds a dominant place in the meetings. And so it should, because, unless the drive succeeds, JEWISH LIFE will not be able to carry on. And now, with such issues as the Prague trial, the peace crusade and

the mounting repression facing us, the existence and growth of JEWISH LIFE takes on an indispensability that is apparent. Have you done your share yet in the Fund and Circulation Drive?

Don't Miss Item

A high point of the 1953 theatrical season is the play produced by the Yiddish Theatre Ensemble, *The Devil in Boston* by Lion Feuchtwanger, translated into Yiddish by Nathaniel Buchwald. The Ensemble presents this play, directed by Morris Carnovsky, on Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons in the beautiful Barbizon Plaza Theater; for those who don't understand Yiddish, an English synopsis is provided—and since the play deals with a universal theme (the witchhunt) set in early America—it will be a great theatrical experience for all—those who understand Yiddish and those who don't. So don't miss *The Devil in Boston*. Groups should arrange theater parties and make a profit to boot. Tickets and information at the office of the Yiddish Theater Ensemble, 189 Second Avenue, New York City; telephone GRamercy 7-2312.

An Opportunity

Those who want to enjoy and know more about progressive Jewish culture, to see a unique progressive Jewish institution in action, should not fail to attend the tenth anniversary concert of the School for Higher Jewish Education (*Kursn*). It will take place on Sunday, March 1, 2 P.M. at Manhattan Center, New York City. Featured at this event will be the Youth Chorus of the *Kursn*, its colorful and exciting dance group and a two-act Purim play titled *Haman's End*. The play brings the traditional Purim play up-to-date and the result is a spectacular production of warmth, humor, satire and biting social meaning. For something new, fresh and significant in the realm of progressive Jewish culture, be sure you occupy a seat in Manhattan Center on the afternoon of March first.

For Your Note Book

On Sunday afternoon, April 19th there will be a grand anniversary commemoration of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in Manhattan Center. April 19th marks the exact date when the uprising started in Warsaw. Since this is the tenth anniversary of that heroic battle and the lessons learned in the ghetto struggle are more pertinent than ever, the commemoration at Manhattan Center will be of the utmost significance. Put that date down for yourself and your organization.

FROM THE FOUR CORNERS

(Continued from page 2)

trary and a discriminatory restraint on freedom of worship. . . . A French nazi collaborator, Gaspard Weiss, was exposed in December as chief French teacher at a United States Army language school at Presidio, Cal. The commander of the school did not regard the pro-nazi, who had been convicted for war crimes in absentia to 20 years at hard labor in France in 1945, as "unreliable" and "objectionable." The Sixth Army command is investigating.

The New York City Board of Education on January 16 directed the public schools to follow the "Pledge to the Flag" that opens each school day, with the fourth stanza of *America* which is an invocation to God. The proposal was made by Brooklyn member Arthur Levitt as a "truly effective devotional exercise." Levitt offered the plan as a substitute to an earlier recommendation by the Board of Regents for a daily prayer. Observers noted that this move further endangered the separation of church and state.

The Cedars of Lebanon Hospital in Los Angeles, which last year caused an enormous protest from the Jewish community when it discharged three doctors for political reasons, decided at its executive committee meeting on December 9 to deny reappointment to four more doctors who had been uncooperative at the Un-American Committee hearings last year. The four are Drs. Joseph Hittelman, Simon Marcus, Jacob Druckman and Frederick G. Reynolds. One of the doctors previously dismissed, Dr. Richard Lipmann, was recently appointed to a leading position at the Bronx Hospital.

Fight against Jimerow. . . . The Pittsburgh City Council enacted an FEPC measure in December. It was noted that one of the leaders in the fight for this measure was Ben Careathers, Negro leader who was indicted under the Smith Act. . . . Dr. Edward C. Broomes, a Negro doctor, filed charges of bias with the New York State Commission Against Discrimination against the Stork Club in January. Dr. Broomes charged that he received discriminatory treatment at the swanky night club. . . . By a vote of 1,608 to 1,575, the all-white Local 47 of the American Federation of Musicians in Los Angeles in December decided to merge with the all-Negro Local 767.

EUROPE

Among Soviet artists who toured Britain during December were three

Jewish musicians who are top performers in their fields. They are Mark Reizen, bass-baritone, and Emil Gillels and A. Yerochin, pianists. The tour was a great success.

The Hungarian People's Republic in December approved expenditures of funds for the rebuilding of the great Budapest synagogue, burned by the nazis.

Dr. David Sford, secretary-general of the Social and Cultural Association of the Jews of Poland, was elected in December to the executive committee of the Polish-Soviet Friendship League.

Six windows of a Wimbeldon (London) synagogue were smashed late in December and a brick was found on the window sill.

Two Jewish leaders of the Resistance in France during the war, Pierre Bloch and Goldschmidt-Forgeot, were assaulted in December by about 100 anti-Semites grouped around a seller of the anti-Semitic paper, *Aspects de la France*, on the Champs Elysees. The men were emerging from a meeting of the Supreme Resistance Committee when the attack occurred. Public sale and display of the anti-Semitic paper was then banned by the police. . . . An amnesty bill had its second reading in the French Parliament in December. The bill would restore full rights, including eligibility for parliament, to all former Vichyite ministers and officials, including Xavier Vallat, ex-Vichy Commissioner for Jewish Affairs.

Full civil rights were restored to all Italian fascists on January first. Some of them are expected to run for public office on the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement Party ticket.

Renazification news. . . . A "Christmas amnesty" order freed 124 nazi war criminals, including ex-Field Marshal Wilhelm List and some war criminals responsible for the murder of Jews. They had been sentenced by a United States court.

ISRAEL

A new five-party coalition headed by Ben Gurion now rules Israel. The five parties are Mapai, General Zionists, Progressives, Hapoel Hamizrah (Religious workers) and Mizrahi (Orthodox), holding 87 of the Knesset's 120 seats. In the cabinet Mapai has nine posts, General Zionists, four; Hapoel Hamizrahi, three; Progressives, one. The government is predominantly right wing and the coalition of Mapai and General Zionist parties

is virtually the equivalent of a "national" government in England of the Labor and Tory Parties. The *New York Times* of December 15 reported from Tel Aviv that "The new government would introduce a far more conservative economic policy and would lift most of the remaining economic controls."

One of the first results of the new right wing government in Israel was a sharp rise in prices. In the first week of the new year, gasoline went up ten cents to 50 cents and kerosene in about the same proportion while electricity rose 18 cents. The official cost-of-living index rose from 100 in December 1951 to 175 in December 1952. Official government figures showed that real wage dropped between 14 and 20 per cent in the past year. The Histadrut is cooperating in the new government policy by deferring all demands for wage increases unless tied to productivity.

Sale by the British government to the Arab states of jet planes and by the United States government of arms to Egypt has aroused alarm in Tel Aviv. The Ben Gurion government has protested to London and Washington.

Two thousand demonstrators chanting "Bread, Work and Peace" marched through Tel Aviv streets on January 12. Speakers called for sitdown strikes in government offices. Unemployment has risen in recent months owing to the new government program.

Official population figures in Israel now stand at a total of 1,629,000 for the whole country, of whom 1,450,000 are Jews and 179,000 are Arabs.

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