

Sept/Oct 1984

JEWISH AFFAIRS

The Jewish People and the 1984 Elections
By Herbert Aptheker

What is Happening to Us?
By Mark A. Bruzowsky

**Peres-Shamir Government:
A Government of Disaster**
By Hans Lebrecht

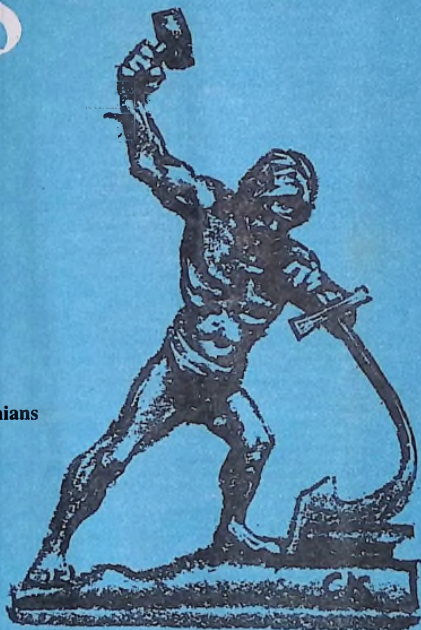
A Christian Voice for Israel and the Palestinians
By Dean McFalls

Uris' Exodus From Reason
By Elia Zureik

Soviet Peace Committee Visits Israel

A Petition to the President of the U.S.

Popular Jewish Theater
By Scheer Konik



The sculpture "We Shall Beat Our Swords into plowshares", by People's Artist of the USSR Yevgeni Vuc-helich stands in front of the United Nations building in New York.

PEACE !שלום!

HAPPY NEW YEAR לשנה טובה

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The Jewish People and the 1984 Elections

By Herbert Aptheker

The 1984 election is the most crucial since that of 1860; then, as now, the very fate of this Republic was at stake. In a larger sense, this election is the most fateful one in all U.S. history, for the Reagan administration controls weaponry which can destroy not only the United States but quite literally the globe. And this administration not only has that power but it is moved by the desperation of its ultra-right imperialist bloc and its Hitler-like detestation of the Soviet Union to actively plan for the beginning of Armageddon.

The 1984 election is not a typical U.S. election in another respect also. This is not an election between two generally classical bourgeois parties — one liberal and the other conservative, mimicking the lines from Gilbert and Sullivan: “Every little boy and gal that’s ever born alive, is either a liberal or a conservative.” No, this is an election in which the Democratic Party does field a fairly traditional program — filled with compromises, demagoguery and half-truths, but generally oriented towards a resuscitation of a kind of New Deal, domestic outlook and a Harriman-like defense of détente. Its nominating a liberal-democrat, Italian-American, Catholic woman for the Vice Presidency is far from traditional, however, and bespeaks the power of ethnic communities and, in particular, the enormous clout of the increasingly conscious women voters.

In addition, and, in particular, this election differs from those preceding insofar as it does *not* represent the conventional two-party alignment of the ruling class; rather it represents the capture of one of the two parties by the extreme Right in U.S. life — the fanatical, pro-war, “better dead than Red” maniacs, filled as such components are with virulent anti-Semitism and, especially, white chauvinism as well as male supremacist poison.

What one has in this election is a liberal-Democratic ticket opposing the Birch Society — with an open member of that fascist-like society actually Reagan’s California campaign manager. What one has is a candidate — the Prevaricator Reagan — enthusiastically endorsed by the Ku Klux Klan; if the Reagan administration has “repudiated” such support this writer has not seen that repudiation. In any case, repudiation — pro forma — by Reagan or not, it is certain that the

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KKK has *not* repudiated its endorsement of Reagan.

Gus Hall, in his report to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, USA, back in June, observed that in this election at stake is “the survival of our country and the world,” and that Reagan’s is “the most anti-labor, most racist, most war-like administration in history.”

At the same time, Hall’s main emphasis was as to how to meet that supreme challenge and in spelling this out he emphasized the danger of the Madison Avenue concocted myth of Reagan’s “invincibility.”

Comrade Angela Davis, in her stirring Harlem speech (reported in full in the magazine of the People’s World, August 11), spelled out the way to guarantee Reagan’s defeat and concluded passionately and accurately: “For the sake of our youth and our seniors, for the sake of the homeless and hungry, and, finally, in the name of human progress, we must guarantee that when November 6 rolls around we will show Ronald Reagan the way to the back door of the White House.”

Comrade Si Gerson analyzed with his characteristic care “The Myth of Reagan’s Invincibility” (*Political Affairs*, July). That idea of invincibility certainly is the central motif of the Reagan publicity catered to by a craven commercial press and television industry. Comrade Gerson showed that with the absence of an Anderson ticket (and with Anderson endorsing Mondale, we may now add) and with significant anti-Reagan sentiment in terms of his racism, his opposition to the ERA, his war-making stance, his anti-labor acts, his brutal policies towards all except his obscenely rich backers and his interventionist policies in the Mid-East, Africa and especially Latin America, the concept of Reagan’s invincibility is nonsense. On the contrary, with proper coalition tactics and aggressive mass organizing his defeat in 1984 is altogether possible.

For our purposes, it is vital to add to the Gerson analysis the fact that there is a developing revulsion against Reagan among broad elements of the Jewish population. That population, for pressing historic and social reasons, always has been part of the Liberal-Left constituency in our country. A shift in this first became apparent in the Nixon days; it accompanied a significant bourgeoisification of the Jewish population — though a large working class component remains and though about one million out of six million Jews in the United States are at the poverty level — and, in particular, the poison of bourgeois nationalism intensified with the holocaust and Zionism.

This shift was maintained in the Reagan election of 1980, though precise figures are not available. But

the tendency back to the Liberal position and to an anti-Reagan outlook has been a striking phenomenon of the past few months.

The sources for this are manifold: Reagan's policy of open alliance with the most reactionary Arab states, as part of an overall policy of strengthening U.S. imperialism's position in the Mid-East and the Indian Ocean areas; Reagan's support of the Begin-Sharon wing of Israeli politics at the time of its most repulsive and anti-human acts; Reagan's fiasco in Lebanon — seen as part of that Begin-Sharon alliance; Reagan's cruel social policies which impinge upon the Jewish poor; Reagan's threats against the entire social security system which threaten, in particular, the elderly, including, of course, the Jewish elderly.

Perhaps of central importance has been Reagan's campaign strategy to put himself forward as the candidate of religious values and, in particular, of "Christian" values, meaning thereby the values of fundamentalists like Falwell. Related to this is the shock felt in the Jewish community with a President vehemently supporting unity of church and state, demanding prayer in public schools, and equating so-called Christianity with America.

The hostility to Reagan has gone far beyond the pioneering role of the New Agenda organization. It permeates the significant Jewish press, for example. The Chicago *Jewish Sentinel* has made no secret of its hostility to Reagan. That important paper recently (September 13) published editorials from other leading Jewish papers taking a position similar to its own. For instance, here is the Kansas City *Jewish Chronicle* asserting that the Reaganites have "wreaked havoc on the U.S. Constitution" and demanding that the Republican Party "stop the dangerous trend toward a government of church rather than state."

Here is the Philadelphia *Jewish Exponent*: "Republicans have a party platform that has enshrined religion as a GOP virtue. This increasing entanglement of religion in our political process poses a grave danger for the American Jewish community, as well as for other minority religious groups." The paper goes on to declare that when Reagan insists, as he did, that opponents of his prayer-in-the-schools-program are "attacking religion" or are "intolerant of religion" he is "not only absurd, he is dangerous." One should add that Theodore Mann, president of the American Jewish Congress, also commented that Reagan's remarks on this matter were "absurd."

The *Jewish World*, in words unusual for that careful paper, editorialized: "President Reagan has belittled

and insulted the efforts of Americans seeking to protect their right to worship without state control . . . He has done a great disservice to those who have deep religious convictions and respect the rights of others to hold dissimilar views."

President Reagan spoke before the B'Nai B'Rith international convention in Washington on September 6; the *Times* reporter, Steven Weisman, observed, after the speech that "there were widespread feelings of dismay, anger and anxiety among Jews over what many viewed as an attempt to violate the separation of church and state;" the reporter's final words were a quotation from a delegate: "Mr. Reagan's positions will cost him votes among Jews in November."

The fact is that Reagan's speech on August 23 in Dallas at a so-called ecumenical prayer breakfast — the actual spark that ignited the words of indignation and opposition quoted above — represented a new low even for that arrogant and ignorant liar.

The Fathers of this Republic, whom he rounded up in his support, were *not* embracing religion and were *not* affirming — contrary to Reagan — "the special importance of religion" in the life of the nation. On the contrary, one of the remarkable features of the American Revolution and of the Constitution and of the nature of the early Republic was their secular character and the care with which there was insistence upon the separation of church and state, as is made explicit, of course, in the Bill of Rights.

Emphasizing this separation does not constitute "attacking religion" as the Great Prevaricator asserted. It does mean forbidding an identification of church with state which had caused such misery in the history of Britain, Ireland, Spain and France. Indeed, one of the motivating forces of the Revolution was to achieve separation of church and state which in some of her colonies — as Virginia — had had established religions.

When Reagan stated that the Abolitionist movement and the civil rights movement had religious inspirations — as well as political, economic and social, which he omits — he is right but even there he manages to lie because he gives the impression that the established churches were parts of these movements. With the exception of the Black churches and, partially, the Quakers, all the established religions were opponents of the Abolitionist movement; and as everyone knows, for most of the 20th century the most segregated place in this racist nation were the churches on Sunday.

It is because of these well-known facts that Abolitionists like Garrison and Douglass repeatedly exco-

riated the churches for their racism and their support of slavery; it is for this reason that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. repeatedly had to debate white clergymen as to the Christ-like nature of the struggle against racism.

It is elementary that there is religion and there is religion. Nat Turner and Jefferson Davis were both religious but their religions differed. Francisco Franco and Willard Uphaus were both religious but their religions differed. Dr. King and J. Edgar Hoover were both religious but their religions differed. Ronald Reagan says he is religious and the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson is religious, but their religions differ.

And Eugene Victor Debs and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn found that to lead the noble lives they did lead, they did not require religion at all; both rejected it. And Ronald Reagan is not worthy to pare the toenails of either of them!

Reagan, the shameless demagogue, is playing to the worst, to the most backward, to the most dangerous traditions of established religion in his desperate effort to be re-elected President. This is still another reason why the election of 1984 is the most important in U.S. history.

The possibility of the advance of a decent and democratic society and world free of the danger of World War demands the defeat of the clerical bound, neo-fascistic Birch Society candidate answering to the name of Ronald Reagan. □

In Loving Memory of My Husband

SAUL BITTMAN

Reader and Supporter of Jewish Affairs

His family and friends mourn his death but celebrate the shining example of his life

1903-1984

ANNE BITTMAN

Carl Rowan to the Electorate: 'Focus on the Issues'

By Lewis M. Moroze

In the face of the mass media's brazen and unscrupulous campaign to convince the electorate that Reagan is invincible, columnist David Broder reveals that the electorate is seriously discussing the issues and will not be easily taken in by style of campaigning. Carl Rowan, Black columnist and radio commentator, in his column in the Newark, N.J. *Star Ledger* (9/19/84), makes an anguished and studied appeal to the electorate to focus on the issues highlighting those that are of "crucial importance in this election:

"Which candidate is more likely to prevent a dangerous 'cold war' with the Soviet Union from deteriorating into a hot war?

"Which presidential contender is likely to end an utterly wasteful arms race in a way that leaves America secure, but with adequate resources to feed, educate, shelter, give health care to all its citizens?

"Which candidate understands the qualities of justice to the point that he will not use his appointive powers to turn the nation's judicial system into a rubber stamp for a draconian nightmare?

"Which candidate will make America face the truth about the certain destructive impact of record-high budget deficits, an all-time high imbalance in foreign trade and other indicators of economic trouble that can only be remedied by forcing well-off Americans and corporations to pay an honorable amount of taxes?"

Addressing himself to the campaign thus far, Rowan is profoundly concerned about the impact of Reaganism on the day to day campaigning. Says Rowan:

"What a dreadful and disquieting presidential campaign!

"Walter Mondale goes to Tupelo, Miss., where youths who support President Reagan's reelection question the Democrat's right to call him a Christian.

"Then youths display their 'godliness' by shouting at Mondale's Black supporters, 'Niggers go home!'

"A newly organized spirit of racism that is too mean to carry the soft title of 'white backlash' clearly is on the loose.

"Vice presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro, a Catholic, who already was mired in a dispute with Catholic archbishops of New York and Boston, shows

up in overwhelmingly Catholic Scranton, Pa., to give a speech. For her troubles, she finds the Catholic bishops telling people, in effect, not to vote for her because she won't pledge to try to force upon non-Catholics the bishop's views about abortion."

Fully aware of the widespread discussions among the electorate about style in the campaigning and the importance of the question of style, Rowan states:

"My first inclination was to write about the incompetence of the Mondale campaign, to criticize the schedulers who sent him to Tupelo and Ferraro to Scranton. Then I thought about it and asked myself: 'Does this country need leaders who face up to tough emotional issues like the deficits, racial injustice, religion and politics, and will walk into the lion's den and speak honestly about them?'

"Or is America better served by a man who sits in the White House handing out a medal to the widow of Hubert Humphrey, tries to con Black preachers, waits as the 'great peace maker' to welcome Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, sings at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, tours a housing project in Buffalo, N.Y., with a Catholic bishop, hoping the residents will not know what a foe he has been of federally subsidized housing for poor and middle-class Americans?

"No. I can't just blame Mondale and Ferraro's schedulers for a depressing turn of events where it begins to appear that the Democrats have no chance of winning the White House. The truth is that Reagan and strategists are appealing to racism, selfishness, d, irrational fear of the Soviet Union and every bad in quality they can imagine and a majority of icans seem to be responding just the way they

Deeply convinced that our very democracy and world peace hang in the balance if Reagan and Reaganism is not defeated, he, nevertheless, overstates the case about the low level of understanding of the electorate because he, too, is taken in by the polls. Says Rowan:

"The polls suggest that most Americans do not want to wrestle intellectually, emotionally or otherwise with these questions that envelop all our futures like a dense fog. So Americans are taking what they foolishly think is the easy way out by falling back on judgements of which candidate looks more like a President or talks more like a leader, or is most in agreement with their pastor or bishop."

The facts reveal that Rowan is underestimating the electorate and is certainly in grievous error when he concludes that: "A majority of Americans seem to have

decided, 'To hell with all these complicated, troubling, fighting issues. If Reagan has scared those people in the Kremlin to the point that they are shaking in their britches, why do I need to know details about things like nuclear arms parity, nuclear throw weight, the advisability of a rush to militarize outer space? Why should I demand that Reagan tell me what his military and foreign policies will be in the next four years?'

Rowan correctly urges the electorate to "focus on the issues" in this election campaign. His reading of the present stance of the electorate does not reflect the true state of affairs though there is much to be done to secure the defeat of Reagan at the polls in November.

The various components in the all people's coalitions for jobs, peace and freedom are engaged in heroic effort to dump Reagan. The stepped-up and thorough-going voter registration drives by the various components of the anti-Reagan coalitions and the carefully laid plans to bring the voters to the polls are based on a profound concern and a deep going understanding of the issues involved, though some sectors of the electorate are impressed by style and are being taken-in by the media polls.

The current economic and political struggles of the trade unions are significant and are being stepped-up. Locals of the Teamsters are voting in polls and by resolutions calling for the defeat of Reagan despite the position taken by their corrupt national leaders. The outstanding role of Afro-American leaders, civic organizations and the community-at-large reflect their profound concern and deep going understanding of the issues described as "crucial" by Rowan. The women's organizations, the senior citizens are not only knowledgeable about the issues but are vigorously campaigning against Reagan and Reaganomics. A coalition of Jewish American organizations conducted a Succoth Peace Demonstration in Washington and lobbied on Capitol Hill. The electorate is getting more and more involved in day to day activity to rid our country of Reagan and Reaganism.

Rowan is certainly right on target when he pleads that there is need for a campaign that "will produce results that we can live with over the next four years." Such a campaign calls for vigorous and pointed discussion of the issues presented by Rowan and to be added is a call for no veering away from a policy that will lead to negotiations with the USSR for arms reductions and for non-intervention in the affairs of Central America via mercenaries, the CIA or the military.

Let there be an end to pessimism and lack of confi-
(Continued on page 10)

Jewish Affairs

What is Happening to Us?

By Mark A. Bruzonsky

This article first appeared in the Chicago Tribune Perspective column, August 21, 1984. Mark A. Bruzonsky is a journalist and a consultant who specializes in the Middle East. From 1977 through 1983, he was Washington associate of the World Jewish Congress.

"What the hell is happening to us? . . . We now beat people to death? We kill with our bare hands?"

Last April 12, four teenage Israeli Palestinians commandeered a bus at knife-point. Though no one had been injured by the Palestinians, who were not armed with guns, and though negotiations were underway, Israeli forces stormed the bus, killing two Palestinians, one Israeli woman and injuring many others. Two of the Palestinians were taken, uninjured, into custody. The next day they were dead, some reports suggesting their bodies were mutilated.

Israeli authorities went to extraordinary lengths to suppress what happened. Film was confiscated, photographs were banned, an establishment Hebrew newspaper was closed for the first time in Israel's history. Official lies were told, altered, changed.

Yet what happened was so disgusting that it repeatedly made front-page headlines around the world, as well as TV network news broadcasts in this country. In Israel itself, the killings caused an uproar. Finally, under unceasing pressure from within Israeli society, the Israeli government established a secret army commission — whose report remains undisclosed — in what now seems a successful attempt to bury the incident with the bodies.

The responsible official, Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens, acted to cast blame elsewhere. Though in charge at the scene and actually photographed with the two captured Palestinians, he denied issuing any orders, knowing anything of their deaths or taking any responsibility. On May 28, Arens issued a statement admitting that the two teenagers were beaten to death and that "legal actions shall be taken" against those responsible — but he suppressed even the army inquiry report with a "top secret" stamp.

Now, a few months after the startling admission that the Palestinians were beaten to death by Israeli soldiers, the perpetrators are still unnamed and untried. No impartial investigation has been allowed, other than *September-October, 1984*

the army's self-investigation. And Arens has refused to answer further questions.

But there is soul-searching. "What the hell is happening to us?" — the quote at the beginning of this comment and my own theme, writing as an American Jew — are actually the words of one of Israel's most senior commentators in Israel's most respected daily, Ha'aretz.

Yoel Marcus, Ha'aretz senior correspondent, penned his anguish early in June. Even more ominously, Marcus pointed out that Israel today has morally degenerated so that this kind of racism, brutality and criminality toward Palestinians has become commonplace.

"In justification we are told that this was a 'deviant act,'" wrote Marcus, adding, "which of course is not true.

"In the same week that we learned the bitter truth about the fate of the two terrorists, the Jerusalem District Court was hearing a case that seemed to come straight out of the Holocaust. It concerned the abuse of Halhoul residents by three border policemen. According to the testimony, they forced children to slap their fathers and even demonstrated the required force of the slap to the children; made residents crawl on all fours and bark like dogs; stood an 83 year-old man wearing only his underwear outside in the cold of the night and as a 'grand finale' made him sing 'Hatikva' (the Israeli national anthem) and chant 'Long live Israel!' Reading these testimonies, you can scarcely believe your eyes. These are members of the Jewish people?"

Saddened and troubled by the growing incidents of murder, torture and barbarism toward Palestinians, Yigal Arens, professor of computer sciences at UCLA and son of Israel's defense minister, recently sent me a few other translations from the Hebrew press detailing similar occurrences.

"This sounds depressingly like some Central American countries we're familiar with," he concluded. "The only major difference being that the prisoners are not simply found floating in some river in the end. Unfortunately, judging from what happened to the two Palestinians a few weeks ago, it looks like this might be next in Israel itself too."

But the saddest reality of all is that the once-vibrant American Jewish community has been totally silenced into a pitiful mouthpiece for Israeli crimes, distortions and excuses. And those who speak up — Jews and non-Jews — find themselves victims of character assassination campaigns, and worse. Former Illinois Rep. Paul Findley's soon to be published volume about

the tactics and abuses of the Jewish lobby makes for intimidating reading.

In this particular case, not one American Jewish organization protested the murder of the Palestinians, nor stood publicly behind the courageous press as it battled the Israeli government. Nor has one American Jewish organization since insisted that those who beat the Palestinians to death be brought to trial.

Israel has badly lost its way. It is in danger of degenerating into a kind of democratic fascism grafted onto a Middle Eastern apartheid. The recent election made all too evident both the escalating ideological polarizations and political impotency inherent in Israel today.

American Jewry has lost its voice and is in danger of allowing its independence from Jerusalem to dissolve along with its link to the universal, humanistic values of its heritage.

And the American government appears to have acquiesced in Israel's tragic distortion of Camp David into a lifeless, one-sided perpetuation of conflict rather than the faint hope it was for a fair and honorable peace that would have promoted "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people" as well as Israeli security.

What the hell is happening to all of us?

We Express Our Deepest Sympathy

To Our Friends and Neighbors

JACK and MILDRED STONE

On the Death of Their Cherished Son

JEFFREY

May They Find Solace in Their Work

For Peace and Friendship Among Nations

DAVID and EDKA SELTZER

Peres-Shamir Government: Government of National Disaster

By Hans Lebrecht

"The new Labor Party-Likud government headed by Peres and Shamir is by no means a 'National United Government' as touted, but a government of national disaster. It is an expanded and even more extremist edition of the hitherto ruling rightwing, war-oriented and annexationist Likud regime, for all practical purposes, based upon the same political foundation," said Tawfig Toubi, deputy general secretary of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (HADASH), during the debate in the Knesset for a vote of confidence.

After last minute delays due to continuing differences flowing from inner-party power struggles of the coalition partners, on Thursday, September 13th, Peres presented his new government of 25 ministers.

Peres will head the government for the first period of time with the Likud chief, Yitzhak Shamir, as his deputy and foreign minister. He received an overwhelming vote of confidence from the 120 member parliament.

Voting against the government were HADASH (4 votes); MAPAM, the left Zionist Social Democrats, until now aligned with the Labor Alignment (6 votes); the Liberal Civil Rights Party of Shulamith Aloni, now strengthened by one deputy, Yosi Sarid, who left the Labor Party (4 votes); the two deputies of the Progressive List. Also included in the opposition vote were the ultra-right and fascist Tehiya Party and Meir Kahane's Kach Party. With the establishment of the Peres-Shamir coalition the MARACH Labor Block has become defunct and the left-wing opposition can count on 16 to 18 votes in the Knesset.

Betrayal by Labor Party Leadership

Victor Shemtov, the general secretary of MAPAM, sharply condemned the betrayal by the rightwing leadership of the Labor Party of Social-Democratic principles and the interests of the working class by joining with the right-extremists and the LIKUD of the big bourgeoisie, conceding to their anti-labor politics. He pointed to the shameful fact that Peres and his fellow-travellers had yielded so far as to appoint Ariel Sharon, the fascist, who is mainly responsible for the war crimes committed in Lebanon, to a senior ministe-

rial post in the new government and even given a place in the ten member "inner-cabinet" which will be the real policy makers of the new regime. *Shemtov warned that Sharon and some of his closest followers have already granted media interviews threatening that Sharon will remove his party chief, Shamir, from power and establish his own dictatorship.*

Government Program Gives Rise to Grave Concern

The 11 page government program distributed among the Knesset deputies and the press gives rise to very grave concerns for the future as well as for the well-being of the peoples of the region and world peace, as well as for the working masses in Israel.

This government will escalate even more than hitherto the aggressive nature of the U.S.-Israeli Military Alliance with Israeli connivance against the peoples' liberation struggles and against the Soviet Union in the region and worldwide. It will strengthen the services rendered to American and domestic oil and arms monopolies and financial oligarchies. Although the government program contains also somewhat of a promise to withdraw from Lebanon, it pre-conditions it upon the establishment in Southern Lebanon Israeli-dictated so-called security measures. It remains obstinate about not withdrawing from the Arab territories occupied since 1967 or to negotiate in any form with the PLO. The program looks forward to further Jewish colonization of the stolen Palestinian soil in the occupied territories either by more settlements or by enlarging the existing ones.

In his opening remarks in the Knesset, Tawfig Toubi observed that the Labor Party could have easily, if it had wished to do so, formed a stable anti-Likud government together with its former allies of the Labor Alignment and all other anti-Likud members of the Knesset. He said that the new Peres-Shamir government gives indication of a further turn to rightwing extremism which was unleashed after the 1967 war and the occupation of Arab territories. This further turn is not limited to the strengthening of the ultra-right and fascist parties but also evidences itself within the veteran Zionist parties including the leadership of social democracy.

New Government Anti-Labor

The Peres-Shamir government will be an extreme anti-labor government warned Toubi. It will put the entire burden of the economic crisis caused by the policy
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of war and production of armaments for further wars, by the services rendered to foreign and domestic big capital and placing the burden on the shoulders of the working masses. This will drastically lower the real income of wage earners and other popular strata.

Reformists Will Throttle Trade Union Struggles

Tawfig Toubi warned that the right-reformist leaders of the Labor Party, who have also leading positions in the Histadrut trade unions, will use this influence on behalf of the Peres-Shamir regime to throttle any trade union struggles against the expected anti-labor measures, measures that the former Likud government did not dare to undertake. As a result, Toubi predicted, the working people will fight for their rights and their living conditions.

Democratic Rights Threatened

Continuing, the Communist Party spokesman said that the Peres-Shamir government will, under the cloak of a broad coalition, attempt to drastically undermine democratic freedoms in Israel and to sharpen racist discrimination against the Arab national minority. This government will pave the way to fascist domination. The bill against racism which the Communists have presented to the Knesset again and again over the decades and has been rejected must be adopted by the Knesset without further delay and put into practice.

Withdrawal From Lebanon

Referring to the government promise for conditional withdrawal from Lebanon, Tawfig Toubi stated that the new Defense Minister Rabin (Labor Party) made the withdrawal pre-conditioned on so-called security measures such as transferring military rule to the Israeli mercenary militia under the command of General Lahad, of the so-called South Lebanese Army. This adds up to perpetuating Israeli military and political intervention in the internal affairs of the sovereign state of Lebanon.

The Peres-Shamir Government and the Palestinians

The Peres-Shamir government will place more obstacles on the way to a just and lasting peace with the Arab Palestinian people and the Arab neighboring states, Toubi stated. In spite of some hypocritical assertions this government will continue Jewish colonization

of the Palestinian territories. The coalition partners are united in their intransigent refusal to recognize and respect the national rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to establish their own independent state in line with UN Resolutions. The coalition partners will refuse to negotiate with the PLO. This policy will bring further bloodshed and wars, Toubi warned.

In order to reach the longed-for peace, in order to stop once and for all the bloodshed, Israel has to withdraw unconditionally from Lebanon and from all Arab territories held since 1967 and to respect the national rights of the Palestinian people. Only this will bring about peaceful co-existence between Israel and the Arab neighbors including the Palestinian people bringing a happier future.

Tawfig Toubi condemned sharply the anti-Soviet instigations and intervention into the domestic affairs of the USSR, which were called for again by Peres in his opening remarks. This exposes the hypocrisy of his intention to improve relations between Israel and the Soviet Union contained in the government program, said Toubi. Continuing, he said that to reach understanding with the USSR, Israel has to stop the anti-Soviet instigation campaign and to lead a totally different policy, a policy of peace and peaceful relations between nations.

The Israeli Communists and their DFPE partners call upon all peace-loving people and champions of democracy to unite and to lead an unwavering struggle against this Peres-Shamir government of national disaster to its downfall. The Communists call for struggle for peace and lasting peace, for defending and extending democratic freedoms and equality of civil rights for all citizens as promised in Israel's Independence Charter. They fight against the growing danger of fascism and the interests of the working masses. In this fashion the democratic, progressive forces of peace will fulfill a most important patriotic task, said Toubi.

Hans Lebrecht is an Israeli correspondent for Jewish Affairs.

(Continued from page 6)

dence in the U.S. electorate, especially the people's coalitions for peace, jobs and freedom. The times call for tightening the unity of the coalitions, strengthening their resolve and increasing their forces. These steps and these steps alone "will produce results we can live with over the next four years."

To Stop the Israeli Suicidal Policies

The following letter appeared in the September 1984 issue of U.S. Farms News.

Why is it that Israeli school children can write an open letter to Begin, saying his policy raises doubts in their minds as to Israel's sincerity for peace; and why is it that 300 veteran officers can publish an advertisement in the Israeli press, saying that if Begin persists on the settlement issue they will have to draw conclusions as to the justness of Israel's own cause; and Defense Minister Ezer Weizman can threaten to resign if work on the settlements is not terminated immediately — why, in that case, do I get called a traitor if I say the same thing? The Israelis have answers for everything, but they never have any solutions. What we need is for several big givers to the UJA to threaten to stop contributing if Israel does not retreat from its suicidal position. That is the only language the Israelis understand.

Rabbi Balfour Brickner
Co-director of the Social
Action Commission Union of
American Hebrew Congregations

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A Christian Voice for Israel and the Palestinians

By Dean McFalls

This article, titled: On Behalf of the Palestinians, was originally published in New Outlook, Tel Aviv, March-April 1984 by the above U.S. author.

I am a young American Christian who, after two months in Israel and the West Bank, wants to add his voice on behalf of the Palestinian people. I speak only for myself, as our group has disbanded.

We of the the Bethlehem Pilgrimage arrived in Haifa on December 4th to complete a 12,000 kilometer walk for nuclear disarmament, an eleven country outreach, a twenty-one month prayer for conversion of hearts and for peace . . .

Before entering Israel, we resolved to withhold comment, to listen and to learn. We attempted to deepen our understanding of the Jewish people . . . Everything we saw confirmed my admiration for a people so resilient, rich in culture, faith and determination. It taught me that this state is a kind of miracle, a fragile foothold which desperately needs international support.

Yet my admiration for Israel faded in the West Bank, as experience ground away at idealism. The sun was setting as we gathered in the ruins of a Palestinian family. They'd had about five minutes warning. Since 1967, 1,350 homes had been demolished by government order.

"The blow that does not kill me transforms me." Thus said a Tulkarm man, paraphrasing Arafat. He was aging prematurely, having suffered three consecutive, unexplained imprisonments, totalling ninety-six days.

Tension was still high in Nablus when we entered, carrying a banner marked "peace" in Hebrew, Arabic and five other languages. Locals winced at the word, days before, eleven year old Aiseh had been murdered by an outraged settler.

Outside the occupied territories, a week's worth of stories were largely confirmed by literature, documentaries, journalists, professors and representatives of the three major religions. Yet I met few Israelis who dare to research, to openly acknowledge, and to oppose West Bank violations of human rights. One hears much about racism and discrimination. But the smokescreen of complexities, prejudices, loyalties, memories, fears
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and propaganda seems to prevent decisive action for reform.

You may wonder at my presumption in writing this — I have to. My hands are stained with Palestinian blood. As an American, my ignorance, apathy and inaction have permitted ongoing support of West Bank policies . . . As a Christian, I accept a measure of guilt for past persecution of the Jewish people. However, this does not bind me to silence, to shouldering other avoidable burdens at the hands of men like Begin, Sharon and Shamir.

While I worry about the future of Israel, I now worry more about the Palestinians. I have to ask myself these questions: What is the cost of security? What does faith in God have to say about the sacredness of human life, such as that of Palestinians? What are the implications of relying on military solutions in the nuclear age? What, once again, does it mean to be Israel? □

Uris' Exodus From Reason

By Elia Zureik

This review appeared in the Journal of Palestine Studies, summer of 1984.

The Haj, Leon Uris, Garden City, N.Y. Doubleday & Co., 1984, 566 pages. \$17.95.

Growing up in the historic town of Acre in northern Palestine, particularly after the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, had special advantages — if they could be labelled as such. I recall vividly the excitement that swept the town every time celebrities made their appearance in connection with making a movie. In the late 1950's it was Otto Preminger, the film producer, who brought us Paul Newman, Sal Mineo and the rest of the crew to shoot Leon Uris' *Exodus*. The folk of the town have seen themselves play extras in too many movies. The cruel irony of all this is that they unwittingly took part in dramatizing events which contributed immensely to falsifying their own history. No doubt the Otto Premingers of the 1980's are now scrambling to turn Leon Uris' latest fictional history *The Haj* into yet another "epic" film. Let us hope that at this time, should Uris and his ilk repeat their earlier

schemes, they would be promptly chased out of the town by the local population before another cruel hoax is perpetrated on them.

The *New York Times*, not known for its sympathies either for the Arabs or the Palestinians, saw fit recently to publish a review of *The Haj* in which the book was severely criticized for having prejudice and propaganda "boom out from virtually every page of the book." A random sample of adjectives used by Mr. Uris in his book to describe the Arabs and culled by the *Times'* reviewer include "lazy, cowardly, boastful, lustful, undependable, murderers, thieves and rapists."

It is no exaggeration to say that, of the various ethnic groups populating the planet, Arabs and Muslims continue to be fair game for movie producers, writers and pseudo artists of all shades who have decided to trade hate for fame and bucks.

In *The Haj*, Uris purports to take his reader on a historical tour to document the Palestine-Israel conflict as seen through the eyes of Palestinians — a commendable task on the face of it, bearing in mind that his earlier book *Exodus*, full of inaccuracies and bias against the Palestinians, depicted in heroic terms Jewish flight from anti-Semitic Europe to settle in Palestine. Instead, what emerges from the book is a highly vindictive and historically distorted account of the conflict in which history has been abused beyond recognition and used as a tool on which to hang an elaborate edifice of hate. The book reveals very little about either Arabs or Jews, but much more about Leon Uris' distorted perception of the world.

In close to 600 pages, and for 20 dollars, the reader is invited to be entertained and enlightened by the complexities of the Middle East conflict through episodes such as the following: on page one, it is told that Arabs believe only in the "power of the sword," on page two that "Arabs are gifted in matters of fantasy and magic," and eight pages later a central Arab protagonist in the novel, a young man by the name of Ishmael, recalls the reaction of his mother, who was humiliated by his father's marriage to another woman, in the following words:

I slept with mother, folded up in her arms, my head between her breasts. When my father and Ramiza (his step mother) made love every night, my mother lay awake, only a few feet from them, forced to listen to them have sex, sometimes half the night long. When my father kissed Ramiza, my mother's massive body convulsed with pain. I could feel her fingers claw at me consciously and

hear her stifled sobs and sometimes I could feel her tears. And when I wept as well, she soothed me by stroking my genitals. (p. 10).

Following the incest scene, we are told two pages later that for Arabs "the tradition of parental indifference is a way of life." Before the reader reaches page thirty, he discovers that the "Arab ideal" is the "bedouin who is a thief, assassin and raider." Thirty pages hence we are confronted with a ghastly scene in which a Palestinian rapes a pregnant Jewish woman and nearly hacks her to death. Not to be accused that he is not well versed in Koranic principles, now that he has demonstrated his superb knowledge of Arab culture and politics, Uris goes on to tell us through the words of one of his Arab protagonists that, according to the Koran, the Nazi "death camps were the fulfillment of (Prophet) Mohammad's prophecy," and that during Ramadan, the holy month of fasting, Muslims "start going crazy" and become possessed with the "majnoon (mad) spirit." Would Uris dare describe Jews, Christians or any group that practices religious fasting in such terms and get away with it? Definitely not.

Even during the rare occasions when the Palestinians surface not as losers, thieves and terrorists but as professionals, Uris does not hesitate to portray them in sub-human terms. This is the fate of Mohammed, the bisexual physician, who worked in one of the Palestinian refugee camps. He comes across as totally unscrupulous, corrupt and perverted, and gets away with molesting young boys and living on bribery. In order not to be misled and think that this man is an aberration, we are assured by Uris that people like Mohammed are to be found "everywhere" in the Arab world.

The cause of the defeat and destruction of the Arabs is to be found in their psyche, culture and religion. Luckily for him, Ishmael is saved from Armageddon and instead joins his sister Nada, whose body was found mutilated in a garbage dump in Jericho after she had told her father Ibrahim that she was no longer a virgin. In explaining the cause of this sorry state of affairs, Dr. Mudhil, an archeologist, comes up with the following revelation:

In ten, twenty, thirty years the world of Islam will begin to consume itself in madness. We cannot live with or accommodate the outside world . . . We never have. We are incapable of change. The devil who makes us crazy is now devouring us. We cannot stop ourselves. And if we are not stopped we will march, with the rest of the world, to the Day of the Burning. What we are now wit-

nessing, Ishamael, now, is the beginning of Armageddon (p. 547).

This is the fate of the Arabs who are "accursed among all living creatures."

Contrast these horrendous images to those offered of Jewish characters in the novel. The main Jewish protagonist, Gideon Asch, is depicted as a dedicated "pioneer" who immigrated to Palestine in the 1880s to make the desert bloom. Gideon wore a "neat blond beard" had "blue eyes" and a "reputation for bravery." He came to "the backwater Palestine which was neither fish nor fowl — a no-man's land — . . . a desolate, desparate land." Gideon came to bring Palestine a "blossoming of culture" and "progress." It was only after Jewish colonists began to expand and build their settlements that "the sweet voice of springtime was again heard in Palestine."

Gideon, the all round and gifted individual, was a decorated officer as a result of his service to the British in Palestine, and went on eventually to set up the Hagannah in the 1920s, the forerunner of Israel's current army. However, his major contribution to Palestinian-Jewish relations was his sexual prowess. "In a nearby cave," we are told, Gideon rendezvoused secretly with Arab women and due to "his strength of youth" they were "very natural with him and for the moment (they) seemed relieved from the eternal shadow of shame." At the end of his exploit, Gideon, who was an accomplished horseman, would ride away in the sunset leaving the Palestinian girls to giggle and smile with contentment.

Arab-baiting is not a new phenomenon. The movies, television, popular press and even comics are replete with negative and racist imagery about the Arabs. Professor Lawrence Michalak of the Middle Eastern Studies Center at the University of California, Berkeley points out in a recent study that as far back as the 1920s Arabs were depicted by Hollywood as teacherous and shady characters. More recently, he cites at least 15 other movies from *Exodus* to *To Cast a Giant Shadow*, *Network*, *Rollover*, *The Trenchcoat* and, we might add, *Protocol*, now in progress, in which the Arab image has acquired new dimensions mainly that of the international conspirator who holds the world at bay by means of financial power and terrorism.

What is new, and emerges clearly from Leon Uris' *The Haj*, is the resorting to religious and biblical symbolism in which Armageddon looms above humanity, and where the forces of good and evil are explicitly delineated for the ultimate showdown. Here enter Jerry

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Falwell, Ronald Reagan and other members of the New Religious Right where literal interpretation of the Bible is given an added ominous dimension, for this time the "prophecy" is about to be acted upon by men who command large audiences and have tremendous power in bringing about the coming of the Millennium. Consider the following rhetorical question raised by William Martin, a sociology professor at Rice University, in an article which was published two years ago in the magazine *Atlantic*:

. . . If a president were to appoint one or more pre-millennials to key foreign-policy posts (who at the confirmation hearings would think to probe for beliefs about the Second Coming?), what incentive would they have to work for lasting peace in the Middle East, since they would regard a Russian-led attack on Israel as a necessary precursor of the Millennium? . . . And if the nuclear destruction of Russia is forfained, in some premillennial schemes, might not a fundamentalist politician or general regard his finger on the button as an instrument of God's eternal purpose? (*Atlantic* Vol. 249, no.6 (June 1982) pp. 31-38).

It is tempting to dismiss *The Haj* as a combination of pornography and adventure, except that Uris echoes a familiar ring in which Orientalism has sunk to yet greater depths. In reading Uris, one could not help but recall Raphael Patai's prognostications in *The Arab Mind* about Arab sexuality, culture, proclivity to exaggeration, undefendability, dogmatism and total inextinguishability. The fact that Patai footnoted his work in support of his claims to give it the appearance of scholarship does not alter the common Orientalist genealogy of both works.

Think about it. Mr. Uris contributed a disproportionate disservice to the cause of peace in the Middle East and elsewhere by concocting images of people where humanity is divided into two neat camps: the good and the evil. And that latter camp, in the case of the Middle East — the Palestinians, other Arabs and Muslims in general, is expendible in the cause of the Second Coming. The ground is being prepared to impose so-called pre-ordained solutions on the Middle East conflict where racist imagery and warped religious fervor are being mobilized to serve political causes. The fact that *The Haj* is number two on the *New York Times'* best-seller list and is sure to climb to number one soon, gives one cause to wonder what it is that people find so gripping in such works. Do we dare contemplate the answer? □

Israeli-Palestinian Women: Perspective on Peace and Development

By Terry Galpin-Plattner

With permission we are publishing this article which originally appeared in the June/July 1984 issue of a publication of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

For the first time, Israeli and Palestinian women nationals spoke together in the U.S. under the auspices of WILPF and the American Friends Service Committee. Their special message focused on the influence of war, peace, economic and political development on women's lives in the Middle East, and how Israeli and Palestinian women can hope to influence the processes of economic and political development and the prospects for Israeli/Palestinian peace. A Sabra Israeli, Tammi Berger teaches literature at Tel Aviv University, is on staff at the progressive publishing house, MIFRAS, and shares leadership in the Israeli Committee in Solidarity with BirZeit. West Bank Palestinian, a Glacaman teaches biological sciences at BirZeit university on the West Bank and works with rural women's health clinics. These two remarkable women share their views:

What is the most crucial issue facing Israeli and Palestinian women today?

Tammi: In Israel, it's difficult to separate social from political trends. In the early days, women's role was more equal, and women worked very successfully side by side with men. But for a while now, Israeli society has been moving in the other direction. As Israel increases its emphasis on military policies, the role and status of women are naturally affected because so much national energy (including over 60 percent of our national budget) is directed toward the military. Thus, the military occupation of Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza is draining national resources that should be used in improving the quality of our domestic lives, including women.

Rita: For Palestinian women, it is our struggle for national survival in the face of Israel's attempt to acquire land without people. This problem faces all Palestinians — men and women alike. It's difficult to

talk about feminism and goals for women separate from our concern for national survival. Palestinian women suffer from the effects of the occupation more than from male domination.

How has Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza influenced Israelis?

Tammi: You can't be an occupier without becoming an oppressor, and that changes your mentality. Either people learn to ignore facts and truths, or people allow their values to change in order to justify the realities they see, which is what I see happening in Israel. I'm very concerned about the changes in Israel's moral fibre.

How has the war in Lebanon affected your respective societies?

Rita: For men and women alike, Israel's invasion of Lebanon and the massacres proved to us that Israel is out to destroy Palestinian people, as well as our political and social infrastructure. It became clear to us once again, that we Palestinians have to rely on ourselves to solve our own problems. Moreover, the war showed us that the world still doesn't understand that Palestinians cannot be annihilated simply by militarily attacking the PLO, which remains for us the central symbol of our social, political and cultural identity. Palestinians saw clearly that U.S. policy is out to control the Middle East by annihilating the PLO and installing a puppet government in Lebanon that will serve U.S. interests, rather than the interests of the Lebanese people.

You know, the massacres really shocked us, and it took people on the West Bank and Gaza months to figure out what to do next. But there's a new movement emerging now with a ferocious determination to rebuild our institutions in order to survive as a people. Finally, there was another new realization — namely that there are two kinds of Israelis. It was amazing to see large numbers of Israelis opposing what their government was doing in Lebanon — 50,000 Israelis demonstrated in Tel Aviv within one week after the invasion.

Tammi: Lebanese invasion brought important changes to Israeli society. It was the first time the Israeli government couldn't justify adequately what it was doing, and it was viewed as unnecessary and immoral by many Israelis. For the first time, Israelis doubted their government — over 60 percent support withdrawal from Lebanon. Israelis have not forgotten that for 11 months before the invasion there was a

ceasefire agreement by the PLO and the Israeli government, and not one bullet was fired on the northern border. A growing number of Israelis are realizing that while their attention and energies were directed toward the war in Lebanon, there was a big push by the Israeli government to increase the number of Israeli settlements on the West Bank. They're feeling somewhat duped by this. As our economic situation worsens (projections are for over 200 percent inflation this coming year), an increasing number of Israelis realize just what military policies and the expansion of the settlements are costing them in daily terms.

What kind of links are there between West Bank and Israeli women?

Tammi: Most contacts are carried out through the peace movement (Peace Now or the Committee for Solidarity with BirZeit) which includes men and women. One other example is an Israeli group called Women Against Occupation, which emerged right after the invasion. It meets frequently with West Bank Women and sometimes holds press conferences to draw attention to important happenings, especially the conditions of West Bank prisoners.

Rita: As far back as 1968 progressive Israelis and Palestinians were in contact with each other, although much contact was individual because of the difficulties involved. It has recently grown in number and includes groups as well as individuals. The policies of the Likud government begun in the late 70's polarized the situation which resulted in the formation of the Committee in Solidarity with BirZeit, a group of Israelis formed to protest the severe affects of military occupation on Palestinian institutions and educational life. Our educational institutions are tied closely to our total life and culture, and provide essential community services in villages, as well as traditional classroom teaching.

Rita, can you describe the West Bank Women's Committees and how they work?

Rita: These are what we call the "New Movement," which is a result of the experiences of the early occupation. The earlier model was the traditional "charitable" one created by our mothers, which unfortunately was concentrated in the cities, neglecting the rural areas. The centralized nature of these charitable groups left them an easy target for the military occupation. The New Movement has broadened women's par-

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ticipation beyond the urban areas, spreading out to become grassroots organizations. Thus, when the military government closes a women's center now, the work continues because it is broad-based, both socially and geographically. It has been shocking to realize the extent to which basic needs in health care, literacy training and vocational training have not been met. These are the areas the Women's Committees concentrate on and this work directs women's participation toward the mainstream of our national movement. It's a very exciting development and will not be easily broken down by the military occupation.

Tammi, in Palestinian communities, a change in the role of women has come as a direct result of the affects of the military occupation. You say that just the opposite is true for Israeli women, that changes for women won't come unless it's through Israel's response to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. How are women in Israeli society able to contribute to the changes you envision?

Tammi: As I've said, it has been very difficult to tie social problems (including the role of women) to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, but I'm hopeful about coming changes. Because the Israeli woman or the Palestinian woman doesn't experience daily severe military and political oppression, the motivation isn't quite there for her. However, as all people realize how the continued occupation of Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza, as well as the development of settlements, is negatively impacting their own lives, they will be more likely to push for social changes. This will obviously include a movement toward a political solution of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

What can we in the U.S. do toward a peaceful, stable Middle East?

Tammi: If people in the U.S want to see peace in the Middle East, they must recognize that present U.S. policy is harmful to Israelis and Palestinian Arabs, as well as U.S. citizens. It appears that the U.S. wants to dominate the Middle East, rather than to help realize a stable, self-determined region there. U.S. people must act on that recognition, just as they did with Vietnam, and are currently doing with El Salvador. Although Israel needs U.S. financial support at this time in history, there are two changes that U.S. people must work toward:

(Continued on page 17)

Soviet Peace Committee Visits Israel

In March, 1984, Chaim Shur, editor of the Israeli monthly, New Outlook, and Liora Barash, its managing editor, met with Yuri Drondov, head of the Asia, Africa and Middle East Department of the Soviet Peace Committee, and Alexander Krosnov, of the Novosti Press Agency. They were part of a Soviet peace delegation invited by fifteen Knesset members and the Public Committee for Better Relations between Israel and the Soviet Union. The delegation's purpose was to meet with various non-governmental peace groups, such as Yesh Gvul, the Committee for Peace Between Israelis and Palestinians, Peace Now, and the Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University. This interview was published in New Outlook, May 1984.

N.O.: Why hasn't the Soviet Union resumed diplomatic relations with Israel?

S.D.: Diplomatic relations were broken in 1967 after the Israeli aggression. Since the conditions have not changed, we cannot, at this time, resume diplomatic relations. If diplomatic relations were resumed, it might be assumed that we have come to the conclusion that all Israeli policies over the last seventeen years were right, but we do not think so.

N.O.: The Soviet Union is a superpower and as such it does many things out of international responsibility. Do you not therefore think that a Soviet Embassy in Israel could only enhance the prospect for peace?

S.D.: Certainly the Soviet Union is a superpower, of course, no international problem can be settled without its participation. However, there are certain conditions that would have to be met before diplomatic relations could be resumed. Foreign Minister Gromyko has repeated many times that we are not against Israel. We are ready to resume diplomatic relations with Israel after it changes its policies. Also, as one of our Israeli friends has pointed out, resuming diplomatic relations at this stage would be a great gift to the present Israeli government.

N.O.: Why were you against the Camp David Accords?

S.D.: As far as we are concerned the major problem in the Middle East is the Palestinian problem. This problem must be settled. This means an independent Palestinian state, alongside the State of Israel. Camp

David makes no steps toward settling the Palestinian question, and we are therefore against it. In our opinion it has only complicated the problem.

N.O.: You are in favor of a Palestinian state, as we are. You see the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as we do. But some groups within the PLO have opted for terrorism. What is your reaction to this?

S.D.: The only way to find a solution to any international problem is through direct contacts, without any mediators. There are a number of different tendencies within the PLO, but as we have seen from our short stay in Israel, your public opinion is not homogeneous either. There is Rakah, Gush Emunim, Yesh Gvul; they all adhere to different versions of a settlement.

N.O.: So you are against terrorism?

S.D.: Certainly we are against terrorism as a method of politics. However, saying this, we must also realize that terrorism in this region was born out of desperation. Given the conditions in the camps in Lebanon, the fact that the Palestinians hear from the Israelis every day that they do not exist as a nation, and that there is no chance for the establishment of a Palestinian state, it is no wonder that, through despair, they resort to terrorism. So certainly we are against terrorism, but firstly we must think about the conditions which give rise to it.

N.O.: What is your position concerning the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon?

S.D.: The lesson to be learned from Lebanon is that no problem can be settled by the use of power. Political negotiations are needed to solve all issues. We advocate the withdrawal of all the foreign forces from Lebanon. Firstly, however, Israel, who we see as the aggressor, should withdraw. After Israel announces the withdrawal of its forces, there will be the opportunity to withdraw all the other foreign forces. Representatives of the Israeli government have said many times that Israel can shell Damascus from its present positions. Under these conditions Syria is afraid that Israel will use its strategic positions to start a war with Syria.

N.O.: If there were an international conference on the Middle East tomorrow, what would be your proposals?

S.D.: There are six basic points we would insist upon at any international conference; firstly, the withdrawal of all Israeli troops from the territories occupied in 1967; secondly, the ensuring of legitimate Palestin-

A Fond Farewell to Jack Cohen

By Edith Beck

- U.S. arms shipments to Israel only encourage more bloodshed, Israeli and Palestinian alike, and must be stopped.
- Continued U.S. financial and moral support for Israeli settlements is destructive for both societies, and it is essential to raise your voices against the continuation of this U.S. support now.

Rita: Of course, I agree with Tammi, but would also like to encourage people in the U.S. to go beyond the usual images and stereotypes of Israelis and Palestinians by learning as much as possible about us. Get first hand contact, visit the Middle East to learn about these things directly. As we've toured all over the U.S., we have seen very little unity on these issues, even among the peace movement here. Greater unity and concentration of efforts are essential in working toward these goals.

What are your visions for the future?

Both: We dream of a progressive, independent, productive and peaceful Middle East. We know this will take a long, long time and will include a time in which strong national identities for both Israelis and Palestinians — that is, two separate states side by side — will prevail. Still, we're hopeful and do see people beginning to change. We hope you and other friends of the Middle East will join in our efforts. □

Terry Galpin-Plattner is a member of Denver WILPF, National Middle East Committee, Denver AFSC Middle East Staff.

(Continued from page 15)

ian rights in a Palestinian national state; thirdly, free access to all religious places in Jerusalem, and the inclusion of East Jerusalem in the Palestinian state; fourthly, mutual security guarantees for the existence of all states in the region; fifthly, a cessation of the state of war between Israel and the Arab countries; and sixthly, international guarantees by the UN Security Council.

N.O.: Finally, now that you have completed your visit to Israel, are you more optimistic than when you arrived?

S.D.: We are more optimistic. We have met many people, among them members of Knesset, who advocate a position that is better, not only for Palestinians, but for Israelis too. □

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*Most beautiful, most rare
Is a gracious old age
Which has drawn from life
The skills to take in
Its varied strands —
This greatest skill of all —
To fight the bitter,
Take the sweet —
And make it beautiful!*

*Excerpt from a poem quoted by the
Rev. Philip Zwierling at a memorial meet-
ing.*

The leaves are wrinkling — one by one they fall away . . .

Last Sunday we gathered to say goodbye to one of our old comrades, Jack Cohen.

The Rev. Zwierling of the First Unitarian Church opened the gathering with a poetic, yet realistic tribute to the man. He spoke of the man as forever seeking more knowledge. The man who gave of himself to the causes he believed in — a representative of the "Humanist Society." Jack belonged to, spoke of, devotion to "humanist" causes.

Friends from the Jewelry Workers Union spoke of his past in building the Jewelry Workers Union.

A moving and interesting part came when his children stood up and spoke of their father and the legacy he left them.

They spoke little of their own feelings (we could tell). They read his writings. They let Jack speak through his writings.

Rambling, unorganized, yet he succeeded to leave in writing his history:

His flight from pogroms — to Germany. In Germany finding a vista for learning and knowing.

His migration to America — his continued quest for education and knowing, thinking.

And as a worker he found the labor movement — trade unions, etc.

In one of his papers he said, "In the labor movement I found my home."

He was one of the founders of the Jewelry Workers Union and a life-time activist.

Lyrical, poetic, moving — true as this was, one

IJPU Holds First National Conference

By Stan Gurfinkel

The United States section of the International Jewish Peace Union (IJPU) held its first national conference on September 1 and 2 in Berkeley, California. Delegates from New York; Washington, D.C.; Boulder; Seattle and the San Francisco Bay Area were present. Also attending was Maxim Ghilan, representing the International Secretariat of the IJPU in Paris.

The International Jewish Peace Union was founded in June of 1982, just as Israeli armed forces began their invasion of Lebanon. At the founding conference, a charter was drawn-up for the organization, stating Israel's right to exist, the right of Palestinians to establish an independent homeland on the territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 War, mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and negotiations between the two.

Internationally, the IJPU has branches in France, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Britain, the United States and Israel. Efforts are now being made to establish a branch in Zimbabwe. Contacts are also being made in northern Africa and South America.

In the United States, the IJPU has over 200 members, half of them located in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Bay Area chapter was one of the major participants in Berkeley's Measure "E" Campaign this past Spring. The Measure called for a cut-back in aid to Israel in the amount that Israel spends on the illegal settlements in the West Bank. The campaign contributed to building strong ties between the local chapters of the IJPU and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC). Nationwide, ADC is the largest Arab organization, with over 20,000 members. ADC's primary concerns are protecting and advancing the rights of Arabs in the United States, challenging the present U.S. position on the Arab-Israeli conflict, and combatting anti-Arab stereotypes in the media.

At the IJPU national conference, Maxim Ghilan reported on a meeting of Non-Governmental Organizations he had attended in Geneva from August 20-22. Ninety-six organizations were present. Of these, sixteen were chosen as a non-governmental advisory committee to the United Nations on the question of Palestine. Among these sixteen were the International Jewish Peace Union, the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, the World Peace Council, the Soviet Afro-Sian Solidarity Committee, the World Council of Churches,

Hadash (Front for Peace and Equality) from Israel, and British Trade Unionists for Palestine.

An important development at the Geneva conference was a worldwide petition drive introduced by the IJPU. The petition calls for a convening of an international peace conference involving all sides in the Middle-East conflict. This proposal was unanimously accepted by all ninety-six organizations present. A goal of ten million signatures was set. The petition would be used as a way to pressure countries, especially the United States and Israel, to participate in such a conference. The official starting date for the petition drive has been set by the United Nations for November 29, the date that the UN voted for the partition of Palestine in 1947.

Several proposals were discussed and agreed upon at the IJPU national conference. Among them was a proposal to "formerly cooperate" with the Rainbow Coalition, recognizing the important role that the Coalition and Jesse Jackson's candidacy has played, and will continue to play, in the progressive movement. Especially significant to the IJPU is Jackson's strong two-state position in the Middle-East, and his support for self-determination for both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. It was also agreed upon to "formally cooperate" with the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee and the Palestine Human Rights Campaign on a national basis. A decision to initiate Black-Jewish dialogue, and the importance of re-establishing strong ties between the two communities, was reached by consensus.

If interested in the IJPU or any of its activities, please write to IJPU; P.O. Box 5672; Berkeley, California 94705. □

Stan Gurfinkel is an activist in the IJPU.

(Continued from page 17)

fact, somehow not mentioned, as to the real dimensions of this man. The apex, the zenith, the center of his thinking, active life, was really *not* told — in total. No one said it — that in his search and interest for knowledge, history, theory — that all *this* — culminated and led him to the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

No one said that Jack proudly proclaimed that he was a communist and long time active, giving member of the Communist Party.

And, as we take stock, we, his contemporaries, to the legacy we are leaving our children and our country — we proudly say, "Jack walked with us."

Rest well, dear Comrade!

Jewish Affairs

TO OUR READERS:

Jewish Americans, along with the overwhelming number of Americans of all religious persuasions are profoundly disturbed by the assumption by President Ronald Reagan of the role of "Evangelist-in-Chief. We fully endorse the position of the *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* in its statement: "There is a clear and present danger in what happened at Dallas, where a fundamentalist brand of Christianity became the Republican proclaimed religion of the State."

We, therefore, endorse the Petition below which is sponsored by "People for the American Way" and urge an immediate campaign to get a maximum number of petitions sent to the President. We would appreciate receiving reports on the campaign.

The Editorial Committee

Petition To The President Of The United States

The Founding Fathers of America made a wise choice about the Separation of Church and State and the prohibition against Establishment of Religion by the government. Hundreds of years of bloody religious warfare and persecution in Europe led them to write the Constitution as they did.

For over 200 years, America's religious institutions and the religious liberty of its people have flourished without government endorsement or advocacy of their viewpoints. This, the American Way, has proven best for all of us.

I am alarmed by your recent efforts to inject ultrafundamentalist Christian religious doctrine into the laws and policies governing all of America's citizens. I urge you to reconsider your position on these complex issues. The Presidency is an office of all the people — not a forum for any one particular religious dogma.

Signature



A scene from the play "Stempenyu" by Sholom Aleichem.



A rehearsal of the new play "Shroud" by Soviet playwright Tsezar Solodar.



A scene from the play "Tevie the Milkman" by Sholom Aleichem.

Popular Jewish Theater

By Scheer Konik

The Popular Jewish Musical & Drama Theater in Birobidjan, the capital of the Jewish Autonomous Territory in the USSR, has recently launched a new production, *The Scales*, by renowned Soviet playwright Cezar Solodar.

It is the story of a Jewish family who have left the Soviet Union for Israel. In the "Promised Land" trade worker Grigori Gurvich, his wife Rosa and daughter Natalia, until recently a student at Medical College, run up against problems which none of them has ever had to cope with before.

"For the first time in many years of writing plays," Cezar Solodar says, "I didn't have to make up a single situation or biography. *The Scales* renders the life stories of many former Soviet citizens I came to know when travelling overseas. This entitles me to define the play's genre as "dramatic fact."

The dynamic and thrilling narrative of the play fascinates the whole company, led by Bertha Schielman, age 76, an old hand at directing in the theater. The cast for *The Scales* consists of both veterans of the stage such as Michael Schein, Max and Hasya Epstein and Betya Gershkove, and young amateur actors including worker Anya Yasnogorodskaya, physician David Bekker, teacher Alexander Yarmakov and journalist Nina Voronina.

As the popular theater (this title is conferred on amateur groups — theaters, choral groups, orchestras, etc. for masterly performances) was established in 1965, colorful playbills announced that the Amateur Jewish Theater would open with Shalom Alechem's Yiddish classic *Mazltov* (Congratulations).

The first feather in the cap of the company started by artistic director Michael Bengelsdorf, musical director Abram Gershkov and conductor Simon Grossman with the backing of the city authorities and the public of the Jewish Autonomous Territory, proved not to be the last.

"This company," says Bertha Schielman, who has been running the theater since 1971, "has been provided with everything we need for fruitful work. The choice of plays is ours. The city authorities provide the funds to purchase costumes and make sets for each production. We permanently rent the stage and a special rehearsal room at the Birobidjan Palace of Culture. Apart from myself, as artistic director, on the full-time staff of the company are a stage manager, musical director and choreographer. When we are on tour or tak-

ing part in some festival, travelling expenses are made up to each company member."

The company is often referred to as Shalom Alechem's theater, since the bulk of its productions are based on the Yiddish writings of Shalom Alechem and the founder of Russian Jewish drama Abraham Goldfaden. Working on a production the actors study the national lifestyle, songs, dances, costumes and traditions which makes for veracity and exhilaration in both performance and staging. The music for many of the productions has been written by Max Epstein, an amateur composer from Birobidjan.

The theater's repertoire is being steadily replenished by the works of one of the leading Soviet writers in Yiddish, Boris Miller, who also lives in Birobidjan. His plays from the comedy *Nothing Falls From the Moon* to the drama *33 Knights* are invariably centered on the contemporary life of the Soviet people.

Of late, Bertha Schielman has been taking much care of the company's young generation, as she attributes prime importance to imparting love for the national culture to the young. A graduate of the Drama School in Moscow, Bertha Schielman has a long record in professional acting and directing. Now she is bending over backwards to pass her knowledge and experience on to young actors. Her choice of plays aims to attract audiences of varying ages.

When the Popular Jewish Theater gives a performance at the Birobidjan Palace of Culture, the house is always packed. The company has toured successfully other cities and towns of the Jewish Autonomous Territory as well as neighbouring Habarovsk and Valadivostok, the major centers of the Soviet Far East. On top of that the actors of the theater are often recorded by the local radio station, which broadcasts in two languages, Russian and Yiddish.

The work of Bertha Schielman's company and of the Jewish Chamber Musical Theater, that was set up 7 years ago, has become integral to the advancement of modern Yiddish culture in the Jewish Autonomous Territory, where there is a population of 200,000 people of over 20 ethnic origins. Incidentally, the two companies have recently put on gala performances incorporating pieces from their best old and more recent productions to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Territory and the 125th birthday of Shalom Alechem. □

Scheer Konik is an actor at the Popular Jewish Musical and Drama Theater of Birobidjan and a contributor to the Birobidjaner Shtern, the local newspaper published in Yiddish. This article was first published by Novosti Press, Moscow.

טויזנטער דעמאנסטרירן אין ישראל קעגן ראסיזם און כהאנא'ס פאשיזם

אויך געווען א לאזונג, וואס האט געלויטעט: „זאגט ניט, אז איר האט ניט געוויסט!“

אין דער דעמאנסטראציע קעגן ראסיזם האט זיך באטייליקט א דעלעגאציע פון פארבאנד פון אנטוויילער יידישע קעמפער און פון קרבנות פון נאציזם, וועלכע האבן פארטיילט אן אויפרוף, וואס איז אויפגענומען געווארן מיט צושטימונג דורך די פארכייגער.

אויך דער ערשטער זיצונג פון כנסת האט כולל ניט פארהאלטן זיין אנטוויילער יידישע צוגאנג, נאך איר זיין אנטוויילער דעמאקראטישן צוגאנג, אפזאגנדיק זיך אפצוגעבן די שבועה, אז ער וועט אפהיטן און זיך אונטערווארפן די אלגעמיין אנגענומענע דעמאקראטישע נארמעס. ער האט דערנאך אויך ניט פארהאלטן זיין זאגאלאגישע שטאם כאונדערס צו די קאמוניסטישע און דעמאקראטישע כנסת דעפוטאטן.

די לאגע איז אויך אזוי ווייט ענטסט, אז אפילו דער פרעזידענט האט געהאלטן פאר ניטיק צו ווארענען דער זיין רעדע קעגן דער געפאר פאר די דעמאקראטישע נארמעס מצד עלעמענטן מיט פאשיסטישע און ראסיסטישע טענדענצן.

דער טיפער עקאנאמישער קריזיס, די אויסוועגלאזיקייט פון דער רעגירונגספאליטיק, דאס אפוארפן יעדע רעאלע און קאנקרעטע מעגלעכקייט פון א שלומדיקער לייזונג פון טראגישן סכסוך שטארקט די פאשיסטישע און ראסיסטישע כוחות. אין דער דאזיקער געפארשערע לאגע פאר דער דעמאקראטיע,

לעבנסוויכטיקייט די פארייניקונג פון אלע כוחות פילן די געפאר פארן לאנד, פארן שלום, בכדי א באריערע קעגן דעם דראענדיקן פארייסמארן פאשיסטישע און ראסיסטישע כוחות.

„דער וועג“,

צו דער ערשטער זיצונג פון דער 11טער כנסת האט דער כנסת-דעפוטאט זון חד"ש מאיר ווילנער אריינגעטראגן א געזעץ-פארשלאג וועגן פארבאטן ראסיס-פראפאגאנדע, וועגן פארבאטן ארגאניזאציעס מיט א ראסיס-כאראקטער, וועגן אנווענדן שריט קעגן יעדע פארעם פון ראסיס-העצע און וועגן ניט דערמעגלעכן דערשיינונג ביי כנסת-וואלו ליסטעס אין וועלכע עס פרעדיקט זיך ראסיס-האס.

דער דאזיקער געזעץ-פארשלאג איז אריינגעטראגן געווארן אין כנסת דורכן דעפוטאט מאיר ווילנער, ברענגענדיק אזוי ארום עס אויסדרוק דעם געאייניקטן פראטעסט פון כרייסע דעמאקראטישע שיקטן אין לאנד, וואס זיינען אויפגעטריטל געווארן צוליב אויסוויילן אין כנסת פון דעפוטאט כהנא, וועלכער פרעדיקט אפן צו אנטוויילער יידישע פארגאמען, צו אנטוויילער אראבישע אקציעס רופנדיק אפן צום פארטרייבן די אראבישע באפעלקערונג פון לאנד.

פאר דער כנסת-געביידע איז בשעת דער דערפערונג פון 11טער כנסת פארגעקומען א שטורמישע און קעמפערשע דעמאנסטראציע פון פראטעסט קעגן דעם געפערלעכן אויפשטייג פון דער ראסיסטישער פעסט. די דעמאנסטראציע, וואס איז גערופן געווארן דורכן יידיש-אראבישן קאמיטעט קעגן ראסיזם, וואס האט זיך פארמירט אין נצרת און בירגער אפקלאנג אין לאנד און אויך אנדערע ארגאניזאציעס פון יוגנט, זון פארשידענע קיבוצים זיינען געקומען פאר דער כנסת, בכדי צו דעמאנסטרירן קעגן דער אנוועהניגייט פון אן אויסגעשפראכענעם פאשיסט און ראסיסט אין כנסת. צווישן די פיל לאזונגען קעגן כהנא או פאר א געזעץ קעגן דער ראסיסטישער געפאר איז

אנטשפערעכן דעם ניווא פון דער קונסט פונעם צוואנציקסטן יארהונדערט. דאס געשטאלט פון מירעלע הרוויץ קאן איינגעשלאסן ווערן אין דער גאלעריע פון די בעסטע פרויען-געשטאלטן אין דער וועלט-ליטעראטור, לעבן טורגעניעווס ליעז קאליטניץ, פלאבערס עמא באווארי, האמסונס וויקטאריע, טשעכאווס נאדיע.

אין 1912 האט זיך דוד בערגעלאסען געדוכט, אז מירעלעס טראגיק איז אומלייבאר. אין סוף פונעם ראמאן פארלאזט מירעלע איר היים-ארט און פארט אוועק, זי טראכט — אין אונסיאן מיט איר שעפער, — אז עס איז שוין אלץ נאך אלטמען. קיין אויסגאנג האט דעמאלט בערגעלאסען ניט געזען. דער אימפרעסיאניסטישער סטיל פון זיין ראמאן איז געווען אז אויסדרוק פון קריטישן רעאליזם. נאך, נאך

אלעמען" האט ער אנגעשריבן א ראמאן מיט א כארייטונגספולן נאמען „אפאנג“, וואו ער האט געזונגען אן אפאנג-געזעענע-ונגס-ליד דער פארשוואזנער וועלט, וועלכע פארקריפט און קאליעטשעט דעם מענטשן. וויאזוי פסוד ווערן פון דער דאזיקער געזעלשאפט האט אבער בערגעלאסען דעמאלט נאך ניט געוואוסט. בלויז ווען אין רוסלאנד איז פארגעקומען די גרויסע סאציאליסטישע אקטאבער-רעוואלוציע, וועלכע האט גרינטלעך פארענדערט די סאציאלע ארדענונג אינעם לאנד, האט זיך בהדרגהדיק עננומען ענדערן אויך בערגעלאסען וועלט-אנשוואונג און זיין שעפערשער מעטאד. דער אימפרעסיאניזם האט ביי אים צוגעגרייט זיין איבערצייגן אויך נייע רעאליסטישע סידורות.

שרייבן אין העברעאיש. די נאוועלע „רוקורן“ (פוסקייט) האט אנטהאלטן שוין דעם ערשטן וואראַנט פון „אָרם וואָקאַזאַל“ און אין געווען אָפגעשיקט אין ווילנער זשורנאַל „הזמין“. זי איז ניט צו שטאַנד געקומען. נאָך אייניקע אַנדערע פּראַווין אין העברעאיש איז בערגעלאַסן אַריבער צו יידיש. דער איבערגאַנג איז געווען פאַר אים אַ ביז גאַר שווערער, אָס זינדיק שוין גוט באַהאַונט אין דער יידישער ליטעראַטור, וועלכע האָט אין יענער צייט איבערגעלעבט אָן אומגעערטן אויפבליי. האָט ער ליידנשאַפֿטלעך געזוכט זיין אייגענעם נוסח, זיין שפּראַך־מאַניר. דאָס מוז מען באַזונדערס אונטערשרייבן. למשל, מער פון אַלץ איז ער געווען אַנציקט פון שלום־עליכעס ווערק און האָט גלייך גענומען שרייבן אין דעם זעלבן נוסח, אָבער אינגיכן אַנערקענט ער, אַז דאָס פאַרפאַסעט קלינגט אומנאַטירלעך דער נאָכמאַכער, און ער וואַרפט עס אָפּ. אין יאָרן אָרום, אין זיינע ענטפערס אויף די אַנפּראַכן פון דער סעקציע פון יידישער ליטעראַטור און קריטיק ביי דער אוקראַינישער וויסנשאַפֿט־אַקאַדעמיע, האָט בערגעלאַסן אָנגעוויזן: פון דער יוגנט האָט מיר געצויגן צו פרצן, אָבער דיאַלעקטיש איז דער פּוילישער פּרץ געווען אומעגלעך, ווי אַן אויסגאַנג־פּונקט אין זין פון שפּראַך. אין זין פון שפּראַך, דיאַלעקט איז צום נאָענטסטן געווען שלום־עליכעס. ער האָט גערעדט מיט דער שפּראַך פון מיינ היים, פון מיינ סביבה, פון מיינ מענטשן. עס האָט זיך געדאַכט, אַז יידיש — דאָס איז שלום־עליכעס, אַז אַן אַנדערע יידיש איז אומעגלעך. די ערשטע פּראַווין אין יידיש זיינען טאַקע געווען אין שלום־עליכעס־סטיל.”

די געשיכטע פון דער ליטעראַטור באַוועגט זיך ניט גלייכמעסיק, נאָר שפּרונגאַרטיק. עס קומט אַ גרויסער שריפּטשטעלער און הייבט אָן אַ נייע תקופה אין איר אַנטוויקלונג. אַזאַ נייע קוואַליטעט האָט געבראַכט אין דער יידישער ליטעראַטור מענדעלע מוכר־ספרים. באלד נאָך אים זיינען געקומען שלום־עליכעס און י.ל. פרץ. ווי עס זאָלן זיך ניט אונטערשיידן די ווערק פון די דאָזיקע שרייבער, וועלכע זיינען געוואָרן קלאַסיקער, זיינען זיי ענג פאַרבונדן צווישן זיך. פאַרשטייט זיך, שלום־עליכעס האָט געבראַכט אַ נייעם נוסח, נייע געשטאַלטן, געשאַפֿן אַ נייע קינסטלערישע וועלט, אָבער זיין שאַפּונג ווערט אויפגענומען ווי אַ דירעקטע פאַרעצונג פון מענדעלעס שאַפּונג. י.ל. פרץ איז אויך ביז גאַר איינגאַרטיק, אָבער פּעסט צוגעבונדן צו זיינע פאַרגייער. אויסערלעך דאַכט זיך, אַז דוד בערגעלאַסן ווערק זיינען פאַרפאַסט אין אַ גאַר אַנדער מאַניר. פאַרשטענדלעך, מען קאָן אין זיי געפינען — און ניט ווייניק — שטיי־פּעדעמער, וועלכע ציען זיך פון אַנדערע קלאַסיקער, אָבער זיין נאָוואַטאַרישקייט האָט זיך פון אַנדייב אָן געוואַרפן אין די אויגן.

אַס וויאַזוי לייב קוויטקאַ באַשרייבט דעם שטאַרקן איינדרוק, וואָס האָט אין דער יוגנט געמאַכט אויף אים בערגעלאַסן, אָרום וואָקאַזאַל. ער דערקלערט עס מיט דעם, „וואָס דער אופן פון שרייבן איז ניט געווען עלעך צו די ביכער, וואָס איר האָב שוין שלום־עליכעס. פרץ. אַנדערש האָט גערעדט מענדעלע, שלום־עליכעס. פרץ. די פאַרטראַקטקייט פונעם געמעל, דער צימצות פון מיטלען ביים געבן דאָס געשטאַלט, די אָונטיקע שטימונג אָרום די פאַרשוניגען, דער באַזונדערער אופן פון איבערגעבן די פאַרשיקט פון דער אויפקער נאַטור האָבן אַן שום ספּע אַריינגעדראַנגען טרף אין האַרצן און אינטערגעשטראַכן דעם טרויעריקן גורל פון די מענטשן „אָרום וואָקאַזאַל“.

משה ליטוואַקאָוו האָט געשריבן אין צוזאַמענהאַנג מיט דעם 25־יאָריקן יוביליי פון בערגעלאַסן שאַפּונג: „בערגעלאַסן אויפטרטיט האָט בשעתו באַטייט אַ שאַרפן נייעם קער אין דער יידישער ליטעראַטור“.

דוד בערגעלאַסן האָט געשילדערט די ווירקלעכקייט פון זיין צייט, און אַנשטאָט דער באַוואַוסטער באַריידעוודיקייט, וועלכע איז געווען איינגשפּאַטלעך מענדעלען און שלום־עליכעס און וועלכע ס'האָט באַמיט גובר זיין פרץ, איז געקומען ביי בערגעלאַסן אַן זייער שפּראַך־אַמערע לאַקאַטישער סטיל. אין מענדעלעס, און באַזונדערס אין שלום־עליכעס הומאָר, האָט מען געזען אַ געלעכטער דורך טרערן, ביי בערגעלאַסן טרעפן מיר וואַר־ניט־וואוּ המאָריטישע עפּיזאָדן, אָבער תּמיד איז דער שרייבער געווען זייער ערנסט, ער האָט אין פּיל ווערק זיינע אומיליטאַ פאַרגעשטעלט די טראַדיק פונעם יידישן פּאָלק אין די באַדינגונגען פון דער ברוזשואַווער געזעלשאַפֿט. אין זיינע ווערק הערשט גאַר אַן אַנדער שטימונג — אַן אינטיים־לירישע, עלעגישע. דוד בערגעלאַסן האָט אויסגענוצט אויך אַנדערע קינסטלערישע מיטלען. מיט דעם ווערט ניט געזאָגט, אַז בערגעלאַסן קינסטלערישער מעטאָד איז אינגאַנצן קעגנגעשטעלט דעם מעטאָד פון די עלטערע יידישע קלאַסיקער. אין חוץ גענומען, וועצט ער פאַר זייערע שטרעבונגען, אָבער אויף אַ נייעם אופן. פּאַלגאָנדיק אין אַ געוויסן הינזיכט די קלאַסישע טראַדיציעס, איז ער איינצייטיק געווען אַן עכטער נאָוואַטאַר.

דוד בערגעלאַסן איז געווען טיף איינגעוואַרצלט אין די טראַדיציעס פון דער יידישער קלאַסישער ליטעראַטור, אָבער זיין דינאַמישע נאַטור האָט זיך מיט דעם ניט באַגונגט. שוין זיינע ערשטע ווערק

1 לייב קוויטקאַ, מיינ ערשטע באַקאַנטשאַפֿט מיט ווד בערגעלאַסן, זשורנאַל „שטערן“, 1949, נומ. 1, 5. 2 „דער עמעס“, 1934, נומ. 2.

יידישע ענינים

צום 100-טן געבורטסטאָג
פון דוד בערגעלסאָן 1884 - 1984

דוד בערגעלסאָן און די יידישע קלאַסיק

פון זלמן ליבנינאָן (סאווערפארבאָנד)
דאָקטאר פון מיליאַגיאַיע וויטנשאַפֿטן, פראַפעסאר



אייגנארטיק, זיי האָבן צו טאָן מיט אַן אנדער תקופה פון זיינען אָנגעשריבן אין אַן אנדער נוסח, איידער די ווערק פון זיינע פּאָרגייער. מיט דער צייט האָט בערגעלסאָן אַליין עס פאַרשטאַנען און אָפֿן אַרױסגעזאָגט זײַן באַצײאונג צו די קלאַסיקער, און דאָ טרעפן מיר זיך מיט אַ רײ פאַראַדאָקסאַלע דערשיינונגען.

דוד בערגעלסאָן איז געקומען אין דער יידישער ליטעראַטור אין אַ פאַרעהלטניסמעסיק שפעטן עלטער — אים איז שוין געוואָרן פינף און צוואַנציק יאָר, ווען ער האָט אָפּגעדרוקט זײַן ערשטע דערציילונג, אַרום וואָקזאַל. ס׳איז געקומען אַ שריפטשטעלער שוין אַ רײפער, לחלוטין ניט קײן אָנפאַנגער. אָבער דער וועג צום „וואָקזאַל“ איז ביים מחבר געווען אַ זײערנדיקער און גאָר ניט קײן לײכטער. אין דער יוגנט האָט בערגעלסאָן אַ סך געזוכט און איבערגעפרוואוט, ביז ער איז געקומען צו דער ענדגילטיקער פאַרם פון דער דערציילונג. צוערשט האָט ער געפרוואוט פאַרפאַסן אין רוסיש, אַזוי האָט אים פאַרכאַפט די רוסישע ליטעראַטור פונעם סוף XIX און XX יאָרהױב. יאָרהונדערטער. האָט דער נאָענטער יוגנט־פריינט זײנער נחמן מײזל דערציילט, אַז די ווערק (פּינטלעכער געזאַנג — עסקיזן) אין רוסיש האָבן שוין פאַרמאַגט אַן אײגנאַרטיקן בערגעלסאָנישן כאַראַקטער. האָבן זײ דעם אײטאָר ניט באַפרידיקט. ער פּרואווט דערנאָך

אַרױסטרעטנדיק אין 1947 יאָר אויף אַן אַוונט, געווידמעט דער שאַפונג פון ד. בערגעלסאָנען, האָט שלמה מיכאַעלס אָפֿן דעקלאַרירט: „די יידישע סאַוועטישע ליטעראַטור שטאַלצירט דערמיט, וואָס אין דער פּערזאָן פון דוד בערגעלסאָן קומט איר צו אַ לעבעדיקער, אַ פּערטער קלאַסיקער.“ דער יידישער גראַפיקער א. העפּטער האָט מיכאַעלסעס געדאַנק אָנשולעך אלייטסרירט. אויף אַ געמעל, וואָס איז געווען אָפּגעדרוקט אין דער צײַטונג „אײַנקײט“ (דעם 8 מאַרץ 1947) באַווייזט ער, ווי ש. מיכאַעלס דערלאַנגט צום פּיעדעסטאַל, וואו עס שטייען שוין דריי ביסטן פון אונדזערע גרויסע קלאַסיקער, נאָך אײן ביסט... אין מיכאַעלסעס ווערטער, אין העפּטערס געמעל איז פאַרקערפּערט דאָס, וואָס אינעם פּאַלסט־באַוואוסטײן איז שוין געווען פּעסטיגעשטעלט: דוד בערגעלסאָן איז אויפגענומען געוואָרן אַלס אַ שריפטשטעלער, וועלכער האָט אוממיטלכאַר און אויף אַ הויך־קונסטלערישן אופן פאַרגעזעצט די טראַדיציעס פון מענדעלע מוכרספרים, שלום־עליכם און י. ל. פּרץ. דאָ מוז באַמערקט ווערן, אַז בערגעלסאָנס פּערזענלעכע באַצײאונג צו די קלאַסיקער איז לחלוטין ניט געווען קײן באַצײאונג פון אַ שילער צו זײנע הויכגעשעצטע לערער, וועלכע ער דאַרף הכנעהדיק מיטפאַלגן. שוין פון די ערשטע טריט זײנע אין דער ליטעראַטור האָט מען געזען, אַז זײנע ווערק זײנען טײף