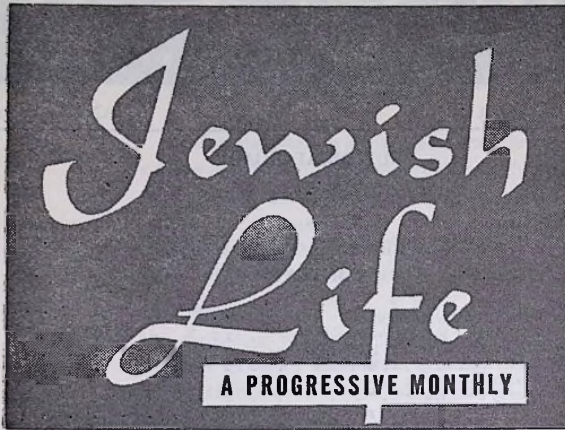


# The AJ Congress Convention

by Jack Greenstein



JANUARY 1954 • 25¢

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE SOBELL CASE**

by Prof. Stephen S. Love

**AN ACT OF INFAMY**

by Louis Harap

**MORE RICHES OF SHOLEM ALEICHEM**

by Morris U. Schappes

**I GET A GOOD JOB**

by Sholem Aleichem

**ACTION-PLAN ON McCARRAN-WALTER**

by Alec Jones

# From the Four Corners

Edited by Louis Harap

AT HOME



VOL. VIII, NO. 3 (81)

JANUARY, 1954

**The Velde Committee** inquisition of 27 Philadelphia teachers in November, all of them Jewish, was followed by anti-Semitic incidents. The Jewish Community Relations Council of the city has received complaints on this score and has held meetings to consider the question. The JCRC has requested that incidents be reported to it.

**Resistance notes . . .** Jacob Potofsky, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, said to the Illinois CIO convention on December 13 that the McCarrans in Congress are "trying to distract us from the real economic and political problems of today." Illinois State CIO President Joseph Germano told the same meeting that the witch-hunts are designed "to scare the people so they won't criticize the administration." . . . The Los Angeles Jewish Community Council late in November "congratulated and commended" the leaders of the General Council of Presbyterian Churches for their stirring call for resistance to the threats against civil liberties and offered to join "you and other groups of the community in any kind of collective action to obtain wider dissemination of these beliefs." . . . The World Jewish Congress late in November called on Secretary of State J. F. Dulles to prevent grant of clemency to nazi war criminals through the newly-established "Allied German Board of Clemency in the United States Zone of Germany."

**McCarran-Walter front . . .** Senator Herbert H. Lehman announced on November 11 that he was serving as temporary coordinator of a National Committee for the Revision of the Immigration and Citizenship Laws now in process of formation. . . . A petition with 20,000 signatures calling for revision of McCarran-Walter was presented to Senator Lehman early in November by a group of labor, Negro, veterans, fraternal and nationality groups headed by Brooklyn *Jewish Examiner* editor-publisher Dr. Louis D. Gross. . . . The Conference of Jewish Women's Organizations of Chicago is circulating among its member organizations a summary of the Lehman-Celler bill and urging a program of action that includes pressure on Congress for a public hearing on the bill. . . . In a speech before the Joint Distribution Committee on December 10, New York's Mayor-elect Robert Wagner called McCarran-Walter an "ugly monument" to "racism and isolationism" and a product

(Continued on page 32)

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# FROM MONTH TO MONTH

## DEFEND PROGRESSIVE JEWISH EDUCATION

**R**ECENTLY an act of collaboration with McCarthyism at least as shocking as the mutual-aid pact between the Velde Committee and representatives of the Anti-Defamation League, American Jewish Committee and Jewish War Veterans, was perpetrated by the *Jewish Daily Forward*, led by a cabal which controls the Jewish Labor Committee, Workmen's Circle and other social-democratic organizations. The venomous hatred of the *Forward* clique for anything connected with progressives has burst forth in an attack on Jewish children's progressive schools that would be hard to match in McCarthyite sadistic malice.

On October 20, 1953, the paper stated, "A *Forward* representative contacted various government agencies yesterday in order to ascertain what will be the fate of the Order [that is, Jewish People's Fraternal Order of the IWO] schools." The significance of the words "contacted government agencies" is clear. The *Forward* had acted as a *mosser*, an informer, through this mission of its representative. Most stool-pigeons do their contacting in secret but the *Forward* announces its nefarious deeds with relish. That the mission of its representative was not unsuccessful is indicated in its editorial of October 21, which crows that now "the government will keep its eye on the schools of the Order."

The *Forward* is not only a *mosser*: it is also a liar. It persists in calling the progressive Jewish schools "the schools of the Order" when it is a matter of public record that the schools made themselves completely independent of "the Order" over three years ago. At a public conference held October 14-15, 1950, the former schools of the JPFO decided to disband as Order schools and thereafter each one began to function on an independent individual school basis. Each school is now organized, led, financed and directed by the parents and other interested individuals in each community.

About 6,000 children attend 100 of these schools in the United States. Before its attack on these schools, the *Forward* had already participated as finger man for and collaborator with Tom Dewey's New York State Insurance Department in the proceedings to liquidate the International Workers Order. Then the *Forward* turned its attention to destruction of the progressive Jewish children's schools. If it is possible, the *Forward* out-McCarthy McCarthy in this campaign of lies, distortion and malevolence hard to equal in Jewish experience in the United States.

Just how loathesome this *Forward* campaign is, can be judged from an insight into what these schools are trying

to do. They are organized by parents in a number of communities to provide their children with a secular, progressive Jewish education. The schools develop in the children a kinship with the Jewish and non-Jewish laboring masses and with the history and progressive culture and traditions of the Jewish people. The children acquire an elementary knowledge of Yiddish. They are taught to identify their interests with those of the Negro people and other oppressed groups. They learn to appreciate the humanist tradition of classical Yiddish writers like Mendele Moicher Sforim, I. L. Peretz and Sholem Aleichem. They learn that peace and friendship must replace war and racism.

In this period of hysteria, the schools offer progressive parents the means to help their children become integrated into an America that represents the sum total of contributions of many national groups and the best of the democratic tradition. In recent years the effectiveness of the schools has been enhanced by efforts to reconstruct the school curricula to bring them closer to the needs of children of American-born parents who do not themselves speak Yiddish. More will be done undoubtedly to meet the needs of the period in which we live.

Such schools, a credit to the Jewish community and to Jewish labor, are what the *Forward* is straining to destroy by the wildest red-baiting. The paper is trying to inflame nationalistic feeling against the schools by the lying assertion that the study of Yiddish is being suppressed.

The attack on the schools falls into the pattern of the day—congressional inquisitions, Smith act prosecutions, deportation and denaturalization hysteria, spy hoaxes, persecution of intellectuals. It extends the McCarthyite pattern into the new field of progressive Jewish education. It is an attack on children, on the right of parents to give their children a democratic education, on the right of national groups to contribute to American culture in the best democratic tradition. The *Forward* attack plays right into the hands of McCarthyism and lays the basis for an attack on all Jewish institutions.

The *Forward*'s attack should be strongly protested by all Jews—by readers of the *Forward*, parents and members of all organizations of every persuasion, for it is a McCarthyite, anti-democratic move. Progressives especially should recognize the fascist threat inherent in this attack, which is part of the offensive against all progressive education, Jewish and non-Jewish. It is an attempt to destroy voluntary organizations and is intended to strike fear into the hearts of parents who want to teach their children anything other than McCarthyism. The attack must be answered by help-



ing build the schools in the communities. A partial answer to the *Forward* attack has been made in many cities by an increase in enrollment and by the establishment of new schools. This is an effective answer and a warning to the *Forward* and the McCarthyites.

Hands off our children!

## BEHIND THE "CENSURE" VOTE

THE Security Council's vote on November 24 to "censure" Israel for the Kibya incident was a crude exposure of the war-inciting policies pursued by Washington and London. It is to be noted that the Soviet Union abstained from voting. There was total silence on this fact from those quarters which periodically talk about the Soviet Union's effort to "woo" the Arabs. For this abstention shows once more that the Soviet Union pursues a policy of supporting peaceful policies and the efforts of all nations, particularly the colonial, or semi-colonial, to achieve independence. That such aims were not contemplated by the vote of censure is clear from one glaring fact about the vote—namely, that it totally ignored any approach to the problem that would promote peace in the area by negotiation between Israel and the Arab countries. This omission was so raw that even the *New York Times* felt constrained to editorialize on November 26 that the "vote of censure . . . does nothing positive toward dealing with a situation which gets worse every day."

In other words, it becomes evident that Washington and London do not want peace in this area. What they intend is to keep the pot boiling so that they exercise control over the Middle East. This control is designed to secure complete military control so that the area can be converted into an anti-Soviet base, as well as to tighten the economic grip of Washington and London on this rich oil region. Their means for achieving this can be discerned from one of the proposals offered by General Vagn Bennike, head of the United Nations Truce Commission. One way of enforcing the truce, he thought, was to station an "international force" on the borders of Israel and the Arab countries. If this were to be done, Washington and London would have the situation in the palm of their hands. Now, how could they justify the placement of an "international force" there? By keeping the area in a state of turmoil and in need of "pacification."

Now we can understand why the Security Council resolution conspicuously and crudely avoided any attempt to initiate negotiations between the parties looking toward a peaceful settlement. This would defeat the anti-Soviet and imperialistic oil objectives of Washington and London. Instead the situation is deliberately being engineered into a state of deterioration until Washington and London can step in and push through approval of the assignment of an "international force" there.

Washington and London's policies in the Middle East are thus a threat to the peoples of Israel and the Arab countries and to the peace of the world. Such policies are being

pursued with the expectation of creating a Middle East "defense" command that would fill out the anti-Soviet military strategy. The Jews of our country, Zionist and non-Zionist, should in the interest of the people of Israel learn that the Middle East "defense" command idea is in reality a war-inciting policy. Certainly this must be obvious from the avoidance of any peace action in the Kibya case. The Zionist organizations' advocacy of Israel's participation in such a Middle East military scheme is not in the interest of peace for Israel and the world. Members of such organizations should press this fact on their leaders.

## AWARD FOR WHAT?

FORTY years ago the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith was founded and the celebration of its birthday late in November was a gigantic affair. The climax of the celebration was a one-hour television show with many of the country's most expensive stars participating. This was followed by the bestowal on President Eisenhower of the 1953 "America's Democratic Legacy Award." President Eisenhower then delivered an acceptance speech in which he said, "In this country if someone disagrees with you or accuses you, he must come up front. He cannot assassinate your character from behind without suffering the penalty of an outraged citizenry. . . . If we are going to continue to be proud Americans, there must be no weakening of the code which guarantees everyone the right to confront an accuser face to face."

Coming as it did on the heels of the shameful, wholesale character assassination precipitated by Eisenhower's own attorney general of a man dead four years (who was never confronted by his accusers) and many other figures who were recklessly called "spies"; coming as it did in the midst of the scandalous Monmouth investigation of "espionage" and the defamation of many scientists (mostly Jews) with serious charges motivated in part by anti-Semitism, according to Eisenhower's own Republican *New York Herald-Tribune* (December 8); coming as it did after the announcement that over a thousand federal employees had been fired as "security risks" without benefit of confrontation of their accusers—the words of Eisenhower can be said at the least to be in contradiction with the acts of his administration. Eisenhower has never raised a finger to stop the character assassination practiced by his own attorney general, by the FBI and by the whole "security" program. Eisenhower was, to say the least, tolerating the systematic destruction of that very "democratic legacy" for which the ADL was rewarding him for outstanding "contributions." Barry Gray, columnist for the *New York Post*, put it straight in his column of November 18: "They might just as well give it to McCarthy, Velde or Brownell. It will have as little meaning."

Are the Jewish people "defended" by "recognition" to a man who has done so little—to put it mildly—to stem the rising tide of McCarthyism that is threatening the very

basis of our freedoms? The appeasement, so enormous in this instance, was even aggravated by the news that, among the many high officials who were guests at this occasion, were two who have in the past weeks played a major role in the official administration embrace of McCarthyism—Attorney General Herbert Brownell and FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover. These two made mince-meat of the very principle of the right to confront an accuser by their deluge of “spy” accusations in connection with the Harry Dexter White case. It is sad that a Jewish “defense” organization should honor these witch-hunters extraordinary.

The ADL no doubt got an incalculable amount of publicity from this affair. But did it help the fight to preserve the “democratic legacy”? Did the ADL strengthen Jewish security, which depends on this precious heritage of the people?

## SAVE WESLEY ROBERT WELLS!

**T**ODAY in Death Row at San Quentin Prison sits a Negro of 44 years awaiting an execution that must be prevented by the people.

One can get an idea of the injustice that impends, if Wells is executed, from the following ground on which Federal Judge Louis Goodman issued a stay of execution in March 1950: “in the true and historic sense the petitioner (Wells) was not accorded due process of law under the 14th Amendment. . . . *By deliberate and designed inactivity* the administrative body, known as the Adult Authority of California, kept the petitioner in an indefinite status *for the purpose of making it possible to impose the death penalty upon him. . . .* The Adult Authority may be called overzealous in an attempt to reach through the criminal process (and indeed to destroy) those whom they regard as undesirable citizens” (emphasis added). Judge Goodman’s stay was reversed a few months later by the Ninth Circuit Court. This fall an appeal to the United States Supreme Court was refused and Wells now faces execution.

Wesley Robert Wells has all his life been a victim of the segregation, discrimination, provocation and insults to which the Negro people are subjected in this country and against which Wells has personally fought. Since he was 19, he has been in prison, except for a short period in 1941. He was returned to prison again in 1941 for stealing a car. In 1944 he got into a prison fight and was found guilty of possession of a knife, for which the penalty is “five years to life.” The authority kept delaying fixing sentence and the motive was explicitly given in a letter from the prosecuting attorney in the case. The attorney stated that if the sentence was not fixed, Wells “will be subject to prosecution under the statute which makes it a capital offense for a life term prisoner to commit an assault.” At the same time, Wells was subjected to provocation and brutal, inhumane treatment.

The deliberate plan to kill Wells legally worked out as anticipated. Under extreme provocation Wells threw a

cuspidor at and injured a guard in 1947. A rarely-used, unique California law provides the death penalty, which was imposed on Wells. Appeal was refused by the California Supreme Court by a four to three decision. Then came the Judge Goodman stay, its reversal by the Ninth Circuit Court and refusal of the United States Supreme Court to hear the case. Only clemency from California Governor Goodwin Knight can save Wells’ life.

The profound injustice to Wells is borne home to anyone who reads the account of his life—his side of the story, which is not in the record—as told by Wells to Robert Ellis, formerly West Coast editor of *Ebony*. This story is available from the Save-Wells Committee, 326 West Third Street, Los Angeles, Cal. It is a story of the oppression under which the Negro in our country lives. We must not, we dare not let Wells die. A petition campaign has been launched to gain clemency from the California governor. Obtain these petitions and further information on the case from the Save-Wells Committee (address above) and get as many signatures as you can. Individuals and organizations should without delay send letters and resolutions demanding clemency to Governor Goodwin Knight, Sacramento, Calif., immediately. Wells must not die!

## A HAPPY, PEACEFUL NEW YEAR!

**T**HE New Year opens with an augury of hope—the, at this writing, prospective meeting of the Big Four foreign ministers in Berlin to discuss outstanding questions, especially Germany. More and more the peoples of the world are realizing that the alternative to obliteration of our civilization by the hydrogen bomb is settlement of outstanding questions by negotiation. The pressures of the British and French peoples on their governments and the insistent demand of the Soviet government for negotiation, have forced upon the reluctant Eisenhower administration acceptance of the bid to sit down and talk.

The other side of the coin in our country of this danger of war, McCarthyism—that is, American fascism—also faces new opposition at this New Year time. More and more people are coming to realize that the time has come to stand up against the brazen McCarthyites and to beat back their attempt to scuttle the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

So, at this traditional time of stock-taking, the beginning of a new year, we see new hope on the horizon. But the hope for peace and for the preservation and extension of democracy will not be realized of its own accord. On the contrary, they can only be achieved by the fiercest, most stubborn battling against those forces which would make a shambles of the world and a brutish people of the Americans. The past few years have shown that the hotter the fight gets, the deeper and broader becomes the resistance to these disastrous eventualities.

Our hearty wishes for a happy, peaceful New Year are also a ringing call to our readers to *make* the New Year happy and peaceful.



# THE AJ CONGRESS CONVENTION

*The menace of McCarthyism and dangers to civil liberties dominated the biennial meeting of this important organization. Now, action!*

*By Jack Greenstein*

**J**UST two days after Attorney General Herbert Brownell's McCarthyite attack on him, former President Harry S. Truman appeared at the closing session of the American Jewish Congress Convention, held at New York's Hotel Roosevelt, November 7-9, 1953. It was an angry Harry Truman who told the 1,000 delegates that "freedom is really in danger . . . when people become afraid to speak their beliefs or to defend the innocent or to explore new ideas." Brownell's attack on Truman and the people's immediate and sharp reaction it led to, was reflecting and sharpening a new spirit of resistance to McCarthyism and that is beginning to be felt throughout the land and that found strong expression at the AJCongress biennial convention.

The high point of the convention's anti-McCarthyism was the unanimous adoption of the resolution (full text in *JEWISH LIFE*, December 1953, p. 21), condemning collaboration with the House Un-American Committee in the proposed inquisition of the clergy and religious groups. The resolution was directed at the American Jewish Committee's announcement of agreement to cooperate with the Un-Americans in conjunction with the National Catholic Welfare Conference and the National Council of Churches of Christ. But the sharp wording of the resolution in condemning collaboration with the inquisitors in the religious sphere makes it also an effective blow at collaboration on *any* part of the un-American inquisition.

## ***Effective Anti-McCarthy Resolution***

Remarks by delegates on the floor and in the corridors and lobby of the Hotel Roosevelt indicated that many had read *JEWISH LIFE*'s exposé of the nefarious deal between Rep. Harold H. Velde and the American Jewish Committee, the Jewish War Veterans and Anti-Defamation League and that they regarded this resolution as AJCongress's answer to the collaborators. Moreover, the Congress resolution was much stronger than the position taken by other Jewish groups, which at first objected that religious Jewish groups rather than the American Jewish Committee were the ones qualified to meet with Velde. The AJCongress resolution probably was an important influence on the decision of all the Jewish religious organizations, announced on November 23, 1953, withdrawing their offer to replace the American Jewish Committee in a conference

with Velde. The religious groups told Velde that they did not regard the Velde Committee as "constitutionally competent" to investigate religion. (*New York Times*, November 24, 1953). Thus the slogan of "no collaboration with the Un-Americans" is spreading!

McCarthyism and the assault on civil liberties was by far the major issue at the AJCongress convention. From the opening session at Hunter College Auditorium on "The Challenge to Freedom" to Truman's appearance at the closing session, the delegates reiterated their desire for a program that would mobilize the Jewish community and all America in defense of democratic rights. "If the AJCongress can contribute to the formation of such a program, it will render historic service to American democracy," said Dr. David Petegorsky, executive director, in the printed report distributed to the delegates.

The convention was aware of the urgent need for organized opposition to the attack on democratic rights. The attack by Velde's Un-American Committee on Rabbi Wise and Judah L. Magnes aroused the whole Jewish community and particularly AJCongress members because of the smear of Rabbi Wise. Speaking at the opening session, Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein, past president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, linked the attack on Wise and Magnes to assaults on others. "The evidences," he said, "of intimidation, smearing, guilt by association are piling up. They reveal the attempts of demagogues to exploit the current anxiety for personal political purposes." There was a growing awareness that the attacks on democratic rights had an important bearing on every aspect of American life. In his report, Dr. Petegorsky pointed out that "the problem continues to grow more acute. Freedom of association, of speech, of religion, of the press are the foundations of democracy; they are also the keys to social progress. *To the degree to which they are impaired, democracy is threatened and social progress blocked*" (emphasis added).

## ***Civil Liberties Resolution***

As Congress members realize the need for a united, effective anti-McCarthyite movement and are eager to contribute toward its establishment, they therefore looked with keen interest toward the resolution on civil liberties.

The resolution opens with today's fashionable formula of "opposition to communism, fascism and all forms of totalitarianism" which too often conceals tolerance of fascism. The resolution then described "the assaults that have been made during the past few years on the freedoms of expression, of association and of thought." It accurately condemns the "general impression . . . that national security requires a high and increasing measure of conformity within officially approved confines" and the fact that "social, political and economic differences have come to be regarded . . . as evidence of dubious loyalty." The resolution correctly points out that "the privilege of congressional immunity and the investigative powers of congressional committees have been grossly misused. . . . As a result, the expression of unconventional and even liberal views and opinions has been discouraged and penalized. . . . Their [the congressional committees'] failure to limit themselves to investigations designed to aid the legislative function provides ample ground for the belief that their primary purpose is not to legislate but to intimidate and stifle dissenting opinion. . . . Powerful forces . . . are exploiting external threats to our national security in order to impair our basic freedoms of expression" (emphasis added).

It is regrettable that the resolution then falls into the very trap of the spurious "national security" argument against which it had just warned: "We are deeply conscious of the need for internal security measures to guard against persons and movements that seek to subvert our government or our system of national defense." For this "internal security" myth, the big lie of a "communist threat," was thought up by the McCarthyites and their predecessors as a smoke-screen for their own anti-democratic subversion. A growing clarity on this point was shown by the applause accorded a delegate who said: "If these attacks can be carried out in the name of 'security' then any such legislation [premised on the "security" myth] is bad."

The resolution calls for "all those who are dedicated to the preservation of our civil liberties to unite in a common program. The resolution lists "among the objectives of such a program" limiting the scope of legislative investigating committees and adoption of a statutory code to alter the procedures of these committees. But the third objective again weakens the resolution. It proposes creation of "a Presidential Commission on Internal Security and Individual Rights which will formulate a new internal security program consonant with both our national interests and our national traditions and thereby arrest the growing challenge to individual freedom." One delegate expressed the thoughts of many at the convention when he asked: "How can we expect an administration that is contributing to the hysteria today to come up with a plan that will end the hysteria?"

A fourth point in the program for unity, calling for repeal of laws that "impair freedom of inquiry, expression and association," was proposed, but Shad Polier, chairman of the Congress executive committee, moved to have it deleted. Delegates had sought to have this point refer spe-

cifically to the McCarran Internal Security act and the Smith act. They recalled that the 1951 AJCongress convention had gone on record against the McCarran law and that failure to renew that stand would be a retreat. They also pointed out that other important groups, among them the Central Conference of American Rabbis, opposed the Smith act. Some 30 to 40 per cent of the delegates opposed Polier's motion to table these amendments and to strike out even the call for *repeal* of the unspecified laws.

### *Attitude Toward Eisenhower Regime*

On other questions, the Congress resolutions and reports took a realistic view of the Eisenhower Administration. In regard to the McCarran-Walter act, Petegorsky's report referred to the infamous deal whereby the administration reneged on Eisenhower's campaign promises to revise McCarran-Walter in exchange for Sen. Pat McCarran's support for the Watkins Emergency Refugee bill. In calling for "early public hearings" by the House and Senate on bills to revise the McCarran-Walter act—particularly on Sen. Herbert H. Lehman's Senate bill 2585—the resolution in effect protests Eisenhower's betrayal and provides a program around which broad, effective unity can be forged in the Jewish community and throughout the land. The resolution, like the Lehman-Celler bill, calls for: elimination of the racist national origins quota system, revision of deportation policies to insure the rights of resident aliens, elimination of legal distinctions between native-born and naturalized citizens, establishment of fair hearings and review in immigration and naturalization, exclusion of fascists and nazis and the allocation of immigration quotas to unskilled immigrants who are not relatives of or sponsored by American residents.

On the question of civil rights, Petegorsky again indicated an awareness of the character of the Eisenhower administration in reporting that it has failed to act on a modified program proposed by AJCongress early in 1953. The resolution adopted by the convention outlined a full program for civil rights, including: passage of a federal FEPC law with teeth, direct action by President Eisenhower to eliminate segregation and discrimination in all areas under federal jurisdiction, amendment of Senate cloture to eliminate filibusters, enactment of state and municipal laws against segregation and discrimination in employment, education, housing and public accommodations and "full and vigorous enforcement" of civil rights laws by federal, state and municipal officials.

It is necessary to note one important gap in the convention. Although AJCongress works closely with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and most of the convention time was consumed by invited speakers, not a single Negro leader was on the program at any time during the convention. AJCongress Women's Division, which held its conference before the convention, did have Dr. Channing Tobias of the Urban League as a speaker at its testimonial to Bishop Bromley Oxnam.



## No Peace Action

Of the topics on which the convention acted, one was conspicuous by its absence. Dr. Petegorsky, in opening his report, had declared: "The cold war . . . remains the all-pervading fact of the day. Tension between nations is unabated. This tension has not only made it impossible to solve problems requiring international cooperation; its repercussions have created within each land a host of new problems and sharply intensified existing ones."

Yet, despite this expressed awareness of the cold war roots of most of today's serious problems, the convention failed to deal in any way with the remilitarization and renazification of Germany—one of the most serious products of cold war policy and certainly of major importance to the Jewish people. The Resolutions Committee did not present any resolution on this question, though AJCongress and the World Jewish Congress have constantly reported the growth of pro-nazi activities in Western Germany. Nor did any delegate voice alarm at this silence. Similarly, there was no indication in the text of the resolution on Israel that Washington foreign policy is causing Israel serious problems.

At the same time, the interests of the cold war were served more faithfully than those of the Jewish people by the casual repetition, in Dr. Petegorsky's report, of the fiction that "the Soviet Union would not hesitate to resort to active anti-Semitism."

Floor discussion indicated a desire among the delegates to deal with this all-important question of the cold war, but every attempt by delegates to have the convention take a position for the relaxation of world tensions was actively opposed by Congress leadership. Professor Horace M. Kallen, the noted philosopher and a vice president of Congress, was sharply rebuffed by Shad and Justine Wise Polier when he attempted to have a resolution on the United Nations amended to include a call for universal disarmament. When Justine Polier, also a vice president, moved to refer the matter to the incoming administrative committee, Prof. Kallen asked that the convention instruct the administrative committee to act on the matter. Mrs. Polier insisted, "You can't tell the administrative committee what to do," and moved to refer the question to the committee for study only. On a voice vote, a large chorus of "no's" was not sufficient to sustain Prof. Kallen but indicated considerable agreement with his position.

Other delegates sought to bring the question of peace to the fore in various ways; a woman asked that the convention support the call of the Presbyterian Council for a "face to face meeting" between the leaders of the major world states; a young man proposed that the convention support the appeal of the World Jewish Congress to statesmen and governments to take every opportunity to reduce world tension. By various parliamentary stratagems these proposals were ruled "out of order" by the chairman.

It is for the membership of AJCongress to decide whether or not action for the preservation of world peace

is "out of order" in Congress. As long as the cold war persists, the anti-democratic measures adopted in its name will persist and increase. A fight against the inquisitors divorced from an attack on the basis of the inquisition—the cold war and its policies—cannot achieve full success.

If AJCongress members are really serious about the program adopted at the convention aimed at doubling Congress membership by 1955, they will have to win new recruits by a program of action. That program can and should be based on the convention's resolutions.

And these resolutions, especially those dealing with civil liberties, the McCarran-Walter law, civil rights legislation and safeguarding the separation of Church and State, touch problems very close to the present and potential Congress membership. Vigorous and steady activity based on those resolutions offers an opportunity to perform vital service to the nation and the Jewish people. Effective implementation of those resolutions can go far to establish the AJCongress as among the leading groups in the American Jewish community in the struggle against reaction.

That the rank and file delegates were ready to give life to this new spirit was evident from their reaction to the many speeches. But the desire for *action* was only partially satisfied by the resolutions adopted with the minimum of discussion permitted by AJCongress leadership. This desire for action, if translated into *deeds* by Congress chapters, can make an outstanding contribution to American democracy. The Jewish community and all America have a right to expect this from the organization once led by the spirited anti-fascist, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise.

### A Call from Czech Jews

DELEGATES from Jewish communities in the 13 regions of Bohemia and Moravia met on November 22, 1953, in the 600-year old Jewish town hall in Prague to establish the Council of Jewish Religious Communities. A constitution was adopted and Emil Neumann, former acting deputy chairman of the Prague Religious Jewish Community, was elected chairman of the new council. Executive bodies of the council were also elected. The group discussed its program and future activity. The council also issued the following call to Jews everywhere:

"Germany is a problem on the solution of which the peace and happiness of our and future generations depend. We, Czechoslovak Jews, felt on our own bodies the bloody terror of the nazi regime, through which we lost more than nine-tenths of our community. You can understand why we follow with the greatest anxiety the large-scale revival of fascism in Germany. You can also understand why we welcome any effort aimed at solving the German problem honestly and by peaceful means, not accompanied by the reinstatement of the fascist murderers of our brothers and sisters.

"We therefore call on you, our fellow-believers, wherever you are—do not forget our six million dead, for whose death Hitler fascism is responsible. Refuse to follow those who try to convince you that the German problem or other international controversial issues can be solved only by brutal armed force and not by mutual understanding."

## REARMAMENT AND RETURN OF THE RATS

TWO world wars have shown that the peace of the world hinges on preventing Germany from having power to make war. The primary problem for peace today is therefore to ward off the remilitarization of Germany—an objective agreed upon by the victorious anti-fascist forces in 1945. The prospective Berlin Big Four meeting that will deal with the German question, among others, gives the opportunity to stop the dangerous inclusion of West Germany in the so-called European Defense Community, which would rearm West Germany as the keystone of an anti-Soviet military alliance. Recent history teaches that such a rearmed Germany would threaten the peace of Europe and consequently the peace of the world.

In France there is nearly unanimous recognition of this fact and the Jewish community of France shares the determination to keep the danger down. An Association of Former French Jewish Inmates of Nazi Concentration Camps, which includes many eminent French men of science and the arts, and is headed by the Zionist leader, Andre Blumel, has been set up to combat German rearmament. A public meeting held by the group in Paris in November was addressed by Parliament deputies of five parties, including the Communist Party. And the Supreme Representative Council of French Jewry (Crif), in which the main French Jewish organizations are represented, issued a statement in November reaffirming its unqualified opposition to German rearmament.

"At this moment," said the statement, "when the question of German rearmament is being debated by the French Parliament, Crif recalls its resolution of December 12, 1950, declaring: 'The Jews of France condemn the remilitarization of Western and Eastern Germany in any form whatsoever. One of the consequences of such remilitarization would be to hasten the return to key positions of the people who were guilty of perpetrating, or who helped to perpetrate, the persecutions and massacres committed by the Hitlerian Third Reich. At this time, when the wounds still smart from the murder of 120,000 Jews who were deported from France and who shared the fate of 6,000,000 of their brethren, the Jews of France consider that such remilitarization will represent a menace to their existence and sacrilege to their dead and to all victims of nazism.'"

The Jews of France thus echo the sentiments of the overwhelming majority of the French people, who have at least learned that their safety lies in a demilitarized Germany.

The main representative body of British Jews, the Board of Deputies of British Jews, however, have adopted the line of passivity in the face of this extreme danger. At the end of November, a Jewish Telegraphic Agency report from London (week-end of December 4) indicated an uncritical submission to government policy. Said this dispatch: "The Board accepted a report by the subcommittee of its foreign affairs committee which stated that while deeply apprehensive of the effects of German rearmament as a menace to democratic progress and world peace, it was a material fact in the situation that such rearmament was the accepted policy of the British and United States governments. . . . It would not be in the interest of British Jewry to intrude in a matter which is now an international political issue."

Strange reasoning! What more urgent duty is there than to combat "a menace to democratic progress and world peace"? Any other course is surrender of their duty to the Jewish people and their countrymen.

In the United States, there is even less resistance in the main Jewish organizations to German rearmament. There is almost total silence on the subject. Thus, at the biennial convention of the American Jewish Congress in November, not one word was said in the convention resolutions about the menace of German rearmament to the Jewish people and to peace.

The fears expressed in the resolution of the French Jews quoted above were well-founded, as was shown after the September election victory of the Adenauer government, which is driving for rearmament. Many high nazis have in fact "returned to key positions" in the Adenauer government. The conservative London *Jewish Chronicle* editorialized on November 1, 1953, as follows: "The inclusion of at least four known nazis in Dr. Adenauer's cabinet in Western Germany will be received with a shock of surprise [why the "surprise"?—Eds.]. . . . Dr. Adenauer's agreement to work with former officials of Hitler's Reich must . . . cause Jews, in particular, to have serious misgivings."

The new Adenauer regime—like the pre-election government of Adenauer—is shot through with nazis, many of whom had a direct hand in the anti-Jewish annihilation program. Here are a few at the highest level:

*Gerhard Schroeder, Minister of the Interior:* a former member of Hitler's storm-trooper SA; under the nazis he was legal advisor of Hjalmar Schacht, Hitler's "financial wizard"; in June 1953, called for German invasion of Poland to recover "lost territories." He is presently legal advisor to one of West Germany's biggest heavy industrial firms.

*Theodor Oberlaender, Minister for Expellees:* joined Nazi Party in 1933; major in Hitler's storm-troopers; nazi Gauleiter of East Prussia.

*Waldemar Kraft, Minister Without Portfolio:* former Nazi Party member and major in Hitler's SS; formerly president of Hitler's Chamber of Agriculture; prevented from holding office by British occupation authorities.

*Viktor Emanuel Preussker, Minister of Housing:* joined SS in 1933; was an "SS Instructor in Racial Questions"; received certificate of thanks for his contribution to "freeing the German economy from the Jewish yoke."

This is only a sampling of the fascist composition of the Adenauer government, whose main objective is West German rearmament in close coordination with Washington. The obvious menace to world peace, and to the Jewish people dictates opposition to raising the German military Frankenstein that once more might engulf the world in war. The solution is rather a united, neutral, democratic Germany.

Where is the cry against rearmament of Germany from the leaders of the Zionist movement, of the American Jewish Congress, Jewish War Veterans, B'nai B'rith and other fraternal organizations? Where is the demand for action against rearmament from the members of these and other organizations? Must the heavy-booted tread of storm-troopers be heard again before they wake up to the dangers?



# AN ACT OF INFAMY

*The White affair was a deep stab in the direction of fascism. But resistance to McCarthyism is widening. It needs to be organized.*

*By Louis Harap*

**I**F the McCarthyites have their way, *Alice in Wonderland* will become real: we shall be governed by an upside-down logic in which up is down and the lie is truth. Those who would destroy our elementary freedoms put themselves forth as our saviors; those who cry "Spy!" are themselves the betrayers of our country.

The Monmouth spy scare demonstrates this only too plainly. Out of nothing, no evidence, no substance, Senator Joseph McCarthy has raised up a lie as gigantic as anything ever thought up by Hitler. As Maj. Gen. Telford Taylor told the West Point cadets on November 27 in a scathing attack on McCarthyism in connection with the Monmouth hearings, "As yet nothing has been disclosed to back up the accusations."

Furthermore, McCarthy's attack on American freedom in his Monmouth hearings also involves a characteristic Hitlerite aspect—anti-Semitism. Nearly all the Monmouth scientists involved in the utterly baseless charges were Jews. The local Jewish organizations are so disturbed over the threat that they have made futile appeals to the Monmouth commander, as the *New York Post* revealed on November 13, 1953. Moreover, on December 8, 1953, Walter Millis in the Republican *New York Herald-Tribune* stated flatly that the McCarthy affair at Monmouth involved "strong elements of racial and religious bigotry and prejudice." The connection of McCarthy himself with anti-Semitism that Charles R. Allen, Jr., exposed in *JEWISH LIFE* (July 1953) could hardly be more strongly confirmed, if any more confirmation were needed. The immediate threat posed by McCarthyism to the Jewish people is once more emphasized.

## ***Brownell Creates a "Spy"***

While the Monmouth affair was going on, the ominous Harry Dexter White "spy" case broke out. In a sense we witnessed here a Monmouth affair on the top levels and therefore a more dangerous phase of the development of McCarthyism. Of course the Eisenhower administration had during and since the 1952 elections supported McCarthy, and utilized McCarthyism in the witch-hunt form already begun under the Truman administration. But the White case, with the direct participation of top administration figures like Attorney General Herbert Brownell, signified that, as former President Truman said on November 16, the Eisenhower "administration has embraced Mc-

Carthyism." And it did so by an attack on the highest public figures who had any connection with the New Deal and the Fair Deal. Senator Herbert H. Lehman had uttered a prophetic warning on April 29, 1953, when he called McCarthyism "the challenge to the Democratic Party and its leaders." For the Brownell-manufactured "spy" scare was in one respect an attempt to discredit the Democratic Party even though that party had engineered the cold war and witch-hunt. Thus the Eisenhower administration was taking a long step in the direction of fascism and embarking on the characteristic fascist tactic of attempting to suppress all opposition by McCarthyite "communist"-baiting.

The timing of this public embrace of McCarthyism by the administration was no doubt dictated by the panicked Republican leaders who realized that the November 1953 elections showed that America was catching up with them. In order to divert the masses of the country from the growing resistance to the administration's labor and farm policies that were beginning to result in a turning out of office of Republicans, the administration decided to take the offensive with the most degenerate McCarthyite tactics.

The White affair is in fact a translation into Americanese of the Hitler technique. The outcome of nazism was the same as that planned by McCarthyism: beating the masses into paralyzed, hysterical submission to the suppression of freedom at home and a chauvinistic lording it over the whole world with eventual world war. Let us see how this worked out in the White case.

## ***Gen. Taylor Accuses McCarthy***

**A** forthright attack was made on November 22 by Brigadier General Telford Taylor in a speech before army cadets at West Point on the groundless "investigation" into "espionage" at Monmouth by Senator Joseph McCarthy. Gen. Taylor, who was United States prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials, said that the charges of "espionage" were without foundation and were "an unscrupulous grab for publicity." "Unless the senator can prove his charges," said Taylor, "and there is as yet no reason to think that he can even begin to—he will stand condemned as a dangerous adventurer. . . . If we permit these demagogues to destroy the freedom, justice and respect for truth which are the essence of America, we will have lost the things on which our national unity rests. . . . Who has stood up for the integrity and good name of the United States Army? The sad answer is that no one has."

## A "Case" Without Basis

It is typical of fascist ventures that there was actually no case against White—that is, that the McCarthyites were employing the technique of the big lie. For there was not the slightest *proof* offered in the highly publicized proceedings of the Jenner Committee on November 17 in which Brownell and FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover appeared. Both of these McCarthyites could offer only FBI reports that had been thoroughly investigated and found insufficient to bring in an indictment by a federal grand jury in 1947. One would suppose that responsible public officials would not in that case continue to make charges that White was a "spy," since a basic principle of Anglo-Saxon law is that a man is deemed innocent until proved guilty. The press contributed to the "communist-Jew-spy" stereotype by none too subtly unearthing the fact that White was Jewish.

The reports on which the "charges" were based were derived from data given by "informants," identity undisclosed. The reliability of this information, for which Brownell and Hoover demand such implicit faith, got a rude shock in the *one instance in which a test was available*. This was in the matter of a letter by J. Edgar Hoover to Major General Harry Vaughan, military aide to former President Truman, dated February 1, 1946, declassified by

Brownell and made public. In this letter Hoover stated that "sources high-placed in the Canadian government" had warned the FBI of White's "unreliability." The accuracy of Hoover's "information" was then drastically challenged when, on November 27, 1953, Lester B. Pearson, Canadian minister for external affairs, stated baldly that this was not true. No Canadian official ever gave such information. "The fact is," said Pearson, "that the only information which the Canadian officials had on which they could possibly warn our American friends about Mr. White's alleged espionage came from the FBI."

If in the one instance in which a check on the FBI "information" was made, it turned out to be false, what credence can be put in the purported mass of "information" which the FBI claims to have on White's alleged "espionage"?

## The Morgenthau Plan Hoax

The real "case" against White came out in the course of the press discussion that followed. It seems that he favored certain policies that in these McCarthyite times are interpreted as "subversive." Of the many issues on which White's attitude was "suspicious," one especially reveals the naked lying, fascist-like character of the "charges" against White. On November 8, the top Washington correspondent of the *New York Times*, James Reston, wrote this sentence: "Finally, there is an ominous note running through the charges: namely, that Mr. White not only was a Soviet spy, but that he also was seeking to assist one of the primary objectives of Soviet foreign policy: the destruction of German industrial power through the 'pastoralization' of that country."

For the easily ascertainable fact is that, as a man like Reston could easily have discovered from the files of his own *Times*, the Soviet Union, far from approving the so-called Morgenthau plan for de-industrializing Germany and making it into an agricultural country, was strongly opposed to this plan. Soviet policy advocated that the war-making potential of Germany be removed but it strongly opposed denuding Germany of industry. For the Soviet Union advocated a reconstruction of Germany into a peaceful modern nation on condition of denazification, decartelization and demilitarization guaranteed by the Allied powers.

The deceptions involved in the White case give the ring of truth to former President Truman's characterization of McCarthyism in his radio speech of November 16, 1953, even though he reiterated elsewhere in his speech the same myth about "communist aggression" which is the foundation of McCarthyism. McCarthyism, he said, "is the corruption of truth, the abandonment of due process of law. It is the use of the big lie and the unfounded accusation against any citizen in the name of Americanism or security. It is the rise to power of the demagogue who lives on untruth. It is the spreading of fear and the destruction of faith in every level of our society."

## "LIBERTY HAS A DIFFERENT TASTE"

By Walter Lowenfels

Liberty has a different taste  
once you've been deprived:  
eyes that know prison bars  
now see what was denied.

I know a rose nobody knows,  
I know a tree so green,  
but nothing in the world as fresh  
as the liberty I've seen.

Through prison bars I saw Kenyatta  
waving his flaming spear—  
announcing from Africa's womb:  
Liberty is here!

I saw the martyrs of my land—  
Indians and slaves, freed—  
the Haym Solomons from whom I come—  
planting the liberty seed.

A song is sung and dies away,  
but out of every hill  
the Freedom Song I heard in jail  
is never, never still.

(Walter Lowenfels is awaiting trial in the Philadelphia Smith act case.)



## McCarthy Stabs Forward

The participation of McCarthyite Number One himself in the White affair in his radio speech of November 24, brings out several important aspects of the present dangerous stage of McCarthyism. By his blustering demand that Washington force all countries to cease trading with China, McCarthy brought out the close connection of McCarthyism with the danger of war. The Eisenhower administration and McCarthy on the cold war. McCarthy acts as China but cannot. Britain and France find it absolutely necessary for their economic survival to engage in such trade and the administration cannot afford to antagonize them further on this score. In appealing for telegrams to the White House demanding such a policy, McCarthy was attempting in a most dangerous way to establish a mass base for a war program. It must not be assumed, however, that a real conflict of policy exists between the administration and McCarthy on the cold war. McCarthy acts as Dulles' advance detachment, as a path-breaker. Sometimes McCarthy goes too far and too fast for the administration, which has to face palpable realities. Dulles must reckon with fear of war by the people at home and abroad and popular pressure on foreign governments by their people toward peace and trade with the huge markets of China and the rest of the socialist world.

The Eisenhower administration, first in the statement by Dulles on December 1 and a confirming statement by President Eisenhower the next day, was forced to repudiate McCarthy's proposal, which would go far to split its "allies" from the United States and would be a dangerous step toward world war. The outcry against McCarthyism in this instance both at home and abroad was too intense for the administration to resist. But the administration persists in its basic policy of refusal to recognize China or agree to a seat for it in the UN.

## The Broadening Resistance

The broadening of the McCarthyite front on both home and foreign issues has called forth new and widening resistance to McCarthyism. As the net of McCarthyism is cast farther to haul in the big fish, important new elements are drawn into the fight. From every part of the country and groups of all kinds have come protests and a stiffening of the spine against McCarthyism. Demands for the resignation of Brownell have come from the most diverse groups. The Negro press almost unanimously struck out against the "dirty politics" of Brownell in the White case. The English-Jewish and Yiddish press have come out against the affair. Most important of all, the trade unions have spoken up. At the CIO convention, which happened to be meeting at the time, a call for "the resignation of Attorney General Herbert Brownell for malfeasance and for not carrying out his constitutional duties" was unanimously and enthusiastically applauded. And *Advance*, organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, warned that "when our

chief law officer, the attorney general of the United States, out-McCarthy's McCarthy, then we better watch out."

This immense and growing resistance to McCarthyism needs to be organized into a solid phalanx that will end the pest that is threatening to blight freedom and to light up the flames of war. The White affair is a warning that the people can ignore at their peril: it holds the possibility of developing into a new and most dangerous phase yet reached by McCarthyism. At the same time, too many of the anti-McCarthyite forces have not yet learned that their effectiveness is perhaps fatally weakened by their persistent attempt to argue McCarthy down by asserting that they are better enemies of the "communists" than McCarthy. They can never win this argument with McCarthy for it brings them into his camp. It does not help the fight when the Democratic Party, through its national chairman, Stephen Mitchell, despite his denunciation (November 29, 1953) of McCarthyism, affirmed that the issue in 1954 will be "communism," that the Eisenhower administration has not been effective enough in "dealing with the communist menace on a world-wide scale." The anti-McCarthyites defeat their own ends unless they recognize that advocacy of peace by negotiations with the socialist world and defense of the constitutional rights of the communists at home are an essential part of their fight to save the peace and American freedoms. One cannot cling to the notion of the "communist conspiracy," which is itself part of the McCarthyite big lie, and also fight McCarthyism most effectively.

The resistance has shown the McCarthyites that the road to fascism in this country is not so easy. But the McCarthyites can be defeated decisively if the resisting forces—regardless of political and social views—organize a counter-offensive which can become irresistible.

## Flames of Jimcrow on Long Island

THE racist fires of Jimcrow housing have been creeping through the country. Occupancy of homes by Negroes who attempted to break Jimcrow was met by bombings in Florida. In Chicago recently a series of fires have occurred in homes of Negroes in a formerly Jimcrow housing project. And now the fires have spread to Long Island. Negro families planned to move into predominantly white-occupied housing developments at Copiague and Uniondale. Within eight days of each other in November fires broke out in these Negro homes.

The law enforcement officers curiously express disbelief that these fires were set by racists. But the Nassau County American Labor Party issued a strong statement through its executive secretary Henry Doliner on November 30 in which it assigns "responsibility for recent outbreaks of fires in Copiague and Uniondale in an attempt to prevent Negro families to own or rent a home in any community they can afford, at the doorsteps of the town and county officials. . . . The profound silence of these public officials . . . about discrimination in housing" should be met with protest.

# ACTION-PLAN ON McCARRAN-WALTER

By Alec Jones

ON December 10, two days before the convening in Chicago of the National Conference to Repeal the McCarran-Walter Law and to Defend Its Victims, agents of the Justice Department staged a raid on that city's Greek Cultural Center and arrested Steve Tsermengas in deportation proceedings and held him without bail. The twilight raid was preceded by blasts against the conference in the Hearst press. It was an obvious attempt to stimulate fear and hysteria in order to discourage participation in the national conference, which was held under auspices of the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born.

This organization has for 21 years lived up to its title and hence has been in the advance guard of resistance to the attempt to limit and even destroy the Bill of Rights through the opening wedge of an assault on the foreign born. It is not therefore surprising that the attempt at intimidation against this staunch organization failed. Rather, it pointed up the very dangers against which the conference had been called and galvanized the determination of 321 representatives from 15 states to redouble their efforts toward repeal of the racist McCarran-Walter law and to further the campaign for public hearings on the Lehman-Celler bill as a first step towards that end.

The delegates demanded in resolution form that the attorney general "stay all proceedings now pending or to be initiated under the McCarran-Walter law" until Congress has had the opportunity to consider the Lehman-Celler bill providing for its repeal.

Enthusiasm of the delegates was reflected in the rousing, standing ovation with which American Committee officers for 1954 were elected: Rt. Rev. Arthur W. Moulton, Prof. Louise Pettibone Smith, honorary co-chairmen; Rev. Kenneth Ripley Forbes, George B. Murphy, Jr., co-chairmen; Abner Green, executive secretary; Charles Musil, treasurer.

The determination and scope of the gathering was seen in deliberations of five panels: labor, women, legal problems, deportation of Mexican-Americans and national group. The reports from these panels to the conference proper reflected a unanimity of perspective: to assure repeal of the McCarran-Walter law and that not one person victimized by it would be without adequate defense.

Deeply concerned with the Justice Department effort to force the American Committee to register as a "Communist-front" organization with the Subversive Activities Control Board, the delegates resolved:

- to defend to the limit the right of the American Committee to carry on its work.
- designate March 1954, as Defend ACPFB Month.
- to raise \$5,000 by April 1, 1954 for the defense of the

American Committee and for its work in defense of foreign-born Americans.

Supervisory parole conditions, denial of bail to those arrested in deportation proceedings and racist discrimination in the immigration laws were roundly denounced as contrary to the guarantees accorded in the Constitution and its Bill of Rights.

The special panel on deportation of Mexican-Americans brought a wealth of information before the conference regarding the utterly inhuman treatment accorded Mexican-Americans in the Southwest. Four hundred and eighty thousand Mexican-Americans were deported in the first six months of 1953. In the conference city of Chicago, immigration officials boast of 200 to 400 deportations weekly.

While the conference joined with all organizations seeking to win public hearings on the Lehman-Celler bill, it also adopted several proposals for amendments to the bill.

Adopting a six-point program of action, the delegates voted to:

1. Make the deportation cases of David Hyun, Korean-born architect and Giacomo Quattrone, charged with "affiliation with the Communist Party," two major cases with full national participation.
2. To give special attention to the denaturalization proceedings pending against Stanley Nowak, former Michigan state senator; John Steuben, editor of *March of Labor*; Paul Novick, editor of the *Morning Freiheit*; Rose Chernin, executive secretary of the Los Angeles Committee for Protection of Foreign Born.
3. To win freedom on bail for Steve Tsermengas held in Chicago; Felix Kusman, Boris Sklar and Herman Nixon, who are all held on Ellis Island.
4. To win public support for the test of the McCarran-Walter law supervisory parole conditions being waged by Alexander Bittelman, Claudia Jones and Betty Gannett.
5. To wage an active campaign for public hearings on the Lehman-Celler bill.
6. To defend the American Committee, which the Justice Department seeks to destroy through Subversive Activities Control Board (SACB) registration.

The conference highlight was the banquet attended by more than 400 persons. Included in a rather impressive array of speakers were Prof. Robert Morss Lovett, Prof. Anton J. Carlson, Rev. Joseph Evans, all of Chicago; I. F. Stone, Washington, D. C.; Don Harris, UE District 8, Illinois; Prof. Ephraim Cross, New York City; Rev. Mark Chamberlin, Portland, Oregon; Prof. Louise Pettibone Smith, Hartford, Conn. George B. Murphy, Jr., New York City, was banquet chairman.



# MORE RICHES OF SHOLEM ALEICHEM

*New translations of two of the classical master's novels bring the English reader closer to the great tradition of Yiddish literature*

*By Morris U. Schappes*

THE audience for Sholem Aleichem in English translation is expanding steadily. When Maurice Samuel's book *about The World of Sholem Aleichem* appeared in 1943, there was then not even a single volume by Sholem Aleichem in print in English. Now, a decade later, there are five such volumes available.

Not that he had been entirely unknown to the readers of English. In fact, in 1916, when he died in the Bronx, New York, a work of his was being syndicated in 20 newspapers with a total circulation of 5,000,000. That was when the New York World Magazine Section, on 13 Sundays from January 2 to June 14, ran serially a condensed version of the masterpiece about Mottel, the cantor's orphan boy, and his emigration from Russia to America. The sprightly newspaper literary editor assured the millions of readers that in the genius of Sholem Aleichem, proudly identified as "the famous New York writer," they would be "introduced to the picturesque Jewish immigrants who are the real prototypes of Potash and Perlmutter." Perhaps Sholem Aleichem's comment would have been his favorite epithet of contempt, "*Amerikaner geshmak*" (American taste), the commercial corruption of which he found appalling.

In 1922 Knopf published a wretchedly translated collection of his stories for children. Before and after that, in various periodicals, mostly Anglo-Jewish, translations appeared of individual stories. But it was to be another 24 years before anything as substantial as even a single volume was to be issued. In that quarter century, a new generation of Jews emerged, not only a generation speaking English primarily, but one exposed to the implications of the exterminating savagery of Hitlerism. Then when in 1946 there appeared a collection of stories entitled *The Old Country*, the reception was unanimously enthusiastic. Just and high tributes were paid both to the great author and to the quality of the translation by Julius and Frances Butwin. (See the present writer's articles in *Mainstream*, Winter 1947 and in *Jewish Life*, November 1946.)

The readers were simply delighted with this "new" classic, the publishers made money and were delighted with the readers and a base was laid for more of Sholem Aleichem. So in 1948 we were given *Inside Kasrilevke* and later that winter the second Butwin translation, *Tevye's Daughters*. Then came a lull. Was the public tired so soon of Sholem Aleichem? Or had the cream of his genius already been skimmed and was the remainder not worthy of translation? Not at all, but commercial publishers have

their own schedules and they will not pay a translator a living minimal wage, so the audience had to wait and hope. But in the summer of 1952 and the spring of 1953 the drought ended, and we were showered with two of Sholem Aleichem's best works: *Wandering Star*, a novel translated by Frances Butwin (Crown Publishers, N. Y., \$3), and *Adventures of Mottel the Cantor's Son*, translated by Tamara Kahana, Sholem Aleichem's granddaughter, and illustrated with woodcuts by Ilya Schor (Henry Schuman, N. Y., \$4).

## *Kasrilevke Moves to America*

These books are the product of Sholem Aleichem's late maturity, of the last decade of his life, 1907-1916. A bit of biographical chronology here will help understand the content of these works. Appalled by the crushing of the 1905 Revolution in Russia and the ensuing repression and pogrom-wave, Sholem Aleichem had gone in high hopes to the United States, arriving in October 1906. By June 1907, when he sailed from New York back to Europe on borrowed money, his hopes were rags.

In Geneva, he began to write his series of sketches of little Mottel of Kasrilevke, the name Sholem Aleichem invented for the typical East European Jewish small town. But it is no longer a Kasrilevke that stays put, stewing helplessly in its pettiness and anguish, but a Mottel and a Kasrilevke on the move—to America. When the first volume of the Mottel series, which takes him as far as London on the way to New York, was published in 1908, it was a great event. Reading it in Russian translation in 1910, Gorky wrote to Sholem Aleichem: "Most respected colleague: Your book has been received, read, laughed and cried over—a wonderful book! . . . The entire thing scintillates with tender, benign and wise love for the people and this feeling is so rare in our day."

Nineteen hundred and eight was also the year when, in scores of countries, Jews publicly celebrated the 25th anniversary of Sholem Aleichem's creativity. In 1909 and 1910 he wrote, first as a newspaper serial, his best novel, *Blondzhende Shtern* (Wandering Stars). Here, too, Sholem Aleichem's characters are on the move and wind up for the last third of the work in America. The first World War finding Sholem Aleichem outside Russia, stranded and unable to return, he again comes to the United States, arriving in December 1914. It is here that he resumes his

series on Mottel, this time Mottel in America, and he works on it until both consciousness and his hand fail him, three days before his death on May 13, 1916.

Therefore in *Wandering Star* and in both parts of Mottel (published in this one volume), we have some of Sholem Aleichem's personal experiences as an emigrant reflected in the narratives of these migrating Jews, and we also have a good part of what Sholem Aleichem wrote in consecutive form about the United States (although a number of masterful stories, sketches, skits and plays on Jewish life in our country still remain to be translated).

The plot-ridden reader, raised on American machine-tooled tauntness of structure, may miss the best in *Wandering Star*—just as he would certainly miss the best in a Dickens. A hundred tenth-rate novelists could have used (and probably have) this plot, contrived with conscious elaborateness, and produced a hundred tenth-rate pieces of trash (and probably have). For, if you want to see it that way, this is a tale of the rise of young teen-age talent in rags in a forgotten corner of the world (Holeneshti in Bessarabia in 1904) to acclaim on the concert and theatrical stages of London and New York in 1910. But it would be sheer critical stupidity to be so snobbish toward the melodramatic-romantic form of *Wandering Star* as to ignore or underrate the rich realism of the content.

### Canvas of Yiddish Theater

For here is a large, realistic canvas of Yiddish theater life in Bessarabia, Hungary, Rumania, Germany, Poland, England and the United States, so essentially accurate that Soviet Yiddish criticism regards it as an indispensable source book for a history of the Yiddish theater. As the first professional writer in Yiddish literature, that is, the first to make a (sorry) living from his pen, Sholem Aleichem was especially concerned with the plight of art and the artist in a money-dominant society. His vaunted humor takes on edge and bite as he shows his major characters, Leo Rafalesco and Rosa Spivak, trying to create real art values amid a crowd, especially in New York, of money-mad theater entrepreneurs, venal reviewers and the vulgar, commercialized Yiddish press. Something of this contrast between the values of realistic art and the corruption of commercialism Sholem Aleichem had already treated in his novels, *Stempeniu* and *Yossele Solovei* (still untranslated in our country), but when he wrote those there must still have been in his mind the hope that America would be different. Then he had seen for himself—America, dominated by profit-seekers, was showier and worse.

Rafalesco, the untutored genius of an actor, moves his audiences by an acting style that is basically realistic: "and all without melodrama, without ranting or posturing, no clutching at the heart, no tearing of the hair, no wringing of hands, no striding up and down the stage, no contortion of the features. . . . He had walked across the stage without causing a board to creak. He had spoken in an

ordinary voice. He had made hardly any gestures. Was this acting? . . ."

Sholem Aleichem was repelled by the repertory of sloppy vulgarity and nationalistic bombast that degraded the taste of the mass audience while enriching the theater-managers. He has Leo Rafalesco reject this repertory for a new type of play like *Uriel Acosta* with which, to the amazement of the entrepreneurs, he triumphs on the stages of Europe, London and New York: "by the force of his own genius (Rafalesco) had given life to an outmoded play, with its quaint sentiments, archaic language, and outworn belief. He had made it apply to their own lives, their own age; he had translated the dilemma of a period into man's universal dilemma." The dilemma is that of the fettered mind in pursuit of a truth unpalatable to a dying class—a dilemma not yet outdated.

With all art measured on the rack of the dollar, Sholem Aleichem and Rafalesco have no way out. As the American Jewish Marxist leader and Yiddish editor, Moissaye Olgin, said, "Sholem Aleichem never led anyone anywhere." Thus Rafalesco, lamenting the "many such talents lying on dung-heaps," bemoans the absence of rich art-patrons among the Jews, assuming vainly that among non-Jews there are such patrons and that they can save the situation. Yet if Sholem Aleichem points no solution and merely states the problem, the "merely" is precious because it is presented with the rich artistry of a humorous genius of great humanity.

It is not without significance that middle class Yiddish criticism in our country tends to scorn this novel and that the *Jewish Daily Forward*, architect of the vulgar Yiddish stage and the coarsest of the Yiddish dailies so precisely satirized in *Wandering Star*, excluded this novel from the *Selected Works* of Sholem Aleichem it published in 1942. By the same token, it is noteworthy that in the Soviet Union, a two-volume Yiddish edition appeared in Kiev in 1936 with a long historical-critical introduction, and a two-volume Russian translation was issued in Kiev in 1939, when the entire country was celebrating the 80th anniversary of Sholem Aleichem's birth.

### Laughter Through Tears

In that year, too, a Russian translation of the first part of the Mottel series was published, and the Mosfilm Studio in Moscow made a Yiddish film out of it (released here by Artkino as *Laughter Through Tears*).

These Mottel stories now appear in a translation by Tamara Kahana. They are a series of delightfully composed little anecdotes strung in chronological sequence like pearls, but, in contrast to the tongue-in-cheek "suspense" of *Wandering Star*, with no more organic structure or dynamic movement than a string of pearls. The interest is aroused not structurally but thematically: will the expectations of Mottel and the migrating Jews be realized?

Sholem Aleichem's humor is here at its best and most varied. There are the comic situations in all their drollery,





Sholem Aleichem

as in the get-rich-quick Kasrilevke enterprises of making a popular drink into which soapsuds disastrously find their bubbling way, and then of making more ink than Kasrilevke (Sholem Aleichem's symbolic Jewish small town) could use if it did nothing but write for a century. There are the pathetic situations rendered "comic" by being presented through the eyes of childish naivete, as when Mottel rejoices at being orphaned because now everybody looks out for him, or when, direst poverty compelling his mother to sell the household goods piece by piece, Mottel starts a tale with the gay observation that "of all the things that we sold, none gave me so much pleasure as the sale of the glass cupboard."

Here, as M. Wiener, the Soviet Yiddish critic, has noted, the humorous optimism is blood-kin to a basic pessimism, the smile barely masking the heartbreak. But added to Sholem Aleichem's unquenchable optimism and the consoling but heartening effect of seeing the bright side of pathos, there is in the Mottel volumes the new strain of hopefulness, the optimism of the emigrant who is *doing something* to change his situation. In *Wandering Star*, written after his first and disappointing stay in the United States, Sholem Aleichem had summed up his disillusionment by this characterization of our country: "this turbulent, noisy, work-ridden, business-engrossed land of 'hurry-up'. . . Hands, that's the nub of the matter. There are no people here, only hands. Hands speaking, hands supplicating. And the louder you shout, 'Hands,' the better it will be for you. . . For that there is a press. . . Whoever wants to make a living in this golden land, and insure himself against starving quietly in this free America, must solicit the help of the press. He must . . . advertise himself in all the papers, extol himself and his merchandise. . . ." Yet even in *Wandering Star* there is the glimpse of the waiter who resents being called a servant—he is a union man—and who scorns the tip rather than give the customer his check.

### Sholem Aleichem on America

Sholem Aleichem's second stay in the United States elaborated but did not change his disillusionment. How in the Mottel series he needles the bubbles of pretension spouted

by Mottel's adult friend Pinney! Mottel asks him "whether it is true that there aren't any classes in America." Pinney gives forth with "all kinds of highfalutin words: America, he says, is the only land of real freedom and equality. In America, you may be sitting right over *here*—and right over *there*, next to you, the President will be sitting; and a little farther away, there will be a beggar, a tramp, a good-for-nothing. And still farther away, a baron, an earl or a millionaire. . . . And Pinney spouts his grandest words until a complete stranger interrupts him, "If, according to you, America is such a fortunate land where everybody is equal, where do they come from—all those barons and tramps?"

Nevertheless, Sholem Aleichem observes that America is a place where, as one immigrant writes home, "everyone is having a terrible time and is making a living." So Mottel's family and his friends proceed to "make a living." There is the garment sweatshop, with its horrors, including the tyrant foreman, rendered bitterly comic. There are unions and there is a strike. For the first time in these available translated volumes, the American reader finds Sholem Aleichem reflecting the organized workers. "If you ask me," says Mottel, "in the whole wide world there is nothing better than a strike." The strike is militant. The bosses use gangsters and the workers cripple one of them. Even Pinney is disillusioned by the bosses' tactics. He wails, "Shame on you, Columbus! Shame on you, Washington! Shame on you, Lincoln!" But the strike drags on, and both Sholem Aleichem and Mottel's elders abandon it. They start "advancing." They buy a tiny candy-soda-water-and-newspaper stand. Then they go up to buy a real candy store. "In America," says Mottel, "nobody stays in one place. In America, everybody advances." Of course the next advance was to be in living quarters, and Mottel's family prepares to "move." But Sholem Aleichem's death interrupted this Odyssey in the middle of a paragraph.

Of America, Sholem Aleichem's judgment was that, you might "make a living," work yourself up to become "all-right" or even the creature he scorned so much, a smug, newly-successful businessman he called an "allrightnick," but the dominant American values were only and repellingly cash values. Everything was for sale, art, human hands, women; even the expectation of heaven, he tells us in a one-act farce not yet translated, had a price-tag. That is why, when he was dying, he instructed his family to re-bury him in Kiev after the war ended (*New York Times*, May 16, 1916). This testament of his has never been carried out. He is buried in New York.

### On the Translations

What about the quality of the translations of *Wandering Star* and the *Adventures of Mottel the Cantor's Son*? This is Mrs. Butvin's third volume of Sholem Aleichem translation and she shows an increasing skill, sensitivity and idiomatic knack in the details of translation. But there is a startling and distressing disregard for major aspects of

*Wandering Star*. If this disregard was forced upon her by the publisher's desire for a short, American-paced novel, it is no less reprehensible.

Sholem Aleichem, who was a careful writer, worked unusually hard on *Wandering Star*. Writing to an American acquaintance, he said: "Into no other work have I put so much effort, no other work have I filed and polished . . . as this one." Composing it first as a newspaper serial, Sholem Aleichem carefully revised his text for book publication. Unfortunately, Mrs. Butwin's translation is that of the unrevised newspaper version published in this country in book form. But even that text has been boiled down to about two-thirds its original length, skirting entire chapters, condensing sections into paragraphs, slicing here, there and everywhere. Then again, Sholem Aleichem had composed seven chapters in the heart of the book in the form of letters by various characters, letters in which, in the first person, he reveals exceptional skill in differentiating character. These letters have been rewritten as straight narrative in the third person, thus obliterating the effect Sholem Aleichem had consciously achieved. Finally, this newspaper version provides us with the "happy ending" that Sholem Aleichem regarded as his compromise with "American taste" and which he deliberately changed completely in preparing the work for book publication.

Mrs. Tamara Kahana, Sholem Aleichem's granddaughter, although her translation is not as skillful as Mrs. Butwin's, has done a generally sound and readable job with the Mottel stories. It is true that a check of several chapters revealed a score or so of minor mistranslations, omission of occasional phrases, a few sentences, some paragraphs and a couple of pages, and even of some additions to the text by the translator. But except for some of the lengthier omissions these weaknesses did not materially alter the impact of the chapters. Inexcusable, however, is the omission of Chapter 5 of the first volume, in which Sholem Aleichem, at his very best, contrasts the starved poverty of the orphaned Mottel with the sumptuous mansion and, to Mottel, fabulous food of an aged lunatic who has mastered the Rambam (the medieval theologian and philosopher Maimonides). [A translation of this omitted chapter follows this article.—Eds.]

In 1959 we will mark the centennial of the birth of Sholem Aleichem. For that occasion, it would be a boon to have a *responsibly* translated edition, perhaps six to ten volumes, of his selected works. Is there an organization, or a socially responsible publisher, university or commercial, that will undertake this project in literary humanism? As Gorky said, "this feeling is so rare in our day," particularly in our country.

## I GET A GOOD JOB

### A Chapter from "Mottel"

By Sholem Aleichem

*As noted by Mr. Schappes in the preceding article, Mrs. Tamara Kahana's translation of the Mottel stories omits one chapter of the original. Below is a translation of this chapter by Max Rosenfeld.—Eds.*

MY mother has just told me the news: she has found me a job. Not as an apprentice, God forbid; her enemies, she says, will never live to see the day that the son of Peissi the Cantor becomes a workingman! My job, she says, is a *good* job, an *easy* job. All day I will go to the Talmud Torah, at night I will sleep at Old Man Lurie's. But he is sick; that is, he is healthy enough, eats and drinks and sleeps, but not at night. At night he can't sleep—not a wink. His family is afraid to leave him alone at night so they need someone to stay with him. It can even be a child, just so it's another human being. It isn't quite fitting to have an old man stay with him; but a child—that doesn't matter, any more than a kitten would!

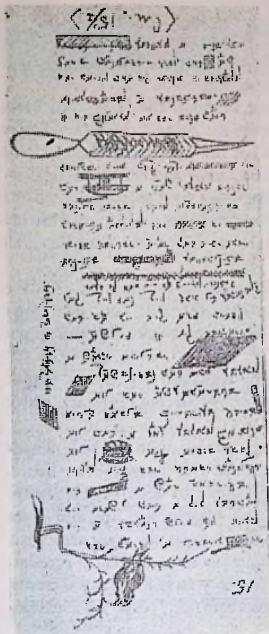
"They promised to pay five rubles a week, plus your supper every morning when you come home from *heder*." (So my mother tells me.) "A good supper, a rich man's

supper. What they throw out would be enough for our whole family! Go to *heder* now, my child; when you come home this evening I will take you to your new place. You will have absolutely no work to do. A rich supper and a good bed and five rubles a week besides. I'll be able to make you some new clothes and buy you new shoes."

Sounds good, yes? So why does she have to cry? It's a habit and she can't break it—she must cry!

In the Talmud Torah I am a student in name only. I'm not learning anything because there is no class for me. So I help the *Rebbetsin* (rabbi's wife) with her housework and play with the cat. The *Rebbetsin's* work is not very hard—sweep up the house, help bring in the fire-wood, run an errand—nothing to it, that's not work! As long as I don't have to learn; learning is worse than working! But playing with the cat—that is really fun! People say that cats are unclean animals; I say that's a lie! Cats are very clean. People say cats are mischievous as the Devil. I say that's a lie—cats are very friendly. Dogs are boot-lickers, they wag their tails too much. A cat is affectionate, and when you stroke its head, it closes its eyes and begins





Facsimile of a manuscript page of "Mottel," showing Sholem Aleichem's "doodling."

to purr. I love cats!—what's wrong with that? Talk to *them*, though, the other *heder* boys, and they'll tell you a thousand stories. If you touch a cat, you must wash your hands. If you hold a cat, your memory will fail. They will make up any old thing. It's a habit with them—as soon as the cat comes near them—bang! they let fly with a foot right in her ribs. I can't stand it, the way they beat the cat, so they laugh at me. They have no mercy for God's creatures; I am talking about my classmates in the *heder*, they are cruel. They laugh at me and call me "wooden pants"; my mother they have named "The Weeper," because she cries all the time.

"Hey," they say to me, "Here comes your Weeping Mother!" She has come to take me to my good job.

ON THE WAY, MY MOTHER COMPLAINS THAT LIFE FOR HER IS bleak and bitter. (Bitter isn't enough.) The Almighty granted her two children and she has to live alone. "Your brother Eli," she says, "married very well, *k'n'hora*, landed on Easy Street. The only trouble is that his father-in-law is a boor. A baker, no less; what can you expect of a baker?" She goes on like this until we reach Old Man Lurie's.

It's a real palace, my mother says. And a palace, of course, I would like to see! So far, we are only in the kitchen, mother and I, and it's not so bad in here, either! The oven is white and sparkles, the pots sparkle, everything sparkles. They ask us to sit down. Soon a young woman comes in dressed like a countess. She talks to my

mother and points at me. My mother keeps nodding her head and wiping her lips, she refuses to sit down. Not me though, I sit.

My mother is ready to leave and as she does, she warns me to behave. Doing so, she manages to cry a bit and wipes her eyes. Tomorrow, she says, she will come for me and take me to *heder*.

Now they bring me something to eat—soup and white bread (white bread in the middle of the week!) and meat—a heap of meat! When I finish, they tell me to go "up." I don't understand; where is "up"? So the cook leads the way; Hannah, her name is; her skin is swarthy and she has a long nose. She leads me up steps that are covered with something soft; it would be fun to walk barefoot!

It is not yet dark outside, and already their lamps are burning; so many lamps I can't count them! The walls are bedecked with ornaments and pictures. The chairs are covered with leather. The ceiling is decorated, painted, if you will forgive the comparison, like the one in the synagogue; even prettier.

I AM LED TO A GREAT, BIG ROOM, SO BIG, THAT, HAD I BEEN alone, I would have raced from one wall to the other; or I would have lain down and rolled on the velvet quilt which was spread over the whole floor. It must be nice to roll around on a quilt like that; sleeping on it shouldn't be bad either.

A fine-looking man, tall, with a grey beard and a high forehead, a silk coat and a velvet skullcap, a pair of carpet-slippers, also of velvet, with glistening embroidery—that is Old Man Lurie. He is bent over a big, thick book. Doesn't say a word, just chews the ends of his beard, looks into the book and murmurs quietly to himself. A very strange character, this Old Man Lurie. I look at him and wonder. Does he know I'm here or not: seems that he doesn't because he doesn't look at me and doesn't talk to me. They simply ushered me into the room and locked the door behind me. Suddenly Old Lurie calls out, without looking at me, his head still buried in his book.

"Come here, sir, I'll show you a bit of this Rambam!" Whom could he be talking to? What "Sir"? Me? I look all around the room, but there is no one here except me. He booms out again in his rough voice.

"Come here, sir, and you'll see what the Rambam says!" I moved a little closer. "Are you speaking to *me*?" "You, yes, you, who else?"

And still looking into his big book, he takes me by the hand and pointing with one finger, he explains the philosophy of the Rambam. The more he talks, the louder he gets; and the louder he gets, the more feeling he puts into his voice. His face gets redder and redder. His thumb twists and turns, and his elbow crashes into my ribs with every point the Rambam makes.

"Well, what do you say, good, isn't it?"

I don't see what's so good but I hold my tongue. I keep quiet and he gets hotter and louder; he gets louder and I keep quiet. Suddenly the rattle of a key is heard, the door opens and in comes the same young lady—the one that's

dressed like a countess. She goes over to the old man and talks right into his ear. He must be deaf—else why is she yelling? She tells him to let me go now, it's time for me to sleep . . . on a sofa with springs! The bed clothes are white as snow. The blanket is soft and silky—this is heaven itself! The lady dressed like a countess tucks me in, leaves the room and locks the door again. Old Lurie paces around the room, his hands clasped behind him, looks down at his pretty slippers, and mumbles and bumbles and moves his eyebrows up and down very strangely. I feel my eyes closing; I want to sleep. Suddenly Old Lurie comes over to me and says:

"You know, I'm going to eat you!"

I look up at him blankly. What is he saying?

"Get up! I'm going to eat you!"

"Who? Me?"

"You! You! I must eat you up. That's the way it has to be!"

That's what Old Lurie says. He paces back and forth again, head down, hands behind him, his brow furrowed. His voice gets softer and softer, he's talking to himself. I listen closely, barely breathing. He asks himself questions and supplies his own answers. Here is what Old Lurie said:

"The Rambam says, that the world did not always exist. How does he come to this conclusion? Because every effect must have a cause! How can I prove it? With my own will. In what manner? Here, I want to eat him up so I will. What's to stop me? Pity? Has nothing to do with it! Whatever I want to do, I do! I want to eat him up. I will eat him up. I must eat him up! . . ."

Such good news he brings me, that Old Lurie; he must eat me up! What will my mother say? Terror takes hold of me, I begin to tremble in fright. The sofa on which I am lying stands a little away from the wall. Slowly I move toward the edge and slide to the floor, between the wall and the sofa. My teeth are chattering. I listen and wait—when will he eat me up? And how will he do it? Silently, I call to my mother; I feel salty tear drops roll down my cheeks and into my mouth. They are very salty. Never have I longed for my mother as I do now. I even long for my brother Eli, but not as much. I think of my father, for whom I say *Kaddish*. Who will say *Kaddish* for me, after Old Lurie eats me up? . . .

I MUST HAVE FALLEN INTO A DEEP SLEEP; AND WHEN I WAKE up, I cannot remember where I am at all. I touch the wall. I touch the sofa. I stick my head out from behind the sofa and see an immense room, filled with light. Velvet quilts on the floor. The walls papered with pictures. The ceiling, forgive the comparison, as in the synagogue. Old Man Lurie still sits over his enormous book, which he calls Rambam. I like that name—Rambam; it sounds like bim-bam. . . .

Suddenly I remember—he was going to eat me up last night! I become frightened he may see me and want to eat me again. I hide between the sofa and the wall, hold-

ing my breath. A bell rings, the door opens and again, in comes the lady dressed like a countess. Behind her is Hannah the cook, carrying a big tray. On the tray are little pots of coffee, hot milk and fresh soft rolls.

"Where is the boy?" asks Hannah the cook, and looks all around the room. She spies me behind the sofa. "You're a real roughneck, I see! What are you doing there! Come down to the kitchen with me, your mother's waiting!"

I jump up from my hiding-place and scamper down the soft, covered steps in my bare feet, keeping time with my new song: Rambam, bim-bam; bim-bam, Rambam, all the way to the kitchen.

"Take your time!" says Hannah to my mother. "Let the boy have a glass of coffee and a soft roll. You, too. Don't worry. Have some coffee. They won't miss it; they've got plenty!"

So says Hannah the swarthy cook and my mother thanks her and sits down, and she serves us hot, fragrant coffee and fresh rolls.

Have you ever eaten egg-cookies with sugar? That's what these aristocratic soft rolls are; maybe even better. The taste of the coffee is impossible to describe. Heavenly! My mother sips her coffee and smacks her lips and gives me more than half of her roll. Hannah the cook sees what my mother has done and begins to scream bloody murder.

"What are you doing? Eat it yourself! There's plenty more," and she gives me another roll. Now I have two-and-a-half.

I listen to their conversation, which is an old story to me. Mother complains about her bad luck. A widow with two children, one landed on Easy Street, the other not so lucky. I'd like to know what does my mother mean about my brother and Easy Street? . . . Hannah listens, nods her head. Then she starts, complains about her fate, about having to work for someone else. She is not a mere nobody, she says. Her father was a respected citizen, had his own house and then it burned down. He began to ail and then he died. Her father, she says, should awake from the dead and see his Hannah working in somebody else's kitchen! She can't complain too much. Thank God, she has a good job. Except one thing, she says—the old man . . . he's a little bit. . . .

A "little bit" what, I'd like to know. Hannah puts her finger to her head, mother listens and nods. Then mother starts talking again. Hannah listens and nods.

On the way to *heder*, she gives me another roll and I show it to the other boys. They stand around and watch me eat it, as though they had never seen anything like it! I give them each a little piece and they lick their fingers! "Where did you ever get such a wonderful roll!"

I stuff the rest of it into my mouth, put my hands deep into my pockets and chew and swallow and do a little dance in my bare feet and say nothing, as if to say:

"Ay! You miserable paupers, you! Such a novelty, soft rolls! Ha! You should try them with coffee, then you'd know what 'heavenly' means!"

(Translated from the Yiddish by Max Rosenfeld)



# NEWS ABOUT SOVIET JEWS

The following report on Jews in the Soviet Union is a Reuters dispatch published in the New York Times on November 22, 1953, under a Moscow dateline. We cannot, of course, vouch for its accuracy in every detail but the information it contains is of considerable interest.—Eds.

**I**N Moscow's Great Synagogue, under the shadow of the ancient Ark of the Law, a prayer is offered every Saturday for Premier Georgi M. Malenkov and his government. With this prayer is preserved the tenuous link between the Jewish community and the Soviet authorities. But it is a Jewish community of graybeards and old women. There are few young faces in the synagogue. There is no religious school for the children.

There are now believed to be 500,000 Jews in Moscow, although only a small proportion appear to be active believers.

In Moscow today there are no open signs of anti-Semitism. In the Great Synagogue there is no indication that these are people who live in anxiety. There is no reluctance to talk with foreigners. There is no attempt to conceal the appearance of their devout faith. The old men wear long flowing beards and their wives the wigs that are traditional in pious Jewish communities.

A typical Jewish congregation on a Saturday consists of about 300 persons, including at least 30 women. This would suggest that Orthodox Jews are able to obtain free time from their work for religious observances.

There is no ghetto in Moscow and no distinctly Jewish quarter. In 1939 there were believed to be ten synagogues in Moscow, but there has been a gradual reduction until today Jews from all parts of the city congregate at the Great Synagogue. Several thousands came to the Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur services and the street was blocked by an overflow crowd.

In the Soviet Union, no religious community receives state subsidies. The faithful are allowed to maintain places of worship if they are able to support themselves. There is no religious education in the schools and the synagogue has no religious classes for children.

The congregation presents a pattern of benign dignity, old men in well-worn black frock coats, skull caps on their heads, others in the typical dress of the Russian worker, trousers tucked into leather boots, wearing round fur caps. Yiddish is widely spoken.

The Soviet government appears to place no obstacles in the way of the Jewish community except by apparent prohibition of organized Jewish religious education. In several ways the government aids the faithful. There is a limited quantity of kosher meat available, although this is not on sale in the usual food stores.

In the absence of religious education it is problematical whether the devout Jewish community can endure for an unlimited period of time. The closure of several synagogues appears to represent not deliberate state action, but the result of diminishing demand for religious facilities.

This government attitude is not confined to the Jews. All religions are treated equally. So long as there are adherents who require religious institutions, no obstacles are placed in their way. But the entire basis of Soviet education is directed

away from religion and the only religious influence that children feel is confined to the homes.

**A** TOTAL of 179 scientists were elected in November to the Soviet Academy of Science. Fifty-three were elected to full membership and 126 as corresponding members. Of this total, at least nine, or five per cent, are Jewish (Jews form about one per cent of the population of the USSR). The Jewish scientists elected were: to full membership, Professor Tamm, outstanding physicist, and Professor Shatsky, geologist; to corresponding membership, Professor Eichfeld, plant specialist and president of the Estonian Academy of Science; in physical and mathematical sciences, I. M. Gelfand, V. L. Ginzburg, A. B. Migdal, E. R. Mustel; in geological and geographical sciences O. D. Levitsky; in technical sciences, L. R. Neiman. (Drawn from lists in Soviet News (London), October 29, 1953.)

**I**N honor of his 60th birthday, Lazar Moiseyevich Kaganovich, first deputy premier of the Soviet Union, was awarded the Order of Lenin on November 22, 1953. *Pravda* and *Izvestia* displayed a picture of the Soviet leader on their front pages with a statement of the Central Committees of the Communist Party and of the Council of Ministers warmly greeting him and extolling his achievements.

Below is a reproduction from the front page of *Pravda* of November 22, 1953, showing the picture of Kaganovich, the decree awarding the Order of Lenin and the statement of the Central Committee.



# AN ANALYSIS OF THE SOBELL CASE

*A professor of law examines the evidence in the trial record. He finds "a great wrong" has been committed and urges it be righted*

*By Professor Stephen S. Love*

*At the National Rosenberg-Sobell Conference, held in Chicago on October 10-11, 1953, an analysis by Professor Stephen S. Love, professor of law at Western Reserve University, of the evidence presented at Sobell's trial was read. Following is the text of Professor Love's analysis.—Eds.*

**T**HE 30 year sentence imposed upon Morton Sobell is a blight upon the reputation of American justice. The sentence is unprecedented in its severity; it has no justification in the evidence; it is obviously the product of hysteria rather than representing a calm, reasoned conclusion; it has aroused the protest of well-intentioned people the world over.

Despite the characterization of Morton Sobell as a "traitor" or as an "atomic spy," the record in his case is entirely devoid of any evidence which would justify either appellation. Sobell was neither indicted or tried for treason. The federal Constitution requires that treason be proven by the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act. Since no one—not a single person—testified that Sobell gave any information to any representative of any foreign power, the charge of treason was out of the question.

The defendant was indicted under a fairly recent federal statute; the indictment under which he was tried jointly with Julius and Ethel Rosenberg—which indictment was filed January 31, 1951—charged them with having conspired with Anatoli A. Yakovlev, David Greenglass, Ruth Greenglass and Harry Gold (the last two of whom were not indicted), to deliver to a foreign government, the Soviet Union, between June 6, 1944, and June 16, 1945, while the United States was at war, certain documents, writings, sketches, notes and information relating to the national defense of the United States, with intent and reason to believe it would be used to the advantage of the Soviet Union; there was no charge that the same would be harmful to the United States.

## ***No Documentary Evidence of Espionage***

Upon motion of counsel for Sobell, the United States was compelled to file a list of the overt acts chargeable against Sobell, which list consisted of nothing but a list of five conversations between Sobell and Julius Rosenberg between January 1946, and May 1948.

At the outset it may be stated without fear of contradic-

tion that despite the fact that the gravamen of the indictment was the delivery of documents, writings, sketches, notes and information relating to our national defense, nevertheless, not a single witness testified, nor was there a scrap of paper, to the effect that Sobell had delivered anything to anybody at any time relating to our national defense. As a matter of fact, with the exception of the witnesses who testified to Sobell's alleged flight to Mexico, there were but two witnesses who even mentioned the name of Sobell, namely, Max Elitcher and William Danziger.

However, even the characterization of Danziger as a witness against Sobell is an act of supererogation, since his only testimony was that he and Sobell had attended high school together, had graduated from the same class of the College of the City of New York in June 1938, had thereafter also worked together for some years at the Bureau of Ordnance of the Navy Department in Washington; that Danziger visited Sobell at his home in Flushing, Long Island, in May 1950, when he told Sobell that he was in the electrical business and had asked Sobell for the address of Julius Rosenberg, who, as Sobell told him, was in the machine shop business, it being the witness' idea that he might give Rosenberg some machine shop work. The witness also testified that Sobell told him that he was leaving for a vacation in Mexico in June 1950, and when the witness came to his home, the Sobell family was packing to leave and were going to Mexico City. He also testified that some time later, he received a letter from Sobell from Mexico City, the return address which was M. Sowell, the letter containing a letter to be forwarded to his sister-in-law and to his parents. The return address on this letter being that of M. Levitov.

## ***The Element of "Communism"***

Despite the fact that the defendants were not indicted on the charge of being Communists nor on the charge of treason, the United States attorney, in his very opening statement (*Transcript of Record*, p. 182) introduced the charge that the loyalty and allegiance of the defendants "were not to our country, but that it was to Communism. Communism in this country and Communism throughout the world," and referred to them as "traitorous Americans" (p. 182), guilty of "traitorous activities" and "treasonable



acts." Remember, please, that none of the defendants had been indicted on the charge of treason.

When the defendants objected to the introduction of the element of Communism, upon the ground that the defendants were not on trial for being Communists, the trial judge held that the inquiry was proper as going to the motive of the defendants to commit the acts charged against them; the United States Circuit Court of Appeals held that he was correct in that ruling. The trial judge went on to caution the jurors that they were "not to determine the guilt or innocence of a defendant on whether or not he is a Communist." I submit that such a performance by a trial judge may be legally sound but in the long run is one of those amiable hypocrisies of the law. It represents one of those rules which the law feels necessary but which the seeker for justice finds practical rather than just. In these days, repeatedly to call a defendant in a criminal case a Communist and then expect him to get a fair trial before a jury simply because the trial judge directs the jury to disregard that charge is naive, if not directly insincere. The warning to the jury to disregard a particular charge is, as stated by no less a personage than Mr. Justice Jackson of the Supreme Court, in *Krulewicz v. United States*, 336 U.S. 440, (1,1650) but "an empty ritual without any practical effect on the jurors." It is largely on the basis of such repeated "empty rituals" that the defendants faced the chair.

The trial proceeded in the atmosphere generated by those charges and by the evident conviction of the trial judge that the defendants were guilty, a conviction which he did little to conceal from the jury. I have made notations, in the record, of over a hundred points at which the trial judge aided the government and its witnesses or showed hostility to the defendants or their counsel or minimized their evidence.

The court's attitude toward counsel for Sobell was well shown by such observations as the following (p. 202).

"Let me ask you this, Mr. Phillips: have you tried any criminal cases? I know your specialty is in the real estate field."

Or this choice bit before the jury (p. 808):

"Mr. Kuntz: May I finish my argument?"

"The Court: Mr. Kuntz, no, you may not. It is a lot of gibberish. . . ."

"Mr. Kuntz: May I —"

"The Court: No, the Court put that question, Mr. Kuntz, and don't give me any course of instruction as to what is usually done in a courtroom. This is the way I am running this courtroom, Mr. Kuntz, and I think I understand how a courtroom should be run. I don't care to hear anything further from you. Your objection is noted."

It does not take a veteran trial lawyer to understand what this sort of attitude on the part of the presiding judge does to the attitude of the lawyer thus humiliated.

The only other witness against Sobell, namely, Max Elitcher, likewise attended high school and then college with Sobell up to 1938. He testified that in 1939 he and

Sobell had a conversation in regard to the Communist Party and that ultimately he joined a cell of the Communist Party in Washington at Sobell's suggestion, and attended meetings of that cell for two or three months after May 1939, and until 1941; that he continued to be a member of the Communist Party until 1948, one group of the party being known as the Navy Branch. He testified nothing further about membership in the Communist Party, but he said that he met Sobell again in 1947 at the Reeves Instrument Plant in New York where Sobell asked him if he knew of students who could be approached concerning espionage and obtaining classified material.

The witness further testified that during the week preceding Labor Day in 1944, he had a conversation with Sobell and that Sobell was angry when he heard that Rosenberg had mentioned his name.

### *The Elitcher Testimony*

The witness further testified that Sobell was employed in the General Electric Plant in Schenectady in 1946, and then inquired of the witness whether there was any written material available as to his work; that Sobell suggested or "implied" that the witness was to see Rosenberg about espionage business in 1946; and that in 1947, when he met Sobell at the Sugar Bowl Restaurant, he asked the witness whether his wife knew about the espionage business and also asked the witness whether he would let Sobell know of any engineering students who were "progressive"; that in June 1948, he told Sobell that he was leaving the Bureau of Ordnance and that Sobell asked him to do nothing about that until he had seen Sobell and Rosenberg, subsequently to which Sobell arranged a meeting between the witness and Rosenberg; that at that meeting Sobell and Rosenberg both tried to persuade him to stay at the Bureau of Ordnance because Rosenberg needed someone to work at that Bureau for espionage purposes, but that the witness adhered to his determination to leave Washington.

The witness finally testified that in July or August 1948, when he was driving from Washington to Sobell's home in New York, he was followed by two cars and that when he told Sobell this, the latter was angry; that Sobell asked him to go with him to deliver a 35 millimeter film can to Rosenberg and that they drove to the neighborhood of the *Journal American* Building, where Sobell got out of the car; that when Sobell returned, he told him that Rosenberg was not concerned about Sobell's having been followed and that he also admitted that he had once talked to Elizabeth Bentley but said that she had not recognized his voice; the last time the witness talked to Sobell was in June 1950.

The foregoing testimony was the only evidence against Sobell; it served as the basis for the 30 year sentence; it was not corroborated by another witness; it came only from the lips of Elitcher, who readily admitted that he knew he had committed perjury in 1947 in applying for a government position, in executing a loyalty oath and in

for an  
**Amicus**  
**Brief\***  
 on behalf of  
**Morton**  
**Sobell**

**THE ARREST**, indictment, and trial of Morton Sobell upon the charge of conspiracy to commit espionage and the remaining sentences of thirty years in Alcatraz in an atmosphere of hysteria induced by unreasoned political and social passions, lacked guarantees of fairness which all Americans have a right to expect under the Constitution.

**MORTON SOBELL** is requesting the Supreme Court to review his case on the basis of new evidence connected with his joint trial with Ethel and Julius Rosenberg. This new evidence, never presented to the Supreme Court for the Rosenbergs, very seriously challenges the credibility of the major prosecution witnesses.

**WE BELIEVE** that the standards of American justice require a new trial for Morton Sobell in an atmosphere free of hysteria.

**IN THE LIGHT** of the extraordinary circumstances, which from the very beginning have surrounded the Rosenberg-Sobell case, we authorize the inclusion of our names in an Amicus Brief to the Supreme Court of the United States, petitioning that the verdict be set aside, and that a new trial for Morton Sobell be ordered based on constitutional guarantees of fairness and equality under the law, in accordance with the best traditions of American justice.

Name	Profession	Address
Dr. Harold C. Urey	Scientist	Chicago, Ill.
Dr. Mary Church Terrell	Educator	Washington, D. C.
Dr. Bernard M. Lonergan	Theologian	Chicago, Ill.
Prof. Ephraim Cross	Educator	New York, N. Y.

\*Signers of an Amicus Brief act as friends of the court, petitioning because they believe an important principle is at stake.

Please return to NATIONAL ROSENBERG-SOBELL COMMITTEE  
 1219 Sixth Ave., N. Y. 14, N. Y., LO 4-9585

Name of person receiving this Amicus Brief \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City and State \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures to the Amicus brief, above, are being gathered by the Rosenberg-Sobell Committee for submission to the Supreme Court in Sobell's behalf.

concealing the fact that he was then a Communist; when he was interrogated about this case by the FBI in 1950, they told him that they knew he was a Communist, and he was then fearful that he would be prosecuted by the United States government for perjury.

### Why the Conviction?

In view of the weakness of the evidence against Sobell, you naturally ask yourself why he was found guilty. There are several answers to that:

**First:** Apparently in reliance upon their conviction that there was not enough evidence to justify a conviction, counsel for Sobell did not permit him to take the stand; that was a mistake, as it now appears;

**Second:** The government introduced evidence to show that Sobell and his family had escaped to Mexico and stayed in a number of places under variations of the name "Sobell"; since he did not take the stand, Sobell gave no explanation of his flight and that immediately prejudiced him before the jury; worse than that, the jury was not given any evidence as to the manner in which he had been kidnapped by the Mexican police, without process, and had been turned over to the FBI at the border; although the government must have known that it was false, it introduced a card by an immigration inspector at the time Sobell was forcibly returned to the United States, which card read "Deported from Mexico"; since he did not take

the stand, Sobell was not able to give the jury the facts to show that he had been kidnapped from Mexico rather than being deported;

**Third:** The government was allowed to introduce evidence as to the activities of the Communists in the United States upon the theory that such activities would show the motives of these defendants as Communists; once that door was opened, the cause of the defendants, including Sobell, was sunk. The first witness on the Communist issue was Harry Gold, a self-confessed spy, serving a 30 year sentence, who would some day be applying for parole. He had a Roman holiday on the witness stand, relating alleged activities of the Communists with which the defendants were in no wise connected; as a matter of fact, he never even knew either Sobell or the Rosenbergs; that this created an atmosphere and a prejudice against the defendants which they could not possibly overcome is undeniable.

Another witness presented in connection with the Communist picturization of the case was our old friend, the ubiquitous Elizabeth Bentley. Since she has made a career of professing to be a reformed Communist and has made a living off writing books, presenting lectures and testifying in practically every case and every Congressional hearing involving Communism, directly or indirectly, it was to be expected that sooner or later the charming Elizabeth would appear here, too. She was subpoenaed from a hard-earned vacation in Puerto Rico for the ostensible purpose of establishing the relationship between the Communist Party of the United States and the Communist International. She was allowed, however, to give an extensive history of what she characterized as her activities as a secret courier among many named and unnamed alleged Communists, which testimony consisted of many generalities, much hearsay, etc. The testimony certainly was calculated to give the jury a picture of very widely-spread and sinister activities of the Communists in this country. That it was very prejudicial to the defendants in the eyes of the jury cannot be doubted, even though she did not profess even to *know* the defendants.

Well, you ask me—and your friends ask you—if this case was so patently full of holes, why did not the Circuit Court of Appeals reverse a conviction based upon that evidence? Even lawyers ask me that. The answer is simple. In the federal judicial system, unlike the practice in most of the state courts, the Circuit Court of Appeals, that is the Court of Review, "is not allowed to consider the credibility of witnesses or reliability of testimony. Particularly in the federal judicial system, that is the jury's province": Mr. Justice Frank's opinion in behalf of the Circuit Court of Appeals (p. 1648).

Why that rule has become so well established in the federal courts is hard to say. Time and time again a trial judge upsets a verdict of "guilty" or criticizes an *acquittal* as a miscarriage of justice. Time and time again, a *state* reviewing or appeals court reverses a judgment upon a verdict of guilty, sometimes without even sending it back for a new trial. History, too, has not infrequently shown



juries to have been dead wrong. But in the federal judicial system, the verdict of a jury, however induced by fear, or hysteria or prejudice, if approved by the very trial judge who probably impelled that verdict, can *never* be set aside on the ground that it was based on false or unreliable testimony. Why *must* the defendants, why *must* the defendants, why must we all, accept irrevocably the view of a Judge [Irving] Kaufman and of a jury so exposed to the influence of his attitude and his rulings? Why may not a higher court review the reliability of the testimony, particularly when the very lives of people depend upon that testimony? I should think that every lawyer, every judge anxious to vindicate the processes of law and to administer justice, as far as that is humanly possible, would demand that some higher court, in the fair and detached atmosphere of a court review, free from hysteria and devoid of the spirit of "we'll show these Communists," review the evidence, *every bit of it*, and direct the acquittal of the defendants, if the evidence did not warrant their conviction. That is what we have a right to expect of our courts; that is what courts are for!

### **"Undo a Great Wrong"!**

In view of the above record, the sentence pronounced upon Morton Sobell by Judge Kaufman is almost incredible. Jointly with the Rosenbergs he prosecuted an appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. The opinion of that court affirmed the judgment of Judge Kaufman although the Circuit Court Judge Jerome Frank gave it as his opinion that Morton Sobell was entitled to a new trial on the ground that the evidence established, if anything, two separate conspiracies: (a) conspiracy between Rosenberg and Sobell to solicit and obtain Elitcher's aid in espionage activities and to send military engineering and fire control information to Europe; (b) conspiracy between Rosenberg, Greenglass and Gold to send atomic information from Los Alamos to Russia, with which conspiracy no one, and no evidence, linked Sobell even remotely; Judge Frank held that trying Sobell jointly with defendants charged with another conspiracy with which he had no connection was grave, reversible error. His two colleagues on that Court disagreed with him. The Supreme Court never passed upon that question because it has steadfastly refused to take jurisdiction of the case. Sobell faces 30 years in jail because one judge of the Circuit Court of Appeals does not agree with the theory propounded by counsel and accepted by Judge Frank.

That is one of the great tragedies of this case, namely, that in a case of this highly controversial nature, where the evidence is so insufficient, where the courtroom and outside atmosphere are so inimical to the defendant, where the possibility of a fair trial has been so obviously impaired, nevertheless the Supreme Court refuses to pass upon the case, refuses even to consider the full record. And the press, and the commentators, and that portion of the public mis-

led by them, cry that the defendant has had a fair trial and fair consideration by the Supreme Court!

We must not allow our interest to lag nor our desire to help an unfortunate fellow being grow cold. In a measure, Morton Sobell has suffered an even greater injustice than his fellow defendants, since we all concentrated, understandingly, on the Rosenberg case. The Sobell case is just as vital. The condemnation of an innocent man to a living death of 30 years, the destruction of his family, the martyrdom of his courageous wife are factors which no American, no man with a human heart, can ignore. We must continue, both in the courts and by repeated appeals to executive clemency and by unrelenting search for further evidence, to attempt to undo a great wrong! When public opinion resumes its normal atmosphere, when the witch-hunt is over, when normalcy returns, America will thank us for our efforts, I am certain.

## **DEMAND FOR INVESTIGATION**

**A** BRIEF was filed on December 4 by the National Rosenberg-Sobell Committee with the Senate Judiciary Committee asking the senatorial committee to investigate the conduct of the United States attorney general's office in the case of the Rosenbergs and Morton Sobell, who is today serving a 30-year term at Alcatraz. The 35-page brief contains documentation of the seven charges made against the attorney general's office. These are drawn up in a Bill of Particulars, which we quote below from the brief:

1. The attorney general's office knowingly used and encouraged perjured testimony against the Rosenbergs and against Morton Sobell.
2. The attorney general's office promised rewards and in fact did give such rewards to several chief witnesses in the Rosenberg-Sobell case.
3. The attorney general's office deliberately engaged in an unlawful campaign of misrepresentation of facts through press releases prior to the trial and falsified essential aspects of the case, influencing public opinion to prejudice the defendants.
4. The attorney general's office attempted and still attempts to keep from the courts documents that reveal the perjuries and the role the attorney general's office played in obtaining these perjuries.
5. The attorney general's office engaged in the use of mental torture against the Rosenbergs and mental torture, as well as physical violence against Morton Sobell.
6. The attorney general's office, by deception and misrepresentation, interfered with the courts' handling of the case.
7. The attorney general's office, by withholding information, by deception and by outright falsehoods, misled two Presidents of the United States, who had before them appeals for clemency.

# RABBI SILVER'S AFFIRMATION

And Again . . .

By Abe Strauss

## Cleveland

The sermon of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, delivered on October 25 in his Temple at Cleveland, in which he called upon "all sections of the people to save the country from fascism," aroused the anger of the local McCarthyites and gave courage to the anti-fascist forces.

On November 1, however, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* editorial, "Rabbi Silver Is in Error," referred to Rabbi Silver as one of the spiritual leaders of the country and charged that he was overlooking the danger of communism and exaggerating the danger of witch-hunting in America. The editorial complains that this is not the first time that Rabbi Silver raised the alarm against fascism and that McCarthy and his colleagues are concerned only with the security of the nation.

The editorial provoked a heated debate. Many letters from prominent Jewish and non-Jewish leaders in Cleveland for and against Rabbi Silver's "call to action" against the McCarthy danger appeared in the *Plain Dealer* of November 5, 6 and 8. Among others, Rabbi Rudolph Rosenthal of Heights Temple and Mr. Harry Dworkin, B'nai B'rith leader, strongly seconded Rabbi Silver's warnings and opposed the position of the *Plain Dealer*. Dworkin, a well-known jurist and constitutional lawyer, pointed out that never in American history had there been such an attack on the fundamental freedoms of speech and thought; he warned that this trend would lead to the liquidation of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Thereupon the *Plain Dealer* struck out with a McCarthyite editorial against Mr. Dworkin.

The letters in defense of the *Plain Dealer's* position were typical storm-trooper attacks. One can recognize in their words the ill-concealed features of racism and anti-Semitism.

Why did the *Plain Dealer* suddenly criticize one of Rabbi Silver's speeches, when everybody in Cleveland and throughout the country knows that this has been his stand for a long time? Rabbi Silver had condemned the war policies of Washington and the witch-hunts long before McCarthy emerged and he continued to do so after McCarthy took over the reins in Congress.

Since 1948, Rabbi Silver has ceaselessly pointed out that the cold war policies of Washington will lead to a speedy alliance

with all the fascist and underworld forces in Europe and Asia. At the same time he has not ceased to warn that the policy of renazifying Germany and the military and political alliances with Chiang Kai-shek, Syngman Rhee, Franco and Tito will lead to ultra-reactionary policies and witch-hunts in our own country. The cold war program, he has repeated, is built on the false theory that only one system—the capitalist, colonial system—can exist in the world.

After the Republican victory last November rumors began to circulate that, since Rabbi Silver was both a veteran Republican and a veteran Zionist, he would stop his political utterances and devote himself to spiritual and Zionist activities. It was even said that he had been warned by Washington about his previous speeches and that the present administration expected him to support its policies.

When Rabbi Silver returned from his vacation before Rosh Hashonah and failed—for the first time—to make his traditional Rosh Hashonah statement, rumors about his "retreat" were accepted as fact. All these reports apparently emanated from Republican circles and from the *Plain Dealer*, which is a Taft paper. But Rabbi Silver, in the first sermon of the season, not only pointed to the danger of fascism, but concluded with a ringing call to all sections of the American people for united action to save the country from the fascist threat. The legend of his capitulation was shattered. Rabbi Silver said conclusively, "Not capitulation and apology, but struggle against those who would destroy our freedoms!"

The fact that in the same speech Rabbi Silver unfortunately disparaged an important constitutional principle by stating that Marxist teachers have no right to their positions in the universities and should be removed by the institutions themselves, was of no avail. The McCarthy gang had never expected that "their" Republican rabbi would refuse to be hitched to their wagon! That is why the editorial appeared in the *Plain Dealer*.

Close friends of Rabbi Silver report that he is not at all concerned about the editorial. He believes in free and honest discussion and will as always continue to defend freedom and democracy in accordance with his conscience as a rabbi and a loyal American patriot.

RABBI Silver reaffirmed his belief in the possibility of co-existence of capitalism and socialism and of peace in a speech in Cleveland on November 21. "I believe," he said, "that our age will find the formula of toleration which will enable the many evolving and fluid forms of capitalism and socialism to work out their destinies in the one world in which we live. . . . The way is not that of a global armament race which will impoverish the people of the earth—ourselves included—in the catastrophe of war. The way is rather that of conference, of courageous diplomacy, of giving urgent leadership in the United Nations to a program of speedy and balanced reduction of armament and help to the backward peoples of the earth." (*New York Times*, November 22, 1953.)

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# RECORDING OF A FINE PRODUCTION

By Nathaniel Buchwald

To the unfortunate out-of-towners who cannot in person be present at New York's Barbizon Plaza playhouse and see *The World of Sholem Aleichem*, the recording of this beautiful piece of theater is the next best thing. But also the lucky New Yorkers who did see that fine show will undoubtedly be interested, as this writer was, to hear the long-playing record (running to a half-hour) and to re-live the reception given Bontche Schweig in heaven and the joys and sorrows of Aaron Katz and his family in *Gymnasium*. (*The World of Sholem Aleichem*, a long-playing record with Morris Carnovsky, Howard Da Silva, Ruby Dee, Gilbert S. Green, David Pressman and Pearl Sommer; dramatization by Arnold Perl; directed by Howard Da Silva; music by Serge Hovey and Robert De Cormier. Rachel Recordings, 756 Seventh Avenue, New York 19, N. Y. \$4.95.)

In its own medium, the recording is as notable an event as the stage production itself. The record of *The World of Sholem Aleichem* bears the same relation to the junk and filth which flood the market of so-called "Jewish records" as the stage version does to the offensive "Jewish shows" of the Bagels-and-Yox variety. In both cases one should invoke the safeguarding word *lehavdil*: not to be mentioned in the same breath.

That the half-hour long-playing record could not escape the limitations of its medium, goes without saying. The condensation of the text was achieved at the expense of omissions that sacrifice substance to gain time. This is particularly true of *Gymnasium*, where much of the poignancy and humor is lost due to the omitted episodes.

On the other hand, the musical element —by Serge Hovey and Robert De Cormier—in the recording is enhanced precisely because the eye does not compete with the ear and the magic of the staging does not divert the listener's attention from the magic of the musical background. Also, by subtracting the visual element from the stage production, the recorded version shifts the emphasis from the "theatrical" to the textual element, from shadow to substance, as it were.

Under the circumstances, this is a mixed blessing. For one thing, the script of *The World of Sholem Aleichem* is not

the kind of drama that is sufficient unto itself. Rather, it was conceived and utilized not in terms of "literature" but in terms of theater and stagecraft. The Chelm stories, for instance, while being funny, are trifling and the charm they generate in the theater is due mainly to the disarming simplicity and imaginative artlessness of the staging which includes, of course, the performances of the actors. Take away Will Lee's dance-like movements when he leads the unseen goat home from the market and back again, and there is very little left to the joke about Dody the prankster who substitutes a billy-goat for the she-goat that the Melamed has bought and by twice reversing the process of substitution creates the riddle that only the wise rabbi of Chelm can solve by his superior reasoning.

Also in the more substantial items, *Bontche Schweig* and *Gymnasium*, the staging and acting are more than half the story. And even though Morris Carnovsky as Aaron Katz and Ruby Dee as the Defending Angel speak their lines also in the recorded version, the magic of their rhythms in gesture and movement is absent.

It is indeed a great tribute to the creative contribution of Howard Da Silva, who directed the show, that the production is as much a product of stagecraft as of Arnold Perl's deft adaptation of the original material. But by the same token, the absence of the scenic element robs the recorded version of much of the charm and theatrical effectiveness of the stage production. While the actors do all they can to endow their spoken lines with the power and subtlety of their artistry, they cannot impart to the lines the unspoken depth and beauty of their stage performances.

Were the recorded version conceived half as imaginatively as the stage production, the result would have been different. Unfortunately, the record does little more than present a truncated version of the script plus some of the incidental music. In view of the richness of the radio-technique in translating drama in terms of sound alone, the recorded version of *The World of Sholem Aleichem* falls far short of the best offered by modern radio-technique. The project bears the marks of

hastiness and a rather mechanical approach to the task at hand.

But perhaps the reaction of this writer, who listened to the record after having seen the stage production for the third time, is colored by his admiration for the latter. It is not that he likes the record less but that he admires the stage version more. Surely, there is enough in the recording to impart to the listener the essential values and qualities of the script and the music. And those who had the good fortune to see the show will undoubtedly supply from memory the missing visual elements of staging and acting, thus endowing the record with these added qualities. As it is, the recording is a notable achievement, and this unique item undoubtedly belongs on the top shelf in any discriminating record library.

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# Book Reviews

## VOICES OF THE COMMON PEOPLE

By Morris U. Schappes

*The Faith of Our Fathers*, edited by Irving Mark and Eugene L. Schwaab. Knopf, New York. \$5.

When McCarthyite reaction seeks to destroy the faith of our fathers in democratic and people's institutions, this book, sub-titled "an Anthology of Americana, 1790-1860," is welcome and useful. Of course the United States Information Agency, whose policy is set in terms of McCarthyite principles of the ideological cold war, will not send this book to our libraries abroad, but we at home can see to it that it is in private, school and public libraries here.

In these 400 pages, the editors have included 124 selections from pamphlets, books, petitions, addresses, letters and circulars written by "those who were of or close to the common people, rather than those who spoke for them from high places." Recognizing that "the democratic faith is a tradition of struggle and not of self-congratulation," the editors have conveyed the dissatisfaction, the criticism, the militancy as well as the groping quality of the search for solutions to social problems of our forefathers.

The anthology is divided into twelve sections, entitled: "Civil Rights," dealing with the foreign-born, workers, radicals, women and Negroes; "Right to Alter the Existing Government"; "Fraternal Aid to the Common Men of Other Nations"; "All Men Are Created Equal," including the poor, the foreign-born and women; "Toward Negro Equality"; "Community Humaneness," dealing with prison reform, treatment of the sick, the feeble-minded and the insane, the education of

the deaf and the blind, and the care of seamen and vagrant children (but omitting agitation for the abolition of flogging in the Navy); "Free Public Education"; "Peace Among Nations" and the founding of the pre-Civil War peace movement; "Religious Freedom"; "Share the Land" that was then in the public domain; "Right to Earn a Living," which, the editors remark, "was nowhere inscribed in the constitutions of states" but "was everywhere graven in the hearts of the people"; and finally "Equitable Return for Work Done," which reflects the pre-Marxian criticism of capitalism in forms Utopian rather than socially scientific.

Saturated with "the caustic of reform," this collection begins with the resolutions adopted in Kentucky in 1798 opposing the Alien and Sedition laws (the historical forerunner of the present-day McCarran-Walter and McCarran laws), and closes with a strike-leaflet published as an advertisement by the Journeymen Printers of Philadelphia.

Sham, reaction and injustice are challenged throughout. In pleading for the extension of the franchise at the New York State Constitutional Convention in 1821, John Cramer argued there is more patriotism "in the labouring class . . . than in the higher orders." Women, Emma Willard insisted in 1819 in "A Plan for Improving Female Education," should be "the companions not the satellites of men." Having left the slave-created comforts of her South Carolina home, Angelina E. Grimke Weld could, on the basis of her extensive observation, passionately assert in an 1838 speech, "I have never

seen a happy slave. I have seen him dance in his chains, it is true; but he was not happy." And Frederick Douglass, having escaped from slavery, reports in an 1850 lecture that "the great mass of slaveholders look upon education among the slaves as utterly subversive of the slave system" and describes the "chagrin" of his master when he found out that Douglass could read.

In 1834, a resolution of the National Trades' Union Convention declares that "the accumulation of the wealth of society in the hands of a few individuals . . . is subversive of the rights of man." In 1850 the address of the national convention of Journeymen Printers recognizes that "there exists a perpetual antagonism between labor and capital" and points to "the utter impotency of unorganized labor." In that year also the pacifist Elihu Burritt issues a leaflet in which he sees "the great, honest, toiling masses of the world" proposing "a Strike against War." In 1851 George Lippard, organizer of the Brotherhood of the Union, envisions "the dawning future, when this Continent shall become, in every sense of the phrase,—*The Palestine of Redeemed Labor.*"

Reflecting the editors' grasp of the depth of American democracy is the fact that ten of the selections are by women (including the historic Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments of 1848 and the equally interesting resolutions of the New York Association of Tailoresses of 1831). Three selections are by Negroes, and one wonders why there are not more. One is by a Jew, Jacob Henry, involved in 1809 in a fight in North Carolina for the right of Jews to hold legislative office.

It is one of the high values of the book that it reveals the extent of radical thought among early native writings. At the same time, however, the editors have ruled out the faith of our non-English speaking "fathers" in the United States, including such contributions to American democratic thinking as were made in German by the first American Marxist, Joseph Weydemeyer. Also certainly questionable is whether the type of American expansionism that wrested more than half of Mexico's territory from it can be considered, as it seems to be here, expressive of American democratic tradition.

All in all, the editors have done a difficult and, in these McCarthyite days, a timely job well, both in the selection and in the fine editorial introduction to each section. Especially noteworthy is Dr. Mark's incisive essay on slavery that opens the section, "Toward Negro Equality."

Undoubtedly the editors have a second

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volume in the making, bringing the democratic faith down to the present day. It is to be hoped that the publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, one of the signers of that bold

manifesto, "The Freedom to Read," will publish that second volume. And when it appears, an index to both volumes should be included.

families, the industrialist was forced to flee through a window, Ronch relates. It is from historical facts such as these that the reader learns that class conflict in Jewish life transcended the ties of language and even religion which others have tried to depict as being all-powerful and immutable.

## NOVEL OF WORKERS OF LODZ

By Ben Stein

*The Awakening of Motek*, by Isaac E. Ronch. Bunting Books, New York. \$3.75.

The milieu of the greatest part of Yiddish literature is that of the *shtetl*, the small village in the "Pale of Settlement" to which tsarism restricted Jewish residence. Yiddish writers interpreted every aspect of the *shtetl* and its inhabitants in stories, novels, biographies, histories and poetic works. Even the great classicists, Sholem Aleichem and Isaac Loeb Peretz, who themselves spent the greatest part of their creative lives in large cities with large Jewish populations, devoted the major part of their work to the *shtetl*.

As a result, Yiddish literature is sadly lacking in portrayals of a vitally important segment of the Jewish people in Eastern Europe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries: the Jewish industrial workers. True, numerically the Jewish urban proletariat was small in relation to the overall Jewish population, which counted the *luftmensh* (the vocationless person who "starved by his wits") as its most representative type. Yet it was precisely the Jewish urban industrial workers who did so much to rescue the honor of the Jewish people—from the days of the tsar to the days of Hitler—by fighting for its rights and its very existence both as Jews and as workers.

The lives and struggles of Jewish industrial workers in Eastern Europe are particularly important to American Jews. For they brought with them to this country their militant working class ideology and traditions of struggle and played an important part in the American trade union movement.

It is therefore greatly to the credit of Isaac E. Ronch, well-known to progressive Yiddish readers for his poems and short stories, that he chose for the theme of his first novel exactly that aspect of Eastern European Jewish life that has been so sadly neglected. Ronch's *The Awakening of Motek* is centered in Lodz, the "Manchester of Poland," and its events revolve around the revolutionary ferment of 1905,

the skirmishes and open battles between the workers—Jews and non-Jews—and the tsarist police. Ronch tells in a personal, eye-witness manner of the momentous labor struggles that are important and too-often neglected chapters of Jewish history.

*The Awakening of Motek* is the first part of a trilogy and the first to be translated into English, though the entire work has already appeared in Yiddish. It is the story of the boy, Motek, whose maternal uncles were part of the rising Jewish industrial bourgeoisie in the booming textile manufacturing city that was Lodz in the early 1900's. Motek's awakening is in part his maturation from a headstrong child to a youth who, still in his early teens, has to assume the position of head of the family to his four orphaned sisters. It is also the story of a boy reacting to the new life and ideas around him by rebelling at the old religious fundamentalism that his parents had brought with them from the *shtetl* and at the "new" dog-eat-dog philosophy that his factory-owning uncle Gustav preached.

In the course of describing this latter "awakening," Ronch depicts various historical events. Among the best of these is Ronch's telling of the "other" side—the workers' side—of an item this reviewer found in an article on Lodz in the *Jewish Encyclopedia* which glowingly tells of the textile factories that Lodz Jewish industrialists set up especially for orthodox Jews so that they could work on Sundays instead of Saturdays. Ronch tells about the pious workers in the factory of the equally pious—but extremely rich—Yacov Wishlitski.

When their co-congregationist declared a 15 per cent wage cut, the workers called a strike, utilizing the methods both of the labor movement and of the synagogue. In addition to placing pickets at the factory gate, they took a religious oath not to return to work. After their pious boss had reported them to the tsarist police, who promptly raided their homes and deported them to their native towns, their destitute wives and children stormed the synagogue where Wishlitski stood praying. Afraid to face the wrath of the workers'

Unfortunately the transition to Motek's social "awakening" is unclear. Nowhere does the reader see explicitly why Motek, a lad of about ten, should so quickly and naturally cleave to the clandestine revolutionary movement. Unclearness arises, too, from the interweaving of the personal story with the social: these two aspects do not blend, but rather intrude upon and tend to confuse one another. One major reason for this is the rather overly-detailed recital of the fortunes of Motek's large number of uncles and aunts.

One could also wish for a fuller picture of the lives and struggles of the Jewish weavers of Lodz. While Ronch vividly describes the demonstrations and street fighting in May and June of 1905, he does not adequately describe the conditions that gave rise to these events. Motek never sees the inside of one of the Lodz textile mills, thereby getting only a second-hand idea of the workers' exploitation. And while we are told that the living conditions of the Jewish workers in the slum area of Balut led them to fight as intensely and heroically as they did, we get only the vaguest picture of what that area—which was later to become the Lodz Ghetto—looked like.

Since there are undoubtedly plans for the appearance of the second and third parts of the trilogy in English—dealing with Motek's life in America—some comments on the quality of the translation may be useful. It would not be overstating the case to say that in far too many places the translation actually stands as a wall between the author and the reader. Almost every page sees violence done both to the character of the original and to the English language. Ronch's clean, simple prose in Yiddish is converted to an anarchic jumble in which dialogue is heavy with incongruous elegance while expository sections are littered with slang. More attention to proofreading is also called for in the future volumes.

But while these weaknesses obscure, they cannot and do not obviate the valuable contribution which Isaac E. Ronch has made in giving Jewish Americans a picture of that segment of their forbears who were most important and most neglected. It is to be hoped that Ronch's example will encourage others to help end that neglect.

# Letters from Readers

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

I should like to commend your printing of that very fine article in your November issue by I. Elsky on "Israel and Turkish War Bases." It certainly leaves no doubt in one's mind as to where the reactionary leaders of Israel are taking their people.

In the same issue of your magazine, however, in "From the Four Corners," you print a news item from Israel concerning statements by Moshe Sharett and Meir Argov expressing their attitude of "non-identification" with any group of world powers. . . ."

Such a statement without comment by you might suggest to the reader that such information is to be accepted as printed.

Such statements, however, are refuted by the concrete facts as explained by the correspondent for JEWISH LIFE, Mr. Elsky, from Tel-Aviv. They are refuted by every action taken by the Zionist leaders who are ruining Israel economically and drawing the State of Israel closer to war by building war bases in Turkey against the Soviet Union at a tremendous cost to the Israel economy.

Obviously, Mr. Sharett's statements are pure demagoguery and under the circumstances should not go unchallenged.

E.F.

New York City.

Editor's note: Our correspondent is right in pointing out that the statement on Israel's "non-identification" policy should not have appeared without comment. The enunciation of this policy was forced by the people's pressure, which also prompted the resumption of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, which was in turn hastened on Israel's part by the divide-and-rule squeeze tactics of Washington. Although it is true, as our correspondent points out, that Israel's actual foreign policy is in line with Washington's anti-Soviet strategy, the Israel government is forced to adopt in words, at least, a policy of "non-identification," which also serves as a form of pressure on Washington.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

We enclose a money order for \$75 from the Detroit Jewish Life Committee. We had a successful affair last week and are glad to help at least this much. JEWISH LIFE is more than just a fine publication—it is very existence is an inspiration to

those who fight for peace and democracy—and an answer to those who would destroy them.

DETROIT JEWISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Detroit.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

Thank you very much for the November (1953) number of JEWISH LIFE. I quite agree with the thesis of the Allen article re: McCarthy and the Negro.

G. MURRAY BRANCH

Morehouse College,  
Atlanta, Ga.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

I am having a time digging up the money for renewals, etc., for different magazines I have received this month. Seventy dollars doesn't go very far these days, as I don't have to tell you. However, I've managed somehow—JEWISH LIFE is always a *must*.

Best wishes.

H.D.B.

Los Angeles.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

The remainder of the check (\$7.00) for my renewal is a contribution. Thanks for your fine coverage.

R.L.

Los Angeles.

Editors, JEWISH LIFE:

The enclosed check is for an additional subscription. Thanks a million for your wonderful publication.

Toronto, Canada

M. F.

## KAISER-FRAZER CUTS UP IN ISRAEL

The biggest single American investment in Israel is that of the Kaiser-Frazer auto assembly plant—\$2,500,000 of American money plus some Israel funds. It is the only car assembly plant in that country and is pointed to as a sign of Israel's industrial development. However, in its October 1953 issue, *Labour Israel*, a British Zionist organ favoring the Mapam Party, revealed a story of this plant which exposes the "benevolence" of foreign investment.

It seems that the police in Israel are now after Kaiser-Frazer. "The Israel Treasury," says *Labour Israel*, "has confirmed reports that an investigation is being held by the economic section of the police into the affairs of the Kaiser-Frazer Company. . . . Two charges are being investigated. One, that the company has not been delivering the money received for export from Israel back to Israel; and second, that misuse has been made of import licenses.

"Several months ago the Israel Treasury made several investigations into the worthwhileness of Kaiser-Frazer in the Israel economy. The report, which was kept secret, expressed serious doubts if Israel gained any foreign currency at all from the export of these cars."

*Labour Israel* then gives some details. All exports of cars from Israel were to countries which do not use dollars for cur-

rency and thus have to exchange their currency for dollars when dealing with Kaiser-Frazer. Total exports of Kaiser-Frazer from Israel totalled \$7,000,000. Conversion of the purchasers' currencies into dollars involved a loss of 15 per cent—which indicates how disastrous for Israel is the exclusive dealing in dollars in its foreign trade.

The journal also reveals "additional charges by the police (which) give details of the misuse of import licenses by the firm spending dollars gained by export on equipment for its factory use which had not been authorized by the government and could in many cases have been acquired in Israel itself."

The journal concludes: "The amount of money in dollars which the firm costs the Israel government in one form or another makes it very doubtful if the Kaiser-Frazer factory brings any dollars at all to Israel. The government is committed to supplying the firm with all the dollars that it needs for spare parts and equipment and several loans have already been made in foreign currency by the government. In 1950, Dr. Zaletsky, who had been sent to Israel by the United Nations to help Israel's economic planning, said in his report that the present agreement with Kaiser-Frazer actually represented a loss for the government."



## Rally 'Round

I want to open with mention of a contradiction which must be resolved—and it can be resolved only by the readers of *JEWISH LIFE* and the organizations which support it. One part of the contradiction, and one that does our hearts good, is the growing influence of our magazine and the increasing recognition that it plays a significant role as a progressive voice in the American Jewish community.

The other part of the contradiction—the one that gives us serious concern—is the lack of a *material* response, which is not even partially commensurate with the growing prestige and value of *JEWISH LIFE*.

"Serious concern" is putting it mildly—because, as I write, there is no assurance that this column will see the light because funds are lacking to pay the printer for the last three issues. In short, the magazine is in a desperate situation, and if something drastic is not done immediately by the readers, *JEWISH LIFE* committees and other interested organizations, the magazine may have to discontinue publication.

*This is no exaggeration*—it is the hard fact. The staff had hoped to be able to wait until the \$15,000 fund drive unwinds in its normal course—without desperate appeals. But the situation (translate "printer," who is a good guy but cannot pay wages with the compliments *JEWISH LIFE* receives from its readers and friends), requires the emergency call I am making here. All readers and committees must take drastic steps to see that funds begin to roll in to the office. There must be guarantees for the success of the campaign. House parties and other money-raising projects should be organized quickly and well. Individual contributions should be given and solicited. We are confident that all our readers and friends will rally 'round. And quick!

## Detroit Shines

The first committee to send in a contribution to the \$15,000 fund campaign was Detroit. It has already achieved a good portion of its quota—\$105. This shows it can be done without undue delay. Other committees should get on the job and join Detroit within a matter of days.

## Life in L.A.

Early in November the Jewish Life Committee of Los Angeles distributed the reprint of the ADL's memorandum and the *JEWISH LIFE* "Open Letter" on the street at the Wilshire Temple, where the Jewish Community Council was in session.

## By Sam Pevzner

Thereby hangs a tale which demonstrates the depth of abasement some leaders of the Jewish community have reached in this day of McCarthyite police statism.

The Jewish Life Committee member who was distributing the reprint was ordered to leave by Rabbi Maxwell Dubin, assistant to Rabbi Edgar F. Magnin, head of the temple. When the distributor, who was exercising her constitutional rights, declined, the good rabbi announced he would "get some of the boys to take care of her." Before long two teen-agers came on the scene to engage in a foul-mouthed heckling campaign.

From here let the woman who distributed the reprints take over:

"The kids in the case were vile and reflected the viciousness of the adults. Remarks like 'Lucky she isn't one of the Rosenbergs—they got what they deserved,' 'How's Malenkov—very sick, I hope,' 'They ought to shoot her' and 'Let's get our gang,' were thrown at me constantly. However, some of the adults reacted favorably.

"One man was very sharp with the kids, saying, 'I don't want anyone to tell me what to read!' One woman told the kids they weren't behaving nicely. When they gave their stock answer that 'this is communist literature,' the woman replied that communists also have a right to be heard. She refused to accept a circular from me but told me she felt I had a right to distribute the material and she commented

on 'how they poison the minds of children.'"

The Jewish Life Committee protested the hooliganism to the Wilshire Temple and is awakening the Jewish community to the dangers in debasing children to the level of brownshirts.

## Glad to Help

We were very pleased to see that one of the largest and most influential Negro newspapers, the *Baltimore Afro-American*, began to print the *JEWISH LIFE* article (November issue) "McCarthy, Enemy of the Negro People" by Charles R. Allen, Jr. in its issue of November 24th.

Other leaders of the Negro community have expressed their appreciation of the contribution *JEWISH LIFE* makes with Allen's article. We are mailing copies of the November issue to many leaders of the Negro people—and suggest that our readers do the same.

## A Real Find

Our readers have been introduced to a few of the stories by the Yiddish classicist, I. L. Peretz, in previous issues. The response was a gratifying one. Now, we can let you in on a bit of exciting news. In a coming issue we will print the translation of a work which has never appeared in English before and which is one of the most penetrating and touching stories of the lot of the worker to appear in Jewish literature. It is *Weaver's Love*—and from the point of view of English-speaking Jews, a real find. It shows a side of Peretz which raises his significance as a writer of and for the people.

## "We shall continue our fight . . ."

THE officers of the International Workers Order (Rockwell Kent, president; Peter Shipka, general secretary-treasurer; Rubin Saltzman, vice-president; Sam Milgrom, executive secretary; David Greene, recording secretary) issued a statement on December 15, when they learned that their services with the IWO had been terminated by approval by the Appellate Court of the order issued by Judge Henry Clay Greenberg giving sole management of the affairs of the IWO. The statement said in part:

"The general officers of the IWO and the officers of the societies have been evicted from the premises of the IWO by Dewey's army of occupation. The Insurance Department has taken over full control of the IWO and they are proceeding to the break-up and liquidation of the inter-racial, multi-national labor fraternal society that

has served the interests of the people for 24 years.

"Leaving the premises of our national office, which was the nerve center of the fraternal, social, cultural and civic activities of 160,000 members, we declare that neither the eviction of the leadership nor the smashing of the IWO can destroy the proud record of the Order's services to our membership and to the American people. . . .

"We shall continue our fight in the interests of our members, for the protection of their benefits and for their democratic rights guaranteed by the Constitution. . . . We call upon the membership of the IWO to stand together . . . and to reiterate their right of association and to practice the fraternalism of their own choosing, irrespective of the outcome of this new form of McCarthyite genocide and murder of a mass organization of the people."

# FROM THE FOUR CORNERS

(Continued from page 2)

of "hysteria and know-nothingism." . . . McCarran-Walter was condemned in a strongly worded resolution passed at the conclusion of the annual conference of the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds late in November. . . . The 65th anniversary convention of the United Hebrew Trades on November 14 called for a new immigration law "not based on the discriminatory concept of superior and inferior nationalities."

**Notes on anti-Semitism . . .** Vandals committed \$25,000 damage on November 18 to three Brooklyn cemeteries, two Jewish and one non-sectarian. . . . Anti-Semitic pamphlets calling for war on the Jews were distributed in New York's garment center late in November by the "National Renaissance Party." . . . Anti-Jewish propaganda activities by excommunicated Boston priest Leonard Feeney cause some belief that he has gained new financial backing. . . . An editorial of November 11 in the *Los Angeles B'nai B'rith Messenger* reports distribution of anti-Semitic material "especially in heavily Jewish populated areas of the city." . . . The *Anti-Defamation League Bulletin* for November exposes the existence of a group of Hungarian nazis, recently admitted to the country as desirable "anti-communists," who are stirring up anti-Semitism.

**An important decision** was rendered on December 7 by the New Jersey Supreme Court which enjoined the Gideons International, a fundamentalist group, from distributing pocket-sized King James versions of the Bible to school children. The complaint was brought by a Jewish and a Catholic parent but the latter withdrew from the case. This was the first court test of a national program of the Gideons group.

**The National Negro Labor Council** at its third annual convention in Chicago early in December projected a program that included a fight against Jimcrow in railroad employment and a drive for skilled jobs for Negroes in the tobacco and textile industries in the South.

**For three days** from December 7-9, the United States Supreme Court heard arguments on the constitutionality of segregated public schools. A far-reaching decision is expected but the court will probably not rule for several months. (See next issue for an article on this.)

**The European Executive** of the World Jewish Congress in mid-December passed a resolution in support of the calling of a four-power conference and welcomed "the prospect that the four great world powers will meet in January to discuss the problems which so far have given rise to tension between the states and anxiety among the peoples of the world."

**Notes on Poland . . .** A competition for the best Yiddish one-act plays, novels and mass songs to be submitted by December 31, 1953, has been announced in Poland. . . . The discovery of a ninth century Hebrew manuscript, said to be the oldest in Poland, and belonging to Eldad Hadani, famous Jewish traveller and merchant of the ninth century, was announced in November by the Jewish Historical Institute. . . . The Institute Director Ber Mark reported in October to the Polish Academy of Science on the work of the Institute. . . . During "Friendship Month" a number of Soviet scientists, writers and sailors visiting Poland went through the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and other Jewish institutions. At a reception in their honor they wished the Jews "a happy future in Poland."

**Film credits** for the new Soviet film premiered on October 7 in Moscow, *Ships Storm the Bastions*, about Admiral Ushakov, shows that the script writer was A. Shtein and the producer M. Romm.

**The Hungarian** football team which defeated the British team 6-3 late in November was coached by Julius Mande and the team doctor was Dr. Julius Pollatsek, both of whom wore the Star of David during the nazi regime in Hungary.

**General Skorzeny**, an intense nazi who commanded the nazi soldiers in American uniforms during the Battle of the Bulge and who rescued Mussolini in 1944, is now a United States intelligence agent in Spain.

## ISRAEL

**Soviet Ambassador** Alexander Abramov arrived in Israel on December 2 and presented his credentials to Israeli President Ben Zvi in Jerusalem, which implies recognition of that city as the capital of Israel. The United States, Britain and France have refused to recognize Jerusalem as the capital city.

**A trade pact** involving \$2,000,000 was signed early in December between the So-

viet Union and Israel. In exchange for citrus the Soviet Union will send Israel 75,000 tons of crude oil and 20,000 tons of wheat. Both of these will be much cheaper for Israel than the world market price. Bulgaria has also agreed to send Israel 5,000 tons of wheat. A contract was also signed for citrus fruit from Israel in exchange for potatoes and sugar from Poland.

**Israeli medical** manufacturer S. B. Levin told a press conference in Tel Aviv late in November that the United States had forbidden Israel to sell penicillin to the Soviet Union and the people's democracies.

**During Eric Johnston's** visit to Israel in October there was a demonstration against his presence in Israel with slogans, "Johnston Go Home," and "Keep Our Water Resources Free of American Influence."

**A National Insurance** bill was passed by the Knesset in mid-November. The Communist Party and Mapam opposed the bill because the benefits were regarded as inadequate.

**197 Hungarian** immigrants entered Israel late in November. They are the last of the 3,000 emigrants to leave Hungary for Israel in accordance with a 1949 agreement. At Haifa the immigrants said (as reported in the *London Jewish Chronicle* of November 27) that "the 100,000 Jews in Hungary—the majority are members of the Orthodox community—are free to travel within the country. Thousands of Jews went to the railroad station in the Hungarian capital to bid them farewell."

**32 Jews** arrived from Bulgaria in Haifa early in November. They sated that the position of Jews in their country was "not bad."

## Jewish Life

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