

JEWISH AFFAIRS

May/June 1985

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Reagan and Bitburg
Herbert Aptheker

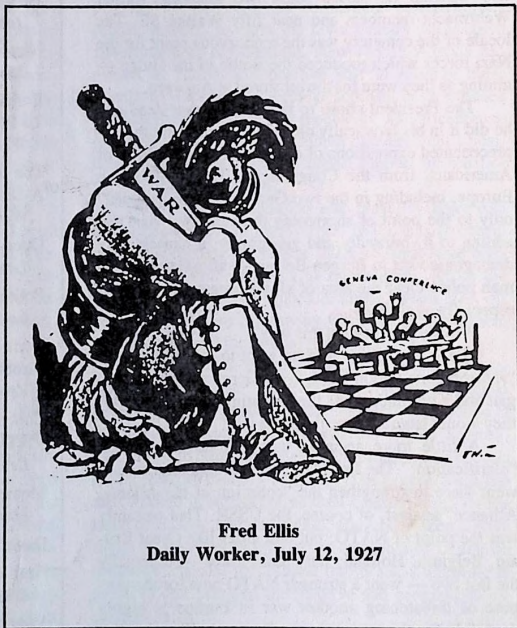
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Jon Weisberger

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A Disaster for Israeli Policy
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A Reagan Canard
Chuck Idelson



Reagan and Bitburg

by Herbert Aptheker

One lived to see the day that a U.S. Senator chose to defend the SS monsters who murdered four-score U.S. prisoners of war at Malmédy, in connection with the Battle of the Bulge. But that was the action of a drunken bum staggering to his demise — that was the action of Joe McCarthy. It was outrageous, but given the perpetrator, it did not really surprise.

Now we have lived to see not a drunken demagogue but a consummate prevaricator, who is President of the United States, choose to place a wreath — in his own name, for even he did not dare inscribe it in the name of the people of the United States — at the cemetery wherein lie buried some two thousand former Wehrmacht members and near fifty Waffen SS. The locale of the cemetery was the rendezvous point for the Nazi forces which produced the Battle of the Bulge — aiming as they were for the oil stored at Antwerp.

The President chose to honor those war dead and he did it in his fanatically obstinate way despite the unprecedented expressions of opposition from millions of Americans, from the Congress and from millions in Europe, including in the two Germanies. He "yielded" only to the point of shortening the cemetery visit and adding to it, belatedly and grudgingly, a nauseatingly demagogic visit to Bergen-Belsen — after having German police clear the area of all protesters and visitors, especially of all Jews.

Why did Reagan act this way?

The White House said he went to the cemetery to "foster reconciliation" with West Germany, but if Reagan and Kohl intensified their existing "reconciliation" they would have to share the same bed!

A little more accurate was a State Department "clarification." The President, his spokesperson stated, went there to strengthen the "cohesion of the Atlantic Alliance" against, of course, the USSR. That certainly was the point of NATO, but that allies like Great Britain, Belgium, Holland, Italy and France — especially the last two — want a stronger NATO now for the purpose of threatening another war in Europe is highly doubtful. On this point, as on Reagan's illegal activities in Central America and his efforts to establish hegemony over West European economies, his summit meeting was a smashing failure.

The leaders of Western Europe must have read

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NEW JEWISH AGENDA LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

By Jon Weisberger

This July, New Jewish Agenda will be holding its National Convention in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Scheduled for the 18th through the 21st, the Convention could not be more timely. For delegates, participants and observers alike, the Convention offers an opportunity to assess NJA's experience and set new goals for the future.

The election of 1984 demonstrated once again, if any further proof were necessary, that the majority of American Jews reject all attempts to draw them into the reactionary fold, and recognize a coincidence of interests with other sectors of American society, especially Afro-Americans. Jews and Blacks comprised two of the three constituencies registering the strongest anti-Reagan vote, while in other races they produced winning margins for anti-Reagan candidates. This recognition of the "whiff of fascism" emanating from the Reagan camp convincingly rebuffed the attempts of right-wing Jewish leaders to link the anti-Reagan forces to anti-Semitic expressions and, more importantly, to equate criticism of Israeli militarism and support for Palestinian rights with anti-Semitism. The 1984 Jewish vote, and the refusal of many Jewish leaders and organizations to be drawn into the reactionary hysteria surrounding the campaign of Reverend Jesse Jackson underlines the advances made by Jewish workers, professionals and women.

Since the re-election of Ronald Reagan, the progressive sentiments of the majority of American Jews have found continued expression in the April Actions for Peace, Jobs and Justice (supported by both NJA and UAHC), and particularly in the storm of criticism aroused by Reagan's shameful decision to honor Nazi criminals over the victims of fascism in his visit to the FRG in May. These events have prodded many of the more timorous forces in the mainstream Jewish organizations to take a stronger anti-Reagan position, despite claims of Reagan's "sincerity." Even the reactionary Zionist organizations are coming to understand what the majority of Jews have long known — that the Reagan Administration's power is for sale to the highest anti-Communist bidder, no matter how fascist or anti-Semitic.

The past year has been a period of intense activity

for New Jewish Agenda. The organization has continued to grow, to the point where more than 40 chapters and affiliates carry on activity on a local level.

A key feature of Agenda's program has been its support for a solution to the Mid-East conflict that takes into account the Palestinian right to self-determination. In calling for direct negotiations between the Israeli government and the P.L.O., NJA has placed itself alongside progressive forces throughout the world. In its lobbying efforts, as well as educational programs such as joint tours by Israeli and Palestinian peace activists, Agenda has demonstrated a commendable commitment to a genuine, lasting peace in the Middle East, and helped to break the attempted stranglehold of Zionist and chauvinist forces on the Jewish community.

NJA has been prominent in organizing in solidarity with the struggle for peace and social justice in Central America. At a time when the Reagan Administration has sought, with the connivance of reactionary Jewish leaders, to paint the revolutionary Nicaraguan government as anti-Semitic, New Jewish Agenda has played an immensely positive role in refuting these scurrilous allegations. Agenda activists have traveled to Nicaragua, and have met repeatedly with Nicaraguan officials to clarify the revolutionary government's position regarding the shameful Israeli support for reactionary forces in the region.

New Jewish Agenda has also played a major role in organizing Jewish involvement in the anti-apartheid protests sweeping the nation. NJA activists have been arrested in demonstrations in major cities across the country, particularly during Christmas, when NJA organized picket lines, allowing Christian anti-apartheid activists to spend the holiday with their families.

NJA has taken an active role in supporting the demand for a nuclear freeze and disarmament. Agenda has sponsored a range of educational activities aimed at the Jewish community, including the Sukkat Shalom, and helped in establishing research projects on the costs of the Reagan military build-up. The organization has also worked in support of women's rights, taken on the issue of lesbian and gay rights, and undertaken a wide range of activities promoting an examination of Jewish religious, cultural and ethical traditions, attempting to preserve and promote the positive and progressive aspects of Judaism.

In sum, then, New Jewish Agenda can look back with pride on its success in drawing together, in the words of the organization's program, "Jews from a variety of backgrounds and affiliations committed to progressive human values and the building of a shared vi-

sion of Jewish life."

The theme of New Jewish Agenda's Convention reflects the organization's perspectives on the future. Taking its title from the second of Hillel's three questions — "If I am only for myself, what am I?" — the Convention is focused on "Jews forging new alliances." The Convention will concentrate its attention on developing strategies in three areas: 1) U.S. foreign policy, 2) feminism, and 3) economic and social justice. Strategy papers on each of these areas will be presented for discussion, and an action agenda will be drawn up and approved by the Convention.

The three areas presented cover considerable ground, and draw on different degrees of experience and activity within NJA. In the area of foreign policy, the outlines of Agenda's position are already fairly well-developed, though much refinement and clarification is needed, as well as an overall strategy for implementation of the organization's program. Certainly it is to be hoped that NJA will continue its activities in support of a policy of non-intervention in Latin America, and its solidarity with the South African liberation movement. But it must be said, and indeed has been pointed out by Agenda activists, that the organization's involvement in support of nuclear disarmament needs revitalization and direction. Halting the arms race is the overarching foreign policy issue of our time — one need only ask those with whom we express our solidarity for confirmation of this emphasis. We are confident that New Jewish Agenda will undertake more consistent work in this area.

Agenda must also re-affirm its principled, progressive approach to the resolution of the Mid-East conflict. Here the issue is delicate, for in its success in attracting a broad range of progressive Jews, the organization must contend with a variety of positions regarding the question of its attitude vis-a-vis the Israeli government. There is a tendency on the part of some forces to use Agenda's properly formulated concern for "Israeli security with recognized borders" as a means by which to undercut its support for a comprehensive peace settlement. This tendency found expression this spring in the failure of the organization to join in the U.N.-NGO sponsored petition campaign in support of an international peace conference on the Middle East. The petition, supported by an extremely broad group of sponsors, including the Israeli Democratic Front for Peace and Equality and the International Jewish Peace Union, includes wording substantially identical to New Jewish Agenda's platform. While individual chapters of the organization may participate in the campaign, it

is to be hoped that the National Convention will undertake the petition as a national campaign, giving it the priority it so richly deserves.

In the area of economic and social justice, New Jewish Agenda can draw on the experience of many of its chapters in formulating a program that will place NJA in the center of the anti-monopoly struggle. In Los Angeles, NJA is in the forefront of organizing on a neighborhood basis to resist the displacement of Jewish and other senior citizens by the encroachment of gentrification and high-rise offices. In Seattle, New York, Cincinnati and other cities, NJA has taken the lead in working with broad coalitions in protesting the devastating impact of the Reagan budget cuts and the arms race on poor and working people. NJA has also performed important research on the impact of Reaganomics on the Jewish community, and theologically-oriented Agenda members have contributed important work in elaborating the Judaic ethical basis for social control of income distribution and the right to work.

The "economic and social justice" area is also the rubric under which NJA has chosen to address the issue of Black-Jewish relations. Here Agenda has taken the lead in uncompromisingly supporting affirmative action with concrete timetables and quotas. NJA is beginning to move aggressively in articulating the objective reasons for viewing an alliance between Blacks and Jews as the centerpiece of its orientation towards coalition-building. Agenda can play a major role in this regard by taking steps to ensure, in every coalition in which it works, that Black leadership and representation are actively sought out and supported. This is a concrete form in which the organization can move beyond abstract speculation about the nature of Black-Jewish relations into the reality of daily work on the basis of respect and understanding.

With an increased emphasis on economic issues, NJA can move even deeper into the mainstream of the progressive movement, and bring the issues confronting the American people into the daily discussion within the Jewish community. Public control of utilities, transportation, housing and owner-abandoned productive facilities are increasingly topics of concern to factory workers and all working people, yet there has been little discussion of these vital needs within the organized Jewish community. NJA's conference on Jews and Economic Justice, held late last year, was an important step in initiating this discussion. What remains now is for the organization to develop a concrete program for action.

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Disarmament, Step By Step

by Marilyn Bechtel

The new US-USSR nuclear arms talks which began early this year in Geneva are taking place against a highly significant historic background: the 40th anniversaries of the victory over fascism and of the nuclear annihilation at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The contradiction these anniversaries symbolize embodies the world's peril and its hope.

In defeating the greatest menace the world had known until that time — Hitler fascism and Japanese militarism — countries with basically different social systems showed they could overcome all barriers and cooperate to defeat a common enemy. The Grand Alliance succeeded, because despite great differences, the most fundamental interest of each country lay in winning the common struggle.

That this lesson was lost on that part of the US ruling class which became dominant after the war has led to the rise of an even greater menace — the rapidly intensifying nuclear arms "chase" which now threatens to soar beyond control.

The history of the 1930's has important things to say to us in this respect. Fifty years ago, as the threat posed by the rise of the Nazis became clear, the Soviet Union began a campaign to engage the nations of Europe in a network of collective security. Had they succeeded, the war might have been averted. At the very least, the worldwide toll would never have reached the staggering level of 50 million dead.

For forty years the USSR has been striving to build a new collective security network to defeat the menace of nuclear weapons. To the foundation laid by its initial proposals that atomic weapons be banned forever and destroyed — proposals that still stand — the USSR has added a superstructure related to banning or cutting particular types of weapons and reducing levels of forces. All share two basic principles: they must help lay the basis for complete disarmament, and they must apply equally to all participants.

Successive US administration's rejection of the Grand Alliance cooperative principles has forced on the world generation after generation of ever more dangerous nuclear weapons, from the hydrogen bomb of 1949 to the MX missile and Trident submarines of the 1980's. This trend has been greatly intensified under the Reagan administration.

But along a path strewn with failures stand several

signal successes: the partial nuclear test ban treaty of 1963, the nuclear non-proliferation treaty of 1967, the anti-ballistic missile treaty of 1972 and SALT II, signed in 1979 but never ratified by the US. These show once again that nations with different social systems can act in their mutual best interests. They became possible because the Soviet Union refused to knuckle under to the Strangelovean dream of the "American Century," and proved its ability to achieve and maintain basic equality. Each treaty is a victory in which the US peace movement played a key role.

This brings us to the present situation, and the talks at Geneva. They opened after more than a year during which there were no nuclear arms talks between the two countries, because the US insisted on placing new first-strike weapons in Europe. That they opened at all was another victory for the US peace movement, now multi-millions strong, which gave the Administration a very clear peace mandate in November.

These same peace forces now bear a great share of responsibility for whether the talks will succeed.

The talk's future has been menaced from the start by the Administration's determination to militarize a whole new dimension — outer space. Star Wars, or as the Administration calls it, the "Strategic Defense Initiative," is no defense at all, but a scheme to wage pre-emptive war through highly sophisticated technology — much of which does not yet exist. If the technology were feasible — and most scientific opinion in the US says it is not — Star Wars would set up a partial shield from behind which the US could launch a nuclear strike against the Soviet Union, while warding off much of the Soviet retaliation. (Administration figures speak of 20 million US dead as an acceptable loss, reinforcing the conclusion of sane people everywhere that the only defense against nuclear weapons is disarmament.)

Even the attempt to realize such a scheme violates international law — in particular the 1967 UN treaty forbidding militarization of outer space, and the 1972 anti-ballistic missile treaty. Most fundamental, it is based on an extremely dangerous premise — that a nuclear war can be fought and won, and on an old, discredited illusion — that the US can achieve and keep military superiority.

Some speak of an agreement that would let Star Wars "research" proceed. That, too, is an illusion. The Manhattan Project was once just "research." But it gave us the atomic bomb. No one should expect the Administration to spend even the minimum projected \$ 30 billion for Star Wars research and then throw it all away.

The Soviets rightly see Star Wars as an enormous escalation of the nuclear danger, and in June of last year they proposed talks for a total ban on space weapons — talks the US refused.

At their meeting in January, Secretary of State Shultz and Foreign Minister Gromyko agreed "that the subject of the negotiations will be a complex of questions concerning space and nuclear arms, both strategic and intermediate range with all questions considered and resolved in their interrelationship." In plain English: you can't talk sensibly about cutting nuclear missiles while one party is trying to open a whole new arena to the arms race.

As the first round of the talks recessed, the Reagan administration and the Soviet government both cited one thing in assessing the lack of progress: The US administration's insistence on going ahead with Star Wars.

However, it is still possible to ensure the talk's success, if we act quickly.

The Soviets have unilaterally declared a moratorium of further deployments of their medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe until November, and have urged the US to join them in a freeze of research, production and deployment of nuclear weapons during the course of the talks. They have also announced their endorsement of the Washington based Center for Defense Information's proposal that a complete nuclear test ban treaty enter into force on August 6, 1985 — the 40th anniversary of Hiroshima.

There is a large and growing area of common ground between proposals made by peace forces in the US and those of the USSR and other socialist countries. Among these are the nuclear freeze (originated here and supported by the USSR), no first use of nuclear weapons (unilaterally proclaimed by the USSR in 1982), banning weapons in space, and cutting military spending (the USSR has proposed using the savings to help developing countries).

Responding to a Pravda correspondent's questions on April 8, Mikhail Gorbachev expressed the Soviet attitude when he said, "Confrontation is not an inborn defect in our relations. . . . We regard the improvement of Soviet-American relations not only as an extremely necessary but also as a possible matter. But, of course, one cannot do without reciprocity here."

There are things we can do now to help win a victory for peace at Geneva. First, tell the Administration and the Congress: No Star Wars. Then, make it clear to Congress that the majority of the US people want a nuclear freeze and real cuts in military spending, with

savings spent on human needs. And insist the Administration negotiate agreements on the common ground proposals, to set the stage for step by step agreed disarmament.

This is the road to creating a new Grand Alliance, in which the most fundamental self-interests of all the world's peoples and governments can be met: the elimination forever of the menace of nuclear weapons. □

Marilyn Bechel is editor of *New World Review*.

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In the area of feminism, NJA must move to strengthen its activity in support of women's rights, particularly for working women. The organization's National Platform contains an important section on "Women in the Work Force, Family and Reproductive Rights," as well as a vaguer passage on the organization's "Feminist Commitment." Agenda has admittedly been hampered in its work on these issues by a lack of definition, and this situation needs to be corrected, especially by developing a higher level activity in support of equal pay, adequate child care, unionization of women workers, and affirmative action in hiring. These are the means by which the organization's goal of bringing women into positions of leadership will be concretely realized.

From the moment of New Jewish Agenda's formation, progressive sectors of Jewish-Americans have welcomed NJA as a positive force within the Jewish community and as an important component of the anti-Reagan, anti-monopoly all-people's struggle. Time has confirmed this analysis, and the prospects for the future growth of New Jewish Agenda are heartening. I am sure that all people who desire peace and justice, non-Jews as well as Jews, will wish the organization success in its deliberations, and will welcome its commitment to struggle for a society of peace and equality for all people. □

Jon Weisberger is a member of New Jewish Agenda.

**EVERY READER
GET A READER**

For a Coalition of Reason to Preserve Peace: GDR on 40th Anniversary of Liberation from Hitler Fascism.

By Werner Haendler.

We have asked Werner Haendler, who in 1938 was thrown into a Nazi concentration camp, Sachsenhausen, and managed to get to England shortly before the war, to write to us his impressions on the 40th anniversary of the victory and liberation, May 8, 1945. He is vice-president of the GDR-USA Friendship Committee with the League of International Friendship of the German Democratic Republic.

I happen to live in Berlin, capital of the German Democratic Republic, only a few steps away from the great Soviet war memorial in Berlin-Treptow, honoring five thousand (5,000) of those Soviet soldiers who forty years ago lost their lives in the spring days of 1945 during the last battles to crush Hitler's last hide-out. Above those graves stands a Soviet soldier, his foot on the remnants of a smashed swastika, with a rescued child on his arm. When you enter the impressive site, you pass the sculpture of a mourning mother. One always finds there, even in the winter, fresh flowers at her feet. Young couples, my daughter did that also, bring their bridal bouquets there, as a token of commemoration, as an expression of thanks to those who with their very lives saved humanity from Nazi barbarism. This custom seems to me a striking testimony that younger people, born even two decades after the end of World War II, do understand what an historic chance for a life in peace and decency they were given with the liberation forty years ago.

But naturally we, the witnesses of the Nazi and war years, have to face pointing questions by the younger ones, for instance, why this terrible war catastrophe could not have been prevented? Yes, we explain, there could have been a chance to maintain the frail peace, but only if the anti-Hitler coalition would have formed an iron ring around Nazi Germany before-Hitler and his high command had lashed out to their various "Blitzkriege". The Soviet Union, as will be remembered, went to a great length to form a system of collective security. But this strategy, aimed at forming a common peace front, failed in the face of suicidal anti-Soviet prejudices of the Western states.

The war against the German people started as early

as in 1933. In July and August that year the first death sentences were executed in Hamburg and Berlin, typically enough against young Communists. And with the setting-up of concentration camps, the torture hells of modern times, and with the stifling of all political parties and trade unions a terror regime was created that had one goal only: war to gain world rule.

Anti-Semitism, fanned by the the Nazi party, too, served this end. The furious hatred of the Jews was aimed at making the "Aryans" of the Germanic-Teutonic "Master's Race" believe in their "right" to world hegemony. This also sowed the evil seeds of brutality and force against all so-called races of "less value", for example the Poles, whose intellectuals were systematically liquidated and who were planned to be nothing but slaves. The final and fanatic consequence of this ideology was the embarkment on the road towards the crime of our century, towards holocaust which meant annihilation of millions of people.

To the credit of the German people I want to mention here that resistance in the lion's den, in Germany itself, had always and courageously been put up under great sacrifices without eventually bringing about the concerted action necessary to overcome the tyranny. Thousands of men and women who saw themselves as genuine German patriots and, at the same time, as allies of the invaded nations, made use of any opportunity to fight against the Nazis. For this reason we, when we mark the 40th anniversary of liberation, also commemorate vanguard resistance fighters such as Ernst Thaelmann, the Communist Party leader, who was assassinated at Buchenwald concentration camp after twelve years of imprisonment (his murderer, however, who worked as a teacher (!) in the Federal Republic of Germany in the post-war years, today is enjoying a high pension to live comfortably there).

We commemorate Count Stauffenberg, initiator of the attempted bomb attack on Hitler on July 20, 1944. We commemorate the late clergyman Martin Niemöller who, contrary to other church leaders, during sermons had courageously denounced the anti-human Hitler regime and was therefore exposed to many years of harassment in Nazi concentration camps. American-born Mildred Harnack, from Milwaukee, was another hero of the resistance. She helped her husband, Dr. Arvid Harnack, run the famous resistance organization Rote Kapelle (red orchestra) for which the Nazis launched feverish investigations. A memorial stone at Berlin's Humboldt University on Unter den Linden boulevard pays homage also to her outstanding services.

Among the men who were liberated on May 8, 1945, are today's leading representatives of the GDR, State Council chairman, Erich Honecker, and Horst Sindermann, president of the Peoples Chamber, the GDR parliament. After forty years which have passed they can note with satisfaction that we have made good use of the chance opened to us through the liberation from fascism. With the GDR a modern state of social justice and peace has emerged, and this in the heart of Europe, in the very country from where two world wars had been prepared and started.

After the liberation we pledged to make all-out efforts to prevent such war disaster from happening again, to prevent another war from ever being launched from German soil again. Therefore, we did not regard the Potsdam Agreement as a burden but as a mission entrusted to us by the United Nations to create reliable conditions for peace in Germany at long last. Yet in the year of liberation we put into practice the democratic land reform thereby breaking the economic backbone of the landed gentry, the Prussian-militaristic clique. In addition, all Nazi teachers were sacked as a first step towards a democratic school reform. Big enterprises owned by industrialists who had pocketed huge profits through the war and where millions of people had worked themselves to death, were nationalized.

However, four decades after the smashing of fascism peace is again in danger. The siting of Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Western Europe, mainly in the FRG, steps up the threat of a nuclear inferno. The U.S. Administration's latest plans for Star Wars have even added to this danger because this stance anew reflects the search for a "wonder weapon" in order to gain unmatched superiority. As a resistance fighter against Nazism I believe that I have the right and the obligation to recall the fact that similar thinking fifty years ago had led to the war in Europe that eventually claimed over fifty million lives.

One must not overlook either that in the other German state, the FRG, forces are making propaganda who regard May 8, 1945, as a day of sorrow, of shameful defeat instead of liberation. Over the past few months, revanchist organizations have not been stopped in loudly expressing again their designs of marching Eastward. They have done so even with open backing from the government. Many people in America, which is so far away, may consider these efforts madness, unimaginable. But had it not been already the designs by German imperialism which were labelled by many people as sheer madness until they became bloody reality? For this reason the GDR uses all its po-

tentials and possibilities to bring about a coalition of reason. We want to unite all reasonable people, worldwide, on all continents, to avert a nuclear holocaust. A first step now, that new negotiations between the USA and the USSR have begun, should be a general ban on nuclear armament, a freeze, combined with a halt to any nuclear test to prevent these negotiations from being rendered null and void through ever new generations of weaponry.

Our goal on the 40th anniversary of the liberation from fascism is a coalition of reason and realism. In this we feel at one with the late Joe Polowsky, a former US soldier who witnessed the first meeting of Soviet and American armed forces on the river Elbe in April 1945. In accordance with his last will, Joe Polowsky was laid to rest at the place where that historic gathering had happened: in the town of Torgau on the Elbe. By choosing Torgau as his final resting place Joe Polowsky left a major message to us and future generations: Let us in time form an anti-war coalition to preserve the dear peace achieved through so many sacrifices. □

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EVERY READER GET A READER

The Invasion of Lebanon: A Disaster for Israeli Policy

By Wolf Ehrlich

In April of 1985 Tom Morris, assistant editor of the Canadian Tribune, interviewed Wolf Ehrlich, Chairman of the Control Commission of the Communist Party of Israel, who was in Canada to attend the 26th Convention of the Canadian Communist Party. Wolf Ehrlich was our honored guest at the 11th Annual Jewish Affairs Dinner. The interview was first published in the April 22, 1985 issue of the Canadian Tribune.

Q: Is the call by the Israeli public for a withdrawal of its troops from Lebanon mainly an expression of the cost of the war in lives and money, or does it reflect a growing realization of the political and moral illegality of the invasion?

A: First, it's true there is a shift in public opinion. Many people favor immediate withdrawal. But it doesn't mean they all favor putting an end to intervention in Lebanon's internal affairs or respecting its sovereignty. But at least they want the troops out. This is mainly due to the rising numbers of Israeli soldiers killed and maimed.

Israelis in general, including working people, are not yet internationalist in the sense that Lebanese or Palestinian victims are important. What is important is the safety of their own fathers and sons. And we must see this limitation.

But even in this limited way, the protests are having their impact, they are rising. There are one, two, five, twenty each month with an impact not only on soldier's families, but also on the public in general.

It's not mainly a moral or political issue, but a general feeling that the government's war aims have not been fulfilled, a feeling that the whole thing is futile and nothing was achieved; that it was a fruitless adventure.

On the economic side, the results are different. Of course, people feel that the economic picture is bad, that unemployment is rising. But unlike Canada, the U.S. or Europe, a big majority of Israeli workers are employed in military-related jobs, and their jobs depend on the country's military spending.

Wages have dropped by 10% over the past six months, and prices, especially on items such as bread, rice, flour, margarine (the basic foodstuffs), have

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soared. People feel something is happening, but as yet the majority do not connect it with the war.

For example, we succeeded in having one slogan accepted. We said: "Divert money from settlements in occupied territories to the slum quarters." This idea was simple and was accepted. But to convince the people that the entire aggression policy is a costly affair is a long-term struggle.

Q: The government publicly warned that, following eventual withdrawal, it will repeat its action unless its border is "secure". How can there then be peace?

A: That's true, it said that. It follows from Zionist ideological indoctrination. They only see themselves; they see everything through their own spectacles. They cannot see that one or two rockets landing on an Israeli settlement cannot be compared to the massive suffering of the Lebanese people. They see only their side, and therefore make such threats. Rabin borrows the "scorched earth" lexicon of the Nazis — and in fact is doing it already. But he is threatening to carry out a fundamental scorched earth operation should anything happen on the border in the future.

Q: The settlements issue is a key one, not only because they establish permanent Israeli presence on Arab lands, but also because Israel appears willing to pursue its settlements policy despite even Reagan's public opposition to it.

A: First, Israel doesn't think Reagan will press too hard. Second, it's part of their ideology — not only the right wing's, but also to a large degree that of the right social democratic Labour leaders. The extreme right wants all of Palestine, the others want almost all of it.

And so the settlements continue, but with two limitations. One is the lack of manpower, because not many want to live in military outposts disguised as living quarters. The government offers financial incentives to attract people to these settlements. The second limitation is the disarray of Israel's budget, which makes it difficult to provide the needed funds for settlements. Construction of them is slowing down, but at least they feel they are "showing the flag" and making a *fait accompli*.

Q: Could you outline the Israeli Communist Party proposals for a just and lasting peace in the region?

A: That's the most difficult question. The Palestinian people, their revolution and their leadership, the Palestine Liberation Organization, have been depicted in the eyes of the Israeli people as terrorists. They have been dehumanized by such comments as that of former Prime Minister Begin as "animals on two legs" which may be treated in any manner — people devoid of all

rights.

Not only the country's leadership, but a large section of the Israeli people, is not yet ready to sit together with the Palestinians, recognize the rights of the PLO, and will do all possible to remain in the whole of Palestine.

Here we have a serious uphill struggle to convince our people that it is not only a matter of solidarity, of the tragedy of another people, but that their own interests require coming to an understanding with the Palestinian people — there is no other way. That means recognizing the Palestinian right to self-determination and to their independent state. This means Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territory occupied since 1967.

The time is past when Golda Meir could say, "There is no Palestinian question." Everyone knows there is a problem, but they are not yet ready to solve the problem.

Q: Do not, then, the Israeli people face a contradiction: the longer the occupation lasts, the greater will be the Palestinian resistance to it?

A: That is correct. It has been proven that the Israeli government, with all its power has not been able to find prominent quislings among the Palestinians. And even those whom the press calls "moderates" cannot detach themselves from the national aspirations of the masses. This shows, that despite all difficulties, the Palestinian people are united in their determination to end Israeli occupation.

Q: Did last election's result show the public's wish to end Begin's hard line? A: To some extent. Some felt that with an alignment of the Labor bloc, it might be easier to solve problems. But most people do not see, that in basic political questions, there is no big difference between the two main blocs.

The fact that a so-called national unity government could be put together after the election shows they can sit together around a common platform and enact similar policies.

People expect the government to solve economic questions. But it is not trying and cannot succeed in solving the crisis — the structural or cyclical crisis facing the nation. But they have succeeded in lowering the working people's living standards. The right-wing Begin government could not do that while the Labor alignment was in opposition — but together they now can, under the leadership of a social democrat like Peres.

Q: Would it be fair to characterize the results of the three-year Lebanon invasion as not only having rad-

Secretary of State Shultz's statement in *Foreign Affairs* (Spring, 1985, p.711): "The present political division of the (European) continent is wholly artificial; it exists only because it has been imposed by brute Soviet power; the United States has never recognized it as legitimate or permanent."

This is not only a repudiation of the Helsinki Accord; if the Secretary of State was serious it is just short of a declaration of war. Its consequence was intensified when in Salzburg, West Germany, Reagan told several thousand carefully selected Right-wing German university students not to be content with two Germanies but to actively seek Germany's reunification. Here was **revanchism** from the mouth of a U.S. President tossed out in West Germany to wildly cheering aspirants to SS uniforms.

Keep in mind, when reading the latest communiques from the White House and from the mouth of its dummy occupant, that recently a new chief ventriloquist for that House was appointed. This is Patrick Buchanan, a Nixon speech-writer, a fanatical Right-wing ideologue and a former columnist for the Moon newspaper, the *Washington Times*. In his latter post Buchanan spent much of his time defending Nazi war criminals finally located and being tried by the Office of Special Investigation of the Justice Department. Buchanan denounced the OSI for "hounding staunch anti-Communist emigres" — who had murdered hundreds of thousands in Germany, the Ukraine, the Baltic countries, Byelo-Russia and Yugoslavia. (See on this the article by Lucette Lagnado in the *Nation*, May 4, 1985.)

Two further points must be made in this brief commentary. There is, certainly, a special horror to placing a wreath at a cemetery containing SS dead. But the cemetery also contains the corpses of hundreds of men of the Wehrmacht. Now, while the Waffen SS was an elite band of murderers attached to the regular Wehrmacht, the latter was the **main** instrument of Hitler's criminal war of aggression and the **main** instrument for the mass slaughter of scores of millions of men, women and children.

The Nuremberg tribunal sentenced the two highest officers of the Wehrmacht to hang — both Jodl and Keitel. The latter, Wilhelm Keitel, was appointed by Hitler in 1938 as Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Nazi Armed Forces. It was he who, on May 8, 1945, ratified the unconditional surrender of the Third Reich. And he — with General Jodl — were hanged as war criminals by the Allied tribunal in 1946.

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OPEN LETTER TO ELIE WIESEL

This originally appeared in the Chicago Anglo-Jewish Weekly, The Sentinel, May 2, 1985.

Dear Elie Wiesel:

As a WW II veteran whose mother lived through a pogrom in Czarist Russia and whose wife's relatives were butchered by the fascists in Poland, I feel impelled to write to you at your moment of travail brought on by Ronald Reagan.

In the U.S. and throughout the world millions are sharply focusing their attention on the WWII fascist perpetrated Holocaust. This is not solely so because we are now commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the defeat of the Third Reich but because of Ronald Reagan's determination to bring about reconciliation with German revanchists whose aid he seeks in his anti-Soviet crusade.

You, who are world renowned, you whose fruitful pen compassionately etched the Holocaust horrors, have been rebuked by Ronald Reagan for your determined efforts to have him change his stance.

In every corner of our land and throughout the globe millions of voices have been raised in anger at Reagan for his refusal to visit Dachau, for his refusal to attend ceremonies celebrating the defeat of the fascists and for his insistence on laying a wreath at the German cemetery where lie buried WW II fascist soldiers and SS troops.

This mass revulsion throughout the globe caused Reagan to add a visit to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp site but he remains adamant about the wreath laying, contemptuously dismissing your earnest appeal and the world-wide requests not to do so.

Of the 12 million Holocaust victims, six million were Jewish, one third of the total Jewish population at the time. In your public address you reported that 6 million were: "Poles, Czechs, French and Dutch, Norwegians and Danes, Ukrainians, Greeks, Gypsies and Gays." Why is it that you overlooked the Russians? Was it perhaps, by design, a debater's signal to Reagan who, as you know, declared the Soviets an "evil empire?"

You are, no doubt, also aware that most Jewish-American leaders and organizations are on record for detente with the USSR. Theodore Mann, President of the American Jewish Congress, at the 1984 Sukkat Shalom Peace Festival held opposite the White House sharply condemned Reagan for declaring the USSR an "evil empire," urging all-out efforts to build detente

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and world peace.

In your desperate attempt to reach Reagan with your heart-felt appeal and to explain his position to the enraged public, you characterized him as "ill-advised." You then elaborated saying that "he is one for whom we have genuine affection and admiration." Tragically history records that such tactics in the 1930's did not deter the fascists from perpetrating the Holocaust.

Who are the "we" of whom you speak? Certainly not the Holocaust Survivors and their families! Menachem Rosensaft said forthrightly: "The time for soft-spoken words and appeals is over." The Survivors urged you to return the medal awarded you and to disband the Holocaust Commemoration Council in protest. The "we" cannot include Jewish-Americans and their leaders who, almost unanimously, attacked Reagan. It does not include the Afro-Americans who condemned Reagan's support of Apartheid South Africa and the Holocaust unleashed there. Nor can it include the 53 U.S. Senators who pleaded with Reagan not to go to Bitburg.

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, sharply rebuked Reagan for being more concerned with missiles than with the widespread misery at home.

New Jewish Agenda, reflecting the outlook of the widest sectors of Jewish-American youth, has been combatting Reagan and Reaganism since its founding convention in 1980 soon after Reagan's first election.

Is it your estimate that your characterization of Reagan as "ill-advised" makes him any the less dangerous?

Were we not seriously threatened by the "ill-advised" Reagan when he called upon the impeached Nixon, during the AWACS debate, to help him keep the Jews in line? U.S. Senator Howard Metzenbaum at the time cried out: "Never had Washington, D.C. witnessed such an orgy of anti-Semitism!"

Is not the historic significance of the Holocaust undetermined when the "ill-advised" Reagan refuses the request of scholars around the globe to open the U.S. Archives on the Nazis now kept under lock and key in West Berlin?

Is it not the racist and the anti-Semites who benefit from the "ill-advised" Reagan's full support of Apartheid South Africa? In whose interests did the "ill-advised" Reagan invade tiny Grenada? Is not peace threatened in Central America by the "ill-advised" Reagan's open battle with the people of the U.S. and the U.S. Congress in his determination to invade Nicaragua? What comfort is there for the Holocaust Survivors

and their families in the "ill-advised" Reagan's declaration that most Germans who fought in WW II are now gone knowing full well that SS veterans meet regularly and are about to hold another reunion? What benefits accrue to Jewish-Americans and other minorities from the alliance of the "ill-advised" Reagan with Jerry Falwell?

Still desperately probing a way to Reagan's ear, you observed that Reagan is a "friend of Israel." With such friends the people of Israel have little need for enemies. The billions of dollars desperately needed at home to rebuild our economy are squandered on armaments by the "friend of Israel" to impose U.S. hegemony over the Middle East for which the Israelis, the Palestinians, the Lebanese and the Syrians pay in blood.

WW II veterans, along with Holocaust Survivors recall only too well Hitler's plan, "Drang Noch Osten," to impose the hegemony of the Third Reich over Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Toward this end the military-industrial complex of the Third Reich unleashed WW II and, in the process, built slave labor camps, the gas chambers and the camp ovens. During the war 50 million people were killed, 20 million of whom were Russians.

Reagan cunningly assumed that your implied acceptance of certain anti-Soviet positions reflect a world view parallel to his own which calls for an anti-Soviet crusade. Reagan, therefore, needs the full support of the German revanchists — the SS reincarnate — accounting for Reagan's insistence on honoring German WW II soldiers and SS troops.

In view of the fact you "feel responsible for the living" and "equally responsible for the dead," please note that in honoring the plea of the Warsaw Ghetto Martyrs — "Never to Forget! Never to Forgive!" you have powerful allies to call upon. They are the peace advocates around the world. Millions are calling for detente, world peace and for outlawing of anti-Semitism and racism. These forces are capable of turning Reagan around.

There is, then, ample reason for you and all Holocaust Survivors and their families to be heartened. The Holocaust Survivors, alongside the scores of thousands throughout the U.S. now pressing their message on Reagan can make the difference; together we are capable of making a change.

On the 20th of April 50,000 men and women of our multi-national people marched in Washington, D.C., 10,000 in Los Angeles and 70,000 in San Francisco. Their message was firm and sharp: "No More Page 12

Holocausts! End Apartheid in South Africa Now! Jobs, Not Bombs! Full Equality Now!"

Here lies our strength! Here are our staunchest allies! Here is our best hope for a future without Holocausts! They are the many! Most significant of all, they are well-advised!

Sincerely yours,
Lewis M. Morozio
Managing Editor, Jewish Affairs

□

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Nicaragua. He has just persuaded Costa Rica to allow his personal SS — the Green Berets — to train killers there, in preparation for his Viet-Nam like assault upon Nicaragua. There is nothing the SS or the Wehrmacht did in Europe which U.S. financed and armed soldiers are not this minute doing in Central America.

Reagan's wreath-laying at a Nazi cemetery is in keeping with the elitist, racist, militarist, interventionist and sadist policies of his Administration. To the degree that Bitburg illuminates this truth, it can serve a significant educational purpose.

From now on let the President be known as Ronald Bitburg Reagan.

□

Herbert Aptheker is the Editor of Jewish Affairs.

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ically altered domestic Lebanese politics, but also making Israel's northern border less "secure" than before?

A: You know, the Israel-Lebanon border, for a full year before Israel's attack, was peaceful. There existed an unwritten agreement between Israel and the PLO that there would be no attacks, and both sides kept to this agreement. This shows that it could be done.

This has now changed. A large part of the Lebanese people who were neutral towards Israel, some even friendly towards the Israeli army, are today very hostile. This change is to the detriment of official Israeli policy and it can not be overestimated.

After the tragedies suffered, the Lebanese people are now trying to get back on their feet, and to overcome extreme hardships. This will take time. The invasion was a disaster for Israeli policy.

□

Jewish Affairs

Polish Holocaust Survivor Speaks Out

by Sol Flapan

WARSAW — "I'm the last of the Mohicans. The only purpose for my living is to give evidence of Nazi crimes committed on Polish Jews."

That's the dramatic opening of an interview for Warsaw's *Zycie Warszawy* by Alexander Bernfes, one of the few survivors of the Nazi German genocidal holocaust here.

Bernfes is the author of an hour long shocking documentary film showing Hitler Germany's aggression against Poland in September 1939 igniting World War II, the setting up of a so called closed Jewish district here in Warsaw, and the tragedy and extermination of the Ghetto.

Much of this spine chilling film came from the personal archives of Heinrich Himmler, a close sidekick of dictator Adolph in the policy of aggression, mass murder, rapine and plunder throughout Nazi occupied Europe. That includes the prior physical and moral and spiritual enslavement of the German people themselves.

The documentary carries a British (BBC) imprint coupled with a censoring by this prestigious "objective" news media of those scenes depicting assistance by Poles to their Jewish compatriots as well as their own costly martyrlogy. Talk of "fair reporting" and complaints of censorship by others, of course.

"I did everything humanly possible to prevent those cuttings," Bernfes told *Zycie Warszawy*. "I have letters from Poles living in Britain voicing regret that they could not see the original version."

Alexander Bernfes, a Varsovian whose roots here go back generations, was driven to the notorious Warsaw Ghetto like many scores of thousands of his fellow Polish Jews. Toward the end of 1941, he related to *Zycie Warszawy*, the AK helped in getting him out of that death trap and shepherded him abroad, eventually to Britain.

The AK were the Polish initials for the Home Army, one wing of the war-time underground, reactionary and anti-Soviet in the upper leadership and subordinated to the erstwhile emigre government in London, though patriotic at the lower and rank and file levels.

"Thus Poles rescued me from death," says this "tired Polish Jew whose entire world was robbed by the

Hitlerites."

"I swore an oath that I must tell the whole world of the Nazi crimes perpetrated on Polish Jews, crimes which are an integral part of the martyrlogy of the entire Polish nation."

Further on in his conversation with *Zycie Warszawy*, Bernfes sadly relates that "some Jews in the west criticize me for always stressing that the martyrlogy of Poland's Jews was a part of the Polish nation's tragedy." He also recalls with bitterness that the producer of this film which was screened in England in 1965, then again in 1975 as well as on some TV channels in the USA, censored out what was claimed to be "politically motivated sequences."

However, Bernfes has managed to show his unexpurgated documentary to Polish journalists. Brought here, this film will enrich Poland's ongoing documentation of Nazi crimes. "I've searched and I'm forever hunting documentary evidence of the Nazi extermination of the Ghetto."

During one of his digs in 1945 Bernfes discovered in some out of the way place in what had been Nazi occupied territory a crate marked "Top Secret — Jewish Problem." It contained Himmler's private archives on the Warsaw Ghetto, among other things. These increased his own private files on Nazi crimes some of which "later found their way to the archives in Washington."

Bernfes also recalls his meeting with Hermann Goering, that co-arsonist of two frightful conflagrations: the torching of the Reichstag (Parliament) in February 1933 which launched the Nazi assault on the German people turning the country into one vast militarized concentration camp which paved the way for the igniting of devastating World War II.

It was the day before the "once fat now thin as a finger" ex-Marshall of the Nazi Air Force poisoned himself while he was a defendant at the post war Nuremberg War Crimes Trial. Frail Bernfes approached the killer of Rotterdam, Warsaw, and scores of Soviet towns and cities in the dock and proclaimed, "I'm a Polish Jew. They'll never bomb this place." Goering "hid his face in his hands."

To the *Zycie Warszawy* question how he felt at that moment, Bernfes replied, "I dare not say. God, there he was, the torturer of my people — Jews and Poles.

When I was in the Ghetto we used to say, "May the Poles not lose hope for the Jews have none left.

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Boris Miller — Birobidjan's Chronicler

By Yevgeni Bugayenko

Sovetsky Pisatel Publishers in Moscow, the country's largest publishing house, have signed a contract with Soviet Jewish writer Boris Miller to publish a collection of his works translated into Russian in 100,000 copies. The volume will include his latest novel, *Render Unto Each Generation the Things Which Are That Generation's* and several stories, including *Affection*. These works had earlier been printed in Yiddish by *Sovietisch Heimland*, the Moscow based monthly.

Boris Miller has been living for many years now in Birobidjan which is the centre of the Jewish Autonomous Region. His works have been published in Yiddish and Russian in nearby Khabarovsk, and in Moscow and Kharkov. Meanwhile his plays have been staged by Jewish theatres in Birobidjan, Vilnius and other cities and towns.

Boris Miller is 71 years old. He looks stout and seems to be laggard at first sight. But he becomes animated as soon as one mentions literature. "Looking back," he says, "I am pleased with the way I have lived. There were problems and setbacks, of course. But they are nothing, compared with the fact that I have always been able to write, which I like doing most of all. And what's more, I have been writing in my mother tongue and have published whatever I wrote. I have readers not only in Birobidjan but elsewhere in my vast country."

"And on top of all that," he said smiling, "I have wonderful children, grandchildren, and even several great-grandchildren."

Boris Miller says he has mainly written about the fraternity of people of various nationalities and about the life of Jews in the USSR. "I wrote one of my stories," he says, "as a result of a chance meeting. On a flight back home from Moscow I found myself in the company of three travellers: a lieutenant-colonel (a Jew), a young Ukrainian woman, and her little son born of her Tartar husband. But two hours later the boy was sleeping in the lieutenant-colonel's lap while the woman, dozing, inadvertently leaned her head onto his shoulder. It was like one family. Before my very eyes this family is growing, and I consider it my duty to write about it."

Boris Miller was born in 1913 in the Ukraine, in the

small Jewish town of Volkovitsy not far from Zhmerinka. During his childhood, the revolution in Russia put an end to discrimination against Jews, abrogating the *Jewish Pale*. In my Volkovitsy, Boris Miller recalls, "Jewish artisans, Russian railwaymen and Ukrainian farmers lived side by side. We, their children, studied at one and the same school, played together and were friends. And in my childhood I acquired the Jewish, Russian and Ukrainian languages as my three mother tongues. As a child I took to literature and began reading Pushkin, Sholom Aleichem and Shevchenko in the original."

He was 15 when a youth newspaper in Kharkov, the capital of the Ukraine at that time, printed his verse. Shortly after, he moved to Kharkov and got a job at a nickel-plating factory. He wrote poetry and short stories in the evenings. The four stories he took to a local publishing house in 1931 were accepted at once and published in a book in Yiddish. This collection of stories written by the 18 year old author, which seems to be somewhat naive now, still reflected an important phenomenon of that time — the Jew's transition from a narrow, isolated township existence to life in cities, towns and villages, with the opportunities it offered.

Boris Miller was no exception. He was admitted to the literary faculty of the Kharkov Pedagogical Institute. While still a student, his second book, *Under the Rainbow*, was published. In 1936, having graduated from the Institute, he went to the just formed Jewish Autonomous Region to work as a teacher of the Jewish and Russian languages and literature. Two years later he was invited to work on the staff of the *Birobidjaner Stern*, a newspaper published there in Yiddish. There he worked as a correspondent, and then executive secretary and assistant editor.

"I made the correct choice," the writer says. "Birobidjan was the embodiment of the changes which involved the Jewish population of the country. Meanwhile my work on the newspaper editorial board provided lots of subjects, ideas and impressions, and helped me get acquainted with many people."

A literary critic once said that the Jewish Autonomous Region was Boris Miller's destiny in literature, besides being his place of residence. And indeed, all the literary works he has produced in the past few decades, for instance, the story *At Top Speed* or the novel *Render Unto Each Generation the Things Which Are That Generation's*, have clearly been written by an inhabitant of that region, by someone who knows it very well. His book's theme is the building of a new life in

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Concentration Camp Resistance Fighters: V-E Day Heroes

By Lewis M. Moroze

As we commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the allied victory over the fascists in World War II, we draw strength from the grandeur of humanity displayed by the resistance forces, against enormous odds, in all the slave-labor and death camps created and run by the Nazis. Too frequently we recall the terror in the camps and know little of or pay little attention to the heroic struggles of the incarcerated men and women under the most oppressive conditions. There prisoners of many nationalities displayed their feelings of international friendship and solidarity.

President Ronald Reagan flagrantly announced his refusal to participate in the ceremony in Germany commemorating the 40th Anniversary of V-E Day and his refusal to visit Dachau, the former concentration camp.

A reading of: "*Resistance in the Nazi Concentration Camps, 1939-1945*," by Krzysztof Dunin-Wasowicz, who was incarcerated in the camp at Stutthof, will give one an overview of the resistance movement and an insight on why Reagan dreads the thought of having to visit Dachau.

To this very day, it is still most difficult to obtain all the available data about the Nazi period. The author acknowledges that there is much yet to be discovered on the Nazi concentration camps.

Today, millions are shockingly aware that the US harbored thousands of the Nazis who ran the death camps. Not too well known is the fact that all US administrations since World War II refused the request of scholars from around the globe for permission to see and study the documents, resting in the US Archives, on the Nazi period, housed in West Berlin in a building surrounded by an electric fence and howling dogs.

The Nazi concentration camps were more than physical detention camps, torture chambers and crematoria. They were designed, planned and constructed with the greatest precision. Their role was to dehumanize, exploit, terrorize and slaughter millions of men, women and children as part of the grand plan to establish a "1,000 Year Reich."

We, who were delegates to the International Conference on Genocide in Occupied Europe, 1939-1945 held in Warsaw, Poland in 1983, learned about the

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planning and the building of the camps. In addition to the building engineers and the building trades artisans, the military-industrial complex of the Third Reich called upon psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, chemists, pharmacists, doctors and others to apply their skills in establishing and running camps to house "enemies of the Third Reich," —communists, anti-fascists and "untermenschen" (inferior peoples). No skill, no detail was overlooked in the plans to demoralize, dehumanize and eventually slaughter the men, women and children to be incarcerated.

In an essay entitled, "*History Experienced and History Testified*," a Polish sociologist, Jerzy Jedlicki, correctly observed that the concentration camp was a place where "violence destroyed any non-utilitarian values, and where values won their struggle against violence."

"*Resistance in the Nazi Concentration Camps 1939-1945*," discusses in its various chapters, the organization of the camps, the many-sided aspects of resistance in the camps, cultural life and religious life in the camps and offers an estimate of the achievements of organized resistance. There are 26 pages of sources and bibliography and a 26 page index of persons.

In the chapter, "*The Basic Concept of Resistance in the Concentration Camps and its Forms*," we read that the "Nazi system in the camps was based on a few fundamental elements." Isolation was an integral component accompanied by "constant terror, hunger, helplessness, loneliness and barely imaginable degradations."

A psychologist, Sidney Cohen, described the initial reactions of the prisoners in the concentration camps as the following: (1) an initial reaction of fear, bewilderment, personality changes and loss of awareness; (2) adaptation to camp life to be able to endure the violence and the shocks and (3) resignation.

Any plans calling for resistance had to contend realistically with the above, with the hierarchies which developed in the camps and the cunning exploitation by the Nazis of national antagonisms, even inside the camps, in order to maintain control.

The author describes "three types of struggles fought in the camps: (1) the struggle for biological survival, (2) for the preservation of human dignity, and (3) the struggle aimed at causing direct damage to the Nazi system."

Under type 2 there was, of course, a variety of forms of political life emphasizing international solidarity — of great value in establishing effective political lectures and discussions. Illegal religious observances

were noted to be of value in assisting the inmates in maintaining their mental balance.

In reports, in books, movies, etc., we have become informed about a variety of activities engaged in to combat the Nazi regime from within the camps. Of significant political and historical import is the fact that armed resistance resulted in the take-over at Buchenwald and Mauthausen when the allies were close at hand.

The Nazis felt it essential to impose an oppressive atmosphere in the camps. A psychologist observed that: "Everything could be treated as resistance because everything was prohibited. Any activity which created the impression that the prisoner had retained some of his former personality and individuality was an act of resistance."

A former Auschwitz prisoner, Anna Pawelczynska, wrote: "Every act of resistance, if it resulted in repression for those who had participated in it (and in collective punishment) helped to break down the structure of terror. Those who had already lost hope were made to recognize that there was still hope. Resistance proved that in every hopeless situation there was still hope. Every form of resistance — irrespective of whether it enhanced the chances of survival for a group of inmates or for a single prisoner, or whether it already caused the death of the person responsible — was an expression of opposition to terror. . . . Every manifestation of solidarity and cooperation was proof that in all situations the response to terror was resistance and independence."

Political prisoners of all nationalities, who were in the leadership of the resistance, were fully conscious that their struggles were important contributions to the general resistance movement alongside the allied armies, particularly the Soviet armies which were carrying the brunt of the fighting against the Nazis.

Two surveys were conducted by former inmates of Auschwitz. One in 1959 conducted among their fellow inmates inquired about the essential elements for survival in order of importance. The answers were: (1) belief in survival, (2) an active position including careful organization and assistance to other prisoners, (3) a strong body and good health, (4) moral support from fellow-prisoners, (5) luck and chance, (6) material help from other prisoners, and (7) religious faith.

A second inquiry in 1974 resulted in the following responses on keys to survival: (1) courage, (2) solidarity, (3) assistance from other prisoners, (4) the instinct of self-preservation, (5) the type of work conducive to survival, (6) chance, (7) command of the German lan-

guage, and (8) medical aid.

The second survey reveals that those items directly tied-in with resistance, numbers 2 and 3, are given a higher level of importance than in the first inquiry. Here we find that the struggle for human dignity and not merely biological survival were given a higher priority.

A sociologist, a former concentration camp inmate, observed that: "There is not one survivor who did not find support and help among fellow prisoners. No one could have survived on his own physical and mental strength."

Estimates of the percentage of the camp inmates who engaged actively in the resistance vary from 5% to 10%. It is a confirmation of what history reveals — that it is the minority, highly motivated and determined to labor for its objectives that moves the many and is capable of influencing conditions and the course of events.

The German political prisoners, the first to be incarcerated, and the Communists, in particular, played the most significant role in the resistance.

The author observes: "Tremendous solidarity and whole-hearted ideological support helped to create ties among imprisoned Communists and among German political prisoners. Hardened in the battle which they had conducted even before Hitler attained power, they showed great belief in the victory of proletarian internationalism and this kept up their spirits. They were often highly praised for their generosity and faith in their ideology (this applies first and foremost to German Communists) — even by people who were far from being Communists."

The Catholic writer, G. Morcinek, a former Dachau prisoner wrote: "The highest value for them (German Communists-L.M.M.) was man. The worst evil, any harm done to him. And 'kameradschaft' was the highest form of bond between people, based on a truly Christian love of one's neighbor. Their attitude towards fellow-prisoners was marked by such deep humanitarianism that they could be put alongside the most zealous apostles of Christ's teaching in the camp, together with any of the pious Jesuit priests."

B. Kautsky, a Social Democrat and a former camp prisoner, wrote of the German Communists in charge of camp self-government, "Without any doubt they rendered extraordinary services to the prisoners. First of all, thanks to it, any corruption was avoided. The Red Administration of the camp made every effort to lessen the severity of the SS authorities. . . . They also struggled to relieve the tension between various na-

tional groups. . . . The antagonisms (between Communists and other prisoners-L.M.M.) were meaningless compared to the tremendous benefits, the most important of which was the fact that the camp was run by a group of people with a sense of humanitarian values and responsibility."

The German Communists, with but a few exceptions of examples of sectarianism, fought inside the camps for the "popular front" concept.

In addition to the German political prisoners, the role of the Poles in the camps was quite significant. There were more Poles than any other nationality in the camps. The composition of the Poles was heterogeneous. Indeed, a specific number were members of the Polish underground, divided between supporters of the Polish government-in-exile and the revolutionary left. The relations between them were not always smooth. In some of the camps joint committees were formed to conduct the struggles — in Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Mauthausen.

Soviet citizens played a most heroic role in the resistance movements in the camps. At the same time facts reveal that their living conditions were deliberately made more difficult than those of other prisoners. Despite the pressures on the Soviet inmates they managed to become leaders in movements for escapes, sabotage, the acquisition of weapons and in organizing military organizations. In Auschwitz they made contacts with strong Polish military groups.

Austrian prisoners were also amongst those who engaged in heroic deeds in the organized resistance. Czechs, French, Yugoslavs, Spanish Republicans, Belgians, Dutch, Norwegians and Danes also participated and contributed to the resistance movements in the camps.

Jewish prisoners, in the main, were driven to their execution straight from the railroad sidings. Those who escaped the "first selection" were placed in camps and there many of them joined the organized resistance groups. In 1943-1944, against great odds the Jewish prisoners led rebellions in Treblinka, Sobibor and Auschwitz. Polish and Russian Jews were the cores of these military groups.

Women, of course, participated in the resistance. They were imprisoned because of their resistance activities outside the camps. The greatest number were incarcerated in Ravensbruck and Auschwitz while others were thrown into Majdanek, Stutthof, Buchenwald, Dachau and Mauthausen. Reports make it clear that solidarity was stronger amongst the women than amongst the men and that the women displayed great

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dignity and fortitude.

Krzysztof Dunin-Wasowicz concludes:

"The international resistance movement deserves its share of credit for its overall struggle against the entire Nazi system. Through its persistent, though not easy propagation of the principles of international antifascist solidarity, it overcame national and political complexes and antagonisms which had existed in certain communities for many years. It also made it possible to save many prisoners from biological annihilation. It enabled many people to preserve their human dignity and faith in the victory of humanitarian ideas. Finally, it effectively contributed to lowering the military potential of the enemy. Generally, it was part of the general European resistance movement."

In tribute to this resistance movement our all-people's coalition for jobs, peace and social justice must tighten our bonds and take all steps necessary to guarantee the successful conclusion of the Geneva Arms Talks to freeze and outlaw nuclear weaponry.

Lewis Moroze is Managing Editor of *Jewish Affairs*

In Memory of DAVID MILGRAN

Ardent supporter of *Jewish Affairs*: the magazine that promotes workingclass culture in the struggle for socialism and peace.

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DEFEAT
REAGANISM

Memento

By Marger Westerman

In the bustle of my everyday life I sometimes think that the last war was just a horrible nightmare, but then the next instance, when the vision of the cruel deaths of my relatives, friends and acquaintances floats up before my mind's eye, my heart is wrung with pain and it seems to me that the 40 peaceful years that have passed since that time have never been.

This pain is not simply the spiritual trauma of a man who has survived his own death, but a pain that lives in the memory of all the millions of my compatriots regardless of whether they have had any war experiences, and no matter what their age or nationality.

No, we have not forgotten the war.

My generation, which was born and grew up between two world wars, heard the word "fascism" at an early age. People spoke primarily of German fascism, of the atrocious treatment of the inmates of Nazi concentration camps, of Jewish pogroms and of the public burning of books by progressive authors. Emigrants from Germany and Austria had horrible tales to tell about the Nazi terror, and it seemed to us that we knew all there was to know about the inhuman nature of fascism. We were mistaken — we got to know what it was really like only when we came face to face with the Nazi invaders.

The whole world knows about the tragic fate of the Czech village of Lidice and the French village of Oradour. In Latvia, which is not a big country, there were three villages that suffered the same fate: Audrini, Nagli and Zlekas. All their inhabitants were shot down and the houses burned. In Russia there were several hundred of these unfortunate villages.

In a secret directive dated September 16, 1941, General Field Marshal Keitel, chief of the Wehrmacht Supreme Command Headquarters, instructed his subordinates to the effect that in the East. . . "human life, for the most part, has absolutely no value." Actually, the fascists were practicing "optimal variants" of a universal holocaust in the East and, if they had not been foiled in their plans, even the Americans would not have escaped that holocaust.

Mass shootings of Soviet citizens were widely practiced in areas occupied by the fascists. Barbarous

murders became a kind of entertainment for the fascist executioners. Shooting living targets and having pictures taken against piles of corpses or the gallows were a common form of amusement for the invaders. Very often they posed for the camera holding a pistol aimed at the nape of the neck of their would-be victim.

Once I became a "subject" of such a snapshot when I was in a concentration camp. It happened on November 30, 1941, the day the Nazis began to clean up the Riga ghetto. By that time it had more than 30,000 inmates, most of them women, children and old folk. The younger men had been killed in the summer of 1941. Early in the morning the soldiers began to drive people out of doors, breaking down the doors with rifle butts. Those who resisted and would not come out were shot on the spot. Bayonets and clubs were wielded to make the people form columns which were then led out of the ghetto. It turned out that they were being driven to the woods on the outskirts of Riga to be shot. It was early winter and the road was covered with a thin film of ice. Those who stumbled and fell or lagged behind were killed on the spot. Corpses lying in pools of steaming blood lined the road.

Part of the ghetto was empty by noon. The fascists formed teams of the remaining inmates to clear away the corpses. These teams were ordered to take the bodies to the old Jewish cemetery. Being a 16-year old young man at the time, I found myself in one of those burial teams.

My companion turned out to be an acquaintance of mine, Izzy Goldberg, a ninth-grader. Numb with sorrow we piled the bloody bodies mechanically on a children's sled and pulled them to the cemetery. On the corner of Ludzas and Vilanu Streets we were brought to our senses by a shout of "Halt!" We saw a group of high-ranking SS officers in fur-lined coats standing before us. All of them were drunk and in a very gay mood. They talked and laughed and joked and postured in absurd fashion imitating the death convulsions of the people who had been shot. Some of the men held pistols in their hands while others had cameras. They made us pose for them.

Several months later, I accidentally saw these snapshots on a desk in the building of the Seklueksports Company in Milgravis. I found myself in the office of the Standartenfuehrer immediately after the morning roll call in the camp. We were told they needed a volunteer. I made a step forward, thus putting myself among men with a trade. I was marched to the chief and told to put together a writing desk which had just been brought from a looted apartment. There was a pile

of snapshots lying on the old desk which I had to take apart. I stumbled against the desk on purpose and scattered the photographs. I saw pictures of blood-spattered Ludzas Street, of corpses and men with yellow stars sewn on their chests and backs who were picking up the corpses. I recognized Izzy Goldberg and myself among them.

What use did an elderly German commissary officer have for these snapshots? I was sure it would not be incriminating evidence against him in the future, in any case. That meant they were to be "mementoes" of the Eastern campaign and would eventually be pasted in the family album, side by side with plump babies and wedding pictures.

At that time I did not know that another amateur photographer, SS man Karl Storm, was taking pictures of the shooting of the Liepae Jews at the sand dunes near Skede, especially the corpses of nude women. Neither could I know that the fascists were just then photographing the execution of the resistance fighter Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya in the village of Petrishchevo. Similar photography was going on in all occupied Soviet areas.

It is true that after the fascists were routed from Stalingrad, an order was issued forbidding the photographing of executions and massacres. After their defeat in the Battle of Kursk, the Germans even tried to destroy some of the pictures, yet they stopped killing only when the Nazi Reich was smashed thanks to the Soviet Union and its Allies.

I would not like the Latin phrase "Memento Morere" — Remember Death — to be used here, but, "Memento Vivere" — Remember Life. We should not forget that 40 years ago we eliminated the threat hanging over humankind thanks to our joint efforts. A new threat looms over the world today, and only the joint efforts of all honest men and women in the West and the East can avert it. □

Marger Westerman was born in Riga in 1925. He was in the Riga ghetto and in Nazi concentration camps, the Dundaga-2 Camp in Kaiserwald among them, from 1941 until July 1944. He escaped when the camp was being evacuated. He took part in the partisan movement and later joined the regular army and fought till the day Hitler's Germany capitulated. Today he teaches history at the Riga Music School. He wrote this article for Novosti Press Agency.

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the taiga. He writes about the present Birobidjan and its past, which he had witnessed with his own eyes.

A collection of verses and two books of prose by Miller were published last year. The writer says his "return" to poetry was due to his "striving to express his feelings more fully and accurately." "In poetry," he says, "one sometimes is unable to express things which can be described in prose. But poetry enables one to describe more fully one's emotions and the mood of the soul."

Boris Miller's dream is to have time to write a novel about his contemporaries. "The idea is like this," the writer says, "the nuclear threat looming over mankind must not breed desperation and decay. I believe in the victory of reason in the end."

Several telephone calls interrupted our conversation in Boris Miller's flat. Poet Leonid Shkolnik who is the editor of the *Birobidjaner Stern* asked him to write a story for the literary page. The director of a secondary school rang him up. She wanted him to talk to the pupils at a literary evening. Moreover, he must work on material for the next issue of the *Sovietisch Heimland* as a member of that monthly's editorial board. Boris Miller never refuses to take on these responsibilities. □

Yevgeni Bugayenko is a Novosti Press correspondent.

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These are things which one cannot and must not forget."

And the Nazi holocaust is one such thing. It will never be forgotten — not by Alexander Bernfes and his fellow Jewish survivors nor by Poles, their fellow victims of that tragedy and fellow comrades in the anti-Nazi struggle.

This holocaust, this tragedy and warning, is being especially solemnly recalled by humankind this year, the 40th anniversary of the glorious victory over and the unconditional surrender by Hitler Germany to the anti-Nazi coalition rallied around the wartime alliance of Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. □

Sol Flapan is Polish correspondent of Jewish Affairs.

David Seltzer: A Profile

The editorial committee salutes David Seltzer, editor of the Yiddish pages of *Jewish Affairs* on his 80th birthday. We all say in unison: "Biz a hindred und tsvuntsig alongside your beloved Edka."

During the Rumanian occupation of Bessarabia in 1920 David's family was forced to flee the terror raids of the arch reactionary Rumanian Boyars and their army of occupation.

Prior to leaving for the US David left the "Gymnasium", high school, to apprentice himself to a printer in anticipation of obtaining a job as a typesetter with his uncle, Morris Seltzer, in his New York print shop.

Within a week after landing in New York David was working at that shop, known as Farragut Press. One year later he was working for a shop that served *The Dial, Survey and New Republic*, three of the advanced literary and socially concerned publications of the time. It was the editor of the *New Republic*, Robert Hallowell, who introduced him to John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World* in the Yiddish translation by Moissaye Olgin. Under the influence of Moissaye Olgin and Alexander Trachtenberg, David turned to Marxism-Leninism, attended classes at the Rand School and joined the Young Communist League and later the Communist Party of the United States.

David worked with his landmen in the Bessarabian branch of the International Workers Order, which was smashed during the McCarthy period.

During the anti-fascist war David was active in Russian War Relief and in the work of Ambijan.

After World War II David and his wife Edka, who is a charter member of the CPUSA, procured the exhibit of the *Children of Stalingrad*, a story of the children who were orphaned during the war.

While working with the exhibit for a period of some 25 years David wrote a book about it. In 1970 the exhibit itself was brought back to Volgograd by David and Edka. There it was placed in the Volgograd Regional Museum. David's book on the exhibit was published by the Volgograd Publishing House and the local writer's union. It was also published in *Sovietisch Heimland* under the title, *Silver Ponds*.

David served as city editor of the *Freiheit* until 1977 when the paper turned to the right, taking on the position of bourgeois nationalism. He then joined the editorial staff of *Jewish Affairs*.

David has written poetry. One of those poems was written in honor of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. His Page 20

other works include: "*Remembering Sam Liptzin: Poet and Union Man*," "*The Lure of the Print Shop*", an article for *Sovietisch Heimland* entitled, *An American Tourist Speaks*", "*Benchik- The Yiddish Bolshevik- Partisan*", and the poem, "*Kotovsky*" published in *Sovietisch Heimland*. Kotovsky

1

By the Dniester Estuary
Where the waves come rolling in,
Of the people and of freedom
Hear the freeborn Cossacks sing.
Horses gallop, hoofbeats thunder,
Steep the river's echoing banks.
Can it be Kotovsky coming,
Urging on his mounted ranks?
Of the people and of freedom
Hear the freeborn Cossacks sing,
By the Dneiper estuary
Where the waves come rolling in.

2

I'll always be with you, Kotovsky,
In battle or just in the line.
I'll raise up my cavalry: abre,
I'll draw this cold pistol of mine
I'll always be with you, Kotovsky,
We'll all of us stay by your side,
As into the battle so fateful
Through a death-hail of bullets we ride.

3

Musician, come strike up a dance
From the bank of the Dneiper River,
For in the Kotovsky kolkhoz
The work of the harvest is over.

As the moonlit waves roll in,
From the bank come echoing
The gentle strains of a song,
A song of the herdsman Kotovsky,
So proud, so brave and so young. . . . *Translated
from Yiddish by L. Berinsky.*

Anti-Semitism in Nicaragua: A Reagan Canard

By Chuck Idelson

The article below was originally published in the People's World.

NICARAGUAN JEWISH exiles are the latest pawn in the Reagan Administration's insidious ploy to whip up public support for renewed Congressional funding for the Nicaraguan contras.

A few weeks before the vote, a national campaign has been launched with press conferences in Los Angeles and Washington to revive the discredited tales of Nicaraguan anti-Semitism that made the rounds in 1983.

Spokespersons for the effort include Elena Gorn and Sarita and Oscar Kellerman. Gorn is the daughter-in-law of Abraham Gorn, one of the richest men in pre-revolutionary Nicaragua.

Gorn the elder had close ties with dictator Anastasio Somoza, and was owner of the nation's largest textile plant, a huge farm, a baseball team and race horses. After Somoza's fall, Gorn was arrested and charged with being a conduit for Israeli arms shipments to Somoza which continued almost up to the day the dictator fled Managua.

Unlike Argentina's much larger, predominantly working class Jewish community, the Jewish population of Nicaragua comprised just a handful of families, like the Gorns and the Kellermans, many of them well-to-do with business ties to the old regime. After the revolution, most fled.

In 1983, after Nicaraguan authorities took over an abandoned synagogue for use as a youth center, the Anti-Defamation League and the Reagan Administration fanned stories of anti-Semitism by the new government. Reagan also greeted Gorn and another ex-Somoza friend, Isaac Stavinsky, in the White House.

Subsequently, a New Jewish Agenda delegation toured Nicaragua and dismissed the charges as false, and even the U.S. ambassador to Nicaragua conceded there was "no verifiable evidence" of anti-Semitism.

A sponsor of the new campaign is Harold (Hal) Phillips, a Burbank, Ca. car dealer and Reagan appointee to the Inter-American Foundation (IAF) which provides grants to Latin American groups.

After a 1981 Heritage Foundation report charging the IAF with aiding "socialist" groups favoring "redis-

tribution" of resources. Reagan replaced most of the IAF board, as he did with the Civil Rights Commission.

The new majority dumped the old director. Phillips was part of the new team as was Langhorne Motley, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America, who most recently said Chile is "in good hands."

If the Gorns, Phillips, et al. fail to persuade Congress, they have perhaps laid the groundwork for an increase in Israeli aid to the contras spurred by the anti-Semitism lie.

But the story is not going uncontested. New Jewish Agenda members have challenged the tale in two Los Angeles forums with the exiles. Many progressive Jews are in the forefront of the drive to end all aid to the murderous contras and allow Nicaragua to develop in peace. □

Chuck Idelson is a staff writer for the Peoples World.

The Editors of *Jewish Affairs*
Announce with Gratitude
the handsome contribution of
MARY GALE



THE EDITORS
OF JEWISH AFFAIRS
SALUTE ONE OF OUR FOUNDERS

ALEX KOLKIN

AND WISH HIM MANY LONG YEARS
OF CONTINUING EFFORTS IN
BEHALF OF PROLETERIAN
INTERNATIONALISM AND EXPRESS
OUR THANKS FOR HIS
HANDSOME CONTRIBUTION TO
THE HYMAN LUMER MEMORIAL FUND

FOR A SPEEDY RECOVERY TO

**RUTH SCHLYFROCK
MAX KLEIN
JEAN GITELMAN**

*Fannie Koltman in behalf of
a group of friends in Miami Beach*

FOR A UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
TO BRING ABOUT A PERMANENT
PEACE WITH JUSTICE IN THE
MIDDLE EAST

IN MEMORY
OF OUR DEAR FRIEND
MANNY BROWNSTEIN

He had an inner sweetness
and goodness. He will long
be remembered.

Freda and John Martin

אזי געווען סענאטאר אלפאנס דיאמאטאָ, וועלכער האָט
געלויבט געצין אפילו נאָך איידער די גרענד-דזשורי האָט
געהאַט אַ מעלעכקייט צו האַנדלען.

די פרעסע און די רעכטע-באוועגונג האָט פרובירט צו
אויסמאַלן געצין אַלס פשוט "געוויינטלעכער כחור" וואָס
האָט פרובירט צו פארטיידיקן זיך פון פיר אָנפאלער. אָבער
וואָס מער גען האָט געעפנט זיין מויל איז עס קלאָרער
געוואָרן אַס דאָס איז געווען אַ קאַלט-בלוטיקער אַקט
באַזירט אויף דער פילאָסאָפיע פון "וויזשילאַנטיזם" אין
ראַסיזם — אַ פילאָסאָפיע וואָס וואָלט געפירט ניר-
יאַרקער איינוואוינער צו שיסן אָן און אונטערשייד איינער
קעגן אַנדערן.

עס איז ווערט צו צאָלן אַכטונג דעם גוטן פאַרשטאַנד
פון מערסטן ניר-יאַרקערס, נישט געקוקט אויף דער
פרעסע-אַטאַקע, זיינען די באַזישע פונקטן געוואָרן
קלאָרער מיטן גאַנג פון דער צייט. די לעזונג צו פאַרברעכן
איז נישט "וויזשילאַנטיזם". פונקט פאַרקערט, אויב יעדער
איינער וואָלט באַזיצט און גענוצט רעוואָלוציע אין די
אונטערבאַנען, וואָלטן מיר קיינמאַל נישט געקענט
אונטערשיידן די אָנפאלער פון די אָנגעפאַלטע. די
איינציקע וואָס וואָלטן געוואונען פון אַזאַ צושטאַנד וואָלט
געווען דער רעכטער-פליגל, וואָס באַמיט זיך אויפדערן
איינוואוינער-איבערהויפט שוואַרצע און ווייסע
איינוואוינער — איינער קעגן צווייטן, אַנשטאַט צו

פאַראייניקן פאַר אַ בעסערער שטאַט.

רעאַליזאַציע פון דעם דורך אַ וואַקסנדיקער צאָל פון
דער באַפעלקערונג האָט געשפילט אַ וויכטיקע ראָלע אין
אַנקלאָגן געצין אין באַשולדיקונג אין מאַרד-פאַרווד.
די באַפעלקערונג אויפואַכונג האָט געצוואונגען אַ
מער הערלעכער גרענד-דזשורי פראַצעדורע, אַט די
אויפואַכונג מוז איצט ברענגען צו אַ צושטאַנד פון אַ
הערלעכן געריכט.

(יידישע איבערזעצונג פון ד.ס.)

**HANDS OFF
NICARAGUA**

פיערן דעם זיג געגן די נאציס אויפן מאַסקווער ריטן סקווער.

די העלדישע דראַגונסקי פאָמיליע

דוד דראַגונסקי שרייבט אין זיין בוך אז די נאציס האָבן דערשאַסן אַלע מיטגלידער פון דער קאָמוניסטישער פּאַרטי אין סוויאַטסק... "זיי האָבן אומגעבראַכט עלטערע מענער, פרויען און קינדער אָן רחמנות. צווישן אַט די קרבנות געפינען זיך 74 וואָס טראָגן דעם נאָמען דראַגונסקי. איינגעשלאָסן מיינע עלטערן, שוועסטער, קאָזינס און פעטערס און די איבעריקע פון מיין פאָמיליע. צוויי פון די פיר דראַגונסקי כרידער וועלכע האָבן געדינט אין דער אַרמיי בשעת יער צווייטער וועלט־מלחמה זיינען דערמאַרדעט געוואָרן ביים פּאַרטידייך פון סטאַלונגראַד. ווען די נאציס האָבן געכאַפט דורס מוטער וועלכע איז אויסבאַהאַלטן געוואָרן דורך אירע רויסישע שכנים האָבן זיי איר געפרעגט:

"וויפל זיין האַסט, אידישקע?"

האַט זי געענטפּערט:

"מיליאָנען — די קינדער פון אַלע מוטערס זיינען מיינע קינדער."

"וואו זיינען דינע זין?"

"זיי קעמפן, קעגן אירך, נאַצי־אַפּפּאַל!"

"שעלט דינע זין, אידישקע, און מיר וועלן דיך לאָזן לעבן."

"איר כענטש מיינע זין: איר כענטש אַלע זין פון רוסלאַנד. איר כענטש זיי פאַר זייער קאַמף געגן דעם געמיינעם שונא!"

אַן אויפרייס פון געווער־פיער האַט פאַרשיטן איר לעבן.

דוד סעלצער

פעלישע לאַנגער

פעלישע לאַנגע איז אַ באַרימטע אַדוואָקאַט אין ישראל: זי איז אומדערשראַקן און אויסגעהאַלטן אַלס טשעמפּיאַן פאַר די רעכט פון די אַראַבער אין ישראל. זי איז אַ קעמפּערין פאַר גערעכטיקייט און שלום. חברטע פעלישע לאַנגער האַט איבערגעוואַנדערט אין 1950 פון פּוילן קיין ישראל. נאָך אי חוהנה האַט זי זיך באַזעצט אין ישראל, ווייל איר מוטער האַט געוואַלט אַז אירע קינדער זאָלן זיין נאָענט צו איר.

ביים אָנפאַנג פון דער צווייטער וועלט־מלחמה איז די פאָמיליע פון פעלישע אַנטלאָפן צום סאָוועטן־פאַרבאַנד. זי האַלט אייביק אין האַרצן און געדאַנק די ליבע צו די רוסן וואָס האָבן זיי געראַטעוועט און געטיילט זייער ביסן כרויט מיט זיי.

ווען זיי זענען צוריקגעקומען קיין פּוילן האַט פעלישע אויסגעפונען אַז איר פאָמיליע און קרובים וועלכע זיינען געבליבן אין פּוילן זיינען נעכער אויסגעשאַטן געוואָרן דורך זי נאַצי־געסטונעס.

אין ישראל האַט פעלישע זיך אָנגעשלאָסן אין דער קאָמוניסטישער פּאַרטי. איר מאַן אויך אַ געבוירענער אין פּוילן האַט געדינט אין דער ישראל אַרמיי און אין דעם רעזערוו ביז ער האַט זיך פענסיאַנירט אין 1982. ער איז אַ מיטגליד אין דער ישראל קאָמוניסטישער פּאַרטי.

פעלישעס יונגע יאָרן אין ישראל זיינען געווען זייער שווער. זי האַט געאַרבעט און געהאַרעוועט אין אַ פאַבריק. זי זאָגט: "עס איז געווען אַ בעסערער קורס אין מאַרקסיזם, ווי וואָס מען האַט מיך געלערנט אין האַי־סקול."

בשעת זי איז אויפגעוואַקסן מיט דעם גייסט פון אינטערנאַציאָנאַליזם איז זי זייער שטאַלץ צו זיין אַ מיטגליד אין דער פּאַרטי — אַ פּאַרטי וואָס האַט אַראַבער אין יידן אַלס מיטגליד.

זי איז אויפגעטרייטלט געוואָרן צו זען אַזאָ שרעקלעכן ראַסיזם אין ישראל. נאָך פרוש אין געדאַנק דער נעחון קעגן דעם פּאַשיזם, קען זי ניט פאַרשטיין דעם ראַסן דאַס קעגן די אַראַבער.

"איר האָב דערוואַרט אַ שיינע געוועלשאַפט וואָס מיר האָבן זיך געראַנגלט צו געווינען אַן אַנטי־סעמיטישע אין פּאַשיסטישע עלעמענטן."

פעלישע לאַנגער פילט טיף אין האַרצן אַז איר אַרבעט וועט העלפן צו מאַכן ישראל מער מענטשלעך און גערעכט פאַר אַלעמען. זי פילט אַז זי וועט טוען מער פאַר ישראל און פאַר די פּאַלעסטינער.

דוד פריד

דער אמתער געץ

(עדיטאָריעל אין "דיעלי וואַרלד"
דעם 2טן אַפריל, 1985)

דער פאַרווך פון דער "מאַסן־מידאַ" (די פרעסע) צו פאַרוואַנדלען בענוואַרד געץ אין אַ העלד איז דורכגעפאַלן. ער איז ענדלעך באַשולדיגט געוואָרן דורך אַ גרענד־דזשורי פאַר פּרובירן צו דערמאַרדן פיר אַפּראַ־אַמעריקאַנער יוגנטלעכע אין אַ סאָבוועי־באַן.

און מעיאַר קאַטש וואַלט זיכער געבליכן צוריקקריגן זיין דערקלערונג וואָס האַט געלויבט די ערשטע גרענד־דזשוריס באַפרייאַונג פון געצעס שולד. אַ צווייטע העלדן־כּויער

יידישע ענינים

צוויי לויב-ווירדיקע אויסלענדישע

רעדנער = געסט ביים באַנקעט

פון "דזשואיש אַפּעירס"

גענעראַל דוד דראַגונסקי סאָוועטיש-יידישער העלד פון צווייטער וועלט-מלחמה אין פעלישע לאַנגער, וועלט-באַרימטע ישראל אַדוואָקאַט פון ציווילע רעכטן.

גענעראַל דוד דראַגונסקי

אויסצוגן פון זיין ביאָגראַפֿישן בוך אַרויסגעגעבן דורך פּראָגרעס פּאַבליטשערס, מאַסקווע, 1982, 296 זייטן.

דוד דראַגונסקי איז געבוירן געוואָרן ביי אַרעמע יידישע עלטערן אין דער שטאָט סוויאַטסק, ווייס-רוסלאַנד די איינוואוינער פון שטעטל אין די אַרומיקע זיינען אָנגערופן געוואָרן "קאַרטאָפּל מענטשן" דערפֿאַר וואָס... פלייש, אַנווער היפט אין אַנווער אויסשליסלעך שפּייז" — זאָגט דער שרייבער אין זיין ריזניקער ביאָגראַפֿיע.

היינט צו טאָג איז דער שרייבער, גענעראַל דוד דראַגונסקי דער היפט פון דער סאָוועטישער וויסטעל מיליטערישער אַקאַדעמיע. די שולן וואָס גיט היינט קורסן צו אויסגעקליבענע אַפיצערן פון דער סאָוועטישער אַרמיי. דראַגונסקי איז ווירדיק באַערט געוואָרן פֿאַר זיין ראַל אין דער צווייטער וועלט-מלחמה אין וועלכער ער האָט אַנטייל גענומען פון ערשטן טאָג ביזן לעצטן. דראַגונסקי איז הויך אָפּגעשעצט און באַעכט דורך דער סאָוועטישער רעגירונג ביי אינטערנאַציאָנאַלע באַנענענישן. ער איז איינער פון די סאָוועטישע יידן וואָס האָבן געשריבן צו די אַמעריקאַנער יידן פֿאַר אַ פֿאַרייניקטן פֿאַרווירן צו דערגרייכן וועלט שלום.

אַן אַרעמען שניידערס זון

דוד דראַגונסקיס מוטער פלעגט אים רופן "דימאַ". ער איז געווען איינער פון צען קינדער אין דער פּאַמיליע פון אַן אַרומגעבנדיקן יידישן שניידער, זיי האָבן געוואוינט אין דער צאָרישער געטאָ פֿאַר יידן. דוד איז אַלט געווען 7 יאָר ווען די אַקטיאָבער רעוואָלוציע האָט אויסגעבראַכן.

דודס פֿאַטער האָט געוואַלט אָז זיינע פיר זין זאָלן ווערן גוטע שניידער, זיין מוטער האָט געוואַלט אָז ער זאָל גיין אין אַ הויך-שול און זיך לערנען דעם פּאַך פון אַ בוך-האַלטער און אפּשר אַמאָל אַרבעטן אין אַ בוך-האַלטער געשעפט.

זיינער אַ לערער ניקאָלאַי זשאַנאָוו האָט אים אָבער גענומען אונטער זיין אויפזיכט און אים פול געלערנט. אינגיכן איז ער אַוועק קיין מאַסקווע, מיט דער הילף פון דער יונגער קאָמוניסטישער ליגע, האָט ער געקראָנן אַ שטעלע צו טראַגן ציגל אין וואַפּע פֿאַר דער מאַסקווער בוי-אַדמיניסטראַציע עס איז געווען אַ גאַנץ שווערע אַרבעט אָבער ער האָט געהאַט פֿאַרגעניגן פון דער חבּרשאַפט פון זיינע מיטאַרבעטער.

ער איז געוואָרן מער אַקטיוו פּאָליטיש און זיך אָנגעשלאָסן אין דער קאָמוניסטישער פּאַרטיי. דער פּאַרטיי-סעקרעטאַר, האָט אים און אַ גרופּע אַנדערע יונגע פֿאַרגעשלאָגן אַרבעטן צווישן פּויערים און דער קאַלעקטיוויזאַציע פון אַגריקולטור. דודס אַרבעט איז געווען אַ גאַנץ שווערע אָבער ער האָט זיך אויסגעטויגט און אַרויסגעוויזן פּייאַקייטן פון אַ פּירער און ער איז באַשטימט געוואָרן אַלס דער פֿאַרזיצער פון דאָרפֿישן סאָויעט.

ווען די צייט איז געקומען צו דינען אין דער אַרמיי האָט ער געהלומט צו ווערן אַ שרייבער אָבער די אַפּרופּען האָבן אים אויסגעקליבן קיין סאַראַטאָוו'ס טאַנקען-שולע.

דוד דראַגונסקיס רייכע מיליטערישע קאַריערע האָט אים פֿאַרוויקלט אין פול מיליטערישע אַקציעס אין ווייטן-מורח נעגן די יאַפּאַנעזער כּוח זיין העראַאישן אויסוואַל צו אָנפירן מיט די טאַנקען-סעקציע און גרויסן פֿאַראַד פון