

# JEWISH AFFAIRS

March-April 1977



**MIKE**

**GOLD:**

*Ten*

*Years*

*After* p. 6

*Warsaw: Beacon of Unity* p. 3

*poetry*  
*short stories*

50¢

# Critical Juncture in the Mideast

Since January, the world has been treated to the spectacle of Tel Aviv and Washington maneuvering to prevent the imperative return to the Geneva peace conference. The year began with a governmental crisis in Israel brought about by the bankrupt policies of the ruling elite. Prime Minister Rabin sought to defuse the mounting internal and international pressure for Israel to take a seat at Geneva, by calling for new elections earlier than scheduled.

Following the dismantling of the coalition between the National Religious Party and the Alignment (the Labor Party and Mapam), and the setting up of a caretaker government, Rabin met in Washington with President Carter and Secretary of State Vance. What emerged from their discussions was a renewed U.S. commitment to Israel's aggression and intransigence. Carter's espousal of Israel's "right" to "defensible borders," a catchphrase for retention of occupied territories, brought choruses of amens from Tel Aviv and the Pentagon. His promotion of a "homeland for the Palestinians" caused consternation in some circles, but he quickly cleared the air by declaring that this homeland must be under the ultimate authority of the reactionary Hussein monarchy of Jordan.

The most reactionary and aggressive circles of U.S. monopoly are at work here, using the Israeli government as a front. These circles have the most to gain from continued threat of war and instability in the Mideast, because they stand to profit from the sale of arms and war materiel, and from continued control of the vast and vital oil wealth of the area. It should surprise no one, therefore, that Rabin was "forced" to resign from office just before national elections in Israel on May 17. It is obvious that the disclosure at this time of his and his wife's financial hanky-panky was more than just a neat coincidence. As many observers point out, the Rabins' illegal bank account was known for some time; making an issue of it now created the conditions for the assumption of leadership by Defense Minister Shimon Peres, the darling of the

continued on page 20

# JEWISH AFFAIRS

Vol. 7, No. 2

March-April 1977

## Editorial Committee:

Herbert Aptheker, Editor

Jack Kling

Daniel Spector, Asst. Editor

Alex Kolkin

## CONTENTS

### Editorial

Critical Juncture in the Mideast..... 2

### Articles

Warsaw: Beacon of Unity, *Sol Flapan* ..... 3

Mike Gold: Ten Years After, *Art Shields* .... 6

Birobidjan, *Samuel Aronoff* ..... 11

A Nazi in the Hall of Ivy, *Jairus Gilden* .... 14

### Special Feature

Toward a New Israel ..... 17

### Poetry

The Strange Funeral in Braddock, *Mike Gold* 8

### Short Story

A Jewish Father, *Mike Gold* ..... 9

Letters to the Editor ..... 19

Greetings to Jewish Affairs ..... 22

*Jewish Affairs* is published bimonthly by the Communist Party, U.S.A. at 23 West 26 Street, N.Y., N.Y. 10010 (Tel: 212-685-5755). Subscriptions: \$2.50 per year (6 issues). Second class postage paid at the post office in New York, N.Y.

Cover title design: Mary Birnbaum



**MAY DAY GREETINGS TO  
ALL OUR READERS - THE STAFF**

## Warsaw: Beacon of Unity



**WARSAW GHETTO MEMORIAL:** Monument in Warsaw to heroes of the Warsaw ghetto uprising.

The prestigious *Washington Post* reached a new low on January 25, 1977, charges Colonel Gustaw Alef-Bolkowiak (Ret.). In a letter to *Zycie Warszawy* (Warsaw Life), the former Army man decries the latest depth to which spewers of alleged Polish anti-Semitism crawl. The colonel's indignation concerns an article by a Nathan I. Silver.

Silver, observes Colonel Bolkowiak, uses this hoary slander to lace his feature devoted to the legal aspects of the grisly Gary Gilmore execution story in Utah. Silver recalls that the murderer Gilmore not only demanded the carrying out of the death sentence passed on him, but even attempted to hasten the process by committing suicide. This would have robbed the state of its "monopoly of the instrument of force," Bolkowiak quotes Silver's essay. Hence, the state moved to safeguard and maintain this "monopoly" even though the act of the individual coincided with state policy.

Silver, the colonel points out, then elaborates on this with a mindblowing exercise in history falsification. His newly-packaged old lie claims that during World War II the Nazi-German occupiers of Poland crushed alleged anti-Jewish pogroms by Poles even though they fitted in with Nazi genocide policy. The point being made was that the swastika armbanded hangmen had to demonstrate their "monopoly of the instrument of force." Silver's pogromists "believed that they were carrying out the policy of their captors."

"As a former member of the Polish resistance movement," says Bolkowiak, "as a commanding officer of a People's Guard formation *inside* the Warsaw Ghetto and commander of various People's Guards and subsequently People's Army units across the nation, as a longtime activist in the International Federation of Resistance Movements (FIR), I could inform Mr. Silver of people who brought succor to their

---

Sol Flapan, who lives in Warsaw, Poland, is a contributor to *Jewish Affairs* and the *Daily World*.

Jewish compatriots despite the terror of the invader and under threat of death.

### Entire Villages Burnt

"I could enumerate for him entire villages which went up in smoke for assisting and sheltering Jewish refugees. I could also cite the existence of our resistance movement's Jewish Aid Council, the *only* such institution of its kind in all Nazi-occupied Europe." [My emphasis—SE]

But the former Polish freedom-fighter is convinced that Silver is not interested in such information because "according to Mr. Silver. . . Poles beat the Jews. . . the Nazis crushed these disorders. . . and it was only by accident that several million Jews were murdered."

Bolkowiak suggests that Silver visit the wartime Nazi death factories of Auschwitz, Majdanek and Treblinka "so as to confront his provocative monstrosities with historical reality." These three Nazi horrors of mass-engineered murders, which devoured over five million men, women and children from all over German-occupied Europe (including some nationals from the United States), are now memorial shrines where "Never Again War, Never Again Fascism" is the eternal watchword.

The colonel's indignation is further heightened by his personal disappointment in *The Washington Post*. He recalls that he had always considered this multipage daily a "responsible paper" during his several years' tour of duty in the U.S. He "never imagined" that this "big circulation Washington daily" would open its columns to such a "hate-monger" without any "editorial explanation for the American reader, who is not always oriented in the realities of World War II."

Of course, the big money news media know which side they are on when it comes to the political-ideological crunch. And that's true for the whole political spectrum, from the "responsible" and so-called liberal wing to the ultra-reactionaries.

Colonel Gustaw Alef-Bolkowiak and his People's Guard's operations are one example of the still only partially known active, armed assistance the Polish people gave to their Jewish brothers and sisters during the Nazi holocaust here. Another little-known facet of such solidarity was the daily death-defying heroism of Warsaw firemen, especially those in Fire Companies 1, 2 and 4.

The latter's stationhouse, for instance, was the

### **For Our and Your Freedom! Poles, Citizens, Soldiers of Liberty!**

**Amidst the booming of guns with which the Germans bombarded our houses, the homes of our mothers, women and children; amidst the rattle of machine guns which we have captured from the gendarmes and SS-men; amidst the smoke and fire and blood of the Warsaw Ghetto we appeal to you, we, the prisoners of the ghetto and we send you our brotherly greetings. We know that you are following with anguish and tears, with admiration and anxiety the outcome of the struggle we have been waging for the past several days with the invader.**

**You have seen and will see that every doorstep in the ghetto is and will continue to be a fortress. We may all perish in the struggle but we shall not surrender. Like you, we are seething with the passionate desire to avenge all the crimes committed by our common enemy.**

**It is a struggle for our and your freedom.**

**For our and your human, social and national honor!**

**We shall avenge Auschwitz, Treblinka, Belzec and Majdanek!**

**Long live the brotherhood of weapons and blood of fighting Poland!**

**Long live Freedom!**

**Death to the murderous and criminal occupants!**

**Long live the life-and-death struggle against the German occupant!**

**THE JEWISH FIGHTING  
ORGANIZATION  
April 1943**

headquarters of the local Security Corps (KB in Polish abbreviation), and underground anti-Nazi military organization. Company 4's Fire Lieutenant Michal Pogorzelski was KB deputy commander.

The rear wall of the stationhouse bordered on the Ghetto—a deceptively easy setup, except for the fact that it was sandwiched between two Nazi police posts. And yet, operating literally in the lion's den,



"Fighting Ghetto," by Polish artist Zygmunt Lopuszynski

Company 4 covered up all types of resistance actions by groups or individuals in the Ghetto, backed up organized Jewish resistance, and supplied the Ghetto with food, medical supplies, arms and ammunition in addition to normal fire-fighting duty. In fact, firefighting and answering self-engineered false alarms were the cover for underground work.

### **Company 4 and Warsaw**

During the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943, Company 4 firemen combined extinguishing flames with hacking fire escape routes as well as combat getaways from tenement house to house along the upper stories and attics where the Nazis had feared to tread. Polish firemen also acted as reconnaissance for the embattled Jews.

Company 4/KB headquarters was also an "Aryan factory." Here, Ghetto escapees would be supplied with forged documents.

Occasionally, particularly during the Ghetto battles, some Jews were smuggled out as firemen. This was very risky because the Nazis usually searched the fire trucks thoroughly when they left the Ghetto, although for some unexplained reason, they

were negligent in checking the vehicles rushing behind The Wall.

It was the sewers, however, that were the main "underground railway" out of the Ghetto inferno. And here, too, Company 4 was gallantly active in engineering intricate cellar and sewer linkup systems which served as a means not only for getaways, but also for hitting the fascist enemy from behind.

Nearly every member of the fire department, both regulars and volunteers, contributed something to the Ghetto Relief Fund and participated in militant solidarity operations with the embattled Ghetto. Any assistance, relief or shelter, it must be remembered, was flirting with collective guilt and mass executions, one of the Nazi hallmarks in this part of occupied Europe.

This notwithstanding, according to still incomplete data, Poles managed to rescue between 120 and 150 thousand Jews, a glorious translation into life of an old Polish national and social liberation struggle slogan emblazoned on all battle standards: "For Our and Your Liberty." ■



**Michael Gold**  
April 12, 1894-May 14, 1967

My words can't do justice to Mike Gold, the author of *Jews Without Money*, who died ten years ago. Mike was the pride and joy of the revolutionary movement. His poems, essays and stories sparkle with beauty and fire, and often burn with anger as well. They inspired thousands of men and women to unite against their oppressors and work for the Socialist future. They brought many into Mike's party—the Communist Party.

The inspiration was mutual. Workers inspired Mike as he inspired them. He wrote his finest poem—*The Strange Funeral in Braddock*—after

---

Art Shields, a close friend of Mike Gold, has been a labor journalist for more than half a century.

# Mike Gold: Ten Years After

by Art Shields

visiting a steel town near Pittsburgh. I think this is the most tragically beautiful poem to come out of the U.S. class struggle. It tells the story of a young Bohemian husband who was engulfed in molten steel. This steel—three tons of it—was lowered into a grave by a company derrick. That's all the widow got. The drum beats of the strange funeral—the drum beats of workers' anger—are sounding throughout the poem. I can still hear them sounding as Mike's favorite aunt chanted them for Mike and myself in her home near Braddock.

Mike was a dedicated literary artist of the American class struggle. There was no finer artist in that richest of all literary fields in his time. He gave

his life to this glorious cause without question because he could do nothing else. The emoluments of literary prostitution meant nothing to him. He never thought of offering his genius for sale. He lived in poverty instead.

Mike came out of the sweated Jewish workers on New York City's Lower East Side. The memory of his class background was always with him. He was happiest in the company of working people, as was his favorite poet, Walt Whitman. When I visited his flat I was likely to find him in the midst of a number of seamen, garment or construction workers, with a Black neighbor among them. They were his people. And they knew Mike belonged to them.

I often enjoyed the welcomes Mike got in New York City's fur and garment markets during the tumultuous strikes of the 1920's and 1930's. And I vividly remember how the miners took him in during a Pennsylvania coal strike that we reported together. Tens of thousands of strikers were swarming into the United Mine Workers in the coking coal fields below Pittsburgh. Mike fitted into every circle of miners so well that he was once coopted as a teller in a crowded meeting hall in the town of Fairchance, where officers were being elected to a new union local.

Mike often said that he was molded for life by his early years in the immigrant's ghetto. The tenement he was born in was still in his blood, he wrote in his essay, *Toward Proletarian Art*. "All I know of life," he wrote, "I learned in the tenement. I saw love there in an old mother who wept for her sons. I saw courage in a sick worker, who went to the factory every morning. I saw beauty in little children playing in the dim hallways, and despair and hope incarnated in the simple figures of those who lived with me."

The story of those early years is told in *Jews Without Money*, one of the finest autobiographical novels from an American pen. It is told with brilliant scenes and portraits that are printed unforgettablely on the reader's mind. We see little Mike swimming with his pals in the East River scum. We hear his teacher, a sour old maid, berating him as a "little kike." We watch Mike's mother in her ceaseless battles with bedbugs in a building that was "nothing but a junk heap of rotten lumber and bricks. It was an old ship in the battering winter storms, all its seams opened, and wind and snow coming through." And we applaud Mother as she leads a fight against Mr. Zunzer, the grasping

landlord, and compels him to furnish heat in a freezing winter.

There are other heroic figures in this unforgettable book. I'm much in love with Mike's Aunt Lena, a glowing woman from Hungary, who lost her beauty in sweatshops. She came home one night with bandaged head after a battle with gangsters on the picket line. "But how we scratched their faces," she chuckled grimly. "They will remember us girls."

But Mother is first in my mind. We see her begging in the tenements for pennies for families about to be evicted. "Puffing with bronchitis, she dragged herself up and down the steel landings of a hundred tenements, telling the sad tale with new emotion each time."

"My humble, funny little East Side mother!" writes Mike.

How can I ever forget this dark little woman with bright eyes, who hobbled about all day in bare feet, cursing in Elizabethan Yiddish, using the forbidden words "ladies" do not use, smacking us, beating us, fighting with her neighbors, helping her neighbors, busy from morn to midnight in the tenement struggle for life.

When Mike's father was crippled, mother saved the family from starvation by going into a cafeteria kitchen for seven dollars a week. She rose at five, was on her feet all day, and at night told how she led the struggles of the Black and white kitchen workers against the boss.

Mike expresses his indebtedness to Mother in words that strike deep into one's heart.

Mother! Momma! . . . I must remain faithful to the poor because I cannot be faithless to you! I believe in the poor because I have known you. The world must be made gracious for the poor; Momma, you taught me that!

The Jews without money on Mike's street

had fled from European pogroms with prayer, thanksgiving and solemn faith from a new Egypt into a New Promised Land. They found awaiting them the sweatshops, the bawdy houses and Tammany Hall.

The sidewalks of Chrystie Street were thronged with prostitutes, who were driven to the pimps by poverty. And each pimp paid tribute to Tammany Hall.

One of these pimps was Louis One Eye, a slim young man with "proud Jewish features," that were marred by a perpetual sneer. He killed men, broke strikes, was a Tammany strongarm man on election days, and tried to seduce every Chrystie Street girl reaching sexual maturity. He turned the sister of Mike's best friend into a prostitute, and would have raped Aunt Lena on the roof one night if Mike's cries had not brought tenants to save her.

"Everyone hated Louis One Eye and I did too," said Mike. "Now I hate more those who took an East Side boy and turned him into a monster." And Mike tells how this ghastly transformation was done.

Louis One Eye's one love was for his mother. At 14 he saw his father beating his mother. He pushed the brutal parent out of the window, almost killing him. For this the kid went to the reformatory, where a keeper flogged him with a leather belt that

burst his eye ball. A cruel prison doctor snipped the useless pulp from the screaming boy's eye. And Louis came out of prison as an enemy of society.

I'm only scratching the surface of this historic novel of the conflicting class forces in the immigrants' ghetto. It ends on a triumphant note after Mike—an unhappy, juvenile worker—gets the message of the future from an East Side soapboxer.

"O, Revolution, that forced me to think, to struggle and to live.

"O great Beginning!"

I'm sorry I lack space to discuss Mike's plays, his volumes of revolutionary essays and stories, and above all his *Daily Worker* columns. They were trumpet calls to battle that brought many young people into the revolutionary movement.

Mike Gold, the son of the Jewish working class, left a deep mark on his time. ■

by Mike Gold

## The Strange Funeral in Braddock

Listen to the mournful drums of a strange funeral.  
Listen to the story of a strange American funeral.

In the town of Braddock, Pennsylvania,  
Where steel mills live like foul dragons burning,  
devouring man and earth and sky,  
It is spring. Now the spring has wandered in, a  
frightened child in the land of the steel ogres,  
And Jan Clepak, the great grinning Bohemian on  
his way to work at six in the morning,  
Sees buttons of bright grass on the hills across the  
river, and plum trees hung with wild, white  
blossoms,  
And as he sweats half-naked at his puddling trough,  
a fiend by the lake of brimstone,  
The plumb trees soften his heart,  
The green grass memories return and soften his  
heart,  
And he forgets to be hard as steel, and remembers  
only his wife's breasts, his baby's little laughs,  
and the way men sing when they are drunk and  
happy,  
He remembers cows and sheep, and the grinning  
peasants, and the villages and fields of sunny  
Bohemia.

Listen to the mournful drums of a strange funeral.  
Listen to the story of a strange American funeral.

Wake up, wake up! Jan Clepak, the furnaces are  
roaring like tigers,  
The flames are flinging themselves at the high roof,  
like mad yellow tigers at their cage.  
Wake up! It is ten o'clock, and the next batch of  
mad, flowing steel is to be poured into your pud-  
dling trough,  
Wake up! wake up! for now the lever has cracked,  
and the steel is raging and running down the floor  
like an escaped madman,  
Wake up! O, the dream is ended, and the steel has  
swallowed you forever, Jan Clepak!

Listen to the mournful drums of a strange funeral.  
Listen to the story of a strange American funeral.

Now three tons of hard steel hold at their heart, the  
bones,  
Flesh, nerves, the muscles, brains and heart of Jan  
Clepak,  
They hold the memories of green grass and sheep,  
the plum trees, the baby-laughter, and the sunny



Bohemian villages.

And the directors of the steel mill present the great coffin of steel and man-memories to the widow of Jan Clepak,

And on a great truck it is borne now to the great trench in the graveyard,

And Jan Clepak's widow and two friends ride in a carriage behind the block of steel that holds Jan Clepak,

And they weep behind the carriage blinds, and mourn the soft man who was killed by hard steel.

Listen to the mournful drums of a strange funeral.  
Listen to the story of a strange American funeral.

Now three thinkers are thinking strange thoughts in the graveyard.

"O, I'll get drunk and stay drunk forever, I'll never marry woman, or father laughing children, I'll forget everything, I'll be nothing from now on, Life is a dirty joke, like Jan's funeral!"

One of the friends is thinking in the sweet-smelling graveyard,

As a derrick lowers the three tons of steel that held Jan Clepak.

(LISTEN TO THE DRUMS OF THE STRANGE AMERICAN FUNERAL!)

"I'll wash clothes, I'll scrub floors, I'll be a fifty-cent whore, but my children will never work in the steel mill!"

Jan Clepak's wife is thinking as earth is shovelled over the great steel coffin,  
In the spring sunlight, in the soft April air.

(LISTEN TO THE DRUMS OF THE STRANGE AMERICAN FUNERAL!)

"I'll make myself hard as steel, harder, I'll come some day and make bullets out of Jan's body, and shoot them into a tyrant's heart!"

The other friend is thinking, the listener,  
He who listened to the mournful drums of the strange funeral,

Who listened to the story of the strange American funeral,

And turned as mad as a fiendish cauldren with cracked lever.

LISTEN TO THE MOURNFUL DRUMS OF A STRANGE FUNERAL.

LISTEN TO THE STORY OF A STRANGE AMERICAN FUNERAL.

# A Jewish Father

by Mike Gold

My father had been the soul of our home. Now it was hard to accept this stranger as my father, this suffering invalid with the shrunken face and gloomy eyes. What justice could there be in a universe that punished so? And there had been no crime—he was innocent, innocent!

I could remember how handsome he'd been as a young father, a tall, rangy figure with a smiling, clean-cut face, high forehead, a red moustache and long sideburns. His eyes sparkled, he had that quality only the French regard seriously as an important virtue—he was gay.

He liked to dress well—on the holidays this house painter dressed in a stiff white shirt and collar, with an elegant bow tie, a big gold watch chain, a suit with long tails like an actor's or rabbi's. He loved friends and family, loved wine and food, feasts and



parades, and above all, the theater. My father was one of those fanatic theater patriots of the old East Side, an audience of illiterate sweatshop workers who adored the classics, and most resembled the working folk of London in whose sun of warm comprehension Shakespeare was able to flourish.

I was the first of three sons—he made me his companion, showed me his world, talked to me seriously as to a grown-up, answered all my questions, as with a respected friend.

One summer day my brother, Manny, a braggart of four, was run over by a horse car. The cruel metal wheel was deeply imbedded in his ankle. A crowd of emotional East Side neighbors agreed that the car would have to be pushed over my brother's foot to release him.

But suddenly my father flung himself under the car, his head under the wheel beside my brother's foot. "Lift the car! I won't let you cut off his foot! Cut first my head!" They pleaded and argued with him; finally, straining and groaning, they managed to lift the horse car, thus saved my brother's foot.

I was four years old, it was the time of Christmas. My father and I were walking through the frozen slush on Houston Street and passed the huge brown church of the Germans. Through the open doors I saw a fairy vision, a sudden glory that ravished my heart, green, red, and silver balls and gleaming candles, my first Christmas tree!

"Papa, I want to go in there," I said, trembling. "No, no," he said kindly, and tried to explain what

a great sin it was for a Jew to enter the church of his enemies. He related terrible anecdotes of things he'd seen in Christian Rumania, he told of pogroms and centuries of persecution.

"Only once, Papa, just let me touch that tree once," I pleaded. When I started to cry, he shuddered and with a grim face led me to the tree. When we came out into the street again, I began to feel sorry for the thing I'd made him do. "Papa, don't worry. It wasn't your fault—God will punish me not you."

He shrugged humorously and said: "It's finished! The sins of a Jewish boy until he is thirteen and a man, must rest on his father. But it was really a beautiful tree! What a good thing for the children!" And we remembered with joy all the way home that beautiful tree.

He was drinking wine and reading his Yiddish newspaper one night after supper. Suddenly he exploded: "Great news, Katie! The twentieth century is coming next Thursday night!"

"Whatever it is, it probably means more trouble for the Jews," sniffed my mother, ever the peasant skeptic.

"They promise us telephones, Katie, electric lamps, wagons without horses, flying machines and wonderful new battleships."

"All I ask is they should leave us alone," said my mother.

"And Goldfaden is also coming to New York, they say," my father exulted. This was Abraham Goldfaden, father of the Yiddish theater, an exquisite genius who composed words and music of numerous folk operas. My father had known him in Jassy, Rumania, their common home.

There was to be a welcome to the new century on the Brooklyn Bridge. My mother refused to go, so my father and I trudged through the damp snowfall and at midnight, heard the great city welcome the mysterious stranger with full exuberant voice. All the tugboats and ocean liners boomed deeply. Hundreds of thousands of people packed on the immense tall bridge sounded their holiday horns, we heard from miles around all the street cars clanging their bells and the fireworks banged and splashed the sullen sky.

My father clutched my hand and said, joyfully: "And to think Goldfaden is also coming here!" This delighted him more than all the promised telephones and battleships of the new century. ■

By Samuel Aronoff

# Birobidjan

The territory of the Jewish Autonomous Region (JAR), 14,000 square miles, is approximately equal to the combined territories of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island and is bounded by the majestic Amur River on three sides. A multitude of lakes and some 2800 miles of streams and rivers within the JAR provide enormous supplies of some 25 varieties of fish.

The climate of the JAR is temperate. The region lies on a parallel south of Paris with an abundance of sunshine throughout the year and an average yearly rainfall of 16 inches, about half that of Austin, Texas. The territory contains an abundance of natural resources: rich forests, gold, iron, tin, lead, marble, graphite, magnesium, asbestos, hot mineral springs, large honey-producing areas, an enormous variety of flora and about 50 varieties of fauna, including sable, bear, raccoon, fox and squirrel.

More than 20 nationalities make up the approximately 200,000 citizens of the JAR, including more than 60,000 in Birobidjan and a Jewish population estimated at 25,000.

## Early Years

On March 28, 1928, the Soviet government assigned the territory for voluntary Jewish settlement, and on May 7, 1934, the territory was named the Jewish Autonomous Region with Birobidjan as its capital. "Birobidjan" is derived from the names of the two rivers Bira and Bidjan. On December 18, 1934, the first Jewish government was established with qualified elected representatives to the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and to the Supreme Soviet of Nationalities.

The first years, 1935 to WWII, were the most difficult for the new settlers: the taiga had to be

cleared, the capital city established, some services provided, small industry established, roads laid, temporary housing erected—indeed, these were trying pioneering years. Settlers came from various regions of the USSR and from foreign lands, including the U.S.

WWII interrupted all activity and all plans. The war effort took priority. At the conclusion of the war, planning and construction were feverishly and urgently resumed. After some 30 years of such dynamic activity, we came to see the modern city of Birobidjan and its surroundings. We talked to many of its leaders, we saw the people in various phases of social activity, and we conversed with them in the street.

An efficient industrial and agricultural economic base had been established that makes the area self-sustaining. There are approximately 50 major industries in the JAR, among which are:

- \*Heavy machinery production, including agricultural equipment and transformers. The Dasmash agricultural machinery plant, whose director is Edward Grigorievich Lepovitsky, developed an advanced combine that operates on caterpillar tracks. This combine is sold worldwide and is under consideration in the U.S. A transformer plant, under the direction of Mark Matvievich Kaufman, employs 3000 workers and produces a variety of transformers worth about \$40 million per year.

- \*Consumer goods. The JAR manufacturers five million pairs of stockings and four million pairs of shoes yearly.

- \*Agricultural products. The Kholkhos "Znamya Ilicha" (The Behest of Lenin) is a combination of five villages placed in a circle around the principle village. The kolkhoz occupies 67,500 acres of land, of which 8,750 are under cultivation. There are 800 workers in the kolkhoz, half of whom are Jewish. There are also 27 workers with special college-level training.

The farm produces 625,000 gallons of milk, 6,000

---

Samuel Aronoff is chairman of the Southern California Council for Jewish Affairs and vice-president of the City Committee of the Los Angeles Jewish-American Cultural Clubs.



The Daselmash agricultural machinery plant

tons of vegetables, 800 tons of potatoes, 800 tons of soy and 350 tons of meat. Whatever is not needed to sustain the collective is sold to the government.

The inventory of the kolkhoz includes 20 combines, 110 tractors, 60 automobiles, and more than 800 cows. The school is attended by 300 children, of whom 100 are Jewish.

Other enterprises include a textile plant, fisheries, a furniture and woodworking factory, cement plants, and honey manufacturing plants.

#### “Like One Family”

We visited the Birobidjan Jewish People's Theater during rehearsal in the Palace of Culture. The theater group has been declared a “Laureate” theatrical group. It produced many plays in Yiddish by Sholom Alcheim, Goldfaden, Miller, Leonov and others in many cities across the USSR.

Birobidjan boasts a fine Sholom Aleichem Library, which is under the direction of Boris Davidovitch Berger. It serves the region with many mobile units and has contact with all libraries in the USSR and with many foreign libraries, including some in Israel.

The very fine Birobidjan Museum is under the direction of Nina Vasilievna Kapitonova. The museum displays various maps of the territory, many of its flora and fauna, memorabilia of WWII, the original documents of the Soviet declaration of 1934, many of its natural resources and products, and a history of the JAR.

The territory has its own Yiddish radio station (TV is beamed from Khabarovsk and other outlying areas) and a Yiddish newspaper, *Birobidjaner Shtern*, whose editor-in-chief is Nahem Abramovich Kapichinski. A Russian language newspaper of the same name is also published. One

can see many bookstores in which Yiddish books by Jewish writers are displayed, *Sovietish Heimland*, the Soviet Yiddish monthly magazine, is distributed widely.

As I observed the panorama of Birobidjan, I was impressed by the variety of housing accommodations and the complete absence of squalid huts and dilapidated tenements.

Many of the principal buildings of the city—the railroad station, the Communist Party headquarters, the library, the Palace of Culture and others—are identified by a plaque at the entrance displayed both in Russian and in Yiddish. A project is under consideration to identify all streets in Russian and Yiddish. The teaching of Yiddish and of Jewish history was also under consideration, with a promise that such courses will be initiated with a group of 17 young people who requested them. At



The “Znamya Ilich” (Behest of Lenin) collective farm

present, those desiring to study Yiddish or Hebrew receive such training in numerous philological institutes in major cities across the USSR.

Albert Axelbank, a writer for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, reported in 1975 that

I spoke to Jewish milkmaids and vegetable growers. They appeared content, secure, energetic. If they were ambitious, it was to produce more milk and grow more peppers and cucumbers, not to change jobs or go off to the city. Half of the 800 families on the farm were Jewish. . . Vegetable grower Riva Vishchinikina, 39, told me “we are like one family here. I am a Jew, but I have a Russian husband.” She said there were 12 nationalities represented on her collective farm.

Watching a rehearsal of a Yiddish play by

Sholom Aleichem, Mr. Axelbank commented that “. . .the emotional intensity of the performance cut through all language barriers. . . I also learned that a few of the 50 members of the group are non-Jews who speak fluent Jewish.”

And why should it be any different? In substance, the JAR is a microcosm of the socialist structure of the USSR, a product of the Great Socialist Revolution that established in fact the brotherhood of man and which now is fostering the emergence of the new social and cultural person on the world scene.

## People Come First

The workers of the JAR, like all citizens of the USSR, are protected by law “from the cradle to the grave.” They are assured of work, enjoy complete, free health care, complete equality and freedom in education, guaranteed vacation periods, freedom to worship, and access to sports and the arts. They are the planners of their society and they are the reapers of its benefits. They are “ambitious to produce more” because they profit from their endeavors.

During my interview with Mr. Kaufman, director of the transformer plant, he elaborated on the distribution of profits of the industry, which is arranged by joint conference of management and the union. Usually, the profits are allocated according to the following pattern: one half for plant improvement; the other half for the general welfare of the workers, for performance on the job, to inventors, to the maintenance of child care, to advance the educational level of workers and their children, to special awards and to scholarships. The production plans are also coordinated between management and the union.

Similarly, the management of the “Znamya Ilch” Kolkhoz disclosed that in the year prior to our visit, they had a substantial bank account, and had invested \$1.6 million in new housing and general construction, including housing for equipment. They provided nurseries for every village in their group, and \$450,000 was allocated for premiums and special allowances for the school.

The Soviet Union now enjoys a 99.6 percent literacy rate for the whole population, and an average educational level of the eight grade. The government has embarked on a program to raise the average educational level of its citizens to the tenth grade. Various enterprises in the JAR provide the facilities and funds as part of the planning to achieve this goal.



Birobidjaner Shtern (“Birobidjan News”), the daily Yiddish newspaper of the JAR.

To the question whether prospective settlers can now come to the JAR, Mr. Lev Shapiro, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in the JAR, explained that “at the present time the period of pioneering is over.” Now they accept prospective settlers by application. We were shown a stack of such applications on his desk. Acceptance of settlers is based on the extent to which they can be absorbed into the social and economic life of the region. The JAR must arrange for employment and living quarters. The prospective settler can come in advance and review the possible jobs and living quarters. The JAR may even be helpful to the applicant in moving to the new home.

With regard to Israel, Mr. Shapiro observed that the people at the JAR maintain a “friendly and sympathetic” outlook. They regret that the Israeli leadership is “betraying the very interests of Israelis” and they “disapprove of the policies of the ruling circles of Israel.”

## Postscript

Mr. Shapiro had met with a group of U.S. Senators, including Jacob Javits, prior to our arrival in the USSR. This meeting occurred in Moscow. During our interview with Mr. Shapiro, he told us that he had given the Senators a full picture of the life, achievements and progress of the people of the JAR. Following this presentation, Mr. Shapiro had a private audience with Senator Javits, during which he noted that the press in the U.S. avoids any mention of the JAR, depriving the public of any knowledge of this dynamic region. Javits indicated that he would use his influence to have the U.S. media publish informative material concerning Birobidjan and the JAR.



Members of the Jewish People's Theater of Birobidjan

Upon our return, I wrote Senator Javits, inquiring about his efforts in this regard. He replied that Mr. Shapiro's presentation "was received with some skepticism by myself and the members of the Senate delegation." Further, he stated that "... I

did not receive any information from him [Shapiro] ... nor did I indicate that I would make an effort to publicize his presentation and I do not know of any published reports with respect to the matter."

Skepticism but no effort to obtain the facts? It is reasonable to assume that Mr. Shapiro easily could have arranged for a flight to Birobidjan on the part of the Senators. What about the matter of material for publicity? Senator Javits certainly had or could have obtained a copy of Mr. Shapiro's presentation. And there is an abundance of information available on the JAR in Soviet bookstores and newsstands, of which Senator Javits could have availed himself if he was seriously interested in promoting the truth. ■

**Editor's note:** This issue of *Jewish Affairs* is being mailed to Senator Javits for his special attention and, perhaps, action.

by Jairus Gilden

## A Nazi in the Halls of Ivy

V.D. Samarin, a/k/a Sokolov-Samarin—wanted by the government of the Soviet Union for treason and collaboration with the Nazis during World War II—recently placed on the Immigration and Naturalization Service's "preliminary list" of Nazi war criminals residing in the U.S.—served for 17 years as an instructor and lecturer Yale University's Slavic Language Department. Throughout the time that Samarin was at Yale, not one inquiry was made into his background nor one word of protest sounded about his presence. In fact, when his past

Jairus Gilden is a senior-year student at Yale University.

was publicly revealed last spring, the University's immediate reaction was to downplay the whole affair. According to its own policy statements, Yale can remove non-tenured faculty for "moral turpitude." But in the Samarin case, the administration chose not to exercise this option, stating that there was no administrative grounds for dismissal.

Samarin would still be teaching at Yale if several members of the Slavic Department had not raised a fuss which threatened a public scandal. In August, Yale allowed Samarin to retire, two years before he reached the minimum retirement age, and further rewarded him with one year's severance pay and a \$20,000-a-year pension. Many in the university power structure hoped that Samarin's resignation would end the matter, but the prolonged presence of a Nazi at one of the country's leading universities cannot be shrugged off so lightly.

### Nazi Collaborator

Samarin was born into a Czarist landholding family in 1902 near Oriol, an industrial town west of Moscow. At the age of 35, he was arrested by the Soviet authorities for draft-dodging. He left Oriol after his release, but returned with the Nazi occupation forces in 1941 as a Gestapo agent.

He served willingly as assistant editor of the fascist newspaper *Rech*. During this time, he wrote viciously anti-Semitic, anticommunist articles that

called for exterminating Jews and Communists. Half of Oriol's population was killed, starved to death, or shipped to concentration camps.

Samarin fled with his tutors when the Red Army began its march to Berlin in 1944. After the war, he offered his services to the intelligence agencies of West Germany and the U.S.

On entering the U.S. illegally in 1951, under the name of Sokolov, he continued to work as a professional anticommunist. In 1959, he applied for a position as an instructor at Yale. Although he included in his application references to his work on *Rech*, he was hired on the spot.

The Soviet Yiddish magazine, *Sovietish Heimland*, exposed Samarin's past in an article last year. The story was made public at Yale last May. By early June, the University was reacting. The dean of the Slavic Language Department, Robert Jackson, the provost of the University, Hanna Gray, and several other persons in relevant positions, held a meeting with Samarin. The purpose of this "informational" session was to determine the accuracy of the charges which had been leveled against the Russian-language teacher.

Samarin admitted writing for *Rech*, but claimed the gist of his work was anticommunist. He was not anti-Semitic—in fact he was now pro-Zionist—and, in any case, the whole attack upon him was a KGB plot. After this meeting, Yale decided that there was no basis for disciplinary action against Samarin.

Now, however, apparently embarrassed by what its earlier inaction indicates about the University, Yale has changed its story. A spokesman for the University, with whom I spoke, stated that the University's decision was based on two related considerations: Samarin's record while at Yale was spotless and the charges against Samarin were not of sufficient weight to justify any action, because they are based on Soviet publications, which the spokesman termed unreliable. More reliable sources were not available, he said.

If hard evidence corroborating the charges against Samarin had come to the University's attention, there would have been a basis for dismissal, the spokesman said. I asked whether, given the seriousness of the allegations, the administration should not have conducted a more thorough investigation. The response: "That was not the role of the University."

### **Yale's Smokescreen**

As this interview indicates, Yale today admits

that there was an administrative basis for dismissing Samarin. Now, to justify its failure to do so, the administration claims the charges against Samarin were based on unreliable evidence. However, it is also apparent that Yale was in no hurry to find out whether the evidence in its possession was valid or not. In fact, Yale's line is nothing more than a smokescreen. All the evidence that anyone could wish for was available to Yale by early summer of last year.

Soon after the informational meeting in June, *Sovietish Heimland* provided irrefutable proof of Samarin's Nazi activities. At the request of members of the Slavic Department, the Soviet Yiddish magazine sent to Yale photostatic copies of Samarin's writings in *Rech*. This provoked an immediate response from four of the six tenured professors in the department. They sent a letter to Samarin disassociating themselves from him and stating that they would not defend him if he were attacked. The letter expressed their personal outrage at Samarin's past activities.

Yale never moved to discipline Samarin, even after this new information was provided. In fact, although Samarin's contract expired during the summer, his reappointment was approved. The university had every opportunity to make some kind of statement about Samarin's Nazi past, but refused to do so. In early August, in the face of mounting opposition within the department, Samarin elected "early retirement."

### **Student Reaction**

Perhaps even more disturbing than the administration's response to Samarin was the reaction among some students and their organizations. Soon after the reopening of classes in September, the Samarin story appeared in the *Yale Daily News*. The *News*, among whose editors are a number of Jewish students, rose to the defense of Samarin. The paper stated editorially: "... should Mr. Samarin have remained at Yale? We are sure the answer to that question ought to have been yes." The main content of the editorial was an attack on the four professors who had condemned Samarin.

Recently, I called the *News* and spoke to one of the editors, John Harris. I asked whether the newspaper would have taken that position in September if all the information now known about Samarin had been available then. The answer:

Yes, nothing has occurred to change our minds. The basic point is that his background should not interfere with academic freedom. Samarin did not commit immoral acts while in the classroom, and it was generally accepted that he was a competent teacher. There was never a question that he should be dismissed. The pressure put on Samarin to resign was the real question. It was excessive and unnecessary.

Another editorial on the Samarin case appeared in September, under the byline of Steve Osterman. It also criticized the four professors in the Slavic Department for not following "due process." Osterman went on to say ". . . Samarin deserves forgiveness. Given his sincere and genuine contribution. . ."

In general, those students who supported Samarin pointed to his long employment by Yale, the lack of complaints against him from Jewish students, and especially his pro-Zionist statements and writings, as proof of his "rehabilitation." This is a clear example of how the extreme anticommunism of the Zionist movement has helped to create a cover which gives a legitimate appearance to the activities of even Nazis like Samarin.

Rabbi Arnold Wolf, the Jewish chaplain at Yale, found the newspaper reaction and the support of Samarin by some Jewish students "outrageous." He stated in an interview that, "A few years ago, students were up in arms about things; but, here with fascism staring them in the face, they talk about 'due process!'" I asked Rabbi Wolf what he thought of the administration's actions towards Samarin. He found them "faultless"—at least from their own point of view. By allowing Samarin to resign quietly, the University prevented serious criticism from any side. Rabbi Wolf did feel that if the charges against Samarin were judicially verified, the University had an obligation to make a statement. He also called for an investigation into whether Samarin worked for the CIA and if other Russian departments are similarly infiltrated.

### **Disturbing Ambivalence**

I talked with a number of Jewish students on campus. One told me of a meeting of Jewish graduate students where the Samarin affair was discussed. He said that some of those present indicated that they were hesitant to react strongly against Samarin for fear that they would appear to be oversensitive to anti-Semitism. In the same vein

was a discussion I held with several Jewish Slavic language majors. When asked about Samarin, the immediate reaction was: "Samarin is not the only anti-Semite in the department." But then, a strange ambivalence:

You can't take it out of the context of the Slavic culture—it's so deeply rooted, playing up the question of anti-Semitism is to treat it oversensationally. Many of the people in the Department left through Germany during or just after the war. All are very anti-Bolshevik and its almost easy to believe that Samarin's anti-Semitism was a result of the conditions of the times.

Yale has consciously developed a Slavic Department oriented toward extreme anticommunism. On one hand, among the faculty, there is a group of non-Jewish emigres from socialist countries whose backgrounds are tainted with anti-Semitism. On the other hand, a large number of the members of the Department are anti-Soviet Eastern European Jews. Their common anticommunism creates an uneasy peace between the two groups, and lets the real perpetrators of anti-Semitism go about their business undisturbed.

Of course, there were also many students who were horrified by the revelations about Samarin. David Thomas, former moderator of the Black Student Alliance at Yale, saw the Samarin episode as fitting in with a pattern of other events. Two years ago Yale was so concerned about the "rights" of racist William Shockley that it suspended several students who dared to disrupt a speech he was giving on campus. Last year the University higher-ups moved heaven and earth in an unsuccessful attempt to block the appointment of Dr. Herbert Aptheker as a seminar instructor. This year's mollycoddling of the Nazi Samarin was thus no surprise to Black students—but it was still insulting. Kent Hirozawa, a leading member of the campus United Farmworkers Support Committee, found it incredible that there were so many people defending Samarin. The discussion seemed to center on whether an injustice had been done to the man, and Hirozawa saw this as "clearly ridiculous."

In general, student reaction to the Samarin incident was muted by two factors: Samarin's resignation defused the anger which his continued presence

*continued on page 18*



## Toward a New Israel

# The Jewish-Arab Democratic Front for Peace and Equality

The 18th congress of the Communist Party of Israel, recently concluded, called for unity of all progressive forces in Israel for the national elections of May 17. This unity would be "based on Jewish-Arab unity and a sound platform of struggle for a just and stable peace, for defense of the interests of the working masses, against national and ethnic discrimination, and for the defense of democratic freedoms and equal rights."

In March of this year, the Jewish-Arab Democratic Front for Peace and Equality was formed, which includes the CPI, the Black Panther Organization (a group representing the Sephardic Jews), elected officials in Arab towns and villages, the Israeli Left Socialists, members of kibbutzim, and Daniel Amit and other academicians. The list of adherents is growing.

We present below the full text of the Declaration of the Democratic Front. —The Editors

## Declaration of the Front

Out of historical responsibility for the fate of our people, out of the superior necessity to unite all forces of peace, democracy and social progress in Israel, we resolve to unite our forces and efforts toward the elections to the Ninth Knesset (Israeli Parliament) and to set up a Jewish-Arab Democratic Front for Peace and Equality.

In the presence of the political, economic, social, and moral crisis gripping Israel as a result of the policy of the government, as well as of the extreme rightist parties;

In the presence of the acute danger of another, the fifth, Israeli-Arab war, certainly even more destructive than all former ones, if the present ruling policy of Israel continues—while, on the other hand, there exists the real possibility of establishing a just and stable peace, if there is a fundamental change in the official policy of Israel;

In the presence of the serious economic crisis, the lowering of the real wages of the workers and the living standard of the majority of the popular masses, as a consequence of the tremendous military expenditures in order to maintain the occupation of Arab territories, and as a consequence of the privileges and superprofits granted foreign and domestic big capitalists;

In the presence of the growing threat to democratic freedoms, the danger of fascist dictatorship, in this or another form, by extremist rightwing forces seizing power;

In the presence of the aggravation of the policy of national discrimination against, and oppression of, the Arab population of Israel;

In the presence of social polarization, of spreading poverty, and aggravation of the (ethnic) communal discrimination (against oriental Jews);

In the presence of continued policy of discrimination against women and the existence (in Israel) of obscurantist marital legislation;

We—Parties, organizations, circles, and personalities, Jews and Arabs, adherents to different ideological outlooks—decided to set up a Democratic Front for Peace and Equality with an electoral list towards the elections to the 9th Knesset. The (electoral) sign of the list will be the (Hebrew) letter "VAV."

The front is based on agreeing to the principles of the following common platform of this list.

### THE FRONT WILL FIGHT FOR:

1. *A just and stable peace between the State of Israel and the Arab states.*

Peace will be based upon respect for all peoples and states in our region, including those of Israel and the Palestinian Arab people.

Israel has to withdraw from all territories occupied during the June 1967 war. The lines of June 4, 1976, will become the recognized and secure

borders between the State of Israel and the Arab states.

The right of the Palestinian Arab people to self-determination and to establish their independent state alongside the sovereign State of Israel has to be recognized.

The Geneva Peace Conference has to be convened without further delay, with the participation of all sides involved in the conflict, including the PLO as the agreed upon and recognized representative of the Palestinian Arab people.

2. *Defense of the interests of the workers* in production, as well as in the services, in town and village; defense of the interests of the slum dwellers in poverty-stricken neighborhoods.

3. *Elimination of the policy of national discrimination against, and oppression of, the Arab population of Israel* in all spheres.

Cancellation of all legislation and measures which discriminate against the Arab population.

Recognition of the Arab population of Israel as a national minority and the securing of equal and national rights, by rule and by practice.

4. *Elimination of ethnic communal discrimination in all spheres.*

Allocation of special funds for raising to an equal level (with other strata) the members of the oriental Jewish communities in all spheres of economic, social, cultural and political life.

5. *Defense of the democratic freedoms and widening their scope.*

Against the seizure of power by rightist and fascist forces.

6. *Securing equal rights for women in all spheres.*

Cancellation of all legislation discriminating against women. Introduction of legislation which guarantees equal rights to women.

Prevention of religious coercion of any kind; the securing of freedom of opinion and faith.

According to these principles the detailed platform of the front will be prepared.

For the management of the election campaign and for securing the continued cooperation between the partners to the front, a central directing board will be set up which will represent all component parts of the front.

The electoral list of the front will be based upon the (parliamentary) faction of the Communist Party (RAKAH) in the Knesset. The CP faction will ap-

peal for the change of its denomination into "Democratic Front for Peace and Equality—The Communist Party of Israel (RAKAH), The Black Panther Organization, Jewish and Arab public circles."

The front will be open for further join-ups of political bodies, circles and personalities on the basis of the above platform.

We call, herewith, upon all forces of peace, democracy, and progress in Israel, Jews and Arab alike, to join the front and to lend their hands toward its success in the elections to the Ninth Knesset.

We call, herewith, to set up local branches of the front with the aim of mobilizing and uniting the widest possible popular forces for the success of the lofty struggle of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality.

The establishment of the Jewish-Arab Democratic Front for Peace and Equality is a new and outstanding feature in the political and social life of Israel.

Tel-Aviv, March 7, 1977



---

**Nazi** *continued from page 16*

on campus might have provoked, and the facts of Samarin's activities in Oriol were never clearly presented to the Yale community. However, even with these factors in mind, it is still frightening that so many students seemed undisturbed by Samarin's prolonged employment at Yale. This indicates what is a universal fact in the United States: the youth have not been taught the actual meaning of fascism and the horrors of Nazism. The absence of such instruction reflects the vicious anticommunism of those in control of education in this country. ■

# Letters to the Editor

## To the Editor:

I have a friend. His name is Mohammed and he is a Palestinian. I am a Jew. Our destinies are one.

For many years I was influenced by the ideology of Zionism. The illusion that the Jewish people could only "go it alone" in order to survive affected me deeply. An attack on the policy of the State of Israel was, to me, an attack on the Jewish people. Zionism led me to think that the Arab peoples were my enemy, that they were "in cahoots with the anti-Semites of history." Zionism boxed me into a corner. As a Jew I had no allies except the most reactionary, militarist elements in the world.

Contradictions developed in my mind. The Vietnam war was clearly to me an expansionist venture of the U.S. against a courageous people. And yet, the leaders of the Zionist movement and of the Israeli government expressed support for the U.S. invasion. "It's good for Israel," they would say.

I decided to visit Israel to see for myself. I found a society much like the one I had left, a society marred by class and racial oppression. Indeed, there was a Jewish bourgeoisie which was no more benevolent than any other ruling class. I spoke with Jewish Black Panthers and they told me of the second class citizenship that Sephardic Jews suffer in Israel. Jewish ghettos in a "Jewish State." It became increasingly clear to me that as in the U.S., class and racial divisions and barriers are quite distinct in Israel.

I saw the abandoned Arab village on the outskirts of the kibbutz in which I was living. I realized that the former inhabitants of this village could not return as citizens to this

land and yet I, a foreigner, automatically would be granted citizenship because of my religion. Was this not racism in the guise of "the national liberation movement of the Jewish people?" Zionism has nothing in common with "liberation."

Many of the friends I made in Israel were of the same age as me. Some were reconciled to perpetual war in their lives, but most longed for peace. I saw in their faces a reflection of my own. I, too, desired peace. I had been active in the movement to bring peace to Southeast Asia. Was there not a need for such a movement among Jews in Israel, I thought.

When I returned to the U.S., I spent many months reflecting on what I had seen and heard. Zionism is an ideology of exclusion in a world that needs a unity of purpose. Zionism is a theory of giving a people super rights over a land that is the home of two other peoples. Peace in the Middle East necessitates a reconciliation of people's rights and freedoms. The Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews can only live in peace with mutual dignity and rights. I came to reject Zionism.

As I mentioned, I have a friend named Mohammed. Our destinies are one. Zionism denies Mohammed his rights in his homeland. Zionism cuts the Jewish people off from the liberating process in the world today. Mohammed and I have one central tie: we both wish to live in a world of peace and dignity, in a world where men and women shall truly "beat their swords into ploughshares."

**Marshall Wittman**  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

*(The author contributed, in cooperation with Karen Lerner, a short story, "Morning Glory," to the January-February issue of Jewish Affairs.)*

## To the Editor:

I have read the "Memorandum about the Jewish Question," printed recently in the *Morning Freiheit*, that had been sent to the Soviet Ambassador to the U.S. and the U.N.

According to the *Freiheit* account, this document was sent in the name of "the Progressive Jewish Movement of America." Those who signed the memorandum falsely charging Soviet suppression of Jewish culture were editor of the *Morning Freiheit* P. Novick; assistant editor Chaim Suller; Morris U. Schappes, editor of *Jewish Currents*; and the editor of *Yiddish Culture*, I. Goldberg.

I challenge their right to speak in the name of the whole progressive Jewish movement of America. I am an activist in the Brooklyn Jewish Cultural Societies and Clubs. I am a member of the Coordinating Committee and the Executive Board of that organization. I am the Recording Secretary of both bodies.

The above-mentioned memorandum had never been discussed with these progressive Jewish Societies, and none of the leaders of said societies had signed their names to the memorandum.

It is misrepresentation on an international scale to pretend to speak for the whole Jewish progressive movement, most of whose supporters would reject all slander of the USSR which saved millions of Jews from Nazism and made it possible for them to be free and equal citizens of a society that respects and gives full opportunities for the development of all nationalities.

**Leonard Hirschman**  
New York

military and the Right-wing. Peres was the one who gave his blessings to the Gush Emunim fanatics who have attempted to build illegal settlements in the West Bank. The effect of Rabin's resignation was to strengthen the Right-wing in the upcoming elections.

This shift of leadership fits in with the retrenchment in U.S. Mideast policy, which is part of the retrenchment in Washington's policy in regard to U.S.-Soviet detente and disarmament. Carter utters "defensible borders" from one side of his mouth, and "human rights" from the other. Imperialism's war by proxy in Zaire, applying Nixon's "Vietnamization" to Africa, is also part of this pattern of cold war aggression.

Imperialism, U.S. imperialism in particular, is playing both courts in the Mideast, using Zionism and Arab reaction to achieve its aims. President Sadat of Egypt has begun to pledge allegiance to Rockefeller's flag. The ultra-Right in Lebanon, armed with Israeli and U.S.-made weapons, is attempting to disrupt the fragile peace and return the country to civil war. Israel's open armed intervention on the side of the Right-wing, with the backing of the State Department, is aimed at liquidating the Palestinian resistance movement and at creating a pro-imperialist neighbor on its northern border. Saudi Arabia and Jordan long have been established as ambassadors of U.S. interests in the area.

### **Intensified Pressure**

These moves by Israel and the U.S. have been in response to intensified international and domestic pressure. The signal for the renewed international peace offensive was given at the UN last December when 122 nations voted to reconvene the Geneva conference, with only the U.S. and Israel opposed. Since then, Washington and Tel Aviv have been swimming against a growing current. At the recent convention of Israel's dominant Labor Party, international guests called on Israel to relinquish the occupied territories and to recognize the right of the Palestinian Arab people to an independent state. Many of these speakers, prime ministers among them, represent parties which, like the Labor Party, are members of the Socialist International.

There is also evidence of a split in U.S. ruling circles, with the most reactionary, represented by the Pentagon and politicians such as Henry

Jackson, being opposed by bourgeois strategists such as Edward R. F. Sheehan and George Ball, former under-Secretary of State during the Kennedy Administration. These latter argue that U.S. national (read "ruling class") interests would best be served by the creation of a Palestinian state allied to Washington and by Israeli evacuation of occupied territories, with minor negotiable adjustments. Both argue against a step by step approach and in favor of an overall U.S.-determined settlement.

Within Israel, peace sentiment has reached an all-time high and continues to grow. One third of the Israel people now favor the establishment of a Palestinian state. The May 17 national elections will be a critical demonstration of the strength of the peace and war forces. In this regard, the formation of the Jewish-Arab Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (see page 17) is crucial, because it unites for the first time various elements of different ideologies under a common peace program.

### **Peace Movement**

Here in the U.S., we see the beginnings of an organized Mideast peace movement. Some of the elements of the movement to stop the war in Indochina came together in February in Washington, D.C. under the aegis of the American Friends Service Committee to discuss an orientation for a peace movement. The conference attracted 200 people from many parts of the country and was a successful initiation of the kind of broad movement necessary to force a change in U.S. policy. Among other things, the participants endorsed UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and called for reconvening the Geneva Conference, with the full and equal participation of the PLO. In addition, the conference called for the creation of a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East, emphasizing that the arms race in the area must be halted.

An event of particular importance was the first national membership conference of Breira (Hebrew for "alternative"). Following on the heels of the AFSC conference, the Breira gathering brought together 400 activists from across the U.S. Although not as politically advanced in its positions as the AFSC conference, Breira's program surpasses that of any established Jewish organization. (See the report in the *Daily World*, March 1977.) It must be remembered, too, that both conferences (but especially the Breira meeting) took place in the midst of the most vicious Red-baiting, slanderous,

McCarthyite attack by the Zionist establishment, combined with an almost total media blackout. The success of the Breira conference reinforces the conclusion that a growing number of Jewish Americans are beginning to question the policies of the Israeli government and the U.S. Zionist establishment, and are looking for alternative policies that can lead to peace and security for Israel.

The danger of a fifth Mideast war is greater than

ever, and the responsibility falls squarely on Washington and Tel Aviv. We have a responsibility to force our government to alter its course. We helped to do it in Vietnam, and we can do the same in the Middle East. This is a priority task for the working people of this country. This can be the year of peace in the Mideast, but only if we force Carter to go to Geneva, in line with all relevant UN resolutions. Now is the time to make your voice heard. ■

---

# HOLD THIS DATE

## 1977

ANNIVERSARY TOURS HAS GROUP-TOURS TO JOIN THE  
SOVIET PEOPLE IN *CELEBRATING*

THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION

THESE GROUPS WILL BE IN MOSCOW MAY 1ST  
AND NOVEMBER 7TH

WRITE OR TELEPHONE NOW!

ANNIVERSARY TOURS INC  
250 W. 57th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10019  
(212) 245-7501

ANNIVERSARY TOURS INC.  
1741 Ivar Avenue  
Hollywood, Cal. 90028  
(213) 465-6141

In loving memory of  
**SAM NELSON**  
dear husband, father and  
grandfather.

Leah Nelson  
Maryland

Greetings to *Jewish Affairs*—indispensable in the fight  
against racism—a beacon in the fight for peace.

Friends in Elsinore, Calif.

Greetings to *Jewish Affairs*  
from Florida friends.

Mike & Vera  
A.&R. Stone  
Sonia Scheider  
A. Kaminsky

Greetings from California  
Lena Rosen  
Edith Glambet  
Max Steinberg

A Group of Friends  
Anna Mandelman  
Rick Pell

Hy Lumer can not be  
replaced and must never be  
forgotten.

Jack  
N.Y.

From friends of *Jewish  
Affairs* in New York.

Dorothy Frumkin  
I. Peress  
Bronx friends  
Rose Thaler

From the Detroit readers of  
*Jewish Affairs*—A tribute to  
the new editor, Dr. Herbert  
Aptheker, on the seventh  
anniversary.

"Long may we write the  
truth."

For Sylvia & Avram—  
love and remembrance

Ethel  
N.Y.

From Joe in California  
with love.

The Editors of *Jewish Affairs* wish to convey  
our deepest regrets to

MINNA AGINS

on her illness and wish her the speediest  
recovery.

We mourn the loss of

Paula Moldofsky

Her steadfastness and commitment ever will be  
with us.

The Editors

10-13-65

לעמאָש, האַלט דער רעדאַקטאָר פֿון „פֿאַרווערטס“,  
אַז מע טאָר די קאָמוניסטן (פֿאַגרעסיווע אָרגאַניזאַ-  
ציעס) ניס צולאַזן צו דער וועלט־קאָנפֿערענץ פֿאַר  
ײִדיש. וועל זיי זינגען „פֿאַרעטער צום ײִדישן סאַלק“  
(א קלייניקייט!), און דער רעדאַקטאָר פֿון „סאַווע“  
טיש היימלאַנד“ האַלט, אַז די לינקע טאַרן זיך ניס  
באַטייליקן אין דער קאָנפֿערענץ, וועל דאָס איז א  
צוועניטישע מאַכערעיקע און דערמיט אליין איז די  
קאָנפֿערענץ שוין טרייף. אזוי, אַז מע קאָן זאַגן, אַז  
ש. וועבער און אַרן ווערגעליס האָבן צווישן זיך א  
מין פֿאַרייניקטן פֿראַנט, עמעס, א נעגאַטיוון פֿראַנט,  
אַבער ס'איז דאָך דאָ א געוויסע אייניקייט אין באַ-  
קעמפֿן די „מאַרגן־פֿרייהייט“ און אין אַטאַקירן איר  
רעדאַקטאָר“...

בעמעסט: גאָט זאָל אַפהיטן פֿון אַזאַ אַנשיקעניש.  
עס באַקומט זיך, ווי אינעם פֿאַלקס־ווערטל— אַז מע  
שיקט איינעם פֿאַרמאַכן די לאָרן, פֿאַרמאַכט ער זיי  
אין דער גאַנצער שטאַט...

גאט זאל אפהיטן פון אזא אנשיקעניש...

לעטערנדיק זשורנאל און צייטונגען

יזנט עס האבן זיך באוויזן — אלץ אפסטער און גע- דיכטער — אומדערלאזבארע. ניט קאנטראלירטע עס דער איין דער ניויאקער „מארגן־פרייהייט“ אָט דער איין פאראנגענומען פערטראך פרוץ־קוואליפיקאציע און עכט־אפגעהיטער פונעם פראפעסאָרעלן זשורנאליסטן טיטן סטאנדפונקט צעטונג, און ס'האָט זיך ארויסגע- יווין, אז גלייך אף גלייך מיט דעם אראפגעלאָגענע נעם פונעם געוויינלעכן דרעך־רעדאקטאָר פ. גאָויק טיילט דעם סקאנדאליעזן טאָן אין דער איצטיקער „מארגן־פרייהייט“ דער פארוואלטער פון רעדאקציע כ. סולער. — איז אומגעשוואמען, נאטירלעך, די פרא- גע: ווער איז ער, סולער, און וועלכע טאלאנט האבן אים, מיטעם אפסטאפ־פירער אינעם „סטעף“, גע- געבן דעם דאס אייריש־זשורנאליסטישער פער- שאפט לויטן נייעם קורס פון דער צייטונג?

מע דאָרף, פארשטייט זיך, גיט אַנעמען אזעלכע זאכן ערנסט, — און סולער איז פון יענע סאָרבאָלאָז פארשוניקע, וועלכע רופן ניט ארויס קיין ווילן צו פּעסטסטעלן, ווער זיי זענען און וואָס זיי זענען, אָבער דאָס, וואָס גראָד ער איז געוואָרן, באַגלייך מיט גאָויק, דער האַרטאָגער אין מויש'ס אָניג'ס „מאָרגן־פרייהייט“ אינעם פּעריאָד פון איר טראַג- טען פּאַסיבליטעט, וועט בעפרייעטש אַראַצייכעט ווערן, ווען עס וועט קומען די צייט, נאָך דער אידיישער יערדיגע, אונטערצופירן א סאָבאַל.

אינע פון די וויכטיקסטע טעמאטישע אַפטיילן אין דער „מאָרגן־פרייהייט“ איז פון שטענדיק אָן דער וועכנטלעכער איבעריכט „אין דער יידישער פרעסע“ וועלכער שטעלט אוועק אונטערן פּאַלעמישן פּראָ- זעקטאָר פון דער „מאָרגן־פרייהייט“ אן אַפּקלייב פון צוגרינג'ס און זשורנאליסטישע פּובליציסטיק אין פּאַרטיי- רענע יידישע פּערזאָנליכע אַויסגאַבעס. פּאַרטישענדי- לעך, אז דער דאָזיקן אַפטייל פירט דער רעדאקטאָר, אָבער אָנהייבנדיק פון א געוויסער צייט האָט זיך דאָרט אַלט גאָוויקס דובליאַר פּאַרפונדעוועט. כ. סולער וועגן פּראָפּעגאַנדעלן ניוואַ פון דעם, וואָס עס טוט אין דער זשורנאליסטיק דער פּאַרוואלטער פון דער ווירטשאַפּט אין דער רעדאקציע פון דער „מאָרגן- פרייהייט“, איז ניט קעניג צו ריינדן, מיר וועלן בלוזן דאָ אַפּמערקן איינע פון זענע „מעסאַדעס“, ווען ער וויל טויזן אינגאנצן אוועקלייגן אף קאַלט זיינעם א קעגנער פון דער פּאַרנעסיווער, קאַמיוניסטישער זויט, באַשולדיקט ער אים אין שוּטפּעס מיט עמעצן קאָן זען, אז סאָקע ער, סולער, האָט דערפונדן דעם „אַרומגעבט“, אז אויב מע קריטיקירט די פּעלערן אין דער איצטיקער „מאָרגן־פרייהייט“, שפּילט מען אריין אין דעם „הענט“ פונעם „פּאַרווערטס“...

טאָנענדיק יאָר 1973

# BLACK LIBERATION JOURNAL

23 West 26th Street New York, New York 10010  
(212) 685-5755

Please send a one year subscription (4 issues) to:

- \$4.00 U.S. & Canada  
 \$5.50 Foreign

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



An Eye Opener

# JEWISH AFFAIRS

*For a change!*

Please enter my subscription  
for year(s) at \$2.50 per year  
(6 issues).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

mail to: Jewish Affairs,

23 West 26th Street New York, New York 10010

