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EDITORIALSAPOLOGISTS FOR THE MEIR REGIME'S POLICIES

On November 23 some hundreds of New Yorkers demonstrated before the Israeli UN Mission. Organized by the Committee for a Just Peace in the Middle East, the demonstration called for a peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict on the basis of full acceptance by both sides of the UN Security Council resolution of November 1967. It called in particular for commitment by the Israeli government to withdraw from the occupied territories as an indispensable condition for a settlement. In addition, it protested the criminal activities of the fascist Jewish Defense League.

A counter-demonstration was staged by the JDL and after the demonstration the JDL thugs succeeded in attacking and beating up a number of individual demonstrators in true gangster fashion.

The demonstration was widely greeted as a courageous initiative in calling to public attention the fact that it is the Israeli ruling circles which are obstructing a peaceful settlement through their persistent refusal to accept withdrawal. But what was the reaction of the Morning Freiheit to this initiative? Not only did it flatly refuse to support the demonstration in any way, but it afterwards published an editorial condemning it.

On what grounds was the action condemned? First, on the grounds that the demonstration was directed against the Jewish Defense League which is strictly an American phenomenon; hence there was no reason to demonstrate before the Israeli UN Mission.

To begin with, the main target of the demonstration was not the JDL but the question of Middle East peace and the responsibility of the Israeli government for ensuring it. But this question could not be raised without coming to grips with the JDL as the most deadly enemy of peace. Moreover, the idea that the JDL has nothing to do with Israel is totally wrong.

The JDL has its roots in and direct ties with similar ultra-Right, fascist groupings in Israel. Kahane himself commutes between the United States and Israel, where he is also engaged in organizing the JDL with at least the tacit approval of the Israeli authorities. Uzi Burstein writes in Zo Haderekh, organ of the Communist Party of Israel:

"The new world"--the rabbi Meir Kahane--has come to Israel, where during the last year a number of evident fascist organizations have sprung up, like mushrooms after rain. The arrival of the rabbi Kahane from the USA had been prepared by the establishment of organizations of the so-called "Jewish Defense League" in Israel and also by the establishment of additional fascist organizations, such as DB (Dikui-Bogdim, Hebrew for "suppression of traitors"). These organizations are mainly composed of

members of Betar (youth organization of the extreme Right Herut Party) and of Herut. Their heroes are Menahem Begin and Ezer Weizman.

These organizations have set themselves the aim of creating a regime of terror and fear in Israel; to attack public meetings, demonstrations, clubs of any party or organization which opposes occupation and struggles for peace. The members of the fascist organizations are busy training in judo, karate and methods of violence, wrapping their activities in a veil of mysticism of underground work, though the authorities and police do not impede their activities; on the contrary, they draw encouragement from the permissive attitude of police and the judicial bodies in this country, as happened at the trial against members of Betar who had attacked the offices of the Communist Party of Israel, and as happens whenever they attack meetings and demonstrations of fighters for peace. (October 20, 1971.)

In the face of all this, should we not protest to the Israeli government against its toleration and encouragement, hand in hand with the U.S. ruling circles, of the fascist gangsterism and warmongering of the Kahanes and their followers? Should we not raise our voices against the menace to peace in the Middle East and to world peace created by the growth of these fascist elements? The Morning Freiheit, it is clear, thinks we should remain silent.

The editorial also argues that the JDL is isolated and that to picket the Israeli Mission is gratuitously to give it allies. But is the JDL really isolated? Are the leading Jewish organizations and spokesmen seriously conducting a struggle to put this gang out of business and to have these hoodlums brought to book for their crimes? On the contrary, despite verbal condemnations, many of the "respectable" Zionist forces are quietly tolerating and even supporting the JDL. In fact, Kahane was permitted to address the recently-held convention of the Zionist Organization of America. And even after the latest and worst outrage--the murder committed in the bombing of the Hurok offices in New York--this situation remains basically unchanged.

But more important, this is in reality an argument against picketing the Israeli Mission for any reason whatever, on the grounds that it will antagonize people and isolate the picketers. And this is precisely what the editorial does maintain.

Thus it objects to the demonstration on the grounds that it raised the question of Israeli aggression, thereby closing the door to mobilizing broad masses of the Jewish people for peace based on the UN resolution. We should organize, says the editorial, not a few hundred but truly large masses. And for what purpose? To "struggle against chauvinism and annexation and for the existence of Israel." Here the editorial begins to expose the real reasons for its opposition.

The demonstration posed not vague generalities about annexation but a very specific demand: that the Israeli government commit itself to withdrawal from the occupied territories--all of them. To this demand the Meir regime is vehemently opposed--and so is the Morning Freiheit. Instead, they speak of "withdrawal to secure and recognized borders." This is what the Morning Freiheit means when it speaks of "supporting the UN resolution." But what this really means is no advance commitment to withdrawal, and hence no genuine acceptance of the resolution, which places such a commitment as a necessary preliminary to the negotiation of secure and recognized borders.

In short, the Morning Freiheit objects to the demonstration because it objects to its purpose, because it does not hold the Israeli rulers responsible for the present impasse and seeks instead to place the blame on the Arab states. Hence the chauvinist query in the editorial: Why demonstrate only at the Israeli Mission? Why not also at the missions of Iraq, Sudan and Syria--states where Jews and Communists are persecuted?

But this is entirely beside the point. When President Nimeiry executed Sudanese Communists there were protests and demonstrations against these acts. Here, however, we are concerned with protesting the aggressive, annexationist policies of the Israeli government, for which none of these other countries bears the slightest responsibility. The editorial, on the contrary, advises: Leave Israel alone. Go picket the Arabs. They are the criminals. This is the voice of rank apologists for Israeli aggression. It is the voice of anti-Arab chauvinism.

Finally, the editorial speaks of "not repeating the mistakes of 1929." In that year, it may be recalled, there took place a series of armed attacks by Arabs on Jewish settlements in Palestine, in which a considerable number of Jews were killed or injured. The Communist Party took the position that, regrettable as these attacks were, the real source of the problem was the Zionist policy of buying up lands for Jewish settlements and evicting the Arab peasants from these lands--of seeking to build a Jewish state at the expense of the Arabs in Palestine.

In this position the Party was almost alone, and Jewish Communists and progressives who fought for it were subjected to severe ostracism and attack within the Jewish community. But the Party never repudiated its basic position, although it was recognized that tactical errors of sectarianism and rigidity in dealing with the situation were committed and should be avoided in the future.

The Morning Freiheit, however, wants to draw lessons of quite different character, namely, that we should not publicly take positions which the masses of the people overwhelmingly reject at the given moment. Thus, it is argued, we should not brand the Israeli ruling circles as aggressors, since no one will buy this and we will only end by isolating ourselves and forfeiting all opportunity of influencing others. In other words, our stand on questions of principle should

be determined by tactical considerations. But this is the very essence of opportunism, of capitulation to the enemy. It leads not to combatting the poisonous influences of reactionary Jewish nationalism and Zionism among the Jewish masses, but to oneself succumbing more and more to these influences.

This is precisely what has happened in the case of the Morning Freiheit. The extent to which this process has gone is demonstrated by this editorial, which disgracefully attacks the very forces that do conduct a struggle.

There is, we believe, an important lesson to be learned from recent events: that if the existence of the Morning Freiheit is to be preserved it will have to abandon its present policies on these and related questions. In Israel the renegade Mikunis-Sneh group hoped to buy "respectability" among the Jewish masses by going in the direction of Jewish nationalism; today it is disintegrating as an organized body and its mass influence has become negligible. On the other hand the Communist Party of Israel, led by Vilner and Toubi, which heroically stood up virtually alone against the 1967 war, is steadily overcoming its isolation and growing in influence and numbers.

The road from demonstrations of a few hundred to actions by tens and hundreds of thousands lies in the course taken by the demonstrators, not in the opportunist capitulation and apologetics advocated by the editorial.

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WHY THEY LEFT POLAND

By Hyman Lumer

In recent months an organization calling itself Committee for Jews of Poland has been circulating widely by mail a book entitled The End of a Thousand Years: The Recent Exodus of the Jews from Poland. Compiled and edited by Itche Goldberg and Yuri Suhl, it contains a preface and a number of articles and statements by Jews who had left Poland and by groups in France and the United States. The book was sent out with a letter asking the recipient to order additional copies for friends and organizations and to contribute to a fund for assistance to Polish Jews "who were compelled to leave Poland."

The preface charges that there took place in Poland an anti-Semitic campaign triggered by Gomulka himself. It states: "Daily, the press, radio and television attacked the Jews of Poland as 'Zionists'--traitors and enemies of Poland. Simultaneously, Jews were thrown out of the Communist Party and dismissed from their jobs under the pretext that they were 'Zionists.'" But "Zionists" was only a term which really meant Jews. "There were no Zionists, or extremely few, in Poland in 1967-68."

The preface goes on to say: "We also believe that what we witness today is a betrayal of the principles of socialism by the forces that are supposed to be its most zealous guardians. The events of late in Gdansk and Szczecin substantiate our suspicion that the anti-Semitic campaign in Poland was used to deflect attention of the people from serious economic problems which have since been exposed.... Maybe some day Poland will cleanse itself and will return to socialism."

We cannot, within the confines of this article, deal with all these allegations. That there took place in Poland in 1967-68 a series of anti-Semitic acts in which Jews were fired from their jobs or demoted, or expelled from the Polish United Workers Party, for no other reason than that they were Jews cannot be denied. In fact, this was acknowledged by the leadership of the PUPW itself. However, the contention that these occurrences represented an official policy of anti-Semitism is false, as we have sought to show in the pamphlet What Happened in Poland (New Outlook Publishers, New York, 1969). Furthermore, while they led considerable numbers of Jews to leave Poland, by no means all who left did so because of anti-Semitism. Not a few left because they saw better opportunities for economic advance in capitalist countries (not, however, in Israel), and there were a substantial number who left for political reasons. And they left not because they were compelled to go, in the sense that they had no other alternative, but because they chose to go. We shall show further that political and ideological considerations were predominant in a number of specific cases, including some of the writers in this book.

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It is important to recall that the anti-Zionist campaign developed mainly after the events of March 1968, when a wave of student demonstrations took place. Ostensibly these were spontaneous actions seeking greater freedom of expression and redress of accumulated dissatisfactions and grievances among the students. But in reality they constituted a well-organized and well-heeled action led by anti-socialist and revisionist elements, the Polish counterparts of those involved in the counter-revolutionary efforts in Czechoslovakia that same year. As in Czechoslovakia, in the name of "socialism with a human face," they swiftly came forward with slogans of counter-revolution, among them: "Down with the Polish United Workers Party. To arms. Down with communism. Let's throw off the Moscow yoke. Down with the USSR. Down with Gomulka's rule."

Against these actions the Party and the government moved swiftly and energetically. A number of faculty members and others involved were removed from their posts. Student ringleaders were expelled from the universities. There were expulsions from the Party and in a number of cases there were criminal prosecutions.

A number of those involved were Jews, both students and faculty members. The Goldbergs, Suhls and others maintain that this is not so, that alleged Jewish participation was fabricated in order to give the whole affair a "Zionist" coloration. But consider, by way of illustration, the case of the well-known sociologist,

Dr. Zygmunt Bauman, who was among those dismissed from the Warsaw University faculty after the March events. Soon thereafter he departed for Israel which, on arrival, he proclaimed as his true homeland. Bauman, it is contended, was a victim of unfounded, anti-Semitic charges of "revisionism" and "Zionism." But he himself has stated otherwise.

In an interview with the Israeli newspaper Haaretz (reported by Shulamit Har'even, "Meetings With New Immigrants," Midstream, April 1969), he was asked why he and his family had left Poland. He replied: "We came to realize that our participation in the Polish liberalization movement and the creation of the arts and science cell within that movement, were harmful." He added that "if I had foreseen the faintest prospect that liberalization would triumph in Poland, I wouldn't have abandoned the struggle there." He acknowledged the kinship of the "liberalization" movement in Poland with that in Czechoslovakia. And nowhere in the interview does he refer to himself as a victim of anti-Semitism.

A similar admission, in a more oblique fashion, was made by the late Juliusz Katz-Suchy, who left Poland to take an academic post in Denmark. In an interview with the newspaper Jyllands-Posten he said with regard to his dismissal from Warsaw University: "The fact that I am a Jew is only part of the reason. The main reason was presumably my political attitude." He added: "I opposed certain internal policies and fought for freer discussion." And further: "My expression of these views led to libelous and slanderous campaigns against me after March 1968. This technique was used against other Jewish civil servants, too.... But campaigns of libel and slander have been used against non-Jews as well...." (Reported in the New York Times, January 18, 1970.)

In contrast to these there is the case of the economist, Dr. Włodzimierz Brus, who was also dismissed from his position in Warsaw University. He elected, however, to remain in Poland, and is employed as an economist in the Department of Urban Planning. Recently he was invited to give a series of lectures at a number of universities in Italy. He was permitted to go without hindrance, completed his tour and returned to Poland.

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What the foregoing indicates is that people like Bauman and Katz-Suchy were in fact revisionists, who left the country primarily because of their political and ideological opposition to the existing regime. Similar reasons motivated those on the editorial staff of Folks-Shtimme who left.

Thus, the article by Shulamit Har'even cited above reports also an interview in Al Hamishmar with an individual identified as "Mr. G., a journalist from Poland." He is further described as follows:

He is a famous Yiddish journalist--well-known, especially for the orthodox Communist Party attitudes he had maintained in regard to Israel. In a matter of days, G's life had changed, when he left his native country.... He asks that his name be withheld for the time being.

He was asked: "When did it first occur to you that you might end up in Israel?" He replied:

It became a possibility during the Six-Day War. Just before the war broke out, I sensed that the public was being prepared for the outright destruction of Israel.... Suddenly I realized that they were trying to convince me that Israel could be annihilated--and should be. After the Six-Day War, I found myself in a state of conflict. I realized that they were making a scapegoat of us and that their Communism was a hoax. At this point I began to make every effort to be fired from the job on the paper on which I worked. I spoke openly. Nothing worked. It had been decreed that my paper was not to be closed, apparently to demonstrate that Jewish culture survives in Poland.

In the end, said Mr. G., he had to quit. He displayed a document saying: "Citizen G. is released from his job at the newspaper at his own request." Mr. G.'s reply, we believe, speaks for itself. Others on the staff similarly resigned; no one was dismissed.

Those whose articles appear in the book tell hair-raising stories of persecution, including the imposition of extreme censorship measures. And they offer no explanation other than "anti-Zionism" and "anti-Semitism." But at the same time some of them make it clear where they stand both on the March 1968 events and on the Middle East.

For example, there is Michael Mirski, former member of the Presidium of the Cultural and Communal Council of the Jews in Poland, who writes: "The attitude of the Polish writers toward the banning of Mickiewicz's play Dziady and the action of the Polish student body in March 1968--the latter carried out in a manner appropriate to youth--were socialist and patriotic manifestations." And with regard to the government's reaction he adds: "What actually were the ruling circles in Poland aiming at? Like gamblers venturing all on one card, their purpose was to prevent the workers from supporting the movement for socialist renewal represented by student youth and intellectuals."

This is echoed by Meier Melman, formerly of the Jewish State Theater in Poland and husband of Ida Kaminska, who writes:

That is really a separate chapter, "revisionism"--a trend which began in Poland in 1956 and was choked off. The healthy desire to renovate the dogmatic approach to socialism, to create a synthesis of socialism and humanism, found expression in 1968 in the Czechoslovak Republic. Here, too, apparently, it was the fault of the "Zionists," a sort of mystical fusion of Zionism and revisionism.

In the eyes of these individuals, clearly, it is the revisionist, anti-socialist elements which emerged both in Poland and in Czechoslovakia which are the "healthy" forces, the forces of "social renewal." And it is those who defended socialism against the efforts to undermine and destroy it who are the "dogmatists," the "bureaucrats," the "unhealthy" elements.

We do not know to what extent these individuals (and others represented in the book) may have been direct participants in activities culminating in the March 1968 events. But is it not possible that their support of these anti-socialist elements had something to do with the attitude of the government and the Party toward them? And is it not possible that their accounts of injustices visited upon them are colored by their position on these questions?

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Furthermore, within the Jewish circles exemplified by these writers there was overwhelming rejection of the charge that Israel was the aggressor in 1967 and insistence that Israel's war was one of self-defense. Yudel Korman, formerly on the editorial staff of Folks-Shtimme, makes it clear that this was the case in the Presidium of the Council of Polish Jews. And it was no less so in the staffs of Folks-Shtimme and other Yiddish publications.

This stand on the war, no different from that of the Zionists, was a culminating expression of the growth of Jewish nationalism within these circles over a period of many years. Korman seeks to defend the right to this view, saying that "there were diverse views on this question both among Jews and non-Jews in Poland, just as there were varying opinions on the matter among readers of the Morning Freiheit in New York, in the entire international labor movement and in the socialist countries." But, apart from Korman's exaggeration of the extent of these differences, did this confer on Jewish members of the PUWP the right to uphold a position diametrically opposed to that of the Party? Did this not create serious problems with regard to the policies of Jewish publications and organizations? And was it not, therefore, a factor of some weight in shaping Party and government attitudes?

It will not do to say, as the preface does, that there were few Zionists in Poland. There was, plainly, a considerable amount of Jewish nationalism moving in the direction of Zionism, accompanied, moreover, by adherence to revisionist views. The "fusion of Zionism and revisionism" is not so "mystical" as Melman claims; revisionism and bourgeois nationalism have always gone hand in hand.

This is not to deny that serious injustices were committed in the name of "anti-Zionism." But neither can it be denied that we have to do here with people guilty of serious political and ideological departures from Marxism-Leninism, and of supporting or taking part in the anti-socialist activities which erupted in 1968. The writers admit that they were not driven out of Poland but felt "morally compelled" to leave. However, to fail to make clear the political and ideological

motivations underlying their departures and to seek to make the issue merely "anti-Semitism" is to distort facts and conceal reality.

Those former Polish Communists who have left have not sought to align themselves with the Communist parties in the countries to which they have gone. And with good reason: their views are just as much opposed to the positions of these parties as to those of the PUWP. Instead, they tend to play an increasingly anti-Communist role. Significantly, an appeal from a group of former Polish Communists in Israel, reprinted in the book, first appeared in the pages of Frei Yisroel, organ of the renegade Mikunis-Sneh group.

Finally, it is important to note that the ideological position of this grouping is fully shared by Goldberg, Suhl and the other leading figures in the progressive Jewish movement here whose names appear on the covering letter. Witness, for example, the extremely hostile reaction of the Morning Freiheit and Jewish Currents to the action by the Warsaw Pact countries in August 1968--a position which they have never repudiated. Witness, too, their growing role as apologists for the Meir regime in Israel. It is in this guise that they come forward as defenders of their counterparts from Poland.

Goldberg and Suhl speak of "a betrayal of the principles of socialism" and express the hope that maybe some day Poland will "return to genuine socialism." But the facts are that genuine socialism is being built now in Poland and that errors are being corrected. Its betrayers must be sought elsewhere.

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AN AMERICAN DELEGATION VISITS POLISH JEWISH LEADERS

(Reprinted from Folks-Shtimme, December 25, 1971)

The delegation of the U.S. Communist Party to the Sixth Congress of the Polish United Workers Party, held in Warsaw, expressed a desire to meet with the leading members of the Social and Cultural Society of Jews in Poland. The meeting took place at the Jewish Cultural Center on Szibowa Place.

The chairman of the national council of the Society, Edward Raiber, greeted the guests with warm and heartfelt words. These guests were Henry Winston, national chairman of the CPUSA, his wife Fern, and Conrad Komorowski, a member of the editorial staff of the Daily World, organ of the Communist Party.

Henry Winston responded to the warm greetings and suggested that in honor of this, their first meeting, they drink a "Lechaim" ("To life"). The American working-class leader, a Black man, spoke this traditional word, often heard at celebrations, with special feeling. Immediately there was established a warm atmosphere for a comradely and frank conversation.

Familiarizing themselves with the imposing building, the Center of Jewish Culture and Labor, the guests asked for some information about the organizations housed there and about their work. To these questions the secretary of the board, Ruth Gutkowska, replied in detail. Additional information was furnished by the director of the Jewish State Theater, Shimon Shurmiai, and the editor-in-chief of Folks-Shtimme, Shmuel Tenenblatt.

They presented an overall picture of a modest but systematic program of cultural activities. It embraced the work in the people's centers in the cities where there are larger or smaller Jewish communities--reading circles, cultural events, literary evenings, celebrations, study seminars, etc. They emphasized some of the difficulties they encounter in the work.

The guests took notes, marked everything in their notebooks. All facts were recorded, all was of interest and importance to them. They listened with special interest to the information on the activities of the Jewish Historical Institute, of the state-supported Jewish Theater and of Folks-Shtimme. They were pleasantly surprised to learn that the government subsidizes the Jewish cultural and scientific work in Poland with millions of zlotys. The theater alone receives a yearly subsidy of 5 million zlotys; Folks-Shtimme receives a yearly subsidy of 3 million zlotys.

The chairman of the American Communist Party expressed astonishment that these facts are not made public. It is important, he said, that the American masses, and especially the Jewish people, should know about them.

Henry Winston posed many questions. How many Jews were there in Poland prior to the Second World War? How many were saved in the Soviet Union and how many were saved in occupied Poland? How many remained alive after liberation? How many left Poland in recent years and how many Jews were there now in Poland? He was also interested in the circulation of Folks-Shtimme, in the manner of circulation, in its double languages (Yiddish and Polish), in its content. With great satisfaction he and his comrades received the detailed answers of E. Reiber and S. Tenenblatt.

There developed a comradesly exchange of opinions. Conrad Komorowski underlined the fact that the Communist Party of the U.S. and its chairman Henry Winston are deeply interested in the life and problems of the Jewish people in Poland because this has also become an international issue. The visit of the delegation carries with it not only an expression of friendship; it also offers an opportunity to touch on a number of questions that are of interest generally, and specifically to progressive Jewish circles in the United States.

Henry Winston spoke at greater length. He said he was fascinated to learn that all Jewish institutions in Poland are subsidized by the government. This fact is little known in the United States, and should be spread widely. He

quoted Lenin's well-known saying: "Not all that is known to us is known to the masses." For us, he said, it is important that the U.S. masses should know about the government subsidies in Poland. This will have an important influence on American Jewish circles. It will be an important weapon against those who come out against socialism.

He devoted a large portion of his speech to the American Jewish community in general and to the progressive circles in particular. He criticized some progressive Jewish organizations and their leaders for abandoning the class line and becoming influenced by nationalism. "With great astonishment," he said, "I learned here that the Morning Freiheit refused to greet Folks-Shtimme on its 25th anniversary. This is simply inexcusable and is an outcome of the wrong line of the paper on a number of questions of an ideological character."

The speaker further reported that the CPUSA is now carrying on an intensive ideological campaign against false nationalist views. There is a journal devoted to Jewish problems. The Party calls meetings of Jewish workers where light is shed on various ideological and political questions--questions of war and peace, disarmament, racial discrimination and anti-Semitism. There is discussion and enlightenment on the question of the Middle East conflict and a solution based on the UN resolution. In conclusion, Henry Winston expressed satisfaction at meeting with the activists of Jewish cultural work in Warsaw, which helped to explain a number of questions.

S. Tenenblatt expressed confidence that the Sixth Congress of the Polish United Workers Party, and especially the report of the first secretary Edward Gierek, will strengthen the process of renewal in the country and of improving the life of the people. For the small Jewish community there will be improved conditions for cultural and national expression. The speaker proposed that in the progressive American press there be more articles on the life of the Jewish people in Poland.

The three-hour session was closed by E. Reiber, who expressed a hope for closer contacts between the Jewish community in Poland and its American friends.

Translated by Esther Carroll

(Note: The above gathering was also televised and shown on Polish television.)

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IN DEFENSE OF SOCIALISM AND THE SOVIET UNION

(The following are excerpts from a recently published book in Yiddish by S. D. Levine, Chapters of My Life: Memoirs, Knight Printing Co., New York, 1971. The author is well known as a fighter in the progressive Jewish movement since the turn of the century. The translation from the Yiddish is by Lewis M. Moroze.)

I stand Firm in My Belief in Socialism, p. 261.

"These are the times that try men's souls." These are the historic words which the great American patriot and revolutionary, Thomas Paine, directed to the Americans who fought in the Revolutionary War. In his call to struggle he attacked the "summer soldiers," those who wait for rosier times searching in the meantime for an excuse not to serve. "But he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman," concluded Paine.

The road to socialism and the road of a socialist are not strewn with flowers, and on the long road of struggle for socialism more than once the above-mentioned historic words of Thomas Paine came to mind.

Much faltering occurred inside as well as outside our ranks. There were traitors, some hard to believe, and there were the weaklings and the fearful, who at every moment of crisis fled from the ranks. There were mistakes and serious oversights. But the struggle for socialism goes forward and the idea of socialism lives on and spreads out.

The Anti-Soviet Hysteria, p. 262.

In the present era the enemies of socialism have unleashed a hysterical campaign of anti-Sovietism, latching on to the severe sentences meted out by the Soviet Union to 11 persons, 9 of whom were Jews, for the crime of conspiring to seize, by force, an airplane to fly out of the Soviet Union and, ultimately, to reach Israel. Friends of the Soviet Union were among those who protested the death sentence against two of the accused, though the crime of hijacking is today considered in all countries a most serious crime calling for a stiff penalty for the hijackers. The sentences were lowered by a Soviet higher court. The death sentences were commuted to prison terms and the jail terms of others cut. But the enemies of the Soviet Union, among them out-and-out adventurers, exploited the incident and the sentences imposed to unleash a hate campaign against the land of socialism, weaving wild stories of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. It went so far that a Jewish newspaper in New York, The Day, brought itself to write that the plight of the Jews in the Soviet Union is today worse than at any time in history.

That this is a flagrant lie is known to the thousands of tourists who have been to the Soviet Union, including outstanding American personalities. Though there are things that even the friends of the Soviet Union can criticize and though one cannot ignore that there remain anti-Semitic individuals who sometimes come out

with their anti-Semitic views, only the enemies of socialism can state that the government itself spreads anti-Semitism.

Only a few months ago the Soviet government, during the celebration of its 53rd Anniversary, awarded honors to a great number of Jews. Jews are in leading positions in the government, in industry, in institutions of learning, in science, literature and in all fields of life in the Soviet Union.

The Purpose of the Soviet Baiting, p. 263.

The aim of the current Soviet-baiting campaign is not in the interest of the Jewish people but rather serves cold-war purposes to strengthen reaction and the capitalist world, to whom the Soviet Union is a thorn in their side.

Since the Bolshevik revolution, as it was so well revealed in the book by Albert E. Kahn and Michael Sayers, The Great Conspiracy, the capitalist countries, with the U.S. at their head, supported all sorts of "pogromchiks" and bandit armies who undertook to do harm to the socialist country. They suffered defeats but they never gave up. U.S. espionage organizations are seeking to work within the Soviet Union to undermine the regime. The current anti-Soviet hysteria is part of that conspiracy though it masquerades as aid to Jews seeking to go to Israel.

Baiting bacchanalias against the progressive movement and against the Soviet Union break out during great changes in history; sometimes as a result of mistakes made by the Soviet Union but at all times the baiting is a struggle against the ideas of socialism.

One of the most intense anti-Soviet orgies took place in 1939 at the time of the signing of the non-aggression pact between the U.S.S.R. and Germany. The world was then threatened - England and France were conspiring with Germany to unite against the Soviet Union. That this was a fact is daily being substantiated in new documents. Be that as it may, the non-aggression pact unleashed a terrifying bacchanalia against the Soviet Union. This brought a split in the ranks of the friends of the Soviet Union, in the main in the Jewish community. Again the words of Thomas Paine were most pertinent.

Historic Remarks of Reuben Brainin, p. 264.

The sincere idealists remained true to their principles of socialism, remained with the Left movement.

Characteristic is the historic declaration of the prominent writer, the humanist-Zionist, Reuben Brainin, ICOR activist (ICOR was an organization exerting efforts for the colonization of Jews in the Soviet Union - L.M.M.), in which he condemned the orgy of that time;

"It is my earnest wish that you know," he wrote, "that ICOR has my fullest cooperation, and, furthermore, I refuse to knuckle under because of a cunningly-contrived hysteria, whose aim it is to destroy Jewish life today. Under no circumstances must we permit the important work in behalf of the Jewish people to suffer because of the fast-changing diplomatic game of chess which is now going on in Europe. The long-range objective is important and not the momentary maneuvers.

"One thing I know for sure is that my comrades in ICOR and in the Jewish Folk Committee are sufficiently reliable to be entrusted with the highly important work against the fascist forces of darkness. And in this work I remain shoulder to shoulder with you, and I am prepared to throw back all attacks which will be levelled against you.

Olgin's Appeal to Those Who Wavered, p. 264

A second statement, which has meaning for our times, appeared in an article by one of our great leaders, Moissaye Olgin, in the Morning Freiheit on the 27th of August, 1939, entitled, "To My Friends Who are Wavering."

"We are not talking to the enemy. They seek out every opportunity to attack the Left. Let me say a word to our friends, who are today unsure, who hesitate, who are confused, to whom it appears that the very foundations are crumbling from in under their feet. One thing that you can be sure of is that the Soviet Union is a builder and guarantor of social justice, a friend and fighter for the oppressed - socially, nationally, etc. These truths must be your staunchest belief, and not to fall into panic."

These are the golden words of two great Jewish leaders at the time of the bacchanalia of 1939. And this must today be the compass.

Devoted to the Soviet Union, p. 265

I do not believe that the current anti-Soviet hysteria has deeply shaken the staunch progressive Jewish elements but there are those who are carried by the waves of history.

I, the writer of these lines, write this article on my 86th birthday, on January 19, 1971. I have come across many former comrades of the type who said, "I told you so." They wanted to know from me, a long-time socialist, who has been in the movement since 1903, two years after the founding of the Socialist Party by Eugene V. Debs and others, and active up to the present in the movement for socialism, they wanted to know if I still believed in socialism and whether I am still a friend of the Soviet Union. My answer to them is quite positive: "YES!" The answer that Reuben Brainin and Moissaye Olgin gave in the earlier years, I give today.

Of course, the world does not stand still. There arise new situations, new crises. The 20th Congress uncovered violations one could not anticipate. But did that mean that the idea of socialism ought to be abandoned? One mustn't close one's eyes; mistakes must be criticized in a fraternal way. Mistakes should be corrected or avoided but the struggle for socialism must go on.

I refuse to say as Reuben Brainin did, "My days are numbered." I hope and wish to live a good number of years making my contributions in the Marxist movement. Now that I have lived these many years, I am still a staunch believer in socialism, in the teachings of Karl Marx and Lenin: the ideal which strives to put an end to war, disasters and all woes which the profit system has brought.

I stand fast in my devotion to the Soviet Union, the land which built socialism despite the mistakes which we criticize.

I believe that our main enemy is on the Right, reaction in the USA and in the other capitalist countries, the movement in the USA which seeks to return to the era of Joe McCarthy, to persecute the people who champion peace and justice. Here we have to struggle to strengthen our own forces.

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A BLOW TO ANTI-SOVIETEERS

By Lee Carr

Recently the hysteria whipped up about Soviet Jews received a severe setback from an unexpected source. A State Department representative, Richard T. Davies, Deputy Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, stated in testimony before a House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee that "with respect to the majority of Jews, claims that Soviet Jews as a community are living in a state of terror seem to be overdrawn." He stated that "Jews continue to be eminent in the economic, journalistic, scientific, medical and cultural world in numbers far out of proportion to their percentage of the population."

Congressman Benjamin S. Rosenthal, chairman of the subcommittee, was completely taken aback. He could only say that Mr. Davies' remarks did not conform to his understanding.

Davies called upon Sol Polansky, a foreign service officer just returned from a three-year tour of duty in Moscow. Polansky said that he would "stand by Mr. Davies' statement" and added that "based on my own experience and travels in the Soviet Union, it would be an exaggeration to say that Jews lived in a state of terror." He said that synagogues in Moscow and Central Asia were usually full and that many Jews spoke frankly to him about their situation. Davies also strongly condemned "the sick and muddled fanaticism" and "extremist acts" by the Jewish Defense League against Soviet personnel and their families.

At the same time, however, Davies by no means abandoned the State Department's anti-Soviet line. He stated that "all Soviet citizens--not only Jews--suffer from the Soviet government's policy of militant atheism and its refusal to consider migration as a right rather than a rare privilege." He said further that the Administration would endorse a Congressional resolution calling on the Soviet Union to "improve conditions for Soviet Jews and allow them to emigrate." Nevertheless, his testimony was a telling blow against the whole campaign of anti-Soviet slander spearheaded by American Jewish leaders.

We can only speculate on the reasons for this action. Perhaps it was prompted by the impending visit of Nixon to Moscow; perhaps it was felt that the anti-Soviet campaign was being carried to too great extremes; perhaps the terrorism of the JDL was thought to be becoming counterproductive.

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For days afterward the Zionist leaders seemed to be in a state of shock. Only a few weak responses were made. The first detailed response was that of the Soviet Jewish renegade Mikhail Zand, which appeared in the New York Times on December 6 (nearly a month after Davies' testimony). The Times describes Zand as "a noted Soviet Orientalist, who succeeded in emigrating from Moscow to Israel last June after his friends and colleagues in the USA and elsewhere gave worldwide publicity to his case." (Soviet academic spokesmen, it should be noted, maintain that he is neither noted nor an authority in any field.)

His article, entitled "Reply to Mr. Davies," attacks the latter for mentioning the existence of Yiddish publications and dramatic troupes and the availability of matzoth. He says that Davies admits that these are merely tokens, so why bother to mention them. Nowhere in the newspaper reports do we find any such statement attributed to Davies. But in any case, can a Yiddish magazine of the caliber of Sovetish Heimland, with a circulation of 25,000, be considered "token"? Or the existence of a number of Jewish theatrical companies, both professional and amateur--in Vilna, Kaunas, Kishinev, Dvinsk, Birobidjan and other places? Would that the United States, with more than twice the Jewish population of the USSR, had such "tokens"!

Zand also attacks Davies for saying that the situation of Soviet Jews today cannot be compared with that in Hitler Germany. Says Zand: "We Soviet Jews never made this comparison." But the fact is that Zand's promoters in this country have gone to such extremes. Consider, for example, the statement of Will Maslow, a leader of the American Jewish Congress, that the Soviet Union is the "greatest purveyor of anti-Semitism in the world today."

Zand says further, "But though we never make this comparison, we still live with the memories and consequences of those sanguinary years (the holocaust--LC)." The implication appears to be that the possibility exists of a repetition of those horrors. It takes a great deal of hatred of socialism to imply that the Soviet Union, which lost 20,000,000 of its people fighting the Nazis and which moved large numbers of Jews, under enormous difficulties, out of the reach of Hitler's armies, could ever contemplate an anti-Jewish policy.

More could be said about Zand's anti-Soviet effusion, but the above is enough to show its character.

The fact is that the Soviet Union is permitting Jews to emigrate to Israel. The fact is also that a considerable number of those who have gone now wish to return. There are growing cracks in the fabric of lies about Soviet Jews. But Zionism, we may be sure, will never give up its hatred of the Soviet Union, and will seek to maintain anti-Soviet hysteria in one form or another. Those who value world peace and friendship between the United States and the Soviet Union must never let up in their efforts to expose these lies and slanders.

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COMMUNICATIONS

QUO VADIS SCHAPPES AND COMPANY?

By A Reader

The American Jewish community has never experienced and never suffered so much from political confusion and perturbation as it does now. Never in the last five decades has American reaction enjoyed such a harvest of anti-Sovietism in the Jewish community, in which the Right and the so-called devotees of "socialist humanism" join in a frenetic distortion of things Soviet. Each group performs its "duty toward the Jews" in its own way and for its own nebulous objectives. However, one is concerned with the "humanist socialists" not primarily because of their numbers but because of the political fraud which they commit among those who were once true believers in socialism--Soviet socialism.

Some years ago Morris Schappes had established a reputation among progressives as both historian and militant. He wrote history from a working-class point of view, and he stood up against reaction in the field of politics. Today people are amazed at the political depths the man has reached. Many former middle-class radicals have retired to their original dens. In the cultural field they nourish themselves on Kafkaism or worse. But Schappes remains active, and his past reputation enables him to disorient many of his followers, leading them to a melancholy feeling of hopelessness or into the camp of anti-Sovietism from a "socialist" point of view.

How is the Soviet Union presented to the readers of Jewish Currents in recent issues of that magazine? In the June 1971 issue the editor-in-chief presents a special box headed "Leningrad Trial." Here he charges the Soviet Union with responsibility for the crimes committed by these enemies of the Soviet state, on the grounds that the latter denied them "their human rights to emigrate to Israel." This, in Schappes' opinion, justifies their attempted crime. He then proclaims from his political abyss that "the fact that all nine are charged with conducting anti-Soviet propaganda can hardly sit well with U.S. progressives who remember Smith Act prosecutions of Communist leaders for advocacy of subversion." What he forgets is that the basis of their convictions was an attempted hijacking--a crime which in the United States is punishable by death. Does the Nixon-Golda Meir cabal need more?

In the issue of March 1971 Schappes editorially poses "Questions for the Soviet Party Congress." The questions are obviously those of an enemy and not of a friend--not even a friend of the Jews, on whose behalf the questions are supposedly put.

There were about 6,000 delegates at the 24th Congress of the CPSU, representing various nationalities, Jews among them. They were led by their Central Committee--people who represent the revolutionary and socialist conscience of the world proletariat and other creative multitudes. They gathered to forge a program to advance the socialist development of their land, to pave the way to a communist society.

And here appears the political dwarf, confronting the giant which sacrificed twenty million of its best sons and daughters to save itself and humanity from fascism, and impudently demands: "Will a stop be declared to all contemplated trials of those Soviet Jews who have declared their desire to go to Israel? Will there be a public recognition of the right of Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel?"

Schappes knows that this is a provocative question. He knows that if Jews are arrested and tried it is not because they want to emigrate but because they are charged with violations of Soviet law. He knows that some thousands of Soviet Jews had already left for Israel, and that they are continuing to go at the rate of a thousand a month.

A second question in Schappes' editorial is: "Will there be a recognition in Soviet theory and fact that the Jews are a world people and that therefore the Jews of any one country have a legitimate interest in and concern with the Jewish situation and with Jews in every other country, including those in the State of Israel?" Aside from the fact that the idea of a world Jewish people is, to say the least, questionable, Mr. Schappes should know that while Lenin and the Soviet Party recognized nations and peoples, above all they recognized classes and class struggle. He is old enough to remember that in England the Jewish Board of Deputies supported the British appeasement deals with Hitler. They approved the Munich sellout which, of course, included the sellout of the Jews. The Jews in this country, except for the Left and some liberals, did almost nothing to save the Jews from the Nazis. Only the Soviet Union saved Jews. But Schappes speaks of a world Jewish people concerned with Jews and their fate!

A national conference of the Morning Freiheit was held in New York on October 15-17. In the Morning Freiheit of October 21 it is reported that Schappes spoke at that conference and concluded by saying: "May socialism become socialism again. May Leninism become Leninism again." It was not reported whether anyone at the conference answered Schappes' renegade "hope."

THE SOVIET UNION: MY THIRD VISIT

By Samuel Utin

I visited the Soviet Union from February 7 to June 1, 1971. It was my third visit, following on previous trips in 1966 and 1967. I have a large family in the USSR, with close to 60 relatives in Moscow alone. On the earlier trips I traveled around the country, but this time I stayed in Moscow. Since I speak Russian fluently, I was able to talk to many people--family, friends, neighbors and others.

I found a big improvement in living conditions and outlook since my earlier visits. The housing situation was much better. Most had new apartments or were about to get them. All were employed and none had any fear of unemployment. And wages had gone up considerably. There were no lines at the stores; food was plentiful and incomes were adequate.

To take one example among my relatives, a family consisting of husband and wife, a teenage daughter and a mother occupied a five-room apartment (not counting the kitchen) with a large porch. The husband was manager of a drug store with 57 employees; the wife worked in the office of a tobacco factory. Their combined income was 400 rubles a month. Out of this they paid 22 rubles a month in rent and two rubles a month each for electricity and telephone. Their apartment was well furnished and they were able to dress well. On the whole they lived very comfortably.

The same was true generally of my other relatives. In only one case was the monthly income as low as 260 rubles; all others ranged from 300 to 400 rubles. All shared a bright, optimistic outlook. The new five year plan, they said, would bring new, even greater improvements. Everything would be as plentiful as in the United States.

They ridiculed the idea that they were in any way oppressed. Those who were religious believers insisted that they were in no way restricted in the practice of their religion. One relative who had been a member of a synagogue but had moved out of the neighborhood in which it was located proceeded to form a minyan which rented a place for services. This, he said, was not uncommon and no objections were ever raised to it.

There had been a story to the effect that the synagogue had had trouble in obtaining a cantor for the high holidays. They had wanted to bring someone in, it was said, but the government would not allow it, since they did not want to see younger people being involved in religious activities. The story, my relative said, was false. The congregation had brought in a cantor from Riga and had tried to get him to stay permanently, offering him a great deal of money, but he had refused. The problem was not government restriction but a shortage of people who wanted to become cantors.

There was, they told me, a great deal of pro-Israel agitation being conducted, especially among the young and middle-aged groups. Some individuals coming in from the West would organize secret meetings where the praises of Israel were sung and nationalistic feelings were aroused. With one exception, no one I spoke to expressed any desire to go to Israel. They said they would never forget how their lives were saved and by whom. They considered the Soviet Union their only homeland.

One individual did express sympathy for Israel and a desire to go there. The others all opposed him. His wife accused him of talking nonsense. With living conditions so greatly improved over the years and promising to improve much more, and with the real economic security the Soviet Union offered, why should anyone want to go elsewhere, especially to countries where it was not even safe to go out at night.

Those people who did want to leave, I learned, were not working-class people. In some cases they were people with a desire to go into business. Or they were professionals attracted by the hope of big salaries. They had not been really integrated into Soviet life.

None of my family speak Yiddish except the elderly, and there is no desire to learn. There is an interest in Jewish culture, but in translation.

I asked why there were no Jewish schools in Moscow while there were schools for Uzbeks and other nationalities. The Uzbeks, I was told, live in one locality and speak only Uzbek. But the Jewish people are scattered over many localities. It was pointed out that there are 200,000 Georgians in Moscow, but there are no Georgian schools except in the Georgian Republic itself. If the Jewish people had a separate territory there would be a reason to have separate schools.

None of those to whom I spoke had any interest in Yiddish schools and they said they would not send their children to such schools. They were deeply involved in studies and activities in the Russian schools along with children of other nationalities. Why deprive them of this?

In a word, my relatives have found a rich, satisfying life in the socialist Soviet Union. And they want to look toward the future, not toward the past.

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THE JEWISH POOR IN THE UNITED STATES

By John Pittman

The Afro-Americans and Spanish-surnamed Americans who have believed they alone were crowded in the inner cities must now take another look at their surroundings.

The American Jewish Committee says that of the 5.8 million Jews in the United States, from 400,000 to 800,000 are Jewish poor people living in inner city neighborhoods.

About two-thirds of the Jewish poor are thought to be over 65 years old, and recent estimates by the committee put the number in San Francisco as 5,000 at least; Chicago, 26,500; Miami Beach, 30,000; New York, 300,000, and Los Angeles, 11,000.

I would suspect that these figures underestimate the actual extent of poverty among Jewish-Americans. Bertram H. Gold, executive vice-president of the American Jewish Committee, said in releasing the report that the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds is making a study which may supply comprehensive information about the Jewish poor, and that no conclusive figures are yet available.

However, the estimates released by the committee serve several useful purposes.

First, they again expose the lying propaganda of the ultra-Right forces about the wealth and riches of every Jew--the standard canard of the anti-Semites and pogromists. Propaganda of this kind is published and circulated freely throughout the United States.

This particular lie has been exposed and refuted time and time again, and at no time more convincingly than by the late distinguished Communist journalist Mike Gold, whose "Jews Without Money" may still be found in the country's libraries and bookshops.

The committee's report also serves the purpose of giving Jewish organizations a challenging task here in the United States. For instance, should Hadassah's 325,000 members intensify their moral and financial support of the Jewish poor in the U.S. inner cities as the American Jewish Committee suggests? This might prove to be a more satisfying and certainly a more economical pursuit than their costly and unrewarding attempt to persuade Soviet Jews by telephone and cable to emigrate to Israel.

There are no Jewish poor of any age in the Soviet Union, none whatsoever lacking food, clothing and shelter, free health care, cultural activity and, if health permits, employment.

However, poverty is no stranger among the Sephardim who make up 60 percent of the population of Israel. According to official statistics, more than 20 percent of the Israelis live below the poverty line. Surely, if charity prefers to settle abroad instead of at home, the impoverished and exploited Sephardim could use it.

It says a great deal about Rabbi Meir Kahane and his mis-named "Jewish Defense League" therefore, that, instead of addressing their efforts to the alleviation of

Israeli poor, they threatened the Arabs of East Jerusalem and demanded the expulsion from Israel of Black Hebrews.

Incidentally, while New York's approximately 300,000 poor Jewish-Americans must pay thirty-five cents for bus and subway transportation, Moscow's Jewish citizens pay five kopecks for subway fares, four for bus and three for streetcar fares, and will soon ride all without payment of any kind.

This point brings into focus a third purpose served by the American Jewish Committee report. For what is more natural than that the Afro-American and Spanish-speaking American poor should find their ranks increased by the Jewish poor--as well as by the white ethnic poor and the white Appalachian poor also living in the inner cities--in a coalition of the poor demanding cheaper and better transportation, cheaper and better housing, food and services of all kinds?

The fact is that such coalitions already exist in some inner cities of the United States. They have emerged in the course of struggles on neighborhood issues. They are the main components of what the politicians call the 'grass roots' of the urban communities.

The task of strengthening the unity and militancy of existing coalitions, and of forging such coalitions where they do not exist, offers a major challenge to progressive forces during the current electoral activity.

The report of the extent of poverty among Jewish-Americans gives progressives another basis for welding these coalitions of the poor into a national force for the decisive elections of 1972.

(Reprinted from the Daily World, February 5, 1972.)

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EVENTS AND VIEWS

"Accomplished facts" department: The following is an excerpt from an article by Ze'ev Shif, "New Map in the Jordan Valley," appearing in the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz (November 4, 1971):

"Without much publicity, in the past four years important changes have been made in the Jordan Valley which Israel probably did not plan in advance. I am referring to the establishment of a series of closely located settlements along the border area from south of Beit Shean to the Dead Sea and along its western shore to Ein Gedi.

"This is strategically important. The new settlements are being established in vital areas that dominate the approaches to the West Bank. There is more Israeli activity in that strip of land than in any other area in the occupied territories. Politically, the establishment of these settlements is very important. It is, in effect, the annexation of the Jordan Valley by Israel. Inevitably, the situation in the Jordan Valley will appreciably influence negotiations between Israel and Jordan, the Palestinians and the other Arabs.

"What is happening there is typical of the way in which the Jewish community has always brought about its fait accompli in this country. While the Arabs are still in a quandary, about their next move, the Israelis are biting off another piece of territory, because the security situation requires that the geographical vacuum be filled."

As Abba Eban is so fond of saying, "everything is negotiable."

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The Canadian Jewish Outlook (January 1972) reports:

"J. I. Fishbein, editor of the Chicago Sentinel in an editorial of November 4, 1971 calls upon Jews to reject what he calls a "Masada complex" that seems to be 'creeping into Jewish life--Masada, in the sense that it spells suicide for Israel if carried to fruition.'

"The editorial cites as an example of the 'Masada' complex, the address recently delivered at a meeting of the Zionist Organization of Chicago by Jacques Torczyner, past president of the Right-wing ZOA and now chairman of the administrative committee of the American Zionist Federation.

"Torczyner called upon the Jewish people to oppose any effort to reestablish diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Israel.

"Among other things he also opposed the expulsion of Taiwan from the U.N. He also applauded the activities of the Jewish Defense League while demagogically decrying their 'terrorism.'"

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Amos Shapira, writing in Ot, organ of the Israeli Labor Party, has the following to say about activities of the Jewish Defense League in Israel:

"Immediately after they arrived, the members of the League established close ties with the 'Suppression of Traitors' group, which participated in such heroic activities as attempting to silence Dr. Goldmann, removing the play 'Queen of the Bathroom' from the boards by force, defacing walls and buildings with chauvinistic slogans and disrupting lectures and cultural presentations not to their taste....

"The League's hoodlums do not rest content with saving our national honor; they also presume to save us from the Arab mobs, as it were. A group of League members demonstrated before the Nablus Gate of the Old City with the obvious intention of provoking the local Arab inhabitants. In an editorial (December 2, 1971) Ha'aretz commented: 'If brakes are not applied to the initiative of a handful of English-speaking youths who, apparently, do not include a single Israeli citizen, the attempted demonstration may...be the beginning of a dangerous phenomenon which cannot be countenanced by any means.'"