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# Jewish Life

A PROGRESSIVE MONTHLY

## PASSOVER—WARSAW GHETTO ISSUE

*“Never to forgive, never to forget!”*



## From the Four Corners

Edited by Louis Harap

AT HOME

**Resistance notes . . .** Senator Herbert H. Lehman said at a Democratic Party dinner on March 8: "War, under modern conditions, is the enemy of freedom. It is the Great Destroyer not only of freedom but of civilization, of which freedom is the richest fruit. . . . As citizens it is our first duty to exercise a vigilant watch over our foreign policy and to let the administration know of our questions, our doubts and fears. In the tangled and difficult paths of Far Eastern policy the administration has blundered badly, in my judgment; I pray that those blunders are not irretrievable or catastrophic." . . . A statement adopted at the 43rd biennial assembly of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations on February 17 urged rabbis and lay leaders "to join forthrightly in the struggle to safeguard civil liberties and to speak out with dignity and with courage for their preservation." The statement also urged the formation of congregational social action committees "to consider ways of resisting all efforts to enjoin upon us the conformity of thought and speech." (N.Y.T., 2/18) . . . Dr. Israel Goldstein, president of the American Jewish Congress and head of the Western Hemisphere Executive of the World Jewish Congress, warned in mid-February on his return from a WJ Congress meeting in Paris that free peoples everywhere "remain on guard against the dangers of militarism, neo-nazism, and anti-Semitism, which may be generated through the rearming of both Western and Eastern Germany." (Sentinel, 2/17) . . . The Metropolitan Council of B'nai B'rith in New York on March 4 urged the city's Board of Education not to adopt a rigid policy of firing "communist" teachers who refuse to inform. (N. Y. Post, 3/4). . . . Joseph F. Barr, JWV national commander, early in March called Attorney General Herbert Brownell's seven "changes" in loyalty procedures "completely inadequate" because they leave the burden of proof on the accused. . . . The AJ Congress in Chicago and the Chicago B'nai B'rith Council expressed opposition to the police state Broyles bills in February.

**George A. Brautigam**, Florida state attorney in Miami who spearheaded the wholesale imprisonment of Miami residents, mostly Jewish, last summer for invoking the Fifth Amendment, was revealed in mid-February to have been a charter member of the pro-fascist Guardians of Liberty. He resigned recently. (Continued on page 32)

# Jewish Life

A PROGRESSIVE MONTHLY

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## CONTENTS

### FROM MONTH TO MONTH

WJ CONGRESS ACTS ON REARMAMENT; HIGH TENSION IN THE MIDDLE EAST	3
LEHMAN-CELLER IMMIGRATION BILL; ANTI-SEMITISM IN MILTON; HALF-FREED FROM JAIL	4
WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING, TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY	
LETTER TO GHETTO FIGHTERS from the Editors	5
STORY OF THE GHETTO UPRISING	6
AMID CRUMBLING WALLS by Tevya Bozhikowski, translated from the Yiddish by Max Rosenfeld	7
12 YEARS LATER: NAZI-LED ORCHESTRA COMES TO THE USA	9
GHETTO WALL, a poem by Kasriel Broda, translated from the Yiddish by Max Rosenfeld	11
HOW PASSOVER GREW by Mendel Joseph	13
PITTSBURGH JEWISH CENTER GETS POLICE STATE TREATMENT by Abe Strauss	15
AT THE TRICENTENARY EXHIBITION by Louis Lerman	19
TRIBUTES TO MORRIS U. SCHAPPES	20
STORIES OF THREE HUNDRED YEARS: XIV, THE JEWS AND THE POST-WAR REACTION AFTER 1918 by Morris U. Schappes	23
IN THE THEATER: MAURICE SCHWARTZ IN ENGLISH by Nathaniel Buchwald	27
THE BIG LIE OF THE ATOM SPY by Charles A. Allen, Jr.	28
MATUSOW LIFTS THE CURTAIN by Louis Harap	30
OBSERVATION POST by Sam Pevzner	31
FROM THE FOUR CORNERS edited by Louis Harap	2, 32

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# FROM MONTH TO MONTH

## WJ CONGRESS ACTS ON REARMAMENT

**A**N event of high importance to the Jewish people occurred in Paris on January 30, when the World Jewish Congress Executive warned in strong terms in a resolution on the grave dangers of German rearmament (for part of this resolution, see March issue, p. 6). This body was therefore following up the many Jewish mass expressions of opposition, particularly the great international delegated meeting in Paris on December 12, 1954. As the most broadly representative Jewish body in the "Western" world, the WJ Congress thus manifested the alarm spreading among the masses of Jews all over the world at the prospect of the rearming of the Wehrmacht, if the London and Paris agreements should be ratified. The resolution warns against every attempt, "overt or covert, to reinstate a militarism which may go hand in hand with the resurgence of nazism, the fostering of anti-Semitism and the thwarting of the processes of democracy." The resolution gives added ground for militant action by the Jewish people on a world scale against this threat not only to the Jewish people, but to all peoples. The menace from the Wehrmacht is no less grave in 1955 than in the 30's.

For the Jews of the United States the action of the WJ Executive has special significance. This we can judge from an inside story of the discussions around the resolution as reported by the Israeli Mapam journalist H. Naftali. Intense pressure, he reports (*Israel Horizons*, February-March), was brought to bear by the delegations from West Europe and Israel to get the resolution passed. This pressure was resisted by the United States delegation, especially by Dr. Nahum Goldmann, architect of the "reparations" deal with Adenauer. Mapam delegate Mordechai Bentov nailed the reason for the strenuous opposition from the United States delegation. "I know," said Bentov in a powerful speech, "that there are members of this executive who live in the shadow of the State Department and do not see the world outside its boundaries." When Dr. Goldmann rose to rebut Bentov, writes Naftali, he "spoke in praise of the reparations and stated that we must take this factor into account in our policies." What does this mean? That the Jewish people must go soft and silent on their intense and wholly justified, implacable opposition to reviving a nazi Wehrmacht—in order not to disturb the flow of millions of dollars in "reparations." Could cynicism go further?

Nevertheless, the delegates from the rest of the world were sufficiently adamant, with overwhelming Jewish mass sentiment at their back, to carry the resolution that emerged. Even though it was a compromise—since it only *warned* against rearmament but did not express straight opposition—it gives a strong stimulus for world-wide struggle among the Jewish people, and indeed all peoples.

We Jews in the United States have a special task. This is to overcome the obstruction to action here at home on this issue being put up by most of the leadership. While the Jews of Europe, as the direct victims of Hitlerism, have reacted most powerfully on the issue, the masses of Jews in the United States are greatly disturbed over the prospect of West German rearmament. There is no more imperative task facing the rank and file in Jewish organizations than to insist on discussions and action on the issue. And this action focuses on the hearings on the agreements before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (Senator Walter F. George, chairman) announced for the end of March. Meetings should be held; resolutions from organizations should be sent to the committee and to every single senator; delegations should visit senators; individual letters should be sent to the senators. As many organizations as possible should ask to speak at the Senate hearings. Better to *act* now than to *regret* inaction later—if we're alive to do the regretting.

## HIGH TENSION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

**T**HE danger to the Israeli people increases as tension between Israel and the Arab states continues to mount. Feverish diplomatic activity by the Turkish premier, who is the messenger of Washington, to dragoon the Arab states against the will of the Arab peoples into pacts joining them to the State Department's military system; the shipping of arms to Iraq and now the Gaza skirmish, in which a number of Egyptians and Israelis were killed; increase the danger of war in the Middle East. Whoever may be responsible for the Gaza incident, the cause of peace and the welfare of the Israeli and Arab peoples will not be served if the UN concentrates merely on fixing "responsibility." The UN "condemnation" of Israel for the Kibya incident did nothing to bring a solution any closer; neither will a repeat of the procedure in the Gaza case relax tensions. Only by attacking the problem at the source will the danger of war be lessened.

The primary source can be located—it is the Dulles policy of aggravating the relations between Israel and the Arab states by frantic efforts to arm the Arab leaders against the "threat of Soviet aggression," for which the State Department has offered no evidence but sheer assertion. If this is the case—and not a scrap of concrete evidence has been shown to the contrary—then a struggle against this policy of generating an arms race in the Middle East offers a path toward a solution.

The apprehension of the Jewish people for Israel in this situation is great. A meeting of Jewish leaders from 16 national organizations early in March to discuss the grave crisis for Israel arrived at contradictory conclusions. On the one hand, the conference called for suspension of arms



shipments to the Middle East, since it is clear that the State Department is not disposed to send arms to Israel but only to the Arab states. On the other hand, the conference called for "the inclusion of Israel in any defense arrangement for the region." But if Israel were so included, then an arms race would be on in real earnest and the peace of the area jeopardized no less than now. The national interests of Israel, whose existence is endangered, requires the total rejection of the State Department's Middle Eastern "defense" projects, its intensified arms program and calls for direct negotiations. Only application of such a policy gives hope for a peaceful solution.

### LEHMAN-CELLAR IMMIGRATION BILL

**I**N THE last session of Congress the administration, in cahoots with reactionary forces, succeeded in keeping the Lehman bill to replace the racist McCarran-Walter act bottled up. But the forces opposing the police state immigration law are broad and determined. Once again Senator Herbert H. Lehman, together with Representative Emanuel Celler and 17 other Democratic senators and representatives, have offered a joint bill to replace McCarran-Walter. The bill would kill the national origins quota system, would cut out discriminatory distinctions between native born and naturalized citizens and would eliminate arbitrary grounds for denying or revoking citizenship or refusing admission of immigrants.

Strong reactionary forces, including the national administration, are aligned against any significant change in the McCarran-Walter law. The Lehman-Celler bill, which would in a measure restore democracy to our immigration policy, has a hard row to hoe, but the opposition among the people to the law gives a basis for a substantial fight for the new bill. What is required is that the literally countless organizations, among which practically every Jewish organization is numbered, which have come out against McCarran-Walter, should resume the campaign at a greatly increased tempo. The Lehman-Celler bill should be supported.

### ANTI-SEMITISM IN MILTON

**F**OLLOWING World War II, a growing number of Jewish families moved into Milton, a prosperous Boston suburb. Signs of genteel anti-Semitism began to appear. When the Jewish community proposed to build a center, unmistakable signs of anti-Semitism appeared among the residents. Obstacles to the center were overcome and the center built, but some non-Jewish families moved out as a result.

At present there are about 400 Jewish families in the town. From time to time Jewish families received phone and mail threats. On January 29 a shot was fired into a Jewish home, missing a baby-sitter by a few feet. Several families found swastikas chalked on their doors. Then, at the outset of Brotherhood Week, on February 19, 30

Jewish families received letters threatening "Death to the Jews!" During the entire period telephone threats were received.

Local, state and federal authorities are said to be working on the affair. However, these incidents cannot be shrugged off. They are a boiling over of a disturbing prevalence of anti-Semitism all over the country in various forms, from the polite to the brutally overt. A large number of the latter are reported frequently, some on a large scale, like the destruction of many Jewish summer homes in Michigan which we reported last month. These phenomena are a symptom of the repressive atmosphere that the post-war drive for conformity has imposed. Specific outbreaks of anti-Semitism must be tracked down and those responsible punished. Most important of all, the frequent explosions of violent anti-Semitism in all parts of the country from time to time can best be met in the long run by the greatest possible resistance to all manifestations of McCarthyism, which are the breeding ground for these anti-Semitic outbursts.

### HALF FREED FROM JAIL

**B**EFORE the five Communist Party leaders were released on parole on March 1 after having served their jail sentences, they were rearrested on the Communist Party membership section of the Smith Act. A sixth Communist Party leader, Irving Potash, a militant labor leader for many years, was released earlier on the same conditions but has accepted voluntary deportation to Poland in lieu of forced deportation. Although arrangements for bail for the Communist leaders were quickly made, these men are only "half-free," as one of them said. For they are subject to parole restrictions which drastically curtail their constitutional rights of association and expression. Thus, the repression follows them out of jail. The threat of another trial on the basis of the membership charge threatens them with double jeopardy, for it involves a trial hardly different from that on which they were originally convicted. Altogether, then, the continuing persecution of these men, among the earliest and most basic victims of the current repression which threatens the liberties of all Americans, needs to be combated. For their fate is inextricably tied with that of democratic freedom for everyone. All Americans interested in preserving the Constitutional safeguard against double jeopardy have a stake in the fight for the freedom of these thought control victims.

One of the Communist leaders who should have come out of jail with them is Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., former Negro city councilman of New York. He remains to serve a 60-day sentence because he refused to become a stool-pigeon. But Davis has continued his outstanding fight against Jimcrow even while in jail. He has petitioned the government to end Jimcrow in prisons. Davis is needed by the American and Negro communities to continue his important role in the fight against second class citizenship for Negroes. Freedom for all Americans stands to gain immensely from his freedom.



# WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING

## Twelfth Anniversary

*"Never to forgive, never to forget!"*

## LETTER TO THE GHETTO FIGHTERS

April 19, 1955.

DEAR brothers and sisters:

We are full of thoughts today. For it is just 12 years since you took up arms against the nazi destroyers of the bodies and minds of men. Our hearts are full of wonder at the greatness of what you did, at your supreme affirmation of the dignity of man. You may well ask us, your fellow Jews who lived after you, "Have you remained faithful to our deeds? Has a final end been put to the bottomless evil that we defied with knowledge of almost certain death? Or have we died in vain?"

It is not easy to answer. You must know that the great powers which won victory over the nazis two years after you died are no longer allies and have cut Germany in two. The rulers of our own country, be it said with shame, are trying once more to raise to power in their part of Germany those same forces that desecrated the spirit of man, that enclosed you in your ghetto and annihilated you, that built crematoria in which they burned millions of anti-fascists and of our fellow Jews.

You have not yet heard the worst. The rulers of our country, grown richer than ever and more arrogant, are forcing the peoples of Europe west of the Rhine to agree that arms should once more be put in the hands of these nazis. For the rulers of our country are trying as hard as they can to raise up armies all over the world in preparation for war on their ally against nazism, the Soviet Union, and a new nazi army is the keystone of their plan.

"What!" you may exclaim, "did we indeed die in vain? Have the people learned nothing? And what of our fellow Jews, do they allow this to happen?" No. The working people of Europe *have* learned. They want no more of a Wehrmacht that would once again set the world aflame. Only this time, you must know, that flame would be many

times more intense and all-consuming than the one that enveloped you. Because our scientists have discovered the secret of the atom and our rulers have placed that secret at the service of destruction.

In England, in France, in Italy—and in Germany, too—men and women gather and cry, no revival of a nazi army! But the rulers do not listen. Their parliaments close their ears to the cries of the people and vote to re-create the nazi army. The people say to their rulers, you must negotiate with the Soviet Union instead of giving arms to a renazified West Germany. The German workers, especially, are everywhere demonstrating. They want their country to be reunified and they have had their fill of soldiering and war-making. "Talks, not tanks!" they cry. The workers declare, you may legislate rearming but we will resist it.

"But what of our own fellow Jews?" you ask. "They should know as well as anyone what a rearmed, renazified army would mean." Yes, most of them do know this and are protesting. They are holding meetings all over Europe to oppose nazi rearmament. In France, especially they are speaking out loudly and are bringing the Jews of the world together by protest. Survivors of Hitler's death camps are vehement in their protest. But some Jewish leaders, like the Judenrat you knew so well, are trying to stifle these cries of outrage against the prospect of a new nazi army. Why? Because they serve the war policies of our government. They would court tragedy for the Jewish and the whole American people rather than oppose such policies.

The Jews of our own country, too, are profoundly fearful of this new threat of nazism and war that our government is trying to force upon the world. It is hard to tell you this, but we must have truth—most leaders of the Jews of our country are doing their utmost to silence the voice of protest. The other day the organization of our richest

Jews, the American Jewish Committee, sent a memorandum to all Jewish organizations, saying, "The problem of rearmament of the West German Republic has evoked great anxiety among the great majority of the Jews of the world." But instead of urging that the organizations of the Jewish people should organize great protests, the memorandum "warns" the Jews not to protest—because the "communists" are actively speaking out!

But did you not learn in your last months that the only safety lies in unity with anyone, including the communists, who would fight against the nazi enemy of mankind? But if our leaders are not willing to fight along with the communists, why are they not fighting without the communists? If they remain faithful to your memory, the Jews

of our country will lift their voices against this revival of the murderers of the bodies and spirits of men. Most of all, we shall follow the glorious example, which you taught us, that the only answer to the nazis and their like is *resistance*.

Rest assured. The last word has not been said. The common people of the world will have that last word. In our own country some Jewish papers and leaders have sent up the warning signal. The pacts to create a new nazi German army come up for ratification in the Senate soon. We shall do our best to let every senator know our opposition. We shall do our utmost to vindicate your heroism and your faith in man. You have not died in vain.

THE EDITORS

## STORY OF THE GHETTO UPRISING

AT THE beginning of 1942 the crematoria of nazi death camps smoked continuously over the burning bodies of hundreds of thousands of Jews and anti-nazi peoples. Many groups in the Warsaw Ghetto became convinced that the time was ripe for active resistance. But first the Judenrat, Jewish administrators for the nazis, and the notorious Jewish police must be discredited with the people and the notorious "The Thirteen," a gang of Jewish blackmailers and informers, had to be destroyed. The new militant spirit in the ghetto in the next year resulted in complete loss of leadership by the Judenrat, which operated on the theory that some Jews could survive by hard work and bribery. The informers were ruthlessly eliminated by the Jewish underground.

But no semblance of unified resistance existed among the various groups of the Jewish underground. Early in 1942, conferences took place among the resisting groups—the PPR (Polish Workers [Communist] Party), Right and Left Poale Zionists, Hashomer Hatzair and Hechalutz (the Bund refused to join at this time)—under the stimulus of Joseph Lewartowski and Andzhei Schmidt (pseudonym for Elya Moses) of the PPR. Lewartowski advanced the basis for battle unity: "We are all brothers and children of one family; thousands will fall but hundreds will come out alive." Andzhei Schmidt, formerly an officer in the Spanish Civil War, was the military leader. In February 1942 the Anti-Fascist Bloc was formed of the above-named groups. They formed fighting groups and underwent military training and they assembled arms under Schmidt's direction. Among them was Mordechai Anielewicz, who was to become the commander of the uprising. Schmidt himself was betrayed to the nazis in May 1942 and killed.

When the nazis began their total extermination program in Warsaw in July 1942, the Anti-Fascist Bloc broke down under the impact and the groups formed their own separate self-defense groups. There were three main groups, Socialist-Zionist, Bund and Jewish section of the People's Guard (a united front group organized by the PPR). The absolute necessity for unity brought the groups back in conference again. By October 1942 unity was achieved, this time including the Bund. The staff of the new Fighting Jewish Organization contained representatives of "Shomer" (Hashomer Hatzair), PPR, "Halutz," left Poale Zionists and the

Bund, with Mordechai Anielewicz as commander.

The Fighting Jewish Organization had its baptism of fire in the brief armed rising of January 18-21, 1943, when they resisted the attempt of a company of SS to round up Jews for annihilation. The next months were occupied in training, the building of bunkers and communications and the accumulation of arms. Non-Jewish forces outside the ghetto (called the "Aryan" side) helped to gather arms, one by one. The London Polish emigre government refused to give any substantial aid from their store of arms. The PRR and a number of its non-Jewish Polish members lent aid to the Fighters Organization.

By April 1943 there were about 40,000 Jews left in the ghetto. The fighting groups were organized and entrenched in their outposts. Zero hour was April 19, the day of the first Seder of Passover. At 6 A.M. the German troops entered the ghetto in force and the fighting broke out. The Germans retreated, beaten after the first surprise attack. The Jewish fighters fought with hand grenades, bottles filled with gasoline (Molotov cocktails) and carbines. But the Germans returned in full panoply. They used tanks, artillery, airplanes and automatic weapons against the embattled Jewish fighters.

By April 23, the Jewish fighters had to abandon open warfare under the battering of these weapons and resorted to partisan fighting. The full array of modern war used by the nazis destroyed their fortifications one by one. Attempts of non-Jewish sections of the People's Guards to enter the fighting met with little success. On May 9 the central command post with many of the leaders of the uprising was attacked by the nazis and most of the leaders, including the commander, Mordechai Anielewicz, were annihilated. But the fighting went on by partisan tactics. On May 16 the nazi commanding General Jurgen Stroop reported to his superiors that "the Jewish section of Warsaw no longer exists." But that was not the end of the fighting. Partisan skirmishes continued until the end of May. The few survivors continued to fight the nazis in the woods.

The resistance of the Warsaw Ghetto was not a spontaneous phenomenon. It was made possible by the training of most of its leaders and fighters in the militant labor tradition of the Jewish workers in Poland and Europe.

# AMID CRUMBLING WALLS

*Moving scenes from the uprising, written by a participant, which reveal the exalted heroism of the Jewish Fighting Organization in the ghetto*

**By Tevya Bozhikowski**

**Translated from the Yiddish by Max Rosenfeld**

*The following episodes from the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising are drawn from the vastly moving book, *Zvishen Falendike Vent (Amid Crumbling Walls)*, published in Yiddish in Warsaw, in 1949. The author, Tevye Bozhikowski, is a Labor Zionist and, as is obvious from the text, was a fighting participant in the uprising. He is at present living in Israel in the Kibbutz Lochmei Haghettoet (Ghetto Fighters). The translation from the Yiddish is by Max Rosenfeld.—Eds.*

## APRIL 19—THE FIRST BATTLE

**M**ONDAY, the 19th of April 1943, the eve of Passover, was a sunny spring day with brilliant light pouring into every corner of the Warsaw Ghetto. Clearly this was a day that awakened in one a desire to live. To the comrades who had spent the night at their posts it was an added reason for sadness that such a day should mark the final destruction of Warsaw Jewry. Such a day should rather have had night-black, laden skies, moaning winds, driving rains which would have made it easier to think of parables for death. But even Nature, it seemed, had become an ally of the enemy, mocking our souls with her splendor at the brink of our extermination.

The Fighter Group "Dror" ["Freedom" group of Labor Zionists] at 33 Nalewki Street, which was my group, took up positions and prepared to meet the enemy. My post was on the first floor balcony at the corner of Nalewki and Gensia; from this position we would be the first to see the German detachment marching into the Ghetto. Other positions were located in the courtyard at the windows of both offices.

Since early morning columns of several thousand infantrymen and motorized troops had been streaming into the Ghetto, as well as armored cars and tanks. Various formations of soldiers, SS men and Ukrainian Auxiliary Police<sup>1</sup> marched in full battle-dress as though this were a battlefield and we were a regularly constituted army. They entered from the "Aryan" side of Nalewki Street, marched on Gensia Street along the wall to the Ghetto gate at the corner of Gensia and Zamenhof. As I looked at the enemy's forces during those first moments, my only thought was, "How weak we are!" What could we do against such a well-equipped army? What could we accomplish against tanks and armored cars with our revolvers and few precious rifles? Yet somewhere we had to find strength and surmount our weakness.

<sup>1</sup> This police force was composed of Ukrainian elements who joined with the nazis.—Eds.

Exactly at six o'clock the Ghetto was completely surrounded. The first German troops stepped upon the Ghetto streets and marched in the direction of Nalewki approaching the junction of three streets, Nalewki-Gensia-Franciszanska. We did not wait for the enemy to begin his murderous work but immediately let fly a hail of bullets, grenades and our own Ghetto-made bombs.

Moment by moment the firing grew more intense. Our bombs and grenades exploded over the heads of the Germans and left many dead and wounded.

Since our group was stationed not far from the entrance to the Ghetto, this was the first battle. The explosions were a signal to all the Fighting Groups throughout the Ghetto that the uprising had begun.

Although the Germans had expected this Jewish resistance, they had no conception of its extent. After the experience of the first resistance on the 18th of January [a three-day armed uprising in the Ghetto—Eds.], when our only weapons were pistols, they were now greatly astounded by our long-range rifles and especially by the grenades. For a long time we held the initiative and the enemy was on the defensive.

The Germans dispersed into smaller groups, huddled against the walls and were afraid to pick up their dead and wounded, who lay upon the street. We heard the curses of the SS officer as he ordered his men to help the fallen soldiers though he himself crouched behind a balcony, afraid to emerge from the shelter it offered him.

When the Germans recovered from their initial surprise, they began to return our fire. They were fighting in the open, however, and were ready targets for our bullets, whereas we were concealed behind the walls of the houses.

All three sections of our group fought with bitter stubbornness. . . . Rivah, the observation scout, ran up with the news that the enemy had withdrawn; not one German was to be seen on the street. The commander went out to survey the battle-area and returned beaming with satisfaction. The Germans had left a score of dead and wounded and we had not suffered a single casualty! This informa-



tion was quickly conveyed to the other positions and all the comrades were overjoyed. Each of us knew what the final outcome must be but our temporary victory and the German losses gave us our only bit of happiness before the end. . . .

## THE SEDER

**D**URING this same night of April 19 I went to a house at 4 Kuzha Street in order to obtain flashlights for our group. Accidentally I entered the living-quarters of Rabbi Maisel. As soon as I crossed the threshold, I suddenly remembered that this was Passover, the night of the First Seder.

The house looked as though it had gone through a pogrom. The bedclothes were strewn about, the chairs overturned, the floor covered with household objects, the windows broken. All this had happened during the day before the family had returned from the bunker.

Only the table in the middle of the room seemed in keeping with the holiday, a discordant note of festivity in a house of gloom. The wine in the cups only brought to mind the blood of the Jews killed on that Passover eve. The rabbi recited the Hagadah—the Passover story—against a background of gunfire and explosions. Through the windows, from the converging flames of burning houses, came the reflection of a rusty light upon the faces of the Seder table. When they reached the section in the Hagadah which begins, "Pour out thy wrath," the rabbi and his sons broke into a great weeping. . . .

A strange emotion took hold of me in the rabbi's house. I could not free myself of the oppressive atmosphere which weighed upon me. In the rabbi's figure I could see the tragedy of the old generation, which did not have the strength to perish in active resistance to the enemy; this was the cause of its helplessness and despair.

As I left him the rabbi warmly shook my hand and wished me success in battle. "I," he said, "am old and useless, but you, young people, do not surrender, fight on, and may God be with you!" He followed me out and gave me a few packages of matzos for my group. "If we are alive tomorrow," he said, "please come back with Zeviah." I gave him my word that I would and on the next evening I and Zeviah visited with Reb Maisel.

Returning to my group, I was struck by the sense of

being in an entirely different world. I felt the warmth of a comradely atmosphere. I was again in an environment where, despite the great sorrows, there were no tears. I was just beginning to appreciate the steadfast spirit of our Fighter Organization as our most valuable strength. This was the strength of not allowing oneself to be dragged along by the general despair; the ability to lift oneself above the tragic surroundings, to pursue unflaggingly the common goal of striking at the enemy. . . .

## STRATEGIC CENTER

**T**HE bunker at 29 Mila was one of the better-constructed bunkers in the Ghetto. This was not an accidental place of refuge which the fighter groups used in the course of the battle; it was arranged before the uprising, with the understanding of the owners, that this bunker would be a strategic point of the Fighting Organization.

The owners were rich Jews who had had the opportunity of outfitting the bunker with many comforts; electric lighting, water pipes—instead of primitive springs (as in the other bunkers), a sufficient food supply, a radio, beds, etc.

The strategic importance of 29 Mila consisted in that the house bordered also on Zamenhof Street and we could attack the Germans from either street. All the groups which were stationed on Zamenhof Street were connected by attic passageways to the house. At the end of the battles on Zamenhof all the groups thus had the possibility of withdrawing to the agreed position in 29 Mila.

When I arrived at the bunker, I met for the first time all the comrades of the fighting groups from Zamenhof Street and we exchanged experiences and impressions of the various fighting sectors.

After their first defeat of April 19 on Nalewki Street, the Germans no longer marched into Zamenhof with parade and pomp. They proceeded with great caution and apparent fright, singly and scattered, hugging the walls for protection. On Zamenhof the Germans centered great military forces. The fighting groups were also concentrated on Zamenhof at four separate points. At these points there were the fighting groups of "Dror," Hashomer Hatzair [left wing Zionists], PPR [Polish Workers (Communist) Party] and the "Bünd." All these groups had coordinated among them the defense of Zamenhof. . . .

***"It is time for the nations of the West, now preparing admission of [West] Germany into their fellowship, to halt in their arrangements and ask themselves if they are ready to bless as redeemed a country that can so easily show signs of a relapse into the horrors of persecution and terrorism."—Dr. Norman Salit, president of the Synagogue Council of America.***

## 12 YEARS LATER: NAZI-LED ORCHESTRA COMES TO THE USA

A wave of protest has swept over the country against the State Department-sponsored tour of 19 cities by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by nazi Herbert von Karajan and managed by nazi Gerhart von Westermann. The purpose of this tour is obvious enough: to ease the acceptance by the American people of rearmament of the renazified West Germany.

On February 20, the protest movement was set off by a petition signed by about 750 musicians of Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians demanding that their officers try to get the tour cancelled. This act startled the people into the shame of having von Karajan, a darling of Goebbels who had been prohibited from conducting in Vienna in 1946 by United States authorities, lead an orchestra in our concert halls. The motive of the State Department in sponsoring this tour was perceived by columnist Beryl Segal in the *Providence Jewish Herald* in February. He ascribes the call to "Come back, come back all you goosestepping, heel-shouting sons of the master race!" to "our eagerness to rebuild Germany" against what he calls "Russian aggression."

In New York the concert on March 1 was met by several hundred pickets in front of Carnegie Hall. Esther Klein, publisher of the *Philadelphia Jewish Times*, called for "an orderly and dignified picket line" in that city and reported that the local impresario, Emma Feldman,

had refused to manage the orchestra's Philadelphia appearance (February 25). Editor Milton K. Susman of the *Jewish Criterion* of Pittsburgh urged protest letters to the local manager of the concert (February 25).

The musicians' protest was promptly followed by a letter (February 24) sent to Acting Secretary of State Herbert Hoover, Jr., by Jewish War Veterans National Commander Joseph F. Barr stating that the JWV was "shocked and disturbed" by the department's approval of the tour. The New York City CIO denounced the tour and urged boycott of its performances. The Carl Diton Branch of the National Association of Negro Musicians, Inc., protested that "Nazis and fascists are allowed to perform in U.S. halls and stages which are denied American Negroes." Other protests in New York were lodged by the Jewish Labor Committee, the American Federation of Polish Jews, Ykuf and the *Jewish Examiner*.

The protest has spread to a number of cities. Editor J. I. Fishbein of the *Chicago Sentinel* (March 3) editorialized against the tour; about half the student body and four faculty members of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati and the local *American Israelite* protested against the coming appearance of the orchestra in that city; the Baltimore Jewish Council protested; and Detroit musicians, Zionist youth groups and the Detroit *Jewish News* protested the scheduled concert in that city.

## A CHILD IN GEHENNA

WE HAD finally begun to move when we were stopped by a weak young voice crying in the distance. We looked hurriedly in all directions to discover the source of the cries which shattered the apprehensive stillness. From a narrow opening which connected to Zamenhof Street there came a little girl of about ten or 11, pleading with us to save her mother from the flames.

Crying hysterically, she told us that her mother's hair and clothing were on fire, that she was unconscious, that there was no one to help her, that all the others had been suffocated in the cellar, that she herself had been badly burned, as we could see.

Immediately several of the comrades went to see what help they could administer, but it was too late. The falling timbers, which now covered her completely, had freed her from her agony.

The little girl refused to understand that her mother was dead. She screamed and wept with her last bit of strength and refused to leave the spot. Forcibly the child was brought into our ranks and we started on our way. As we moved ahead the child tried to tear herself away from the hands that were holding her, refused to accept the thought that she was leaving her mother behind in this havoc and destruction. . . .

## MISSION THROUGH THE SEWERS

WITH the night before us and no place to rest our heads, a meeting of all the fighter groups was arranged to consider what to do. We were agreed that because of the systematic burning of the Ghetto houses we would not be able to hold out for long. It was decided that a group of four comrades with "Aryan looks" should get through to the "Aryan" side of the city and bring help to evacuate the remnants of the fighters when all further resistance had become impossible.

The next morning, Sunday the 25th of April, together with Halima, Jeremiah (Hashomer Hatzair) and Dorka Goldkorn (PPR),<sup>2</sup> I descended into a sewer which led to the "Aryan side." The first moment of our entrance into the sewer will haunt me until I die. Scores of people, not finding any protection above ground, had hidden themselves in the dark, narrow sewers, through which flowed the filthy waters of the city's drainage. In the frightful closeness of the low, narrow pipes, scores of people lay pressed together in mud and filth. Some were unconscious and no one could be concerned with them. The surging waters carried away the dead and made room for those who still retained their strength. The wounded and the

<sup>2</sup> This heroic Communist woman's memoirs of the uprising were published in *JEWISH LIFE*, April 1950.—Eds.

burned lay bleeding in the muck and there was nothing to do but step upon them.

After we entered the sewer, the situation grew even worse. The jam of human beings became so thick that it stopped the cold, muddy water like a dam. Because of this the water-line rose quickly and in some sections of the sewer covered the prostrate mass of bodies and drowned the helpless children. The hope of each individual to survive lay in the death of another; that was the only solution that would relieve the deadly congestion. But everyone wanted to survive. Even in the worst moments this instinct of self-preservation did not leave them. No matter how deeply each one was shaken by the death of another and by the dragging of a corpse through the filthy sewer waters, the others breathed freer for the moment and were grateful for the bit of "living space." . . .

### THE JEWISH FIGHTERS' MAY DAY

WHEN I had been at 29 Mila, the illegal Polish radio-station had informed us on the 24th of April that the international workers' holiday, May Day, was approaching. What a strange and distant anachronism this seemed to us in a world facing extinction. The thought of a holiday of freedom and people's brotherhood was a shriekingly discordant note in the horror of our reality. And yet for a brief moment feelings of hopefulness awakened and our thoughts raced back to the old years of the great May Day

#### *"To the Jews of America"*

*The United Committee to Commemorate the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in March issued a call "To the Jews of America" to heed the lesson of the heroic uprising and oppose the rearming of West Germany. The United Committee is holding a memorial meeting to the ghetto martyrs on Sunday afternoon at one P.M. on April 10 at Manhattan Center, New York City. Excerpts from the call follow:*

"The Twelfth Anniversary of the heroic, unforgettable uprising of the Warsaw Jews is approaching. . . .

"With pride and veneration we recall our heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto. Their sacred memory can never be erased from our minds. Nor can time erase the commandment which they bequeathed to us to be handed down from generation to generation: "Never to forgive and never to forget!" . . . Never to forget *who* did this! . . .

"When the hangmen of the Warsaw Ghetto did not know what to do when our heroes fought on the roofs and in the cellars and in the sewers, the hangmen had to call upon the devilish "Stuka" airplanes commanded by Marshall Kesselring to rain down fire and death on the roofs, on the houses of the Warsaw Ghetto. Today they plan to place the same Marshall Kesselring and the other fiends at the head of the new German Wehrmacht. Can we remain indifferent to this? Can we be silent when the murderers of our brothers and sisters are being rearmed? Do we not hear the cry of our kin, their last outcry, forever to remember what the German nazi Amalek did? . . ."

demonstrations. We saw the marching contingents in a sea of red flags, radiant voices singing of faith in tomorrow. But our happy memories only made our hearts more bitter; the here and now was too bloody to forget.

After that radio broadcast, days and nights passed filled with terror and struggle. We had withdrawn from 29 Mila and lost our only contact with the outside world—the radio. We became more and more absorbed in our daily activities but we did not forget to count the days which separated us from the workers' holiday.

In the bunker at 18 Mila we discussed suitable ways to celebrate the First of May. Our commanders decided that the most fitting celebration would be a reinvigorated attack against the enemy.

Previously we had attacked the Germans only at night. On May Day, for the first time, we launched an attack in broad daylight. The place was 47 Nalewki Street. Long hours we stood in a deserted clearing among the ruins, without a wall or a barricade to protect us. At a distance the enemy darted back and forth like a swarm of infuriated bees. Seeing our steel helmets and someone carrying a rifle, the murderers thought we were German soldiers. They could not imagine that Jewish fighters would be moving about in the street in the middle of the day. Their mistake made it possible for us to carry out our plan.

At a pre-arranged moment our bullets let the Germans know who we really were. Yitzchok Suknik, one of the Hashomer Hatzair, fired his rifle repeatedly into a group of Germans and three fell. At first the remaining Germans were taken by surprise and seemed at a loss as to what to do. Then they began to close in on us from all directions. We began the agreed-upon retreat toward our base at 18 Mila. The way was long and hard. Because of the heavy enemy fire we were forced to maneuver among the ruins until nightfall. We returned to our bunker without a loss, happy that we had been able to celebrate the First of May in a manner befitting Jewish fighters. . . .

### THE COMMAND IS ANNIHILATED

THOSE who felt a little better gave us the story of the German attack on 18 Mila [headquarters of the Fighting Organization]. On Saturday, the 8th of May, the Germans encircled the bunker and broke into all five entrances simultaneously. At each opening stood a determined group of fighters, who immediately began firing at the enemy. But defense was impossible; there was no way to get out of the bunker to fight under more "favorable" conditions. As soon as they had smashed all the entrances, the Germans released a great quantity of gas bombs into the shelter. In a few seconds the gas began to choke and blind the people in the bunker, who were now in a state of indescribable panic.

The moment they realized that all hope was gone, Arieh Vilner called upon the fighters to commit suicide. Most of the members of the Fighting Organization did so, either with their own weapons or by poison. Lutek Rotblatt



shot his mother and then himself. Berl Brode, whose hands had been wounded, pleaded with the other comrades to kill him. Some of the fighters fell into unconsciousness without being able to take their own lives. Most of the civilian population in the bunker was suffocated by the gas; a small number climbed out of the cellar and surrendered to the Germans. The few comrades whom we had found in a semi-conscious state had crawled to an opening after the Germans had gone away, believing everyone in the bunker dead. The air seeping from the outside had kept them alive.

Besides Mordecai Anielewicz who died together with his fighters, the following active workers of the Hechalutz movement perished in the bunker at 18 Mila: Berl Brode, Aaron Holsband, Nesha Zucker, Mira Fuchrer, Arieh Vilner, Lutek Rotblatt. Also, Herman and Joshua Spantzer, of PPR, and Melech Perelman and Ignatz Futerman of the Bund. . . .

## PLAN OF ESCAPE

**S**UDDENLY [in the sewers] we were startled by the rays of a powerful searchlight moving closer to us from a distance. This meant only one thing: the Germans were hunting down the remnants of the Jewish fighters. We were not entirely surprised because we had heard that the Germans were "finishing up their work" in the sewers, using gas or grenades. . . .

Breathlessly we stood and watched the light grow larger and larger. The reflection lit up our faces, but our blinded eyes could not see who or what was behind the light. Our bearing, however, was composed—the calm indifference of utter hopelessness. The splashing of water underfoot reached our ears, indicating the last moments between life and death.

The impossible happened; illusion became reality. Before our unbelieving eyes help appeared, in the person of Simchah Rotheizer (Kazhik) and with him was Rishek, a [Polish] PPR worker on the "Aryan side"; leading their way was a workman in the sewer system. Our joy was beyond words. We embraced as though nothing could ever separate us again. This unexpected joy, coming at the precise moment of expected death, bewildered us so that for a time no logical explanation seemed possible. Before they told us anything, they fed us lemons and bits of sugar. I can never forget how we gobbled the lemons, not even stopping to peel them, unmindful of their bitter-sour taste.

The good fortune of this meeting in the sewer actually intoxicated us to the point where we momentarily forgot our suffering, our hunger, our thirst and our physical exhaustion. A new soul had been breathed into us. We could not assimilate what had happened.

When we finally were calm enough to hear the story from Kazhik, he gave us details of the efforts which had been made by the representatives of the Jewish Fighting Organization on the Aryan side—Yitzhok Zukerman and his contacts—to bring help to the Ghetto. Our meeting in

## GHETTO WALL

*By Kasriel Broda*

*Adapted from the Yiddish by Max Rosenfeld*

At the wall, we stand  
with hanging hearts and hands  
like willows weeping weeping  
in the howling winds.

Eyes blind, unseeing  
staring far away and deep,  
impaled upon a pike  
of everlasting grief.

You cannot see the world  
through pressing ghetto walls  
and crouching towers counting  
death's daily toll.

But close your eyes,  
shut out the ghastly wall,  
then everything is clear—  
the world, the truth, all.

*(Kasriel Broda, a Yiddish poet of the Vilna Ghetto, was murdered by the Nazis in 1945 in a concentration camp near Koenigsburg, Esthonia.)*

the sewer was one of the results of these efforts.

In accordance with a decision of the Fighting Organization, Kazhik had left the Ghetto with Zalman Friedrich on the night of April 29 to make contact with Yitzhok Zukerman on the Aryan side, where they were to expedite the organizing of help for the Ghetto fighters. They had succeeded in reaching him the next day.

For over a week now, Kazhik told us, the organization had been working feverishly together with the PPR, which had displayed great understanding of our problems and had supplied help for our needs. The expedition to the sewers was organized largely by Kostek, an active [Polish] PPR worker.

For quite some time they had been wandering through the sewers trying to get into the Ghetto. On the night of May 9 they had finally emerged safely into the Ghetto ruins and had gone to all the former bases of the Fighter Groups, only to find them destroyed. With the sickening conviction that all the fighters had perished, they had left the Ghetto. On the way back they had looked and searched, doubling back in various directions through the many forks of the sewer, hoping they might still find someone alive. By a lucky chance they had found us at the very moment of our utter despair in any possible rescue.

After this brief report Kazhik told us that help was waiting to transport us to safety. . . .

## FINAL ORDEAL OF THE SEWERS

**W**E were now a group of almost 60 people, each one trembling with impatience to be free of this beastly existence in the sewers. [This group had finally reached a manhole on the Aryan side.] But deliverance did not arrive so quickly. From a note dropped through the manhole cover, we learned that it would not be possible to bring the [rescue] truck into the street during the daytime, that we would have to wait. A great depression settled upon us again as we learned that we would have to wait until past midnight in the mud and filth, suffering hunger, thirst and cold. It was almost too much to accept but the force of necessity convinced us, one by one. . . .

The long-awaited darkness came. The expectation of momentary deliverance renewed our self confidence. Our nerves had gradually been quieted by the knowledge that another hour or two would take us out of the nightmare of the sewers.

But little by little we began to realize that it was now long past the hour when Kazhik was to return. Impatiently we pushed out a note through the manhole cover begging them to hurry because we could not hold out much longer. We knew that there was supposed to be a constant watch over the sewer opening but we heard no one approach to take the note.

In an atmosphere of spiralling tension we again waited for something to happen, powerless to move a finger. Footsteps near the manhole revived our hopes momentarily; again it was a note, this time containing the news that all the neighboring streets were blockaded by police; we would not be able to leave the sewer that night.

This knowledge shattered us completely. A terrible apathy settled over us, and for a short time our planlessness was overwhelming. But we soon understood what was in store for us; if we were not out of the sewer that

We again pushed out a note begging that we be taken out at any cost, even if it meant that most of us would be killed in a fight with the police; we made it clear night we would have to wait another 24 hours. that we would rather die than wait any longer in the sewers. Our friends on the outside were forced to deny our request; the plan would not work, they said, because the most essential thing was not available—the truck.

In the late hours of the night, when the street above us was completely empty, the two comrades on the outside opened the cover for a few seconds and let down a pail of soup. There was enough only for each of us to wet his lips and the torment of our hunger grew worse.

As the day dawned, we began to feel that our strength was about to leave us completely. Some of the comrades, the women especially, had collapsed of exhaustion. . . .

With each passing moment the sense of doom grew relentlessly, and we tried to convince our comrades on the outside to lead us out, even in broad daylight. By this time they had realized themselves that we would not last till nightfall, and were prepared to go through with the plan. Not being able to get one of their own trucks, they had telephoned an ordinary transportation company to send a truck and a driver to Prosta Street to move some merchandise. When the truck arrived at the appointed place, a few of the comrades, weapons in hand, informed the driver that the "merchandise" was a group of Jewish Fighters from the Ghetto; that if he refused to transport the cargo, he would not leave there alive. Not having another choice, he agreed.

At nine o'clock in the morning, on the 10th of May 1943, the manhole cover opened suddenly and a stream of sunlight poured into the sewer. At the opening stood Kzhatshchek, calling us to climb out at once. After 30 hours in the blackness of the sewers, the brilliant spring sunlight was blinding; the street was full of people, who stopped curiously to see what was happening. From the windows of the Polish houses, unbelieving eyes peered out at these strange, inhuman creatures, lumps of moving mud and filth crawling out of the sewer like living corpses.

A half hour had elapsed and all of us were not yet out of the sewer. Suddenly from somewhere came the startling news that Germans were approaching Prosta Street. Kzhatshchek hurried us feverishly, but the danger point had been reached and he ordered the driver to start. About 15 comrades were left behind.

In the truck we were ordered to crouch low and we began to move through the streets of the city at great speed. We flew past streets and parks and gardens, breathing the clean air, staring at the blossoming trees as at something foreign and mysterious.

Turning and doubling back over the city streets to avoid the known concentrations of German guards, we finally reached the woods a few miles from Warsaw.

The daring act of emerging from the sewers and driving through the streets in bold daylight had succeeded. It was a step that could have been taken only by people who had nothing to lose and were ready to gamble everything. It had been made possible by the energetic efforts of the Fighting Organization on the "Aryan side" and by the great understanding and sacrifice of the Polish comrade—Kzhatshchek. . . .

**"A rearmed Germany would be a menace to the world. There will be peace if Germany is reunited, but a demilitarized and neutralized Germany. United States policy will have to change on this point."**

**—Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver**

# HOW PASSOVER GREW

*The origins of the Passover festival and the changes it underwent as a result of the liberating exodus from slavery under Pharaoh*

*By Mendel Joseph*

**P**ASSOVER, like other Jewish holidays, is an integral part of Jewish folk life. Though it originated in the dim past as a pagan nature rite, in time it became clothed with new and vital meaning in response to the changing currents in Jewish life. And because there was such close interaction between the observance of Passover and the history of the people, it has remained a living holiday throughout the ages of its existence, ever new in its application to reality.

The Jews observed a Passover long before they escaped from Egyptian slavery. When they were yet nomadic shepherds, they used to sacrifice a lamb to their desert god in the spring of the year, in the birthing time of their flocks. Like their primitive contemporaries, the Hebrews appeased their god in the season of new life to ward off plagues and illnesses and to assure themselves good luck in the coming year. For they too held the pagan belief that all that occurred in nature was controlled by the god of the land they lived in.

When they settled down in ancient Canaan and became farmers, therefore, they copied the agricultural rites of the Canaanites. To insure that the earth would bring forth its fruit, the Hebrews performed their sacrifices on the high hills which were the dwelling places of the Canaanite gods. This coincided with the Passover that had developed among them in their nomadic days. In time the customs of their old spring festival became merged with the new forms they had borrowed from their neighbors.

With the approach of the first full moon of spring, the Hebrews of Canaan scoured their villages and cleared them of all sour or fermented dough so that nothing of the old agricultural year would remain to mar or spoil the new grain that was soon to be harvested. Then, on the night of the full moon, they went up to the hills and, following prescribed ritual, slaughtered a pure lamb of their flock and roasted it. As a sign of their acceptance of the covenant with their god, the entire clan ate the sacrificial animal, for it was a custom in ancient times to seal an agreement by eating together. The Passover meal, however, they ate in haste, along with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, lest the heat of the Near East cause spoilage of the sacrificial animal, for no impurity could be permitted at this most fearsome time of "communion" with the god. For this reason, they baked the bread of the Passover without leavening, which in those days consisted of sour

or fermented dough. They further insured the purity of the occasion by eating bitter herbs, whose cathartic action would prevent fermentation in the course of digestion.

After cementing the bond by eating the sacred meal in common, they dipped a bunch of hyssop in the blood of the sacrifice and sprinkled its blood on the doors' and lintels of their houses, visible evidence that they had participated in the Passover. And before dawn, they gathered up all the remains of the meal and burned and buried them in the pits they had dug, to make the break with the old year complete.

It is interesting that among a small Jewish sect called Samaritans, this primitive Passover ceremony remained unchanged and could be observed in action in modern times in Nablus, Palestine. The ancient Samaritans had separated themselves completely from the main body of the Jews so their descendants were untouched by the historical currents in Jewish life. Their Passover remained static, a relic of ancient ritual, but among the Jews the Passover underwent a complete metamorphosis, to become a great freedom festival.

## *Transformation of Passover*

Out of the centuries of struggle that the Jewish people of old waged against slavery, against the impoverishment of the common people by kings and aristocratic landowners, the Jews developed a new concept of God and religion, ethical monotheism. The great prophets, the ideological leaders of these struggles, had transformed their God into the champion of the common man, into a symbol of social justice for all mankind. In this atmosphere the primitive rites of the Passover ceremony lost their meaning. And out of the struggles of the Jewish people against ancient tyranny—against the oppression of Persian, Greek, Syrian and Roman overlords—had come a burning desire for freedom and independence. And it was in response to the hopes and aspirations of these centuries of struggle that the Passover was transformed. It became identified and intertwined with the historic memory of Moses and his liberation of the Hebrews from Egyptian slavery.

Year by year and age by age, the symbols and customs of the ancient Passover were reinterpreted in terms of the struggle against Egyptian slavery. The unleavened bread became a sign of the hasty departure from the land of



## PASSOVER GREETINGS

from  
The Editors

bondage and the herbs a reminder of the bitterness of slavery. Some of the pagan rituals were dropped altogether for they no longer held significance for the Jews. They no longer performed sacrifices so they stopped sprinkling blood on their doors and lintels. And there was no longer any point in eating the Passover in haste; in fact, the seder was purposely made into a most leisurely meal, so the story of freedom could be thoroughly told to the younger generation and the lesson of the great struggle driven home.

With the centuries new customs found their way into the Passover seder, all of them deriving from the new meaning of the festival to point up the struggle for freedom. The drinking of wine was introduced and people began to recline at the seder, for these were easily recognizable symbols of free men in the Greek and Roman period, when slavery was so widespread. They also added *haroses* to the seder meal further to emphasize the forced labor that tyrants and oppressors exacted from the people. And they set aside a cup of wine for Elijah, the great prophet who had boldly denounced King Ahab, a ruler of ancient Israel, for the frame-up murder of Naboth, a small landowner. For Elijah had become in Jewish legend the forerunner of the Messiah and Messiah in the time of Roman oppression meant a living and breathing man who would lead the Jews to freedom and independence.

Freedom was the main theme of Jewish life in those days. Jews by the hundred thousand used to stream into Jerusalem at Passover time to celebrate the freedom festival at the temple. It was a jittery time for the Roman officials when the Jews thus massed in their ancient capital to celebrate the winning of independence in the past. For it would be only natural for the Jews to relate the ancient struggle to the needs of the present. It was for this that Jesus became a marked man when he joined a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and was hailed by his followers as the Messiah—for in the eyes of Rome any man who could stir the Jews with hope of messianic deliverance, especially at Passover time, was a most serious threat to their control over Judea.

### *A Festival Alive With Meaning*

It was thus in all the ages of the Jewish people—their ever-present need to struggle for survival, to combat discrimination and all manner of oppression, kept the Passover holiday alive with meaning for them. In the Jews' streets of medieval times and in the walled ghettos of the 17th and 18th centuries it recalled struggles and victories, it

rekindled hope. In the period of emancipation from the ghettos the Passover inevitably focused attention on discrimination and inequality that make a mockery of freedom. And in the midst of struggles that the Jews participated in here in America, it was a morale builder of a high order. The Jewish colonists of the Revolutionary War period—the Jews who fought against slavery in the Civil War—the Jewish workers who fought the sweatshops half a century ago and struggled to build a labor movement—for them the words and symbols of the Passover had vital, current meaning. And in 1943, in the midst of devastating Nazi oppression, the Passover came dramatically alive when the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto heroically raised the banner of revolt on the very eve of the Passover itself.

In the fateful years of struggle for freedom and independence for the Jews of Israel, the Passover was like a call to arms, a bond cementing Jews the world over in common cause. The establishment of Israel gave the Passover new significance, added to its store of freedom struggles a glowing, heroic episode—episode, because it brought no lasting security for the Jews. How can Jews sit secure “under their vine and fig trees” when the newspaper gives daily reminders of the vulnerable position of Israel and of the rising tide of discrimination and anti-Semitism here in America? And how can Jews, or any people today, rest secure when the cold war and its weapons of mass destruction hang over the world and the campaign for the remilitarization of Germany is pushed with such vigor?

As in olden times, the problems of the day fill the mind of the people as they make preparations for the Passover. The Jews have lived through many troubled eras and in its way the Passover has helped—it gave pleasure and instilled hope, but above all it strengthened the resolve of the people to struggle on toward true freedom and equality. It is truly a holiday to celebrate.

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# PITTSBURGH JEWISH CENTER GETS POLICE STATE TREATMENT

By Abe Strauss

**W**HILE news of the heroic Warsaw Ghetto uprising was still fresh early in 1944, a group of Jewish cultural workers of the Yiddishe Kultur Farband (Ykuf) gathered in a Pittsburgh home. A local Ykuf leader delivered a report on the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto and the results of Hitler's extermination program. Following the report, the group discussed a plan to erect a cultural institution as a memorial to the fallen heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto. The plan was unanimously adopted. The memorial was to be a Jewish Cultural Center, available to all anti-fascist cultural groups in the city regardless of political belief.

Not unexpectedly, the project aroused the deep interest and enthusiasm of the anti-fascist Jewish cultural community in Pittsburgh. In a short time several thousand dollars were raised. Following the first anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in April 1944, a beautiful three-story building was bought at 6328 Forbes Street, facing the imposing Hebrew Institute, in the populous Jewish neighborhood of Squirrel Hill. A charter for the center was issued to the Yiddishe Kultur Farband on May 26, 1944, by the Common Pleas Court of Allegheny County. The Jewish Cultural Center was conceived as a fitting memorial to the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto. The center was immediately outfitted with suitable furniture; carpenters, paperhangers, plumbers volunteered their services to equip the building in the most up-to-date fashion. A fine library and reading rooms occupied the second floor. The library shelves were soon filled with hundreds of books in Yiddish, Hebrew and English.

Hundreds of Jewish people of all viewpoints visited this memorial, the only one of its kind in Pittsburgh. Even those who disagreed with Ykuf gave recognition to the initiative displayed by Ykuf leaders in establishing the memorial and pledged their moral and financial support to maintain it.

In a short time the center was bustling with lectures, symposiums, celebrations and organizational activities. The center was used by the Warsaw Federation, to which prominent leaders of the Polish Jews of the city belong,

by the National Council of Jewish Women and various landsmanshaften. The center was available to them rent-free in the spirit of the charter, which made the center a sacred memorial, not a business institution. Jewish workers of all outlooks, rabbis, Hebraists and Zionists contributed funds to maintain the center.

When the surviving remnant of Jews in Poland learned about the ghetto memorial in Pittsburgh, the leaders of the Central Committee of Polish Jews expressed their profound appreciation in a letter to the center's board of directors. They also sent valuable pictures and documents of the heroes who perished in the uprising.

## *First Attack on the Center Fails*

The post-war attack on the Roosevelt tradition hit Pittsburgh with especial violence. In this city, which is in the heart of heavy industry and monopoly corporations, the attack was spearheaded by the newly-formed "Americans Battling Communism" and other pro-fascist forces led by infamous Judge Michael Musmanno and his Jewish aide, Harry Alan Sherman. These pro-fascist groups, helped by professional informers, initiated the notorious "sedition" case in which Steve Nelson was sentenced to 20 years in prison. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court threw out this case and it is now being considered by the United States Supreme Court.

After a series of assaults on civil liberties, which included a red-baiting attempt to ban a performance of a symphony by the noted composer Roy Harris, Sherman and his clique moved in on the Jewish Cultural Center. This action was executed also wholly by a Judenrat set of Jews. Harry Alan Sherman, who boasted that he was the sponsor of FBI stoolpigeon Mat Cvetic, prepared the attack on the center. Early in 1953, Sherman, with his brother Samuel and one Paul Ginsburg, entered a complaint in the Common Pleas Court before Judge Henry Ellenbogen that the center was engaged in "communistic" activities. They demanded revocation of the charter and "investigation" of the leaders of the center. Behind the charges lay the monstrous plan to arrest leaders and members of the center and of Ykuf and to subject to a McCarthyite smear all local liberal Jewish leaders whether they did or did not participate in the activities of the center or gave it financial support.

ABE STRAUSS is the *Morning Freiheit* correspondent in Pittsburgh.

In April 1953, when the first hearing took place, Sherman and several of his assistants broke into the center in a fascist-like raid. Without identifying themselves they threatened the caretaker and forced her to give them the keys to the office. They vandalized the office and stole papers and documents, some of which had been received from the Jews of Poland. They wrecked the library. They photographed a picture of the classic Yiddish writer I. L. Peretz on the wall, wishing to convey the idea that it was a picture of Stalin! It was only several weeks after this raid that defense attorney Hymen Schlesinger found out that Judge Henry Ellenbogen had issued a court order giving Sherman the "right" to break into the center. The judge, of course, has never issued an order to Sherman to return the documents to the center although the center has asked for their return.

Local Jewish opinion expected that Judge Ellenbogen, a Zionist leader who had been elected with the help of the organized labor movement and the left progressives, would forthwith dismiss the pro-fascist charges. But the judge, by now yielding to the local Musmanno and Sherman forces, was bent on his course. At the first hearing and several times later he delivered McCarthyite speeches and demanded that defense attorney Hymen Schlesinger im-

mediately produce the records and names of the board of directors and of the contributors or face contempt of court. The attorney's attempts to prove that this would place many people in danger of imprisonment and loss of jobs were unavailing. The judge frequently threatened Schlesinger with contempt.

The defense attorney immediately applied to the State Supreme Court to throw out the charges. In October 1953 the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, voting four to two (one of the latter was Musmanno), ordered dismissal of the petition to lift the charter of the center and ordered Sherman, his brother and Ginsberg to pay court costs. The Supreme Court decision held "that the present petitioners are merely informants." If they were permitted to institute proceedings, the decision went on, "the same rights would exist on the part of each and every citizen of the Commonwealth, however irresponsible, however improperly motivated he might be."

### ***The McCarthyites Return to the Fray***

But the Judenrat clique was not stopped. They planned a second attempt to destroy the center and, more important, to uproot the city's progressive cultural movement.

## **DR. UREY SAYS: SOBELL WAS "NOT PROPERLY TRIED"**



A testimonial dinner under the auspices of the Chicago Sobell Committee was given on February 12 in Chicago to Dr. Harold E. Urey, noted scientist and Nobel Prize winner. Dr. Urey was presented with a bound volume of scrolls signed by prominent persons throughout the world in tribute for his achievements as a scientist and his contributions as a citizen. (The photo on the left shows Dr. Urey being presented with the scrolls by Mrs. Helen Sobell, wife of imprisoned scientist Morton Sobell.)

At the dinner Dr. Urey made an address in which he showed why he thought that Morton Sobell, now serving a 30-year sentence at Alcatraz for alleged conspiracy to commit espionage, "was not properly tried" and that "the verdict and sentence were not justified." He also said that the Rosenbergs, with whom Sobell had been tried, were not proven guilty of the crime for which they were executed.

Dr. Urey stated that the integrity of justice administered in the United States was at stake. "If proper trials cannot be secured," he said, "for unpopular people—and it is evident from the publicity of this trial that all those charged were unpopular—then it will be impossible to secure justice for other somewhat unpopular people and so on until no justice is possible at all."

Dr. Urey defended his right to speak out on this case: "I am exercising certain rights that were mine at birth and I wish to keep them until death."



For this purpose they dragged out of the gutter another FBI spy, a character named Joe Mazzei. At hearings before the Un-American Committee in Pittsburgh and Washington in 1953 and 1954, Mazzei swore to such fantasies as that he saw with his own eyes bombs being made in the cellar of the center and that people were shooting at a picture of Senator Pat McCarran for target practice!

In this atmosphere the Pennsylvania Republican Attorney General Frank Truscott appointed Sherman a special counsel to prepare a second complaint against the center. This also was brought before Judge Ellenbogen.

Despite the fact that prominent Jewish leaders thought that Judge Ellenbogen should dissociate himself from this disgraceful affair and dismiss the case, the judge ordered the association to appear at a hearing on January 18, 1955 with all the records of the center. Again Schlesinger argued that to make the records public under the present McCarthyite hysteria would inflict grave injustice on those named. Edward Freedman, assistant state attorney general, severely censured Sherman at a pre-trial hearing for demanding the records of the center without his knowledge and permission.

By this time everyone connected with the affair realized that Jewish leaders' opinion was not powerful enough to stop the proceedings and that Judge Ellenbogen was working hand in glove with Sherman. Schlesinger then proposed the following proposition on behalf of the Jewish Cultural Association: 1) the charter would be surrendered voluntarily; 2) a period of 90 days was to be allowed to sell the center and to wind up its affairs; 3) the proceedings against the Jewish Cultural Association should end and they would be permitted to liquidate their own assets.

The collusion of the Sherman-Ellenbogen combine was demonstrated when Freedman, the representative of the attorney general whose office was prosecuting the case, agreed to this proposal. But Sherman demanded that the charter be surrendered unconditionally. The judge agreed and ordered an immediate jury trial. An aroused Jewish opinion warned of the evil consequences for the Jewish population of the city of such a trial against a Jewish cultural institution. But the McCarthyites demanded names and victims.

### **The Trial**

On the 17th of January the trial began. By this time a new Democratic administration had come into office in Pennsylvania. Schlesinger therefore proposed that the trial be postponed in order to give the incoming attorney general, Herbert Cohen, of York, time to familiarize himself with the case. Mr. Charles Coll, the assistant attorney general assigned to the case, supported Schlesinger's motion but the judge denied it.

Schlesinger's motion to have every juror polled on his attitude to Jews was granted. Three Negro candidates for the jury were challenged and dismissed by Sherman. When

the prosecution asked one juror about his feelings towards Jews, the juror answered that he had prejudices against "some" Jews. The judge then asked the juror whether he meant that he had prejudices against "communists." Schlesinger had to reject this anti-Semite by using one of his four peremptory challenges.

Sherman prepared subpoenas for a number of Jewish cultural workers. Subpoenas were served on Herman Gordon, chairman of the Jewish Cultural Center, and J. Saul, former Ykuf leader. Also subpoenaed was Allan D. McNeil, a trade union organizer for many years, who lived in the top floor apartment in the center. Herman Gordon, who was business agent of Local 44, Jewish Bakers Union for many years, was the first witness. For three days Sherman bombarded Gordon with questions and threats of jail in an attempt to get the names of the officers, members and contributors. In his opening speech to the jury Sherman had repeated the wild tales of the informer Mazzei about a "red arsenal." The press gave prominence to all this McCarthyite nonsense. Anti-Semitic hooligans smeared Gordon's store with red paint and Gordon himself was threatened with fire and physical violence. The newspapers carried pictures of the vandalism on his shop and left anti-Semitic poison in its wake.

The lurid publicity and the outburst of anti-Semitic threats of more to come made the Jewish population apprehensive. In his weekly column on January 21, Milton K. Susman, editor of Pittsburgh's conservative English-Jewish weekly, *The Jewish Criterion*, expressed this apprehension when he said: "It is a pity that this danger could not have been more of an influence on the jurist to let the case be resolved as the Commonwealth and the defendants were agreed to settle it."

During the trial Sherman introduced in evidence the documents he had taken from the center during his raid of April 7, 1953. He offered pamphlets from the Central Committee of the Polish Jews as proof of an international conspiracy! President of the Central Committee was at that time the Zionist leader Dr. Somerstein, who now resides in the United States!

On January 25, Schlesinger demanded that the trial record include the episode of the anti-Semitic juror. The judge refused. In the discussion that followed, the judge threatened the defense attorney with contempt of court. Schlesinger then pointed out that constant threats made it impossible for him to continue with an adequate defense. The judge then ordered him out of the case. Schlesinger asked the judge for time to consult with his clients. The judge refused and gave the association 24 hours to obtain another attorney.

Gordon, who was on the stand at the time, and the center were left without a lawyer. The judge's suggestion that they obtain another attorney in one day was of course impossible under present conditions. Gordon was thus forced to surrender the charter to the judge. He explained that, since the judge had disqualified Schlesinger, he had no choice but to turn the charter over to the court.

## The Fight Goes On

The judge immediately appointed Milton Harris, a businessman, as chief trustee. As counsel for the trustees he named Harry Alan Sherman and an attorney Vincent Burke. Within a few hours the center, its equipment and the library were taken over by Sherman and company. With typical McCarthyite callousness on the same day they ordered Allan McNeil and his family evicted from the center. (McNeil was a tenant, not an employee of the center.) Sherman even entered their rooms when the family was not at home and seized several books. The McNeils were locked out of their home and their household and personal belongings kept from them to this day.

Thus the McCarthyite forces in Pittsburgh, with the help of a Judenrat lawyer and a Zionist leader who followed his lead, confiscated the splendid Jewish Cultural Center which since May 1944 proudly bore the testament of the Ghetto—"Never to Forgive and Never to Forget!"

On that January 25th when Judge Ellenbogen turned the Warsaw Ghetto Memorial over to pro-fascist Sherman, the former president of the Warsaw Verein issued a state-

ment, saying: "In 1943 Himmler with the help of the Judenrat liquidated the Warsaw Ghetto and destroyed the few Jews who remained. In 1955 the McCarthyite forces with the help of infamous Judenrat elements in Pittsburgh seized a Jewish Cultural Center—a center which for 11 years carried its emblem with pride and dignity in memory of the Warsaw Ghetto. We will outlive these McCarthys and their Judenrat 'co-workers'!"

A committee has been formed to continue the fight against this attack upon culture. A statement by the committee points out that if this attack against the Jewish center is permitted to stand, all cultural and people's organizations are in danger. "For McCarthyism," says the statement, "just as Hitlerism in Germany, is determined to destroy our democracy. We owe it to the community to fight for cultural freedom and our organization."

At present an appeal to the State Supreme Court is being prepared. The committee is appealing to Jewish opinion throughout the country for moral and financial help. Contributions and requests for information should be sent to Miss Evelyn Abelson, Renshaw Building, Room 806, Pittsburgh, Pa.

## NEWS FROM EASTERN EUROPE

### *Jews and the Soviet Writers Congress*

SOME facts about Jews in relation to the Second Congress of the Union of Soviet Writers held in Moscow last December give the lie to the persistent hoax about Soviet "anti-Semitism." The report of the Credentials Committee in the *Literary Gazette* (December 18, 1954) contains a breakdown of the delegates to the Congress according to nationalities. In the Soviet Union, it should be explained, the Jews have an official status as a "nationality." There were 738 delegates present from 45 nationalities. The largest number, 250, were Russians. *Second largest were Jews (Yevrei)—with 72 delegates.* Although there are between two and a half and three million Jews in the Soviet Union, that is, *over one per cent* of the population, delegates at the congress who designated themselves as Jews constituted *nearly ten per cent* of the delegates.

Another interesting fact emerged from the report on children's literature delivered by Boris Polevoy, who is Jewish. He mentioned 280 titles of children's books translated into Russian from the languages of the fraternal Soviet peoples in the past eight years. Of these he singled out 20 which were most popular with Soviet children. One of these was L. Kvitko's *To My Friends*, which was translated from the Yiddish.

### *The Cry for Peace*

ON the occasion of the tenth anniversary (April 4) of the liberation of Hungary, Dr. Benjamin Schwarcz, president of the National Rabbinical Council of Hungary issued a statement which said in part: "Ten years have passed since the Soviet Army, driving forward from Stalingrad and marching forward triumphantly in unceasing struggle, liberated Hungary and crushed

the German Army, which had appeared invincible and strove to dominate the world. From death row the liberating Soviet Army brought our 70,000 brethren imprisoned in the Budapest Ghetto back to life at the eleventh hour. . . . The blood of our 600,000 martyrs shouts to us: watch out lest there be another war. Do not permit the giving of arms, of weapons of mass destruction, into the hands of those who were our murderers. Proven murderers must not be permitted to launch an attack against mankind again. Pray and work for peace."

From Czechoslovakia came an appeal to co-believers in Czechoslovakia and abroad signed by Czech Chief Rabbi Dr. Gustav Sicher, Slovakia Chief Rabbi Elias Katz, and religious community leaders Emil Neumann and Josef Lipa (*Vestník*, February). "In a few weeks," said the appeal, "we shall be celebrating Purim, a holiday which is dedicated to the memory of the saving of Jews from the destruction prepared for them by Haman, prototype of fascist persecution of the Jewish people. But our joyous anticipation of Purim, a holiday of unrestrained gaiety, is beclouded by anxiety—anxiety over the fate of mankind and its culture. For the lives of all humanity and the fruits of its peaceful, creative work are threatened by the decision of a few politicians, come what may—and despite the spontaneous resistance of their peoples—to put weapons in the hands of our sworn enemy, the hands of the neo-nazi Hamans. . . . Oppose the ratification of the Paris and London agreements, for you must realize that the remilitarization of Western Germany, the rearming of the nazi hangmen of your parents and children would afford the possibility of repeating and concluding the nazi campaign of extermination of the Jews . . . Warn, protest and do everything possible to block . . . the revival of nazism and revanchist militarism."

# AT THE TRICENTENARY EXHIBITION

By Louis Lerman

I MUST confess at the outset that I cannot be objective in this review of the exhibit now on display at 189 Second Avenue in New York to commemorate 300 years of Jewish life in America—no more objective than I could be about my family tree. Because what the Committee for the 300th Anniversary of Jewish Settlement in the United States has done is to fill three halls with pictures, documents, books, music, sculpture, that represent the history of the creators of my Jewish American heritage. One would assume, then, that I would view the exhibit more than sympathetically.

But as I walked around in the aimless and disorganized way one does at museums and exhibits and let items here and there attract my eye, I found myself struck by the repeated phrase *the Jew*—"The Jew Philip Moses Russell, surgeon's mate, at Valley Forge, in the winter of 1777-78," "The Jew Benjamin Nones, Jeffersonian Democrat," "the Jew Ernestine Rose, suffragette and leader of women," as though that repeated phrase left a double sort of overtone, one shrill and wailing, the other deep and proud.

It was not too difficult for me to translate these conflicting overtones into words. In the psychology of language the phrase *the Jew* has more frequently been a curse than a description of national origin—a synonym for a landless one, a countryless one, one who walks on borrowed ground. That gave a part of the reason for this curious conflict of feelings I had.

The other part I found as I looked about at the panels on Jews in the colonies, Jews in the Revolution, in the anti-slavery movement and the Civil War, at the panel which showed a photograph of a document about Ku Klux Klan lynching of a Jew and Negro during Reconstruction, at the panels that pictured the vast migrations of nameless Jews from old Poland, Austria and the Russia of the Black Hundreds, the panels of Jews in the labor movement, in science, in the arts, in government, in every area of today's living toward which the Jews have made their full measure of contribution. Here were familiar names, because they were Jewish names. Solomon, Lazarus, Levy, Franks, Gold, Gershwin, and alongside them the title scientist, poet, commodore, colonel, labor leader, composer. Here was the other part of the reason—a strong and proud reason.

And then passing the first panel on my way out, I stopped to read its title again "Jews were never strangers here." And it occurred to me that the tradition of Jews who wept, but always without rebellion, was a little fiction. That the heritage of rebellion is indeed a Jewish heritage, passed on from the Maccabees to Ernestine Rose, from the fighters

of the Warsaw Ghetto to the Hagana, and that the evidence in America is plentiful enough in the history of the bloody struggles of the picket line, in the epics of the Lincoln Battalion and the war against fascism.

A unique feature of this exhibition is the considerable space devoted to the struggles of the Jewish masses to abolish the sweatshops and to improve their economic conditions. The heroic strikes are shown in revealing photographs, the tragedy of the deadly Triangle Fire flames out again from the walls, the rank and file and the leadership of progressive labor are given full recognition as in no other exhibition. And appropriately in the same room are materials on the New Deal, the fight against anti-Semitism and nazism.

I leafed through the visitors' book before I went out, and read the comments noted down. There was "*mazel tov*" and "fine exhibit" and "need more time to get acquainted with a new wonderful world of ideas" but the comment most frequent said, "a proud tribute to our people." So that I knew that many other visitors to the exhibit must have had the conflict of feeling and mood that I am writing about.

Shall I tell you that this exhibit is one that you should not miss seeing? I hope I have told you that already in terms of what I felt.

There is a debt we owe to the committee, the historian Dr. Herbert M. Morais who assembled the exhibit, to Frank C. Kirk who designed it, to Philip Reisman and Aaron Goodelman, who contributed their painting and sculpture and to the many anonymous workers in Jewish life who must have worked on it. The committee plans to tour several large centers of Jewish population with the exhibit and has under way a handsome volume "The Jews in the U.S., 1654-1954" which will embody the exhibit material and expand on it. The committee welcomes pre-publication subscribers to join them in guaranteeing this very ambitious and pioneering book. The committee has done more than its share. We ought to take over our share of the job.

## Tercentenary Exhibition

Open until April 3; 11 A.M. to 11 P.M. daily  
189 Second Avenue (over Phoenix Theater), N. Y. C.  
ADMISSION, 49 CENTS

Auspices: Committee for 300th Anniversary of Jewish Settlement in the USA.



# TRIBUTES



Morris U. Schappes

The banquet in honor of our fellow-editor Morris U. Schappes, as we anticipated, gave many persons—historians, colleagues, students, friends and organization delegates—an opportunity to express collectively the affection and admiration they all individually feel for him. They came most particularly to signalize the contribution that Morris has been making to the study of American Jewish history for a decade and especially this year to the celebration of the Tercentenary. Thus it was that several hundred persons turned out despite a pouring rain to break bread with Morris on the afternoon of March 6 at the Great Northern Hotel in New York. The warm, friendly atmosphere that pervaded the banquet hall was so palpable that everyone remarked on it.

Dr. Philip Foner was master of ceremonies for the speaking part of the program. Philip Foner, Cyril Graze, June Gordon, Sam Pevzner, Mrs. Helen Sobell, Lester Blick-

stein and Louis Harap spoke briefly. Interspersed were the tributes from all over the country from American Jewish historians, Jewish Life Committees and individuals. We share some of these tributes with you below.—Eds.

MR. Schappes . . . has been able to enrich the field of American Jewish history in many directions and has enabled American Jewish historians to present material unknown until he made it available. I have been for many years appreciative of his accomplishments and an admirer of his style and ability to express his ideas. I wish you a happy day.

Boston, Mass.

DR. LEE M. FRIEDMAN  
Honorary President  
American Jewish Historical Society

WILL you please convey my personal wishes to Mr. Schappes, an indefatigable worker in the long neglected field of American Jewish history?

New York City

PROF. SALO W. BARON  
Past President, American Jewish  
Historical Society

MY good wishes on the occasion when he (Mr. Schappes) is to be honored in recognition of the notable contributions he has made to the advancement of the knowledge of American Jewish history. I know how diligently he pursues the subject and how strenuously his effort is to establish the pertinent facts and to give them the interpretation that they have heretofore not received.

His *Documentary History* is, as you know, recognized everywhere as a remarkable achievement and ranks high among the greatest of contributions to American Jewish historiography. My opinion of the book I endeavored to express in the short preface which appears at the beginning of the volume. The wonderful reception the book has had is an indication of the esteem in which it is held. I have good reason to hope that the market for it has not been exhausted. Seeing the increased interest in American Jewish history, I can anticipate a continuous demand for the book.

I hope that the dinner which is now tendered to Mr. Schappes will stimulate an interest in the re-publication in book form of the wonderful series of articles which he con-

# TO MORRIS U. SCHAPPES

*A gathering to mark his contributions to American Jewish history  
and the Tercentenary celebration receives many hearty greetings*

tributed to JEWISH LIFE on various aspects of American Jewish history. Rich in content, incisive in analysis, they are sound in interpretation. I venture to hope that before long the means will be found to have this suggestion put into effect.

*New York City*

DR. JOSHUA BLOCH  
Librarian; Vice-President of the  
American Jewish Historical Society

ALTHOUGH he (Mr. Schappes) and I have differed sharply over political and economic implications in contemporary and historic American Jewish life, I am nevertheless one of those who is deeply conscious of his many contributions to our understanding of the background of the Jews in America, and I congratulate him on his selfless devotion to research in our mutual field of scholarship.

*Philadelphia*

DR. BERTRAM W. KORN  
Historian, Member of the  
Executive Board, American  
Jewish Historical Society

MY contact with Mr. Schappes and his work has convinced me that he is a most conscientious and competent technician in the field of Jewish historical research and deserving of recognition for his contributions to the study of American Jewish history.

*Providence, R. I.*

DAVID C. ADELMAN  
President, Rhode Island  
Jewish Historical Association

YOUR invitation to attend the banquet honoring Morris U. Schappes fills my heart with joy. . . . One of the pleasures of living is to know that at long last honor often comes to those to whom it is due . . . I greeted the *Documentary History* and it has become a popular and useful source in my classes in American history. . . . The honor he now receives he richly deserves.

*Stillwater, Okla.*

B. B. CHAPMAN  
Professor of History, Oklahoma  
Agricultural and Mechanical College

WORK in the field of research done by Mr. Schappes and other Jewish historians has revealed many hidden facts about the contribution made by many minority groups to our national progress and development. It is with much appreciation that I extend to Mr. Schappes heartiest congratulations.

*New York City*

GERTRUDE A. ROBINSON  
President of the New York Branch,  
Association for the Study of  
Negro Life in History

WE realize the great contributions made by members of the Jewish faith to our efforts to attain first class citizenship and on this occasion of the anniversary of the coming of Jews to this nation, we salute all who have, in the past, and those today, who are making themselves felt in shaping the course of our history.

*New York City*

JAMES E. ALLEN  
Program Coordinator, New York Branch  
Association for the Study of  
Negro Life and History

THE Los Angeles Jewish Life Committee extends greetings to Morris U. Schappes on the occasion of today's banquet. To enumerate his many contributions to American Jewish history would be impossible for us; it will be better done by others. But his consistent efforts both as an eminent historian and as an editorial board member of and contributor to JEWISH LIFE has thrown much light on the path we march toward peace, brotherhood and the full equality and dignity of *all* peoples. We look forward to many more years of Brother Schappes' outstanding enlightenment. In his honor we dedicate ourselves to greater efforts to spread that enlightenment by building the publication to which he is so devoted—our magazine JEWISH LIFE.

RICKIE ROTH  
Executive Secretary,  
Los Angeles Jewish Life Committee

IN this Tercentenary celebration we salute you for your invaluable contributions as an author and historian to the cultural and historical heritage of the American Jewish people.

JEWISH LIFE COMMITTEE OF CHICAGO

**W**E would so love to be present at your (Mr. Schappes') testimonial dinner! To us in Detroit, as to your many friends everywhere, you have always represented the very best things in life—brilliance of mind, unshakable courage. We have learned so much from you.

DETROIT JEWISH LIFE COMMITTEE

**W**E hail you as one of the outstanding Jewish scholars and historians and fighter for world peace and brotherhood.

Cleveland

SYLVIA AND ABE STRAUSS  
LIBBY AND EUGENE DUCHAN.

**T**HE "accepted" Jewish "historian" in the United States usually writes the history of the rich man and of the rabbi. And that is supposed to represent the history of the American Jews. Such a personality as M. Olgin [late editor of the *Freiheit* and a noted critic and writer—Eds.], of course, can find no place in this kind of history, nor can Winchevsky, or Edelshtat or even Meyer-London. But obviously in a real history the essential place must be given to those who reflected the interests of the masses, who led the masses—and I do not mean to say that the rabbi and even the rich need not be recorded in such a history, provided they deserve it.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Jewish masses in the United States are fortunate in having a historian like Morris Schappes. It is impossible to evaluate his role at present in connection with the Tercentenary celebration. With his research, embodied in the exceptionally important series of articles in *JEWISH LIFE*, and with his fight for the historical truth, he is making a contribution that no words of praise can overestimate. . . . The very valuable magazine *JEWISH LIFE* is clearly justified in being proud of Morris Schappes. But the *Morning Freiheit* also has an honored place at this banquet. For Morris Schappes is well known to those who read him in the *Morning Freiheit*. . . . In a certain sense Morris Schappes is a liaison between the Yiddish-speaking and the English-speaking Jews. . . . How important it is to bring closer together Yiddish and English-speaking forces of the progressive elements among the Jewish masses in the fight against reaction . . . and for the building of a progressive Jewish culture in Yiddish and in English!

New York City

PAUL NOVICK  
Editor-in-Chief  
*Morning Freiheit*

**W**E appreciate greatly your wonderful achievement by giving the people material on the history of the Jews of America. We join the many friends who are acknowledging the well-deserved recognition paid to you today.

J. ASPIZ  
Los Angeles Manager,  
*Morning Freiheit*

**Z**AMLUNGEN, Yiddish literary quarterly, salutes your important creative and constructive work.

New York City

LOUIS MILLER  
for the Board of Editors

**M**AY you continue another 30 years of your outstanding contribution to unity and advancement of Jewish and Negro peoples.

ALPHAEUS HUNTON  
Executive Secretary,  
Council on African Affairs

**O**UR admiration and thanks to you from all your friends in the Jewish cultural clubs in Los Angeles. Your labors in our people's past lights up our historic ideals of social justice and peace and makes their achievement possible within our own time. We wish you long years of continued fruitful work.

Los Angeles

SANFORD GOLDNER

Messages were also received from the Emma Lazarus Club of Miami Beach, Fla.; sculptor Aaron Goodelman and his wife Sarah (New York City); Flo and Charlie Kraus and girls, Washington, D. C.; Yiddish poet Aaron Kurtz and his wife, Olga, a writer, (New York City); and Helen Lewis for the Chicago Women's Club.



Editorial Board of "Jewish Life" at the Schappes banquet: standing, left to right: Sam Pevzner, Lester Blickstein, Morris U. Schappes; seated: Alice Citron, Louis Harap.

JEWISH LIFE



# THE JEWS AND THE POST-WAR REACTION AFTER 1918

By Morris U. Schappes

**A**FTER World War I the economic rulers of our country were bloated but of course not satiated. The United States had in 1914 been a debtor nation, owing money to foreign investors, but in 1918 it was a creditor to a good part of the capitalist world. War profiteering, as subsequent official investigations revealed, had been rampant and even the ordinary profits were enormous. Real wages however, declined and in many ways, remarks one economic historian, "the immediate effect of the war appeared detrimental to labor."<sup>1</sup>

Swollen though these ruling circles were with newly-gorged wealth and power, they were haunted by a new form of the ancient fear of the organized workers and the people aroused, which they suddenly saw triumphantly embodied in the new Russian revolutionary government. While a Siberian Expeditionary Force was dispatched as part of an international endeavor to overthrow that government, the rulers of America let loose against the American people a savage attack on all fronts. As the conservative Frederick Lewis Allen sums it up, "It was an era of lawless and disorderly defense of law and order, of unconstitutional defense of the Constitution, of suspicion and civil conflict—in a very literal sense, a reign of terror."<sup>2</sup>

The targets of this reign of terror were not new: the worker organized or trying to organize, the Negro, the foreign-born, the Jew. But there was a new element that fused all these traditional ingredients of American reaction into a new amalgam and that new welding element was the International Red Scare and the cry of Bolshevism. Unions were Bolshevik and aliens were Bolshevik and Jews were Bolshevik and they and their defenders must be smashed, deported, imprisoned, terrorized.

The Negro people suffered most from the terror. Under Southern skies the trees rocked with the strange fruit of 239 reported lynched in the years 1919 to 1922. In the summer of 1919 race riots swept the land: in Washington, D. C., for three days, in Knoxville, Tenn., in Tulsa, Okla., in Longview, Texas, in Omaha, Nebraska, in Elaine, Arkansas, in Chicago worst of all. By 1924 the Klan claimed a membership of 4,500,000 and held dominant political

positions in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Indiana, Ohio, California and Oregon. This racism on a rampage of course spilled over into the mounting hostility to the immigrant masses that was being whipped up at the same time. Racist theories of Anglo-Saxon superiority now fused with the new look anti-Bolshevik hysteria and the chairman of the Senate Committee on Immigration, Senator Thomas R. Hardwick, "proposed restricting immigration as a means of keeping out Bolshevism."<sup>3</sup>

One immediate result that had far-reaching effects upon the Jewish people here and abroad was the immigration law of 1920. The preamble to the law baldly accepted the false premise of Anglo-Saxon supremacy, while the law itself aimed to encourage Anglo-Saxon immigration from Central and Northern Europe, and to discourage immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe, specifically Italian and Jewish. Therefore a quota system was devised that would annually admit into the United States no more than three per cent of the total number of immigrants from any country that were already here in 1910.

The effect upon Jewish immigration was drastic. From 1904 to 1914 the average annual Jewish immigration was over 100,000. In 1921, just before the law went into operation, Jewish immigrants numbered 119,036. In 1922 it dropped to 53,524 and then to 49,719 and 49,089 in the next two years. But even such a decline was not enough. Therefore in 1924 the quotas were changed from three per cent to two per cent, not, however, of the number of immigrants from any country that were here in 1910 but in 1890. This new formula cut the Jewish immigration by more than 75 per cent so that in 1925 it was only 10,292 and it hovered around that figure until the late 1930's.

## The Red Scare and Anti-Semitism

Those Jews who were already in the country were being subjected to new levels of anti-Semitic attack stoked in the furnace of anti-Bolshevism. In 1919 a Senate committee headed by Senator Overman began public hearings on—the relation between "German brewers and Bolshevik propaganda." In garish color there was planted in the minds of millions the bewhiskered image of the free-loving,

<sup>1</sup> Harold U. Faulkner, *American Economic History*, 5th ed., N. Y., 1943, p. 600-601; Labor Research Association, *Labor Fact Book II*, N. Y., 1934, p. 193.  
<sup>2</sup> Frederick Lewis Allen, *Only Yesterday*, N. Y., 1931, Bantam Edition, 1946 p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Lewis Allen, work cited, p. 66.

church-burning, bomb-throwing Bolsheviks—a name soon reduced to headline slang as Bolshies. The commercial press was less interested in the truth than in the wild tales about the so-called “nationalization of women.”

The “Jew-Bolshevik” was also proclaimed from the platform of the Overman hearings, with a Dr. George S. Simons giving testimony under oath on February 13, 1919 that the Bolsheviks were Jews and that the conspiracy to overthrow the tsar was hatched in New York’s lower East Side ghetto. No less grimly humorous than this malicious attack was the craven “defense” of the Jews advanced by the American Jewish Committee in a statement that appeared in the *New York Times* of February 15 under these headlines: “Says Mass of Jews Oppose Bolsheviks” and the perhaps unintentionally comic sub-headline: “East Side Not A Hotbed.” President Louis Marshall of the Committee did not even dare to assert the elementary democratic principle that Jews had as much right as anybody else to be Bolsheviks or communists. Instead he apologetically argued the obvious that the Jews were as patriotic as other people, loved law and order like everybody else and so forth. And then, without having asked the Jewish masses for their views, Marshall presumed to end with the announcement, “Attack Bolshevism as much as you please and the Jews of America are with you.” This kind of reply, of course, did not even prevent Louis Marshall himself from being called “a Bolshevik orator” on June 5, 1920 by Ford’s Dearborn Publishing Company.<sup>4</sup> All it did was publicly to commit the Jewish plutocracy represented by the American Jewish Committee to the one element in its program to which it has been more faithful than any other.

Having softened up the people by this propaganda barrage, our government later in 1919 started mass raids in which thousands of persons were arrested in a hunt for “alien radicals” to be deported. This violent marauding was ordered by Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer and executed under the direction of his Special Assistant J. Edgar Hoover. A trial run on November 7, 1919, second anniversary of the Soviet Revolution, netted 452 arrests in 11 cities. But the big play came on New Year’s Day, 1920, when 2,758 were arrested in 33 cities.

The fears that Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson, a former trade unionist, had expressed to Palmer on the eve of these raids that they were unconstitutional and would cause “injury to innocent parties” were more than confirmed. A blow for sanity and constitutional rights was struck on January 12, 1920 when Francis Fisher Kane, United States attorney in Philadelphia, resigned his post with a public letter to Palmer and President Woodrow Wilson. “Is it necessary,” he asked Palmer, “to protect our American workingmen . . . from the influence of a handful of Russians and Russian Jews . . .?” He pointed to the case of a “Russian Jew barber” arrested in Philadelphia and thought “it is not only foolish but an outrage to take him from his wife and [six] children” by deporting him.

<sup>4</sup> *American Jewish Year Book*, 5682 (1921-1922), p. 316.

“I cannot regard him as a menace to society just because he was a member of the Communist Party.” Despite these and other protests the Palmer raids continued until about 10,000 had been arrested, most of them unjustly, for only some 300 were deported. The International Red Scare, terrorism, anti-Semitism were taking their toll.<sup>5</sup>

And while the Red Scare was crimson in the sky, Congressman Victor Berger of Milwaukee was denied his seat in the House on January 11, 1920, five New York State assemblymen, a couple of them Jewish, had their seats challenged on January 7 and were finally excluded in April 1920; on May 5, the frame-up of Sacco and Vanzetti began.

### Ford’s Anti-Semitic Campaign

It was precisely at this time, however, that Henry Ford began his mass campaign of unbridled anti-Semitism. And the International Red Scare was at the bottom of that too. For the man who was instrumental in converting Ford to militant anti-Semitism was one Boris Brasol, an agent of the tsar’s secret police and an expatriate from revolutionary Russia. Employed here by the United States Secret Service, Brasol had the forged *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* translated into English and placed in the Secret Service files as a document to “explain the Russian Revolution.” Then Brasol got the *Protocols* to Ford, who was promptly convinced that this “international Jewish conspiracy” was the cause of the ills of the world and of Henry Ford. Thus from May 1920, for seven years, Ford’s weekly, *The Dearborn Independent*, poured out an uninterrupted stream of uninhibited anti-Semitism into millions of American homes throughout the country.<sup>6</sup> The International Red Scare had spawned the myth of the International Jewish Banker. On February 8, 1923, the *New York Times* reported that Ford was already financing—Hitler! In our own country discrimination against Jews in employment, housing, social contacts and admission to colleges sharpened. A protest movement, however, mounted rapidly, involving not only all of Jewish organized life but many non-Jewish elements. On January 16, 1921, 119 eminent non-Jewish Americans headed by President Wilson issued a statement in defense of the Jews. The film magnate, William Fox, was able to get Ford to stop the publication of a scheduled “exposé” and smear of Fox by threatening him with a news-reel campaign demonstrating that Ford cars get into more accidents than any others on the roads. Decisive, however, was the mass boycott of Ford cars which led to a great slump in the sale of the Model T car, especially in the East. Finally on June 30, 1927 Ford addressed to Louis Marshall an evasive apology and promised to stop the circulation of the slanders against the Jews. That Ford did not do so is evidenced by the fact that *The International Jew*, a compilation of the vicious stuff in the *Dear-*

<sup>5</sup> “Political Deportations in the United States,” *Lawyers Guild Review*, Fall, 1954, p. 98, 111; *William B. Wilson Papers* (Hist. Soc. of Pa.), Official Correspondence, 1913-1921, Series 16, Folder 60, Wilson to Palmer, Dec. 30, 1919; Francis Fisher Kane, untitled brochure, p. 7-8; Robert W. Dunn, ed. *The Palmer Raids*, New York, 1948, p. 13-32.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn, *The Great Conspiracy*, Boston, 1946, p. 143-148.

born *Independent*, has continued to circulate, both here and abroad, down to the present time. What the Palmer Raids and the Overman Hearings and the Klan and Henry Ford sowed is still bearing poisonous fruit today.<sup>7</sup>

### The Red Scare and Labor

The International Red Scare was also used, of course and primarily, as a weapon to attack the labor movement. The big employers attacked all along the line. In 1920 they launched The American Plan which, as Professors Perlman and Taft note, "purported to abolish the 'un-American' closed shop but as in previous open shop crusades, the destruction of unionism was the real objective." The bureaucratic leadership of the American Federation of Labor was itself embarked upon an "anti-Bolshevik" drive. Right in the depth of the post-war economic crisis of 1920-1921, the AFL Executive Council on February 23, 1921 called a meeting of union officials "to combat the problems arising from unemployment, reaction and Bolshevism."<sup>8</sup>

The working masses, however, fought back hard. Between 1919 and 1922 about 10,000,000 workers went on strike. More than 4,160,000 were on strike in 1919, with 411,000 coal miners led by John L. Lewis and, the most important strike of the time, 367,000 steel workers led by William Z. Foster. The Jewish workers particularly saw the significance of that Great Steel Strike. Of the total of \$418,141 in financial contributions received by the strike committee, \$20,000 came from the International Fur Workers' Union, \$60,000 from the I.L.G.W.U. and \$100,000 from the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the last being up to that time "the largest gift of its kind ever made by any union in this country." The Jewish workers also struck back. The New York cloakmakers won a general strike involving 55,000 that began on November 14, 1921 and lasted nine hard weeks. The men's clothing workers won a two-week strike of 40,000 for the maintaining of union conditions in June-July 1922. Yet the overall picture was bad. From its peak of 4,078,740 members in 1920, the AFL dropped 30 per cent to 2,865,979 in 1924. The great strikes, despite some economic concessions, writes Foster, "were all beaten to a greater or lesser extent. . . . Organized labor lost much hard-won ground. . . . It was the most serious defeat ever suffered by the American labor movement."<sup>9</sup> The AFL leaders could not hold on to more than a million members but at the 1923 convention they did have the power to expel one of the delegates for being a Communist and to order Communists out of the unions.

The war against the left in the labor movement was a reflection of the pressure of the International Red Scare, siphoned into the ranks of the workers through the lead-

ership of the AFL and the Socialist Party. The split in the Socialist Party, which had deepened on the issue of our government's war program, reached the breaking point in 1919. Beginning in May the National Executive Committee, led by Morris Hillquit, began a series of expulsions of entire state, city and national group socialist federations that in a few weeks drove 55,000 members out of the party, while others left in disgust. From a membership of 108,504 in 1919 the S. P. dropped to 26,766 in 1920 and to 13,484 in 1921.

In the Jewish Socialist Federation the process by which the left majority turned its back on the entrenched right leadership lasted until September 1921. Early in 1919 the first split took place at a convention in Boston, with Alexander Bittelman leading 30 of 100 delegates out of the Federation. In March, *Der Kampf* (The Fight), became the organ of this Jewish left movement. By the fall of 1921 left wing forces still in the Jewish Socialist Federation had grown to the point where, as a majority led by a group the best-known figure of which was Moissaye J. Olgin, they broke with the Socialist Party, while the minority remained as a shell calling itself the Jewish Socialist Farband. By that time the communist movement, having weathered the blows of the Palmer Raids and the police persecutions, was ready to emerge to found the Workers (later to be called the Communist) Party. The left Jewish Federation therefore participated as a constituent body at the first convention of the Workers Party opening December 23, 1921, with the Left Poale Zion, incidentally, represented by fraternal delegates.

The Jewish Federation of the Workers Party immediately got to work on a historic and ambitious project, to publish a daily newspaper. On April 22, 1922 there appeared the first issue of the *Freiheit* and around it rallied all the left Yiddish speaking workers, communist and non-communist. In 1925, when the membership of the Jewish Federation was only 1447 out of a total Workers Party membership of 16,325, the circulation of the *Freiheit* was already 22,000, larger than any other left paper.<sup>10</sup>

### Expulsions of Labor Left Wing

Now the right-wing Socialists, who had not hesitated to expel tens of thousands of members of the S.P., were also in the leadership of the large Jewish unions and of the Workmen's Circle and they carried their war against the left into these organizations. The struggle was sharpest in the garment industry. Even anti-communist writers are compelled to concede that the right wing socialist office-holders were callous, ruthless and dictatorial to the extreme in their attacks on the *majorities* that followed the left, and that the "successes" of the right wing prostrated the unions and drove workers' conditions down. Joel Seidman observes that "the failure of some of the old union leaders to solve these industrial problems provided

<sup>7</sup> Upton Sinclair Presents William Fox, Los Angeles, 1933, p. 215-216; Bernard G. Richards, "History Is Not 'Bunk,'" *Congress Weekly*, January 28, 1952, p. 10-14; *American Jewish Year Book*, 5688, p. 383-89.

<sup>8</sup> Selig Perlman and Philip Taft, *History of Labor in the United States*, 1896-1932, New York, 1933, p. 491; Lewis L. Lorwin, *The American Federation of Labor*, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 204.

<sup>9</sup> Matthew Josephson, *Sidney Hillman, Statesman of American Labor*, New York, 1952, p. 189; *American Labor Year Book*, 1925, New York, p. 50; W. Z. Foster, *History of the Communist Party of the United States*, New York, 1952, p. 199-201.

<sup>10</sup> Nathan Fine, *Labor and Farmer Parties in the United States, 1828-1828*, New York, 1928, p. 326, 330; Foster, work cited, p. 189-191.



an opportunity for an opposition group to win support from the dissatisfied and restless masses. . . . The policy of mass expulsions and revocations of charters followed by the I.L.G.W.U. national leadership, far from having the desired effect, instead solidified large sections of the rank and file behind left leadership. . . . The movement that the Communists led won wide support in union ranks partly because, unlike the I.W.W., it long opposed dual unionism."

These expulsions were no trifling matters. They began on a small scale in 1923 in New York and Chicago but in 1925 it was about 30,000 workers who were expelled in June when the duly elected leaderships of Locals 2, 9 and 22 were removed, the offices of two of the locals seized during the night and the third, Local 22, held on to its office only by dint of a continual emergency membership guard. Their jobs, conditions and the very union at stake, the workers rallied to the support of a Joint Action Committee of the three locals, 40,000 of them coming to a Yankee Stadium meeting on July 10 and 30,000 responding to a call for a work stoppage on August 10, 1925. As the cynical and red-baiting Benjamin Stolberg has to admit, "obviously the vast majority of the workers were with the left wing and not with the International. But that didn't seem to faze Morris Sigman," the International president. Sigman retreated a bit and the expulsions were rescinded. But "Sigman's power rested," Stolberg admits, "on the rotten borough system. . . . A small local of a few hundred buttonhole makers, for instance, had five delegates on the Joint Board and so did the huge dress-makers Local 22 . . . the small unions had a disproportionately large number of delegates in the national conventions. Since most of them were mainly right-wing, they made up a Sigman majority in the conventions."

Finally the right wing saw its "opportunity," towards the end of a bitter strike of 40,000 cloakmakers that had begun on July 1, 1926. On December 9, two days before a compromise agreement covering about one-third of the workers was signed, the United Hebrew Trades, according to Morris C. Feinstone, "took the initiative. It sent out a call to all affiliated unions and internationals and to the American Federation of Labor inviting delegates to convene and discuss the organization of a counter-movement against the Communist penetration of the trade union movement." On December 13, Sigman removed the officers of the New York Joint Board conducting the strike and settled the strike over the heads of the locals and the Cloakmakers Joint Board, liquidated the existing locals—and invited the members individually to re-register with the International or else lose their jobs in union shops! At Madison Square Garden on December 18th, 18,000 workers rallied in wrath at such tactics and mobilized to fight them. But on December 21 the conference called by the U.H.T. was held with 500 delegates and with Feinstone as secretary. He continues to boast: "They organized a Committee for the Preservation of Trade Unions. . . . Its success was enormous, since the whole labor movement

co-operated with it. Great numbers of Communists were driven from cover and forced to start opposition unions. . . ."—and, it might be added, then the right-wingers denounced the left as "dual unionists." Of course it was not the bureaucrats but the workers who suffered. For, as the anti-communist Melech Epstein sums it up, "The right had won the battle, but the union lay wrecked." Whatever the weaknesses and mistakes of the left may have been, there is no question that the responsibility for the disasters that came down upon the workers lay with the right wing Socialist bureaucrats and the AFL top leadership that spurred them on."<sup>11</sup>

### Where Left and Center Held Fast

It was only in the furriers' union that the workers under left leadership were able to defeat the splitting attack of the right wing. Mass expulsions by the Socialist bureaucrats did not work here because the left-led locals and Joint Board had the workers so solidly behind them and had organized the entire trade so thoroughly, that employers could hire workers only by dealing with the left-led locals. The brilliant and resourceful Ben Gold, surrounded by a more homogeneous leadership than seems to have existed in other branches of the garment trades, was able to defeat the coalition of AFL and Socialist bureaucrats by uniting the workers and dividing the opposition, which resorted to gangsterism and invoked the aid of the police against the left, but in vain. Here the battles were fully as sharp as in the I.L.G.W.U., but the victors were the workers, as their union conditions demonstrated.

In the headgear and men's clothing trades the fight was not so intense, although attacks against the left were not uncommon. Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, however, was not part of the *Jewish Daily Forward* red-baiting clique. Although there were occasional expulsions and suspensions of officers, Hillman, perhaps learning from the results of the I.L.G.W.U. conflict, rejected a policy of mass expulsions. He was also, as Foster notes, "inclined to follow some elements of a progressive political policy, A.C.W. conventions commonly adopting left resolutions on non-economic questions."<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, the International Red Scare, as it was forced upon the Jewish trade unionists by the right wing, weakened the Jewish labor movement all along the line. When the crisis hit the country in 1929, the state of the Jewish labor movement, except for the furriers, was low indeed, and it was only from the militant left elements that there came the clarity, the courage, the will to fight and the organizational leadership to mobilize the masses to defend themselves against the worst ravages of the crisis.

<sup>11</sup> Joel Seidman, *The Needle Trades*, New York, 1942, p. 156, 158; Perlman and Taft, work cited, 546-47; Benjamin Stolberg, *Tailor's Progress*, Garden City, N. Y., 1944, p. 129-130, and a demised review of this book by Rose Wortis, a leader of the Joint Action Committee in *Political Affairs*, January 1945, p. 78-89; Foster, work cited, p. 253; Morris C. Feinstone, "A Brief History of the United Hebrew Trades," in *Gewerkschaften*, New York, 1938, p. 21; Melech Epstein, *Jewish Labor in U.S.A., 1914-1952*, New York, 1953, p. 153.

<sup>12</sup> Foster, work cited, p. 254-55.



## MAURICE SCHWARTZ IN ENGLISH

The announcement that Maurice Schwartz would do three plays in English at the Downtown National Theatre caused quite a stir in Yiddish theatrical circles. The head of the formed Yiddish Art Theatre had acted in English before without anybody being particularly glad or sad about it. But this time the Hebrew Actors Union (the misnamed organization of Yiddish actors) charged bad faith and adopted a stern resolution against Mr. Schwartz amounting to excommunication.

The union denied its intention "to create the impression of discriminating against the official language of our country, English. Nor do we wish to coerce actors to perform Jewish plays only in Yiddish." But Mr. Schwartz, the union contended, went back on his promise to head a Yiddish company for an engagement at one or both of the union-sponsored Yiddish theaters (in the Bronx and in Brooklyn) during the current season.

Upon his return from his latest tour of Latin America, Mr. Schwartz was given the customary warm reception by the union and in turn once more professed undying loyalty to Yiddish and the Yiddish theater. But even while reaffirming his devotion to the cause of Yiddish—so the union charged—he was engaged in negotiations with a private producing group to direct and play the lead in three plays in English—Sholem Aleichem's *Shver tsu Zain a Yid* (It Is Hard To Be a Jew), Moliere's *The Miser* and Shakespeare's *King Lear* at the Downtown National Theatre.

It seems that the location of that playhouse at the foot of Second Avenue, the heart of what used to be the Yiddish theatrical district, is at the bottom of the quarrel. Yiddish theater has been declining for years both in scope and quality. Some two decades ago there were still a dozen or so Yiddish playhouses in Greater New York with about the same number in other parts of the country. Now there is not a single Yiddish theater outside New York, and in New York only the Second Avenue Theatre operates on

a business basis while the other two Yiddish houses, the Elsmere in the Bronx and the Parkway in Brooklyn, function under the nominal sponsorship of the Hebrew Actors Union as "cooperative" enterprises, with the actors sharing the deficits.

The Yiddish theatrical season, which used to run 30 weeks and more, has been reduced to 10 or 12 weeks. Of the repertory system, which used to include both good plays and trash, not a trace is left and what is offered the audience is trash. The system of "benefits"—theater-parties with blocks of tickets sold for weekday performances at less than half the box-office price—all but did away with normal theater-going. On a night when there are no "benefits," the house is dark.

Under the circumstances, the appearance of Maurice Schwartz, whose very name symbolizes Yiddish theater at its best, on Second Avenue in a revered Yiddish play by Sholem Aleichem done in English was regarded as a dagger-thrust at the very heart of the Yiddish theater. A theatrical enterprise headed by Maurice Schwartz would, naturally, further reduce the attendance at the remaining Yiddish playhouses. Worse than that, Mr. Schwartz's demonstrative change from Yiddish to English would be viewed by many as public notice of the demise of the Yiddish theater. When other Yiddish actors abandoned Second Avenue for Broadway or Hollywood, they did so as professionals in search of a broader field. But Maurice Schwartz is not just an ambitious actor. He is the Mr. Yiddish of the theatrical profession and his change from Yiddish to English would be viewed as desertion.

The question of doing Jewish plays in English is not involved here. Only sectarian "Yiddishists" will deny the validity of Jewish culture in any language other than Yiddish and only they will decry the normal use of English in the cultural activities among American-born and English-speaking Jews—be it children's schools, periodicals or stage presentations. But one thing is the normal use of English as one of the languages in the Jewish cultural field, quite another is abandoning Yiddish cultural positions. Jewish culture

could only gain by developing Jewish theaters in English alongside Yiddish theaters. But giving up Yiddish is certainly no aid to the Jewish theater or culture generally. Abandonment of Yiddish, while there is a need for it, for the sake of English is an act of deliberate opportunist assimilationism, not of culture.

It is against this background of controversy, resentment and dismay that Maurice Schwartz appeared in *The Grass Is Always Greener*, an odd title which succeeds in hiding both the authorship and the Jewish theme of Sholem Aleichem's famous comedy.

One who saw the play for the first time at the National Theatre in Tamara Kahn's English version would hardly suspect that it was among Sholem Aleichem's outstanding dramatic works or that the part of David Shapiro was among Mr. Schwartz's greatest achievements on the Yiddish stage. It was a painful experience to see *Shver tsu Zain a Yid* turned into a trite comedy in which the central theme of brutally-senseless anti-Semitic discrimination and persecution in tsarist Russia was all but drowned out by Mr. Schwartz's tricks both as actor and regisseur. Sholem Aleichem's dialogue—in itself a source of delight—certainly did not survive Miss Kahn's translation, even though she is a grand-daughter of the great Yiddish humorist. In her English version, the "laughter through tears" gave way to mechanical gags (David Shapiro described himself as a broker who is broke!). The tragic aspect of the comedy situation—the humiliations and anguish suffered by the Russian student who had traded documents and names with his Jewish pal—was overshadowed by empty "jokes." The play as a whole sounded mechanical, contrived, empty.

But *Shver tsu Zain a Yid* is not an empty comedy. It is essentially an outcry against anti-Semitic discrimination with the comedy situation pointing up the tragedy of a persecuted people. In this respect the main theme of the play is not dated since it is echoed by American reality of today. The plight of the non-Jewish student impersonating his Jewish schoolmate serves as a bitter commentary on the "silent quotas" in our own professional schools and universities. No wonder Laura Z. Hobson in her *Gentleman's Agreement* resorted to the same device—apparently borrowed from Sholem Aleichem—as a "handle" for her expose of anti-Semitic practices in this country.

Had Maurice Schwartz endeavored to stress the main theme of the play and to bring out its poignancy, first-nighters would not have shrugged their shoulders about Sholem Aleichem's "outmoded" technique and reviewers would not have been so condescending in their appraisal

of the comedy. Essentially, *Shver tsu Zein a Yid* is a variant of *Gymnazia*, which created so profound an impression in *The World of Sholem Aleichem*. David Shapiro is but another name for Aaron Katz, but in Morris Carnovsky's portrayal the laughter that Aaron Katz evoked was, indeed, refracted through a prism of tears. If Maurice Schwartz had brought to his part Morris Carnovsky's artistic integrity and good taste, his David Shapiro would be less "funny" but more human and socially significant.

But Mr. Schwartz preferred to act his part in the vein of broad comedy, leaning heavily on gags and conventionally-"Jewish" intonations and mannerisms, sacrificing character for the sake of laughs.

In justice to Maurice Schwartz it should be pointed out that his original version of David Shapiro on the stage of the Yiddish Art Theatre was superb. But his latest rendition of the part is only a shadow of its former self. The shell remains, the makeup and all the familiar outward forms of the part are there, but the soul has fled the body. Playing in English, Mr. Schwartz not only plays in another language but for another audience whom he apparently holds in low esteem, for his audience-appeal is on a decidedly low plane. Where he used to play for the humor of character and situation, he now plays just for laughs.

The others in the cast are neither here nor there, except that Nancy R. Pollock is unbearable as Mrs. Shapiro. But then again, she mangles her part in the spirit of Mr. Schwartz's sorry interpretation of the play.

All in all, it is a sad business.

**Just a word** of admiration for the revival of Chekhov's *The Three Sisters* at the 4th Street Theatre. Since the Moscow Art players acted this play in New York in 1923, this reviewer has not seen *The Three Sisters* performed so beautifully. David Ross, whose production of *The Dybbuk* had left much to be desired, revealed himself here as a very sensitive and perceptive regisseur. He succeeded where so many others have failed—in distilling the essence of the play and evoking its *Chekhovian* mood.

While individual roles were excellently rendered by Carol Gustafson, Peggy Maurer, Eileen Ryan, Philip Loeb, Morris Carnovsky and others, it is the production as a whole, despite the woeful limitations of the stage, that cast a magic spell upon the audience and illumined from within this drama of frustration in tsarist Russia. While one may disagree with Mr. Ross' interpretation of the play (too much "universal" drama and not enough Russian social tragedy), one can only admire the over-all high quality of the revival. Stark Young's translation is splendid.

## Book Reviews

### THE BIG LIE OF THE ATOM SPY

By Charles R. Allen, Jr.

*The Atom Spy Hoax*, by William A. Reuben. Action Books, 165 Broadway, New York. \$3.75.

**It took guts, daring and skill** to put together a book like this. Manifestly, the author of this striking work has all of these traits in abundance. He also has the facts.

Bill Reuben was the journalist whose series of articles in the *National Guardian* in the summer of 1951 on the Rosenberg-Sobell case inspired the national and, finally, the international campaign to save them. Reuben's articles on the Trenton Six case also did much to touch off the nation-wide concern which ultimately led to the rescue of six innocent Negro youths from execution.

As a direct consequence of his intimate knowledge of the Rosenberg-Sobell case, Reuben felt compelled to reappraise the chain of so-called "atom spy" cases that have scarred our times. He starts with the first links in the chain: the "revelations" of the Soviet defector Igor Gouzenko and the group of Canadian "atom spy" scare cases in 1946. He follows with the emerging pattern of "communist espionage" in the "confessions" of Elizabeth Bentley, Louis Budenz and Whittaker Chambers; then takes up the "atom spy" cases that unfolded under F.B.I. direction from Klaus Fuchs to Harry Gold to Alfred Dean Slack to Abraham Brothman and Miriam Moskowitz to David Greenglass to Ethel and Julius Rosenberg and Morton Sobell.

Reuben sleuthed his way through a complicated maze of court records, congressional and governmental hearings and a wide range of related legal, technical and scientific matter. Throughout his book the *documented record* is his base. He comes out with total dissent from one of the major theorems of the current hysteria: atom spy equals communist equals traitor.

**Ostensibly**, the government tracked down these atom "spies" in order to enforce the law; actually the main reason was political. Reuben brings out with considerable sharpness that the government deliberately used these cases as one of the main techniques for inciting the cold war. The motive can be seen in the

statement by Cyrus Sulzberger in the *New York Times* of March 21, 1946, whom Reuben quotes (p. 16) as follows: "The momentum of pro-Soviet feeling worked up during the war to support the Grand Alliance had continued too heavily after the armistice. This made it difficult for the [Truman] administration to carry out the stiffer diplomatic policy required now. For this reason . . . a campaign was worked up to obtain a better psychological balance of public opinion to permit the government to adopt a harder line."

Reuben brings forward a mass of documentary evidence to support this thesis. He exposes the ignorant myth that has come to be accepted as an incontestable truism today: he shows that there never has been any such thing as the "secret" of the atomic bomb. Mrs. Clare Boothe Luce, wife of the publisher of the *Time-Life-Fortune* empire and present ambassador to Italy, recognized this as early as October 28, 1945, when she quoted the findings of eminent scientists that "no fundamental secret of the bomb exists." Time and again, following the release of the A-bomb over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the highest scientific authorities, cited by Reuben, stated that the production of A-bombs by the Soviet Union was inevitable in three to five years.

But such sobriety was a hallmark of the period before the opening of the Cold War. These same sources—such as the *New York Times* and the Luce empire and a varied assortment of congressional committees which recognized this basic

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fact of life—were the very ones to turn truth on its head within less than a year.

The first of the atom spy scare cases broke in Canada in 1946. Even by the informed student of political affairs the Canadian cases are usually assumed to have dealt with a network of communists who plied their trade in atomic secrets. But the entire Canadian atomic spy scare was a lie which Reuben nails with devastating effectiveness.

Of 26 persons who fell afoul of Gouzenko's accusations in 1946, 16 were finally acquitted; one was fined \$500 for making a false statement on a passport application; nine were given short prison terms—not for atomic or any nuclear espionage, but for technical violations of the Official Secrets act. These violations included discussion of personal political views and of technical data on explosives and chemicals available in the public library.

The United States press of course screamed in daily banner headlines about the Canadian "A-Bomb Spy Ring" disclosures and gleefully played up the "communist" angle of the "plot." But there

never was a plot, as Reuben proves decisively. Even the then Prime Minister Clement Attlee was forced to admit in Parliament that the Canadian cases had nothing whatever to do with atomic espionage. The science editor of the *New York Herald-Tribune* characterized it (March 24, 1946) as a "spy scare . . . so ludicrous that it is a laugh to all but the most gullible."

The Canadian cases formed the basis for what followed. Thanks to the A-spy hysteria, it was relatively easy to gain widespread acceptance of the guilt of those subsequently indicted for conspiring to pass on atomic secrets to the Soviet Union.

The role of the informer is clearly seen in *The Atom Spy Hoax*. Without the informer the government's case against both the Rosenbergs and Sobell would have collapsed. The innumerable inconsistencies in the totally uncorroborated testimony of David and Ruth Greenglass are pitilessly exposed by Reuben. His documentation against the incredible liar, Harry Gold, impressively suggests that the by-play among Klaus Fuchs, Gold and Greenglass was a fabrication.

The chapters in the book dealing with Alfred Dean Slack and Morton Sobell are particularly significant because these two men are still alive—and in prison. A careful reading of Reuben's account of both these cases must convince any dispassionate observer that these two men were simply framed. Sobell—by admission of Judge Irving Kaufman—had nothing

whatever to do with atomic espionage. Yet he remains entombed on Alcatraz, a young, gifted scientist consigned to a living death for 30 years solely on the totally uncorroborated testimony of an admitted liar and perjurer, Max Elitcher.

The story of Alfred Dean Slack, a chemist who first confessed and later refuted charges of conspiring to commit espionage, is an incredible account containing the most frightening details of outrageous judicial indifference, unspeakable intimidation by the FBI and complete neglect by counsel (the same Ray Jenkins who worked in tandem with Senator McCarthy during the Army-McCarthy hearings), that the reader is consumed with a sense of outrage.

Certainly justice demands that these two men be granted a new trial.

Reuben's book is not without defects. I for one wish that the reader had been given more of a break. In places the sheer bulk of the material is a bit too much. While this concerns organization of material, there are several implications deriving from the cumulative thesis of the book which this reviewer believes are open to grave doubt.

In dealing with the real reason for the arrest of the Rosenbergs, the author rejects the view that the Rosenbergs were "arrested because they were Jews." While one may agree with Reuben that the evidence for this belief is not available, one must also note the disquiet over anti-Semitism connected with the case. Originally voiced in the anti-communist Yiddish and English-Jewish press, this aspect of the case cannot be overlooked. Concern was expressed that Judge Kaufman had "bent backward" to sentence the Jewish defendants to death. The anti-Semitic behavior of prosecutor Irving Saypol in the Remington case gave further cause for concern on the part of many Jews and non-Jews. Moreover, there is a mass of evidence that organized bigotry in this country quickly seized the occasion to trot out their hoary canards in such pamphlets as *The Jews Have Got the Atom Bomb*. The question of anti-Semitism in these trials should never be discounted.

The facts about entrapment, coercion and the refined techniques of our political police that Reuben brings out in his book are initially frightening. But once the reader has read the facts that Reuben has placed before him, he can not help but feel strengthened by the truths that the book uncovers. The book is a powerful weapon that can prove a deadly mace to hurl against all liars.

(Charles R. Allen's long-awaited book, *The McCarthy Conspiracy*, is scheduled for publication in the fall by Cameron and Kahn.)

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# MATUSOW LIFTS THE CURTAIN

By Louis Harap

*False Witness*, by Harvey Matusow. Cameron & Kahn, New York. Paper edition, \$1.25; cloth edition, \$3.00.

This is a story of criminal careerism and brutal self-aggrandizement, of cold-blooded lying and half-truth, of blackmail and greed. It is much more—it lifts a corner of the curtain behind which the witch-hunting conspiracy against the liberties of the American people is being plotted. Or, to change the figure, it lifts up the rock under which are exposed the indecent wriggings of the reptiles of stool-pigeonry. What Matusow has revealed is a case study in the actual subversion of the Constitution and the whole democratic structure. The criminality that this book reveals dwarfs the most heinous crimes against individuals because the McCarthyite conspiracy it unfolds is aimed at the finest values that mankind has painstakingly built up over the centuries, just as Hitlerism tried to corrupt the elementary decency of men.

Announcement of the publication of this book also uncovered some disturbing reactions on the part of the government. Instead of facilitating the arrival at the truth, the government has frantically tried—without success—to discredit Matusow or has remained remarkably sanguine in the face of the exposure of this contamination of judicial and investigative procedures. The publishers of the book, who are to be congratulated for their patriotism and courage, are harassed by congressional committees and grand juries and threatened with contempt.

The demand we should make upon the government is for a thorough investigation. Nor should this investigation be carried out by the Department of Justice, which is itself up to the neck in the whole affair. Rather some agency like the Senate Judiciary Committee would be an appropriate body.

Matusow retraces for the reader the steps through which he descended deeper and deeper into McCarthyite degradation. He began by informing to the FBI on his closest friends and comrades; then followed wild lying before the un-American Committee and the Internal Security Committee, a stint with the blackmail, blacklisting racket *Counterattack*, "investigation" for the Ohio Un-American Commission, lying, red-scare journalistic excretions about "reds" among youth and

the press, manifold services for Joe McCarthy, "witness" work at the trial of the New York Smith act victims, of trade unionist Clinton Jencks and others.

Along the way Matusow left a train of ruined men and women, of innocent people railroaded to jail on his lying testimony. His absolute indifference to truth, his deliberate fabrications are revealed on almost every page of this book. His trade was literally the telling of lies.

The obvious question arises, is he telling the truth now? If anyone doubts it, let him consider this: if Matusow is lying, any number of people can haul him into court on libel charges because the book is chock full of such matter. But no such threats have yet turned up. Surely a senator would not allow a statement like the following to go unchallenged, if it were not true? In discussing Joe McCarthy's usurpation of the executive function in the case of the Greek shipowners, Matusow tells of blackmail by McCarthy. "Joe's big satisfaction," said Matusow, "was in the way in which he had gotten the agreement signed. He intimated that he had enough 'dirt' on the (Greek) shipowners and that he let them know he intended to use it if they didn't go along with him. One of his big clubs was the new McCarran immigration bill and its clauses for deportation" (p. 212).

Furthermore, what motives could Matusow have for lying now? There is no promise of large monetary rewards. And in making these exposures Matusow is unquestionably risking imprisonment for perjury and persecution from the very ones who lionized him when his lying testimony suited their purpose. And one can add that honest people have known all along that his fantasies were false.

The book is sprinkled with accounts of sensational shenanigans by assorted McCarthyites. One of these was Matusow's spiriting out of the country of Mrs. Arvilla Bentley in order to avoid her being subpoenaed in connection with the senatorial investigation of McCarthy's finances. The book spells out the typical

informer's gluttony for money and red-baiting notoriety gained from the ruin of literally hundreds of lives and even more catastrophic, from the degeneration of democracy itself.

One revealing bit of especial interest to the Jewish people is a confirmation of the charge which we made in these pages over two years ago, that Roy Cohn was a Judenrat element who was lending himself to McCarthy's fascist offensive. In telling of Cohn's appointment as counsel for the McCarthy Committee, Matusow writes, "McCarthy told me that one of his reasons (for hiring Cohn) was to offset the frequent charge that he, McCarthy, was anti-Semitic. By employing him and giving him such a place of prominence, said McCarthy, he would have the basis for refuting the charge" (p. 210).

Matusow's story is not of course unique but typical of the stable of informers that have disgraced our country in the postwar period. Already two more such informers have confessed to their lying while others have been exposed as liars and deceivers by affidavits and the court records of various trials. How is it possible, one must ask, that such skullduggery as Matusow describes on almost every page of this book could have catapulted this mediocre, unscrupulous young man into such influence in American life? This Great American Calamity would never have occurred if the ground had not been manured by the governmental and press red-hunting generated by the Big Business campaign to prepare the country psychologically for war. The Matusows are only the little, benighted, corrupt instruments of the powerful forces that spawned the Taft-Hartley, Smith, McCarran, McCarran-Walter and Communist Control acts and all their vicious little brothers in state government.

But the fact that this book has appeared shows that something has gone awry with the plans of the Big Witch-Hunters. A new atmosphere has become apparent. The tissue of lies built up in the postwar period is being pierced and the red hysteria is losing some of its potency.

But we still have very far to go before the atmosphere becomes clean again. Upon this eventuality depends not only the survival of democracy but the physical survival of millions of our people. For the domestic and international aspects of the witch-hunt are opposite sides of the same coin. McCarthyism and the policy that is leading to war hang together. These twin dangers can be headed off if, on the one hand, democratic process is restored for all non-conformists, including the Communists; and on the other hand, if a policy of peaceful co-existence is achieved. A wide reading of the Matusow book and a realization of its full implications can help rid our country of this two-headed dragon.

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# OBSERVATION POST

## The Lesson

By Sam Pevzner

### Philly Scores

On the tercentenary front the Philadelphia Committee to Celebrate 300 Years did an outstanding job with its celebration on February 26th at the YWCA auditorium. Seven hundred people heard B. Z. Goldberg, Morris U. Schappes, Martha Schlamme, the Philadelphia Jewish Chorus conducted by Harvey Shreibman and saw the Jewish Dance Group. The celebration was greeted by Pennsylvania Governor George M. Leader, Senator James H. Duff, District Attorney Richardson Dilworth and Representatives Hugh Scott and William J. Green, Jr. In addition Mr. Green, Jr. introduced a concurrent resolution in the House of Representatives greeting the Jewish people and extending its best wishes to the February 26th celebration in Philly. Greetings were also sent by Congressman William T. Granahan. We are justifiably proud of the fact that our JEWISH LIFE contributor and translator, Max Rosenfeld, was secretary of the celebration committee.

### Talking Tercentenary

It would be difficult to comment on all the grand events celebrating 300 years. . . . No doubt many of them throughout the land have not been called to our attention. . . . One of the most significant is the Exhibition of the 300 Years Committee being held at 189 Second Avenue, New York City. . . . Glad to inform all those who have missed it so far that its run has been extended to Sunday, April 3rd. . . . Organizations should arrange group parties pronto. . . . Individuals should not miss it. . . . Admission only 49 cents.

Must also comment on the thrilling celebration held by Bronx Emma Lazarus Clubs recently. . . . Karen Morley, Edna Starr, the Jewish People's Philharmonic Chorus and the New Century Dance Group combined their talents around a script written by your columnist to produce what was in my very prejudiced opinion a standout tercentenary event.

### More Coming

Whenever the Jewish Young Folk-singers of New York give a gala concert it is an evening long to be remembered. This is not just publicity guff but a fact. Seeing the bright youthful faces and hearing their fresh resonant voices welded into a brilliant ensemble, musically rich and colorful—is an exciting experience. And for this tercentenary year their con-

cert holds out the promise of promises. On Saturday evening, May 21, the Folk-singers will present the premiere of the *Ballad of August Bondi*, with music by Serge Hovey, composer of the music in *The World of Sholem Aleichem*, and text by poet Aaron Kramer. Brooklyn Academy of Music will be the scene of this grand premiere, and Bob DeCormier will conduct. Those who miss this concert know not what they do.

### Shining Moment

In recent issues this column has repeated that the JEWISH LIFE banquet in honor of Morris U. Schappes will be a high point in the tercentenary celebration. Well, those who attended the testimonial on March 6th in the Great Northern Hotel would no doubt agree with my pre-affair characterization. The festive hall was charged with the electric quality of appreciation, high esteem and affection for the guest of honor. It shone in the faces of Morris' friends and co-workers, and of the many organization delegations. It sparkled in the tributes paid by fellow historian Phil Foner, who was master of ceremonies, teacher Cyril Graze, women's leader June Gordon, the heroic Helen Sobell, fellow-editors Louis Harap and Sam Pevzner, and manager Lester Blickstein. Some of the most significant moments in the program were provided by the tributes and wires sent by renowned Jewish and Negro historians who, while expressing differences in political and social philosophies, recognized Morris' great contributions to American Jewish historiography. It was here that one recognized that Morris, more than any other single historian, brought advanced social science and historical truth to the celebration of the Tercentenary this year. He has placed in proper perspective the deep-rooted contributions of the Jewish working people to American democracy and to Jewish life in this country. Without Morris' work—especially in the JEWISH LIFE series—the tercentenary celebrations would have been out of focus, befogged by the anti-labor, anti-progressive-tendentiousness and ignorance of historians who view history through the befogged binoculars provided them by the Jewish plutocracy and payers-of-big-fees. This is why the banquet was not just another testimonial. It was setting the tercentenary record straight—just as Morris' work has attempted to set the historical record straight. It was indeed a shining moment.

April is the month of remembering for the Jewish people and for all who hate nazism. It was 12 years ago that the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto taught the world that resistance is the lesson. Resistance to fascism, tyranny and anti-democracy. Resistance to the McCarthyites and the Judenratler who serve them.

The proposal to rearm West Germany is a desecration of the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto—and of all the men and women who gave their lives to defeat fascism. The Jewish people want to cry out and call for a halt to this desecration, but the souls of too many of their leaders have been sold to Dulles. But they cannot silence the Jewish people. On Sunday, April 10, at one p.m. the Jewish people will speak out at the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising Memorial at Manhattan Center. And we call upon all JEWISH LIFE readers to be there.

### Skip the Oil

Briefly and without agitation we must tell you this. The present JEWISH LIFE campaign for \$15,000 to keep it going has not hit a fraction of its goal. Too many organizations, Jewish Life committees and readers who treasure the magazine have been sliding along hoping the other fellow (whoever he is) will do the job. Therefore, we tell you now that there is no other fellow. There is just YOU. And YOU (be you an organization, committee or individual reader) must come to the rescue NOW. There must be an intensification of individual contributions and solicitation, organized affairs and what have you. That way you can save the magazine.

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# FROM THE FOUR CORNERS

(Continued from page 2)

**Roy M. Cohn**, former McCarthy Committee counsel who was charged by ex-informer Harvey Matusow with having suggested fabricated testimony in the New York Smith act trial, on February 11 was named chairman of the executive committee of the American Jewish League Against Communism. George E. Sokolsky, right wing columnist, was named president to replace Alfred Kohlberg, who becomes honorary president. (N. Y. T., 2/12)

**Mrs. Marion Simmons**, a Negro woman, was named in February acting regional director of District Four (western Kansas to southern Illinois) of the CIO Packinghouse Union. She said: "It's another one of those challenges. As a Negro and a woman, I've always been faced with a challenge."

**Notes on anti-Semitism** . . . During the inaugural of Florida Governor LeRoy Collins, anonymous broadsides were distributed over the city of Tallahassee saying, "LeRoy was elected—Florida is now in the hands of the Jews—watch the wolves feed—two years is enough." (*Jewish Examiner*, 1/21). . . . During Brotherhood Week in Philadelphia two 15-year-old Jewish boys were brutally attacked by a gang of young hate-inspired hoodlums. One boy was hospitalized. The *Philadelphia Jewish Times* (February 25) complained editorially against the "namby-pamby manner in which the Juvenile Court" has dealt with cases of anti-Semitic assaults.

## EUROPE

**From Poland** . . . From all over Poland more than 1,000 Jews participated for two days in the Second Jewish Arts Festival at the end of January at the Yiddish State Theater in Wroclaw. Jewish choruses, orchestras and amateur dramatic groups took part. Much material from I. L. Peretz and Sholem Aleichem was used. Socialism and peace were the main themes. (London *Jewish Chronicle*, 2/11) . . . At a ceremony at the Polish Writers House in Warsaw on January 31 the Yiddish writers L. Alitzki, Ber Mark, David Sfar and H. Rubin were among those who received the medal, "10 years of People's Poland."

**David Zaslavsky**, a leading Soviet political commentator of *Pravda*, was award-

ed the Order of the Red Banner, second highest decoration in the Soviet Union, during January for his "long and faithful years of work in the Soviet press" on the occasion of his 75th birthday.

**The second annual cultural conference** of progressive Jewish workers was held on January 30 in a hall of the Sorbonne University in Paris. Over 400 delegates from people's organizations attended. The conference decided to award two prizes for the best Yiddish literary work and the best plastic work in the coming year. The conference resolved also to protest German rearmament.

**A message** sent from Rabbi E. S. Rabinowitz of the Hull (England) Jewish community to Moscow Chief Rabbi S. Schliefer brought a reply late in January from Rabbi Schliefer which said, in part: "In our country peace reigns among all peoples. In addition to the customary traditional prayers for peace we have instituted a special prayer for Sabbaths and festivals that peace might triumph over war. It is our firm hope that eventually, in the near future, all the inhabitants of the world will recognize and know the value of peace, which in the words of the Sifri is 'the sum of all blessings.'" (London *Jewish Chronicle*, 2/4)

## ISRAEL

**The real purpose** of the water power project for use of Israel and the Arab states being proposed by Eric Johnston, President Eisenhower's representative in

the Middle East, is to take away the national independence of these countries, said Dr. Moshe Sneh in the Knesset on February 24. He demanded a Knesset debate on the issue.

**At a gathering** in January in honor of his 75th birthday, the veteran Zionist Yitzhok Greenbaum made a speech in which he pointed out that hundreds of thousands of Israelis had signed the peace petition. He proposed that a bloc of peace candidates be put up as representing these peace signers. He expressed the hope that this bloc of candidates under the slogan of "For peace, work and equality" would be projected.

**Histadrut**, Israel's united labor federation, announced in January a policy for 1955 of seeking no wage rises. Left wing forces are demanding a 20 per cent rise in wages.

**David Hacohen**, head of the five-man trade delegation from Israel to China, said in Hong Kong that they had been well received by Chinese authorities. He said that the embargo on China had not seriously affected China but had helped the socialist countries in Eastern Europe by giving them a Chinese market. He described the Peking regime as "absolutely incorruptible. You get a receipt for everything—even for a two cent stamp purchase."

**Shmuel Elyashiv**, former Israeli ambassador to the Soviet Union, who retired because of ill health, said in Tel Aviv late in February that 80 Jews left the Soviet Union for Israel last year and that there was a possibility of more leaving. Brigadier Yosef Avider has been named to replace Elyashiv.

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