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# JEWISH AFFAIRS

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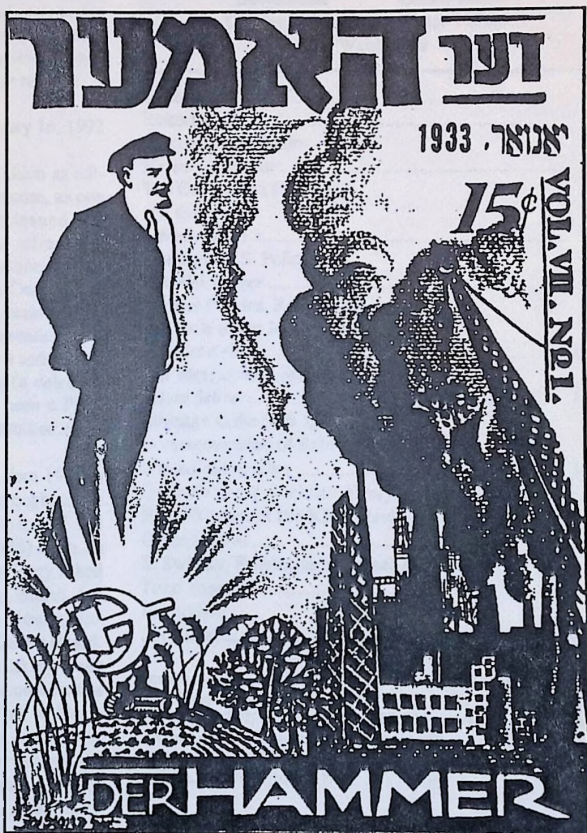
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## Farewell from the Editors

Editor Herbert Aptheker, Associate Editor Alfred J. Kutzik, Managing Editor Leo Werner and Yiddish Section Editor David Seltzer have resigned their posts due to political differences with the national leadership of the CPUSA, which publishes *Jewish Affairs*. They will continue to be involved in progressive Jewish activities and wish their readers and successors well.

## Letters

We believe our readers are entitled to know why they have resigned so we are printing the letters of resignation of our editor and associate editor. The managing editor and Yiddish section editor as well as two editorial committee members have also resigned for similar reasons.

January 16, 1992

Comrades (of the National Board CPUSA):

This is a letter of resignation from my position as editor of *Jewish Affairs*. This action is taken because, as one of the several hundred comrades who issued the "Initiative," in an effort to strengthen and refresh the Party, I have been insulted by the characterizations of this group in Comrade Hall's report to the XXV Convention. This action is taken also to emphasize my rejection of the legality (not to speak of decency) of that Convention.

Personally, I was astonished to learn on my arrival that I was a "non-voting delegate." I was elected (a delegate, ed.) to the Convention by my club; I have been a Party member 52 years and on the National Committee since 1957, and this was my designation!

I was an editor of *Masses & Mainstream* from 1948 to its demise; I was editor of *Political Affairs* throughout the McCarthy era; I was founder and director of the American Institute for Marxist Studies (AIMS) from its founding in 1964 until its close in 1985. The Party asked me to testify for it at State sedition cases, Smith Act cases, McCarran Act cases, before the House Un-American Activities Committee and the McCarran Board.

I represented the Party in breaking speaking bans against Communists at scores of colleges and universities from Maine to California and from New York to North Carolina. I represented the Party at numerous international gatherings for peace and disarmament; I organized the visit (with Hayden and Lynd) to North Vietnam, 1965-66, and demanded an end to the war there, speaking to millions of people.

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Alfred J. Kutzik, Associate Editor  
Leo Werner, Managing Editor  
David Seltzer, Yiddish Editor  
David Fried Gerald Horne  
Charles Keller Victor Tishler  
Jon Weisberger

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## Editorial

### Zionism is Reactionary Nationalism: Israel is a Capitalist State

The rescinding of the U.N. resolution adopted in 1975 declaring that "Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination" should not be lamented but welcomed by progressives. For this resolution was incorrect and an obstacle to Palestinian national liberation and Mideast peace and had other serious negative political effects.

Zionism is not a form of racism but a form of nationalism. It does not consider any racial groups inferior to Jews but all non-Jews irrespective of race to be or inevitably bound to become antisemites among whom it is impossible for Jews to live a secure and fulfilling life. That is what underlies Zionism's basic tenet that Jews must live in a "Jewish state," i.e., Israel. Elements of racism have been incorporated into the thoughts and actions of many Zionists in Israel, where most non-Jews are dark-skinned; but white-skinned, blond and blue-eyed Palestinians are treated no less brutally and all Palestinians are treated differently than Arabs of other nationalities. In Israel there are many Zionists, including members of the Labor Party and the entire memberships of the *Mapam* (Socialist Zionist) and *Ratz* (Civil Rights) parties, that are non-racist and this is also true of most Zionists in other countries. It is factually incorrect to equate Zionism with racism. It is also politically incorrect.

This false equation has not only misread the social and political views of democratic Israelis who are adherents of Zionism but obscured the nature of the policies of their undemocratic government leaders—and the measures required to oppose and reverse them. These policies are not designed to racially discriminate against Palestinians but to annex their land. The mistaken position that the Israeli government has been subjecting Palestinians to racial rather than national oppression has misrepresented the Palestinians as a discriminated against racial group that should have equal treatment under Israeli hegemony rather than an oppressed national group that should have self-determination in a national territory of its own.

Another negative consequence of the U.N.'s adoption of this unsound resolution is that it gave the dying Zionist movement worldwide *and in Israel* a new lease on life by enabling it to conduct a propaganda campaign "proving" that most of the world's non-Jews hate Israel and refuse to recognize that Zionism is "the national liberation movement of the Jewish people" although they recognized all other national liberation movements. While

Zionism is a national movement, it is not a national liberation movement. For no national liberation movement has ever been supported by and collaborated with imperialism or suppressed another national liberation movement as has Israel. However, this propaganda campaign succeeded in convincing many that Zionism is dedicated to the national liberation of the Jewish people and that those who opposed it were not only anti-Israel but antisemitic.

Consequently, most Jews and many non-Jews were alienated from the U.N. and the Socialist and Third World countries that played the leading role in formulating and passing the 1975 resolution and the Israeli government won their sympathy thereby weakening opposition to its aggressive, oppressive policies. It also antagonized many Jews and non-Jews towards the Communist Party USA, which like the CPs of Israel and other countries, were among the few organizations that supported this resolution.

Perhaps most importantly, the resolution's faulty focus on Zionism and racism obscured the class nature of the government of Israel and its policies. Ironically, the focus on Zionism supported the Zionist position that Israel is a "Jewish state" governed by Jewish individuals with a Jewish ideology concerned with the welfare of Jews rather than a capitalist state governed by a capitalist class with a bourgeois ideology concerned with the maximization of profits and territory. This was also supported by the focus on racism that treated Israeli policies as racial rather than class and class-based national oppression.

Among its most negative consequences, the resolution added impetus to the misguided campaign against Zionism waged by the world Communist movement led by the Soviet CP. This ideological battle downplayed Israeli political and economic factors in favor of international Jewish cultural and religious factors whose biased "research" and "analysis" were frequently antisemitic. Even when the CP campaign against Zionism was not antisemitic, as in our country, it indiscriminately lumped the millions of Jews who supported Israel and the few thousands who supported Zionism in the category of "Zionists"—defined as bourgeois nationalist racists—thereby alienating the Jewish community from which the CP has historically drawn so many members and supporters. (See in this issue "The Communist Party USA and the Jews")

Fortunately, the UN resolution that has caused so much

## Editorial

*Continued from page 3*

damage has been rescinded. Unfortunately, it will take a long time and much work to undo the damage and regain Jewish support for the UN, for a change in Israeli policies and for socialism and the Communist Party. May this editorial be a first step in this difficult but necessary process.

A.J.K.

## Letters

*Continued from page 2*

And in 1991 I am a non-voting delegate! And am among those insulted in an ignorant, callous and brutal way by a Chairman of my Party!

In the face of this dastardly behavior meted out to me and hundreds of devoted comrades and deeply opposed as I am to the devious acts of an ossified, bureaucratic clique, it is necessary for me to publicly terminate my position as editor of *Jewish Affairs*.

I will assist in producing the January-February, 1992 issue and with that my resignation takes effect.

Herbert Aptheker

Dear George and Elena,

Yesterday some time after you informed me on behalf of the National Board that I was being asked to resign from the chair of the Jewish Commission and the (associate) editorship of *Jewish Affairs* and I agreed to do so, Elena told me that this had been a mistake and, in effect, asked me to stay on in these positions. I can not.

My continuing in these positions when all of the comrades who signed the "Initiative to Renew the Party" have been removed from national leadership positions would falsely suggest that I no longer agree with the views expressed in the "Initiative" and that I accept the present national leadership's views as expressed by Comrade Gus (Hall, ed.) that the "Initiative" and other approaches of the so-called "factionalists" with which I agree are "anti-workingclass, anti-industrial concentration, non-class struggle" and opposed to a "Marxist-Leninist trend" (*Report to the 25th National Convention....., December 6, 1991, p.43*)

I hereby confirm my resignation from the chair of the Jewish Commission and the associate editorship of *Jewish Affairs*, but will continue in the latter capacity until the end of this month in order to get the Jan.-Feb. issue of the magazine out.

Comradely,  
Al Kutzik

*On January 23, 1992 Jim West, a member of the CP National Board, sent Herbert Aptheker a letter stating that he hoped he would withdraw his resignation. West*

*ascribed the cause of Aptheker's being a "non-voting delegate" at the CPUSA national convention to certain acts of the CP's Northern California District, where Aptheker lives, adding that "many lies" are being spread. West informed Aptheker that, if he would accept the "mandate" of the convention, he could continue writing for Political Affairs and the People's Weekly World and edit Jewish Affairs, noting that these publications "need the benefit of your writing". The letter closed with, "Please respond." The response follows:*

January 30, 1992

Dear James West:

In response to yours of January 23, my resignation stands. You will please submit it to the Board.

Some further comments: Your version of my status as "non-voting delegate" is not accurate. And the basic source of that designation was the fact that I was among the numerous comrades who signed the "Initiative".

Your remark about the PWW staff, i.e., that "only" Barry (former PWW editor Barry Cohen) was dismissed is one that makes a distinction when, in reality, there is no difference. The treatment of Carl Bloice, (former associate editor) both at the Convention and then the substitution of the writing of Webb for his, was inexcusable.

Please remember, I was present (at the Convention), and I saw the treatment accorded the duly-elected New York delegation. I saw the "guest" status given to Len Levenson, a devoted comrade for decades, a wounded member of the Lincoln Brigade, and one who was impelled to leave his editorship of *Political Affairs*, for which you now ask me to write.

I noted the advertisement for a public meeting on "What Happened in Cleveland" (i.e., at the convention, ed.). Did the meeting include Angela's letter (Angela Davis' letter of resignation from the CPUSA)? Did the meeting report the refusal to allow James E. Jackson five minutes after his 60 years of valiant service? Did the meeting include a reading of the statement I finally was able to make for five minutes? If none of this was done, did the meeting really convey "What Happened in Cleveland"?

Did the meeting include the gagging of the PWW's Moscow correspondent for the past five years and the importation of Mike Davidow from Moscow for "extended time", including nauseating fawning before the Chairman?

Overcome denial in yourself, James West. Look at yourself before asking me to re-think resignation from the editorship of *Jewish Affairs*.

Herbert Aptheker

## Fascist Winds Return

Herbert Aptheker

President Bush, in his State of the Union address, commended governors of states—like those of California and Michigan—who have moved to intensify the suffering of the impoverished, cutting or eliminating various forms of relief. After endorsing this brutality, Bush went on to say that he rejected “scapegoating or finger-pointing” when, of course, that was precisely what he was doing.

Bethinking himself, Bush lamented “a rise these days” in “racist comments and anti-Semitism”. He added: “Really, this is not us. This is not who we are.”

What insufferable demagogy! “Who we are” indeed! This of the nation whose rulers fattened on the slave trade, batted on centuries of slavery and jim crow, all the while feeding on “divide and rule.” This from a nation where lynching was institutionalized. This from the mouth of the man who became President by campaigning not against the Governor of Massachusetts but against “Willie Horton”.

The fact is that “Fascist Winds Return” as a headline on the cover of the January-February issue of *Tikkun* correctly observes. In New York City the police recorded in 1991 540 racist crimes including murder; but Howard Ehrlich, director of research at the National Institute against Prejudice and Violence, “said that probably 80 percent of incidents are not reported because victims feel nothing will be done” (*N.Y. Times*, Jan. 27, 1992).

The police amuse themselves by sending the vilest kinds of racist comments to each other via the radios in their cars, and park employees leave similar obscene message strewn about public buildings, as in the city of Alameda, California. People of Asian extraction are attacked (even murdered) and routinely insulted throughout the nation. A Republican candidate for Governor of Louisiana—a nazi and Ku Kluxer—is barely defeated and this largely because now (after decades of struggle) the state has an African-American electorate which unanimously rejected him. A Republican presidential candidate, Patrick J. Buchanan—writer for Presidents and a nationally syndicated columnist and television commentator—is a notorious antisemite and chauvinist who finds it necessary to dismiss his campaign coordinator, Joseph D’Alessio, for publicly making the vilest racist “jokes” (*N.Y. Times*, Jan. 3, 1992).

Simultaneously, the Shamir government ruling Israel

tells its soldiers to “shoot to kill” Palestinians actively opposing the occupation of their land; this after officially stating that 850 Palestinians already have been killed by its armed forces in suppressing the effort for liberation. These figures minimize reality; they do not include, for instance, those who “have been killed at close range by special undercover commando squads” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, February 3, 1992).

Anthony Lewis writes in his column (Jan. 29, 1992) that in the Gaza Strip, 750,000 Palestinians exist in “crumbling, garbage-strewn towns.” The entire occupied area has “Israeli Army units everywhere” and “is surrounded by a fence, with just two check-points where one can leave.” In the zone “the unemployment rate is over 60 percent”; insulting treatment is the rule and “the stories of misery and humiliation are endless.”

Lewis ends his column: “And all for what?” The answer, which he omits, is for the glory of Shamir and his plans for a “Greater Israel”. Meanwhile, within Israel, according to a report released in January, 1992 from the nation’s National Insurance Institute, “the number of poverty-stricken people in Israel is up considerably and is still climbing.” Specifically, the number of Israelis living below the poverty level was 14.6 percent in 1989 and 16.9 percent in 1990, meaning 537,700 people. This continued to climb in 1991 but final figures are not yet available (*Chicago Sentinel*, Jan. 23, 1992).

Especially suffering, said the report, were the children: “Nearly a quarter of a million children, representing 22.3 percent of all Israeli children were registered (in 1990) as impoverished, up from 18.6 percent in 1989.”

Glory enough for Shamir!

And the occupation continues, the oppression intensifies, the settlements, multiply and the arrogance of the rulers is matched only by their blindness.

Yes, “fascist winds return” worldwide and Shamir whistles as he marches further towards the cemetery he is preparing for Israel.

Never was there a more urgent need than now for a united, democratic, invigorated Left—here and in the world, here and in Israel. The chauvinism of a Bush and a Shamir imperils humanity. All who favor sheer decency must raise the alarm and militantly assert the values of equality and of peace. □

# The Communist Party USA and the Jews (I)

Alfred J. Kutzik

From its founding until today Jews have been a major part of the membership and a substantial part of the leadership of the U.S. Communist Party. Most of the founding members of the C.P. in 1919 had been members of the ethnic "federations" of the Socialist Party, the largest of which was that of Yiddish-speaking Jews. Probably half of the Party's membership during the ensuing four decades was Jewish.

This was in part due to the courageous and effective leadership of U.S. Communists in the struggle for better wages and conditions for the hundreds of thousands of Jewish workers in the "needle trades" and elsewhere. It was also due to the well-earned reputation of Communists in this country and worldwide as friends of the Jews. At the turn of the 20th century, the left socialists who later called themselves "Communists" were the most outspoken opponents of Czarist oppression and the frame-ups of Dreyfus and Bailis. The already well-established reputation of Communists as friends of the Jews was greatly enhanced when the Bolsheviks outlawed anti-semitism as one of their first acts after coming to power with Jewish members of the Central Committee and a Jewish President of Soviet Russia. It was further enhanced by the Red Army's fight against pogromist counterrevolutionaries during the four years of Civil War and the Soviet authorities unprecedented affirmative action on behalf of Jews in the 1920s including the support of Yiddish and the establishment of an "autonomous Jewish region" as a homeland for Jews in Birobijan.

Despite serious setbacks for Soviet Jews—along with other purportedly "bourgeois nationalist" groups—in the second half of the 1930s, during most of that decade through 1945 the already high reputation of Soviet Communists and Communists everywhere else as friends of the Jews reached a new level as the Soviet Union became the main diplomatic and then the main military opponent of Nazi Germany and the world Communist movement was the most determined opposition to fascism. This reputation peaked in 1947-8 when the Soviet Union played a leading role in the establishment of Israel. But, starting that same year, at the height of Jewish support of Communists and Communism, with Jews probably a majority of the U.S. Party's over 100,000 members and a large proportion of its many more supporters, there occurred a drastic deterioration of the position of Jews in the Soviet Union which would soon tarnish and eventually destroy the Communist Party's reputation among the

great majority of U.S. Jews including Communists.

Some Soviet Jewish leaders, like those of other Soviet nationalities, had been jailed or executed in the late 1930s for "crimes" against the state which the authorities largely attributed to their nationalism. This had ceased during WWII, however, soon after the establishment of Israel, when a crowd of Moscow Jews gave that country's new ambassador to the Soviet Union an enthusiastic reception echoed by Jews in other cities, the Soviet authorities renewed their campaign against Jewish nationalism with a vengeance. In 1948-49 over 400 Jewish cultural workers (writer, poets, journalists, editors, etc.) along with several Jewish engineers, scientists and politicians were arrested. On August 12, 1952 two dozen of the most prominent of these prisoners, the foremost Yiddish writers of the Soviet Union, were executed on trumped-up charges of being agents of U.S. imperialism. They were accused of collaborating with the C.I.A. and planning to set up a "Jewish state" in the Crimea which would secede from the USSR. The repression of individual Jews was accompanied by the suppression or destruction of Jewish cultural institutions, which were considered to be purveyors of Jewish nationalism.

These events of 1948-52 were described in the "Resolution on the Jewish Questions in the USSR" adopted by the N.Y. State Communist Party on March 31, 1957:

Administrative actions that go back so far as the mid-1930s led, after World War II, to the liquidation of all Jewish secular institutions, organizations and channels of cultural expression, outside of Biro-Bidjan... Jewish schools were shut down, Yiddish and Russian-Jewish newspapers ceased publication. The Yiddish publishing houses stopped functioning. The Yiddish theatres were disbanded. The Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee (*the Soviet Jews' only national organization, AJK*) was in 1948 abruptly ordered to disband. Jewish cultural figures, many of them with world-wide reputations and followings, were unjustly and secretly executed. Many others were persecuted and imprisoned.

The occurrence of these events could be acknowledged by the CPUSA in 1957 since even greater crimes and errors of the Stalin regime had been revealed in Krushchev's 1956 report to the XXth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The events had been denied by the U.S. Party until then although reports of the disappearance of the world-famous poets Ivisik

Feffer, David Bergelson *et al.* and the near extinction of Jewish cultural life had filtered out of the USSR from 1948 on and questions had increasingly been raised concerning this in the U.S., England, France, etc. These questions came not only from anti-Soviet quarters but from pro-Soviet ones, including Communists. The CPUSA's reaction to such questions from many of its Jewish members had been expressed in a 1950 article by Central Committee member John Williamson ("United Front Among the Jewish People," *Political Affairs*, July 1950).

Williamson's article attributed the "new campaign of attack on the Soviet Union and its Socialist solution of the Jewish Question" to U.S. imperialism, Zionists and Social Democrats. It asserted that rather than unwarrantedly criticizing the Soviet Union on its supposed mistreatment of Jews, "(W) e must popularize and explain the Socialist achievement in the Soviet Union of eliminating all forms of social oppression—including national oppression and antisemitism." As for those raising questions within the Party, the article declared:

Many comrades in Jewish work and in the *Morning Freiheit* have demonstrated great ideological weakness on this question and some have fallen victim to the ravings of the bourgeoisie about "What happened to the Soviet Jewish writers" Such comrades must be sharply criticized. It is the opinion of the National Committee that the comrades in the *Morning Freiheit* should work out a series of projects for self-correction to guarantee a systematic ideological campaign in the *Morning Freiheit* popularizing the Soviet Union, its tremendous achievements in the Socialist solution of the Jewish question.

This was the "party line" for the next six years muting the questions that continued to concern many Jewish Communists, particularly after the "doctor" plot in 1953. This was the frame-up of a group of nine doctors, six of them Jewish, charged with plotting "to cut short the lives" of Soviet leaders "through sabotage medical treatment" and already having murdered two, including the top Party leader Andrei Zhdanov. The official Soviet communicate that announced this to the world presented it as a Jewish plot, stating that "most of the participants in the terrorist group (M. S. Vovsi, B.B. Kogan, A. I. Feldman, A. M. Grinshtein, Y. B. Ettinger, and others) were connected with the international Jewish bourgeois nationalist organization 'Joint' (*the Joint Distribution Committee, AJK*) established by American intelligence...." An editorial in *Pravda* on the day of the doctors' arrest stated, "exposure of the band of poisoner-doctors is a blow at the international Jewish Zionist organization." A media campaign along these lines led to harassment of Jewish doctors throughout the Soviet Union and

an outbreak of verbal abuse against Jews generally. This governmentally-inspired antisemitic campaign soon ended one month after Stalin's death on March 4, 1953 when the "doctors' plot" case was dropped with an admission by Soviet authorities that it was a frame-up. This did not change the CPUSA's line, following that of the CPSU, that the USSR had solved the Jewish question and that those who raised doubts about this were anti-Soviet.

It was not until 1957, a year after the Krushchev revelations (which did not mention anything relating to Jews) that the long-available information on the suppression of Jewish culture and the jailings and executions of Jewish leaders forced the CPUSA to change its line. This was expressed in the above-cited March 31, 1957 resolution of the N.Y. State CP endorsed on behalf of the Party as a whole in a *Daily Worker* editorial of April 8, 1957.

In addition to describing the antisemitic governmental actions of the last five years of the Stalin regime, which it linked to similar actions in the late 1930s, the resolution acknowledged the continuing existence of antisemitism in the Soviet Union while denying that this was official policy.

We reject the slander of anti-Soviet elements accusing the Soviet Union of anti-Semitism. There is no official state policy of anti-Semitism. However, remnants of anti-Semitism, implanted by generations of former Czarist rule and revived to a certain degree among backward elements by the Hitlerite war-time occupation, apparently remain.

The resolution and editorial called upon the Soviet government to take steps to restore the Jewish cultural institutions that it had destroyed.

This new position of the CPUSA met the concern of nearly all U.S. Jewish Communists for attention to the situation of Soviet Jews. While a large number of Jews were among the tens of thousands of members who left the Party during the McCarthy decade 1948-1958, relatively few did over the issue of antisemitism in the Soviet Union. Like most others, they did so due to disillusion with the newly-disclosed Stalinist perversion of socialism in the USSR and, even more, to the intense governmental persecution of Communists in the U.S. Partly by design and partly by coincidence, the persecution was particularly directed against Jews. Jews were a special target of the government's campaign against Soviet "spies" whose results ranged from the judicial murder of the Rosenbergs and the imprisonment of Morton Sobell to the media convictions of Judith Copland, Harry Gold, et al. This was accompanied by the firing and blacklisting of "subversive" Jewish Communists and progressives who were

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# Israel and U.S. Policy

Jon Weisberger

*This is almost the entire transcript of a talk given to the Local Alliance for Middle East Peace in Knoxville, TX, on October 21, 1991.*

I want to start by underlining three principles. The first is this: that despite the events of the past year, the biggest problem in the Middle East and the root cause of the turmoil which the region has undergone during the past 20 years or so is the Arab-Israeli conflict, and especially its key component, the continued occupation of Arab lands by Israel. The solution to the Palestinian issue is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. And resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict is a necessary but not sufficient condition for solving the larger problems in the Middle East. If the occupation were to end tomorrow and Israel would reach agreement with its Arab neighbors to end the occupation, the Middle East would still be in the news. And it will be for a long time to come due to the fact that it is a region which most of the world sees, at least in economic terms, as vital to its interests. It is also a region whose history has been shaped by a variety of actors, external intervention as well as internal dynamics. But indisputably the Arab-Israeli conflict remains crucial to the possibility of achieving a comprehensive Middle East peace.

The second principle is that the Palestinians have a right to self-determination, to shape their own future. They have a right to be free of occupation, to develop their own institutions, their own schools, justice system, and so forth.

The third principle is that the Israelis have a right to self-determination also, that there is an Israeli people, that one need not subscribe to political Zionism to understand that there is a group of people in Israel who have their own language, their own culture, their own traditions, their own psychology, their own economy—all of which are characteristics of a people. And on this basis we can see that the two-state solution, the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, is the most just solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The first question that we have to ask as American citizens are, "What is our government's policy in the Middle East with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict?" and "What are the roots of that policy?" At this point, American policy is undergoing a very interesting evolution, proven by the recent statements from the administration that are causing such a stir. These statements are

shaped not only by events in the Middle East, but by the international scene in general.

Now, up until the past 3-4 years, American policy in the Middle East was shaped by two primary considerations. The first consideration was the role that the Middle East oil plays in the U.S. economy, and the world economy in general. The other was the Cold War, the Middle East as the strategic southern flank of the Soviet Union, and the notion that those states and movements that are not with us are against us. So throughout the 1970's and the early 1980's, the main argument advanced by the U.S. government against the establishment of a Palestinian state was that such a state would be part of the Soviet bloc. There was a sharpening confrontation in the Middle East between Israel, the ally of the U.S. and the enemy of the Soviet Union, and the Palestinians, the enemy of the U.S. and the ally of the Soviet Union. And their case against the establishment of a Palestinian state was made on these geopolitical grounds: a Palestinian state would be a blow to the U.S. in the Cold War.

Virtually the same argument was made by the State Department conservatives in the late 1940's against U.S. support for establishment of the state of Israel, because they were convinced that all of these socialist, Zionist, Russian Jewish emigres would create a state that would become an ally of the Soviet Union and a force for subversion in the Middle East. The problem for the U.S. government has always been to reconcile these two so contradictory interests. On the one hand, pure economic interests dictate that the U.S. maintain friendly relations with all oil-producing states in the Middle East. On the other hand, these states argue that one of the things they want the U.S. to do as part of the improved relationship is to put pressure on Israel to relinquish Arab territory. And that in turn would devalue Israel as an ally in the Cold war.

In 1981 Alexander Haig, who was U.S. Secretary of State at the time, and Ariel Sharon who was Israeli Defense Minister, signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which was a fascinating document. The document tried to square the circle by saying that the U.S. considered Israel to be a major non-NATO ally, which is actually a quasi-legal category. The status made Israel eligible for a number of benefits, provided for the repositioning of U.S. military equipment in Israel, allowed for joint exercises, exchanges of military intelli-



gence, and really helped solidify this relationship between Israel and the U.S. It specifically said, "this is an agreement that is not directed against any state in the region, but against the Soviet Union." So the U.S. could go to the Arab states and say, "Look, this agreement doesn't have anything to do with our relationship with you, we view Israel as a necessary ally in the Cold War, and that's the basis of our relationship with Israel."

Israel was willing to do this at a time when even countries like Saudi Arabia were very wary of providing bases, allowing U.S. military ships to use port facilities, and so forth, largely because as they saw in 1978, when the Camp David agreements were signed, the reaction of the Arab masses to accommodation with the U.S. would be hostile. The Palestinian cause is tremendously popular among the Arab people. The most basic reason is that the occupation, the denial of the Palestinian right to self-determination, is seen as the essential remaining symbol of neocolonialism and imperialism in the Middle East. There is this ongoing case of occupation by a country which identifies itself as non-Arab, as Western, as the bearer of Western civilization and culture. So even with the problems of democracy or lack of it in most of the Arab states, they are not governments of occupation and that's a real difference—that we would do well to understand.

In the past two years one of the twin but contradictory legs of U.S. policy in the Middle East is being whittled away, that is the Cold War. The strategic relationship with Israel developed in the 70's and the early 80's no longer has the same kind of urgency in a world moving away from bipolar confrontation. For the Bush administration, positions which existed on paper in the U.S. ever since 1967 are now being pulled out and dusted off and elevated to questions of greater significance and principle. Is there anything new to the U.S. position regarding the shape of the Middle East settlement? If you look back and follow what our government has had to say since 1967, the answer really is no. Every administration has said that it is opposed to Israeli settlements on the West Bank. In 1982, when Reagan unveiled his plan for Middle East peace, one of the key elements was a settlement freeze. And Ronald Reagan was the best friend that Israel ever had in the White House. The principle of exchanging land for piece is contained in U.N. resolution 242—the U.S. had always supported that. At least partial Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights—the U.S. has always supported that. And opposition to a Palestinian state has always been the U.S. position. No administration has acknowledged the Palestinian right to self-determination but has spoken only of legitimate political rights

for Palestinians.

So the particulars of U.S. policy really have not changed: exchange of land for peace, recognition of Israel by the Arab states, some kind of relationship between Jordan and the Palestinians on the West Bank, some kind of agreement relating to the Golan so that Syria's concerns can be met. What has changed now is the degree to which the administration is prepared to use the power at its disposal to enforce that policy. Because, although these have always been U.S. positions, in fact no administration until now has been prepared to use serious leverage, including the most obvious tool that they have—which is money—to gain Israeli compliance with that program. The Arab states basically signed on to the U.S. program in 1982. They said, "We will accept a two-state solution. We are prepared to recognize Israel, to reach peace with Israel, provided that Israel withdraws from the occupied territories and a Palestinian state is created." That narrowed the gap between the U.S. and the Arab states to one issue, that of a Palestinian state. Israel's position, on the other hand, is no return of the Golan—they annexed it in 1981 over U.S. protests—no return of East Jerusalem.

Now if you have been following the coverage of East Jerusalem in the newspapers, you have been misled in one regard. It is generally said with respect to Jerusalem that the U.S. does not recognize the annexation of East Jerusalem—but that is, in essence, a half-truth. It is true that the U.S. does not recognize the annexation of East Jerusalem, but it is equally true that the U.S. does not recognize the incorporation of West Jerusalem into the state of Israel, and that's a far cry from the Israeli position, which is, "The city is ours, it will always be ours."

Most U.S. administrations have characterized the Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza as illegal. The Reagan administration said, "Well, we're not sure if they're illegal or not, but they're still a major obstacle to peace." The Bush administration has continued that policy saying "We don't consider it to be fruitful to discuss the legality under international law of the settlements, but they remain a big obstacle to peace." In the meantime, even though these were the U.S. positions on paper, no matter what the Israelis did, annex the Golan Heights, annex East Jerusalem, undertake this immense settlement program, violate human rights, bomb Iraq's nuclear reactor, nothing interfered with the flow of very large amounts of aid to Israel.

Several reasons have been advanced for this continued financial support from the U.S. government. One is that

*continued on page 21*

## Radical Politics, Radical Art: The Role of the Jewish Left in 20th Century American Art

Charles Keller

The question of why Jewish artists are "especially responsive" to the lure of radical politics was raised by the recent exhibition, "Painting a Place in America: Jewish Artists in New York, 1900-1945", at the Jewish Museum, in New York City. This was alluded to but not developed in this writer's two-part series, "Art and the Greenhoming of America" in the two previous issues of *Jewish Affairs*.

Artists or not, political concern is certainly one of the various manifestations of social involvement characteristic of Jews. Community participation has long been a principal feature of Jewishness. It was inevitable that the Jewish artists of the '30s would become involved in the struggles of that period, especially as Jewishness itself was under attack. As described in "Greenhoming II", the artist-writer Jennings Tofel initiated the Jewish Art Center in 1925 which featured "the Jew—the worker" not as the weary, worn and all-too-familiar personification of despair, but rather as the heroic toiler "with a background of European working-class poverty and of activity in the revolutionary movement of 1903." In this spirit artists including Goodelman, Shahn, Harkavy, etc. chose themes of social injustice, such as lynchings, the Sacco-Vanzetti and the Scottsboro "boys" frame-ups, etc. Also described in "Greenhoming" was the founding by the Communist Party in 1929 of the John Reed Clubs, 18 cultural centers nationwide, highly influential within a broad spectrum of artists and writers.

The Great Depression years were a period in history when confrontations of all kinds were taking place. Millions of workers in the U.S. were forced to fight on two fronts: the struggle for jobs and unemployment relief and soon thereafter in the war against fascism. Many "premature anti-fascists" tried to stop the debacle in its early stage by "illegally" joining the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in support of the legally elected Republican government of Spain against Franco insurgents. The losses were overwhelming, inflicted by vastly superior forces including those sent by Hitler and Mussolini. More rewarding was

*Charles Keller, painter, cartoonist, teacher, was New Masses art editor 1945-47 and Peoples Daily World staff cartoonist, 1979-88.*

the fight for jobs on the home-front, where artists scored a great victory when the Federal Art Project was created. Thousands of artists thus won recognition as socially useful workers, earning the right to be paid for their work as artists, with dignity and the freedom to create as they pleased! They won this status by allying themselves to the trade-union movement, the cause of workers nationwide.

Organizing the Artists' Union, later sponsored by the CIO, the artists found themselves in a heady atmosphere. Culturally they were in possibly the greatest renaissance of the arts the world had ever seen!

A major reason that many artists, including Jews, were drawn to radical ideas was because it was primarily the Communists who were mobilizing the public on basic issues, and it was the Soviet Union, soon to become the front line of defense against fascism, that was perceived by many as the land that promised peace and freedom from prejudice and exploitation. It was John Reed's classic account of the Russian revolution, *Ten Days That Shook The World* and the clubs named in his honor that inspired class consciousness and racial equality. In 1932 the N.Y. City Reed Club assembled a show titled "Revolutionary Art in the Capitalist Countries" which it sent to Moscow. For New York it mounted an exhibition called "The Social Viewpoint in Art," and in 1933 a show on "Hunger, Fascism and War." In response to Bulgarian Georgi Dimitrov's call at the 7th World Congress of the Communist International for a united front against fascism the prestigious American Artists Congress was founded and the John Reed Clubs disbanded. They had mobilized thousands of writers including Richard Wright and Theodore Dreiser, artists and composers including George Biddle and Elie Siegmeister. They had organized the above-named theme shows, lectures, poetry readings and the American Artists School near Union Square. The 1936 American Artists Congress, following the American Writers Congress by one year, was headed by Louis Mumford, Hugo Gellert (mis-identified as Jewish in the Jewish Museum catalogue), Stuart Davis and Harry Gottlieb. Its success in mobilizing artists, liberal, radical and conservative, from coast to coast confirmed the cor-

rectness of the United Front concept. Holding mass meetings, concerts, exhibitions and issuing proclamations in defense of democracy it lasted only three years. In 1939 a split led by art historian Meyer Shapiro, painters Mark Rothko and Adolph Gottlieb and others dissolved the Congress. The Hitler-Stalin non-aggression pact and the Soviet invasion of Finland had disenchanted many, and the "Yanks are not coming" stance of the Communists confused others.

In response to an appeal by Trotsky and Andre Breton in *Partisan Review* in 1938 calling for an anarchist Revolutionary League of Writers and Artists (and in response also to an article signed by Diego Rivera but attributed to Trotsky urging abstract individualistic experimentation as the only true artistic freedom), the League for Cultural Freedom and Socialism was set up in

1939 by critics Harold Rosenberg and Clement Greenberg and artists G.L.K. Morris and Fairfield Porter.

One year later, in 1940, the American Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors replaced both the League and the Congress. Thus still existing organization had an anti-Communist clause in its by-laws which it withdrew in 1953 (the year of the Rosenberg executions) to avoid any similarity to McCarthyism which was raging throughout the cultural community.

Back to 1936, ICOR, the Organization for Jewish Colonization in Russia, was established and chaired by Social Realist painter Frank Kirk, who was Jewish. ICOR sent artworks to Birobijan that formed the base of its new art museum.

In 1938 the Yiddisher Kultur Farband (YKUF) was founded by Communist writers and artists to combat antisemitism and fascism. In Europe and America YKUF grew out of the World Alliance for Yiddish Culture. American delegates to its Paris conference in 1937 were Minna Harkavy, Isaac Lichtenstein and Frank Kirk. Philosopher Chaim Zhitlowsky was chair of the American Art Section.

YKUF held many large exhibitions which included artists of all schools, non-Jews among them. It was a powerful voice in support of the Soviet Jewish autonomous regime in Birobijan and sent a show to Moscow.

During WWII the art students were also active. We set up Artists for Victory, stenciled cartoons, Russian-style, for "wall newspapers" for trade-unions and mounted a show in 1942 called "Art, a Weapon for War" at the New School for Social Research. Rockwell Kent was our patron. Focusing on three New York art schools, we organized the Young American Artists Association, our Communist response to the United Front movement. Years later, in 1948, we organized the Graphic Workshop modeled on the Mexican Taller Grafica de Arte Popular. Among our many services to the unions, two folios of prints were issued by the inter-racial membership which included works by Edward Walsh, Jacob Lawrence, Leonard Baskin, Charles White, Roy De Carava, Antonio Frasconi, Bob Gwathmey and others.

A high point in the student experience for some of us in the late 1930s were the excursions with artist-teacher Harry Sternberg to the steel towns and coal mines in Pennsylvania where we met working miners and went down to their "bootleg" tunnels.

Despite the war—and perhaps because of it—American Jews now felt welcome in the art world and, with Birobijan and Israel out there, we were no longer outsiders. We were, beyond question, part of the American story. □

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Poster from the 1930s courtesy of Adele Lozowick and the Jewish Museum of New York City.

## Lev Morgenstern: A Memoir

David Seltzer

The printed words on the fluttering pages of a book have always stirred my soul.

When I first set my eyes on the little printing press—the *Amerikanka*—in the window of Yitzhok Chitron's print shop on Odessa Street in Soroki, I stood there for a long time in a sort of trance. I watched as quick hands of the pressman put a blank white sheet of paper into the mouth of the machine, which kept opening and closing, and pulled out a finished handbill with big Russian letters—one blank sheet in, one printed sheet out!

One day I picked up a printed sheet which had blown out the open door and landed at my feet. My fingers were stained by the fresh black ink, but I didn't mind. From that moment, the printer's ink was in my blood forever.

Of the four print shops in our town—Weisman, Davidson, Chitron and Balaban—the last-named had the most appeal for me because at home I had often heard that my Uncle Monya had once worked there. So I would often stand in the doorway of S. Balaban's *Typographia*, near the German Synagogue, and watch old Reb Choneh turn a big crank and the wheels and rollers of the big printed press would make a kind of loud groaning noise.

On a little stool by the machine the printer Lev Morgenstern would sit in his blue workshirt and brown linen apron and feed big sheets of paper into the shining metal fingers which picked up the paper smoothly, drew back, wrapped the paper around the cylinder, and released it over moving leather belts, which then delivered the printed sheet into a wooden basket where the sheets fell into a neat growing pile.

From time to time Lev would push a lever and shout: HUP! At that point, Choneh would stop cranking and the press would come to a groaning halt. Lev would get off his stool, walk over to the pile of printed sheets and turn a little handle. The basket with the pile of paper would be lowered into a little wheelbarrow. He would grab the rope attached to the wheelbarrow, pull the pile to a side and in its place he would put a fresh empty basket and mounting the stool again, he would again move a lever and shout: CHUD! Choneh would start cranking and the press would start moving once again and the printed sheets would fly into the basket once again.

Fascinated, I would watch the girls fold the large sheets into halves, quarters and eighths and then the

binder would press the paper down, paste and bind it and finally trim it into finished pamphlets with brightly colored jackets.

So I made up my mind then that I would be a printer, specifically a typesetter. I watched as Lev Morgenstern stood at the wooden typesets and the two fingers of his right hand raced from box to box picking up single letters and placing them into a flat metal holder which he held in his left hand. The letters would form a line of type, upside down and backwards, so that if you held them up to a mirror, you could read them right side up.

Lev would place the lines of type into a sort of long tin tray, with heavy lead blocks at the sides to keep the separate letters from falling down. When he had completed a few dozen such lines, he would tie them up securely with a piece of string, lock them into a form with a kind of tray and put it in the press. Then he would fill the little troughs above the rubber rollers with black ink and the machine would again start up with a loud groan, shooting out freshly printed sheets of paper.

At the end of 1919, when it was decided that our family would move to America and that Uncle Monya, my father's younger brother—who had a printing shop in New York—would "sign for us," I made the serious decision to learn the printing trade. I had just entered the third class in the *gymnasia* and my father wanted me to complete that year, but I had my heart set on becoming a worker immediately. I happened to be reading a Russian book by Rubakin *In the Land of Liberty and Work*, which celebrates the dignity of labor, and I came to the independent conclusion that setting type was the most beautiful work in the world.

So against the wishes of my father, I put away my gray *gymnasia* uniform with the silver buttons, donned a blue workshirt and set out for Balaban's *Typographia* to hire myself out as an apprentice for six months.

The proprietor, S. Balaban—he was hard of hearing—regarded me skeptically and was about to send me out with a disparaging wave of his hand, when Morgenstern shouted to him:

"He's a nephew of Monya's!"

Herr Balaban cupped his right ear in his palm and when he heard the word "Monya," he positively beamed:

"Young man, if you turn out to be even half as good as

your Uncle Monya, you'll be a first-class craftsman! Oh, that Monya! That was a typesetter with golden hands and an iron memory! Alright boy. You'll get 750 lei at the end of six months, as a going-away present to America."

"A thousand lei, Herr Balaban!" Morgenstern boomed. "Don't steal from little children!"

"Alright, alright," Balaban muttered petulantly. "Am I the boss around here?"

Thus I worked for six months, until we left for America, under the fatherly supervision of Lev Morgenstern. Not that I learned very much. I spent more time running errands than working at the case but on the other hand, Lev introduced me to the world of work and struggle. He was at that time the head of the trade unions in Soroki. So he would send me out with verbal messages to the secretaries of the store clerks, the journeyman tailors and shoemakers, the mill workers on the hill and the brewery workers on the *Mala* (the lower and poor part of the city). Mostly the messages had to do with the time and place of illegal meetings that would be held that same evening.

I myself was never present at any of those meetings, but at night on my pillow I would fantasize Morgenstern making a flaming speech and everybody listening rapily. And the next morning, when I would hear from Lev himself that the meeting had gone peacefully, I would be happy that I too had been able to help the workers in some way. If the meeting had been discovered, however, and someone had been arrested, my face should drop and Morgenstern would say with a smile:

"Don't worry about it, boy. Unity is a hard struggle. Until the workers learn to stick together and not be afraid, there will inevitably be victims. But the future will be bright!"

One event prior to our leaving Soroki elated Lev Morgenstern in my eyes even higher and etched his courage into my heart.

Elections were about to take place to parliament. The Romanian invaders wanted to crush the Moldavian national movement of the peasants, who were grouped around the Peasant Party under the emblem of the rake and the scythe. Their campaign called for a vote against the rich boyars and the Romanian invaders.

One day a tall Moldavian with a shock of black hair under a green sheepskin hat came into the shop and conspiratorially gave Lev an election poem to print. When he left, Morgenstern called me into the closet where they kept the ink and paper. First he swore me to secrecy. Then he handed me a sheet of paper containing some lines of verse. They had been typed on a Russian typewriter, with Moldavian spelling, in the Cyrillic alphabet.

He instructed me to set the type for it in ten lines.

"But not a word to anybody! It's explosive stuff! Very dangerous!"

With thumping heart and trembling fingers I set the type the next morning and Lev printed them on a small handpress. Never will I forget those ten revolutionary Moldavian lines. Their message was something like this:

"Hey, peasant, hey Romanians, be brave and join together! Vote with your hearts for our present symbol. The rake and the scythe is our sacred coat of arms. The rake and the scythe will liberate you from all your troubles and misfortunes, from all oppression and oppressors!"

The next day, after the Moldavian had picked up the leaflets, the secret police came and closed the print shop and took Balaban and all the workers—including me—to their headquarters. Herr Balaban denied any knowledge of the matter, explaining that Morgenstern, his manager, supervised the shop. All the workers declared that they knew nothing about it, that they had never seen the sheet being set or printed.

When the chief of police turned to me, I felt my knees buckle. But before he could ask me anything, Lev said:

"Let the boy alone! It was I who set the type and printed it."

The chief pushed me away with his big paw and in the same motion slapped Lev's face so hard that the blood gushed from his nostrils. The rest of us were sent home.

The next morning we heard that Lev had been tortured in the cellars of the secret police to make him reveal the name of the author of the poem. Several weeks later it became known that Lev Morgenstern had been sentenced to hard labor in the salt mines of Doftane.

Herr Balaban hired a new typesetter and was given permission to reopen his shop. And I sailed off to America with an ache in my heart and with a light in my young eyes that Lev Morgenstern had kindled by his brave and selfless act. □

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## Education in Israel

*continued from page 18*

economic strata generally being streamed into the lower achievement groupings.

This book levels the most severe accusations against Israel's educational system. The writer asserts that the supporters of these above-mentioned educational programs had no intention of reducing gaps in educational achievement. He suggests these programs might well be evaluated according to the degree of their success in institutionalizing Israel's elitist educational trend. In this, it seems, they have succeeded beyond all expectation. □

## Document

### Message to the 50th Anniversary Kiev Commemoration of Babi Yar (October 5, 1991)

Mikhail Gorbachev

Dear fellow countrymen and countrywomen, Ladies and gentlemen,

Half a century has passed since the awful tragedy that occurred here, on the old Ukrainian land, which became a cradle of history and statehood for the three fraternal Slavic peoples. A little more than half a century separates us from the time when Hitler Nazism began preparing a world totalitarian order, and a little less than a half a century when states and peoples united to defeat the aggressor and condemn national socialism as a criminal ideology of genocide and terror.

A memory about irretrievable losses is passed on from one generation to another. It knows no bounds.

Babi Yar is a suburb of the Ukrainian capital. Like Khatyn, Oradour, Lidice, Oswiecim and Buchenwald, it is not simple a geographical point but an appalling symbol of that senseless war. Babi Yar has become a place of grief, lament and repentance.

Babi Yar reminds one of the price that people paid for blindness, political mongering and shortsightedness of some rulers and for violations of all norms of humanity by others.

Babi Yar urges modern politicians to be vigilant and remember that they have been granted power to serve people and that immoral politics should no longer exist in the world.

The Second World War inflicted innumerable losses. Their scale is shocking. Among tens of millions of victims were almost 6,000,000 Jews—representatives of the great people dispersed over the whole planet. Babi Yar shows that Jews were among the first Nazi victims both in our country and in the whole of Europe.

The Nazis speculated on the lowest feelings of envy, national intolerance and hatred. They used antisemitism as a major means to infect people's minds with chauvinism and racism.

Venomous sprouts of antisemitism sprang up in the Soviet Union. The Stalin bureaucracy, which publicly dissociated itself from antisemitism, in fact used it as a means to isolate the country from the outside world and to strengthen their dictatorial position with the help of chauvinism.

The years of perestroika and renovation have radically changed the social atmosphere in the country. However, manifestations of antisemitism that still exist in our everyday life play into the hands of some reactionary cir-

cles.

The Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the Congress of Soviet Peoples Deputies and legislative enactments of the Soviet Supreme Soviet have strengthened the legal basis of democratic development of inter-ethnic relations and stiffened sanctions against nationalistic excesses.

The right to emigration has been established. But I should say frankly that our compatriots emigrate and the country loses many gifted and enterprising citizens. I say this in reproach to those public and administrative bodies, which have failed, or did not want, to use perestroika to create an atmosphere of intolerance of and condemnation of manifestations of antisemitism.

This ceremony in Babi Yar is a mournful event but it inspires hope that we, our renovating society, are capable of learning lessons from tragedies and errors of the past. □

### Israel and U.S. Policy *continued from p. 23*

willing to do various things because it's a no-win situation....

Although most people don't oppose the loan guarantees outright, they are in favor of tying them to a settlement freeze. The American Jewish community is a sophisticated community and its leadership knows how to read polls. This talk of compromise from Jewish leaders really broke out after it was leaked to the press that nameless advisors were recommending to the President that he go on prime-time television and make a speech about why he was calling for this delay in the loan guarantees. And the reason is this. Arthur Hertzberg, a strong critic of the Occupation, made a remark to the effect that the danger to the American Jewish community is going to arise the first time that a President is willing to say, "We want to hold Israel to the same standards that we apply to other countries." Because then if American Jewish organizations and the pro-Israel lobby say, "No, we don't want Israel held to the same standard," they will be opening the door to anti-Semitism. And that's the point that we're coming to, because the U.S. has always conditioned economic, military, and humanitarian aid to every country in the world on policy "reforms." So for Jewish leaders to argue that economic aid to Israel should not be tied to Israeli policy would be to open the door to all kinds of problems for them. □

## Reviews

Dan Raviv and Yossi Melman, *Every Spy a Prince: The Complete History of Israel's Intelligence Community*, Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1990, 473 pp; Kathleen M. Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s*, Berkeley University of California Press, 1991, 228 pp.

Gerald Horne

In many ways this book could be viewed as Israeli propaganda. It refers to the PLO as "terrorists" and accepts most of the premises that have deluded the Likud for so long. Another book by Ian Black and Benny Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars: A History of Israel's Intelligence Services*, covers much of the same ground and in a more balanced and comprehensive manner. Still, a close reading of this book is warranted precisely because the authors seem to have close ties with elite circles within the Israeli "intelligence community."

Nevertheless, the authors' casual chauvinism is quite offensive. The book is studded with comments like "the intelligence services of the Arab countries lacked the diligence and stamina needed for long-term operations...the Arabs could not run a successful operation within Israel...(the Palestinians had a) lack of professionalism..." (pp. 97, 152, 171). Inevitably such chauvinism is turned on fellow Israelis; it is suggested that the "Oriental, Sephardic sector of the Jewish population...were generally less educated men who built their careers more on brawn than brains..." (p. 173).

Naturally, the authors—and the Israeli intelligence services they so clearly admire—exhibit a stunning sexism. Most women within the Mossad not only are limited to "administrative and service capacities," but "it is expected of them to use sex as one of many weapons in the field" (pp. 133-34). Early in Israel's history, their intelligence services attempted "to use women and money to seduce the US Marines who guarded their embassy in Tel Aviv." The authors, quick to criticize the slightest transgression, real or imagined, of the PLO evince no disagreement with such policies and, indeed, appear to smile approvingly on such.

It seems a turning point for Israeli intelligence came in May 1951 when Reuven Shiloah, then head of the Mossad, cemented intelligence cooperation between Israel and the US. To that point it was feared in Washington. *Horne is chair of the Department of Black Studies, University of California at Santa Barbara.*

ington that "the important aid given by the Eastern bloc in the first days of the new nation" would mean Israel was leaning toward the USSR. This did not occur and, in fact, Israel became a leader in the effort to destabilize socialism. It is ironic that this development has spawned the kind of anti-Jewish fervor that the intelligence services ostensibly were opposing.

An alleged reason for Israel's hostility to socialism was the issue of Soviet Jewry; but the authors explode this supposition by pointing out that "in obvious contrast to the noisy policy adopted by Israel in demanding the freedom of emigration for Soviet Jews, Jerusalem maintained a low profile and absolute silence with regard to the Romanian Jews" (p. 235).

In discussing, US-Israel collaboration, the authors cite a joke where a CIA man tells his Mossad contact that Israel was lucky it never became the 51st state. Why lucky, the Israeli wondered? "Because then, 'said the CIA agent, 'you would only have two US senators, and this way you have at least sixty.'" The joke does not mask the reality that Israel has been able to pose a "strategic asset" for the US during the Cold War; however, the authors do not explain how the new situation internationally will impact US-Israeli relations.

The case of Jonathan Pollard, the young Jewish American caught spying for Israel, and the Iran-Contra scandal, in which Israel was deeply involved, are indications that US-Israeli relations are in the process of evolution. The Pollard case revealed that Israeli theft of US defense secrets and technology was more extensive than many in Washington had feared. Some right-wing Senators sought to scapegoat Israel by blaming them for the Iran-Contra disaster. The authors continue the cover-up by suggesting that US arms being shipped to Iran via Israel began in 1985-6, when recent revelations point to the distinct possibility that the election team of Ronald Reagan cut a deal with the Iranians in 1980 pledging arms in return for Teheran not releasing US hostages during the tenure of President Carter. Nor do the authors

shed light on the Israeli bombing in broad daylight of the USS Liberty during the 1967 war, killing a number of US sailors in the process.

Iran Contra also illustrated a new trend within Israeli intelligence; "Israel has an entire new class of Mossad, Shin Bet, and senior army veterans who are working to persuade their own country to sell while convincing foreigners to buy...making money has become some sort of triumph for the Jewish community." However, if this narrow elite continues to be successful in substituting its narrow class interest for the interests of the Jewish community as a whole via their influence in major Jewish organizations, a catastrophe looms for all those who have faced the lash of discrimination. In unwittingly driving us to that conclusion, the authors deserve our heartfelt thanks for producing a book that, finally, forces serious reflection.

The Ku Klux Klan began after the Civil War, had a renaissance after World War I and today, unfortunately, is still with us. Though white Protestant males have been their major base of support, it would be a mistake to see this grouping as their exclusive area of recruitment. This verity is underscored in this fine piece of historical sociology authored by Kathleen M. Blee.

The KKK that erupted in the 1920s is the subject of this book; they claimed a membership of over 5 million. This may have been inflated figures but it cannot be denied that they had a mass base. In 1924 "Klan-backed candidates won the governorship, many mayoral contests including those in Indianapolis, Evansville, and Kokomo, and numerous offices of sheriffs, district attorneys, and others" (p.147). Though the author examines other states, Indiana is her primary focus.

A considerable percentage of their membership consisted of white Protestant women. Indeed, "some leaders of the women's suffrage movement used nativist and racist arguments and rhetoric, calling for votes for white women to counter the votes of black and immigrant men" (p.116). Women of the Ku Klux Klan (WKKK) leaders often backed gender equality. One of their leaders backed the Equal Rights Amendment to the US Constitution on the premise that it would empower white Protestant women against Klan foes, e.g. African Americans, Jewish Americans and Catholics. Their appeal was so considerable and pervasive that some argued that the de facto leader of the Klan was a woman, Elizabeth Tyler. One leaves this book with the inescapable conclusion that there has been a phenomenon that could be called "racist feminism" (or "feminist racism") and a looming question is to what extent it still exists.

A key to the success of the WKKK was their campaign around practical "social" questions that most political

organizations ignored, e.g., abusive husbands. "Many of those menaced by the Klan were men who deserted their wives or took up with women in adulterous affairs...Through channels of neighborhood gossip, local women targeted philandering men for Klan punishment...Women also asked the Klan's assistance with financially irresponsible husbands" (p.82). This "assistance" was a two-way street: "women's transgressions were more likely to evoke a sadistic response by the Klan..." In a precursor of the "Moynihan Report," the KKK "proclaimed neglect of one's family to be another violation of its moral code. Mothers accused of neglecting their children were subject first to a warning, then to violent punishment: (p.83). The WKKK was so influential that some have subsequently "described the KKK primary as an agency of redress for wronged women..." (p.83). The fact is that like today's Republican Party, the WKKK used "social" issues demagogically to spur millions: "When the Klan drew on racist, anti-Catholic, and anti-Semitic innuendoes and tales of immorality and depravity, it mobilized large numbers of indignant white Protestants: (p.97).

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of this book is the author's analysis of the WKKK's use of gossip—a powerful tool whose use is not unknown in progressive circles either. Gossip was particularly powerful as there "were no reports to seize, no meetings to invade, no publications to refute" (p.149). A WKKK leader in Indiana claimed that "her 'little black book' contained the names of five women in each county who were members of a so-called poison squad of whispering women through whom she could spread any gossip across the state in twelve hours. [Vivian] Wheatcraft compared her women's network to the "Whispering Women of the Pieve" whose defeatist propaganda contributed to Italian military defeat in 1917" (p.115).

The purpose of this gossip was not benign. "Acting individually but with a collective direction, Klanswomen could force Jews, Catholics, or blacks out of their communities or into financial bankruptcy...Businesses with Jewish owners, ranging from large department stores to small shops and professional services, went bankrupt throughout Indiana. Jewish professionals and business owners fled communities in which they had lives for decades.... Workers who were Catholic, Jewish or suspected of anti-Klan leanings often discovered vocational klannishness by being suddenly fired from their jobs" (pp.147, 152).

The author's chapter on gossip is so powerful that it reminds us why this tactic has such an odor in the US: it has been used most effectively by reactionaries for reactionary ends. The WKKK was among the more skilled



practitioners.

The WKKK was also inspired by more traditional ends. Their leaders "evoked white men's fears of losing both racial and male supremacy, for example, with a warning that black men were organizing societies in which all members pledged to marry white women" (p.76). They were not above the use of Reichstag fire tactics either: "In several cities in Indiana, Klan organizers and officers were arrested for arson of school buildings, for fires they set and attempted to blame on foreigners, Jews, or blacks (p.173).

Their list of enemies was elastic, as well. In addition to African-Americans and Jewish-Americans, the WKKK focused on "'local enemies'", e.g. "Mormons in Utah, union radicals in the Northwest, and Asian Americans on the Pacific Coast. (p.21).

Still, like their counterparts today, the WKKK seemed to have a special animus directed toward the Jewish community. WKKK leader Alma Bridwell White "charged Jews with secretly financing the Catholic empire, making immoral films, keeping motion pictures and other 'vile places of amusement' open on Sunday, and procuring young Protestant women to work in movies, dance halls, sweatshops, department stores, and white slave dens. The Jewish owned fashion industry, White argued, foisted immodest clothing on women through 'the powerful edicts of fashion.' In moral standards, White thundered, a Jewish man had 'no code to restrain him in his dealings with Gentile women'" (p.75).

The traditional demagoguery of the ultra-right made the WKKK even more dangerous. They were opportunists who "often tried to appear tolerant in public and reserve messages of racism and prejudice for closed private meetings" (p. 141). As the history of the 19th century "Know-Nothing" party amply demonstrates, the US has a long history of secretive, conspiratorial, semi-underground political organizations that pursue illegal acts. This makes the refusal of some to accept that Presidents and civil rights leaders can be murdered as a result of conspiracy even more difficult to fathom.

One point that the author could have explored further is the reasons for the decline of anti-Catholicism. After all, members in good standing of the US ruling elite include such Catholics as William F. Buckley, William Simon, Lee Iococca and Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

Antisemitism was eroded after World War II but seems to be on the increase today. Racism against African Americans appears to be increasing as well. In any case, Kathleen Blee amply demonstrates, as feminist historians have reminded us consistently, that when we add gender as a category of analysis we can come up with startling new discoveries. □

## *Shlomo Swirsky, Education In Israel: Schooling for Inequality, Brerot, 1990*

Yossi Yonah

Dr. Shlomo Swirsky's most recent book, *Education in Israel: Schooling for Inequality*, lays bare, on the basis of firm evidence, the ways in which our educational system ultimately serves narrow economic and class interests. The author debunks one of Israel's central myths: the myth of equal opportunity.

Those who have been duped by this myth offer various excuses for Israel's growing social, economic, and educational gaps. They claim that these gaps are inevitable expressions of the intellectual and cultural advantages of the established strata as against the weaker sections of the population. In other words, the rich and well-established are naturally clearer and by definition cherish loftier cultural values. For many, this explanation is accompanied by an intolerance and contempt for social protest in all its forms. Those who cry out against the status quo are perceived as marginal figures, absorbed in self-pity and lacking the proper motivation for self-advancement. They are accused of demanding social rights without accepting social obligations. The basis for this dismissal of valid educational concerns lies in the illusion that the educational system, like the process of education itself, is outside the political and social power struggles in Israeli society.

Swirsky's book demonstrates that Israel's discriminatory educational system is the main cause of the disparity in the performance of pupils from different social groups. Through a precise historical analysis of the development of the system, Swirsky traces the factors responsible for the gaps in achievement among three segments of the population: Ashkenazi Jews, Oriental Jews, and Israeli Arabs.

According to Swirsky, prior to the establishment of the state there were no significant differences in the educational achievements of Ashkenazim, Oriental Jews, and Arabs. Modern educational methods had been adopted by Oriental Jewry in their countries of origin. The immigration of Oriental Jews to the fledgling State of Israel blocked this trend, and the institutionalized Israeli education led to retreat in the methods of education among Oriental Jews and Israeli Arabs. What were the factors behind this retreat? Lack of space permits me to focus

*DR. Yonah is a lecturer at The Hebrew University's School of Education and a founder of the Forum for Social Justice and Peace. This review first appeared in the Israeli anti-establishment monthly, Hapatish.*

here on only two groups, Ashkenazi and Oriental Jews.

First of all, the largely Ashkenazi pre-state Jewish community (the Yishuv) related to the Oriental Jews were an arrogance stemming from a conviction in the superiority of European culture. This led to a general lack of interest in absorbing "culturally deficient" Oriental pupils into schools where their own children studied. Thus, in the early 1950s, for example, "about 80 percent of the children in the immigrant transit camps learned in schools set up in the camp themselves." Another factor in the deterioration of Oriental education was the inferior and alienated nature of the teaching staff in these camps, a marked contrast to the situation of teachers in the older, established communities. Beyond this, the communal frameworks the Oriental Jews brought with them from their countries of origin collapsed upon their arrival in Israel, and they were thus unprepared (and were unaware of any need to prepare) for a political struggle over their rights. Their few attempts to "organize" met with strong opposition, the establishment viewing such efforts as attempts "to divide people."

Over the course of the 1950s, two different, but complementary, socio-educational trends emerged. The old Yishuv community became integrated into the administrative frameworks required to run a state. A bourgeois class enjoying many economic privileges soon arose. As its prosperity grew, this class increasingly saw the importance of education as an instrument for creating social and economic opportunities for its children.

At the same time, the Israeli economy underwent a rapid process of industrialization, facilitated by the mass immigration from Arab countries and the foreign capital streaming into the state. The trend toward industrialization led to a process of the proletarianization of the Oriental community. Here the educational system had a special social role: to further this process by preparing thousands of Oriental youngsters for blue-collar jobs. Swirsky claims that the Orientals were meant to supply, and did indeed supply, most of the human reserves for menial industrial positions. Between 1966-1970 the number of Oriental students in trade schools increased four times as quickly as the number in regular schools.

Academics were brought in to justify the transformation of Oriental immigrants into factory workers. They provided the ideological, moral, and scientific authorization for the disparity in achievement between Ashkenazi and Oriental students, and for the channeling of Oriental youth into trade schools which did not offer the academic matriculation exam. One of the most interesting chapters in Swirsky's book deals with the ideology of "cultivating the deprived." With more than a little sar-

casm, the author lays bare the shaky theoretical foundations and the deeply rooted prejudices which underlie these "explanations." In particular, Swirsky sets out to evaluate and rebut two approaches: the theory of "educational expectations" mainly associated with educational researcher Moshe Smilansky, and the "rehabilitative instruction" developed by Karl Frankenstein.

According to Swirsky, Smilansky's approach, which is the dominant approach in today's educational system, combines the contradictory messages of equality and difference. Its praise for the ideal of equal educational opportunity is eviscerated by a second tenet: Oriental children "are not capable of standing up to the demands of the regular educational program." The system thus has a special obligation to provide these deprived children with alternative educational possibilities, without which they would surely drop out of school. It emerges, therefore, that under the guise of obligatory equality of opportunity, the ideology of "educational expectations" enables the system to divest itself of all serious attempts to raise the achievement-level of Oriental children. As a rule, these children find themselves streamed into separate educational frameworks, such as professional and special education.

Frankenstein's "rehabilitative instruction" theories are discussed in great detail in Swirsky's book, although only one example in this system of thought must suffice us here. Characteristic of Frankenstein's approach is his concept of "the essence of primitivity." In his view, primitivity is a side product of "the degeneration of the Oriental person," a process which has been detrimental to the intelligence of both Arab and Jewish Orientals.

In addition to these two approaches, other attempts have been made to improve Israeli education. These include the "reform" and "integration" programs. On the surface, these proposals seem to be intended to improve the achievements of all students, and particularly Orientals. They bring students of different ethnic backgrounds together in one school building, and then divide them into different "tracks" according to their abilities. In practice, Swirsky suggests, this reform has served elitist trends in education and mainly benefits the well-established sections of the population. Not surprisingly, its main advocates were the heads of the prestigious high schools, backed by various academics. Accordingly to Swirsky, integration enabled supporters of the elitist trend to claim that all students are afforded the same opportunity to continue regular academic studies. In fact, he claims, the system of grouping has created even stronger ethnic divisions, with students from the lower

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## CPUSA and the Jews *continued from page 7*

concentrated in education and performing arts. In addition to their share of McCarthyism in general organizations, Jewish organizational targets that had a special intimidating effect on Jewish party members and supporters were the House Unamerican Committee's investigation of the left-progressive Camp Kinderland and the government's destruction of the Communist-led Jewish People's Fraternal Order and the close to 200,000-member Communist-led International Workers Order of which it was a part.

In the decade beginning 1957 the much-diminished CPUSA retained the allegiance of thousands of Jewish members and the support or sympathy of tens of thousands of Jewish former member and non-members by maintaining the policy of criticizing manifestations of antisemitism in the Soviet Union and lack of action against them by Soviet authorities while defending the Soviet government from the charge of officially promoting antisemitism. Although intimidation had greatly reduced the readership of the Party's Yiddish paper, *The Morning Freiheit*, and English-language magazine, *Jewish Life*, this policy was still widely known among left-leaning Jews. In addition, they knew of the publication of a Yiddish literary journal (*Sovetish Haimland*) and books by Jewish authors in Yiddish and Russian, the reconstitution of amateur dramatic groups, the performance of concerts of Jewish music, etc. and that the Party continued to call upon the Soviet authorities to fully restore Jewish cultural life to the level it had achieved before 1948 when there had been far more Jewish publications, a world-renowned professional Yiddish theatre, Jewish schools, etc.

Pursuing this policy, towards the end of this decade the Party sharply criticized the antisemitic publications that began to be published by official Soviet publishing houses as critiques of the Jewish religion and Zionism. This came to a head following the 1963 publication of Trofim Kichko's book, *Judaism Without Embellishment*, by the Ukrainian Academy of Science. In addition to its antisemitic content identifying certain obscurantist beliefs of Judaism and certain reactionary aspects of Zionism with the Jewish people as a whole, the Kichko book was illustrated with patently antisemitic caricatures. These evoked the following from Gus Hall, who was already the Party's general secretary: "There is no doubt in my mind...about the anti-Semitic character of what I have seen. Such stereotyped, slanderous caricatures of the Jewish people must be unequivocally condemned, whatever their source. And certainly they can have no place whatever in Communist or progressive literature" (*Daily Worker*,

March 24, 1964). The Party's theoretical journal, *Political Affairs*, not only criticized Kichko's book but stressed that it was an expression of antisemitism in the Soviet Union and called on the Soviet authorities to strenuously combat it. In the June 1964 issue of *Political Affairs*, the editors stated:

In our opinion it (*Kichko's book, AJK*) cannot be simply dismissed as an isolated incident, as the result of carelessness or failure to treat the question seriously by those involved. On the contrary, the book's appearance reflects the continued existence of anti-Semitic ideas and influences among individuals within the Soviet Union...In recent years there have been other books and articles containing anti-Semitic references or statements, indicative at the very least of a lack of sensitivity toward the question...What the Kichko book demonstrates, therefore, is the great tenacity of national and racial prejudice and the need to wage relentless ideological war against it, even long after its basic cause has been eliminated within the country. It is, we believe, an unjustified feeling that the fight is over, and consequently an insensitivity to continued expressions of anti-Semitism and a failure to see the need of an open campaign to eradicate every vestige of it, that account for the appearance of such monstrosities as *Judaism Without Embellishment*.

Although expressing the Party leadership's collective position, the length and fervor of the editorial seem related to the fact that the editors of *Political Affairs* at this time, Betty Gannett and Hyman Lumer, were both Jewish. In a pamphlet issued soon after, "*Soviet Anti-Semitism: A Cold-War Myth*" (1964, Lumer, who was also the Party's national education director, developed this position. He noted the "veritable storm of expressions of outrage and condemnation" the Kichko book had provoked among Jews and that it had fueled a national and international campaign against official "Soviet anti-Semitism." He also noted that criticism of the book had been expressed by the Communist parties of Canada, England, France, Italy and other countries including the Soviet Union, where by April "all available copies had been confiscated and destroyed." In explaining the continued existence of antisemitism among Soviet people Lumer added to the effects of Czarism and Nazi occupation "the incorporation into the Soviet Union of large populations which had previously not lived under socialism" and "Stalin's assault...on Jews and Jewish institutions." Particularly significant was the following footnote:

As this pamphlet goes to press, we have before us a copy of a recently issued pamphlet by F. Mayatsky, entitled *Contemporary Judaism and Zionism* and published

by the State Publishing House in Kishinev. Its contents duplicate in large measure the crude anti-Semitism of the Kichko book. The fact that it could appear *after* the furore provoked by the latter gives renewed emphasis to the gravity of the problem and to the continued absence of a serious ideological campaign against such continuing manifestations of anti-Semitism.

**R**ecognition of the existence of antisemitism among Soviet individuals, including writers and editors, while denying that these was official "Soviet antisemitism" and calling for governmental action against individual expressions of antisemitism characterized the Party's approach for the next two years. Continuing dissatisfaction among Jewish Party members with the inaction of authorities against expressions of antisemitism in the increasing number of Soviet anti-Zionist publications and the minimal development of Soviet Jewish cultural activities led the activists in the Party's Jewish Commission, the *Freiheit* and *Jewish Life* to press the Party leadership to communicate their concerns to the Soviet Party. Gus Hall consented to do so in the course of his visit to the Soviet Union in December 1966. Reflecting the Soviet Party's response to this communication, upon Hall's return he wrote the following in *Political Affairs* (January 1967):

A few words about...the so-called "problem of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union"...I want to react to the slanderous campaign against the Soviet Union. This is purely a criminal fraud on the world. It is clearly a part of the cold-war conspiracy...Let me say that there is no anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. I did not expect any and I did not see any....

Hall spent two pages justifying this position. In order to avoid contradicting it, he revised his 1963 criticism of the "anti-Semitic character" of the Kichko book: "When some anti-religious material appeared a couple of years ago in the Soviet Union—material that could have been interpreted as anti-Semitic—it was withdrawn." He concluded that those who say that there is a "problem of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union" are "instrument(s) of an anti-socialist, anti-Soviet campaign." From this time on the Party line of the previous decade was reversed and the denial that there was any antisemitism in the Soviet Union, non-governmental or governmental, became one of the tests of political loyalty for members of the CPUSA. This mistaken policy undermined the longstanding support of the CPUSA by Jews in and out of the Party. It was soon further undermined by the Party's correct policy on Israel after the Six-Day War of June 1967 which it implemented incorrectly, increasingly making the ideology of Zionism rather than the policies of the

Israeli ruling class the issue.

The Party's earlier sound focus on socioeconomic rather than ideological factors in dealing with Israel is exemplified by four 1966 articles in *The Worker* by Lumer in which he analyzed Israel's political, economic and social situation without once mentioning Zionism. These articles, based on a visit to Israel as well as published material, were re-printed in the pamphlet *Which Way Israel* (July 1966). One year later, directly after the Six Day War of June 5-11, Lumer wrote a *Political Affairs* article and an expanded version of it as a 20-page pamphlet (*The Middle East Crisis*, July 1967) which again did not so much as mention Zionism, although they discussed in detail the "aggressive policy" which led the government of Israel to launch a "pre-emptive war." Lumer did not blame the war on Zionism nor on Israel but on "the Israeli ruling class" (pp. 4, 18).

**S**ince the Party stood almost alone in the U.S. in denying that the Six Day War was a defensive war on the part of Israel against Arab aggression, it soundly coupled this position with an expression of understanding of Jewish concern for the welfare and security of Israel. Lumer began his article and pamphlet with such a statement and quoted Gus Hall's excellent formulation in *The Worker* of June 11, 1967:

The existence of the State of Israel is of importance not only for the people living within its borders. It has deep meaning for the entire world but above all for the Jewish people throughout the world. Its existence is related to a history of generations of special oppression. It is related to a world-wide struggle against anti-Semitism. The threat of Israel's extermination is linked to the extermination of six million Jews by the fascists of Germany. Therefore one can well understand the concern, the deep anxiety of the Jewish communities throughout the world. The continued existence of the State of Israel must be the concern of all peoples.

This combination of criticism of the policies of the Israeli ruling class and support for Israel as well as understanding of the Jewish people's concern for Israel might well have retained the allegiance of most Jewish Party members and the respect of most of its Jewish supporters. However, the editors of the *Freiheit* and *Jewish Affairs* insisted that the Six Day War was a "defensive war." After months of discussion with the Party leadership, *Freiheit* editor Paul Novick was "suspended" from membership. He was expelled the following year. Soon nearly all the staff of the two publications and most of their readers who had not already done so left the Party. Reflecting the new situation, *Jewish Life* changed its name to *Jewish Currents* and its status to that of an "independent" magazine. □

*To be continued*

## Israel and U.S. Policy *continued from p. 9*

this policy results from the power of the pro-Israel lobby in the U.S. The other argument is that disagreement between friends is the price we have to pay to assure that this special relationship continues because of the critical role that Israel plays in the geopolitics of the Middle East. But that is a reason that is now beginning to disintegrate. In fact the disintegration process is fairly well advanced, particularly in the aftermath of the Gulf War. For example, the U.S. just signed a 10-year military base agreement with Kuwait to finally station troops and equipment and whatever else they feel like in Kuwait. And agreements not as big but certainly important are being signed with the Saudis and with most of the Gulf states that give the U.S. an alternative military strategic foothold in that region.

So the value of Israel as the one place where we could do this has now been reduced. It hasn't been eliminated—because relative to most of the countries in the Middle East, Israel is a democracy. And that implies a different kind of political stability. The moral argument—that because Israel is a democracy we should side with it in its conflict with the Arab States—is simply propaganda. But one of the lessons that the geopolitical planners at the Pentagon and the State Department have learned over the past ten years is that regimes that don't have any social base of support are not the most reliable allies. We certainly found that out in 1979 and 1980 with the overthrow of the Shah. That was a regime in which we'd invested billion of dollars and those billions of dollars went down the drain. The reason is that the regime didn't have the political base to suppress popular outrage indefinitely.

The lesson for the Pentagon is that it is preferable to have a government to work with that doesn't depend on mass repression to maintain itself in power. Because when such a government is overthrown there might not be much of an inclination for the new government to honor commitments made by its predecessor. (We see that happening in the Philippines now, and that's with a relatively cooperative government; the Aquino administration certainly wants to keep the bases there, and yet the Senate, which is popularly elected, is about to kick the bases out). However, support for relatively democratic regimes is not an absolute principle, it's a matter of weighing it against other considerations.

So Israel's value as a strategic ally in the Cold War has diminished significantly for two reasons: first is the shift away from U.S.-Soviet confrontation, second is the emergence of improved, if not new, allies in the region. We're now seeing an administration willing for the first time to

raise the possibility of using the muscle it has with regard to Israel in order to push the Israeli government to be a little more compliant with U.S. policy in the region. The Bush administration and even the Reagan administration in the last two or three years of its tenure, has made it about as clear as it possibly can what it would like to see happen in Israel. And part of the frustration that you hear being expressed by President Bush and Jim Baker is not this nonsense about personal dislike of Shamir but the fact that the Israelis are not getting with the program.

The program is a peace conference in which Israel will agree to withdraw from the Golan Heights, and to turn over most of the West Bank and Gaza to Jordan and Egypt, or some group of Palestinians that are associated with the Jordanian regime, and thereby reducing the likelihood of war without allowing for the creation of a Palestinian state and thus basically solidifying U.S. dominance in the area. It happens that this is also essentially the program of the Labor Party in Israel, insofar as the Labor Party can be said to have a single program, since the party is falling apart. In 1988, when elections were held in Israel, the Reagan administration did everything but issue bumper stickers for the Labor Party. And they made it about as clear as they could that they wanted to see a Labor victory, because Labor's program was so similar to the U.S. program. That didn't happen so it took the next best alternative, which was the National Unity government. But what the administration in now faced with is a government that has its own ideological imperatives, its own political agenda, which does not match very well with the U.S. administration's agenda. And that's the essence of the conflict that we're seeing now over the loan guarantees.

The Israeli government over the past few years has spent a great deal of time and money to insure that a significant number of Soviet Jews would emigrate to Israel. They lobbied the Reagan administration fiercely to reduce the number of Soviet Jews permitted to emigrate to the U.S. And they also are still working very hard to establish direct flights from the Soviet Union to Israel, so that there's no chance that the Soviet Jews can get away from them. It used to be that Soviet Jews who wanted to emigrate would get an invitation from Israel, they would go and get an exit visa from the Soviet government and they would then get on a plane and fly to Vienna. When they got to Vienna, they would be met with representatives of various Jewish assistance organizations and they would say, "Well, we don't really want to go to Israel, we want to go to the U.S." They'd be told, "Fine, you're political refugees from the Soviet Union with a well founded fear of persecution and discrimination," because

basically anybody leaving the Soviet Union was considered to be a political refugee, the Jews in particular, so there was no limit to the number of political refugees from the Soviet Union that were allowed into the U.S. And so they would drop out; that's what they were called, "drop-outs." The drop-out rate in 1988, when the Soviet emigration was really beginning to hit its stride, was in excess of 90%. More than 90% of the Soviet Jews who were emigrating, were "changing their minds" in Vienna. It's evident that they never had any intention of going to Israel in the first place. But the whole thing was really crazy, because the Soviets had a policy of allowing emigration only for the purpose of family reunification. So there was this fiction that communications coming from Israel were really being sent by long-lost family members. The Israelis were very unhappy with the number of Soviet Jews coming to the U.S. from Vienna so they, together with some American Jewish organizations, lobbied the U.S. administration to stop permitting this to happen.

One of the arguments they used—a perfectly legitimate argument—is that the Soviet Union has changed its policies with respect to emigration and it's ludicrous to say that anybody leaving the Soviet Union is automatically a political refugee, which is defined legally as someone who suffers a well-founded fear of persecution. So the Israelis argued that they're not political refugees anymore, the U.S. doesn't need to make any kind of special provisions to allow them to come here. And this was accompanied by other arguments, like, "Well, we have a country to take care of them, and Jews really belong in Israel anyway," and all kind of wild stuff. So that was the lobbying that was undertaken by Israel and Jewish groups to close the door of the U.S. It's mind-boggling. It's amazing to me that significant segments of the Jewish community concluded that it was appropriate for them to lobby to close the doors to Jews who wanted to come here. Nevertheless, that's what a number of American Jewish organizations did. Israel, of course, was still concerned about this drop-out phenomenon. So they said, "Well, we'll put them on a plane in Moscow and they're not going to stop until they get to Israel. That'll take care of the problem."

Until the mid-1980s and the changes in the Soviet Union, there was evolving domestic pressure in Israel to reach some kind of accommodation in terms of the Occupation. The argument that was made by significant circles in the Labor Party and the liberal-left wing of the Zionist movement is this: we really only have three choices. We can continue the Occupation, but the world will not stand for this indefinitely, the Palestinians won't

stand for it indefinitely, it's corrupting our society, it's a cancer that will only continue to grow. If, on the other hand, we annex the territories, then we're faced with another bad situation, because the demographics are such that within 25 years there will be more Palestinians than Jews in this enlarged Israel, and therefore Israel will cease to be a Jewish state. Or we will have to deny political rights to the Palestinians in which case it will be just like South Africa, a minority denying political rights to the majority. And so the liberal Zionists opted for the third alternative, which is to end the Occupation.

There were weaknesses in this argument which showed up when the Soviet Jews began to emigrate to Israel in greater numbers. The main weakness was, as Shamir pointed out, "We've got all these Jews coming. That means that the demographic problem doesn't exist anymore." Now, there's a big debate going on about to what extent the demographic argument is invalidated by the Soviet immigration. Some people argue that it postpones the point at which the Palestinians become a majority of about 15 years. But that undercuts the so-called pragmatic argument. If you are saying, "We should end the Occupation because otherwise they're going to outnumber us," then there are a lot more solutions than ending the Occupation. One solution is a big immigration of Jews. Another is taking measures to reduce the Palestinian population, like deporting them. So it became clear—and this has contributed to the polarization in Israel—that you had to make an argument for or against the Occupation, especially against, on a basis that addresses the fundamental problem. The fundamental problem is that history tells us that the prospects of maintaining colonial rule over another people indefinitely are not very good. Sooner or later the price that is paid becomes too great. And the intifada was one of the major means that the Palestinians used to raise that price.

The intifada has two goals. The first goal is to increase the price of the Occupation for Israeli society. The second goal, largely overlooked but in my view the more significant, is to begin to create the institutions of a Palestinian state. If you talk to Palestinians from the territories, they tend to stress that. So the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees is the nucleus of the Ministry of Health of a Palestinian state. And the union of Palestinian agricultural workers is the frame work for the Department of Agriculture. And the entire system of self-education that has been developed in the course of the school closings is the beginning of the educational apparatus of a Palestinian state.

When I went to visit with the leadership of the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees in 1988, they

spent a tremendous amount of time dealing with injuries that result from human rights violations under the Occupation. "Beatings medicine" is becoming a specialty for Palestinian physicians. But at the same time the Union is also undertaking a big anti-smoking campaign. That's the kind of program that is more typical of a state than a liberation struggle.

In the first two years of the intifada, there was really a feeling that the solution was close. I was there right after the Palestinian Declaration of Independence was promulgated, and the feeling was, "We have now explicitly said that we recognize Israel's right to exist, we have now made our peace initiative, the international community is on our side, and it's only a matter of time before negotiations begin to end the Occupation." I don't think that perspective is there now, and the Palestinians are facing some very difficult choices in terms of the current peace process. Because, as I said earlier, the relationship between the Palestinians and the Arab states is a complicated one and they're going through some difficult times right now. The Syrian Government may be—in my view, probably is—prepared to reach a Camp David type of agreement with Israel if they can get what they want, which is the Golan Heights. Egypt, of course, made its agreement with Israel a long time ago. Jordan is questionable but there is a real danger of the Palestinians being isolated in the Arab world and left out in a similar way or more drastically than they were in the Camp David accords.

They have to decide whether or not to participate in this peace conference. And that's going to be a very difficult decision for them to make. Because the Israeli government is doing its absolute best to insure that the Palestinians decide not to attend by imposing provocative conditions....

I would recommend that the Palestinians bite the bullet and accept all these crazy conditions. The conditions don't really matter anyway, because the Palestinians are not going to accept an agreement that does not include an end to the Occupation, that does not include an independent Palestinian state, that does not include some accommodations on Jerusalem. Everyone knows that no matter who the Palestinian delegation is, the PLO is the representative of the Palestinian people. And whoever goes to the conference on behalf of the Palestinians cannot deliver the Palestinian people without the agreement and support of the PLO.

I think that the situation in Israel is extremely tense, that the Bush administration—and it pains me deeply to say this—is basically doing the right thing. It's true that as a Middle East peace activist, I would say that the Bush

administration's position is unsatisfactory on several counts. Its failure to endorse the Palestinian right to self-determination is the biggest problem. And without that kind of statement, or an indication that they would be willing to accept a Palestinian state, the U.S. is not acting as a neutral facilitator of a peace agreement. The unwillingness to resume the U.S.-P.L.O. dialogue is another serious weakness. You can't be a neutral facilitator if you are not talking to one of the parties. But the fact is that for the first time a U.S. administration has publicly stated that it is willing to use the economic leverage that the U.S. has in order to push the Israelis to take certain kinds of decisions, particularly freezing the settlements and accepting the principle of exchanging land for peace. And no matter how much it may stick in our craws, it would be mistaken for us not to say, "Good for you, Mr. President, keep it up, do more." It's really a strange position to be in, because this administration is not one we're used to supporting. But the notion of a President of the United States saying up front and before it happens that he is willing to use his veto to deny economic aid to Israel unless it takes certain positions is mind-boggling.

There have been a number of explanations advanced as to why the U.S. has failed to exercise in the past its economic leverage to influence Israeli policy. The fact is that the pro-Israel lobby in the U.S. is powerful, one of the most powerful foreign-policy lobbies. But to think that it's as powerful as, for example, the National Association of Manufacturers is a pretty distorted view of how things work in Washington. But having gone back and looked at some of these other issues, I think anyone who really investigates this situation has to come to the conclusion that if there were no pro-Israel lobby in Washington, U.S. policy in the Middle East would not be very much different than it's been for the last forty years. The Cold War still existed regardless of the presence or absence of the lobby. U.S. economic interests still existed. And the fact is that when the U.S. administration has really been willing to go to the mat on Middle East issues, it has won. The paradigm for that was in the 1982 AWACS sale, and AIPAC, the pro-Israel lobby, lost. And they were very cautious about challenging the administration after that. Not that it never happened and not that they never won after that, but it demonstrated that it would take a real life-and-death struggle to beat the administration when it wanted to push something. And that's one of the reasons that for the past couple of weeks AIPAC and American Jewish organizations in general have said that they are extremely anxious to work out a compromise with the President, that they really don't want to fight the administration on this issue, and they are

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