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Herbert Aptheker

Remembering the Holocaust
Alfred J. Kutzik

Robeson, Scholarship and Slander
Lloyd L. Brown

**Jewish Americans Move
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Jon Weisberger

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Editorials

END U.S. SUBSIDY OF INJUSTICE

The Bush administration has finally made public its approach to ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It calls upon "Israelis and Palestinians...(to) take specific and immediate steps to reduce tension between them...and at the same time begin a general discussion of a 'final settlement'." This approach needs to be basically changed if it is to help resolve this urgent problem.

The administration's seemingly evenhanded approach calling upon both the Israeli occupiers and the occupied Palestinians to reduce tensions equates bullets and rocks, school closings and shop closings, blowing up homes and painting slogans on walls, jailing without charges or time limits and flying the Palestinian flag. Further, calling for a "general discussion" by Palestinians, who are publicly committed to negotiations, and Israeli officials, who refuse to negotiate with the Palestinians' chosen negotiators and have beforehand rejected the establishment of a Palestinian state, is an exercise in futility.

What should be the U.S. approach? Our government should demand that Israel end its occupation of territory conquered in 1967 as required by U.N. resolution 242 and agree to an international conference with the PLO, the U.S., the U.S.S.R. and other nations to undertake negotiations without preconditions for a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that would be guaranteed by the major powers.

Since the 3 billion or more dollars of U.S. foreign aid annually given or "loaned" to Israel helps make possible its occupation and other military operations, the U.S. is largely responsible for these operations and is both duty bound and in a position to make and enforce the above demands. Now that Congress has certified that Israel is violating the human rights of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, following its established policy the U.S. government should cut back foreign aid to Israel until the Palestinians' rights are not being violated.

Non-Jewish as well as Jewish citizens should tell their congressional representatives that, after 22 years of humiliating occupation and 16 months of brutal repression of the resistance to this occupation, it is high time that our tax dollars stop subsidizing such injustices. Continued U.S. financial aid should be dependent on Israeli respect for and non-interference with the human rights of Palestinians, including the one this heroic people has placed above life itself: the right to self-determination in a state of their own.

JEWISH AFFAIRS

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NEVER TO FORGET! NEVER TO FORGIVE!

For the past decade a week late in April has been designated "Days of Remembrance" of the Holocaust. Along with commemorating the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis, this week also celebrates Jewish resistance to the Nazi murderers in the Warsaw Ghetto and many other less well-known but equally heroic actions from Auschwitz to Sobibor. At the same time *Jewish Affairs* also commemorates the 10-12 million non-Jewish noncombatant victims of Nazi genocide and the widespread non-Jewish anti-Nazi resistance. We call upon progressives to work to add this neglected dimension to Holocaust observances, monuments, museums, etc. without diminishing the incomparable tragedy of the Jews. See in this issue, "Remembering the Holocaust".

Each April when the Holocaust is commemorated the U.S. public is explicitly and implicitly propagandized with the bourgeois-chauvinist position dear to Zionist ideologues that the Nazi-persecuted Jews of Europe were deserted by their non-Jewish countrymen in their hour of peril. The well-known instance of the rescue from deportation to concentration camps of most of the 7,000 Danish Jews by non-Jewish Danes is presented by bourgeois journalists and scholars as a unique exception to the rule. Everyone knows about the "noble Danes" but few know about the saving of tens of thousands of Polish Jews by non-Jewish Poles individually and through the organization *Zegota*, in the only Nazi-occupied country where helping Jews in any way was punishable by death. Another little-known instance, is the rescue of all 50,000 Bulgarian Jewish citizens from deportation to concentration and death camps by non-Jewish Bulgarians, whom we recall and honor. See in this issue "Bulgarians Honored for Saving Jewish Population from the Nazis".

International Women's Day

Jewish Affairs joins in celebrating the 89th anniversary of International Women's Day on March 8. We note with pride that this world-wide observance originated among predominantly Jewish working women and mothers on New York's East Side who held a demonstration on March 8, 1908 demanding the right to vote. Established as an annual national holiday by the U.S. Socialist Party later that year, it was declared an international holiday at the International Conference of Women Socialists in 1910. As a contribution to observing International Women's Day and Women's History Month, which it has given rise to, this issue contains an article on the remarkable Rose Pastor Stokes, a Jewish founding member of the Communist Party USA.

Letters from Readers

Enclosed is my check for a subscription to *Jewish Affairs*. I recently found your magazine at the public library and I was impressed with the perceptive articles....

I am not a communist nor am I Jewish. I do, however, believe in freedom of press, speech and religion.

Richard J. Smith
Lakewood, CA.

In response to your appeal I am happy to renew my subscription and add a little contribution.

I know it is a great struggle and I wish I could do better but at present it is difficult. So carry on because *Jewish Affairs* is indispensable.

Ray Green
Bronx, N.Y.

Please enroll me as a subscriber to the most rational, informative publication, *Jewish Affairs*.

Enclosed is a check for a two-year subscription.

Thomas L. Vassilaros
Mojave, CA.

Since there is a new policy in the Soviet Union of rehabilitating falsely convicted former leading revolutionaries and many people of different national groups, I've been thinking for some time about the possibility of a request to the proper Soviet officials to take steps to clear the names of the Jewish artists, namely, Itzik Feffer, Solomon Mikhoels, David Bergelson and others.

This will not only bring honor to their names and families, but create a better image of the Soviet Union in the Jewish community in this country.

I would appreciate a reply regarding this matter.

Marsha S. Rifkin
New York, N.Y.

The Soviet Jewish cultural figures executed on trumped-up charges in 1952 were officially rehabilitated in 1956 and their families notified of this by the Soviet government. Since then the works of these writers and poets have been published in the U.S.S.R. in Yiddish and other Soviet languages and have been discussed in literary journals and lectures. For example, our last issue reported that the first session of the recently formed Yiddish cultural club in Kiev "was dedicated to the life and work of the poet, Leib Kvitko who tragically perished on August 12, 1952 together with other writers of Soviet Yiddish literature." The present issue reports on the opening of the Solomon Mikhoels
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Racism and Free Speech

Herbert Aptheker

Again to the fore has come the question of the First Amendment and the application of its freedoms to racists, antisemites and fascists.

Racism is never simply an idea, always it is both idea and practice. We contend that nazis have no right to freedom of speech. What nazism is about is murder, the destruction of civilized community. Basing itself upon anti-Communism and rationalizing itself with the poison of racism, it advocates the concept of *untermenschen* — of people less than people — and from this explicitly concludes that those it fits into such categories have no right to life.

For Hitlerites, the crematoria were vast sewerage projects, means to eliminate scourges and parasites. Hence the "final solution" was logical and was the solution to global ills.

One witnesses again the rise of this cunning insanity — among other numerous examples, the recent electoral gains of nazis in West Berlin, and the election of the nazi-KKK leader, David Duke, to the Louisiana legislature, as a Right-wing Republican momentarily embarrassing to the Reagan-Bush gang. But then, Reagan always was officially endorsed by the KKK. Did not Reagan himself personally urge that bygones be bygones when he spoke in Bitburg, West Germany, and equated Holocaust martyrs with Wehrmacht and SS dead as equally victimized? Extreme Right-wing fanaticism appears from Iran to California.

The ADL Special Report just issued, on the growing menace of nazism (obtainable from the ADL of B'nai Brith 823 United National Plaza, NYC 10017), documents the swelling numbers among them and their criminal acts, from vandalism to arson to murder. Additional important data are available from the Southern Poverty Law Center's Special Report on Hate Crime in 1988 (400 Washington Ave., Montgomery, AL 36104). This is dated February, 1989 and refers to the preceding year as having been marked by racism on "a rampage of violence." It documents the appearance of antisemitic and white supremacist groups on a scale unprecedented for forty years and "obsessed with violence."

The United States, as the home of slavery and institutionalized racism, has a long history of debate about the question of racism and freedom of speech. Before the Civil War there were so-called moderate folks in the North who invited apologists for slavery to visit and to present their defense of the barbarous institution. Leading Abolitionists, like William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass, attacked this as prostituting freedom of speech. They rightly insisted that slavery could not be rationally defended. It

violated every concept of justice, of humanity, of decency; it was in fact legalized violence. To offer its advocates a rostrum was to insult its victims and to desecrate the essence of democracy.

When, after World War I, there was an organized campaign of racism and antisemitism, accompanied by awful violence in which scores of African-American people were murdered, one of its features was the production and release of the film "Birth of a Nation" — a glorification of the Klan. In connection with that film the question of "freedom" again arose. Leaders of the struggle against racism insisted that its advocates were criminals and therefore beyond the pale of the Bill of Rights. Du Bois, for example, fought within the Executive Board of the NAACP for a position condemning racist propaganda and demanding the boycotting of theatres showing the filth. Du Bois got a majority of that Board to approve this position. Massive picket lines surrounded theatres showing "Birth of a Nation" with Dr. Du Bois himself leading the marchers. Some success was achieved; for example, the showing of the film was banned in Boston.

How did the anti-fascist coalition act thirty years later after it crushed nazism? It affirmed, in the Potsdam Treaty (signed by the United States as well as the other Powers), the criminality of fascism and it forbade its teachings. That is, the Allies *prohibited* nazism, its organizations, its symbols and its propaganda. I repeat, the Allied Powers, including the United States, agreed in a treaty to prohibit the propagation of the ideas of the nazis and to illegalize their organization. (In this sense, the seating of nazis in the West Berlin legislature violates international law.)

The United Nations thereafter several times has approved resolutions condemning racism and demanding that its propagation be held as criminal activity. Of course, all Socialist states outlaw it (which does not mean that every inhabitant of every Socialist country is free of it); in addition, several bourgeois-democratic countries have done the same — Holland and Canada are examples.

Such a stance must be fought for by all progressive-minded people in the United States especially now with the evidence earlier cited of the rise of organized racist propaganda and activity. This is the more urgently needed with Bush as President — a man who surrounded himself with nazi advisers in his filthy campaign, itself based upon racist propaganda.

In this connection, fervent congratulations are due the student body of Howard University whose massive protests

Continued on p. 13

Remembering the Holocaust

Alfred J. Kutzik

The annual Days of Remembrance of the Holocaust takes place towards the end of April. This is almost universally understood as remembering the six million Jews killed by the Nazis. But we should remember all the victims of Nazi genocide.

Most people in our country know that the Nazis killed six million Jews, many know that they also killed every Gypsy they could lay their hands on (400,000 to 600,000), but very few know that they killed at least 10 million Slavic non-combatants. The non-Jewish civilian victims of Nazi genocide included about 3 million Ukrainians, 2.5 million Poles, 1.5 million Byelorussians, 1.5 million Yugoslavs and 300,000 Czechs. The Nazis also killed 3 million Soviet, mainly Russian, prisoners-of-war.

For rare documentation by an American scholar, see B. Wytwycky's *The Other Holocaust* (Wash., D.C., The Novak Report, 1980). But he is unaware that the millions he writes about were only the first victims of the Nazis' plan to annihilate the Slavic peoples.

Just as the Nazis extensively carried out what is known as the Wannsee Conference plan for "the final solution of the Jewish question," they began to carry out the more ambitious "Generalplan Ost" (General Plan for the East) for destroying the entire Slavic population. All East European scholars agree with Joseph Buszko that "the crimes committed against the Polish [and other Slavic—A.J.K.] people in the years 1939-45 were a prelude to the implementation of the program of exterminating the nations of Eastern Europe contained in the Generalplan Ost prepare(d) by the Reich Main Security Office (RSHA)." (*Auschwitz: Nazi Extermination Camp*, Warsaw, Interpress Publishers, 1978.)

To his credit, another American scholar pointed this out 25 years ago: "Hitler's long-range aim was the total destruction of the almost 300,000,000 people belonging to the Slavic race... Had the Germans succeeded they would have carried out a diabolical scheme of 'resettlement' and 'special treatment,' which would have caused the death of a couple of hundred million Poles, Czechs, Ukrainians and Russians... and they would have sterilized the remaining peasant population." (T.H. Tetens, *The New Germany and the Old Nazis*, N.Y., Random House, 1961.)

Although unaware of the Nazi plan for total annihilation of the Slavic peoples and tending to underestimate the number the Nazis killed, three major national American

Jewish organizations have acknowledged the murder of millions of non-Jews and called for remembering them along with the Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

The American Jewish Committee, in the brochure, "Rationale for Teaching About Genocide and the Nazi Holocaust" (undated) defines "the Holocaust... as the systematic persecution and destruction of eleven million people, including six million Jews, during the Hitler era (1933-1945)" and states that "any study of the period must emphasize the suffering and attempted destruction of all who were considered enemies of the Third Reich."

The B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League in its "ADL's Agenda for Action" (undated) calls for "preventing future Holocausts by making certain that the Nazi slaughter of 17,000,000 human beings is understood and never forgotten." And a resolution adopted at the July 1979 national convention of the Jewish War Veterans urges annual memorial observances for "the 12 million Jews and non-Jews who perished in the flames of Hitler's inferno," concluding, "We call upon our membership to foster this program throughout the nation."

The American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League have not actively implemented the above policies, but the Jewish War Veterans (JWV) has.

In Baltimore, in coalition with leaders of the Polish, Ukrainian, and other communities, the JWV was instrumental in getting what was slated to be an exclusively Jewish holocaust memorial built on public land to include in its inscription a remembrance of the millions of other victims along with the six million Jewish victims of the Nazis. Also, in coalition with the American Legion, Catholic War Veterans, Disabled Veterans of America and other Maryland veterans' organizations, the JWV has conducted annual programs at the Baltimore Holocaust Memorial in honor of all victims of Nazi genocide. While these programs have concentrated on memorializing Jews, Poles and other nationalities, they have also noted the mass murder of Communists, Socialists, liberals, trade union leaders and homosexuals.

Remembering all the victims of the Holocaust in Baltimore has resulted in improved relations between the Jewish and Polish and other ethnic communities. It has also increased awareness that Nazism was and is not just a danger for Jews, but other ethnic groups as well as all politically active people and trade unionists. The Baltimore experience shows that remembering all the victims of the Holocaust is an effective way of educating people about fascism and getting them to oppose it in their own interests. □

Alfred J. Kutzik is former chair of the Holocaust Committee of the Jewish War Veterans of Maryland and former co-chair of Baltimore's Citizens' Holocaust Committee.

Robeson, Scholarship and Slander: Response to Morton Duberman's *Biography of Paul Robeson*

Lloyd L. Brown

Aware from the outset that Duberman would not be objective in his interpretation of Robeson, a factor that he readily admits (*Radical History Review*, Fall, 1988), and knowing that he would be relying primarily upon input from two highly unreliable witnesses (Essie's papers and Paul Jr. in person), I nevertheless expected that as an historian the author would strive for accuracy in recording important data from available sources. He has not done so, as this example will show.

All previous published biographies have given the same account — some in nearly the same words — of Robeson's first concert and its historic significance:

- Eslanda Robeson (1930) cited a review of Robeson's April 19, 1925, concert in New York: "...first concert in this country made entirely of Negro music if one may count out the chorals of Fiske [sic] and so forth..."
- Shirley Graham (1946): "...unique and the first of its kind — a program of all-Negro music..."
- Marie Seton: (1958): "There had never been a concert wholly devoted to Negro Spirituals and Work Songs; the only interpretations of the Spirituals which had been presented to the public were in choral form."
- Edwin P. Hoyt (1967): "...this first American concert of native [sic] Afro-American music..."
- Dorothy Butler Gilliam (1976): "The first concert had made history, for although choral groups like the Fisk Jubilee Singers and the Hall Johnson Choir had sung concerts of spirituals before, Robeson's was the first solo concert made up entirely of Negro music..."
- And now Duberman (1989): "The concert marked the first time a black soloist rather than a choral group, such as the remarkable Fisk Jubilee Singers, who had preceded Robeson by sixty years — had devoted an entire program to spirituals and secular songs."

These accounts are not true, and it seems that Duberman chose to go along with this misinformation rather than to give credit to another historian who gave a different, and true, account. That historian is Anatol I. Schlosser, whose dissertation (*Paul Robeson: His Career in the Theatre, in Motion Pictures, and on the Concert Stage*), was available

Lloyd L. Brown, his literary collaborator and chosen biographer, is completing a biography of Paul Robeson.

to Duberman. Though he does not list Schlosser as a source, he refers to that study in Note 24, p. 582.

As I once remarked to Schlosser, I was pleased to see that he had verified something that both Robeson and Lawrence Brown had told me, namely that the Greenwich Village concert in 1925 was not the first all-Negro music recital given by Robeson. Schlosser (who preceded both Duberman and me in access to the Robeson papers) wrote: "On November 2, 1924... Paul Robeson delivered the first concert in America devoted wholly to Negro music." He cited reviews in several Boston papers.

To me, as Paul Robeson's designated biographer, this matter was important. *That first concert, held not in Greenwich Village but in Boston, was programmed by Robeson quite apart from his friends in the Provincetown Playhouse who sponsored the 1925 appearance.* It was Robeson's own choice of material, and when I did not find in Schlosser or the Robeson Archives a record of the songs he sang in Boston, I sought and found that datum in that city. In the Boston Public Library there was the concert program of all-Negro music and the reviews in the Boston newspapers.

In telling me that story both Robeson and Brown proved as always to be concerned with the truth, and in Brown's case it was especially honorable since another man, Louis Hooper, and not he had been the accompanist on that historic occasion.

Aside from Duberman's exclusion of another historian's finding, this instance shows how unreliable Eslanda Robeson can be on important matters in the Robeson story. Her diary for the 1924 trip to Boston describes the luxury of their suite and its bathroom in the Copley Plaza Hotel where the concert was held, but says nothing about the concert program and its significance. And in her book she told, as I have shown, the erroneous story that all other biographers — including Duberman — have since recounted as gospel.

Much more important than a lack of concern for accuracy is Duberman's use of the unsubstantiated testimony of a single individual to impugn Robeson's character. Nearly all reviewers have commented on Duberman's account of a meeting between Robeson and the Soviet Jewish poet Itzik Feffer in 1949. After Robeson is said to have expressed concern about Feffer's whereabouts, the story goes on to

say that Feffer was brought from jail and sent unaccompanied to see Robeson in a hotel room. The first version of this story originated among anti-Soviet emigres in Israel who put the date of the Robeson-Feffer meeting as 1951, a time when Robeson was still denied permission to leave the U.S. In that version Robeson was unaware that Feffer was not the free man he appeared to be and left the Soviet Union not knowing that his friend was awaiting execution.

After Robeson's death in 1976, that version was published by the Bulletin of the Center for Soviet and East European Studies at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. In the next issue of that publication, Paul Robeson Jr. expressed "outraged protest" and charged that the Robeson-Feffer story was "pure fiction" and "wholly false" according to what his father had told him.

However, five years later, Robeson's son who had become as hostile to the Soviet Union as his father had been friendly, reversed himself on that subject. Speaking to an anti-Soviet Jewish rally in New York, Paul Jr. said that his father had been surreptitiously told by Feffer that a murderous anti-Semitic campaign was being waged by the Soviet government, and that he, Feffer, and many of his Jewish colleagues were being framed up and would soon be slain.

Thus according to Paul Jr. his father had first-hand knowledge of ongoing anti-Semitic crimes and foreknowledge of Feffer's doom, but did nothing about it except to tell the story to his son who was sworn to keep it secret until five years after the elder Robeson's death. Not one of Robeson's closest friends and co-workers was let in on the grisly secret. Not Benjamin J. Davis Jr., W.E.B. DuBois, Alphaeus Hunton, Louis Burnham, George B. Murphy Jr., or Lloyd Brown, Robeson's literary collaborator and chosen biographer — all of whom were closer to Robeson than was his son who had been raised apart from him.

To believe Paul Jr.'s unsubstantiated story, one would have to conclude that from 1949 on, despite Robeson's public stance as a champion of human rights, he was an utterly unprincipled man who was involved in a monstrous cover-up. Consider this fact: In 1949, only five months after he had heard (according to his son) a renowned Jewish poet tell him a grim story of racist persecution, Paul Robeson told an audience at the Waldorf Astoria celebrating the Russian Revolution that he had observed in the Soviet Union "whether one is a renowned poet or a peasant farmer — black, brown, yellow or white — Christian, Jew or atheist, he enjoys the same human dignity, the same human rights." Did Robeson believe that, or was he lying as his son maintains?

None of us who heard Paul Robeson then and witnessed his heroic stand during the Cold War years that followed, when he defied the framed-up Rosenbergs and all other victims of repression — risking his life to do so — can have

the slightest doubt about Robeson's monumental integrity.

Though Duberman had read a documented rebuttal to Paul Jr.'s slanderous story about his father, he made no mention in his text that the story had been challenged by anyone. He merely referred in a footnote to an article, "Telling the Truth About Paul Robeson," by Lloyd L. Brown, without giving his readers any idea that it was a thoroughly researched refutation of the Robeson-Feffer canard.

Finally, a word about my own work on the Robeson story: After my collaboration with Paul Robeson on his book, *Here I Stand*, he asked me to write a full-length biography of him. My full-time work on that project, which took me to London, Moscow, Berlin and throughout the U.S., has continued despite a serious injury in an accident and other illness. In February 1982, soon after I had exposed his slanderous story about his father, Paul Jr. informed me that he had decided to change his father's decision about me as his biographer. In *Jewish Currents*, (Feb. 1982, p. 28), the magazine that had published his Robeson-Feffer "revelation," Paul Jr. wrote, "Lloyd Brown presents himself as 'Paul Robeson's designated biographer.' That is no longer true." He went on to explain that my right for access to and use of Paul Robeson's private papers "was terminated by the executor of Paul Robeson's estate," and he added, "I concurred with that decision."

Obviously no one could posthumously change Paul Robeson's designation of me, and the deceptive explanation as to who terminated me adds a comical note to the son's disloyal action. In 1979, three years after his father's death, Paul Jr. became the executor of the estate, and so the person with whom he "concurred" was actually himself. Lamentably, the son did not inherit along with a great name the greatness of Paul Robeson's integrity — a treasure that Robeson said he had gained from his own father, William Drew Robeson.

In his secluded retirement in Philadelphia, when according to Duberman he was in a deep depression and semivegetative condition, Paul Robeson honored me with this inscription in a new edition of *Here I Stand*: "To dear Lloyd, with deepest thanks for your understanding and kindness. Hope we can work together again in the effort to help our fellow men. A better future for us all. Paul Robeson, October 1971." That is the man whom persons who never knew him will get to know in my book about him. □

**EVERY READER
GET A READER**

Roots and Branches

Jewish Americans Move Towards Independence

Jon Weisberger

One of the dangers of writing for a bimonthly magazine is that the speed of events can render an article out-of-date before it reaches subscribers. For a long time this consideration was irrelevant if the topic was the Middle East or the American Jewish community; in both cases, the main players seemed locked into positions that allowed for movement that could most charitably be described as glacial. The developments of the past few months, however, have created a new situation, and writers will have to make the best of it. It seems, then, worthwhile to spend some time in examining the background to the current situation, identifying trends and historical processes rather than risking obsolescence. In this issue and the next, I want to take a look at the long-term developments that have taken place among American Jews that lead in the direction of renewed communal democracy and independence from the ideological hegemony of Zionism. The main impetus to these developments has been the Palestinian uprising. The fearlessness of the Palestinians in carrying out a brilliant strategy of resistance to the Occupation, and the brutality of the Israeli Defense Force in its attempt to crush the uprising has shattered the status quo. Among the immediate consequences have been the Palestinian Declaration of Independence, which laid the groundwork for a qualitatively new PLO peace initiative by forthrightly embracing a two-state position; the advance of new sectors of the Israeli peace movement towards recognition of the PLO and advocacy of a Palestinian state; the rapid growth of the Middle East peace movement in this country, placing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the public agenda and, after a lot of embarrassing wriggling, the decision of the US government to initiate a dialogue with the PLO. These are substantial accomplishments. For progressive Jews in the US though, there is one more, less obvious and less immediate, but ultimately of tremendous significance—the apparently irreversibly fracturing of the monolith of Jewish-American ‘unity’. Both directly and indirectly, the intifada has created the framework for reestablishing American Jewish democracy and creating the conditions for a Jewish renewal of potentially gigantic proportions.

The Roots of Dissent

The intifada and the Israeli response have not created this framework by themselves; its roots lie in developments spanning a dozen years. What events in the Middle East have done, though, is to strip away the multitude of illusions and pat answers that allowed Jewish community leaders to convince themselves that all was (or could easily be) well. The starting point of this process was the election of Menachem Begin's Likud government in 1977. Until that time, the virtual identity of the Israeli government with Labor Zionist ideology made it possible to reconcile American Jewish liberalism with a policy of unconditional support for the Israeli government. Whether the reality of Labor Zionism was consonant with the American Jewish tradition of support for progressive causes is largely irrelevant in this context, what mattered, as New Jewish Agendas Ezra Goldstein recently put it, was “an image of Israel forever frozen in the mythical 1950s...a nation of pioneers: men and women standing shoulder to shoulder building a new country based on a unique brand of humanitarian, Jewish socialism.” (*Present Tense*, January/February 1989). From this viewpoint, Israel's victory over its Arab neighbors in 1967 seemed a near mystical ratification of its essential goodness: “for very many Jews,” writes Leonard Fein in *Where Are We?: The Inner Life of American Jews* (1988), “the experience of the Six Day War had religious significance. Specifically, it was after the Six Day War that Israel came to occupy the center of the Jewish religious consciousness and consensus. In a very precise way, Israel had now become the faith of the American Jew.”

The victory of Menachem Begin and the Likud in 1977, then, came as a tremendous shock to American Jews. For a decade the almost-unanimous position of American Jews was that the Israelis were “waiting by the phone” for Arab states to call and negotiate a comprehensive peace settlement that would exchange land for peace. Rivers of ink were spent in describing the unanimous desire of Israel's leaders for a settlement with the Arabs. Now a man who spoke

openly about "the undivided Land of Israel," who had occupied a place in Labor Zionist demonology behind only the Soviets and the Palestinians (insofar as they were acknowledged to exist), was the Prime Minister of Israel. The most serious consequence of Begin's tenure for American Jews was, ultimately, that support for the policies of the Israeli government became dissociated from support for Labor Zionism, with its liberal rhetoric and image. For years liberal Jewish leaders had used the "need to unite around Israel's government" as a means of suppressing Begin's supporters in the U.S.—now, they were hoist on their own petard. It was inevitable, then, that Jewish-American leaders would, if only to retain their constituencies, begin to back away from the policy of uncritical support for the Israeli government. But the forward movement of American Jewish opinion, at least among the leadership, was retarded by the Camp David Agreement, which was presented as a confirmation of the concept that "only a Begin" could bring about an agreement with Israel's Arab neighbors. Still, Begin's crass manipulation of Jewish sentiment, and his obvious unwillingness to deal with the Palestinian question, the core of the Middle East conflict, lessened the impact of this argument. The "achievement" of Camp David slowed, but could not stop, the development of American Jewish independence. The first significant signs of this growth came on the heels of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, and especially the Sabra-Shatila massacres. For the first time, American Jews openly expressed unease at the militaristic adventurism of the Israeli government. The protests were made easier by the presence of a lightning-rod for criticism, Defense Minister Ariel Sharon. Sharon's callousness, his ultra-right fanaticism and his obvious chauvinism made him a relatively safe target for criticism. Still, the mild expressions that arose from some quarters, the sterner criticism from a few others, and the spurt of activism among progressive Jews (including the newly-formed New Jewish Agenda), met a storm of criticism. Arthur Hertzberg recalled that upon his return from six months in Israel to his New Jersey congregation, "I said that the war had nothing to do with *shalom ha'Galil*, the peace of the Galilee. Rather, I said, the war had everything to do with a conception of the use of military might to create a Phalange-ruled Lebanon... and supposedly help shove the PLO and the Palestinians toward Syria and Jordan... For saying this," he goes on, "I was denounced by many within my own community. How could anyone say such terrible things?" For other, less prominent Jews who protested the war, the attacks were more severe; some, signers of a newspaper ad, were "excommunicated" by a particularly zealous group of Orthodox rabbis, while others were made virtual pariahs, frozen out of Jewish community organizations in which they had long worked.

The Labor-Likud Stalemate

The withdrawal of the IDF from Beirut and central Lebanon, and the electoral stalemate which resulted in the formation of the first National Unity Labor-Likud government spelled an end to the first wave of Jewish protest of Israeli policy. For one thing, the relative quiet that prevailed, especially in the Occupied Territories, meant that Israel's hostility towards the Arabs was no longer the subject of nightly newscasts, and the claims that the Palestinians were docile beneficiaries of enlightened policies could once again be asserted. Equally important, though, was the demobilizing presence of the Labor Party in a joint government with Begin's successors: it is easy for us now to forget the high hopes that many American Jewish leaders had for Shimon Peres' turn in the Prime Ministerial "rotation," but at the time, the belief that Peres would be able to provide an alternative policy was widespread, especially among those who clung to the notion of Labor Zionism as inherently more just and more interested in genuine peace. Once again, public criticism of a "sympathetic" Israeli leadership was held as counter-productive; if American Jewish concerns about the status quo persisted, they were better off whispered in the Prime Minister's ear, so as not to embarrass Labor's chief, either in the eyes of the non-Jewish world or of the Israeli right. Even some progressive Jewish community activists were seduced by this logic, believing that the role of the left within the Jewish community was to engage in quiet lobbying and gentle persuasion. Others, while unconvinced of the soundness of this strategy, argued that Jewish progressives should fight to, in essence, maintain the status quo—which, while clearly unsatisfactory, meant a constant struggle against Kahane's brand of Jewish fascism, the growth of Jewish settlements in the West Bank, annexation schemes, and the portrayal of the Occupation as irreversible. A few, finally, worked either alone or in coalition with Arab-Americans and others in calling for an end to the Occupation; still, their voices, while clear, were far from strong. Yet at the same time, Peres' failure to take the initiative during his tenure as Prime Minister, and his offhand rejection of American Jewish concerns, however gently expressed, was making it clear to a growing number of Jewish-Americans that Labor Zionism, even by the standards of contemporary liberalism, was incapable of offering a genuine alternative to Likud theory and practice. Indeed, the rotation into the Prime Minister's position of Yitzhak Shamir was almost unnoticeable; the Israeli economy continued to suffer, scandals continued to underline the seamier side of Israeli political life, and the Occupation continued in the same mode of constant repression and degradation, with occasional outbreaks of more open brutality and illegality. Expressions of American Jewish concern began to reappear, in the hopes that they might influ-

ence the Israeli electorate to give Labor a clear mandate in the upcoming elections. By 1987, as the Occupation passed its 20th anniversary, the more liberal end of the mainstream Jewish spectrum was openly expressing its support for Labor's formula that "the Occupation cannot continue indefinitely in its present form." In September and October of that year, the American Jewish Congress and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, respectively, passed resolutions that called for an end to the occupation and an international conference to carry out negotiations with that goal. It was far from coincidental that both resolutions envisioned such a conference in terms identical to those laid out by Shimon Peres, looking forward to elections by November, 1988 at the latest. The intifada radically altered the tempo of these developments, both in its stark representation of Palestinian unwillingness to tolerate the status quo, and in the quick resort to a shocking level of violence by the Israeli armed forces. The tentative, though significant, steps which had been taken by the AJC and UAHC paled in comparison to what was needed. Galvanized by the uprising, the American Jewish response to both aspects has since passed through three clear stages, and American Jews and their community organizations now stand on the threshold of a new phase.

A New Era?

The initial response of a large number of American Jews to the massive human rights violations perpetrated by the Israeli occupiers was open shock and revulsion. Barely more than a week after the uprising began, a group of American Jews associated with the Israeli International Center for Peace in the Middle East issued a statement calling for peace negotiations and "a political settlement of the Palestinian problem, that would liberate Israel from the yoke of occupation..." Among the signers were a number of leading Jewish liberals and progressives, including Rabbis Balfour Brickner and Marshall Meyer, Leonard Fein, Letty Cottin Pogrebin, Milton Viorst, and Seymour Martin Lipset, as well as the five American Jews who were to participate within the year in a historic meeting with PLO chair Yasir Arafat. The first few months of 1988, as the repression in the Territories intensified, were filled with similar declarations from an ever-broadening circle of American Jewish leaders and "notables," as well as significant numbers of "unknowns" who felt compelled to speak up. Friends of Peace Now ran two ads in the *New York Times*; *Tikkun* magazine collected over six hundred signatures of Jewish intellectuals on another ad; Jews Opposed to the Occupation, an ad hoc grouping, issued a strongly-worded statement calling for an end to US government "military, political and economic support" for the occupation that was signed by hundreds, including over 30 self-identified New Jewish

Agenda members (including a number of prominent chapter and national leaders).

The culmination of the first phase, and the beginning of the second, was best represented by an open letter to Prime Minister Shamir from seven notables that was published at the end of March. The letter, signed among others by Nathan Glazer, Arthur Hertzberg, Seymour Martin Lipset and Menachem Rosensaft, was a strong attack against Shamir and the Likud, exposing the former LEHI terrorist's hypocrisy in "opposing violence." While reaffirming their support for Shamir as Israel's Prime Minister, they told him that "we stand against you as the leader of the party in Israel that insists on holding on to the territories..." In a similar vein, UAHC senior vice-president Albert Vorspan published a lengthy "personal diary" in the May 8 *New York Times Magazine*, which included an account of Shamir's meeting at the end of February with a group of American Jewish leaders which also, while expressing criticism of American Jewish leadership, blasted Shamir as not only intransigent but contemptuous of American Jewish opinion. This second stage of American Jewish reaction was deeply influenced by the nearing Israeli elections. Unwilling to look clearly at the political sclerosis of the Labor party, a significant portion of those mainstream Jewish leaders who opposed the Occupation persisted in the belief that a victory for Labor represented the best hope for ending the crisis. During this period, from the late spring through November, there was a noticeable diminution of criticism from these leaders, and it was more carefully focussed on Shamir and the Likud. The role of Labor in supporting the repression, and the prominence on the Labor slate of Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin (who bore the responsibility of the day-to-day tactics of repression), were evaded in the hope that a Labor government would be able to shift course; thus, one had the spectacle of American Jewish leaders asserting that King Hussein's abandonment of the "Jordanian option" represented no obstacle to its implementation. The Israeli elections marked the beginning of the third phase, as Labor and Likud split the bulk of the Knesset between them, opening up new opportunities and dangers for both parties and for American Jews. The behavior of both, especially their mirror-image approaches to the ultra-Orthodox, and the refusal of Labor to enter the opposition in the wake of Likud's initial agreement with the fascist right, created the conditions for American Jewish dissent to fully mature, and pushed Jewish-American organizations to new levels of public criticism. In our next issue, we will take a closer look at how the "Who Is A Jew?" controversy, the Palestine Declaration of Independence and the renewed National Unity government's paralysis have catalyzed new debate among American Jews, and brought discussion of the Jewish-American future to a new level. □

Rose Pastor Stokes: A Fighter For Women's Equality

Arthur Zipser

What better time than International Women's Day to recall Rose Pastor Stokes, whom few of us ever knew and most of us never heard of? In her own day she was a celebrity, a labor heroine certainly, a founder of the Communist Party USA in 1919. After her death she began to fade out of collective memory though her friends Jeanette Pearl and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn were among those who tried to keep her memory green, mainly through commemorative articles in the left press.

Rose was born to a failed marriage of Anna Lewin and Jacob Wieslander in Augustowa, Russian Poland, 110 years ago. When she was three her mother and she migrated to Victorian London where she subsequently received all her formal education — three years of elementary school. Her mother remarried and, when Rose was eleven, the family moved to America and settled in Cleveland. There, within a few days, Rose was sent out to learn the trade of a stogie maker in a makeshift cigar factory. It was a primitive skill at which she soon excelled. Before long she replaced Israel Pastor, her stepfather, as the principal source of the family's meager income. As the family grew with the birth of more children Pastor first neglected them and eventually abandoned them as grinding poverty destroyed his morale.

Rose Pastor spent 12 years in the dusty precincts of the stogie industry. During that time she was introduced to a somewhat broader world through the interest of a fellow worker. She read Shelley and Markham and was attracted to the new doctrine of Zionism. A neighbor passed on to her copies of the *New York Jewish Daily News* where the editor of the English page urged his readers to send in letters dealing with their daily lives. Rose's talented and ample response to this invitation led to her development of a following among the readers of the paper and this in turn led to a job as assistant to the editor of the English page. In early 1903 she settled on the Lower East Side and, a few months later, was joined by her mother and some of the children. The others were being cared for in foster homes.

Transformed now into a professional writer Rose Pastor made an easy transition into this new intellectual milieu. Her own gifts and personal charm advanced her acceptance into the Jewish literary scene and into the world of the

proliferating East Side settlement houses.

When she had been working on the newspaper for about six months she was assigned to interview the most prominent social worker on the staff of the University Settlement. He was the tall, handsome, rich, educated James Graham Phelps Stokes, a son of one of the leading banking and mining families of the day. Though his family were pillars of the Episcopal church Graham's Christianity was outside of formal church bounds.

The highly eligible bachelor and the dynamic, attractive, vivacious Jewish immigrant girl were strongly attracted to each other and Graham's courtship of her ended two years later with a large wedding at his parents' suburban home on her 26th birthday, July 15, 1905. A year later Rose and Graham joined the Socialist Party. Both events, but especially the marriage, drew phenomenal publicity.

While the life style of Rose and Graham was modest it also had some of the advantages of great wealth — such as a suburban home in Stamford and a town house in Greenwich Village. Both of them spoke frequently for the SP. Graham helped found the Intercollegiate Socialist Society (ISS). Rose was active in a number of strikes — hotel and restaurant, shirtwaist makers, textile — and in the major women's struggles for birth control, suffrage and peace. She also lectured widely on campuses for the ISS. In her quieter moments she wrote plays, poetry, and political pieces.

World War I put the Pastor/Stokes relationship to a test it could not pass. As the United States came closer to involvement and finally on April 6, 1917, declared war on Germany, Rose and Graham sided with the Wilson war administration and resigned from the Socialist party when the party opposed it. But, though Graham moved ever further to the right as a war supporter, Rose returned to an anti-war position and by January 1918 rejoined the SP. Before many months had passed she had been convicted under the catch-all Espionage Act on the basis of a mild letter she sent to the *Kansas City Star*. She was sentenced to ten years in prison but remained free on bail. Higher court reversals and the decision of President Wilson that she could not be convicted years after the war was over led to the dropping of the case.

In January 1919, with John Reed, James Larkin and others, Rose Pastor Stokes helped to form the Left Wing Section of the New York Socialist Party and in September she was at the Chicago conventions that founded the present CPUSA.

In the 1920s Rose was active in the CP — she attended the

Arthur Zipser and Pearl Zipser have written a biography of Rose Pastor Stokes titled "Fire and Grace" scheduled for publication in the fall of this year by the University of Georgia Press.

famous Bridgman Convention, for which she was duly indicted, and was a delegate to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International. Her Communist work antagonized her husband and their life together became increasingly difficult. Her main emotional support in this period came from her best friend, Olive Tilford Dargan, the southern regional writer also known as Fielding Burke.

Rose was divorced from Graham in 1925 which returned her to an impoverished existence from which her marriage to young V.J. Jerome in 1927 did not immediately rescue her. In 1929 they were both working in the left movement. But now bad health — cancer — doomed Rose for her few remaining years. She wanted to have those years to complete an autobiography, but the sickness curbed her efforts and it remained unfinished. Desperately seeking treatment she placed herself in the care of a prominent roentgenologist in Frankfurt, Germany, and was there when Hitler came to power. Her confidence in radiology therapy proved unfounded. Rose Pastor Stokes died in Frankfurt in June 1933. □

Letters Continued from p. 4

Jewish Center in Moscow. The Feb. 12 N.Y. Times story on this event stated that "earlier this month members of the (Jewish) Anti-Fascist Committee were formally rehabilitated." All the executed Jewish writers and Mikhoels were leaders or members of this committee.

Racism Continued from p. 4

forced Bush's leading adviser, Lee Atwater, to give up his appointment to that university's Board of Trustees. Shame to those who had acquiesced to this bit of kow-towing and glory to the young people who saved the honor of Howard University.

Fascism, racism, antisemitism are doctrines of murder; they are stained with the blood of generations of innocents.

Such abominations are over-ripe for outlawry. Making racism criminal, advances meaningful democracy; it in no way contradicts our splendid Bill of Rights.

The Editorial Committee
expresses its sympathy to
Albert Paula on the death of
his wife, Cecelia, both
devoted supporters of
Jewish Affairs.

The Lodz Ghetto Wedding

Henri Percikow

Love made its foray
Through hunger and death
Bringing lovers together
If only for months, weeks and days
Until forced separation
Or united in gas-chamber
The synagogues of the Ghetto
Were closed by nazi decree
Rabbis were forbidden
To officiate at weddings
Faiga and Mendel
Came to the House of Culture
On a Sunday afternoon
And stood hungry, in their shabby clothes
Where the Chairman of the Jewish Elders
Married them in brief ceremony
Without the traditional "Khupeh"
Or golden ring
The groom instead offered his bride
A symbolic gold-pointed fountain pen.
The newlyweds
Drank from one glass of wine
And received an only gift
A prized coupon
That offered a dinner
For their memorable day.

Jewish Centers Continued from page 15

was a Soviet policy of this sort specially directed against Jews. He points out that until very recently there were no nongovernmental organizations permitted for any ethnic group:

It should be remembered that until last year there were no public organizations outside the synagogue where Jews could get together to discuss Jewish affairs. This was not permitted, permitted, not for anti-Semitic reasons, but supposedly for "internationalist" reasons. The fear of the party authorities was that ethnic groups would foster ethnic "nationalism" if they had their own organizations. Thus Ukrainians or Armenians or others who lived in the Russian republic were also not allowed to have their own organizations.

The reversal of Soviet policy as regards ethnic cultural institutions, which Soviet authorities now not only do not object to but support wherever they are requested by citizens (see the interview with Russian officials concerning Yiddish classes in this issue), has led to a renaissance of Jewish cultural life in the U.S.S.R. *Jewish Affairs* will keep its readers informed of this significant development.

A.J.K.

World Jewish Solidarity Conference

Lewis M. Moroze

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's "Jewish Solidarity Conference" in Jerusalem revealed wide support for the security and continued existence of the state of Israel and at the same time worldwide Jewish opposition to his policy. This was a significant setback for Shamir, who sought support in preparation for his trip to the United States for policy talks with President George Bush.

A sharp blow was dealt to Shamir at the opening of the conference with the revelation of the Israeli Army's intelligence report highly critical of his policies in attempting to subdue the intifada in the West Bank and Gaza. Shamir's perspective had been to invite top Jewish leaders worldwide and planned for an attendance of 2,000. This goal was never reached. Of 130 prominent British Jewish leaders invited, fewer than 50 responded. Had it not been for the fact that a few hundred Jewish leaders from around the globe were in Jerusalem for other reasons, the conference might have had to be cancelled.

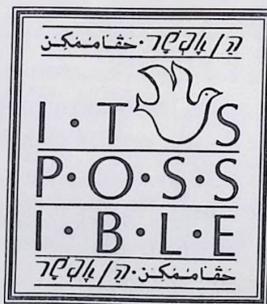
It has been reported that the idea for the conference originated with Rabbi Marvin Hier, whose ultra-right views have cut him off from the Jewish Federation of Los Angeles, where he heads the Wiesenthal Center. Many American Jewish leaders at the conference expressed dismay. Arden Shenker, chair of the National Jewish Community Relations Council in the United States, observed that "To only say 'No' to the PLO and a Palestinian state is not sufficient in responding to American concerns. What the situation requires of Israel is a policy that seizes the opportunities and contributes to change in the reality of the conflict." Howard Squadron, former president of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, characterized the conference as artificial and said that it would have no impact. "If Shamir comes to Washington and puts together affirmative ideas," said Squadron, "he will be received positively. If not, the reaction will be negative." Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, stated at the conference, "We are here for one reason only, not to endorse this or that policy or to sign a blank check... We are here to express our oneness with the land and the people... Unity does not mean uniformity of views."

Jerusalem Post correspondent Walter Ruby observed in the *Washington Jewish Week*, "Many Americans are ambivalent about the conference. Many rabbis of all denominations sent regrets. Other Jewish leaders have made it clear that they see the conference as a pointless exercise."

Yehuda Lev, columnist for the *Jewish Journal* of Los Angeles, reported that the Jewish American leadership was "being set upon by Shamir as unwitting supporters of policies for which they have little sympathy." He reported further that upon their return home these community leaders indicated that they had ample opportunity to meet with Israeli leaders to tell them of their doubts "about stonewalling on a settlement with the Palestinians and about Israeli authorities aggravating the situation in the Occupied Territories by establishing new settlements in sensitive areas."

Charlotte Jacobson, leader of the Jewish Women's Zionist organization, Hadassah, and treasurer of the Jewish National Fund, warned at the conference that the American people are turning against Israel and in favor of the PLO. Likewise, significant numbers of Jewish American participants called upon Shamir to reconsider his opposition to talks with the PLO. Shamir's policies have isolated Israel. Of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, only the United States has not yet called for the convening of an international conference under the aegis of the U.N. The Bush administration has a heavy responsibility in maintaining peace in the Middle East as an ally in the U.S.-Israeli Strategic Military Alliance. Worldwide pressure on Bush is mounting, as a result of which Bush has called for Israel to give up the Occupied Territories. Bush has also called for "a properly structured" Middle East conference. A conference sponsored by the UN Security Council would seem to have just such a "proper structure."

Shamir has alienated Jewish Americans and Jews worldwide. They told him so at the Jerusalem Solidarity Conference. Members of the House and Senate report steadily increasing mail critical of Israeli government policies in the Middle East. Now is the moment for peace constituencies to step up their demands on President Bush to impress upon Israel as an ally that the strategy for peace in the Middle East requires the convening of an international conference under the aegis of the U.N. with the participation of the PLO, the legitimate representative of the Palestinian People. □



Jewish Cultural Centers Proliferate in U.S.S.R.

On February 12 the Solomon Mikhoels Center opened in Moscow in the building of the Moscow Jewish Musical Theater. According to TASS, the Soviet news agency, this "Jewish cultural center...will provide information on various aspects of the life of Soviet Jews, the development of their national art and literature" and will house "exhibitions and meetings with prominent Jewish cultural personalities, artist, actors, writers and politicians" and "Yiddish and Hebrew classes."

At the opening ceremony, the director of the Center, Michael Gluz, who is also artistic director of the Jewish Musical Theater, said that the goals of the Center's activities were the study and development of Soviet Jewish culture and the development of relations with Jewish cultural organizations in other countries. According to "Jewish spokesmen" interviewed by the *N.Y. Times*, the center will also have "a library with works in Hebrew and Yiddish as well as Russian, an exhibition gallery, audio-visual equipment and a cafe."

On the opening night the exhibition gallery displayed a Holocaust exhibit from the (U.S.) Simon Wiesenthal Center, while the theater was the scene of a dedicatory program which the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency Digest* reported was attended "by delegates from around the world, including ambassadors from the United States, Great Britain, Canada, France and Australia, as well as a group of Israeli diplomats." Among the "delegates" were Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress and U.S. writer-educator Elie Wiesel, both of whom delivered addresses.

Wiesel, whose usual lamentations for Soviet Jewry were out of place at this event, talked about how bad things had been in the past and called upon President Gorbachev "to have more courage and establish diplomatic relations with Israel" and to "open the file of Raoul Wallenberg." (*Editor's note: The Soviet Union has stated its readiness to establish diplomatic relations with Israel as soon as it agrees to participate in an international conference to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Soviet officials have repeatedly stated that Wallenberg died in a Soviet prison in 1947, but his continuing imprisonment to this day is a favorite charge of anti-Sovieters.*)

The commercial and Zionist press did what they could to present this latest positive development in Soviet Jewish cultural life as negatively as possible. For example, they used the fact that the center is named after Solomon Mikhoels, the great Soviet Jewish actor, killed in an accident that some charge was a planned assassination, to inform readers that

he had been murdered by Stalin along with other leading Soviet Jewish cultural figures. No attention was given to the fact that government approval of a Mikhoels center was a form of public recognition if not rehabilitation. (The Feb. 13 *N.Y. Times* story did note that "earlier this month members of the [Jewish] Anti-Fascist Committee [of which Mikhoels was chairman] were formally rehabilitated" but had no details of this significant action).

While there were other ways in which the Center's positive significance for Soviet Jewish life and culture was called into question by the media, the most blatant was their falsely reporting that it is the only governmentally recognized Jewish cultural center in the Soviet Union. For example, the *N.Y. Times* story began by characterizing it as "the first officially approved Jewish cultural center in the Soviet Union" and the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency's* story with "The Solomon Mikhoels Center, the Soviet Union's first officially sanctioned Jewish cultural center in more than half a century." This was challenged in a letter to the *N.Y. Times* that it printed on March 10 by Sid Resnick (whose translations of Soviet Yiddish material have appeared in our last two issues). Resnick's letter stated: "(It is not true that this is the first approved Jewish cultural center in the Soviet Union...(T)he striking fact is that last year publicly functioning Jewish cultural centers were established in about 15 Soviet cities; including one in Moscow at the Yiddish theater, Sholem, last Oct. 28." Among other cities in which there are Jewish centers—all approved by the government—he lists Bobruisk (in Belorussia), Lvov (in Ukraine), Tallinn (in Estonia) and Vilnius (in Lithuania).

In an article ("New Soviet Jewish Cultural Societies," *Jewish Currents* March, 1989), Resnick reports that Jewish cultural centers or societies also exist in Minsk (in Belorussia), Riga (in Lithuania), Ufa (in Russia) and that there are several in Moscow, Leningrad and "elsewhere." Nearly all of these are "registered with the Soviet Culture Fund, a semiofficial organization that provides financial and other assistance to cultural societies of different nationalities."

Since these Jewish centers have all been organized in the last year or so—along with Yiddish classes in Baku, Kishinev, Tashkent and Tirasopol, two new Yiddish theater groups in Kiev, etc.—it can be mistakenly concluded that the Gorbachev administration is departing from a heretofore antisemitic policy that prevented the development of Jewish cultural institutions. But Resnick denies that there

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A Feast of Dark Colors

Markas Zingeris

Review of a Sept.-Nov. '88 exhibition in Vilna reprinted from Jewish Art of Lithuania (Vilnius, 1988)

Sculptures, pictures, engravings, drawings. What compelled us during a half of our stormy century to conceal from public eyes this bronze and plaster, these painting and graphic sheets? Who prohibited observing this dramatic coloring, these breaking lines, these nervous strokes of the brush—this sceptic and ecstatic handwriting of Jewish culture? Why are Zale Berkeris and Cerne Percikovicute, Neemija Arbilatas and Chaimas Fainsteinas even nowadays not perceived in the context of their national art? What rings new and unexpected in Adomas Jacovskis when exhibited with his ancestors?

This summer we could see posters announcing the first exhibition of Jewish art in Lithuania since 1938. It was also the first exhibition of this sort in the Soviet Union after the twenties when a section of Judaica still existed at the Ethnographic Museum in Leningrad. The Ciurlionis State Museum of Art in Kaunas made it possible for people of our postwar generations to penetrate into the spiritual world of these old inhabitants of Lithuania. Elderly people in Lithuania remember the numerous Jewish communities of prewar years—men who with their horses and wagons carried water and painted signboards, were busy in trade and craft, prayed to God and fostered their national existence by all possible means. Statistics give the figure of 240 thousands. This vital and energetic community greatly contributed to the arts in Lithuania. The creative progress of gifted individuals was undoubtedly stimulated by two exhibitions of Marc Chagall, one in Kaunas (1921), the other in Vilnius (1935). Creative potentials were based both on close links with the ethnic tradition and an intense involvement in everyday life. Young people with artistic inclinations attended the art workshop of Sledzinski in Vilnius, the art workshop of Justinas Vienozinskis in Kaunas or the Art School there. Later many of them continued their art studies in Paris, Berlin, or America. Prominent Lithuanian artists greatly appreciated the peculiar national traits marking the works of their Jewish colleagues.

In 1938 Julius Gens, an enthusiastic art collector living in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, sponsored a mobile exhibition of Jewish graphic art. His aim was to show that modern Jewish art existed and continued to develop and enrich national traditions. Because of World War II the exhibition did not reach Kaunas. A greater part of it has been lost, but we can see fragments of this collection in our present exhibition. In fact all this exhibition is fragmentary. We get a fractured picture of Jewish self-expression in Lithuania.

This makes it deeply tragic but no less inspiring.

I would like to mention works I enjoy most but that would take too much time and place. So let me limit my notes to an impression of two. Jakob Messenblum is my favorite among the graphic artists. I greatly appreciate the Renaissance spirit of Mane Katz and the mastery of color in portraits by Natan Altman. There is a special thrill in works that have become unique witnesses of the time—for instance, the poem by Solom Zelmanavicius dealing with Graf Potocki who in the 17th century turned to Judaism and was executed; the author dedicated his poem to scenographer Liudas Truikys, his Lithuanian colleague. Arbit Blatas painted portraits of Juozas Vaicuk, one of the pioneers of Lithuanian theater, and of Sofija Binkiene, wife of the poet and dramatist Kazys Binkis. Close relations between Jewish and Lithuanian culture are obvious in the work of Chaimas Fainsteinas, author of engravings depicting old Jewish quarters and streets and peculiar ethnic types and presented also by a series of portraits of Lithuanian men of science. We find some works by Cerne Percikovicute reproduced in the recently published "History of Lithuanian Art." Here we can take a fuller view of her talent and realize its wider Jewish context. Max Band gets in touch with us through his famous painting "My child." He is one of those Lithuanian Jewish artists who have gained worldwide renown. There still exists works by him as well as by Arbit Blatas that were lost during the war and could be searched for in Lithuania and elsewhere.

The section on graphic art has acquired range and weight thanks to numerous exhibits from the aforementioned Gens collection. Postwar art has its interesting representatives in the persons of Samuelis Rozinas, Ada Skliutauskaite and Adomas Jacovskis. A special part in the exhibition are works by artists who were born in Lithuania or started their art studies here but later went to remote countries, like Segall (Brazil), Belmont (Canada), Joseph Rascob (Mexico). With classic Russian art are linked such prominent sculptors as Ginzburg and Mark Antokolski.

Putting this exhibition together has proved a laborious task. Emanuelis Zingeris, the initiator and organizer, spent five years searching, checking, collecting exhibits and literary sources, accumulating all the necessary information, overcoming bureaucratic obstacles. But the final result is rewarding, an important part of the cultural heritage of Lithuania has been raised from oblivion. Both Jewish and Lithuanian culture have become richer by it. And closer too. Many visitors realize that it is only the first step on a long path of cultural rebirth and deepening cultural relations. They express the opinion that the State Jewish Museum closed in 1948 should be revived and consider the exhibition of Jewish art in Lithuania an impressive proof that this is possible in the near future. □

In Hitlerite Hell

Sol Flapan

A little known page in the history of the Nazi-German occupation of Poland in World War II was recalled some-time ago in the national daily Trybuna Ludu. It was a three column story with accompanying photo headlined "Arabs in the Hitlerite Hell." It deals with the fate of Arab and Black African soldiers of French and British colonies taken prisoner by the Nazis.

According to the Trybuna Ludu contributor everything points to a painfully slow illumination of this dreadful page of history.

This mainly concerns the crimes committed on POWs by all kinds of Nazi-German formations from special service forces and the police to the regular army, allegedly innocent of war crimes according to some western historians. Relevant archives in the Federal Republic of Germany are inaccessible to researchers, historians especially those of the former Nazi-occupied countries, says TL reporter Jacek E. Wilczur.

The fate of British and French Army Arab POWs were grimmer than grim, he says. He cites witnesses testifying before Polish courts at trials of Nazi war criminals immediately after the war of the exceptionally bestial treatment meted out to these men by their racist captors. Witnesses told the courts that these colonial people were "treated worse than animals" by the camp guards, the elite super-Nazis of the notorious black-uniformed SS and the "guiltless" Wehr-macht soldiers.

Hence, observes the Trybuna Ludu story, the official anti-Semitism of the Third Reich — its Nazi party, the SS, the police and all institutions without exception — concerned not only Jews and descendants of Jews to the third generation. (This is not intended to negate or minimize the scope and final effect of the Holocaust). But the Nazi racist policy of exterminating people of Semitic background also was directed at Arabs.

The "brief romance of the Nazi Reich with reactionary nationalist Arabs headed by the erstwhile Grand Mufti of Jerusalem was completely without significance," says TL. Everything written on that still only partially-illuminated page of the Arab in the Hitler hell says that in the event of a Nazi victory over the anti-Axis coalition a Holocaust awaited the Arabs as well....

The Jewish "Golden Age" under Arab rule in the Middle Ages, the generally good neighborly relations between Jew and Arab before the advent and influence of political Zionism, the Holocaust of the Jews, and intended extermination by the Nazis of the Arabs—all cry out for present day Jewish-Arab empathy and solidarity. □

Sol Flapan is our Polish correspondent.



Lapel pin issued by Jewish Cultural Society to commemorate the 100,000 Jews in Vilnius who perished in the Holocaust.

A MINI-REVIEW

Beware Lest the Nightmare Recur published by the Association of Jewish Communities in the GDR, Grafischer Volksbetrieb Völkerverfreundschaft Dresden, Berlin, 1988, 111 pages.

This is a "documentary account" of the many events that took place in the German Democratic Republic last year in "remembrance of the Nazi pogrom in the night of 9 November 1938". It contains speeches by leaders of the government (including the president of the People's Chamber of the GDR which appeared in our last issue) and messages from prominent Jews outside the GDR that were read at commemorative events (including one from Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the [Reform] Association of American Hebrew Congregations).

There are twenty pages of photographs and a fifteen page listing of events that took place from January through November.

Among the most touching of the photos are those of the dedication and laying of the foundation stone for the reconstruction of the New Synagogue on Berlin's Oranienburger Strasse on November 10 in the presence of the head of the government and the Socialist Unity Party, Erich Honecker, and other government and public figures as well as Jewish leaders from the GDR and abroad. The rebuilt synagogue, which was desecrated on November 9, 1938 and destroyed during the war, will house a Jewish cultural center as well as facilities for religious activities. According to the publication it "will serve as an international meeting place, a center for the cultivation of the Jewish religion, for preservation of Jewish culture and traditions and for research into the antifascist resistance struggle, as well as a memorial and a warning".

Bulgaria Honored for Saving Jewish Population from the Nazis

Reprinted from the People's Daily World

Bulgaria saved its entire Jewish population of 50,000 during World War II, the only nation in Europe to have done so. In November in Sofia, representatives of Jewish communities from all over the world gathered on the 45th anniversary of a mass demonstration to prevent the deportation of Jews to pay tribute to Bulgaria and its Communist-led anti-fascist resistance for this unique humanitarian feat.

The two-day Sofia symposium, "Saving the Bulgarian Jews, 1941-1944," drew participants from 11 countries, including Israel and the United States, as well as many prominent Bulgarians. It received a message of greetings from Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov, an active participant in the events.

Zhivkov said, "In Bulgaria, the trains of death never left for the Nazi gas chambers, despite the decision of the Bulgarian monarchist-fascist regime and the Nazis...The 20th century, which witnessed these events, could go down in history as a century of reason, a century in which awareness of the need to protect the entire human race becomes an awareness of all nations on earth."

Serge Cwajgenbaum, director of the European Jewish Congress, told the meeting, "We were brought together by a unique fact in European history — Bulgaria is the country where all the Jews were saved."

Gerald Kaufman, foreign policy spokesman for the British Labor Party, said, "In an era and a situation when it was easy to stand aloof and look on, and when it was very difficult to stand up for your principles, the Bulgarians wrote a page in world history that will remain indelibly inscribed as long as world history exists."

"Glory to the noble Bulgarian people!" These words were spoken in the Bulgarian language by Shulamit Shamir, the wife of Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir. She was born and grew up in Bulgaria, and took part in the Sofia meeting.

Preben Nilson, representative of Veterans of the Danish Liberation Struggle, said in Sofia that "the saving of each Jew is a miracle and the saving of the 50,000 Bulgarian Jews is a miracle 50,000 times over."

The Danish anti-fascist underground secretly evacuated most but not all of Denmark's 7,000 Jews into nearby neutral Sweden in 1943, just before the Nazis intended to round them up for deportation.

The situation in Denmark, however, differed from that in Bulgaria, where mass demonstrations, sabotage and nationwide armed resistance prevented the Bulgarian Jews from being deported or harmed by the Nazis and their Bulgarian fascist helpers. □



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A Document

Russian Educators Planning Yiddish Classes

Officials in charge of education in the Russian Republic of the Soviet Union now assert their attitude on the teaching of Yiddish in the Republic's elementary schools has changed and they are preparing to open optional classes for the study of Yiddish in some schools where parents request this course as early as the fall-term beginning in September 1989.

This and related information is revealed in a two-page interview which appeared in the February 1989 issue of the Yiddish monthly literary journal in Moscow, *Sovetish Heymland*. The interview was conducted by the journal's staff member, Gennady Estraiikh, with two officials of the Ministry of Public Education of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, Alexander A. Yegorov and his aide, Alla Lvovna Bugayova, the chief of the Division for Nationality Schools.

Gennady Estraiikh is one of the new Yiddish writers of short stories associated with *Sovetish Heymland*. He is 37 years old and lives in Moscow. The slightly abridged text of the interview entitled, *A Shmuess in Ministerium (A Discussion in the Ministry)* follows:

Estraiikh: As you know, almost all educational institutions in which the instruction was conducted in Yiddish were closed down at the end of the 1930s. From that time on, with only a few exceptions, Yiddish was not taught anywhere. What measures is your Ministry adopting in order to make up for this gap in the teaching of Yiddish, Jewish history and culture?

Yegorov: At the very first it must be said that the position of the authorities in public education has changed. It is no secret that instruction in the languages of the nationalities (in the Russian Federation) was for many years viewed as a secondary problem. For example, the publication in 1982 of a special (Yiddish) textbook, *Alef-Bais (Alphabet)*, was regarded as exceptional. Our present position is as follows: In every city, in every community of the republic, groups or classes for learning the Yiddish language have to be organized if this is requested by parents and pupils.

Estraiikh: What are you planning to undertake in Moscow, in the city which has a Jewish population of almost a quarter of a million people?

Yegorov: In the last days of the previous year we held a consultation here in the Ministry with the participation of representatives of the administration for public education in Moscow. It was decided then to institute courses for adults at an early date and that the number of these courses will

depend on the demand for them; also, to proceed with Yiddish instruction in a few of the schools in Moscow at the beginning of the coming school year that is, in September 1989. Before us looms the big task of clarifying the wishes of the parents. The choice of the elementary schools for these courses will depend on the "geography" of the upcoming contingent of pupils. Of course, it will be necessary to inform the population of this adopted decision.

Estraiikh: Has a particular organizational method for the instruction of Yiddish in the schools been chosen?

Yegorov: We reckon to establish groups in selected elementary schools for optional instruction in Yiddish. However, a few pedagogues dispute this decision because it would increase the learning load of the pupils who will be studying in these future Yiddish language groups... This problem needs to be attentively explored. In general, there are many questions. First, it is difficult to find a sufficient number of qualified teachers. Not every person who knows Yiddish is capable of giving instruction in this language. One has to know the methodology... It was decided to conduct a seminar in methodology in the first half of the current year in order to raise the qualifications of the teachers. We hope to be assisted by the journal, *Sovetish Heymland*, around which are gathered almost all the specialists in the field of Yiddish.

Estraiikh: Will it be possible to attract teachers to this seminar from other cities or republics?

Bugayova: Undoubtedly. In general we hope to solve the problem of pedagogical cadres in the coming years on the basis of the graduates of the Pedagogical Institute in Birobidzhan which will be opened this year, as well as on the basis of the existing Pedagogical School in Birobidzhan where they are already providing instruction in Yiddish. There are also plans to prepare teachers of Yiddish in a pedagogical school in Moscow.

Many teachers will be required because according to our present conception a nationality language must be learned in kindergartens as well as in schools. This is already partly practiced in the Jewish Autonomous Region (Birobidzhan).

Incidentally, not long ago I especially visited Birobidzhan and I was favorably impressed. I attended a Yiddish lesson in the second grade where 33 pupils were learning — among them 15 non-Jews. The lessons proceeded in an interesting manner. The point here is not merely the professional assessment of the specialists who were with me, but also the fact that none of the pupils or parents failed to continue in

these lessons.

Yegorov: Yes, I was also in Birobidzhan and I believe they made there a certain step in the right direction. The most important thing is that there has been a change in respect to Yiddish on the part of the public and by the leadership. Previously it was even the Jews, too, who quite often showed no interest in their mother tongue. I want to emphasize that without a desire for this on the part of the Jewish population nothing will come of this delicate restructuring.

Bugayova: Since we are discussing Birobidzhan I should like to appeal through your journal to the potential teachers of Yiddish who live in the various republics. Birobidzhan is prepared to create all the conditions necessary for those who express the wish to come out there, if only for a few years, in order to put the instruction of Yiddish on its feet at the Pedagogical Institute that is being established there...

Yegorov: It would also be good to inform your readers that the Ministry (of Public Education) is prepared to consider proposals of authors and authors' collectives in regard to creating various methodological learning materials. An important role will be played, of course, by the study books and manuals that are being prepared by the staff members of *Sovetish Heymland*... Obviously it is necessary to have new dictionaries, new textbooks and chrestomathics for the various grades.

Bugayova: Also, study aids on history, books on nationality customs, on the nationality culture. A few periodicals that are issued in the languages of other Soviet peoples have introduced features, "Do you know your mother tongue?" Your journal could also assist those who are learning Yiddish.

Estraikh: You already know, surely, of our feature of many years, "Lessons in Yiddish" and about the Yiddish-Russian Dictionary which our journal has printed as a supplement to the readers. In the current year the readers of *Sovetish Heymland* will receive other useful materials which will aid them in a deeper study of the mother tongue. But a journal is a journal! As for books, letters of our readers contain many complaints about the miserable print run of, let us say, *Alef-Bais*. Will the same not occur with these new editions?

Yegorov: This need not happen. It will be necessary to have proper orders from the local educational authorities. We are prepared to allow part of the print run of the new textbooks for the open market, without prior advance orders...

Estraikh: How do you feel about the self-learning method of studying Yiddish? It is not in every city that a class or group can be organized. Even in large cities there are individuals who prefer to study on their own.

Bugayova: This is a good idea... Some thought must be given on how this can be better organized. Again, in this

matter we cannot do without assistance from your journal.

Yegorov: And a textbook for this purpose will have to be especially prepared.

Estraikh: The last question, or more precisely, a proposal: Why not organize in your Ministry a working group which will include specialists in the field of Yiddish. Such a group could work at public expense, at least until such time when Yiddish, Yiddish literature and history will finally become a subject for the scientific and scholarly institutes of the country.

Bugayova: We shall await proposals from *Sovetish Heymland* on the composition of such a working group.

Yegorov: I should like to thank the editorial staff of *Sovetish Heymland* for its active position in this matter. We count on a continuing cooperation. We definitely recognize these problems and we must solve them together. Perhaps not everything will work out right away. We don't doubt that much depends on you and us. □

Introduction and translation by Sid Resnick.

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Continued on p. 20

דעריבער דארף מען. לויט מײן באשיידענע מיינונג, צו ריידן אין אן אנדערן טאָן. ווי נעמט מען זיך די רעכט אָנווייזן אַז: ״ס׳מוז דורכגעפירט ווערן אין מאַסקווע אַ גרעסערע אויפקלער־אַרבעט מצד די דאָרטיקע אידיש־אינסטאַנץ״.

איך וואָלט פֿאַרגעלייגט דעם וועלט־ראַט דורכצופירן אין ישראל און אויפקלער־אַרבעט וועגן דער נויטיקייט פון פֿאַרשטאַרקן אידיש־קולטור־אַרבעט אין ישראל און צו שאַפן אַן אנדער אַטמאָספֿערע פון טאַלעראַנץ, קאָאָפּעראַציע, פון קעגנזייטיקע באַזוכן פון סאָוועטיש־אידישע און ישראלדיקע שרייבער אין אידיש. ס׳איז פֿאַראַן אַ גרויס געביט פֿאַר קאָאָפּעראַציע, פֿאַר העלפן זיך קעגנזייטיק, ווי גלייכע מיט גלייכע באַזייטיקנדיק די געזאַמלטע פֿאַראַרטילן...

גרעסערע אויפקלער־אַרבעט מצד די דאָרטיקע אידיש־אינסטאַנץ. וועגן שיקן לערן־מאַטעריאַלן וואָלט גוט געווען צו באַהאַנדלען בשותפותיק, נישט געבנדיק עצות...

איך וואָלט געראַטן דעם וועלט־ראַט אויפצוהערן צו געבן אָנווייזונגען, וואָס די סאָוועטישע אידן דאַרפן טאָן. לאָזט זיי באַשליסן. דאָס איז אומבאַרינגט נויטיק כבדי אײנזשטעלן אַן אַטמאָספֿערע פון דורכרייד, פון אײנפֿאַרשטיין זיך. ס׳וואָלט אויך געדאַרפט אַוועקגעשטעלט ווערן אויפן טאָג־אַרדענונג די פֿראַגע פון אויסטריש פון שאַפונגען צווישן סאָוועטיש־אידישע שרייבער און ישראלדיקע שרייבער. לויט מײן מיינונג דאַרף מען אַוועקשטעלן די פֿראַגע פון קאָאָפּעראַציע צווישן סאָוועטיש־אידישע און ישראלדיקע שרייבער.

Correction

Ronald C. Kent's "Jewish Youth and the Resistance in Nazi Germany" in our Jan./Feb. issue should read as follows on p.19:

"The sources above, then, easily refute the "minimal" thesis advanced by Hoffman, Gordon Craig and other historians, including Henry Turner in his recent study, *German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler* (New York, 1985) and "as documented by Peter Altmann, et al., in the book *Der deutsche antifaschistische Widerstand 1933-1945* (Frankfurt/M., 1984)..."

EDITOR DAVID SELTZER IS EIGHTY-FIVE

The *Jewish Affairs* Editorial Committee congratulates David Seltzer, editor of our Yiddish section, on his 85th birthday. The Committee wishes him, "Biz hundert un tsvuntsik alongside your beloved Edka."

A former city editor of the *Freiheit*, Seltzer is the author of a book of reminiscences of his hometown, Soroki in Moldavia and four books of poetry. Our last issue has an English translation of one of his poems. Two of them appear in the current issue's Yiddish section.

Contributors Continued from p 20

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און תופיק אן אראבער,
טאר ביידע וואוינען אין תל-אביב
מיט קינדער, אייניקלעך און ווייבער.

איז ווי-זשע קאן מען ברוגז זיין
און שטענדיק אָנפירן דעם קריג,
אַז פענצטער קוקן העל אַריין
און קינדער האָבן זיך גאַר ליב.

און יצחק בעט ביים ווייב און קינד:
העלפט מיר אויסשטרעקן די האַנט,
און תופיק מיט זיין הויז-געזינד
ברעכן אויפגעשטעלטע וואַנט.

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כיוואַלט וועלן הערן —
ווי ביי ביידע ברעגן פון דעם ירדן
זינט מען היינט בלויז איין געזאַנג.
די ביקס געלאָזן אין געצעלט
און אויסגעשטרעקט די ברודער-האַנט.
און שפּראַכן גיסן זיך אין כאָר,
זיך חברן מיט האַדסאַן און מיט נעוואַ,
מיט ברעגן פון דעם ירדן און דונאַ.

כיוואַלט וועלן הערן —
ווי מען טרינקט לחיים ביי דעם ירדן,
און ס'רופן-יאבער זיך די בערג און טאָלן,
און מען שליסט אַ שלום-בונד אויף אייביק
און ס'קלינגען רייד פון די נביאים,
און שטאַלנדיק גייט אויף אַ פּרילינג
פון ברודערשאַפט און גליק.

די פראגע פון קאָאָפּעראַציע צווישן סאָוועטיש-אידישע און ישראלדיקע שרייבער

פון: יוד-לאַמער, (תל-אביב, ישראל)

האַבן אַן דער הילף פון דאָזיקן "קאָמיטעט" אַנטוויקלט אַ פאַרצווייגטע קולטור-טעטיקייט אין דער וועלט-ראַט האָט ענדלעך דערזען, אַז פענס קומט פאַר. לעצטנס האָט טאַקע דער וועלט-ראַט אָפּגעהאַלטן אַ ספּעציעלע יזענג אויף וועלכער י. קאַרן, אַלס פאַרזיצער פון וועלט-ראַט האָט אַוועקגעשטעלט אויפן טאַג-אַרדענונג דאַס נייע אין אַרישן קולטור-לעבן אין סאָוועטן-פאַרבאַנד.

באַגריסנדיק דאַס נייע אין דעם וועלט-ראַט וויל זיך באַמערקן, אַז י. קאַרן וואַלט געמעגט זיך באַפרייען צו באַהאַנדלען די פּראָגע נישט אַלס אַפּוטרופּוס, נישט פון אויבן. "מיר פון אונזער זייט — זאָגט י. קאַרן מעשה באַלעבאַס — דאַרפן אויסרונצן די דאָזיקע געשאַפּענע לאַגע און זען, אַז עס זאָל דערמעגלעכט ווערן אין עטלעכע גרויסע שטעט צו שיקן לערן-מאַטעריאַלן אין ביכער, צוגעבנדיק, אַז: "די צייט איז אַ היסטאָרישע און מיר מוזן אויסנוצן, די געלעגנהייט. מען טאַר דאַס נישט דורכלאָזן און זיין פּאַסיוו" ("לעצטע נייעס", 13.1.89), אַנוויינדיק, אַז: "אויסער דעם מוז דורכגעפירט ווערן אין מאַקסווע אַ

דער וועלט-ראַט פאַר אידיש און אידישע קולטור אין ישראל האָט אָנגעהויבן צו באַמערקן. אַז אויפן געביט פון אידישער קולטור-טעטיקייט אין סאָוועטן-פאַרבאַנד קומט פאַר אַ וויכטיקע אַנטוויקלונג. ס'איז נישט איין מאָל אויסגעקומען צו רופן די אויפמערקזאַמקייט פון די טוער פון אידישן וועלט-ראַט אויף דער פּאָליטישער אַנטוויקלונג אויפן געביט פון אידישער קולטור-טעטיקייט אין סאָוועטן-פאַרבאַנד. מען האָט גערופן די אויפמערקזאַמקייט דערויף, אַז דער אַרגאַן פון אידישן וועלט-ראַט "אידיש-וועלט" פאַרשווייגט סיסטעמאַטיש און אינפאַרמירט נישט אירע ליינער וועגן די וויכטיקע אַנטוויקלונגען אויפן געביט פון אידישער קולטור-טעטיקייט אין סאָוועטן-פאַרבאַנד.

אויף דער לעצטער זיטער סעסיע פון וועלט-ראַט פאַר אידיש האָט מען נאָך לויטן אַלטן סטיל פון באַקאַטירן, פעלשן און פאַרשווייגן דאַס וואָס קומט פאַר אין סאָוועטן-פאַרבאַנד. געשאַפן אַ קאָמיטעט פאַר די סאָוועטישע אידן. ס'האָט זיך אָבער אַרויסגעוויזן, אַז די סאָוועטישע אידן

באגריסונגען צום 70סטן געבוירנטאג פון מאיר ווילנער

שייערער ח' מאיר ווילנער,

פארטיי און דער קאמוניסטישער פארטיי פון סאוועטן-פארבאנד.

צו זיין 70סטן געבוירנטאג איז באשלאסן געווארן צוצוטיילן דעם גענסעק פון צ"ק פון מק"י, ח' מאיר ווילנער די אויסצייכענונג פון דער אקטאבער רעוואלוציע.

פארזיצער פון פרעזידיום פון

העכסטן סאוועט פון

סאוועטן-פארבאנד -

מ. גארבאטשאוו

סעקרעטאר פון פרעזידיום פון

העכסטן סאוועט פון

סאוועטן-פארבאנד

ט. וונטשאשווילי

דער צ"ק פון דער סאוועטישער קאמוניסטישער פארטיי באגריסט אייך פון גאנצן הארצן אלס אקטיוויסט אין דער קאמוניסטישער באוועגונג אין ישראל און אויך דער וועלט. אלע אייערע כוחות, אייער רייכע פאליטישע און לעבנס-דערפארונג, אלס פארטראגט און אינטערנאציאנאל-ליסט, ווידמעט איר דעם קאמף פאר די יסודותדיקע אינטערעסן פון די ארבעטנדיקע אין אייער לאנד, אידן און אראבער, פאר דערנענטערן דעם טאג, ווען די מיטל-מזרחדישע פעלקער, וועלן קענען סוף-סוף, אן אונטערדיק, לעבן אן מלחמה, פיינטשאפט און גוואלט און געניסן פון דער נישט רעקלאמירבארער רעכט אויסצוווילן אויף א פרייען אופן זייער אנטוויקלונגס-וועג.

ווי שטרייכן אונטער מיט צופרידניקייט דעם באדייטנדיקן בייטראג פון מק"י און פון אייך פעדעראלעך דערצו, אז היינט קען מען אין געזעלשאפטלעכע-פאליטישע קרייזן אין ישראל אלץ מער זען דאס נייע אנט-מלחמה-טראכטן, וואס נעגירט די פאליטיק פון אגרעסיע, אקופאציע און וואפן-געיעג.

אין סאוועטן-פארבאנד שאצט מען זייער שטארק אפ אייער טעטיקייט פאר שטארקן די באציונגען פון פארברידערונג און אינטערנאציאנאליסטישער סאלידאר-טעט, וואס הערשן צווישן מק"י און קר"פ און פאר אנטוויקלען קעגנזייטיקע פארשטענדעניש צווישן די פעלקער פון אונזערע לענדער.

מיר ווינטשן אייך ח' מאיר ווילנער, א סך געזונט און ווייטערדיקע דערגרייכונגען אינעם קאמף פאר די המאנישע אידעאלן פון שלום, דעמאקראטיע און סאציאליזם.

צ"ק פון דער סאוועטישער
קאמוניסטישער פארטיי

* * *

דער העכסטער סאוועט פון סאוועטן-פארבאנד האט באשלאסן וועגן צוטיילן דעם גענסעק פון דער ישראלדיקער קאמוניסטישער פארטיי די אויסצייכענונג פון דער אקטאבער-רעוואלוציע פאר זיינע פארדינסטן אינעם קאמף פאר סאציאלן פראגרעס, דעמאקראטיע, שלום און פריינטשאפט צווישן די פעלקער, פאר זיין גרויסן בייטראג צו שטארקן די באציונגען פון פארברידערונג צווישן דער ישראלדיקער קאמוניסטישער

צום ח' מאיר ווילנער זיינען אָנגעקומען באגריסונגען פון צ"ק פון דער ישראלדיקער קאמוניסטישער פארטייען אין פון קאמוניסטישע פארטייען פון די סאציאליסטישע און אנדערע לענדער.

The following greeting was sent to Meir Vilner by the Communist Party USA:

The National Committee of the Communist party USA extends best wishes to you on the occasion of your 70th birthday, and congratulates you on being awarded the Order of the October Revolution. We want you to know we appreciate your sound and stalwart leadership in the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism in your country and throughout the world. In your ceaseless efforts in behalf of the right of Palestinians to self-determination under the leadership of the PLO, you and the Israeli Communist Party have set an outstanding example of uncompromising internationalism under the most difficult conditions that inspires Communists and progressives everywhere to do likewise. We wish you many more years of sterling leadership in the Israeli and world Communist movements.

יידישע ענינים

בער גרין, פאָעט און עסיאיסט, געשטאַרבן
 בער גרין (א. פרינץ), לאַנגיאַריקער מיטאַרבעטער פון דער "מאַרגן-פרייהייט" און מיטגליד פון רעדאַקאָלעגיע פון זשורנאַל "יידישע קולטור" איז געשטאַרבן אין אַ היים פאַר עלטערע מענטשן אויף דער איסט-סאיד.
 שבת, דעם 11-טן פעברואַר, 2 נאַכמיטאָג איז פאַר-געקומען אַן הֹכרה אין דער "וואַ" אויף וועסט 23-טע גאַס, לעבן 7-טער עוועניו.

בער גרין, דער האָרעפּאַשנער זינגער פון אידישן ליד און קולטור-וואַרט

בער גרין איז איינער פון די פּיאָנערן פּראָגרעסיווע אידישע אַרבעטער-ליטעראַטורן אין פּאָלן-שרייבער, וועלכע האָבן אויסגעקעמפט און אויסגעטראָטן דעם וועג צו דעם איצטיקן אידישן שרייבער-פאַראַיין און "זאַמלונגען".

אונזער ליטעראַטור-געשיכטע וועט נאָך אַמאָל פאַרצייענען ווי אזוי מיט דעם אויפקום פון דער טאַג-צייטונג "פרייהייט" אין 1922 איז געבוירן געוואָרן דער זינגער שרייבער, אַרבעטער שרייבער-פאַראַיין מיט זיינע אויסגאַבן "יונגט" און "יונג-קונצע", וויאזוי עס איז אַנשטאַנען דער "פּראָלעטען" מיט זיין קעמפּערישן אַרגאַן "סיגנאַל" און שפעטער "אידיש-אַמעריקע" ביז דעם איצטיקן שרייבער-פאַראַיין ביים איקוף מיט זיין פּרעכטיקן פּעריאָדישן זאַמלבוך "זאַמלונגען".

בער גרין איז פון ערשטן טראַט זיינעם אויפן אַמעריקאַנער באַדן אין 1923 געוואָרן אַ זייל אין די רייען פון די פּראָלעטאַרישע אידישע שרייבער.

פון די ערשטע לידער וואָס ער האָט פאַרעפנטלעכט אין 1924 אין "די פּעדער" און "אויפקום" איז ער גלייך אַרגאַניזירט-עקערטאַר פון "פּראָלעטען", אין דער "יאָמער". ער איז געוואָרן אַ שטענדיקער מיטאַרבעטער און ליטעראַטור-רעדאַקטאָר פון דער "מאַרגן-פרייהייט". אין 1933 איז ער אַרויסגענופן געוואָרן קיין קאַנאַדע צו רעדאַגירן די פּראָגרעסיווע אידישע וואַכנשריפט "דער קאַמף". נאָך זיין צוריקקומען קיין ניו-יאָרק איז ער געוואָרן דער האָרעפּאַשניק אין רעדאַקציע-קאָלעקטיוו פון אונזער "מאַרגן-פרייהייט".

אַלס יונג-שחבר און קאָלעגע-שרייבער פיל איך זיך גליקלעך צו האָבן געשאפּט מיט בער גרינען האַנט-אין-האַנט אין די רייען פון קעמפּערישן אידישן ליטעראַרישן אַוואַנגאַרד.

דוד זעלצער

צום אייביקן אַנדענקן



בער גרין

אַ טייל פון דיר

פון בער גרין

איך בין, מיין ווונדער-וועלט, אַ טייל פון דיר,
 אַ פּערז פון דיין פּרילינג-דיקן שיר.
 אַ ציגל אין די מויערן פון דינע שטעט,
 אַ פּאַס רויערד אין דיין פּעלדישן בעט.

אַ געזונט קערנדל אין זוימען צום פאַרוינען,
 אַ ברודער אין דינע קעמפּערישע רייען.
 אויף דינע פּעלדער — אַ זוינקע זאַג, אין דיין שיר-השירים — אַ העלער קלאַנג.

איך בין, מיין ווונדער-וועלט, אַ טייל פון דיר,
 אַ זינגער פון דיין פּרייהייט-שיר!