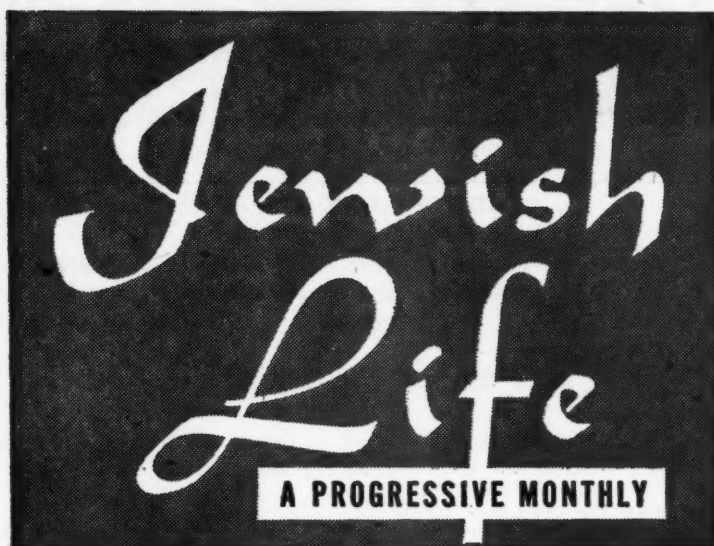


# Roots of the Israel-Arab Crisis

*by Louis Harap*



MAY 1954 • 25c

*How the recession affects Jewish workers, I:*

## OUTLOOK FOR THE NEEDLE TRADES

*by Victor Perlo*

**THE JEWS AND AMERICAN SLAVERY** *by Morris U. Schappes*

**FALSE STEP IN AJ CONGRESS** *by Jack Greenstein*

**JEWISH LIFE IN EAST EUROPE** *three-page round-up*

## From the Four Corners

Edited by Louis Harap

### AT HOME

**Resistance notes . . .** When a Gallup poll of attitudes of Jews to McCarthy was taken in February, it was found that 71 per cent were opposed, 12 per cent were favorable and 14 per cent were undecided. A Gallup poll taken a few weeks later showed that 83 per cent of Jews polled were unfavorable to McCarthy, 12 per cent favorable and 5 per cent had no opinion. . . . The 75th birthday of Dr. Albert Einstein was celebrated by the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee with a conference of 200 educators, ministers and authors on March 13 at Princeton, N. J. In answer to five questions submitted to him by the conference, Dr. Einstein reiterated his belief in academic freedom and his view that it is the duty of the intellectual to refuse to cooperate with the inquisition. . . . When Rabbi Joseph S. Shubow, of Boston, was told that Samuel P. Sears, McCarthyite Boston lawyer who was forced to resign as counsel for the investigation of the Army-McCarthy affair on April 5 for being less than frank about his McCarthyite public position, had said that no positions were assigned in a debate with Rabbi Shubow on McCarthyism, Rabbi Shubow exclaimed that this Sears statement was a "despicable lie. . . . The people of Boston certainly know I wouldn't be on McCarthy's side." (N. Y. T., 4/6). . . . Professor Paul Freund, of Harvard Law School, told the ninth annual conference of the Boston Jewish Community Council on March 21 that "a counter-current" to the attack on civil liberties was setting in. At the same meeting Bernard H. Trager, president of the National Community Relations Advisory Council, coordinating agency for major Jewish organizations, agreed with Dr. Freund that men of good will should "have the courage to stand up and declare our faith in democratic freedoms and denounce those who would deprive us of them." (Boston Globe, 3/22). . . . David L. German, former president of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, who refused to participate in an SAR meeting awarding a medal to McCarthy, called McCarthyism "a national menace" in a talk before the Professional Group of the American Jewish Congress in Philadelphia late in February. (Phila. Jewish Times, 2/26). . . . Rabbi Herbert Friedman, of Milwaukee, attacked McCarthyism early in March. "This Republic was not established by cowards and cowards will not (Continued on page 32)

# Jewish Life

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# FROM MONTH TO MONTH

## GENEVA AND THE H-BOMB

**W**HEN the Berlin Conference in February projected the Geneva Conference for April 26 to discuss Asian questions with the new China, few were aware that in a matter of days the number one question would become literally peace or total annihilation. If ever before in all of man's history the settlement of outstanding questions by negotiations was absolutely necessary, the H-bomb has made this the time. Since Berlin, too, Dulles has made the Indo-Chinese war a potential starting point of World War III by his threat of "massive retaliation." Dulles' talk of "Communist aggression" in a war in which the Indo-Chinese are reclaiming their country from French colonial domination, is exposed as baseless. Dulles' deception was so clear and so fatally dangerous to the very existence of humanity to the bargain, that his call for "united action" met with a rebuff from Britain, France and all but one of his Asian and South Pacific "allies."

The Geneva Conference offers mankind an opportunity to strengthen chances for survival. By his brandishing of the H-bomb and his strenuous efforts to torpedo this conference even before it starts, Dulles has made the task of assuring peace more difficult. At this writing, Dulles has not persuaded Britain and France to shut the door to negotiations at Geneva. And indeed this is not in the cards since the peoples of the world have too healthy a sense of self-preservation to allow H-bomb annihilation to rain down on their heads. A wave of fear and resistance to H-bomb warfare has gripped the world since the March 1 explosion of the thermonuclear bomb and the knowledge that this can simply destroy humanity.

The peoples of the world have a job to do to stop the madmen in Washington who would go ahead with this world-destroying weapon. The people need to tell Western diplomats without any room for doubt that peace in Asia must be negotiated at Geneva. To us Americans falls a special responsibility. We must in the name of sheer survival compel the Eisenhower administration, which is leading the suicide squad of H-bomb maniacs, to negotiate to relax international tensions and immediately to take steps to reach an agreement to ban the H-bomb.

## LEGISLATIVE MCCARTHYISM

**T**HE H-bomb madness has its domestic counterpart—McCarthyism. Abandonment of reason required for acquiescence to H-bomb warfare is only possible in a totally McCarthyized America. But, just as the H-bomb throwers are faced with the people's resistance to suicide, so the McCarthyites are beginning to meet massive resistance to the strangling of America's freedoms. The labor movement and the masses of the people know that Mc-

Carthyism has in store for our country a repeat performance of Hitlerism. The coming investigation of the Army-McCarthy affair would not have come about if it were not for the mass outcry against the degeneration of the fiber of public and private life that McCarthyism has engendered.

The Jewish people, who are so overwhelmingly opposed to McCarthyism because they know its special danger for them, can not ignore the potentialities for an intensification of anti-Semitism from the despicable, incredible, arrogant antics of McCarthy's chief counsel Roy M. Cohn, whose role in the McCarthy-Army affair must be exposed by the investigation. The best and indeed only defense of the Jewish people against such Judenrat elements among themselves is an uncompromising and effective fight against McCarthyism itself.

But an effective fight demands the active realization that McCarthyism is far more than McCarthy. Even if McCarthy's national importance should be diminished by the coming investigation—by no means assured, we must add—McCarthyism still constitutes the number one danger at home. One need only consider the rash of anti-communist measures that fill the legislative hopper at Washington, which are McCarthyism in its legislative form, to realize how great is the danger from fascism in our country. These bills aim not only at the suppression of communism but of every thought that clashes with the police-statism of the McCarthyites. Their target is not the Communists alone but anyone who dares to believe that the masses of the people have the right to organize in bona fide trade unions and people's organizations for improvement of the lot of common men.

One critical phase of the fight against McCarthyism today is therefore to prevent the passage of the repressive measures sponsored by Attorney General Herbert Brownell and his legislative vigilantes. In this fight the organizations of the Jewish people must join, whatever may be their opinions concerning communism. In a democratic society one *debates*, one does not *suppress* communism. All those with a vital stake in civil liberties—the masses of the people, the trade unions, the Negro people, the Jewish people—must work to hold back the legislative anti-communist avalanche. Retention of American freedom demands this resistance.

## MAY DAY

**M**AY DAY, celebrated by labor since 1886, is the symbol of the strivings of labor, the majority of the people, to make a better life. This year these strivings are threatened not only by war and McCarthyism, but by the recession. All trade union members and all men of good will should therefore swell the May Day celebrants, wherever they may be, to strengthen labor's struggle to defend and extend its rights.



# OUTLOOK IN THE NEEDLE TRADES

*Harder times face the workers in the already sick garment industry if they do not unite for a militant labor program to meet the slump*

*First of Two Articles*

*By Victor Perlo*

**T**HE country is in the midst of an economic decline. Production has fallen over 10 per cent. Unemployment has passed the four million mark. Leon Keyserling, economic adviser to the Truman administration, predicts it will reach seven million by year-end. The financial journals generally claim that the worst is behind us. No matter which is right this year, the conditions which caused the present decline point to a severe economic crisis in the not too distant future.

What is at the root of the trouble? Stimulated by war orders, industrial capacity has doubled since before World War II. But the purchasing power of working people has increased very little. Foreign markets, which in past times created new outlets for expanded capacity, are shrinking.

The huge capacity built by the workers of this country means that we can produce enough for everybody to live a life of plenty. Unless everybody does enjoy a good life, the factories cannot keep busy in peacetime and workers cannot have steady employment. Otherwise we must soon fall back to an even worse chronic depression than that of the 1930's.

## *Two Programs*

There is a "great debate" as to what should be done about it. The Eisenhower administration is using all its prestige to sell the public the big business "solution." This solution is simple. Cut taxes on the wealthy, keep them high on the poor. Give valuable public lands to the big corporations, take land from the "marginal" farmers. Postpone minimum wage increases and other labor benefits on the grounds that they would "increase costs." Through all these methods big business would be "stimulated" to invest money, thereby "creating jobs and restoring prosperity." This is the notorious "trickle-down" theory. The Hoover administration had a clear field to apply it in 1929-1932. Everybody knows the disastrous results.

VICTOR PERLO is a noted economist and the author of *American Imperialism*, *The Negro in American Agriculture* and the pamphlet *Israel and Dollar Diplomacy*, which is a reprint of his series of articles in *JEWISH LIFE*, September 1952 to January 1953.

To make matters worse, today the "trickle-down" approach is wedded to the adventurous Dulles "New Look" foreign policy, to "prosperity through armaments," to military stockpiling of surpluses, to production of H-bombs, nerve gases and plague germs. Thus the administration policy, if it puts off the worst depression suffering, does so at the grave risk of the destruction of all of us in the most murderous of all wars.

But there is also a quite different approach to these problems. It is basically the approach of the labor movement. The progressives, in and out of the labor movement, are most active in developing and publicizing it. The Democratic Party goes along with some parts of this program because it realizes that such measures respond to the real needs of the people and hence support of these steps will help that party get back into power.

Such a program would relieve depressed conditions by increasing the purchasing power of the working people and would reduce unemployment by providing government-financed jobs. This approach calls for higher minimum wages, for a fair employment practices law with teeth that would raise the incomes of the most exploited, for vastly extended social security, for a large housing and public works program, for real aid to farmers, for sharply reduced taxes on workers and closed loopholes for the rich. The more advanced sections of the labor movement also advocate the development of foreign markets by opening the road to East-West trade and by cutting the burden of armaments through sincere international negotiations.

The program outlined is generally known as the "New Deal" approach. However, today it must go far beyond the New Deal of the 1930's. It must realize in life the advanced principles expressed by Franklin D. Roosevelt during the difficult years of World War II—that every person has the right to a decent job at decent wages; that peaceful relations between countries with different political systems are the cornerstone of international prosperity.

One might think that without question 90 per cent of the people would choose this New Deal road, since it leads to a solution of their problems. However, big business, through the Eisenhower administration and all of its organs of publicity, tries to identify the interests of the ordinary people with those of big business in order to put over its piratical program. It tries to split the people a thousand



ways, by throwing small crumbs to select groups while robbing the mass.

Although the Jews of our country are of course feeling the recession like everyone else, it is possible to study the effects on them more specifically because they are in large part concentrated in certain occupations. Probably a majority of the Jews in the labor force are to be found among garment workers and other light industry workers, professionals, retailers and clerical and sales workers. Geographically the nation's over five million Jews are concentrated in the largest cities. Over three fifths of the Jewish people reside in five cities; New York City—2,294,000; Los Angeles—325,000; Chicago—325,000; Philadelphia—245,000; Boston—140,000; total, 3,329,000 (*American Jewish Yearbook*, 1954, Vol. 55). How are the Jews specifically affected by the recession? How can they help themselves minimize its effect? In this first article we shall examine the plight of those employed in the garment industries.

### ***Sickness of Garment Industry***

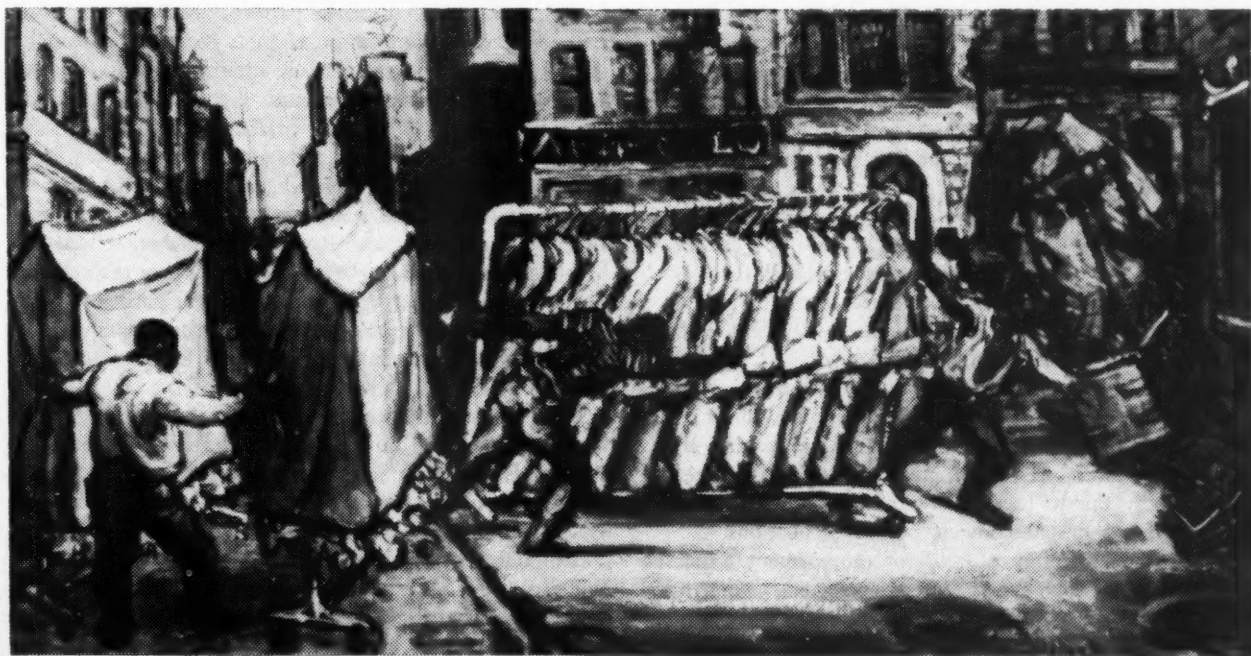
Jewish tailors and seamstresses brought their skills from the old country and developed the modern American garment industry centered in New York City. At first they toiled in sweatshops and were among the worst exploited of the immigrant groups. Through bitter struggles they formed unions which ended the sweatshop system and created more dignified working conditions, better wages and shorter hours. Today many tens of thousands of Jewish workers are still employed in the garment industries, alongside of workers of Italian extraction, Negro and Puerto Rican workers—to name the most important groups.

These workers are worse off than most. They have suffered from a growing economic depression that hit their industry shortly after the end of World War II. Of all the consumer goods industries, the apparel industries have felt most the "guns versus butter" impact of the cold war and the Korean War. Between 1945 and 1952 purchases of clothing per person in the United States declined 23 per cent in physical volume. In the quality lines, employment has stagnated or declined while wages have been almost stationary in the face of the rapid rise in living costs. In 1946 average annual earnings for fully-employed workers in the apparel industries were 13 per cent less than the average for all manufacturing. In 1952 they were 31 per cent less than the average. Except for the earnings of tobacco workers, they were lowest of all industry groups.

New York garment workers have been especially hard hit. Employment in the apparel industries in New York State fell from 418,000 in 1946 to 383,000 in 1953, with many of those in 1953 working part-time. In the New York City ladies' cloak and suit industry, employment dropped 20 per cent between 1950 and 1953 alone.

During the Korean War boom year of 1951, when registered unemployment generally in New York City was only 4 per cent, it was 16 per cent in the apparel industries. Even in better years seasonal patterns impose 15-20 weeks of annual unemployment on the average garment worker. Now the general business drop is worsening this bad situation. Registered unemployment among New York State apparel workers was 88,743 in January 1954, as compared with 66,601 a year earlier. Allowing for the incompleteness of these figures, it is safe to say that one-fourth of all garment workers were unemployed—in the busy season!

Between 1946 and 1952, real weekly earnings of men's



**THE CROSSING**

*A Painting by Philip Reisman*

MAY, 1954

coat and suit workers in New York City fell 20 per cent, of ladies dress workers 23 per cent, of ladies cloak and suit workers 30 per cent. Annual earnings are unbelievably low because of irregular work and medium-to-poor weekly earnings. According to State government figures, the average worker in 1950 earned between \$2,133 (men's coats and suits) and \$1,238 (women's underwear). Annual earnings did not change much in later years, but now they are declining with rising unemployment.

In order to grasp the full impact of the recession on the garment industries, it is necessary to understand that New York City garment workers already suffer from a number of special evils, in addition to feeling the effects of having a peacetime occupation in a country geared for war. The recession on top of these evils makes the situation of garment workers especially hard.

### *Special Evils of the Industry*

One evil is the contracting system. This is a descendant of the contracting and sweating systems of early English manufacturing and the sweatshop system of the early New York garment industry. Manufacturers farm out a large part of the work to contractors. The main or "inside" employers play off "their own" workers against those employed by the contractors, assigning work to that shop where the workers will accept the lowest piece rate.

The prevailing piece rate system is another evil. In some other unionized industries with piece-rates, the workers use various methods, such as informal agreement among themselves as to rate of output, in order to maintain their earnings and prevent speed-up. But in the garment industry competition among the workers is the rule and a general lowering of standards results. To make matters worse, the piece-rate scales are usually set by formulas unknown to the workers. As a result, formal wage increases are often wiped out in the practical setting of piece-rate scales. Reflecting the competition among workers resulting from piece-rates and contracting, labor productivity in the women's outerwear industry increased roughly 25 per cent between 1947 and 1951—a shocking contrast to the declining real earnings.

All in all, the garment industries provide a classical example of Karl Marx' conclusion: "Piece-work has, therefore, a tendency, while raising individual wages above the average, to lower this average itself."

Another evil is the national divisions among the workers. In the New York dress industry, Italian and Jewish workers are organized in separate locals, thus weakening the workers' bargaining power. Increasingly, Negro workers and especially Puerto Rican workers are employed in the lowest paying shops and lowest paying occupations.

Finally, the leadership of most of the garment unions follows a policy which shows more concern for "saving the employers" than leading the struggles of the membership. Workers find the interference of union officials the decisive obstacle in their attempts to win gains in negotiation

with individual employers. The union leadership bases its position on the support of the favored crafts, such as cutters, and workers in favored shops, generally a relatively small number of high-price line, higher wage shops. Red-baiting and national divisions complete the pattern of control.

The only exception in the needle trades is among the fur workers who, thanks to a progressive-led union, have the highest weekly earnings of any manufacturing industry in New York City (\$116 in the last quarter of 1953). However, these workers also suffer greatly from the slump. Employment in the fur industry dropped 35 per cent during 1953. Poor business in the fur industry has been aggravated by the 20 per cent excise tax on furs. Some relief may follow from the recent cutting of that tax to 10 per cent. There still remains the cold-war embargo on import of vital furs from the USSR and China. As a result of this embargo, New York has lost its position as fur capital of the world to London. The embargoed furs were not competitive with American furs, but complemented them, and their loss means a loss of business. A. Hollander & Sons, world's largest fur dressing and dyeing company, is closing American plants while its Canadian and French plants, getting Soviet furs, experience record business. Its president, A. Feldman, petitioned Congress to remove the embargo which causes "the strangulation of our own American fur industry."

### *What to Do*

Declining labor income nationally combined with a continuing war economy is bringing the chronically depressed garment industries to an acute condition. Action along the following lines is urgent.

1. Jewish and non-Jewish garment workers are clearly in need of important improvements in organization and union policies. Aside from these internal reforms, they require the New Deal approach on problems of general interest. Consider the standard labor union demand for raising the minimum hourly wage from 75 cents to \$1.25. This would directly raise the wages of over 60,000 garment workers in New York City and over half a million nationally. With such a pronounced immediate effect, the higher minimum wage would necessarily ease the achievement of substantial wage increases for all garment workers. It would deal a body blow to the runaway shop and reduce the special exploitation of Negro and Puerto Rican workers.

2. Nowhere is it more important for Jewish workers to seek the closest relations with workers of other national origins. Italians and Jews are the largest national origin groups among all New York workers. They work side-by-side most in the garment industries. Closer cooperation in union affairs between Italian and Jewish workers in the garment industries will give a new vitality to their unions, and contribute much to effective united political and economic action by labor generally in New York City.

3. Today many of the Jewish workers are among the





—Reprinted from *Advance*, organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers

avored, more highly paid garment workers. But they see that this gives them no protection against unemployment and lowered incomes. The Jewish workers cannot preserve their standards by trying to monopolize them. Substandard conditions for Negro and Puerto Rican workers pull down the conditions of all workers. Jewish workers, themselves so often the victims of discrimination, must take the initiative. They must spare no effort by strong union action to raise the wages of Negro and Puerto Rican workers, to open all jobs to them without discrimination, especially by an organized fight for the upgrading of Negroes and Puerto Ricans in the industry.

4. No industry more than garment is dependent on a reduction in high taxes for war, combined with a series of measures to raise labor's purchasing power. Government studies show that as family income goes up, spending for clothing increases *more than proportionately*. An increase of 20 per cent in the purchasing power of the lowest income groups would bring a rise of 30-40 per cent in their spending for clothing. In this respect garment employers, many of whom are Jewish, have a common interest with garment workers in the general rise of real wages.

Garment union leaders have not been conspicuous in leading the fight for a way out. But garment workers are most vitally interested in the kinds of New Deal-type programs advocated by the labor movement generally. For example, the United Automobile Workers' full employment conference held in Washington in December 1953 put forward a program which has been adopted essentially

by the CIO, and largely followed by the AFL. This program includes:

1. Two million homes yearly, including large-scale public housing;
2. broadened education, health, public works, more TVA's;
3. FEPC with teeth;
4. 100 per cent parity for working farmers;
5. improved social security;
6. \$1.25 minimum wage, extended to all workers;
7. personal tax exemptions of \$1,000, higher taxes on wealthy;
8. debt moratorium for the unemployed.

In many states central labor bodies and local unions are active before state legislatures and city councils petitioning for improved unemployment insurance, federal food relief, against evictions and for other demands. The political arms of the labor movement will be especially active in this year's congressional elections, to elect candidates committed to a New Deal-type program.

A decade ago the garment unions were in the forefront of the coalition which elected Franklin D. Roosevelt to give the people a better New Deal program for the post-war period. The promise was betrayed by Roosevelt's successors. Garment workers have every interest in doing even more to realize that betrayed promise today.

(The second and final article will discuss the effect of the recession on the professions, trade and clerical workers.)

### ***And Dulles Wants to Rearm Germany!***

**H**ERE are recently disclosed facts about West Germany.

1. "Tomorrow the existence of concentration camps, gas chambers and crematoria may be difficult to prove," writes the *New York Post* (April 12). The paper reports that nazi concentration camp records will be turned over to the Bonn regime after the State Department put pressure on Britain and France. Recipient of the records will be Theodor Oberlander, minister of refugees and expellees in Adenauer's cabinet, who had joined the Nazi Party in 1932 and was director of Hitler's racist Institute for Eastern European Questions. He will thus be in a position to manipulate and "interpret" the records to put an end to *any* denazification and to confuse the history of nazi genocide.

2. The *New York Times* reports (March 5) that neo-nazis succeeded in making it possible for the Lower Saxony ministry of justice to permit and the ministry of finance to pay for the exhuming from a common, prison grave and reburial in individual graves in the town of Hamelin of 91 executed nazi war criminals. Among those reburied were the unspeakable Joseph Kramer, "Beast of Belsen," and Irma Griesse, Belsen's Ilse Koch. The World Jewish Congress is protesting.

3. A virulent successor group to the tsarist "Black Hundreds" pogromists, composed of Russian emigres, is flourishing in West Germany and issuing anti-Semitic propaganda in four languages.

And this is the West Germany that Dulles wants to rearm to defend democracy!



# ROOTS OF THE ISRAEL-ARAB CRISIS

*What are the real issues in the crisis which threatens war in the Middle East? Path to a solution in the interests of both peoples*

*By Louis Harap*

**A**S the sixth anniversary of the State of Israel approaches—the new state was established on May 14, 1948—the Israeli people, who fought so valiantly for their state, once again face the danger of war. The Arab peoples, subjected to wars, oppression and abject poverty by their feudal overlords, face the same catastrophe.

For Spring has ushered in a new series of crises between Israel and the Arab states. Hardly a week passes but some new grave situation arises. Border incidents between Israel and the Arab states which have been continuous since the end of hostilities, have increased in frequency and magnitude since last summer, reaching a climax in the Kibya massacre.

A new climax in tensions occurred on March 17, when 11 Israelis on a bus were brutally murdered at Scorpion Pass. After an interval of heated exchanges on both sides and the refusal of the UN Mixed Armistice Commission to censure Jordan because the trail of the murderers was lost at the Jordanian border, the Israeli representatives walked out of the commission. On the night of March 28-29 Israelis murdered nine Jordanians in the village of Nahhalin. On March 29, a Soviet veto in the UN Security Council defeated the New Zealand resolution to reaffirm a UN resolution of September 1951, urging Egypt to cease interfering with Israel shipping through the Suez Canal. Even as we write, the Security Council is considering the complaint of Israel against Jordan for the latter's refusal to attend an armistice conference, demanded by Israel in accordance with terms of the armistice agreement, and for the massacre at Scorpion Pass; and the Arab request to take up the murders at Nahhalin.

## *Who Is Arming Arabs?*

If a "second round" is to be avoided, the real root of the problem must be recognized and appropriate action taken. There is widespread tendency, encouraged by Washington and London and by the press, to interpret the dangerous developments in the Middle East as primarily a conflict between the peoples of Israel and the Arab countries. Arab leaders and Zionist and Israeli leaders tend to assign responsibility for the crisis to the "antagonisms" of the peoples involved. But this is not true, as we shall see.

What can be done to lift the very real danger of war in that unquiet area? One thing is clear—no piecemeal ap-

proach of tackling isolated aspects of the question such as the Egyptian interference with Israel shipping through the Suez Canal can do it. The Washington-London-dominated majority of the Security Council rammed through a vote of "censure" of Israel for the Kibya massacre that was one-sided and quite deliberately avoided doing anything to further peace in the Middle East, as even the *New York Times* pointed out editorially (November 26, 1953). The reason is that peace is the last thing that Dulles wants, since he would thereby lose his influence over the area. The same is true of the UN Security Council's resolution on the Suez Canal issue. As Soviet UN Delegate Andrei Vyshinsky said in the debate on the question on March 28, "there is no connection between the proposals contained in this draft resolution and attempts to settle or even approach a settlement of the general and, of course, more important Palestine question."

In the course of his remarks Vyshinsky showed the only path to a peaceful settlement of the issues between Israel and the Arab States. It has been commonly said that the Soviet Union vetoed the resolution on the Suez Canal in order "to plunge the Middle East into disorder," as Thomas J. Hamilton asserted in the *New York Times* (March 31). Yet, it is the Washington-London policy, as we shall explain, that demands and leads to turbulence in the area. As Robert C. Doty wrote from Cairo in the *New York Times* of March 7 on the overturn of regimes in Egypt and Syria, "these recent events . . . might result in some gain for the Western objective of bolstering defenses in this vital area linking three continents."

Who is supplying arms to the Middle East and setting up a feverish arms race that is so unsettling? Obviously, Washington and London: it is they whose provocative arms policy is holding back a peaceful solution and who are primarily responsible for the threat of war that would be so destructive to both the Israeli and Arab peoples. No one has accused the Soviet Union of supplying arms to the Arab states because the fact is that no arms are coming from there. How then can one say that the objective of the Soviet veto was to keep the Middle East in disorder?

Why then did the Soviet Union veto the UN resolution to reaffirm the 1951 resolution asking Egypt to cease interference with Israel shipping through the Suez Canal? Vyshinsky explained his position in his speeches on the issue. Not only, he said, did this resolution evade the real

and basic question, solution of the overall problem, but the UN acted on the resolution "in order to distract attention and to show that you are doing something." He pointed out that Egypt has refused to comply with the UN request for two years and Egypt let it be known in advance that she would refuse to comply if the resolution were passed again. Thus, it was apparent that "the Security Council, by adopting a worthless, inane and unsatisfactory resolution, impairs its prestige and its international authority."

### **Why the Veto?**

The Soviet Union stated instead that the *only* way to deal with this question was "that we (the UN Security Council) should recommend that both parties should reach agreement and find a solution to the problem by means of direct negotiations. . . . On one side we have the representative of Israel and on the other the representative of Egypt; they are sitting opposite one another. Let them sit down at one table and try to settle the questions which the Security Council cannot settle now. I am deeply convinced that they can find a better solution. That is why certain representatives and States show a stubborn disinclination to permit direct negotiations between the interested parties and are trying to interfere in and, unfortunately, to hinder those negotiations."

The Washington-London policy does in fact fear direct negotiations, for this implies a relaxation or cessation of their control over the eventual outcome. In the case of Jordan, everyone knows that this government is a puppet of Britain: the Jordanian army is financed by Britain and commanded by the British general, Glubb Pasha. If the Jordanian regime, which is involved in the most recent exchange of border massacres at Scorpion Pass and Nahal-in, refuses to enter into direct negotiations with Israel, is London innocent of this intransigence? Could not Dulles urge the Arab states to sit down to negotiate directly, if this plan were consistent with his objectives in the Middle East? Yet one does not hear anything from Washington about the necessity for direct negotiations. They don't want a peaceful solution by direct negotiations because this would loosen their hold over the area.

### **Toward Direct Negotiations**

Direct negotiations under present circumstances are difficult to achieve. But the various ineffectual resolutions advanced by the Washington-London majority or by one side or another of the parties to the disputes are not only foredoomed to failure, but do not hold the possibility of a real solution to the problems even if they were carried out. Despite the fact that direct negotiations are hard to realize, mainly because of the reluctance of Washington and London actively to further them, this is the only solution in which the interests of the parties are mutually fulfilled and agreement is reached by voluntary action.

So far as Israel and the Arab states are concerned, direct

negotiations require changes in attitudes and policies. For the Israel regime, this means a radical change in the approach to the Arab peoples. It demands a halt to the discriminatory treatment of the Arabs within Israel, revision of the second class status of Arabs in Israel in relation to citizenship and the holding of property, freedom of movement and equality in every respect. It requires efforts towards agreement on the Arab refugees. It also requires adoption of a position like that of India towards an arms race—opposition to American arms "aid" to any country in the area. On the Arab side it demands the tempering of intransigence on issues, willingness to negotiate such questions as the anti-Israel economic boycott and the refugee problem. Above all, the condition for satisfactory negotiations is the resistance against pressures by Washington and London and reassertion of genuine independence.

Such an outcome is completely in the interests of both the Israeli and Arab peoples. Only in this way can peace be won for the Middle East. Is it a coincidence that this cumulative heightening of tension in the Middle East in the past months follows upon the carrying out of the policy announced by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles after his tour of the Middle East last June? The basis of this policy is the international McCarthyite myth of the "threat of Soviet aggression." The real objective of the policy is control of the oil resources of the Middle East (more than half of the known world resources) and closing the gap of anti-Soviet military alliances. The palpable signs of the Dulles policy are the agreements to send arms to Arab countries in exchange for an anti-Soviet military agreement, miscalled a "defense plan."

### **Dulles' Middle Eastern Plan**

Dulles' plan is by now well advanced. Washington has entered into an agreement with Pakistan to send arms to that country despite the intense protest of all India, which regards this as a threat to her security and to peace in Asia. Further, under Washington auspices a military alliance has been concluded between Pakistan and Turkey. These two countries are to form the eastern and western anchors of a chain of anti-Soviet military establishments in the Middle and Near East which Dulles is trying to set up in accordance with his expressed overall anti-Soviet plan.

Intense activity is going on to reach agreements on the sending of arms to the Moslem states between Pakistan and Turkey. As Dana Adams Schmidt said in the *New York Times* on February 13, "Eventually, it is hoped, other countries of the Middle East (in addition to Pakistan and Turkey), particularly Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia, will join this defensive grouping of nations on the Soviet Union's southern borders. Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia are the countries that produce the oil that the West desires to defend the Middle East." In one form or another, the regimes of Saudi Arabia (*Chicago Sentinel*, January 14) and Syria (*New York Times*, March 5) have indicated willingness to cooperate with this scheme.

Among the inducements offered by Dulles to the Arab leaders are arms and technical aid in building an army. All this is given, of course, in the name of "defense against Soviet aggression." Yet there is something passing strange in this claim. For it is agreed by all observers that the people of the Middle and Near East are totally unconcerned about this "threat of Soviet aggression" for the simple reason that they know it does not exist. A report on United States foreign policy issued in March by the Brookings Institute, a conservative research organization in Washington, said, according to a Jewish Telegraphic Agency dispatch (week-end of March 19), that "the Arabs (meaning, we presume, the Arab people as well as the leaders—L.H.) are probably less inclined than ever to join a regional defense organization 'in view of the latest Soviet peace offensive.' The Arabs, the report stated, indicate 'a marked lack of awareness of any menace from the Soviet Union.'" One should add that they are not "aware" of it for the sound reason that it doesn't exist.

Why then are the Arab leaders indicating that they will accept arms from Washington and cooperate in such a regional pact against the Soviet Union? India has expressed its sharp apprehension that United States arms to Pakistan increase tension in the relations between the two countries since India believes the arms are aimed at her—for India, too, is well aware that no threat exists from the Soviet Union. And Israel has protested vigorously that the arms now promised to the Arab leaders are really intended for use against her, notwithstanding the frequent assertions of the State Department that the granting of arms is conditioned on their not being used against Israel. The reactionary Arab leaders, who together with the people know that they are not threatened by the Soviet Union, are exploiting Dulles' offer of arms to strengthen their own military positions for their own purposes and not for "defense" against "Soviet aggression."

### Israel and Dulles

And what of Israel in this situation? Is the Mapai-General Zionist regime following a policy designed to further peace and to reach a settlement of differences with its Arab neighbors? Far from disputing the Dulles anti-Soviet policy in general or in relation to the Soviet Union in the Middle East, Zionist and Israeli leaders vehemently affirm their agreement. They oppose Dulles because he refuses to agree with the Israel regime that Israel is the strongest and most reliable Middle Eastern power for a military alliance for "defense against Soviet aggression." After the putsches in Egypt and Syria in March, Israeli Premier Moshe Sharett pointed out that arming such states was not a reliable method of setting up Middle East "defense" arrangements. Giving arms to the unstable Arab governments "within the region will make no contribution either to the defense of the region against outside aggression or the promotion of stability within." (*Israel Digest*, March 15). In other words, Sharett wished to impress Dulles with the fact that

Washington's "defense" scheme was not being furthered by giving arms to Arab leaders, who really intend these arms to be used against Israel. The basis of the Israel government's position, support of Dulles' anti-Soviet Middle Eastern scheme, is thus suicidal. For this plan promotes strife and unrest in Israel-Arab relationships. If Dulles' scheme is not opposed, the basis for Israel-Arab strife remains.

The disturbed Middle East situation is made even more turbulent by the effort of the State Department to displace British influence in order to gain undisputed dominance over the Middle East. The jockeying between London and Washington can be discerned from the attempt of the State Department to act in the area without consulting its "ally," Britain. Here are a few decisive instances. In Egypt, Washington is trying to take London's place as the controlling power now that London is being pushed out by the Egyptian people's demand for independence. "It was learned from authoritative State Department sources," said the *Jewish Record* on January 7, "that the United States has already informed Great Britain of its decision to send arms and dollar aid to Egypt. This move is taking place despite British objections arising from the present tense negotiations between Britain and Egypt involving the Suez Canal Zone."

The case is similar with Iraq. "British Foreign office sources confirmed this week," said the Chicago *Sentinel* on January 14, "that the United States government had concluded an agreement with King Saud of Saudi Arabia for the training and equipment of a substantial Arabian army. The same sources said the British government had not yet been consulted by the United States on a similar arrangement proposed for Iraq."

The evidence thus shows that the tension and threat of war arises from the Dulles policy of working toward dominance over the Middle East and of promoting an anti-Soviet war atmosphere. Coincident with this feverish activity of the State Department, the Middle East—specifically the relations of Israel and the Arab states—has been thrown into a turmoil by the succession of incidents and crises. Direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab states as free as possible of pressures from Washington and London offer prospects for a solution.

## JEWISH BOOK WEEK

May 1-9

**T**HIS year Jewish Book Week has particular significance, for we are celebrating 300 years of Jewish settlement in the United States. Although the actual Tercentenary date is September, when 23 Jews arrived in New Amsterdam in 1654, the occasion is being marked through the year. The event provides the opportunity for deepening one's knowledge of the progressive tradition of American Jews so as to act more effectively.





## NAT GANLEY: LABOR LEADER

By Abe Strauss

### Detroit

**Nat Ganley** is one of the six Michigan working class leaders who were recently convicted under the Smith act. Ganley, acting as his own attorney, addressed the jury at the opening of the trial on October 7, 1953. He told the story of his life, of his 34 years in the Communist Party, of his pioneer work in the building of the Auto Workers Union into a great labor organization. These remarks made a deep impression in the courtroom and in the labor movement. The local press indicated their importance by printing lengthy quotations. In the succeeding months of the trial Ganley set the tone and level of the trial by his defense and by his knowledge of Marxist literature and the history of the Communist movement in America. Together with his five colleagues he helped expose the anti-democratic nature of the accusations and the lies of the informers.

The local labor movement knows the Ganley home as "the house of the wise," the home of wisdom and knowledge. The library in Ganley's home holds a treasure of modern literature and a rich selection of works on American labor history. Once you enter the house, you are enveloped by the warm welcome of friendly people. Anna Ganley, too, is one of the first victims of the McCarran-Walter act. Like her husband, she is known and loved in the labor movement, in which she has been active for the last 30 years.

**"My father Label,"** Nat Ganley explained, "worked as a plumber and tin-smith in Bialostok, Poland. He was active in the 'Bund' and fought against tsarist tyranny. My mother Elka was a weaver in Poland, a child of religious parents. She took part in the strikes of the weavers and helped to win better conditions for herself and the other workers. It was in the midst of these activities that she and my father met and married. Together they fought against tsarism and against the bosses. In their home many illegal 'Bund' meetings were held.

"In 1900 they could no longer stay in Poland and fled to America. My father continued his activity in the Workmen's Circle and the Socialist Party. My mother kept a religious home and always helped

my father in his activities. For my five sisters and me there was always a blessing on her lips: 'May you always be as honest and sincere as your father!' We tried to carry out her wish: we all remained loyal to the labor movement.

"In our home on the East Side we felt the pinch of poverty. At the age of nine I had to go out to work to help support the family. In the evenings my father would come home from Workmen's Circle meetings and share his experiences with us. He would tell us of the bad economic situation and the bitter exploitation in the sweat shops. He would give us leaflets to read calling workers to organizing meetings of unions. 'The resistance of the workers is growing!' he used to shout, as though he were making a speech to a large assembly. And thus, day in and day out, his words inspired us. My mother quickly joined the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Workmen's Circle and enlisted us all to help in cooking meals for the strikers."

**In 1916,** at the age of 13, Ganley became a member of the junior section of the Young Socialist League, where he studied the history of the socialist movement. In 1919 he entered the Socialist Party and in the same year became an active member of the "Scenery Artists" of the Painters Union, AFL. Here for the first time he came into conflict with the opportunistic leadership of the union, who were also leaders of the Socialist Party. "I saw for the first time, how they betrayed the workers and militant Marxism," he told me. In 1920 he became a charter member of the Communist Party.

McCarthyite hysteria is nothing new for Ganley. Even before he left the Socialist Party, he was arrested at a meeting in Harlem in a "Palmer Raid." He was taken to Ellis Island for deportation until the FBI suddenly realized that he was a native American and that they had "captured" the son, when it was the father they were after! It was 11 days before he was released. His father was later arrested for deportation and released after a struggle.

Nat Ganley spent a lot of time in the Communist Party studying the foundations of scientific socialism and the history of the labor movement in America and

throughout the world. For several years he was New York state secretary of the Party. Later he settled in New England, where he was active in the drives to organize the textile workers. In the thirties, the years of hunger and unemployment, he participated in the leadership of the great unemployed movement and organized in New England the "Right to Live" clubs, which carried through historic actions against hunger and for security.

**The Ganleys** moved to Detroit at the end of 1932. This largest auto center was then a stronghold of the open shop. The small number of AFL unions and independent locals were isolated and rotten with corruption. Nat Ganley organized the Trade Union Unity League there and became a powerful organizing influence among thousands of militant workers in light and heavy industry.

For a time Nat Ganley worked in an auto shop on the East Side of Detroit. His initiative resulted in the organizing of Local 155, largest of the UAW. One of the charter members of that local was Walter Reuther, now president of the Auto Workers and of the CIO. At the end of 1936, Local 155 called the first big strike for a union agreement. The strike took the form of the historic "sit-down strike." This first sit-down in Detroit won a union contract and the economic demands of the union. The success of Local 155 shook the open-shop fortress and encouraged the auto workers everywhere to strike action.

Brother Ganley was very popular among the Auto Workers and was unanimously elected as a paid business agent of his local. In 1937 he conducted negotiations with the management of large companies.

In the ten years during which he was a business agent of Local 155, Ganley did not lose a single fight. When he left the position in 1947, the local had grown from 1000 (in 1937) to 30,000 members. He was a delegate from his local to six national conventions of the UAW and the CIO. At every convention he was a member of the Resolutions and Constitution Committees. To this day Nat Ganley is a member in good standing of Local 155, of which Walter Reuther is still a member. No one in the local has dared to attempt a "McCarthy job" on their unforgettable leader, Nat Ganley.

"They knew me as a Communist even before I came to Detroit," said Ganley as we ended our chat. "When I became an active leader in the local labor movement, they came to know even more about my Marxist convictions and activities and that I was proud of them."

Many workers in Detroit—even his political opponents—regard this brave working class leader with great respect and his persecutors with even greater contempt.

# FALSE STEP IN AJ CONGRESS

*An account of expulsion proceedings against two devoted AJ Congress members. Is this anti-McCarthyite organization helped by this move?*

*By Jack Greenstein*

THE American Jewish Congress is today playing an important part in the opposition to the fascist onslaught of McCarthyism. The forthright stand taken by AJ Congress against collaboration with the Velde Un-American Committee on the inquisition against religious leaders, its appeal for united opposition to McCarthyism and participation of its chapters in grass-roots anti-McCarthy movements are significant contributions to the fight.

But *because* AJ Congress has enhanced the struggle for America's traditional freedoms and rights, *because* it needs every ounce of strength to carry on that fight, members of AJ Congress have cause to be deeply disturbed at a recent development that exposes a serious weakness.

We refer to the recent expulsion from AJ Congress of Mrs. Billie Portnow and Mrs. Judith Pollack, vice president and publicity chairman, respectively, of the Queens Women's Division. Both women have been active leaders whose work has brought credit on the AJ Congress in the community. Mrs. Portnow's work has been often commended by the national office, as well as the local press and radio. Expulsion from an organization engaged in fighting McCarthyism is a serious matter, especially now that AJ Congress is seeking to double its membership the better to carry on this fight. Why then the expulsion of two leading members, who sparkplugged local Congress activities in the past?

This is the reason: Mrs. Portnow and Mrs. Pollack were expelled for inviting others to listen to and for listening to opinions that differed from those expressed by AJ Congress leaders. Specifically, Mrs. Portnow and Mrs. Pollack were expelled from AJ Congress for having arranged a *private* meeting in a *private* home as *private* individuals and having listened to Morris U. Schappes discuss the Prague trial and the charge of anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe. At the beginning of the expulsion proceedings there were other charges, but these disintegrated in the course of hearings ordered by the AJ Congress executive committee. Toward the end of the hearings, another charge was tacked on by order of the executive committee, based on a statement sent to Congress members by a group called the Committee for the Defense of Civil Rights in the American Jewish Congress, organized among Congress members to defend the two women. Written in the heat of the expulsion proceeding itself, this statement contained phrases and formulations which the "defendants" them-

selves later withdrew. Yet the statement was permitted to remain as a basis for expulsion.

Although the other charges were either withdrawn or ignored during the hearing, they must be examined here. For their introduction threatened to open wide the gates for a McCarthyite incursion into AJ Congress; their withdrawal reflects an anti-McCarthyite awareness in Congress.

## *"Guilt by Accumulation"*

The original charges, in addition to one on arranging a private meeting to hear Morris Schappes, were: introduction of a resolution asking the national leadership of AJ Congress to consider taking a position in favor of clemency for the Rosenbergs; obtaining signatures to the Stockholm World Peace Appeal for a universal ban on atomic weapons and quoting, in a Congress chapter newspaper, the opinion of a Queens high school teacher that there was a "cesspool of bigotry" in the New York Board of Education. These charges were lodged by Judge Justine Wise Polier, president of the AJ Congress Women's Division, who made a major point that these actions by Mrs. Portnow and Mrs. Pollack formed a "pattern" that indicated they were unfit to be leaders or even members of Congress. The "pattern" idea or, as it has been called, "guilt by accumulation," is also written into the McCarran Internal Security Act of 1950, which was condemned by AJ Congress and by former President Truman for that very reason, among others. AJ Congress understood then—and still understands—that McCarran's "pattern" concept poses a threat to American democracy and to Congress itself.

Royal W. France, outstanding civil liberties lawyer, who served as counsel for Mrs. Portnow and Mrs. Pollack, reminded the hearing board of the dangers inherent in the "pattern" formula advanced by Judge Polier. He listed 14 positions taken by the Communist Party, ranging from its opposition to racial discrimination and segregation to its call for repeal of the McCarran-Walter and Smith acts and including such things as opposition to quota systems in schools and colleges and fighting the return of nazis to leading positions in Western Germany. "How many of the above objectives has the American Jewish Congress favored?" France asked. A check indicated that in 7 of the 14 points listed, AJ Congress and the Communist Party took similar positions; of the remaining seven, on only one

issue—the Stockholm Appeal—did AJ Congress take a position diametrically opposed to that of the Communist Party. By McCarranite and McCarthyite standards, that would make AJ Congress a “communist front” organization. Of course, such a conclusion is ridiculous—just as ridiculous as the attempt to draw “sinister” conclusions from the “pattern” presented by Judge Polier that later dissolved. While the hearing board did not specifically reject the “guilt by accumulation” concept, this did, in effect, disintegrate when the charge relating to the Rosenberg case was withdrawn and when the board refrained from passing on the other charges.

### *Right of Dissent*

The whole case, then, rested on the fact that Mrs. Portnow and Mrs. Pollack had arranged a private gathering to listen to Morris Schappes express opinions in conflict with those held by many leaders and members of AJ Congress. Their expulsion was ordered on the basis of a doctrine that is foreign to an organization like the American Jewish

Congress, which stands behind the basic precepts of civil liberty and the right of dissent.

What the hearing board said, in effect, was this: If a member of Congress arranges the presentation of opinions not sanctioned by AJ Congress policy and fails to condemn those dissenting opinions, then the member has demonstrated that he or she has no place in the ranks of the American Jewish Congress!

This writer covered the recent AJ Congress convention for *JEWISH LIFE* (January). He heard expressions of deep-going disagreement between leading executives of Congress on such important questions as the separation of church and state and how world peace can best be attained. We are certain that Rabbi Morton Berman, an AJ Congress vice president, has listened and will continue to listen to and express unsanctioned opinions on the use of religious buildings by public schools even though his position was overruled by the convention as far as AJ Congress policy was concerned. We believe that Prof. Horace M. Kallen, also a vice president of AJ Congress, is no less an advocate of universal disarmament today though he was unable

## *ADL Awakens to Anti-Semitism at Monmouth*

**A** STRONG protest against the “recking” anti-Semitism in the Fort Monmouth “investigation” was invoked by Harry Green, attorney for some of the victims. He made the charges at a speech delivered before a breakfast at the Sons of Israel Congregation in Asbury Park, N. J., on April 5. Green pointed out that all but four of the engineers and scientists at Fort Monmouth suspended or put on declassified work were Jewish. He called the Monmouth affair “the American Dreyfus case, except that here there are 41 Jews being sacrificed instead of one. . . . Anti-Semitism was brought out in all its ugliness in three hearings before the First Army Security Board. Although the Army will not publish these transcripts, I intend to make them public when I receive them.”

Green hurled a challenge at the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress for their silence in the face of this anti-Semitic affair, reported the *New York Post* on April 5. “Seven months have elapsed,” he exclaimed, “since 41 men have been sacrificed on the altar of anti-Semitism and not a single voice of support or help has been forthcoming from any Jewish agency.” He called for an end to the agencies’ hush-hush attitude on the issues.

The Anti-Defamation League, whose excuse for existence is its claim to defend the Jewish people against anti-Semitism, was apparently stung by this challenge. Speaking at a banquet of the B'nai B'rith of Newark, N. J., on the evening of the same day, Arnold Forster, ADL chief counsel, made the first statement of that organization on anti-Semitism in the Monmouth affair. He said that McCarthy’s attack on engineers and scientists at Fort Monmouth had a “spark of anti-Semitism.” Forster said: “We thoroughly investigated the situation

in Fort Monmouth before we arrived at our conclusion. The single all-important problem for America today is to uphold our civil liberties. As Americans we shall take part in this fight.”

Forster connected the firings at Monmouth with the anti-Semitic agitation of local anti-Semites Mrs. H. D. Strack, of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and William Smollen. Asserting his own anti-communism, Forster continued: “Minorities in the country and our civil liberties can be destroyed by false accusations and by malicious rumors. There are those who use accusations as ‘proof.’” (Retranslated from the Yiddish.)

Criticism of the Jewish defense agencies for their silence on Monmouth anti-Semitism had also been expressed by Samuel B. Gach, publisher and editor of the *California Jewish Voice* (Los Angeles) on March 3. He noted that a Jewish defense agency (unnamed) had sent him material about Telford Taylor’s criticism of McCarthy’s Monmouth “investigation,” in which “Not a word was mentioned in the release as to the anti-Semitism undertones of the Fort Monmouth investigations. The outmoded and always to be deplored hush-hush treatment prevailed.”

While accepting the current delusions about “communism,” Gach went on: “This week the same ‘defense’ agency sent in an eight-page ‘fact’ sheet telling us that anti-Semitism continues in Soviet satellites. It’s like bringing coals to Newcastle. If it’s a Jewish defense organization, I expect it to go after my domestic enemies. These ‘defenders’ are not strong enough to go policing overseas. . . . What our domestic ‘defense’ agencies should tell us more about are the extreme right wing groups plotting to make life untenable in America. Said rightists are as much if not more of a threat to this country than are the extreme lefties.”



at the convention to make it an official policy of Congress. According to the logic of the Portnow-Pollack case, should Rabbi Berman and Prof. Kallen be expelled next?

Morris U. Schappes, a member of the editorial board of JEWISH LIFE, appeared in a private home in Queens on February 21, 1953, and spoke to a group of persons regarding the recently concluded trial in Prague. This was at a time when every medium of communication was echoing and re-echoing one single interpretation of the trials: that they were the result of "an anti-Semitic campaign behind the iron curtain." Morris Schappes and JEWISH LIFE were not alone in challenging the official chorus. Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, for instance, had declared: "I am not prepared to believe on the evidence so far that the Soviet Union, in the light of its past record as being opposed to anti-Semitism, is now guilty of anti-Semitism, and I shall have to reserve judgment on that question." There were many, like Silver, who reserved judgment and who were eager to hear all the facts and opinions before passing judgment. So widespread was this desire for facts, that *The Truth About the Prague Trials*, published by JEWISH LIFE in the magazine and reprint, found 42,000 readers in a matter of weeks.

### **AJ Congress Needs Them**

Less than half of the group that gathered in Queens to hear Morris Schappes were members of AJ Congress. There was no mention of Congress by anyone that evening. Mrs. Portnow, who had invited the others, did not do so in her capacity as a Congress member but as an individual. She and the others heard Morris Schappes ask them, as intelligent adults, to consider another point of view and the documents that support it.

Mrs. Portnow and Mrs. Pollack were ordered expelled for bringing people to listen to another point of view be-

cause, the trial board said, Schappes' position is in contradiction to AJ Congress' basic principles (Article 1, Section 2 of Congress' constitution). Part of that statement of principles reads: "The American Jewish Congress will assist the people of Israel to develop in freedom, security and peace. . . ." It is extremely difficult—if not impossible—to see how Morris Schappes' remarks violated that precept. If anything, his statements offered a way of providing the greatest measure of "freedom, security and peace" not only for the people of Israel, but for all mankind.

Neither Mrs. Portnow nor Mrs. Pollack expressed total agreement with Morris Schappes. They did not express disagreement, either. They listened. They had listened to leaders of AJ Congress and of the federal administration, to dozens of radio, TV and newsreel commentators. Their ears and eyes, like those of all Americans during that period, had been filled with the charge of "anti-Semitism behind the iron curtain." For a few hours one evening, together with members and non-members of AJ Congress, they listened to another viewpoint. McCarthy would certainly pillory them for it. But what should provoke questions among opponents of McCarthyism who respect the AJ Congress, is that they should be pilloried by AJ Congress. The fact that an undemocratic proceeding against active local leaders was brought by the top leadership of the AJ Congress indicates that this top leadership is itself playing with the fire of McCarthyism. Unfortunately, Congress is not alone in this respect among anti-McCarthyite organizations. But this happens at the very time when the AJ Congress membership is actively fighting McCarthyism. The action of the top leadership in this instance violates the civil liberties program of the AJ Congress.

The defenders of democracy today need every voice, heart and hand that can be mustered. AJ Congress is weaker for having lost the abilities of Mrs. Portnow and Mrs. Pollack. It needs to regain that strength and to grow stronger.

## **LABOR VERSUS McCARTHYISM**

**A** CALL to labor to be "galvanized into the most serious grass-roots political movement in history" to defeat fascism in this country, was issued by Hugo Ernst, president of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers (AFL) in the March issue of his union paper, *The Catering Industry Employee*. Referring to the McCarthy-Army wrangle, he said that it has "rudely jolted" Americans. "I only hope that the labor movement feels the shock," he said, because "time is running out on democracy" in the country. "More and more people," wrote Ernst, "are beginning to discern the ominous parallels between the country lawyer from Wisconsin and the Austrian house painter."

"Both rose to power with cries of 'Red' and 'Treason.'"

"Both dealt in the Big Lie."

"Both deliberately undermined the confidence of ordinary people in the established government."

"Both made heroes of informers and turncoats while holding honorable men and women up to scorn."

"Both catered to the bigoted and the ignorant, while

heaping abuse on their country's intellectual leaders and burning their books."

"Both were openly aided and abetted by the biggest business men, because in both Hitlerism and McCarthyism, these business men recognized the ruthless will to destroy the trade unions. . . ."

"The labor movement, together with its natural allies among the farmers, minority groups, little businessmen, has it in its power to deal McCarthyism a staggering blow next fall by electing the kind of Congress which will be ready and willing to clip his wings and those others who are playing his game."

"We can do it by building the kind of political action in every town which draws together those who have the most to lose the more McCarthy gains."

"We can do it by insisting that this year the election be fought on the real, bedrock issues of jobs, public works, houses, farm prices, cheap power and all the things that McCarthy and Co. don't want to talk about."

# THE JEWS AND AMERICAN SLAVERY

*The relationship of Jews in our country to slavery before the Civil War. While some owned slaves, others joined the anti-slavery group*

By Morris U. Schappes

THERE is no better test, actual and symbolic, of the attitude of Jews to slavery in our country than the experience in the colony of Georgia. Two groups of Jews had arrived in Georgia in the very first year of the existence of the colony, 1733. By the end of the year, when there was a general allocation of land to the colonists, the Jews also were assigned their plots of land.

Now there were two peculiarities in the Charter governing the colony as drafted by the Trustees in London. The first was that there was to be no outright ownership of land or private property in land; instead each colonist was to be assigned a plot of land for his use for seven years, at the end of which period there would be a reallocation of the land. The second was that the use of slaves was prohibited. The reason for the ban on slavery is clearly stated in the title of the law enforcing it: "An act for rendering the Province of Georgia more defensible by prohibiting the importation of black slaves or negroes into the same."<sup>1</sup>

The colony of Georgia, however, did not prosper. After five years the colonists concluded they knew the reasons why they were not prospering, and drew up a petition to the Trustees, setting forth "the Two following chief Causes of these our *present* Misfortunes and this *deplorable* State of the Colony," especially when it was compared with the flourishing Carolinas. First the Georgians wanted to institute private property in land in order to attract more settlers and provide an incentive for the colonists to "making further Improvements" on their land, since their children would then be able to inherit it.

Secondly, the petition asks for the right to import Negro slaves, "with proper Limitations," to overcome the labor shortage, increase production and thus be enabled to pay off the debt they are incurring by their import of English goods.<sup>2</sup>

Now 117 freeholders signed this petition to introduce pri-

vate property in land and slavery into Georgia. Did Jews in Georgia sign the petition?

## Petition to Introduce Slavery

I have put this question to scores of classes in the past few years. Sometimes a majority and always a minority of the students said no, the Jews did not sign it; moreover, it was argued, Jews would not, could not sign it. Why would pious, God-fearing Christians sign it and not Jews? Well, students explained, and these were liberal-minded, progressive students, the religion of Judaism forbade slavery, and according to the Bible, Jews had to free slaves, and there was the Jewish tradition of opposition to slavery, and Jews themselves had been slaves in Egypt, and always spoke of it at Passover, so how could Jews petition to introduce slavery? Christians—yes; Jews—no. . . .

Fortunately, we do not have to guess whether the Jews did, could or would sign such a petition. First, the record clearly states that the Jews did not sign. Those who thought they did not are triumphant; even some of those who believed the Jews did sign give expression to a sense of relief that they did not. Good for the Jews. . . .

But the record also clearly states why the Jews did not sign: "The *Jews* applied for Liberty to sign with us; but we did not think it proper to join them in any of our Measures."

The result of the petition is simple to relate. When the Trustees refused to grant it, most of the Georgia colonists, including all but three Jewish families, moved up the coast from Savannah to Charleston. Thus pressured, the Trustees yielded, and the original colonists, including many Jews, returned to Savannah, introduced private ownership of land and slaves, and prospered. By 1762, Mordecai Sheftall owned 1,000 acres of land and nine slaves. In 1763, Isaac Lyons and a couple of non-Jewish partners imported eight slaves. In 1768, James Lucena began to import slaves and by 1771 he had 20. In 1780, Abigail Minis owned a plantation of over 1,000 acres and 17 slaves.<sup>3</sup> And so it went.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob Rader Marcus, *Early American Jewry*, Philadelphia, 1953, vol. 2, p. 344, 322, 324, 358.

<sup>1</sup> Charles C. Jones, Jr., *History of Savannah, Ga.*, Syracuse, 1890, p. 66; see also Schappes, *A Documentary History of the Jews in the United States, 1654-1875*, New York, rev. ed., 1952, p. 24. Unless otherwise stated, the main facts and the texts of the documents in this article will be found in that volume, pages 37-38, 99-102, 118-121, 134, 293-301, 312-315, 332-333, 573-574, 593, 596-597, 599, 612, 643-644, 648-649, 656.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Tailfer, etc., "A True and Historical Narrative of the Colony of Georgia, in America, . . ." Charleston, S. C., 1741, reprinted in Peter Force, *Tracts and other Papers . . . of North America*, Washington, D. C., 1836, vol. 1, p. 40-42.

If the Jews reacted exactly like the Christians to the same given situation in Georgia, it was not because they were any the less pious, God-fearing or "moral" than their Christian fellow-colonists. It was not the Old Testament or the New Testament, the "teachings" of Jesus or Moses, that determined the morality of Jew or Christian with regard to the enslavement of human beings. It was the relations of production, and of Jews and non-Jews to the need for labor that basically decided their attitudes to slavery, not abstract religious principles of the brotherhood of man, or religious rituals, or a history of one's own group's enslavement or suffering in the distant past.

Tradition? What was the living tradition in the immediate past of the Jews (or Christians), of which Jews (or Christians) might reasonably be expected to be conscious in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries? Speaking of the trade in the Middle Ages in both white and Negro slaves, Israel Abrahams points out "the connexion of the Jews with this hideous traffic," and declares: "The real blot on the social morality of the middle ages lies in the attitude both of the Church and Synagogue towards slavery. . . . Neither Jew nor Christian looked with equanimity on the enslavement of members of his own religious sect, but neither raised any protest against the sin which slavery commits against the rights of man."<sup>4</sup>

### *Among the Slave Traders*

When emerging European capitalism seized upon the slave trade and expanded it tremendously, Jews were among the active promoters of the gruesome traffic. The Dutch West India Company, in which wealthy Jews from Holland were active from the beginning, regarded the slave trade as one of its main aims. In Brazil in the seventeenth century, and in the West Indies and Guianas of South America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, sizable Jewish populations developed the sugar trade on the basis of plantation economies and slave labor—in the same territories as non-Jewish plantation and slave owners.

This, for Jew and Christian coming from Europe or South America, was the living tradition. Could a Passover ritual offset it and be decisive? Any nationalistic or chauvinistic theories or feelings about the alleged ethical superiority of the Jews obviously have no basis in reality when examined in this light.

Not that a living militant tradition cannot activate a conscience and thus affect human conduct on basic issues. The example of the Quakers indicates that it can. Emerging in the seventeenth century as a dissenting religious sect to which only bold spirits affiliated, the Quakers first in England and then in the American colonies became outstanding in the movement first against the slave trade and then against slavery as a whole. While one would exaggerate to assume that the Quakers were "as a body, throughout their history a solid phalanx aligned against human

<sup>4</sup> Israel Abrahams, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*, Philadelphia, 1896, rev. ed., London, 1932, p. 114, 112, 113.

enslavement," Dr. Herbert Aptheker reached this conclusion: "The radical philosophy, persecution and minority character of the original Quaker movement led it to take, as a group, an advanced position in the struggle, first, against the slave-trade within its own Society and then in the outside world; secondly, against slavery itself within its own Society (though here most gradually); and finally, against the existence of slavery anywhere."<sup>5</sup>

Thus "by the end of the Revolutionary War no accepted Quaker held slaves in any state north of the Mason and Dixon line" and by 1800 "the institution of Negro slavery had practically ceased to exist among accepted Quakers." As a dissenting part of the middle class, the Quaker movement had taken the general middle class principle of equality to mean that all men are brothers and "friends." But, unlike the vast majority of the middle class, the new, active religious ideology of the Quaker movement led it to seek to enforce the ideal of brotherhood upon its own members, first by education and remonstrance, then by discipline.

The contrast between the Quaker tradition and the absence of it among the Jews is most vivid in a state like Rhode Island. After 1715, when the British ruling class allowed colonial merchants to get directly into the African slave trade, Newport quickly became the main center of that barbarous traffic. The Rhode Island Quakers in 1717 and 1727 denounced this trade. By 1773, they had not only long since stopped Quaker participation in the slave-trade but were expelling Quaker slaveowners and by June there were no more such in the Society of Friends.

### *Some Slave Transactions*

Jews in Newport, however, got into the slave trade at the latest by 1754, when the Rivera family entered it. In 1762 Isaac Elizer and Samuel Moses sent a ship out to the African coast and handed their Captain John Peck a set of instructions as to what to do with his human cargo as matter of fact as if they were dealing with inanimate merchandise. Most involved in the slave trade, however, was the powerful shipper, Aaron Lopez, who got into the trade in 1764 and sent out one vessel each year to Africa in the 1760s, but in the 1770s, as the traffic expanded, he sent out three ships a year, each bringing 80 to 100 slaves to Jamaica.<sup>6</sup> Of course by that time 100 to 150 ships a year were sailing from Newport to Africa in quest of slaves and the proportion of Jewish participation was small.

Jews in Newport were by no means the only Jews to take part in the slave-trade. Those in New York, Philadelphia, Charleston and Savannah were also involved.

Jewish merchants who offered slaves for sale did so with as clear and callous a conscience as did non-Jewish mer-

<sup>5</sup> Herbert Aptheker, "The Quakers and Negro Slavery," *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 25 (1940), p. 331, 362.

<sup>6</sup> Marcus, work cited, vol. 1, p. 126, 141. In contrast, Morris A. Gutstein, then rabbi of the Newport synagogue, wrote in 1936, "We have met with no instances where the Jews of Newport traded in black slaves" (*The Story of the Jews of Newport*, New York, p. 164-165).



chants. On March 29, 1752, at the First Seder of Passover, Abraham Pereira Mendes undoubtedly was reminded in the Hagadah that the Jews had been slaves in Egypt and all that, but there is no trace of this tradition in his advertisement in *The New York Gazette*, May 4, 1752, of "a Parcel of Likely young Negroes, Piemento, Old Copper, Coffee, etc. . . ." Similarly did the Jewish silversmith Joseph Pinto announce his merchandise in *The New York Mercury*, October 30, 1758 as "... Silver Watches, chased Silver Milk Pots, Stone Rings: Also a healthy and likely Negro Boy. . . ."

### "Kindness" to Slaves

Judging by their conduct, Negroes enjoyed slaving for Jewish families no more than they did for non-Jewish. Now since very few Jews were plantation owners needing field hands, most slaves owned by Jews were used for domestic service or for work in merchants' shops. In this "patriarchal" slavery, house slaves are much less harshly treated in some ways than field hands, being used for convenience rather than profit. But "patriarchal" slavery is slavery still, and Ernestine L. Rose gave a definitive retort to the slaveowners' defensive wail that they were kind to their slaves. This noble and eloquent abolitionist, daughter of a Polish rabbi, in 1853 told an audience celebrating West Indian Negro emancipation:

"Ay, even if slaveholders treated their slaves with the utmost kindness and charity; if I were told they kept them sitting on a sofa all day, and fed them with the best of the land, it is none the less slavery—(applause); for what does slavery mean? To work hard, to fare ill, to suffer hardship, that is not slavery; for many of us white men and women have to work hard, have to fare ill, have to suffer hardship, and yet we are not slaves. Slavery is, not to belong to yourself—to be robbed of yourself. . . ."

The deep human desire to belong to themselves led as many Negro slaves as could do so to run away from "patriarchal" as well as other forms of slavery—and they ran away from Jewish as well as non-Jewish masters too. And Jewish masters did what others did: they offered rewards for their escaped slaves, warned and threatened all and sundry against "harbouring" these runaways or helping them get aboard a ship, and cried out righteously that their slaves had "robbed" them. Thus did Judah Hays about his runaway slave, "a Negro Wench, named Sarah, aged about 30 years," who had robbed him of "upwards of fifty pounds" in clothing, and for whose return he offered 40 shillings reward in *The New-York Gazette*, February 11, 1750/51, and for four weeks thereafter, apparently in vain. And so did the famous silversmith, Myer Myers, offering 20 shillings for the return of "a Negro Wench, named Daphne . . . tall and likely, not very black," in *The New-York Mercury*, May 4 and 11, 1767.

<sup>7</sup> Schappes, "Ernestine L. Rose: Her Address on the Anniversary of West Indian Emancipation," *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 34 (1949), p. 350.

### Giving Slaves Freedom

One significant aspect of slavery, especially towards the end of the eighteenth century, when the equalitarian ideals of the American revolution were being felt, was the number of masters who freed their own slaves, either during the lifetime of the masters or at least in their wills. Tens of thousands of Negroes achieved freedom that way, some of them of course from Jewish masters too.

While there are more wills by Jews and non-Jews transmitting slaves to heirs than freeing them, those that manumit (free) slaves are of special interest. The oldest so far uncovered goes back to 1692 and concerns Cresie, a Negro man slave of Arthur (Asser?) Levy, who died without leaving a written will. Nevertheless, when five witnesses swore they had often heard Levy say he wanted Cresie to be free after Levy's wife and he died, the Mayor's Court of New York, responsive to the oral will of Levy, set Cresie free.<sup>8</sup>

In the eighteenth century, manumissions are more numerous. In 1748, Daniel and Esther Gomez liberated a slave during their own lifetime, rather a rare deed. In 1770 brother Benjamin Gomez declared in his will that "my Mustee [octooroon] wench, Katty, is to be free from the yoke of Slavery, as a reward of her fidelity." Katty obtained her reward when he died, August 8, 1772.<sup>9</sup> Also in New York, the powerful merchant Jacob Franks, who had imported a dozen slaves between 1717 and 1743,<sup>10</sup> set one slave, Cato, free in 1761.

In Charleston, Philip Hart freed his "Negro Woman Flora" in his will, and in 1800 Jacob Cohen wrote a will giving "Tom his freedom for ever immediately after my death." When laws in Southern states made manumission illegal, Rachel D'Azevedo in 1843 bequeathed four female slaves "and their issue and increase" to her daughter, and declared that on her daughter's death they were to work for themselves "as if they were entirely free."<sup>11</sup>

One of the most interesting of manumission documents comes from Virginia. For various reasons, Jews settled late in that state, but by 1788 there were 10 Jewish householders in Richmond. All except Isaac Mordecai, who was too poor to own one, had at least one slave, and the firm of Cohen and Isaacs had three. Later the partnership broke up and in 1799 Isaiah Isaacs freed his slave Lucy. Four years later, he drew up his will in which, after disposing of other matters, he turns to the matter of his five slaves. "Being of opinion," he writes, "that all men are by nature equally free and being possessed of some of those beings who are unfortunate doomed to slavery," Isaacs sets forth the following schedule for the liberation of his slaves: Rachel is to be freed January 1, 1816, James, 1820, Polly,

<sup>8</sup> Samuel McKee, Jr., *Labor in Colonial New York, 1664-1776*, New York, 1935, p. 133.

<sup>9</sup> David de Sola Pool, *Portraits Etched in Stone*, New York, 1952, p. 238,

<sup>10</sup> 477. Marcus, work cited, vol. 1, p. 64.

<sup>11</sup> Charles Reznikoff, *The Jews of Charleston*, Philadelphia, 1950, p. 77.

Know all Men by these presents, That Jacob Levy Jew

do, by these presents, for good and valuable considerations, fully and absolutely Manumit, make Free, and set at Liberty, my slave, named Samson, of my own free will and by willing and declaring that the said Samson, my slave, shall and may, at all times hereafter, exercise, hold, and enjoy, all and singular the liberties, rights, privileges, and immunities of a free man. And I do hereby, for myself, my Executors, Administrators, and Assigns, absolutely relinquish and release all my right, title, and property whatsoever, in and to the said Samson, my slave, as if he had been born free. In TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, the day of March, one thousand eight hundred and seventeen.

SEALED AND DELIVERED IN THE PRESENCE OF

J. Jacobs

City of New York, ss.

On the sixth day of March, 1817

Jacob Levy Jew, appeared before me, and acknowledged that he executed the above instrument, as his voluntary act and deed, for the uses and purposes therein mentioned. I allow it to be recorded.

**Freedom document of four slaves freed by Jacob Levy, of New York, in 1817.**

1822, Henry, 1830, William, 1834. Should Rachel or Polly have children before they are freed, such children are to be slaves until the age of 31, when they shall be freed. None of his slaves is to be sold and each is to be given \$20 in clothing on the day of liberation. In 1806, the year he died, Isaacs made certain improvements in this will: Polly's date of liberation is advanced from 1822 to 1818; the *grand-children* that Polly and Rachel may have shall be free from birth; and Clement Washington, Rachel's youngest son, is to go free on—January 1, 1836.

### Work with Anti-Slavery Societies

Late in the eighteenth century, when the anti-slavery societies began to be formed, Jews of progressive views began to work in them. The oldest of these was formed by the Quakers in Philadelphia in 1775, was inactive during the Revolution, and resumed its work in 1787, with Benjamin Franklin as president. The first Jew to join the Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage was the partially disabled Revolutionary War veteran, Solomon Bush. (See Schappes, *JEWISH LIFE*, March 1954, p. 24.) Bush was a member until he died in 1794.

Manumissions by Jews of their slaves recorded in the manuscript records of the Society show that in 1784 Israel Jacobs and Philip Moses Russell each liberated a slave, and Raphael De Cordova freed one in 1820. Other Philadelphia Jews who took some part in the work of the Society, appearing as witnesses when others manumitted slaves, include Samson Levy and Daniel Levy in 1787, Benjamin Nones in 1792 and 1795, Joseph Levy in 1796, Sol Marache in 1797.<sup>12</sup>

The second such group to be formed was in New York in 1785, the Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves, and Protecting such of them as Have Been or May Be Liberated. The first Jew to be elected to membership was Moses Judah in 1799; the Jeffersonian democrat Mordecai Myers was elected in 1803. Judah, moreover, was on the Executive Committee for more than two years, a leader in one of the strong anti-slavery organizations of its time. Incidentally, the manuscript minutes of this society indicate five or six cases in which the society had to defend Negroes against masters whom we know to have been Jewish.

It is from the militant radicalism of a Bush, a Judah and a Mordecai Myers that there stems the American Jewish progressive tradition of opposition to slavery. These lower middle class Jews fashioned the tradition not out of religious ritual but out of the living contact with the social system of which they were a part. It was the organized work of a Myers and a Judah that stimulated the manumission of slaves, on printed forms now in the records of the society, by merchants like Haym M. Salomon, son of Haym Salomon, who freed one slave in 1812, or Jacob Levy, Jr., who freed six in 1817, or Ephraim Hart, who freed one in 1818. More important, it was such work that helped the society and its supporters press the New York state legislature to pass a law that on July 4, 1827 freed 10,000 slaves born in New York.

### Ernestine Rose Fights Slavery

The outlawing of the slave-trade in 1808 and the abolition of slavery in the northern states in the next two decades led to a lull in organized anti-slavery work exactly at the time when slavery in the South was getting a new lease on life because of the increase of cotton production made desirable by the use of the cotton gin. When the anti-slavery movement revived in the 1840's and 1850's, an Ernestine L. Rose was outstanding as a leader. Hoodlums drown out her voice at a meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society in New York on May 7, 1850,<sup>13</sup> but she will not be silenced.

At that time the middle class leadership of the Jewish organizations supported, condoned or tried to be indifferent to the issue of slavery. The most widely known Jew of the period was Mordecai Manuel Noah, Grand Sachem of Tammany Hall, who on February 20, 1848 assured the readers of the *Sunday Times and Noah's Weekly Messenger* that the Bible sanctioned slavery and that Negroes were cowards. In 1850, while Mrs. Rose faced hoodlums in support of the Wilmot Proviso to keep slavery out of the ter-

<sup>12</sup> Manuscript, Hist. Soc. of Penna.: List of Members, 1789-1819; Manumission Book A, 1780-1793, p. 86, 87; Book G, 1819-1853, p. 56-57; Book A, p. 13-14, 132; Book B, 1788-1795, p. 239-240, 267-268; Book B, p. 92; Book D, 1795-1801, p. 77-78, 252.

<sup>13</sup> W. P. and F. J. Garrison, *William Lloyd Garrison*, 1805-1879, Boston and New York, 1894, vol. 3, p. 297.

ritory taken from Mexico, Noah campaigned against that Proviso, and helped defeat it.

When the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 was passed, *The Asmonean*, English-Jewish weekly in New York, wrote on January 10, 1851 that laws must be obeyed, and that moreover the Bible endorsed "the principle of reclaiming the absconded slave." Yet in the new town of Chicago, a young Jew, Michael Greenbaum, not knowing or not caring about this so-called Biblical tradition, helped rescue a fugitive slave from the clutches of a federal marshal in 1853, and helped to forge a new tradition.

In 1853, when the Thirteenth Annual Report of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society was presented to its convention, it contained a section evaluating the relation of American religious institutions to slavery and found it on the whole shockingly bad. About the Jews these devoted, militant and self-sacrificing abolitionists express acute disappointment: "The objects of so much mean prejudice and unrighteous oppression as the Jews have been for ages, surely they, it would seem, more than any

other denomination, ought to be the enemies of CASTE, and the friends of UNIVERSAL FREEDOM." This judgment is inescapable. The Mrs. Rose who was already a beloved figure among the abolitionists was separated from organized Jewish life. Few and faint in 1853 were the Jewish voices in the anti-slavery movement. But new forces were to emerge from within the Jewish people, in the South and West and North, around the birth of the anti-slavery Republican party, with John Brown in Kansas, riding the ever-rising anti-slavery tide, which even the slaveholder's insurrection in 1861 could not stop. A new tradition was to be forged for American Jews.

*Note:* in my article in April, I stated that Henry Steele Commager might well have included Nones's letter of 1800 in his *The American Mind*. This is an error. The work I had in mind was Professor Commager's *Living Ideas in America*, since *The American Mind* deals only with the period after 1880.—M. U. S.

## Testifying at Ben Gold's Trial

By Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois

*On April 2 the witch-hunt claimed another victim—Ben Gold, fur union president, convicted on the charge of having committed perjury in signing the Taft-Hartley non-Communist oath. The conviction will of course be appealed. Below is a statement by the distinguished Negro scholar and leader, Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois on his testimony at the trial.—Eds.*

I HAVE not only long heard of Ben Gold and the Fur Workers but while I was under attack for speaking for peace his unions and 13 other national unions whose cooperation he secured gave a dinner and contributed to my defense. I was therefore only too glad to help when he came under fire in the federal courts because it was alleged that he had not really resigned from the Communist Party under the specifications of the Taft-Hartley law. I therefore promised that I should be glad to testify as to his character and reputation during the trial.

I was called to the witness chair about 10:15 on Tuesday, March 30, and for the first time in my life took oath as a witness. The jury was present, half of them being colored, with one colored woman.

I testified that I had known of Ben Gold and the Furriers Union for about 25 years, that I had talked about him and heard about him from various persons. I especially named the late Mayor LaGuardia, and Dr. [Edward] Lindeman of the School of Social Work, Lillian Wald and Mary Ovington, social workers, and later, Dr. John Kingsbury.

I added that my chief informants were persons whom I do not remember and perhaps whose names I never knew, who were workers and union members and especially colored men who were gratified that the Furriers

Union had dropped all discrimination and was admitting them as members.

I testified that from all these sources I was told that Ben Gold was a man of honesty and integrity, representing the best type of union leader.

The prosecution then took over. A tall man arose with folded arms and looking at the wall said, "Dr. Du Bois, did you know that in (naming a certain date) Ben Gold attended the Lenin Academy in Moscow?" I answered, "No." He then asked me, "Do you know that in (naming another date) Ben Gold was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party?" I answered "No." He repeated this question, naming two or three other dates, and I continued to answer, "No" to each one. Then he started to ask apparently about another date, but stopped and said no, to strike that out. Meantime he had consulted with the colleague who went out and then came back in ten or 15 minutes and whispered to him. I imagine that they were seeking further information about me, but apparently did not get it.

The attorney for the prosecution then said that he had no more questions. Nearly all other witnesses had been asked the question as to their present or former membership in the Communist Party. He did not ask any question about this but simply indicated that he was through. Marcantonio then arose and asked, "Did you know that Ben Gold was a member of the Communist Party?" I answered, "Yes." The judge then dismissed me as a witness.

Leon Strauss and I then went over and saw the Japanese cherry blossoms which were just bursting in bloom and we also went into the Jefferson Memorial and read what Jefferson had said about freedom of thought.



# HOW PETER STILL WON FREEDOM

*A biography of Peter Still published in 1856 tells how the slave put his faith in the Friedman brothers to help him buy his freedom*

*Excerpt from "The Kidnapped and the Ransomed"*

*By Kate R. Pickard*

*These moving excerpts from an anti-slavery classic reveal the fascinating relationship that developed in Tuscumbia, Alabama, in 1847-1850 between the slave, Peter Still, and the Jews, Joseph and Isaac Friedman, with whose cooperation Still bought his freedom from his master, John H. Hogun. The anti-Semitism of the self-righteous non-Jewish slaveowners adds a dimension to the story. Mrs. Kate E. Pickard, a white school teacher in Tuscumbia, knew Still and the others in the story, and writes it as it was told to her by Peter Still. First published by northern abolitionists in 1856, the volume went into three editions. In 1941 it was reprinted by Angelo Herndon and the Negro Publication Society of America, now defunct.—M. U. S.*

**T**HE next year, 1846, the young master, John H. Hogun, having become of age, assumed the control of his wife's property, and hired Peter (Still) to Mr. Allen Pollock, a bookseller of Tuscumbia, (Alabama).

Mr. Pollock had, some weeks before Christmas, proposed to Peter that he should live with him the ensuing year, and hire his own time. He had not much for him to do, he said, and after cutting his wood, putting his store in order, blacking his boots, and doing such other small jobs as necessary, he could get work elsewhere in town; and all he earned above the \$85 hire which Hogun must receive, should be his own. True, this arrangement was against the law, but if it were kept secret, it could do no harm.

For a long time Peter hesitated. Mr. Pollock was said to be a close, penurious man, and our student of human nature doubted the disinterestedness of his motives. Still there was a chance that he might succeed in saving something; he might, at least, procure more comforts for his family than they had yet possessed; and he at length resolved to try.

So the bargain was concluded; openly with Mr. Hogun, privately between Mr. Pollock and the slave; and Peter entered trembling, upon the new year. He had never before occupied so respectable a position. The \$85 must be earned, and that was a great sum to be raised by dimes and half dimes, for doing little jobs about town. . . .

Thus passed the year away. . . .

At the end of the year he had saved \$75, besides having spent \$35, during the year, on his wife and children. But this was a profound secret to all but Vina. No one in Tuscumbia knew even that he hired his time. It was under-

stood, by those for whom he labored, that Mr. Pollock permitted him to make his own bargains, and that to him he paid in all he earned.

His success this year was an astonishment to himself. It opened a new world before him. Hitherto, his only hope of escape from slavery had been in flight; but now came other thoughts. "Seventy-five dollars in one year! How long would it take to buy myself if I could get the same chance every year? Oh, if I could be free!"

Towards the close of the year, Mr. Pollock proposed to his master to hire Peter again; but Mr. Hogun declined making a second bargain with him until he had consulted Peter.

"Well, boy," said he, a few days before Christmas, "do you want to live with Mr. Pollock again next year?"

"No, Sir," replied Peter, "I don't keer 'bout livin' with him."

"Why, I reckon he's used you well this year, and he offers to pay me up now for your hire. I reckon you'll do as well with him as anywhere. It's not often that a man offers to pay money before it is due."

"Well, Sir, if you hire me to Mr. Pollock, I shall have to stay with him; but there's Mr. Joseph Friedman—he'll pay you as well as Mr. Pollock, and he'd like to hire me for next year."

The young master immediately called on Mr. Friedman, and learning that what Peter had told him was correct, he hired him to the Jew before he left the store.

**THE JEWS!** YES, JOSEPH FRIEDMAN WAS A GERMAN JEW, who had resided in Tuscumbia for six or seven years. He came there at first with a small stock of goods and opened a store, and by untiring industry and strict economy he had now accumulated a handsome little fortune.

He was small in stature, with the black hair and keen dark eyes peculiar to his race. Associated with him in business was his younger brother, Isaac, who was taller and handsomer than Joseph, but scarcely his equal in sagacity and force of character.

At the commencement of their sojourn in Tuscumbia, these Jews, the first that had ever settled in that region, were regarded with suspicion and dislike. But as their stern integrity and manly independence of character became known to the citizens, the prejudice excited by their peculiarities of religion and manners gradually subsided.

As business men, they gained the confidence of the public, and though they never mingled freely in society, they were no longer exposed to rudeness or neglect.

Peter during the past year, had been mysteriously attracted towards these somewhat isolated brothers. His thoughts had been intensely occupied in devising some method by which he might yet taste that liberty, which, notwithstanding he had been 40 years a slave, he still felt was his *right*. Day and night he had pondered this subject; but one great difficulty was ever present to his mind. He knew not a man whom he could trust. If he dared to breathe, in human ear, his wish for freedom, the bold thought might be reported to his master, and from that moment he would be looked upon as unsafe property. The consequence of this *might be* a sale, and journey to the low country; and then the light of hope would be forever quenched. . . .

No wonder that he weighed each word that fell upon his ear, in order to discern the spirit of the speaker. Oh! that he knew a man of soul so brave that he could safely confide to him his heart's great secret! There might be many such in town; but how could he distinguish them from those whose flattering words proceeded from the deep, dark caverns of deceitful hearts?

While his ear was thus eagerly bent to catch the breath of honesty, some chance remarks of Mr. Friedman drew his attention. The Jew made no display of his opinions, or declaration of his principles; but uttered merely some careless sentence, which revealed his sympathy with the suffering, and his hatred of injustice and oppression. Peter had often performed slight services for the two brothers, and whenever he was in their presence, although no word respecting himself was uttered, he felt that he was regarded as a *man*.

It was this feeling which induced him, before his year expired at Mr. Pollock's, to ask Mr. Friedman to hire him for the ensuing year. If he could persuade him to do this, he could have an opportunity to become more thoroughly acquainted with his character; and perhaps—oh! how the bare idea thrilled his frame!—perhaps he should thus discover the path to liberty.

To Peter's request the Jew readily assented, and, as before related, the bargain with his master was concluded.

ON THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY, 1847, PETER COMMENCED his labors under the protection of Mr. Friedman. According to their private contract he was to board and clothe himself; and then, whatever he earned above his hire should be his own. He waited on the table at a hotel, as during the previous year, to pay his board; and his clothing cost him very little—as the Friedman brothers gave him all their cast-off clothes, as well as occasionally the material for a new garment from the store. Besides these, he frequently received presents of half-worn clothing from other young men whom he was always glad to serve; or from married ladies, of discarded articles from the wardrobe of their husbands.



Peter Still

These clothes, however, he never wore, but sold them to slaves from the surrounding plantations—receiving in payment, eggs, chickens, or any little products of their patches, which they brought into town for sale. These articles he conveyed to the hotel, where they were always in demand, and so were speedily converted into money. He always appeared in the same attire—blue roundabout and trousers, with strong shoes; and a more respectable looking servant could not be seen in all the town. . . .

The confidence between the worthy Jew and his faithful servant was constantly on the increase; yet, as the year drew near its close, and Mr. Friedman made no advances towards hiring him for the next, Peter became uneasy. Several other persons had proposed hiring him, but he had told them all that he thought Mr. Friedman wished to keep him another year.

At length, when Christmas was very near, he one day saw his young master across the street, and he resolved to terminate his suspense. So he approached the Jew. "Look, yer, sir," said he, "ain't you willin' to do the same by me next year that you have done?"

"Yes, Peter."

"Well, are you satisfied with the way I have done this year?"

"Yes; are *you* satisfied?"

"Yes, sir, to be sure I am: and if you're willin' to do agin like you've done this year, why don't you go and hire me? Thar's my master, over yon."

"I see him there, but I will not run to speak to him."

"Well, sir," exclaimed the delighted slave, "I'll tell him you want to hire me; and we shan't have no new bargain to make; if you'll do like you have done, so will I."

The conference ended, and soon Peter was hired for another year to Joseph Friedman. . . .

PETER COMMENCED THE YEAR 1848 WITH HIGH HOPES. His last year's gains had greatly encouraged him, for he had laid up, besides expending over \$30 for his family, \$105; which, with \$30 which he had saved before he hired his time,

and the \$75 that he had accumulated while with Mr. Pollock, made \$210 now in his possession.

The hope of being free he had thus far communicated to none but his true-hearted wife; but now, as he had become satisfied that Mr. Friedman was his friend, he determined to seek his cooperation in his plan. This resolution was not formed without the most careful consideration; and yet when he approached the counting room for the purpose of opening to the Jew his cherished plans, his head throbbed painfully, and his knees trembled so that he could scarcely walk.

"Mr. Friedman," said he, "I've got something I want to tell you, but it's a great secret."

"Well, Peter—"

"I've been a thinkin', sir, I'd like to buy myself; and you've always dealt so fa'r with me, I didn't know but you mought buy me, and then give me a chance."

The Jew's countenance brightened. He had become much attached to Peter, and had often wished in his heart that by some means the faithful fellow might be free, but such a plan as this had not occurred to him.

"Can you get the money, Peter?"

"I reckon I could, if you didn't pay too high for me. Mars John Henry oughtn't to ask a great price for me, no how, when I've served the family so long."

"How much shall I give for you?"

"I think, sir, \$500 is as much as you ought to pay."

"Hogun will not sell you for that price," said the Jew. "John Pollock offered him \$600, and he laughed at him. Some men in town would give \$855 for you—not because you are worth so much, but because they know you."

"Well, sir, I have served the family for 35 years. I have earned 'em a heap of money, and have been mighty little trouble or expense. They can afford to sell me for \$500."

"Yes—well, I will speak to Hogun." . . .

[The next year, on January 15, 1849, Joseph Friedman succeeded in buying Peter Still from John Hogun for \$500.]

GREAT SYMPATHY WAS FELT IN TUSCUMBIA FOR "POOR Uncle Peter." It was so strange that Hogun would sell such a faithful old man to a Jew. *Of course*, Friedman wanted to make money out of him; and when he became no longer profitable, he would not scruple to carry him off and sell him.

Thus spake gentlemen and ladies; and soon their children caught the tone. "Don't you think," said one bright-eyed little girl to another, as they walked to school, "Uncle Peter is sold!"

"Sold? I'm so sorry! Who's bought him? Are they going to carry him off?"

"No—no, not now. Mr. Friedman's bought him; and 'ma says he's a Jew, and she says Jews will sell their own children for money. Pa says he don't doubt that Mr. Friedman will sell him the very first chance he gets to make money out of him; and then, perhaps, he'll be taken off to the rice swamps."

"Oh! that will be too bad! Aunt Milly says that in the rice swamps they don't care no more for killing black folks than they do for pigs and chickens. Oh! I'm so sorry for poor Uncle Peter! But what did they sell him for? He didn't run away—nor his master didn't die."

"I don't know what made them sell him, his master wanted the money, I reckon. Oh! I wish my Pa owned him—he wouldn't sell him, I know. Ma says she thinks it's a pity for black folks to be sold at all, but sometimes it can't be helped."

"Well, I think it ought to be helped, for they feel so bad to be carried away off from somebody that loves them. Just think—if Mr. Friedman should sell Uncle Peter away off where he never could come back—Oh! wouldn't it be too bad?"

Said a gentleman, "Why didn't you let me know, Peter, that your master wanted to sell you? I'd not have let that Jew get you. He'll sell you again; or, perhaps, work you to death."

"No, sir, I reckon not," replied Peter; "Mr. Friedman's always been mighty good to me, and I reckon he'll use me fa'r. Leastways, I belong to him now, and he'll do just as he thinks best."

Such was the judgment pronounced upon the noble-hearted Jew by men and women who had bought and sold, and beaten, and oppressed the poor until their cry had gone up to heaven. They considered it *their right* thus to trample on their darker brethren. They were born slaveholders, and when their servants neglected their duties, or so far forgot their station as to speak improperly to their superiors, they must be beaten, though their heads were grey. Money, too, was sometimes "Tight," and then the sale of a few of the young Negroes that were "really in the way about the kitchen" would help to fill the purse. These were *their rights under the Constitution*; but for a Jew to have such power over a choice old servant was quite too bad. "A foreigner, too! How could he know the feelings of tenderness cherished by a true Southerner for his slave?"

MEANWHILE THE DESPISED AND SUSPECTED JEW WAS ARRANGING, with the object of all this sympathy, their future relations to each other. "You may work, as you did before," said he to Peter, "but you may keep your earnings. When you get \$200 more, I will give you free papers, and you shall go where you like. I do not want your work—get all you can for yourself."

Did the heart of the slave bound at these words? Did the tears of gratitude sparkle in his eye? and the bright beams of hope irradiate his countenance? Ah! there is One "who seeth not as man seeth," and in His eye the generous truthfulness of the slandered Jew outshone the gaudy hypocrisy of his traducers.

Peter continued his usual labors with a light heart. He had now no hire to pay—his earnings were all his own.

The night after paying his \$300 to Mr. Friedman, he went out to make his usual semi-monthly visit to his wife. How her heart throbbed when he told her all! Again and again



she asked him if he were sure Mr. Isaac would be true. The children, too, had their hundred questions. Their father was very dear to them; and now he possessed new dignity, even in their eyes. "Just think, he would soon be free!" No selfish dread that thus he might be lifted above them dimmed their transparent hearts. They loved their father, and they could not doubt him. . . .

In September of this year, Joseph Friedman returned from Texas; and soon after, Peter paid to him \$100 which he had earned since January. The Jew seemed delighted at the success of his humble friend, and congratulated him on the prospect of soon becoming free. Only \$100 was now lacking, and that, if he were prospered, he soon could earn; and then he should be free.

Patiently he toiled on. His brow was all unruffled, and no trace of care was visible on his cheerful face. He moved so quietly in his accustomed course, that men forgot their jealousy of the Jew, and little maidens ceased to pity "Poor Uncle Peter."

LATE IN THE EVENING OF THE SIXTEENTH OF APRIL, 1850, Peter sought, once more, the counting-room of Mr. Friedman. His hand might well tremble as he raised the latch; for his all was now at stake, and he was helpless. He entered. There sat the little Jew, looking at him with his keen black eyes. Timidly he drew forth his leather bag, and commenced counting out the money.

A footstep approached. Mr. Friedman quietly laid a pile of paper over the coin, and Mr. S——, the auctioneer, walked in.

"What, Peter," said he, "are you paying up?"

"Yes, sir. Mass'r Joe make me pay him up close."

"How much do you have to pay?"

"Well, sir, he makes me pay him half a dollar a day."

"That's pretty tight, but it's the best way, after all."

"Yes—that is so—I like to keep all close. Peter must pay me promptly."

When the neighbor's chat was ended, and they heard his receding footsteps on the sidewalk, they finished counting the money. How beautiful it looked to Peter; that little heap of coin, as he shoved it towards the Jew, and felt that now his fate hung entirely on the will of the little man before him.

M. Friedman took up his pen, and wrote a receipt in full, together with a Certificate of Freedom, as follows:

Received, Tuscumbia, January 26th, 1849, of my  
boy, Peter, three hundred dollars ..... \$300.00  
Jos. Friedman

Received, September 1st, 1849, of my boy, Peter 88.00  
Eighty-eight dollars and twelve dollars (\$12.00) .. 100.00  
Received March 29th, 1850, of Peter, sixty dollars 60.00

Jos. Friedman, \$460.00  
Received, April 16th, 1850, forty dollars ..... 40.00

\$500.00

For, and in consideration of the above five hundred dol-

lars, I have this 16th day of April, 1850, given Peter a Bill of Sale, and given him his freedom.

Tuscumbia, Ala., April 16th, 1850.

Precious was this paper in the eyes of the self-ransomed slave, and yet he felt not all secure. The habit of doubting that truthfulness of which he had so seldom seen an illustration, could not at once be overcome.

He had five dollars left, with which he bought a trunk of Mr. Friedman; and then in one old silver dollar, which he had kept for many years, consisted all his store.

Mr. Friedman had charged him no interest on the two hundred dollars which he had advanced to purchase him of Mr. Hogun, and during the last year he had bestowed upon him many little presents. Jew though he was, and sometimes quoted as a miser, yet he knew the happiness of being a blessing to the poor.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER RECEIVING THIS LAST PAYMENT FROM HIS servant, Joseph Friedman started for California, leaving Peter in the care of his brother Issac. The whole transaction was still a secret, no mortal save the two brothers, and Peter's own family were aware that he had even wished for liberty.

He was one day engaged in cleaning the church, when two or three ladies came in to superintend his labors. Among them was Mrs. D., one of the most excellent ladies in town. "Peter," said she, when she had finished giving him some directions, "you ought to be free. You have been a faithful servant for a great many years; and now that you are getting old, you deserve to have your freedom, instead of being sold to those Jews."

"Oh!" replied he, "what use would it be for me to be free?"

"Why then you could do as you chose, and go wherever you liked."

"What! now I've got to be an old man, a'most 50? I've got no house nor garden; and if I was free, I'd have to hire a house, and buy my own clothes; and then if I should be sick, there'd be nobody to take care of me. No, ma'am tain't no use for me to think of bein' free. I'm too old to be turned off to take care of myself."

Thus carefully did he conceal his real feelings, lest he should place in greater peril that freedom which he had so dearly won.

At the approach of summer, Mr. Isaac Friedman decided to sell out his stock of goods in Tuscumbia, in order to remove to Cincinnati, where his brother Levi then resided.

Peter no sooner learned this plan, than he requested leave to accompany him as far as Louisville. In all his intercourse with the Jew, he had never revealed to him his early history, or breathed to him his own great wish—that of seeking his parents, and his childhood's home. But he had often talked of Lexington, and now he said he should like once more to visit "the old place."

Mr. Friedman readily assented, and Peter commenced his preparations for the journey. His earnings since he had finished paying for himself, together with his receipts from the sale of a few articles which he no longer needed,

## ORANGE JUICE AND BANANA OIL

By Victor Perlo

**R**ECENTLY the government of the USSR resumed trade relations with Israel in a transaction involving large quantities of Israel oranges and Soviet petroleum. The *New York Times* anti-Soviet "experts" twisted this into a new story about Soviet government "profiteering." Various Jewish publications picked up the *New York Times* story and took it at face value.

The *New York Times* story does not even discuss the main question, the terms of trade for Israel. The fragmentary information available is sufficient to show that these terms are quite favorable to Israel. The USSR bought 29,000 tons of oranges for \$2,500,000. If these were metric tons the price was 3.91 cents per pound. If the figure was a conversion by the *New York Times* into United States or net tons, the price was 4.31 cents per pound.

During the first six months of 1953, United States orange growers received an average of 3.83 cents per pound for their exported oranges. Thus the USSR paid Israel something more than a competitive price. Furthermore, the market for citrus fruit in European countries is limited and highly competitive. The socialist markets are clear gain for Israel.

The price charged Israel for the Soviet oil has not been announced. But according to a dispatch in the *New York Journal of Commerce* (March 30), it is 10-15 per cent below the world price. According to the same dispatch, **British oil companies are "up in arms" over the transaction**, since the oil will be processed at the British-owned refinery at Haifa. It helps break the embargo that has forced Israel to use extra-expensive monopoly-controlled Western Hemisphere oil and which keeps the Haifa refinery partly idle.

The *Times* and certain American Jewish publications keep absolutely silent about all of these facts which show that the transaction is highly favorable to Israel.

The charge of profiteering arises from the calculation that the wholesale price paid by the USSR is equivalent to 10 kopeks per orange, while the retail selling price, the *New York Times* claims, is 45 times as much. Thus, it is charged, the Soviet government profits by many

rubles at the expense of Soviet consumers.

The fact is that Soviet foreign trade with capitalist countries does not involve the use of rubles, but various kinds of capitalist currencies, barter and gold. The internal purchasing power of the ruble is quite different from its bookkeeping value for the measurement of foreign trade, a point which the *New York Times* often stresses in its articles on Soviet prices. Hence the comparison between the ruble equivalent of the import price and the retail price in rubles is meaningless. Undoubtedly the Soviet government includes a turnover tax in the retail prices of the oranges, since this tax is a major source of revenues. But the collection of normal government revenues can hardly be called "profiteering."

The *New York Times* is correct in stating that the internal price of oranges in the USSR is influenced by supply and demand, and that the demand is greater than the supply. This might suggest a profitable market for the surplus United States orange crop to bring down prices to Soviet consumers, for whom the *Times* expresses such concern, and to aid the American citrus industry.

Moreover, the *New York Times* might well pay some attention to the spread between import and retail prices in the United States. Our main import fruit is bananas. During the first six months of 1953 we imported almost 26 million bunches of bananas for over \$34 million. This is an average of \$1.32 per bunch, or roughly 2.6 cents per pound. These bananas were sold to American consumers for an average of 16.6 cents per pound, or a total of about \$215 million. Here the comparison is valid, because all the transactions are in dollars. And the figures show the United Fruit Company and its tiny competitors making a six month profit of \$179 million at the expense of consumers in the United States, and at the expense of banana workers in Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia and other Latin American countries. This is the "freedom from Communist aggression" Dulles asks us to fight for in his attempt to overthrow the democratic government of Guatemala, which seeks to regain for its own people the banana groves exploited by the United Fruit Company.

amounted to \$80. That he thought, would be sufficient to meet his expenses on the way.

The Tuscumbians again became excited. Some gossiping oracle "*reckoned*" that Joseph Friedman had failed, and straightway that important *reckoning* was announced to be a fact. *Joseph had failed, and Isaac was about to sell off his goods at auction, and quit the country. Uncle Peter, too was to be dragged off and sold, or, as some said, to be hired out upon a steamboat, and thus exposed to all the frightful sickness that then raged upon the Western rivers.* "Now Uncle Peter," said one, "if you find out that those Jews are about to sell you, just let me know, and I will buy you."

"It will be too bad for them to speculate out of you," said another, "but I *expect* that it's what they bought you for."

To all these kind expressions of interest in his welfare, Peter had but one reply. "Mass'r Joe and Mass'r Issac always has been good to me; and anyhow, I belong to them, and they can do what they like."

"What a contented old fellow he is!" said one who listened to this quiet answer. "I'd like that some of the Abolitionists should hear him talk, they would be obliged to own that *niggers' pining to be free is moonshine.*"

The Saturday before Mr. Friedman intended to leave town, Peter went out to pay a farewell visit to his family. To them he unburdened all his heart. His great hope had been, if he could once be free, to find his own relations, whom he always thought of as living in or near Philadelphia. Then, if they were able, perhaps they might assist him in the purchase of his wife and children, and so, at last, they could all dwell together. . . .

# JEWISH LIFE IN EAST EUROPE

*Periodically a rehash of charges of "anti-Semitism" in socialist countries is offered up by organizations like the American Jewish Committee and the Jewish Labor Committee. We have in these pages continually published ample evidence of the falsity of such charges. Below we print a round-up of recent events and eye-witness accounts concerning the Jews in Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union which add to the evidence that exposes the slanderous nature of the charges of "anti-Semitism."—Eds.*

## I: POLISH YIDDISH WRITERS MAKE PLANS

### Warsaw

A meeting of the Yiddish writers of Poland was held in Warsaw on November 14, 1953, in the conference hall of the Union of Polish writers. Much attention was given to the writers' plans in connection with the coming celebration of the Tenth Anniversary of People's Poland in July 1954. The question was discussed in a report by Ber Mark, director of the Jewish Historical Institute. He pointed to the accomplishments of Yiddish writers in Poland in the post-war years, and to the high government award to the poet Binem Heller. Ber Mark emphasized that this honor was also a mark of recognition for all Yiddish writers who live and work in Poland.

In preparation for the Tenth Anniversary, Mark pointed out, it was important for Yiddish writers to portray the heroism of Polish Jews in both ancient and modern times, in the great people's uprisings, in the revolutionary movement of the Polish working class, in the army and, during the anti-Nazi war, in the ghettos, in the concentration camps and as partisans in the woods. The Yiddish writer, he said, should also write about Jews today who are working at the machine in the factories and cooperatives, on the farm and in the laboratory; about the soldiers who became builders and educators after the victory over Hitlerism, as well as those who stand guard at the borders. Yiddish writers, he said, should live and breathe current realities. They should recognize that colossal changes have taken place and continue daily so that these changes could be adequately depicted in their creative work.

**Publishing plans** for 1954 were discussed by S. Lichtenstein, manager of the

"Yiddish Book" publishing house. Of the 34 books to be published in 1954, the majority will be creative work of contemporary Yiddish writers. Also planned is a series of hitherto unpublished works of Yiddish writers who perished in the Warsaw Ghetto. Lichtenstein discussed the plan for obtaining subscribers through the various people's organizations. He stressed that it was important for writers to meet with their readers in order to establish even closer relations between writers and readers.

A proposal was made by Horazi Safran to issue a journal dedicated to Ten Years of People's Poland in which the best creative Yiddish work would be published.

Yitzhok Turkov told his listeners that he had written a novel about the Jews of Lower Silesia from 1946 to 1949. Turkov also reviewed the work of Wroclaw writers as members of the local branch of the Writers' Union. The Polish writers of Wroclaw, he said, were greatly interested in the work of their Jewish colleagues and have decided to translate some Yiddish poems and stories into Polish.

L. Olitzki suggested that Yiddish writers prepare a collection of translations of the poems of Adam Mickiewicz, Poland's outstanding 19th century poet, in connection with the 1955 celebrations in honor of the poet. Olitzki added that Yiddish writers should undertake more translation of Polish and Soviet literature into Yiddish. This would also serve to enrich the writers' own creative language.

Hersh Smoliar suggested that all Yiddish writers should contribute to the Tenth Anniversary celebration. As for the proposed journal, he pointed out that such a publishing medium for all forms of Yiddish writing would also serve as a source for material to be used by the Jewish dramatic

circles and people's choruses. He also stressed the importance of having a journal of Jewish writing in Polish translation as a means of acquainting Polish readers with progressive Yiddish literature.

Yitzhok Guterman declared that more frequent meetings of all Yiddish writers would be of great value to writers and their work. He also criticized the editors of "Yiddish Book" publishing house for inefficiency because, he said, many manuscripts had to wait too long for publication.

**The noted poet** Binem Heller discussed the Tenth Anniversary celebration. "All the poems, stories, documentaries and other works written up to now and dedicated to our new, free life are the history of ten years of People's Poland," he said, "and are a contribution to this great occasion." Although he doubted whether the writers could produce large new works in time for the July celebrations, he thought that each writer should contribute his proportionate share to the projected journal. Heller also appealed to the Yiddish writers to contribute reviews and critical articles to the Yiddish papers.

David Sfard pointed out that the writers would be helped in their understanding of reality by deepening their study and knowledge of Marxist literature. He warned the writers against a mechanical approach to their creative problems. Seminars should be organized, he thought, for younger writers to read and discuss their work generally as well as their specific themes. In connection with the subscription campaign of "Yiddish Book" publishing house he proposed that writers visit clubs and take part in the discussion evenings and thus popularize the book issued. This activity would also benefit the writers' own work.

Shimon Zachariash stated that the Yiddish writer must look both at the past and the present. Such figures as Berek Yoselevich and hundreds of other folk heroes provide subjects for the Yiddish writer, as do also the honored traditions of struggle of the Communist Party, he said. He indicated the need for a skillful portrayal of class struggle in Jewish life even after the liberation of Poland, of the great educational work on behalf of productivization of the Jewish masses, of the difficulties of the early days. He called upon Yiddish writers to meet the Jewish masses in the factory and in the home, to acquaint themselves with the people's life.

S. Lent, director of the Yiddish State Theater, called on the writers to work more closely with this institution.

Ber Mark, Binem Heller and Moshe Skliar were elected to represent the Yiddish writers in the Polish Writers' Union.

(Translated from Folk-Shtimme, Yiddish newspaper published in Warsaw.)



## II: AUSCHWITZ DIARY UNEARTHED

Interesting news from Poland is contained in a dispatch from Warsaw printed in the London *Jewish Chronicle* of February 5. It tells of the unearthing by workers at the Auschwitz camp of a Yiddish diary describing events there until November 26, 1944. The diary recounts tortures of Jews by the nazis and gives names of the torturers and many victims. It also indicates that other such diaries in Yiddish may be found at the camp. The Jewish Historical Institute of Warsaw is taking steps to trace these and also plans to publish excerpts from the diary in the next

issue of *Bleter far Geshichte* (Pages from History).

The Jewish Historical Institute also announced that in 1954 it will publish a collection of manuscripts in Hebrew, Polish, Greek, Czechoslovak and other languages on the history of the Jews in the Slavic countries from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries. Among other books to be published is a collection of early Jewish travel literature as far back as the tenth century, including travel stories by Benjamin of Toledo, Eldad Hadoni and Psachyahu of Regensburg.

A history of the Jews in Poland in the first half of the nineteenth century is being written by Aron Eizenbach, a member of the Jewish Historical Institute. Shimon Zachariash, a leading Jewish Communist, is the author of a short history of the participation of Jews in the Polish Communist Party. Mrs. T. Bristin-Bernstein has authored a work on economic conditions in the ghettos under the nazi occupation.

The Polish Academy of Science has requested the Jewish Historical Institute to prepare a short history of the Jews in Poland to be used as a textbook for students in secondary and higher educational institutions in Poland. This is a new departure in Polish history and is the first time that Jewish history will be a separate subject in Polish schools. The work is now in preparation.

## III: COMMEMORATION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

By Eleanor Wheeler

### Prague

On March 14 I went to the synagogue in Jerusalem Street to attend a service held in memory of the 3,800 Jews who were sent to the gas chambers in one night (9th to 10th of March, I believe, in 1944) ten years ago in Auschwitz. The speaker was Rabbi Dr. Richard Feder, regional rabbi of Brno, at 78 years the oldest rabbi in Czechoslovakia and an eloquent speaker. He urged the congregation to be fruitful and multiply, to found families and replenish the ranks, for "we are few, we are few" after the persecutions under fascism. He did not confine his talk to the one startling crime but reminded his audience that they had not had a moment's peace after the Hitlerites crossed the border in 1939 until 1945. Now, exactly 15 years later, they should think of what fascism and imperialism mean for Jews and what a just minorities policy under socialism means for them.

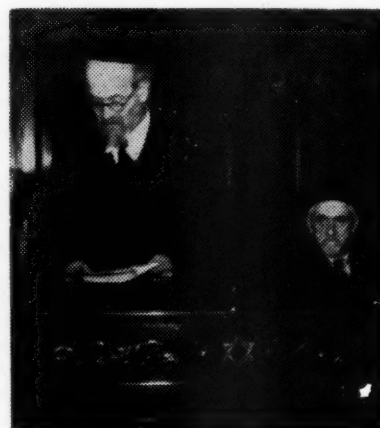
He reminded them of the smaller injuries that came first in 1939, ejection from film houses, theaters and even trams, then the shipment to the camps. He told how the nearly 4,000 Czech and Moravian Jews in Terezin were led to believe that they were going to a better camp and more human policy when they were sent en masse to Auschwitz, but then came the horrible truth.

The tension in the women's gallery built up as the rabbi grew closer to the fatal March day in 1944 and told of the last moments of the Jews, many of whom

showed their defiance of fascism and loyalty to the country of their birth by singing the Czech anthem. In conclusion Dr. Feder said: "We wish that our children, that all future generations live in quiet and peace. We do not want wars and wish that all nations of the world should live in fraternal friendship and all people should have the assurance that Auschwitz, Dachau, Buchenwald and Terezin will never return."

Almost all 600 of those attending the service were related in one way or another to those they were commemorating. As I stood among these widows, cousins, mothers and daughters of Jews who have fallen victim to fascism, I felt a real physical chill against those who are putting back in power the murderers of thousands and millions of Jews and who are slandering and accusing of anti-Semitism a country which maintains and repairs the Jewish synagogues, arranged for ritual food for the approaching Passover season, punishes by law overt acts of anti-Semitism.

An interesting recent event was the decision of the Jewish congregation at Karlovy Vary to build a new synagogue, since the congregation has grown to 400. People who have been scattered around in health institutions have been cured and new industries have grown up in the city, so the old synagogue, which was only provisional, became too small. With the aid of the government a new synagogue has been built. It was dedicated on January 17 with a spe-



Rabbi Dr. Richard Feder (seated), 78-year-old dean of Czech rabbis and Regional Rabbi of Brno, and Czechoslovak Chief Rabbi Dr. Gustav Sicher.

cial service conducted by Chief Rabbi Dr. Gustav Sicher of Prague.

The chairman of the local community thanked the section for Jewish affairs of the local National Committee for the help and said that the congregation could not have done nearly so well alone. He said that the local governing authorities had shown great understanding of the special needs of the Jewish faith.

Dr. Rudolf Iltis, general secretary of the Jewish Community Council of Prague, spoke about progress in establishing a permanent rest home at Mariánské Lázně. Since nazi and communist governments are supposed to be interchangeably totalitarian and anti-minority, I'll try to match this with an account of new synagogues and rest homes under the nazis here. The only permanent rest homes the nazis built—no, the comparison is too obscene.

## IV: A VISIT WITH JEWS OF MINSK

*The following letter describing a visit to Minsk recently was published in the London Jewish Chronicle, March 5. The writer, Brian Pearce, is from Middlesex.—Eds.*

**I had the pleasure** of visiting the USSR in December 1953 and during my visit spent five days in Minsk. I am a Gentile and not well acquainted with your paper but a Jewish friend who heard me talking about people and things I saw in Minsk suggested to me that your readers might be interested in what I saw of the position of the Jews there.

As you know, Minsk was formerly an important center of Jewish population, about one-tenth of the city's 240,000 inhabitants on the eve of the war being Jews. The Germans carried out extensive massacres there during the war and very few Jews have survived. At an orphanage which I visited, two of the monitors for the week, I noticed, were girls named Blum and Gimelshtein. One of the students whom I met at a students' concert was a Jewess whose parents had been murdered by the German Army.

It was interesting to see also that there were Jews occupying a number of leading positions in various institutions which I visited. At the "Kaganovich" footwear fac-

tory, for instance, the head of the planning department was an engineer-economist named Feldman. At the Minsk automobile works, where the huge, 25-ton earth-shifting tip-lorries are made—they are used in connection with the canal and irrigation schemes along the Volga—the manager of the chassis shop was named Galshtein, and two of the senior foremen were Livshitz and Sheitelman. At a clinical hospital, one of several in the city, the assistant head of the children's diseases department (which is headed by the well-known academician Leonov) was a Dr. Katzman.

An individual whom I did not meet in person, but whose work I saw a good deal of and whose name I frequently heard, was the sculptor Zair Asgur, twice a Stalin prizewinner; his portrait busts of Felix Dzherzhinsky and of the Byelorussian national poet, Yanka Kupala, are very well known.

There is a synagogue in Minsk but there are no separate Jewish cultural institutions. The Yiddish language, I learned, has almost completely passed out of use. Since the war there have been practically no cases of emigration to Birobidjan (though maps of the USSR showing the Jewish autonomous region are to be seen all over the place).

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## WE SEE THE SALT OF THE EARTH

**By Jesus Colon**

**Salt of the Earth** is an American film but it is completely alien to Hollywood's bombastic artificiality. It is a production in the tradition of all that is fine and clean in the American people. Through its depiction of the struggles of Mexican American miners, the picture portrays in a bold, militant, dramatic and beautiful way—a message of unity, equality and brotherhood.

The main theme of the picture—unity and strength of the working people, regardless of race, creed, color, sex or national origin—runs through it like a song of optimism. This film is not for the United States alone but for all people in the world.

Workers' unity and strength are concretely shown in this movie in the workers' attempt to destroy discrimination against the Mexican Americans through a strike to save the union and the benefits won by the union's past efforts and to win equality with the "Anglo" miners. Above all, this unity and strength are achieved in the struggle for equality for women.

This important aspect of the picture is not developed by sermonizing speeches. It is realized through actions in the home and on the picket line—actions that speak volumes of theory on the questions of male supremacy, racial and national chauvinism and the need for militant trade unionism. The wives, children, sisters and daughters of the miners actually played an essential role in the final victory of the strikers. In the process the men were taught to treat the women as their partners and equals. All these important questions are treated both ideologically and artistically in the most truthful and simple terms. All aspects of the fight for equality are tightly connected in the film, showing us that genuine democracy is not realized by isolated effort on any aspect of life but on many phases at the same time.

The story is based on a 15-months strike of Local 890 of the independent Mine, Mill and Smelter Union that actually took place in the zinc mines of New Mexico a few years ago. The fight of the workers against the mine-owners to win safety in the mines, better standards of health, sanitation and housing for the Mexicans equal with those of the "Anglo" workers, is brought home to the spectators in all its reality. The story of the workers gradually realizing their power through unity and

of winning thereby comes out forcefully.

Some of the movie critics of the big newspapers couldn't take this truth and hence wrote that the film was "angled." The truth is that the picture is a story of what actually happened. A look at the photographs of the strike itself on which the movie is based and a few minutes of talk with Mrs. Henrietta Williams, who played the role of the leader of the women's picket line, and strike leader Juan Chacon, would be very instructive for these reviewers.

In the course of their struggles the workers learn many things. When an injunction against picketing by strikers is issued and the women hold the picket line, the men come to realize the folly of male supremacy. The convincing presentation of this truth is one of the most important contributions of the picture. The struggle has its effect on everyone: nobody is the same when the film ends. Not even the audience!

Rosaura Revueltas, the Mexican film star loved and admired all over Latin America, plays the leading feminine part. She gives a simple, stirring performance that signifies understanding of the living truth of what she was acting. It is typical of this remarkable film that the leading male role was played as an adequate counterpart to that of Miss Revueltas by Juan Chacon, a leading participant in the strike itself. Will Geer plays the sheriff with his usual skill. The ring of truth reverberates through the film as the numerous women and men of the local union play their parts with conviction and understanding. The script of Michael

Wilson does thorough justice to the heroic theme. Paul Jarrico's production and Herbert Biberman's direction welded all these elements into the organic whole that we now see.

The powers-that-be all over America tried to prevent *Salt of the Earth* from being produced. At the start they persecuted the producer, director, actors and technical staff during the making of the film. The union hall and the home of one of the leaders participating in the picture were burned by vigilantes. In the halls of Congress, Representative Donald Jackson, of California, incited mob violence in the Silver City area of New Mexico against the film makers. Miss Rosaura Revueltas, the female star of the picture and twice winner of the Cuauthemoc Prize as the best actress of Mexico, was arrested and deported.

As Juan Chacon, Miss Revueltas' co-star and president of the mine local, wrote in the *Union Worker* (February 1953): "It looks clearly like powerful citizens of Silver City, Washington, D. C. and Hollywood do not want the truth about our lives to be known by others. They must think they will gain in some way by suppressing the truth about our lives and our union: they must think that keeping the Spanish speaking people in the Southwest as second class citizens will make them more powerful. They must be afraid that, with our movie, we can reach millions of friends . . . new friends."

The producer, director, writer, actors and technical staff have done *their* work. The rest is up to us. It is not enough for us individually to see the picture and rave about it. We have to get other people to see it. We have to organize our enthusiasm so that *Salt of the Earth* is shown in many cities and that millions see the film.

The film is now showing at the Grande Theater on East 86th Street in New York City.

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**THE EDITORS**



# Book Reviews

## SLAVERS GLAMORIZED

By Morris U. Schappes

*The Well of Gerar*, by Ruben Rothgiesser, translated from the German by Harry Schneiderman. The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1953. \$3.

**This is a shameful book.** It is a disgrace that the Jewish Publication Society should publish it and a scandal that it should be touted as the first novel to be related to the American Tercentenary celebration.

The heroes of this historical novel are Jewish slaveowners and their main heroism is exhibited in the crushing of slave rebellions.

As I read it with disgust, I remembered that in 1948 the same publisher had issued a novel for young people glorifying the Jewish slaveowner and Confederate leader, Judah P. Benjamin (see *JEWISH LIFE*, November 1948, pp. 15-18). I also remembered that Dr. Solomon Grayzel, the editor of the Jewish Publication Society, in a paper delivered at the Conference of the Yiddish Scientific Institute on February 7, had been at great pains to explain that the fiction published by his organization was distinguished particularly by its high moral standards, its "purism" and "didacticism." Apparently the basic immorality of slavery and of holding slaveowners and the crushing of slave rebellions up as exemplary persons and activities today, have escaped this publisher and editor.

**Historically**, the novel is based on the fact that in Surinam, Dutch Guiana, in the 18th century some hundred Jewish families owned sugar plantations and mills operated by thousands of slaves. Of course, these slaves rebelled; scores of such revolts took place between 1690 and 1772 and in fact they did not cease until the emancipation of the slaves in 1863. Prominent among the Jewish families that, together with non-Jewish slaveowners, put down these desperate freedom-uprisings was the Nassi family, three generations of it, Samuel, David and Isaac, the latter two being the particular "heroes" of this book.

The action begins in 1742, when on Yom Kippur David Nassi dies while defending his thousand-acre plantation, which bears the Biblical name of Gerar, from attack by runaway slaves. The volume ends in 1749, when David's son, Isaac, repels a

similar invasion of the plantations of the *Jewish Savannah (Surinam)* by runaway slaves who cannot break through the palisade built by Isaac. In victory Isaac is confident that the Jews will now live in peace and security. In actual historical fact, Isaac Nassi was killed in 1750 when he undertook an expedition against the runaway slaves.

The reader is supposed to hate the rebelling Negro slaves who are described as "frenzied and fanatical Negroes," who are "even more vicious and bestial than their ancestors had been in Africa" (p. 42). In France, our "hero" Isaac is introduced by a Jewish banker-philosopher as "a brave young man; he has fought in the wilderness against blacks" (p. 125).

Of course there are slaves who do not rebel; they are held up as good and loyal slaves—as if loyalty to chains is a virtue. Such slaves are even converted to Judaism and we are supposed to be touched by the fact that they are allowed to pray in the same synagogue "huddled back of the seats of the congregation" (p. 38). And when a Jewish slave dies defending his master, that slave's brother is pictured saying the *Kaddish* in the synagogue "standing next to the planters" and we are supposed to glow with something or other at this vision of an all-solvent Judaism that dissolves everything except the shackles. Similarly the author tries to present Isaac Nassi as a "humane" slaveowner because, in Puerto Rico, he orders "new shacks" and "medical care" for the slaves—as if his slaves in Surinam had not rebelled despite his good shacks and care. How can the humanity of any particular slaveowner alter the inhumanity of the slave system in our Hemisphere?

**Although the novel** begins and ends in Surinam, the bulk of it takes Isaac to Europe. Here the author presents us with adventures built on the pattern of the "morality plays" of medieval Europe. The theme is: how can the Jews cope with anti-Semitism? In Amsterdam, Isaac learns that even the wealthiest Jewish bankers are powerless to help their fellow-Jews persecuted in Poland, Bohemia and Hungary. He is startled to find that some had made money on the Amsterdam Stock Exchange because his father had put down the slave uprising and lost his life in the endeavor.

Later Isaac learns that his own Austrian stocks have risen in value because Austria captured Prague—and expelled the Jews of Prague. Shocked that he was making profit out of Jewish misery (although indifferent to the fact that all along his family had been making money out of Negro slavery), Isaac throws his stocks away—and goes to Paris.

There he is first captivated by the French Enlightenment, with its philosophical essays on the emancipation of the Jews, and then disillusioned with the futility of such projects. From Paris we shift to Pressburg in Hungary, where the ghetto is terrorized by blood libel charges. The hysterical ghetto-dwellers snatch at the delusion that a Hungarian petty-nobleman who wishes to convert to Judaism will be able to save them, but the high nobility turn the anti-Semitic mob on the ghetto and there is wholesale destruction.

Escaping to Sicily, Isaac finds anti-Semitism there too. There he is tempted to convert to Christianity by the offer that he would become head of tremendous sugar-plantations in Puerto Rico to be worked by newly-imported Negroes. This escape from anti-Semitism Nassi also rejects, returning to Surinam to build a palisade against the attacks of runaway slaves, safe behind which palisades he will live happily with the faithful Miriam. The author, who leaves nothing to the imagination, assures us that the palisade is also a symbol for "the rock-wall of the Holy Scriptures and the strict tradition which, for thousands of years, had shielded his people and saved them from destruction. . . ."

**How can one explain the fact that an Isaac Nassi, who feels the sufferings of the Jewish people so keenly, is so indifferent to the plight of the slaves?** Essentially, his limitation is the limitation of his class position. At that time the entire capitalist class, while fighting for liberty for itself, was simultaneously enslaving and horribly oppressing millions of Negroes. An Isaac Nassi, as a Jew who is part of that class, wants equality for himself and his own people but in a typically middle class and nationalist way he will participate in the suppression of "his" slaves.

This is the "purism" and this the "didacticism" and the morality of this latest novel of the Jewish Publication Society of America. This ennobling of the Jewish slaveowner—what a commentary it is on the morality of a portion of the American Jewish plutocracy! Against this morality the Jewish workers and democratic masses affirm that the historical "necessity" of slavery cannot cover its villainy and that they will not look on slaveowners crushing rebellions as heroes and models. The rebelling slaves are closer to the Jewish people than the slaver who is Jewish.

# Letters from Readers

## How They Do It

You ask how we raise money for JEWISH LIFE. First of all, every reader and subscriber makes a contribution toward the JL Fund Drive because they enjoy reading the magazine and value the important contribution that JL is making for the Jewish people. We also arrange lectures, show films and arrange luncheons and we are always successful! You can realize that all this takes time and energy but our members of the Emma Lazarus Clubs do it with so much love and devotion. We know that JL brings the truth to the people, fights against anti-Semitism, against war and is trying to promote a better understanding and relationship among all peoples. That is why we are so interested in the sale and existence of JEWISH LIFE. We will send you more money in the near future. We wish you a successful Fund Drive.

(Mrs.) F. CARROLL

Miami Beach, Fla.

## Appreciation

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

Being a traveling salesman, I make it a "must" to leave a copy of JEWISH LIFE (after reading it thoroughly, of course) with people who could benefit by it most. It's surprising how deep in the heart of Texas your issues have traveled.

J. T.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

Enclosed is my check for renewal.

As one who considers your publication to be almost in a class by itself among progressive as well as Jewish periodicals, I must make a point in self-defense at being addressed as "Ex-Subscriber." I was unaware that my sub had run out.

Flushing, N. Y.

B. M.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

I really have not been an "Ex" or a "slacker." I have been buying JEWISH LIFE each month. But it is best, as you say, for both of us to "stick" together—this, for many reasons, especially in these times.

Enclosed is my check for \$2.50 so that I may no longer be an "Ex" to you.

New York City

Mrs. F. M.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

Enclosed find a check for \$2.50 to banish the status of "Ex" from my household.

New York City

Dr. B. C.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

Here's our renewal. While we're at it, we'd like to say in all sincerity that JEWISH LIFE is one of the finest magazines we read. Keep up the good work.

Toronto, Canada

A.B.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

I feel guilty as hell for not having renewed sooner—strictly an oversight. We all enjoy and appreciate your very fine magazine. Please send our sub through immediately. You are all doing a wonderful

## GREETINGS!

**Coney Island  
EMMA LAZARUS CLUBS  
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May the memory of those who heroically died in the Warsaw Ghetto spur us on to fight the American brand of Fascism.

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job and we certainly need more publications with your honesty and guts.  
Long Beach, Cal.

B.W.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

Thank you for bringing to our attention that our sub to JEWISH LIFE had run out. We were out of town for a time and it is possible that your reminder to renew was misplaced. We wouldn't want to miss JEWISH LIFE—we value it highly.

Los Angeles

H. & F. T.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

I'm always happy to hear from the people who write one of the best magazines in existence.

Huntington Woods, Mich.

N.E.

## In Memory of Abraham Olkin

A YEAR ago, on May 18, our unforgettable Abraham Olkin passed away.

We shall always remember him for what he was: an outstanding dynamic leader of the progressive Jewish movement; a defender of human rights and dignity; a staunch fighter for racial equality, for peace, freedom and security.

We shall carry on where he left off to help build the kind of world he lived and fought for.

IN HONOR OF THE GALLANT  
WOMEN WHO FOUGHT  
SIDE BY SIDE WITH THE MEN  
IN THE WARSAW GHETTO

WE SHALL NEVER FORGET!

**Chicago Council  
of  
Emma Lazarus  
Clubs**

# OBSERVATION POST

By Sam Pevsner

## Alice in Sunnyland

When the witch-hunt started in the New York City school system, one of the first victims was Alice Citron, a teacher in the Harlem schools for many years. After McCarthyite William Jansen, superintendent of schools, instituted proceedings against Alice, a mass movement of Harlem parents and residents developed protesting the firing. Alice was a leader of the community—working for better schools, for Negro-white unity and against Jimcrow.

Our readers know Alice for her warm articles and her children's stories. But they may not know about the great contributions she has made and is still making in defense of the civil and human rights of the American people. She worked indefatigably in the campaign for justice in the Rosenberg case; previous to that she played an important role in fighting back the government's attempt to jail Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois for his peace leadership. Wherever there is a campaign for justice with intricate problems to solve or with need for someone who can help broaden that campaign on a national or international scale, Alice's aid is sought.

Her vast experience and clarity has enriched the Editorial Board of *JEWISH LIFE* and we opine it is high time that one of the main bailiwicks of the magazine, Los Angeles, partake of this enrichment with more than the printed word. Therefore the magazine is sending Alice to Sunnyland for several weeks during the latter part of the month of May. She will also visit San Francisco and other points in California. Alice is going to help the Jewish Life Committee achieve the Los Angeles goal of \$3,000 and 300 subs in the present campaign.

## The Chicago Fire

Business Manager Blickstein hit the road recently to look in on the folks in Detroit, Cleveland and Chicago. Object: raise a head of steam for the present fund and circulation campaign. Best news he brought back was the reception and results of his visit to Chicago. While he was there, the city achieved 50 per cent of its quota, but even more important, a large and well-staffed Jewish Life Committee was set up. This column greets the new

committee and urges it to permit nothing to interfere with its resolution to function and build the magazine. And to the Chicago friends we wish to say that Lester was rhapsodic in his report on the warm and hospitable welcome he received from them. Early fulfillment of your quota, Chicago, will mean earlier plans for a return visit. Keep that Chicago fire burning.

## Hold Back a Tear

The usually mundane and prosaic table in the editorial office wore holiday raiment—a white paper tablecloth, napkins, a "fleshl branfn" and fresh sponge cake. Around it sat the editorial board and three visitors, an elderly woman and her two sons. There was a momentary hush in the room when the mother stood up—eyes flashing and voice vibrant with years of toil and instinctive militancy. In a rapid Yiddish she spoke of this visit to *JEWISH LIFE* as an auspicious moment in her long life. She told how she was an orthodox religious woman who understood piety to mean peace and an end to oppression. She hated McCarthyism. Her two sons support her financially. Out of the few dollars she received, she has saved pennies and nickles—and now her sacrifice and saving have reached \$500.

She is an old woman. Most of her friends and acquaintances have departed this earth. She wants to do something significant before she rejoins her friends. The \$500 represented a great responsi-

bility. She has thought long and deeply. She has discussed and conferred. At first she wanted to assure herself a good name for the future world by purchasing a Sefer Torah for the synagogue. This is good, she thought, this is right. But she thought more and conferred more. Then she came to the conclusion that she must help a Jewish institution that is fighting this terrible thing, McCarthyism. Fighting fascism, that is holy, that is godliness.

She has seen *JEWISH LIFE*. She likes it because it always fights fascism. God bless *JEWISH LIFE*—and give it many years of strength. And she wants to help. Here is \$400 in cash for your magazine—and \$100 she wants to give to the Talmud Torah on the East Side where her sons went. Now she feels she can meet the prophets with head high and joy in her heart.

A few words of thankfulness were expressed, the glasses were lifted to our lips—and with difficulty each one of us held back a tear.

## Dots and Dashes

Parents, now is the time to assure your children a vacation where they can enjoy an atmosphere of progressive Jewish culture and inter-racial living. Camp Kinderland on beautiful Sylvan Lake provides such a vacation in an atmosphere of fresh hope, brotherhood and love for peace. This camp is the answer to your problem of where to send your child this summer. . . . Camp Lakeland, the adult camp which neighbors Kinderland, is also a good vacation spot for all adults. . . . Camp Unity in Wingdale, N. Y., is known as a wonderful vacation spot, too. . . . This year Camp Unity has a day camp for children. . . . For a thrilling and worthwhile cultural experience attend the Annual Concert of the Jewish Young Folksingers on Saturday, May 22, at Brooklyn Academy of Music, dedicated to 300 Years of Jewish life in the United States.

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# FROM THE FOUR CORNERS

(Continued from page 2)

preserve it," he said, and he called for a "fight back" against the menace. . . . Together with labor officials and churchmen, Rabbi Harold Krantzler of Austin and E. H. Staulson, Hillel Foundation director at the University of Texas, opposed a "loyalty board" bill in hearings of the Texas legislature late in March. . . . Laurent B. Frantz, writer and legal researcher, late in March told about 300 AJ Congress members at a panel discussion of McCarthyism, that "McCarthyism is bigger and older than McCarthy. The fight against McCarthyism means a fight against all witch-hunting."

In a speech full of anti-Semitism and McCarthyite ranting, Mrs. Henry D. Strack, of Locust, N. J., addressed the annual state conference of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Newark on March 18. Among other things, she said that kosher markings on food products were a "secret code." Local groups denounced the speech and the N. J. DAR finally repudiated the speech on March 24.

**On the Jimcrow front . . .** The Baltimore *Afro-American* in mid-March called upon Attorney General Herbert Brownell to end discrimination in federal prisons and praised jailed Communist Party leader Benjamin J. Davis, Jr. for his plans to file suit against the government for the Jimcrow he suffers in his Terre Haute federal penitentiary. . . . Students of the University of Illinois at Champaign picketed a local barber shop late in March because it discriminated against Negroes. . . . Baltimore's hotels refused on April 7 to lift Jimcrow after an effort was made to get them to make an exception of the Negro members of Baltimore's new American League baseball team. . . . A bill to end segregation in Kentucky's private colleges passed in the lower house but was allowed to die late in March in the State Senate. . . . Racist hooligans in Cleveland on April 2 threw a bomb at a newly-purchased Negro church at 10723 Magnolia Drive, doing \$6,000 damage. No one was hurt. . . . A rally organized by the NAACP in Chicago in mid-March called Mayor Kennelly responsible for violence against Negro housing because of ineffectual police protection.

## EUROPE

A "national day of protest of French Jewry against German rearmament" was held on March 21 in France under the auspices of the Association of Veterans of

the Jewish Resistance Movement. The appeal for united action regardless of political views "condemns unconditionally any rearmament in Germany in any form and in any area whatsoever." . . . The Jewish Ex-Service Men's and Women's Association of Leeds, England, in March passed a resolution at its annual general meeting declaring its "opposition to any form of German rearmament" and plans to ask other bodies in the city to join it in a united group to act against German rearmament.

**News of Soviet Jews . . .** *Izvestia* announced on April 1 that D. Y. Raizer, first deputy minister of construction of the USSR, was awarded the Order of Lenin on his 50th birthday. . . . Of the five deputies elected to the Soviet Council of Nationalities in March from the Jewish Autonomous Region (Birobidjan), two were Jewish: Ilya K. Bobyr and Rakhail G. Sreidkin. Lazar Kaganovich, first vice premier, and Ilya Ehrenburg, famous writer, were elected to the Council of the Union. . . . In an election speech on March 11, Soviet Foreign Minister V. Molotov pointed out, among other things, that the Soviet Union had put an end to the incitation of hatred against peoples such as anti-Semitism.

**A reorganization** of the Polish government saw two Jews in cabinet posts: Hilary Minc, first vice premier, and Yakub Berman, who was formerly under-secretary of state, first vice premier. Following the second Workers (Communist) Party Congress in mid-March, it was known that the two above mentioned and Roman Zambrowski remained on the 13-man Politburo; that of the 77-man Central Committee, 10 are Jews; that of the 50 deputy members of the Central Committee, four are Jews. (London *Jewish Chronicle*, March 24.)

**A recording** on LP records of a number of the letters of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg has been issued by Chant du Monde (LD M 6003) in Paris. The reading is by Berthe Bovy and Julien Bertheau of the Comedie-Francaise.

## ISRAEL

**A meeting** was held in Tel Aviv in March to protest German rearmament. A committee of 33 was elected at the meeting to carry on the campaign throughout Israel.

**A shipment** of 2,500 tons of wheat arrived in Haifa early in March from the

Soviet Union. This is said to be the first wheat shipment ever received in Israel from the Soviet Union. An Israeli trade representative said that 25,000 more tons of wheat are due from the Soviet Union in accordance with a trade agreement.

**A trade agreement** for \$2,000,000 between Hungary and Israel was signed in Jerusalem early in March. Israel citrus fruit and products will be exchanged for Hungarian agricultural and industrial goods.

**The Israel government** took a leaf from the McCarran act book when on March 23 it refused visas to three Soviet women who were planning to attend the Democratic Women's Conference at Haifa. After strong protests were lodged with the government, the visas were given to the Soviet women.

**Immigration notes . . .** Immigration to Israel in January was 326, the lowest monthly figure. In the same month 400 Jews emigrated from Israel. . . . The Tel Aviv correspondent of the London *Economist* reported on December 19, 1953, that of the thousands who have emigrated from Israel, "there were some 15,000 old-timers." . . . A party of 15 Jews, who had come to Israel five years ago, left Haifa to return home to Rumania early in March.

**The Supreme Court** of Israel on March 16 upheld the validity of the Land Acquisition Act of 1953, which in effect gives the Israeli minister of finance the power to requisition Arab property and to pay compensation for it. Grounds for requisitioning the land may be absence of the owner on April 1, 1952, or if the land is regarded as necessary for development, settlement or security. Arabs are highly resentful over this law.

## Jewish Life

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