

# Congress Weekly

*CA Review of Jewish Interests*

## **Shattered Unity Who Will Pick Up The Torch?**

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## **Intolerance of 'Tolerance'**

*LOUIS ADAMIC*

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V# FEBRUARY & APRILS MAY & JUNE

# !CHRONICLE

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# OF EVENTS

## AT HOME:

THE U. S. STATE Department urged Britain and Israel to treat the shooting down of five RAF planes in the Negev as a "regrettable incident only" and expressed the hope that the incident would not be allowed to interfere with the Israeli-Egyptian truce negotiations to be held on the island of Rhodes.

ISRAEL asked the Security Council to investigate British military maneuvers in the Middle East on the grounds that recent British action is likely to endanger "international peace and security." Israel accused Britain of violating the UN truce resolution of May 29, 1948 and of "fomenting an artificial crisis" on the eve of talks between Israel and Egypt.

A GROUP of world-famous concert artists and conductors informed the Chicago Symphony Orchestra that they would not appear as soloists or guest leaders of that Orchestra if it went through with its contract offer making Wilhelm Furtwaengler principal conductor. The artists, including Vladimir Horowitz, Artur Rubinstein, Lily Pons and Andre Kostelanetz, based their action on charges that Furtwaengler had remained in Germany during the war and had conducted leading German music organizations before Hitler and other top Nazis.

IN A BRIEF filed before the U. S. Supreme Court, the American Jewish Congress challenged the constitutionality of an Hawaiian statute which curbs the teaching of foreign languages to children. The AJC brief urged that the law curtails religious liberty and leads toward "cultural genocide."

PRESIDENT TRUMAN asked Congress to grant the Displaced Persons Commission a \$5,200,000 appropriation for its work in bringing displaced persons to the United States during the last half of this year and the first six months of 1950.

A NEW DP BILL, sponsored by Democratic Senators McGrath and Neely, went to the Senate Judiciary Committee with indications of early action. The bill would allow 400,000 DP's to enter the United States by June 1952 instead of 200,000 by June 1950, under the present law.

THE WHITE HOUSE announced that President Truman will address a testimonial dinner in honor of Dr. Chaim Weizmann, first President of Israel, to be held on February 19 in New York by the American Committee for the Weizmann Institute of Science.

A SURVEY of the IRO's resettlement program has shown that if they continue at their present rate, a minimum of 250,000 out of the nearly 750,000 refugees will be in countries of permanent residence by this time next year.

A GROWING DESIRE among American Jewish youths to serve the community as rabbis was reported by Rabbi Robert L. Katz, director of admissions of Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion.

THE EXISTENCE of nationwide racial and religious prejudice in the United States is reported in a publication issued by the Library of Congress as a guide to members of Congress. The publication was prepared by W. Brooke Graves, Government expert in public administration, who points out that while the Jews and the Negroes are the most numerous of the minorities, they are not the only minority groups discriminated against.

## ISRAEL:

STATEMENTS of two captured RAF pilots regarding the orders they had received from their commander, documents in their possession and the fact that they bailed out over Israeli territory, offered irrefutable proof that the five RAF planes shot down by Israeli forces were on an armed photo-reconnaissance mission.

BRITISH ARMS deliveries to Egypt during the past few months have amounted to \$200,000,000 and included some of the most modern design jet fighters, naval vessels, heavy artillery tanks, heavy caliber shells and aviation gasoline according to dispatches from Tel Aviv. The British denied the charge.

TWENTY-TWO separate lists of candidates for the forthcoming general elections including three Arab lists were submitted to the Central Elections Committee before the deadline. The total number of candidates for seats in the 120-member Constituent Assembly is 1,288.

A NEW SETTLEMENT has been established in the Negev, by a group of Buchenwald concentration camp survivors. During the past week a total of nine new settlements were founded in various sections of Israel. Four more will be established next week. Former inhabitants of Beth Haarava (the settlement which was the subject of the film "A House in the Desert") will resettle in one of the first of nine new settlements. Beth Haarava was overrun and destroyed by the Arab Legion.

THE VAAD LEUMI, Palestine Jewry's elected assembly which served local government needs during the Mandatory regime, and all its affiliated institutions, will be officially suspended this month and all its functions will be turned over to the State.

THE ISRAELI NEWSPAPER *Al Hamishmar*, organ of Mapam, charged that the British Government has been secretly recruiting and mobilizing former Nazi army and air officers in Europe

and facilitating their transportation to Arab army bases in the Middle East.

ISRAEL has asked the U. S. Department of Commerce to help it obtain American industrial and commercial publications to aid in developing the State.

MORE THAN 2,500 Egyptians were killed, wounded or captured during the most recent fighting in the Negev, according to Col. Yigal Yadin, Israeli Army chief of operations.

A HALF-MILLION dunams of wastelands and holdings abandoned in Israel because of the war are now under cultivation by settlement farmers, new settlers and landless Arab farmers.

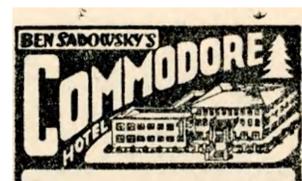
## ABROAD:

IT WAS REPORTED from London that the British would not lodge a complaint with the UN Security Council over the downing of five RAF planes by the Israelis, as originally planned, because "apparently the British bowed to heavy pressure from the United States." From Washington it was reported that President Truman has been following the situation closely and that the State Department statement urging that the shooting down of the planes be considered "regrettable" was issued on the direct instructions of the President.

BRITAIN is moving strong forces into "British installations" in the Middle East, especially in Transjordan. Naval vessels, troops and planes are being sent to "strengthen communication lines," although the *Manchester Guardian*, influential British newspaper, called the dispatch of troops to Qaba in Transjordan "ill-timed" because it gives an "air of a concerted plan of action against Israel."

COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED Hungary which has given the Jews the status of a preferred minority has changed its policy and now "seems to regard Jews as another class to be liquidated—not by physical or economic extinction but as a bargaining asset in trade negotiations with Israel," according to *New York Times* correspondent John MacCormac. MacCormac reports that it is now difficult for Hungarian Jews to obtain visas for Israel and that the Government "is willing to continue to permit Jews to leave—but only if Hungary receives an equivalent in citrus fruits for what they may take with them."

CONTINUING its "get-soft-with-the-Germans" policy, a special U. S. Army Review Commission has recommended clemency for 29 Germans convicted of war crimes at the Dachau concentration camp.



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# Congress Kfeeklu\*

*A Review of Jewish Interests*

## TIMELY TOPICS

### *Justice for Refugees in Cyprus*

WHILE BRITAIN with an air of injured innocence is filling the headlines with outcries against Israel's alleged "aggression," the world should not lose sight of the fact that the same Britain, whose representatives invariably invoke the concepts of morality and justice in international relations, is guilty of a gross violation of all the noble principles it publicly professes. We have reference to Britain's immoral and illegal detention of over 10,000 Jewish refugees in its private concentration camp at Cyprus.

Recently, Dr. Stephen S. Wise made public a letter which, as president of the American Jewish Congress, he had sent to the British Ambassador at Washington on the subject of the Cyprus detention. In this letter, written on the occasion of the return to London of the Magna Carta manuscript which had been loaned to the Library of Congress, Dr. Wise recalled to the Ambassador the principles of freedom established by that famous Charter of Liberty which, he pointed out, were being violated by the British Government in forcibly detaining thousands of Jews at Cyprus for no crime other than their desire to go to Israel. Dr. Wise appealed for the release of these Jews.

In his reply to this appeal, the British Ambassador defends the continued detention of the refugees as "due solely to the anxiety of the British Government scrupulously to carry out their obligations to the United Nations." These "obligations," he argues, arise from the provisions in the Security Council's truce resolution of May 29, 1948, which he interprets to mean that "men of military age" should not be permitted to enter Israel during the period of the truce.

The fact is, however, that this interpretation is completely at variance with that given by the late Mediator, Count Bernadotte, who stated that "my interpretation was that the resolution did not prohibit immigration nor did it appear to place any complete or positive ban on the inclusion of men of military age in such immigration." He stated further that "the wholesale detention of these men in Cyprus has never been recommended or requested by the Mediator as essential for the observance of the truce." As if to clinch the case against Britain, Count Bernadotte said that the Cyprus detention is "an act of the United Kingdom authorities on the island of Cyprus, and of them alone."

It is thus clear from the record that the United Nations had imposed no "obligations" upon Britain

or anyone else to prevent men of military age from going to Israel. What the British have done in Cyprus has no valid connection with "obligations to the United Nations." It was a unilateral act by the British Government to further its policy of hostility toward Israel. But the moral and humanitarian aspects of the Cyprus case cannot be ignored. Justice demands that the British-made prison at Cyprus be broken down and its long-suffering inmates be set free.

### *Peace Prospects in Palestine*

J—before Egypt finally became persuaded that the people of Israel have actually reestablished themselves in the land of their fathers and that the reborn nation of Israel is an inescapable reality with whom it must come to terms. Like the Biblical Pharaoh, his modern successors remained stubborn of heart in their persistent refusal to recognize the existence of Israel until the modern version of "Operation Ten Plagues" had run its course and convinced them of the error of their ways. Thus Egypt is now prepared to enter into direct negotiations with Israel for an armistice and presumably also for a final peace settlement.

Egypt's example will undoubtedly be followed by Abdullah of Transjordan, who had been waiting all along for some other member of the Arab League to take the initiative in negotiations with Israel so that he would not have to bear the stigma of formally breaking Arab "unity." Abdullah will now with some measure of propriety be able to talk peace with Israel and proceed with his plan of annexing the unoccupied parts of Arab Palestine, especially since he has the sanction of a large section of the Palestine Arabs who at their recent conference in Jericho had publicly invited him to merge their country with Transjordan. Likewise, the recent change of government in Iraq presages a reorientation of policy by that Hashemite kingdom which is likely to parallel the policy of its neighbor, the Hashemite kingdom of Transjordan. With Egypt and Transjordan, whose armies have done most of the fighting, now ready to negotiate a peace settlement, it may be assumed that as far as the Arabs are concerned, the war in Palestine which they had begun has reached its final stage.

The real obstacle to peace, just as it had been the instigator of war, is Britain, and judging by its latest maneuvers it is prepared to go to desperate lengths



# Who Will Pick Up The Torch?

LOUIS LIPSKY

THE FIRST AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS OF thirty years ago was the first effort to organize a program of action for the *Community as a whole*. The program concerned itself exclusively with problems arising out of the first World War. The organization of the Congress ran counter to many established prejudices. But it was an effective demonstration of communal cooperation on a national scale. Its delegates were elected through democratic elections—the first in American Jewish history. Its discussions were public. It aroused interest wherever Jews lived. It formulated Jewish demands and sent a Delegation to the Versailles Peace Conference to join Jewish groups of other countries. But the death of the Congress was foreordained. It was agreed in advance to liquidate its affairs in accordance with a precise, legal contract. When the Delegation submitted its report, the Congress voted to adjourn without day, and all went home to their own affairs, never to meet again under the same roof.

The Congress left a committee of Jewish delegates in Paris with Leo Motzkin as its chairman. This committee conducted the struggle for Jewish rights at Geneva for many years without American moral or financial support. The democratic experience of the Congress seemed to have left no trace in the memory of some of the Jewish groups who had participated in that unique enterprise. There was even a rankling resentment of the popular uprising that had persuaded them, against their better judgment, to join in creating the first Congress, which they regarded as a major indiscretion. They had one deep satisfaction—the Congress would legally die at a prescribed date. The disturbing agitation of almost ten years had been poured into the mould of a temporary instrument and would be silenced. The Torch of democratic organization for the American Jewish Community would be extinguished.

A self-constituted “heir” put in an appearance, claimed the remains, took over all the abandoned slogans, its structure and its intangible assets; and proclaimed itself the American Jewish Congress. The legitimacy of the “heir” was often cynically alluded to by its opponents. It was dubbed a “rump” Congress. It was regarded as an interloper—which it was; as un-American and un-democratic—which it was not.

It really was a remnant, an improvisation. The large body of American Jewry turned their faces away. Even some Zionists felt at that time that they could not overlook the “sin” of breaking a sacred agreement. But it had the good will of the Jewish masses, the Yiddish press, and the so-called Intelligentsia—the stirrers of revolt. For a decade the

remnant Congress struggled along, unable to come to grips with Jewish life. Stormy meetings were held from time to time and resolutions were adopted denouncing self-appointed leaders and endorsing nationalist principles and Zionism. Controversies were provoked and the press clamored, but the vested interests made no reply, except when matters seeped into the general American press.

Only when the menace of Nazi Germany loomed on the horizon was the Congress able to play its destined part in Jewish life. Hitler’s attacks shook the Jewish world to its foundation. Forces were set in motion which began to alter all aspects and relations of Jewish life. The poison of anti-Semitism poured out of Germany with such volume and such rapidity that the Congress had no chance to devote itself to organizing Jewish life, to establishing a united Jewish representation. It had to concentrate upon the growing anti-Semitism in the United States. It sounded the alarm for American Jewry throughout the world. It was involved in the boycott of German goods. It gave welcome to the intellectual refugees who escaped from the Nazis and formed an active corps of workers in the World Jewish Congress. How to rescue the threatened Jewries was a constant incitement to action that always ended in futility. It was on that excitement the Congress lived. It was the irrepressible voice of American Jewry of that period. It was the sparkplug of an incessant fight against Hitlerism, shaming indifference and lack of vision with such effectiveness that before the Second World War began all groups in American Jewish life were engaged in the struggle, not working together, but each doing what it thought was right in its own way.

A DREADFUL WAR was approaching in which all Jewish life would be involved, and the Jews of America would be called upon once more to take part in the settlement of the issues. The memories of those years are still fresh in our minds; how all Jewish life, voicing indignation and protest, lodging appeals in high places, had to look on while the plans for massacre were being executed; how all Jewish life struggled and pleaded for intervention to avert impending tragedy; how the news of the great destruction trickled through the iron wall of the Nazi regime and finally overwhelmed the world with its terrifying revelations.

Refuge was taken at first in the traditional cliché of action. If we survive the war, it was said, there will be a terrifying indictment of modern civilization to which there will have to be adequate reply. We shall plead at the bar of justice. To prepare for that day the American Zionist Emergency Council (looking

toward Zion) was formed, and the American Jewish Conference (looking to the Galut front) was organized as the counterpart of the first Jewish Congress. There was to be an American Jewish delegation and a list of demands.

Behind the activities of the American Zionist Emergency Council stood every positive force in American Jewish life. Groups alien to Zionist interests, antagonistic and prejudiced, rallied to the support of the Zionist cause with an intensity never before witnessed. An unbroken chain of Jewish communities throughout the country was formed which reacted from day to day, from month to month, to give expression to the great indignation of the Jewish people. The target was the Government of the United States. The difficulties were not in the American people but in the Government, which was unable or unwilling to adjust policy to the requirements of justice and fairness as expressed by public opinion. Government had to be persuaded and coerced. In the long run, in spite of disappointments and inadequacies, Government may be said to have performed in a fairly satisfactory manner. A wall of public opinion was created and maintained with remarkable fidelity over a period of years. The State of Israel owes much to the efforts of American Jewry.

The American Jewish Conference (the Congress in new form) was organized to have the whole Jewish Community participate not only in the fight for the achievement of Zionist aims, but also for Jewish rights everywhere. Once more all American Jews were assembled under one roof. Once more American Jews gave expression to their demands with one voice. The Conference represented Jewish life with dignity and intelligence, with democratic correctness and with due regard for every nuance of opinion which prevailed in the Community. But that was not to be for long. In order to set up the Conference and bring all elements within its four walls, the same limiting and crippling conditions had to be agreed to which were imposed upon the first Jewish Congress. The Conference was an *ad hoc* organization. It was bound not to perpetuate itself. It was limited in scope. It had to wrestle with what was in effect the veto right of large groups. It was a partnership in which every partner was free, but through the exercise of *his* freedom, the Conference was hobbled and compromised.

In the course of its nearly six years of life, however, the Conference revealed that the American Jewish Community could conduct its own affairs in a democratic way and fairly maintain the allegiance of nearly all minority views. It had the authority to speak for all and exercised that authority. It showed that a united American Jewry could be organized without detriment to the real interests of the various

groups. It validated the claim that such an Assembly need be based only on one premise—that all concerned recognized the *priority of overall Communal interests*.

The Conference revealed the great strength and influence of the Community as a whole. It was a vast improvement on the first Jewish Congress. It showed a ripened understanding of parliamentary action and democratic procedure. It could easily, with good will, have become a permanent institution of great value. It could have become a forum in which full discussion would establish a basis for Jewish policies. It could have been moulded into an instrument which would have become the voice of organized Jewish life. But it was killed by indifference, conflicting loyalties, by lack of responsibilities, by narrow-minded organizational ambitions and by the refusal of all concerned without exception—in spite of their public declarations—to recognize the prior claims of the Community as such.

THE PASSING of the Conference sees the end of its activities. But its work is unfinished. The revolution in Jewish life, now stimulated by the establishment of the State of Israel, will not be ignored by American Jewry today as it was after the first American Jewish Congress. The amazing birth and defense of the Jewish State will not be isolated in influence and limited to the people and territory of Israel. Not only is Israel to be free, self-governing, democratic in a real sense. Not only in Israel are Jews to be courageous and resourceful and defensive in their own interests. Jews must be prepared to meet the problems of their survival also in the Galut. It is of the utmost importance that order and plan and devotion become standard in all Jewish life; that democratic cooperation be recognized as indispensable for the conduct of all Jewish affairs.

The existence of the Jewish State will radically alter inter-Jewish relations, give new meaning to traditions, create new concepts of Jewish life. The persistence of anti-Semitism in new forms requires re-orientation and far-reaching defense which the existing Jewish defense groups seem unable to give with any degree of adequacy or understanding.

The doors of the American Jewish Conference were closed on December 31st. But there must be other ways to reach its objectives. Necessity will compel the opening of another door leading to the organization of Jewish life in a manner worthy of the power and resources of the Community and of the changing times we live in.

*Who will find that door?* The situation calls for somebody to take up the Torch for the Community. Has American Jewry lost its voice? Has the Jewish press abdicated? Is there no group capable of lifting

itself above the petty and vulgar struggles of organizational life to initiate an action for the Community as a whole?

The American Jewish Congress took over what was

left of its first mutilated edition. It laid claim to the succession. It took possession of what was left. It accepted the handicap of its heritage. It cannot escape the moral obligations of its record.

## *Theocracy for Israel?*

EMANUEL RACKMAN

**I**SRRAEL ALREADY HAS SEVERAL POLITICAL PARTIES whose platforms include a demand for a commonwealth founded on Biblical and Talmudic law. The opposition, in turn, frowns upon any attempt to create a polity which is commonly regarded as a "theocracy." And particularly is this true of American Zionists who justly cherish the principle of separation of Church and State. Mere mention of the word "theocracy" conjures up the dread of punishment for heresy and religious non-conformity, strict censorship, clericalism in legislative, judicial and administrative office, and a host of other phenomena that are obnoxious to the liberal democratic temper.

Unfortunately, however, both proponents and opponents of a commonwealth founded on Jewish law have been guilty of muddled thinking. The proponents use a slogan without carefully analyzing its implications. They cannot even generally describe the nature of the constitution required by traditional Judaism. Certainly with regard to specific political institutions they have neither dogmas nor binding precedents on which to rely. But their opponents are similarly rash. They believe that Jewish law requires a theocratic form of government. Sometimes even Josephus is cited as the authority for their view. Yet Josephus' words are seldom examined, nor is the correctness of his designation subjected to careful scrutiny. The fact is that Jews were rarely responsible for any of the ugly associations of the term. And only because the term virtually haunts Jews in the modern era, capital is made of an emotional reaction.

If one would carefully consider the literature regarded by pious Jews as authentic, as well as the facts of Jewish history, one might readily conclude that the separation of Church and State is a Jewish point of view. Judaism did not want persons vested with priestly power to possess political power at the same time. For this reason so much of the discussion about the theocratic nature of the state according to Judaism is without foundation in fact.

Moses distinguished between two types of authority — the spiritual and the political — and he assigned each to different persons or groups of persons. The priestly power was vested in the tribe of Levi

while Moses' successor, as lawgiver and general, was from the tribe of Benjamin. Thus a king was never a priest and a priest was never a king. Only once in Jewish history were both authorities in the same person. The Hasmonean dynasty that thus offended, was never forgiven by the Pharisees. The Talmud states that for this sin the family had no survivors.

Augustine regarded the combination of a spiritual and political authority in the same hands as a typically pagan institution. But it was not Jesus, as Augustine claims, who established the separation of the two powers. It was Moses. That Jesus may have concurred was only natural, for he did concur in many a Pharisaic point of view.

HOWEVER, in the second millenium it was the Catholic Church to whose theory of organization Augustine contributed so much, that tried to restore the incidence of the two authorities in the same person. Their separation was one of the achievements of the late middle ages and modern period. But what does this separation involve?

It does not mean that a cleric cannot hold public office. In the United States and in England there is no such disqualification.

It does not mean that the state shall not enforce laws which have their origin in canon law. Many a rule of civil and criminal law came originally from canon law. Fraud was originally only a "sin." It later became actionable at law.

It does not mean that the state shall not appropriate funds for chaplaincies in the army, navy, and air force, as well as in hospitals and other welfare institutions. In this manner support is given, albeit indirectly, even to established churches.

It does not mean that the state cannot exempt religious corporations from taxation and relieve conscientious objectors of military service, though this is tantamount to an unequal distribution of the burdens of citizenship.

In the final analysis, the state should be very much influenced by the moral ideals of the community which religious organizations can enrich. But history has demonstrated that by allowing the moral or spiritual authorities in any community to become possessed of political power is detrimental to human freedom and ultimately even corrupts the moral or

*Rabbi Rackman is spiritual leader of Congregation Shaaray Tefla, of Far Rockaway.*

spiritual authorities themselves. When a church's leaders can win their point by coercion instead of persuasion, the church suffers. Its leaders are no longer saintly and obedience to their precepts is based on fear rather than love and conviction.

**F**OR THESE REASONS, there must be separation of Church and State—for God's sake as well as man's. But what the separation involves is not that the state shall become amoral—or refrain from giving any encouragement to the development and implementation of religious ideals. It means only that the ultimate moral and spiritual authority or authorities in any state shall not at the same time be the ultimate political authority. The ultimate political authority—for freedom's sake—shall be vested in the many. And even if a cleric should hold a political office, he shall do so as the agent of the people he represents and subject to their control. On the other hand, when he speaks in his church as an authority on moral or spiritual matters, his authority is aristocratic in nature. But by the same token, people may or may not obey him. His appeal can be only a moral appeal—and his method, not legal sanctions, but moral persuasion.

It is basically the separation of the two types of authority that is involved in the separation of Church and State. The spiritual authority may be a Pope, a Synod, a Council or a Chief Rabbi. But their power must be spiritual power alone and their sanctions only moral sanctions. The violation of their will may be sin. The political authority, however, which is vested in the many, shall decide when a violation of moral law constitutes a punishable crime. These two

authorities should be separated. It is bad for the Church to have more than spiritual power, and it is good that the State shall always be subject to the independent moral judgments of experts in matters of conscience.

Now a State becomes a theocracy when the spiritual authority and political authority are vested in one and the same person, or group of persons. It is then that all sanctions available to the state can be used to extirpate heresy and punish religious non-conformity. So long as the people, however, retain the ultimate political authority to adopt and amend constitutions, to make laws by duly elected representatives, to implement human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the spiritual authority, which by its very nature, must be aristocratic in character, has only moral power, then we have no theocracy.

Any other use of the term theocracy is objectionable. For if by theocracy we mean that the rulers are priests, then clerics in the United States are eligible for all offices and conceivably within the pattern of its present constitutional system, the United States might lawfully become a theocracy. And if by theocracy we mean that some of the law is divine in origin, then the United States is already a theocracy. When one regards certain rights as inalienable, is not one virtually assuming a divine source?

However, if the term is understood as referring to the identity of the spiritual authority with the political authority, then it may be said that Judaism is even anti-theocratic, for Judaism has always insisted on a separation of *Malchus* (political power) from *Kehunah* (priestly power).

## *Tolerance—Counterfeit of Intolerance*

LOUIS ADAMIC

**E**VERY ONCE IN A WHILE SOME POLITICIAN, preacher or lecturer gets up, or some writer sits down, and comes out in favor of tolerance. He is all for tolerance as a remedy for nearly everything he has been led to believe ails individual and group relations among Americans on the ethnic, racial and religious levels. In most instances the speaker or writer is sincere enough. His uneasy mind has been touched by the nebulous idea of goodwill. He means well. *But . . .* there's a big *but* about tolerance. To mean well is not enough; you know what the road to hell is paved with. . . .

I won't say that the principal trouble with most tolerance advocates is ignorance. Some of them are

vey learned. But it seems to me that in a majority of cases, advocates of tolerance are not doctors but part of the disease.

I feel, too, that the advocacy and practice of tolerance have no really positive long-range effect on relations among Americans belonging to different ethnic, racial and religious groups, nor on the quality of American life as a whole. On the contrary, as I shall try to suggest, the advocacy and practice of tolerance have decidedly negative undesirable effects.

What does it mean when an American nowadays is "tolerant"? In 90-odd-instances out of a hundred it means simply and exactly that he *to-le-ra-tes* those unlike him racially, religiously or in old-country background.

When an American nowadays is "tolerant," it means little more than that he refrains from blurt-

Mr. Adamic, *authority on minority and labor problems, is the author of many popular social studies.*

ing out his doubts about your fitness to breathe the same air with him because you are a native of Hungary or were born of Italian-immigrant parents, or because your name is Wasielewski or Zambloskas, or because you are Jewish or Catholic or Protestant, a Yankee or a Mexican.

This is particularly true when the tolerator practices racial and religious tolerance *consciously*, with a good deal of righteous effort or purpose, in response to appeals by people of prestige who, working on his humane tendencies, led him into thinking that tolerance is a high and shining virtue.

The tolerator often is himself a member of some so-called "minority" group and an object of toleration. Some of the most eloquent advocates of tolerance are Jews. I am glad to add, however, that in recent years many Jewish American leaders (with Rabbi Stephen S. Wise long in the forefront) have ceased to be satisfied with tolerance and have begun to give skeptical thought to the idea or concept of toleration. In fact, there is a general decrease of the addiction to the word, the advocacy and the practice of tolerance.

**T**jet us look briefly into the *practice* of tolerance . . . also into the *effects, the end results* of that practice in this country in the crucial period.

As *practiced* in these ethnically and religiously complex United States, tolerance is controlled, suppressed, subtle intolerance. To many people in and out of the "minority" groups, tolerance seems preferable to active intolerance in immediate day-to-day situations, now and then. Tolerance works more or less favorably, off and on . . . now' and then . . . for the so-called "minority" people whose conscious individual concern is for the moment only, whose aim in life is to be left alone, to "get by." Tolerance may work in normal times when the winds of doctrine are mere breezes and serious group tensions induced by economic or political trends and tides are absent or dormant.

When a crisis comes, however, when things tighten up economically and the winds of doctrine attain gale velocity, when a war threatens to break out, when large numbers of people are afraid or confused and can't think matters through, and scapegoats become a desperate psychological need . . . then the thin veneer of tolerance cracks and there is open racism, anti-Semitism, anti-alienism, hitting individuals and whole groups.

Much hypocrisy is traceable to tolerance. A few months ago I came upon a sentence on a page back among the ads in the *Saturday Evening Post* which struck me as very true. Its author is a man named Franklin P. Jones and it was a definition of tolerance which hit the nail on the head. "Tolerance," according to Mr. Jones, "is the ability to put up with

something you couldn't endure if nobody was looking." I quote this sentence for two reasons: because it helps to make my point on hypocrisy, and because it suggests that those of us who were looked at askance a few years ago for our opposition to tolerance are now getting support from such magazines as the *Saturday Evening Post*.

Several years ago about a dozen such mass-circulation magazines as the *Post* rejected a piece of mine in which I tried to take tolerance apart. Last summer, however, *McCalls* magazine, read by some 15,000,000 people, published as the leading piece an article of mine which was far more drastic with tolerance than what I tried to say years ago. And it was a popular article; the editors and I received a great many letters, all praising it, more or less. So there seems to be progress on this point, and it's about time.

As it works out in practice, tolerance makes one "tolerant" not only of Jews as Jews if one is Gentile, or of Gentiles as Gentiles if one is Jewish; not only of Negroes as Negroes if one is white, or the other way about; not only of people with Oriental faces if one's own is blessed with Caucasian features, and vice versa. It makes one tolerant also of persons and organizations, schemes, tricks, events, trends, conditions and developments in other than racial and religious fields, of some of which, at least, one would be actively intolerant within the best American traditions, were it not for one's entanglement in the whole subtle business of tolerance.

**D**EMOCRACY, if it is to be a positive way of life—in other words, if it is to endure and evolve and lead to individuals' creativeness and happiness—requires something more than tolerance. The different elements of the American population will have to begin to *accept* one another with all their racial or old-country and religious dimples and warts—as Gentiles, as Jews, as Negroes, as New Americans of the various Caucasian and Oriental stocks—in line with the basic American principle that "all men are created equal" and are entitled to the same chance within the American scheme of things.

We will need to *accept*—not merely tolerate—one another.

This does not mean that one ought to like everybody—not at all. It means that one should like or dislike or be indifferent to a man on the basis of his essential qualities as a human being, and not on the basis of the fact that he was born an Albanian or Yankee, or that he or his ancestors came over in steerage or in a slave ship, or that he can sport a Mayflower blossom in his family tree.

Personally, I happen to dislike some Gentiles, some Jews, some Whites, some Negroes, some Protestants, some Catholics, some Italian Americans, and

some Yugoslav Americans because I find them to be unsound or objectionable individuals. But, off and on, perhaps too seldom, I wonder if my dislike of them is just and intelligent.

I like others—people of all sorts of backgrounds—not because they are Gentiles or Jews or whatever, but because I happen to like the turn of their minds, their ways and inclinations, their social and political ideas.

Perhaps Mark Twain's attitude is apropos. He was a pessimist and humorist—nearly all humorists of any depth are pessimists. At any rate, Mark Twain said he had no prejudice whatsoever. He didn't give a hoot whether a man was white or black, Jew or Gentile, Protestant or Catholic. The only question was: was the fellow a member of the human race? That was enough; you couldn't say anything worse about a man than that.

We need to be trained—we need to train ourselves in the direction of becoming positively, creatively, generously, interested in a man partly because he is different; because, being different, he is apt to have something out-of-the-ordinary to offer us personally and contribute to the evolving culture and civilization.

Inviting diversity, being interested in it, will tend to produce unity in a democratic country—unity, not uniformity. Uniformity is the fascist aim. Inviting diversity will tend to make our democracy dynamic. On the human level, it will bring out the basic sameness of people, just as the opposite brings on only more and sharper differences. It breaks down both the superiorities and inferiorities, which are equally bad—two ends of the same stick.

Schools need to come in on this job in a big way. Also the radio, the newspapers, the magazines, and of course the movies.

Some may have been grateful for the two movies last year which dealt with anti-Semitism—*Gentleman's Agreement* and *Crossfire*. But I wonder if that's the way to tackle anti-Semitism in a mass medium like the films. Tentatively, I feel it was a mistake in those two films to present anti-Semitism as a problem while avoiding the least hint of the causes of that problem. I feel that we need pictures which will present the Jewish American as a human being and as a constructive factor, which he is, in the American community—as a prominent factor in the great diversity of our population, which diversity is not anything to bemoan, not anything to look upon as a problem, but to regard as perhaps one of the most wonderful phenomena under the sun.

Such films would be unlike *Crossfire* or *Gentleman's Agreement*. They would not be problem melodramas, but stories of normal life in America, of Americans of all sorts intermingling dramatically in constructive functions. Such stories, such movies, would tend toward *acceptance*, rather than tolerance.

We need to look at one another closely, critically and honestly, with a conscious effort away from fearing anyone because he is different; with *concern* about and for one another, and for the trends and tides in our national life and our international affairs; and with purposeful and continual endeavor toward *understanding* on the basis of information eagerly sought and generously interpreted.

Large aspects of our nation's and the world's future may well hinge on whether or not we do this.

## The Amazing Martin Buber

JACOB S. MINKIN

MARTIN BUBER IS ONE OF THE MOST AMAZING prolific Jewish writers living. At the age of seventy he is the author of so many learned and popular volumes that future generations may well wonder whether in reality there had not been several Bubers who by some mistake were confused together. Scarcely a year passes when not one, but several volumes issue from his extremely fertile pen. Mystic and philosopher though he is, he knows how to clothe his thoughts in such arresting and often poetic form that he succeeded in obtaining for himself a following not usual with writers of his class. It speaks something for the man and the influence he wields that, although writing on serious subjects, publishing houses both here and abroad are vying with each other in translating and making accessible to the general reading public the major works he had

written on Jewish and philosophical themes.

Buber is one of the truly extraordinary figures of our generation. He is a leader in so many social, intellectual and spiritual directions that he is one of the most difficult men to classify. He is mystic and poet, philosopher and theologian, a man of this world but with the vision and insight of the ancient Hebrew Prophets, a translator of the Bible and translator of the Hasidic tales and legends, which he was the first to discover and make known to the Western world. He espoused many interests, but he never wandered far from the Jewish moorings in which his early life was rooted. Although in his youth a faithful follower and collaborator of Dr. Herzl, he soon left political Zionism because of its adulation of the *Judenstaat*, to follow his own conception of the Jewish destiny which may be described by the phrase "Spiritual Zionism."

Since Spinoza and Henri Bergson, Buber is one of the few modern Jewish thinkers to be almost universally acclaimed. But while the former had alienated themselves from the religion in which they were born, Buber carries the flag of his faith and people so high that there is no chance of mistaking it. He made his debut in the religious-philosophical world with his slender but highly significant volume, *I and Thou*, in which he ventured his definition of religion as a constant and intimate dialogue between God and man. The book had no sooner appeared, than it was hailed by Catholic and Protestant thinkers alike as the most novel contribution to the religious thought of the age. Other books in the same vein and pattern quickly followed from his abundant pen, perhaps the ripest fruit of his scholarship being *Between Man and Man*, in which his dialogical faith-relation between God and man is applied to society and the world. *Moses*, a vigorous and original little volume, but more of a self-portrait of the author than a historic picture of the Jewish lawgiver, became the storm center of a controversy among scholars soon after it had made its appearance.

Recent Buber books published in America by no means exhaust his current books appearing in English. They do not, for instance, include *Mamre* (Melbourne and London, 1946), a singularly attractive and challenging little volume of essays, containing the author's thoughts on Judaism and what made it a vital and abiding force in the history of the world, and *Pardes ha-Hasidut*, "Garden of Hasidism" (Tel-Aviv, 1945); an examination of the Hasidic teachings and implications in the light of modern thought. In *Tales of the Hasidim: The Later Masters* (Schocken, \$3.75) Buber proves his mastery of the Hasidic legend and folklore. He is more than the interpreter of Hasidism; he is both its poet and philosopher, as well as its creative artist. The *Tzaddikim* around whom the stories revolve are real men. We hear their voices, look into their faces, listen to their conversation, and catch something of the fervor and ecstasy of their faith.

IN REALITY, *Tales of the Hasidim* is a history of Hasidism in miniature—its hopes and goals, its range of thought and action, its religious and world outlook. The Hasidic leaders rarely wrote books or delivered long exhortations. They spoke tersely, almost enigmatically. It is of such cryptic, anecdotal utterances of the Hasidic masters that *Tales of the Hasidim* is made up. When compiled and grouped together they give a clearer and truer insight into the Hasidic world than any documented history.

The Rabbi of Sasov so loved his fellow-men and spent himself in their service that he exclaimed: "He who is not willing to suck the pus from the sore of

a child sick with the plague has not climbed even halfway up the mountain to the love of his fellow men." The Rabbi of Apt prayed: "Lord of the world, I know that I have no virtue ... for which you could set me in paradise among the righteous. But if you are thinking of putting me in hell among the evil-doers, please remember that I cannot get along with them. So I beg of you to take all the wicked out of hell, so you can put me in." The Yehudi was willing to forego his share in this and in the coming world "for one ounce of Jewishness." When an overbearing *Tzaddik* wrote to the Rabbi of Kotzk, "I am so great that I reach into the seventh firmament," the latter answered him: "I am so small that all the seven firmaments rest upon me." Submission to God, no matter one's life's lot, was Rabbi Heshel's counsel. "A man," he said, "should be like a vessel that willingly receives what its owner pours into it, whether it be wine or vinegar," and the Rabbi of Ger said: "I often hear men say, 'I want to throw up the world.' But I ask you: Is the world yours to throw up?" The Hasidic attitude to Galut is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in Rabbi Hanok's saying: "The real exile of Israel in Egypt was that they had learned to endure it."

MUCH OF THE MATERIAL contained in Hasidism (Philosophical Library, \$3.75) had already seen publication in *Mamre* and in *Pardes ha-Hasidut*, but one hopes that in its present version it will reach a wider audience than would otherwise be possible. This is a precious little book, the sum and substance of what Martin Buber has thought and taught about Hasidism over a period of more than forty years and it should be read and studied for its vital contents.

*Israel and the World* (Schocken, \$3.75) is a compilation of selected studies and addresses which, though they were written and delivered over a long period of time, have a relevance to events and conditions confronting Jewish life today that is almost prophetic. With insight and vision, Buber penetrates to the roots of Israel's religion, culture, nationhood, statehood, and Jewish-Arab relations with a view to the Jew living in a time of crisis. He speaks openly and sharply, but even in censuring there is no mistaking his intense love for the Jews.

Buber remained passionately devoted to the Zionist ideal, although he opposed Herzl's methods of realizing it. The mystic-philosopher of Jewish nationalism utterly rejects mere political redemption. His heart and mind are set on higher goals. "The goal," he says in his essay On National Education, "is greater than mere liberation. It is regeneration of the very being; it is an inner renewal, a rescue from physical and spiritual deterioration, the turning from a fragmentary, contradictory existence to a whole and unified life; it is purification and redemption." In

the same essay Buber writes: "We are not intent merely on throwing off an alien yoke, but on transforming the entire life of the people, within and without . . . God leads his people into the Land in order to prepare it for its messianic work in the world." Buber the socialist, who abhorred the Marxian class struggle, but who equally abhors those who wax fat by other men's toil, looked forward to the Jews creating in Palestine a new order based on social and economic justice and righteousness, and the *Halutz* appeared to him as the most striking example of the new Jewish type. "The *Halutz*he says, "does not draw his will to realize this ideal out of himself, or out of his era, or out of the Western world . . . Whether he knows it or not ... he is animated by the age-old Jewish longing to incorporate social truth in the life of individuals living with one another, the longing to translate the idea of a true community into reality."

IUBER has been widely spoken of as an Ahad Ha-Amist in academic robes, whose ideas he absorbed and espoused, although in somewhat different form. But nothing could be further from the truth. Although both were early opponents of Herzlian political Zionism, they differ from each other in many more respects than they agree. Thus, Ahad Ha-Am was a rationalist, Buber is an idealist. One fell under the influence of Darwin and Spencer; the other under that of Immanuel Kant and Hermann Cohen. The former was a strict logician and an evolutionist; the latter mistrusted both logic and evolution and fires the Jewish heart with the heaven-soaring dreams of the ancient Jewish prophets. To complete the contrast, while the Russian philosopher staked his faith on Jewish culture, his German counterpart will have in Palestine nothing short of a Jewish religious revival.

There are many thoughts and ideas in Israel and the world which almost beg to be quoted, but which for the lack of space must be passed over. Buber is an intensely spiritual writer, almost Biblical in style and outlook. One can not turn to his pages without being enriched, uplifted and purified. There are chapters in the book which inevitably become fixed in one's mind once they are digested. I have reference to such chapters as "The Faith of Judaism," "The Man of Today and the Jewish Bible," "Biblical Leadership," "Teaching and Deed," "National Education," "The Spirit of Israel and the World of Today," "Nationalism"—but I have almost exhausted the whole book.

In "Teaching and Deed" Buber observes that "it is impossible to teach and to learn without living." Throughout his life the writer walked in the light of his own doctrine. He sustained Jewish life in Germany for nearly two generations not only by precept

but by example. Much had gone out of prewar German Jewish life, but that not much more had disappeared was due almost entirely to Buber, for he was the anchor that kept the Jewish ship of thousands of his countrymen from sinking. He organized clubs, founded literary societies, initiated art magazines, traveled, preached, lectured, and taught with the single purpose of implanting in the drab hearts of his people the strength and beauty of the Jewish folk spirit.

And during the years immediately preceding the war, his very presence was a tower of strength unto them. The mystic knew no fear. With unflinching courage, Buber suddenly appeared in Berlin, the very bastion of the Nazi terror, and started a course of lectures at the Jewish *Hochschule*. What was his subject in such frightful and awesome days? He discoursed on the psalms of David, the very psalms to which Jews had always turned in their personal and national disasters. Old and young came; Jews of every religious and cultural shading crowded the lecture halls. He counseled, comforted, raised their dejected spirits, and held out to them the hope of the divine promise. Perhaps not many of those who listened to him survived the fiendish slaughter, but if they perished, they died with a firmer faith in their hearts and a deeper conviction in their minds of their people's spiritual destiny. Martin Buber had taught them to die as Jews had always died—sanctifying the Name.

## Abdullah's Role

MARK M. KRUG

THE UNANIMOUS APPROVAL BY THE TRANSJORDANIAN Parliament to unite Transjordan with Arab Palestine signifies the beginning of a new era in modern Arab history in the Middle East. The Arab League, carefully organized and nurtured by the British Empire-minded officials, has now become little more than an impotent debating society.

Transjordan is expected rather to withdraw from the League or to be expelled. Iraq, ruled by the Hashemite family, of which King Abdullah is the head, is now giving only lukewarm support to the League, and it is only a question of time when the Christian and the pro-Israeli majority of Lebanese will throw off the tyrannical rule of the Moslem minority and break away from the League.

But the fact which undoubtedly makes Azzam Pasha, the able Secretary-General of the League, a sad man indeed, is his realization that the Arab people throughout the Middle East have completely lost faith and confidence in the sincerity of the League's high-sounding resolutions and in its capacity

to act effectively on any issue.

The lying and hysterical propaganda by which the Arab League for the last few years attempted to divert the attention of the millions of exploited and downtrodden *fellahin* from their own problems by assuring them of an easy victory over the "infidel" Jews of Palestine, is now beginning to plague the Arab rulers. The news of the decisive victories of the Israeli armies is gradually seeping into the Arab states in spite of heavy censorship.

The trend toward a more realistic appraisal of the present military and political situation on the part of the Arabs can be clearly seen in the letter sent to King Farouk by Sheik Mohammed Jaabari, Mayor of Hebron and President of the Palestine Arab National Conference in Jericho. In this epistle, the Mayor defied King Farouk to lift the press censorship in Egypt even for one day so that the Arabs may learn the truth about the developments in Palestine. He told Farouk that in six months of war the Arab armies occupied ten Jewish settlements while the Jews captured fourteen Arab cities and towns and 400 Arab villages. Jaabari charged that despite daily communiques claiming victories, the Arab armies had "lost on all fronts and have been defeated on every single battlefield." That Egypt finally agreed to negotiate directly with Israel means that King Farouk recognizes the facts even if he wants to hide them from his people.

THE CONGRESS OF JERICHO which was attended by mayors and notables of all Arab states and towns in the Arab part of Palestine convened at the beginning of December. It not only affirmed allegiance of the Palestinian Arabs to Abdullah, but also marked the final declaration of Independence on the part of the Palestine Arabs from the heavy tutelage of the Mufti of Jerusalem. The significance of this break cannot be overestimated because up to May 15, 1948, the day of the declaration of the Jewish State and the beginning of hostilities between the Jews and the Arabs, the former Mufti of Jerusalem commanded the allegiance and the loyalty of the overwhelming majority of the Palestine Arabs.

It took a decisive victory of the Israeli armies to prove to the Palestine Arabs that their continued allegiance to the Mufti will end with their total ruin and destruction. The decision of the Palestine Arabs as expressed in the Congress of Jericho to seek a union with Transjordan, the outlawing of the Moslem Brotherhood in Egypt, and the fall of a friendly Syrian Government, left the Mufti's "government" in Gaza without any support in the Arab world. It might actually be considered as non-existent as far as its being a factor for peace in Palestine is concerned.

There were significant differences between the resolutions passed by the Jericho conference and the text

of the approval of the union between Transjordan and Palestine given by the Transjordan Parliament. The Jericho conference proclaimed Abdullah, king of *all* of Palestine and demanded immediate resumption of the war against Israel. The proclamation of Transjordan spoke of the union between Transjordan and *Arab Palestine* and omitted any reference to the resumption of fighting. The Transjordan resolution indicates that King Abdullah is reconciled to the existence of Israel and realizes the futility of continued fighting against it. A week after the Transjordan Parliament passed the resolution, the Arab Legion commander in Jerusalem, Colonel Tell, signed an agreement with the Israeli commander Colonel Dayan for an effective truce in Jerusalem.

The crucial question whether the union between Transjordan and the Arab part of Palestine is advantageous to Israel, is a complex one. It might well be that it would be better for Israel to have an independent Arab state, limited to the territory of Arab Palestine, as its neighbor. At best the choice is not an easy one. Should the Arabs of Palestine be left to their own devices, there is little doubt that the Mufti and his henchmen would soon regain domination over them, especially since the Mufti has the support of King Farouk of Egypt. But even with the Mufti in control, the state would be small and hardly a threat to Israel.

On the other hand, there are also several important advantages in the union of Transjordan and Arab Palestine. First, there are excellent prospects that King Abdullah, soon after the union is effected, would conclude a peace treaty with Israel and since his Arab Legion is the only effective Arab force in a position to resume fighting, the hostilities in Palestine would end and Israel could direct all of its energies and resources to the absorption of great numbers of immigrants and to strengthening the foundations of the new state. Second, Abdullah's rule over Arab Palestine would make the split in the Arab League complete and lasting and would remove, at least for the foreseeable future, any possibility of a united front of the Arab states against Israel.

But the creation of a united kingdom under Abdullah also presents dangers which the leaders of Israel undoubtedly contemplate with great apprehension. Abdullah's kingdom will have a vastly larger territory and for some time to come also a much larger population than Israel. Transjordan has a treaty of alliance with Great Britain which allows the latter to build air bases and army camps in its territory almost at will. Were the territory of Arab Palestine to become a part of Transjordan, the clauses of this treaty would be enforced in that part of Palestine as well. It is no wonder that many close observers of the Near Eastern scene say "Britain left Palestine through Haifa and will return through Amman and Hebron."

## Concerning Jews

*This review, conducted by Alfred Werner, is intended to keep our readers informed of significant comments on subjects of Jewish interest that appear in current non-Jewish magazines of nationwide circulation.*

Judging by Helen Waren's article, "Arabs and Jews Are Cooperating" (*The American Mercury*, January 1949) the Biblical prophesy about the wolf who dwells with the lamb and the leopard who lies down with the kid has come true in some parts of Palestine, after all. In Abu Gosh, an old Arab village near Jerusalem, Moslems, Christians and Jews are living and working peacefully together. "Sure, I believe in partition," an Arab waiter said to the author, "so long as I can live in the Jewish section." There are other Arab towns that have defied the Mufti's propaganda, and a number of Arabs are serving in the Israeli armed forces, notably several tribes of Druzes who are more literate than other Arabs. At the same time, the Israeli Government endeavors to be as fair as possible to Arab civilians and prisoners of war:

Never before in the Arab history have they (the Arab workers) experienced what we know as the western democratic form of government, guaranteeing personal freedoms . . . Without foreign interference, Arabs and Jews in Palestine would be at peace and could create governments friendly and cooperative to each other. One thing is certain: that, no matter what the final outcome will be in Palestine, the wealthy *effendi*, or foreign adventurer and imperialist, will find it difficult to bring the average Arab back down to the level on which he left him before this war.

In "The Israelis as Conquerors" (*New Republic*, December 13) J. L. Teller deals with the same topic, but feels that there exists a lot of mutual embarrassment and even hostility in the relations between Jews and Arabs. The 50,000 remaining Arabs have to be watched carefully but, as an Israeli leader told the author, "it is psychologically extremely difficult for Jews to keep another people under guard because we have been kept under surveillance too long ourselves."

Israel is a melting-pot, where a new nation is born, but so far no homogeneity has been accomplished. Having visited Hakiryra, seat of the Israeli government in the neighborhood of Tel Aviv, Teller writes: "More languages are spoken at Ha-

kiryra than at an international airport" ("The World's Newest Capital," *New Republic*, December 20). In "Joseph Meets His Brethren" (*New Republic*, December 27) Teller describes the tension between the "sabra," the Palestine-born Jew, and the DP soldier, and other conflicts emerging in this multilingual country: "The American Jew is not popular in Israel. This may be ascribed partly to a lingering deference for the British." In the last of his six articles, Teller discusses the status of the extremists:

The Irgunists and Sternists still frankly regard the Provisional Government as "deceitful" appeasers. . . . On the other hand, Ben Gurion and an overwhelming body of public opinion regard the Irgunists and Sternists as incorrigible conspirators only biding time for a putsch ("Guerrillas in the New Israel," *New Republic*, January 3, 1949).

*The Nation* devotes much space to Israel, too. Continuing her series of articles on Palestine, Freda Kirchway rejects the Bernadotte Plan's suggestion that Israel should abandon the Negeb to compensate the Arabs for their loss of Galilee:

Israel has no obligation, under the UN or under heaven, to pay Abdullah for land held in Galilee in order to oblige the British Foreign Office. The sooner that is understood, the better for international honesty ("Nonsense about the Negeb," December 11).

Miss Kirchway visited Negba, key point in recent counter-attacks on the Egyptians, and reveals how the heroic settlers helped the Israeli troops to stop the foe's advance on Tel Aviv and Jerusalem ("The Battle of Negba," December 18).

Driving to Jerusalem, Miss Kirchway talked with the city's military governor, Dr. Bernard Joseph, and visited various fronts in the neighborhood ("Jerusalem under Fire," December 25). She contrasts the behavior of Arab troops who wantonly wrecked, looted, or used for "profane" purposes Christian religious institutions, with the discipline generally displayed by Israeli troops—the Israeli authorities had decreed the death penalty for soldiers caught looting or damaging church property ("The Holy Places," January 1, 1949).

Mark Alexander is critical of the Israeli Government, as far as its attitude towards the Arab refugees is concerned. In "The Arab Refugees" (*New Leader*, December 25) he admits that much of the blame for the present misery is to be placed on the Arab leaders, but he claims that the Jewish soldiers have not refrained

from cruelties, either. Moreover, he charges the Israeli government with a "major sin of omission" because they have "not yet unequivocally declared their readiness to allow Arab resettlement once the war is over."

Two leading British magazines have devoted lengthy articles to the Palestine problem. In *The Economist* of November 27 and December 4 a "Gentile recently in Palestine" tries to scrutinize "the Mind of Israel." He compares warfaring Jewish Palestine with the England of 1940:

As in 1940 we peered across the Channel for an invader whom, once landed, we saw little chance of repelling, so they looked north and east and south for invaders who would start with all the odds in their favor. We escaped invasion. They drove it back. . . . In quality, if not in degree, their experience in the summer of 1948 is comparable to what we in Britain passed through from 1940 to 1945.

The anonymous writer is extremely fair to the Jews, whose heroism he admires. He regrets the Jews' hostility towards Britain, but he admits that their bitterness is justified.

An admirer of Jewish accomplishments is G. L. Arnold who, in the October issue of *19th Century and After* described Israel as a "republican democracy" supported by the U.S.A. as constituting an element of "progress," whereas the Arab States, oligarchic and pre-industrial, were supported by Britain because they were perpetuating the status quo in the Middle East. In the December issue of the same magazine George E. Kirk assails Arnold's views. He asserts that the Israeli government consisted of individuals appointed by the Jewish Agency, and that the latter was ruled by the World Zionist Organization "which alone saved Israel from financial bankruptcy." Apparently Mr. Kirk was unaware of the fact that the present Israel cabinet is a provisional one, and that the new state will soon have general elections. The author also questions the degree of democracy prevalent among the Histadrut.

Lowell M. Limpus, in an article, "This was Mickey Marcus" (*Saturday Evening Post*, December 4) paid tribute to an American Jew whose genius helped defeat the Arab armies. The article movingly describes the background of this Lower East Side boy who graduated from West Point and, after a long successful career in the U.S.A., went to Palestine to conduct some of the Israelis'

military activities. Posing as "Michael Stone, foundry worker," he outwitted the British, while being in supreme command of the Jerusalem front. Colonel Marcus was killed last June only a few hours before the armistice went into effect, and was buried with military honors at West Point.

Lewis W. Gillenson, *Look* staff writer, in a richly illustrated article describes the first Jewish-sponsored university in America ("Brandeis University is Born," January 15). He stresses the fact that this university has no "quota" system, and that application forms do not reveal the student's religious or racial background. Dr. Sachar, president of the school, is quoted as saying that "we would like to think of schools like Brandeis as supplementing the tremendous institutions and giving more attention to the personal cultivation of the individual."

"Postwar Reconstruction in Western Germany" is the topic of all contributions to the November issue of *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Philipp Auerbach, a distinguished German-Jewish jurist who, after having spent many years in concentration camps, was appointed State Commissioner for Nazi Victims in Bavaria, has written an article on "Restitution for Victims of Nazi Persecution." Among the many questions he discusses is the problem of disposing of the estates left by people murdered by the Nazis.

## The Yiddish Stage

By SAMUEL KREITER

After the "Voice of Israel," Maurice Schwartz' inaugural production this season, signed off a bit hoarsely from the boards at the Yiddish Art Theatre, its director unveiled an episodic period comedy built around the jolly character of Hershel Ostropolier whose real, anecdotal existence in 18th century Ukraine has come to enliven modern Jewish folklore. As the second of four offerings projected by the Art Theatre, it makes the box-office jingle merrily.

Spoken in unforced rhyme the classic touch, couched in song, and staged a bit unevenly, this melodic farce bounces along blithely without troubling itself about logical denouement. It presumes to reproduce Jewish social foibles in the light of traditional flim-flam as allegedly practiced by our provincial brethren in the Napoleonic era, with Hershel as the tattered arbiter who ultimately rights things by the mere swish of his stinging tongue and the quiver of his funnybone. With the exception of the ascetic looking rabbi (Boris Auerbach) who is forever wrestling with heavenly reflections, everybody sings: Hershel (Maurice Schwartz) for his supper; his shrewish suffering spouse (Anna Appel) with a swinging rollerpin; their plain-looking daughter (Sara Gingold) of love whose common sentiment is echoed by her rich, insipid suitor (Muni Serebov) brought to her by the agile matchmaker (Gustave Berger) and the rest of the company in tuneful choral cadence with a little hoofing on the side.

The "Hershel" melange of music, wit, and offhand but timely allusions to Eretz Israel, has definitely caught on with *dos liebe publicum*, as the playgoers are fondly referred to on Second Avenue. The play's manifest appeal bears out the truism that there is more gold in pleasant hokum than in many a serious tract dealing with problems, be they national, personal, universal or immaterial.

The acting is uniformly good, and the production is well mounted. In marking its thirtieth anniversary, a feat credited entirely to the courage and devotion of Maurice Schwartz, the Yiddish Art Theatre will observe the event with intermittent appropriate revivals of its classic repertoire. From all appearances "Hershel Os-

tropolier" is destined for a considerable run, and may help to restore one's faith in the vitality of Yiddish dramatic expression.

Peretz in a Stage Version

The Folksbine, a Yiddish dramatic group sponsored by the Workmen's Circle for a score of years, deserves the praise and support for making available productions of intrinsic Jewish content and value. Its current play, *Vos in Fiedele Steck* (What the Violin Conceals, or Joel, the Fiddler), distilled from stories and a play by J. L. Peretz, mounted in the tradition of that classic genius of Yiddish letters, is a tender and adroit reproduction of pre-Hitler Jewish life in Poland. It is charged with mood and tension growing out of deeply human conflict. It is a taut dramatic translation of the perennial struggle between good and evil, man and fate, faith and doubt—a bitter searching study of moral values and in frustration. Yet Jews, accustomed as they are to laughing off—and at—the grimness of their environment, and involving God in their humor, often meekly submit to the inevitability of causation, and make history of blood and martyrdom. Even in so serious a play as this there are moments of balanced comedy neatly interwoven in its total and gripping effect.

The theme is developed out of a shattering fear for the tragic consequences from an epidemic that hit the area. The Jews of the town, seeking desperately the cause of it, stumble upon the moral breachment of a pretty orphaned maid with her pious employer-seducer. The more central motif is the illicit but idyllic love affair between Joel, husband to woe-ridden Mirl and father of four huskies, and the lovely Peshe whom family snobbery prevented from marrying him in their youth. Supplying the play's overtones and under-currents are a variety of characters who are vividly drawn and represent a cross-section of nostalgic Jewish community life forever snuffed out by Hitler.

The troupe consists of semi-professionals whose acting has professional polish and conviction and would be a credit to any stage. Those who impersonated the major roles with distinction are Hyman Zaner,

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Formerly at  
160 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn  
License #226108