

## AJR

## INFORMATION

ISSUED BY THE

ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH REFUGEES IN GREAT BRITAIN

Hans Jaeger

## POLITICAL TRENDS IN GERMANY

An analysis of the present political situation in Germany cannot start with the National Democratic Party, still at this stage a marginal phenomenon. It should begin rather by dealing with an increasing uneasiness emanating from several sources. It would seem as though many things previously taken for granted are no longer certain, so that a feeling of insecurity has been created.

Without unconditionally subscribing to the thesis of the primacy of foreign politics, it is necessary to consider this aspect first. For a long time the alliance with the U.S.A. was almost a dogma for a large section of the German nation. A slight change began—though at first restricted to a comparatively few—when the Americans spoke of the “atomic pause” in the case of an emergency. This was considered by some experts as a change of the strategical concept—as if the Americans were mainly concerned with the security of their cities and wanted to leave the Germans to their fate and to the initial brunt. This concern, though it seemed to be rather academical, was accentuated when Germany’s insistence on co-determination on nuclear issues did not bring tangible results. The critics propounding the “hard course” ridiculed the term “German Gaullists” and could not follow de Gaulle at a later stage when it transpired that he neither advocated the “hard course” nor believed in the existence of a Soviet danger. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that their distrust of the U.S.A. was influenced by France, which had not stopped predicting that America could not be relied on and that the Americans would one day clear out. This school, therefore, advocated the closest co-operation with France, even at the expense of the links with America.

Britain played a minor part in these considerations. Some distrust had much earlier been fostered by certain quarters, reaching a climax when Macmillan visited Moscow. The slogan of “thinning out” was mistaken for disengagement and considered as a concession to the Rapacki Plan. The distrust increased when Labour came to power. British resistance to the multilateral atomic force (MLF) was considered as confirmation of former prejudices, though de Gaulle’s attitude, which was similar, was overlooked.

And then came the disappointment caused by de Gaulle. For a long time criticism levelled against him was denounced as a threat to German-French friendship, and French action, compared with British action, was measured by a different yardstick. Eventually, however, steps dating from the French recognition of China to the demand for Vietnam’s neutralisation, from the negotiations with Poland to de Gaulle’s visit to Moscow, could no longer be overlooked.

Since then one blow has followed the other. France gave notice to the Americans, albeit

making a differentiation between Nato and the Alliance as such. The status of French troops was raised. Then Britain announced a reduction in her Rhine Army. And now the U.S.A. is also considering reducing her troops in Germany. This is, of course, the outcome of the Vietnam war. Again a section of the German population fears that America will turn from Europe to Asia, seeing China as the main enemy, and again the nightmare occurs of American-Soviet understanding at Germany’s expense.

The feeling of uneasiness thus stems primarily from foreign politics. But the ground has become more slippery, and we must also take notice of what is showing at the fringe. There are those who may go beyond the slogan of a more active policy towards the East and advocate understanding with the Soviets at any cost. Furthermore, some sections have developed a tendency towards nationalism. They refer to the breakdown of 1945, describe the years of occupation as a period of humiliation, and call for a national renaissance. A counter-movement has sprung up to intercept such extremist movements; its followers are especially alarmed at the possibility of these two trends merging into “National Neutralism” and even “National Bolshevism” (which had its tradition in the Weimar Republic). This counter-movement stresses that national conscience broke down, too, in 1945, that its revival is quite normal and healthy, and that patriotism exists everywhere. By differentiating between national and nationalistic, they seek to steal the thunder of the extremists. But that has tremendous dangers. It may end in fierce competition. This was experienced in the Weimar Republic when, in 1932, even the Communists adapted themselves to their main enemies and also paid tribute to nationalism with their programme of national and social liberation. In such a competition the more dynamic forces always tend to win. If there is no balance, the border-line between national and nationalistic will be blotted out. Besides, it means that the extreme nationalists are allowed to set the trend.

A second source of uneasiness is in the economic field. For the first time the balance of payments is in the red. Germany is flooded by cheaper goods from the E.E.C. partners. German reaction to these things is much more nervous than that of most other countries. The same applies to certain symptoms which are inaccurately described as inflationary. Reaction to this is even more irritable, because of the trauma left by the inflation of the ‘twenties. Spoilt by the atmosphere of prosperity, Germany could not withstand a real crisis. The slightest such indication is registered with concern. The peasants are dissatisfied with the results of E.E.C. The Ruhr miners are alarmed by oil competition.

Irritability is the breeding ground for

extremism. Hitherto, we have only noticed the first symptoms. We have registered some outcries though they are still at the periphery: end aid to developing countries, end “reparations” to Israel, end restitution, out with the “guest” workers.

And last but not least comes domestic policy. The C.D.U. was defeated in the Diet elections in North Rhine-Westphalia, the largest of the German Laender. Nevertheless, the wishes of the electorate were disregarded, and the old coalition of the C.D.U. and F.D.P. remained, with a tiny majority of two. This cannot be compared with Labour in 1964, as the swing was obvious. In the C.D.U., which did not want the Big Coalition suggested by the Social Democrats, two different trends fight each other. There are shades of opinion from former German Nationals to Left-wing adherents of the former Centrum Party, to use the terminology of the Weimar Republic. Once this mass party was kept together by one person, Adenauer, but this is not now the case, and a proper integration could not be achieved. The S.P.D. has its problems, too, though the Dortmund party conference resulted in a certain consolidation. Abolition of the present mixed electoral system (which is no longer the proportional system of the Weimar Republic) might be a big temptation for the two big parties, as it would squeeze out the F.D.P. But the two-party system cannot be artificially established. Under German conditions this would have an undemocratic effect.

The result is, at the fringe, a battle-cry against the “licensed” parties.

This brings us to the *National Democratic Party* of Germany (N.P.D.). It is still not a real danger, but it could become so if uneasiness deepens. One cannot minimise it, as was rightly done with the tiny splinter groups of the past. The N.P.D. got 658,000 votes in the Bundestag elections (2 per cent). This is not much, but still far more than any other such group achieved before. At the Diet elections in Hamburg they increased their share from 1.8 per cent to 3.9 per cent. In the municipal elections at Schleswig-Holstein in some places they got between 6.7 per cent and 10.5 per cent (the total cannot be compared as they contested the election only in some towns). In the Bavarian municipal elections they got over 5 per cent at Fuerth, Traunstein, Coburg, Nuremberg; over 8 per cent at Ansbach Schwabach, Passau, Tegernsee and Erlangen; over 10 per cent at Bayreuth; thus with two exceptions, Northern Bavaria prevails. On the other hand, they did not participate in the North Rhine-Westphalia elections.

An analysis of their 21,000 members (among them several hundred Bundeswehr soldiers) shows that followers are once more coming from the middle classes; many are between 45 and 59, though the proportion of the youth is 18 per cent; members are mostly in small and medium-size towns; they have more Protestants than Catholics; they are mostly in Northern Germany and in Bavaria; the pro-

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## POLITICAL TRENDS IN GERMANY

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portion of Eastern expellees is above average.

The question which is mostly of interest is, of course, their relationship to National Socialism. This is rather complicated. On the one hand, many of their members indignantly state, probably in good faith, that they are not Nazis and that they would resign if the party should become Nazi. They give the assurance that they are democratic. One can, at this stage, take it for granted that the party is not homogeneous but that it is definitely composed both of Nazis and non-Nazis. Of 218 members of the executive in North Rhine-Westphalia, 86 are former Nazis; of 50 candidates 21 are Nazis. In Rhineland-Palatinate twelve out of 18 executive members are former Nazis. Many come from the banned Sozialistische Reichspartei (S.R.P.). It was significant that the Bavarian leader, Franz Florian Winter, led his followers in the laying of a wreath for the executed war criminals. The Nazi leaders include Professor Bernhard v. Gruenberg, Gauamtsleiter in East Prussia; Otto Hess, S.S. Lieut.-Col.; Georg Koerner, possessor of the golden party badge; Emil Meyer-Dorn ("Strength through Joy"). Two of the deputy chairmen, Wilhelm Gutmann and Heinrich Fassbender, were Nazi members. It was stated in Kiel that at their meetings Nazi songs were sung, Nazi ideas spread and war criminals glorified. The chairman, Thielen, who came from the German Party (the branch in Bremen was always extreme Right) professed to know nothing of this. Von Thadden, who is the actual leader of the party, tried some de-Nazification, but he met with obstruction and completely failed.

One recalls the Henlein Party where, at first, the Nazis formed only a fraction and their "Aufbruchkreis" competed with "Kameradschaftsbund," but in the end the Nazis were victorious.

It is as though the German Nationals who co-operated with the Nazis in the Harzburg Front and paved their way to power, in the vain hope of "taming" the Nazis, were now linked with the Nazis in one party, yet one does not require much imagination to guess who will be more dynamic. What keeps them together is—nationalism.

However, this common bond has its own logic. All nationalistic arguments actually point the Nazi way. They speak about the "system" and the "licensed parties" (denouncing their opponents as foreign agents); they deny Hitler's guilt; they minimize the massacre of the Jews; they demand discontinuation of the trials; they are against all sorts of reparation; they are against Israel; they hate the former emigrants; they resent consideration of international opinion; they resent the Western Powers. In fact, they have the typically emotional approach.

The party is still torn in two directions. When v. Thadden tried to withdraw the discredited members he was supported by the younger elements, but the old militants were stronger. This is a bad omen. And in some respects the extreme Right-wing of the C.D.U. and especially the C.S.U. helped, for instance, by the campaign against intellectuals. When they reject the N.P.D. it is because they would prefer to have them in their party and under control, because they distrust their foreign policy, and because they are afraid of adventure. They know, too, that there is, as we have tried to show, sufficient dynamite in Germany, though still under the surface. Will it remain there?

## COMPENSATION DELAYS

At a meeting of the Jewish Claims Conference in Geneva, Dr. Nahum Goldmann warned against a budgetary protection law passed by the West German Parliament. The law, he said, seriously curtailed payments of compensation to Jewish claimants during 1966 and 1967, deferring them to a later date. Many of these claimants might not live to see this date.

## SLAVE LABOURERS' CLAIM

A claim for compensation by a group of former Polish and Norwegian inmates of concentration camps in Austria involves thousands of former "slave labourers" drafted for work in Nazi war and allied industries between 1939 and 1945.

Claims have been submitted to two Austrian firms for members of this group by the "Internationales Lagerkomitee" in Vienna. Herr Hermann Langbein, the secretary, has indicated that legal steps will be taken if payment is refused.

## TOEROEK CLEARED

An official announcement by the West German Foreign Ministry in Bonn states that Dr. Alexander Toeroek has been cleared of charges of Nazi activity during the war.

Last year a Budapest newspaper accused Dr. Toeroek, the deputy head of the West German Embassy in Israel, of wartime membership in the fascist and antisemitic Arrow Cross movement in Hungary. Dr. Toeroek, of Hungarian origin, acquired West German nationality after the war.

## RIGHT-WING APPEAL DISMISSED

The administrative high court in Bad Bergzabern, Rhineland-Palatinate, has dismissed the appeal of the local group of the Right-wing "Stahlhelm" organisation against the State Government's ban on the ground of its neo-Nazi character.

## "UPRIGHT GERMAN" HONOURED

Mr. Eberhard Elmrich, a former official of the German army who now lives as a businessman in New York, was awarded the Israeli "Medal for the Upright" in recognition of his rescue work in occupied Poland during the war. He helped Jewish camp inmates to escape, provided some of them with false papers and also hid prisoners in his flat.

## ISRAELI AMBASSADOR AGAINST HYPOCRISY

In an interview with a "Ma'ariv" reporter Mr. Asher Ben-Natan, Israeli Ambassador to Bonn, warned Israelis to beware of hypocrisy in their relations with West Germany. "Hypocrisy", he said, "is indicated when you object to German music, but travel in a Volkswagen, or when you solicit for German funds for cultural purposes and then resist cultural relations with the Germans". He could cite a thousand other examples. "Why", he asked, "maintain for outside appearances principles which you cannot adhere to in material relations?"

## FRISTABLAUF!

Es wird darauf aufmerksam gemacht, dass die Anmeldefrist fuer Anspueche nach dem BEG-Schlussgesetz am

**30. September 1966**

ablaeuft. Diese Anmeldefrist ist nicht verlaengert worden.

Insbesondere Verfolgte, die nach dem 1. Oktober 1953 die Ostblock-Laender verlassen haben, muessen ihre Antraege bis **30. September 1966** beim Regierungspraesidenten Koeln eingereicht haben. Fruere Anmeldungen bei einem anderen Amt sind ungueltig.

Mit Ruecksicht auf die am 15. September 1966 beginnenden Feiertage wird empfohlen, die notwendigen Anmeldungen so bald wie moeglich vorzunehmen.

Nur die Frist fuer die Substantiierung von Antraegen ist bis zum 31. Maerz 1967 verlaengert worden.

## WAR CRIMES

The East German news agency, A.D.N., announced in East Berlin that Dr. Horst Fischer, an S.S. doctor at Auschwitz concentration camp, has been executed for war crimes. He was found guilty of selecting between 55,000 and 75,000 prisoners for gassing at the camp during the Second World War. The East German Supreme Court sentenced Fischer to death in March.

Three other former Nazis have been sentenced to life imprisonment by East German courts. Dr. Kurt Kreismeyer, a lung specialist, was convicted of crimes against humanity in Neuengamme concentration camp in 1944 and 1945. Franz Hahl, a former Nazi police sergeant, and Arnold Zoellner, a former S.S. sergeant, were found guilty of complicity in Nazi mass crimes on the East European war front.

At Bochum four former Nazi policemen were sentenced to life imprisonment for complicity in the murder of 17,000 Jews and of individual murders at Nowy Sacz, in Poland, during the Second World War. Ten subordinates received prison sentences of between ten years and 38 months for complicity. The president of the court said that the proceedings were a lesson for people who did not want to believe that such atrocities happened, including the incorrigible elements, who were again desecrating Jewish cemeteries and synagogues.

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# HOME NEWS

## ANGLO-JUDAICA

### IN PARLIAMENT

#### No Soviet Jewry Debate

Sir John Foster pointed out to the Commons that all the Jewish schools and most of the synagogues in Russia had been closed. The Foreign Secretary should consider making representations on this and also to achieve the unification of Jewish families separated by the war.

Mrs. Eirene White, Joint Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, replied that official bilateral representations to another country on behalf of people for whom no direct interest could be claimed was not possible. It was proper to raise the matter internationally, as Britain had done at the United Nations.

The motion signed by a large number of M.P.s deploring the plight of Soviet Jewry was referred to by Sir Barnett Janner. The Leader of the House said he could not promise time for a debate but there were other opportunities open to M.P.s who wanted to raise the matter.

#### Anti-Jewish Literature

The House of Lords raised the matter of the publication of violent anti-Jewish literature by the Greater Britain Movement. Although the literature itself contravened the Race Relations Act, it was allowed to continue because the publication of written matter among members of an association was not an offence.

Lord Russell of Liverpool said that the Greater Britain Movement was best described as the Nazi party of this country. There were many offensive passages about the Jews in the "official programme" (which could be obtained for an enrolment fee of 6d.) and there was great similarity between it and Hitler's "Mein Kampf".

Lord Brockway stated he hoped to bring forward a Bill to amend the Act and it would also be introduced in the Commons.

#### Nazi Youth Journal

Mr. Tom Driberg raised the publication of a British Nazi youth journal containing apparently authentic recruiting advertisements for the Army and R.A.F. These had been reproduced from advertisements inserted officially in reputable newspapers. The Under-Secretary for the Army stated that the advertisements had been published without permission. He was considering what steps could be taken to prevent repetition.

#### Hotel Discrimination

In reply to a suggestion that legislation should be introduced to make more effective provision against racial discrimination in hotels, the Under-Secretary, Home Office, replied that if experience over a reasonable period showed that existing legislation was ineffective, amendment would be considered.

#### UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HEBREW CENTRE

The Hebrew Department at University College, London, is to be expanded into a comprehensive centre for Jewish studies. As the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies, it will introduce two new degree courses—a B.A. Honours in Jewish History and a B.A. Honours in Hebrew Literature and Jewish History. This move has been made possible by the grant of approximately £50,000 from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, established by the Claims Conference out of the last instalment of the German annual payments.

Professor Siegfried Stein, head of the department since 1950, expressed the hope that it would become a centre of Jewish studies in the broadest sense and would attract an increasing number of undergraduate and post-graduate students. Professor Stein, who was born in Berlin, is a Board member of the London Leo Baeck Institute.

### CONCERN AT DISCRIMINATION

Poale Zion, the Jewish Socialist Labour Party, has submitted for the agenda of the annual Labour Party conference in October a resolution expressing concern at "continuing discriminatory practices" and manifestation of antisemitism. The Government is urged to consider strengthening the provisions of the present law against racial incitement and discrimination. The resolution also stresses the need for a wide programme of education and the subject of race relations.

#### G.B.M. HEADQUARTERS VACATED

The bookshop in Norwood which was used as the headquarters of John Tyndall's Greater Britain Movement was vacated the day before the High Court heard an order seeking to stop the lessee from using it for political purposes. In court it was stated that the owner of the shop had leased it to Mr. Paul Howard Trevelyan, having no idea at the time that Mr. Trevelyan was a fascist.

#### WARWICK SWASTIKAS

Swastikas appeared in Warwickshire, where Britain's first Indian policeman is being trained. The initials N.S.M. and the slogan "No black police" were also daubed. Colin Jordan, leader of the National Socialist Movement, is reported admitting that he knew about the daubings.

#### ARSONISTS' APPEAL REFUSED

The applications for leave to appeal of the four men recently sentenced for arson to synagogues on July 31, 1965, were refused by the Court of Criminal Appeal. Tried and sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment at the Central Criminal Court in February, the judge said the sentences were appropriate and there was no reason to interfere.

#### JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

The Rev. W. W. Simpson, general secretary of the Council of Christians and Jews, arranged and presented a programme on Jewish and Christian worship in the B.B.C. Home Service. The programme, "One God and One Father", was an introduction to the international conference of Christians and Jews, held in Cambridge.

Most of the sources used for the programme were Jewish. An extract from the "Essence of Judaism" by Rabbi Dr. Leo Baeck was also included. Mr. Simpson described Dr. Baeck as "one of the saintliest men I ever knew"—(J.C.)

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#### Leo Baeck College

Students at the Leo Baeck College include two from Germany, two from Holland and one from Sweden. Four students have this year passed their final rabbinical examinations, eight graduated from the College's teachers' training course and 175 laymen attended its evening institute. Rabbi Dr. W. Van der Zyl, until now Hon. Director of Studies, has been elected president of the College. Mr. H. Arbeid succeeds Mr. A. S. Diamond, who has retired after five years' chairmanship of the College.

#### Wolfson Grant

A girls' school at Carmel College will open in September, 1968, to cater initially for the 11-13 age group. An amount of £325,000 for its establishment was donated by Charles Wolfson, Sir Isaac's brother.

#### House for Hebrew University Post-Graduates

A house in Anson Road, Cricklewood, has been given to the Friends of the Hebrew University. It will be used as a residence by teachers and graduates of the university who hold fellowships of the Friends for research or advanced study in London. An agreement for the gift of the house was handed to the chairman of the Friends, Professor N. Bentwich, by the owner, Mr. Maurice Lewin.

#### Birthday Reception

The London board of the Leo Baeck Institute held a reception at Hannah Karminski House to celebrate the 75th birthday of Dr. Robert Weltsch, chairman of the London board of directors of the Institute, and the 80th birthday of Dr. Richard Fuchs, a member of the board.

Professor Norman Bentwich paid tribute to Dr. Weltsch. He spoke of Dr. Weltsch's courage during the Nazi persecution and referred to his work as editor of the Institute's year book as being the crowning achievement of his life.

A tribute to Dr. Fuchs's Jewish activities was paid by Professor Hans Liebeschutz.

#### Birmingham Anti-Shechita

The Markets and Fairs Committee of the Birmingham City Council unanimously decided to write to every authority in the country to ask support in seeking to make ritual slaughter illegal.

#### Hull Youth Centre

It is hoped that building will soon start of a new Jewish youth centre in Hull, the plans for which have been approved by the Ministry of Education and the local authority. The estimated cost of the project is £17,800, excluding the cost of the land. The Ministry of Education is to make a grant of £8,400 and the local authority £4,200.

#### Sheffield Centre

Appreciation of the co-operation and good services of the Sheffield Jewish Centre was expressed by Mr. E. Isaacs, president of the Hebrew Education Board. It was stressed that if the community was moving away from religious concepts, then a social centre became of paramount importance. The president of the Representative Council described the Centre as a "living, thriving entity".

#### Welsh Yeshiva

A group of Chasidim from Stamford Hill will move to Llanelli to set up a yeshiva there. Led by Rabbi Samuel Kraus, the group intends to take over the 57-year-old synagogue in Llanelli, now only rarely used.

#### Co-operation Conference

A conference on the theme of "Jewish-Christian co-operation: present trends and future tasks", was held at Newnham College, Cambridge. Organised by the Council of Christians and Jews, the conference included several speakers from abroad. The opening address was given by Sir Seymour Karminski.

## NEWS FROM ABROAD

### CONFERENCES

#### W.J.C. Assembly

Over 500 delegates from 45 countries, representing over 60 Jewish communities and organisations, attended the fifth general assembly of the World Jewish Congress in Brussels. Representatives from three Eastern bloc countries, Rumania, Yugoslavia and Hungary, and the Chief Rabbi of Rumania, were also present.

In his opening address the president, Dr. Nahum Goldmann, drew attention to the danger facing world Jewry by the loss of identity through assimilation. Jewry's central task, he declared, was to ensure the survival of Jewish communities as unique and distinctive groups.

Dr. Goldmann claimed that his policy towards the Soviet Union had helped in two achievements—the recognition by world opinion that a Jewish problem existed in the Soviet Union and the recognition of it by the top Soviet leaders themselves. (A detailed report about the Congress, especially about the symposium on "Germans and Jews", will be published in the next issue.—The Ed.)

#### Cojo

The World Conference of Jewish Organisations (Cojo) held its three-day plenary session at Geneva. Its ten constituent organisations endorsed "basic principles" to strengthen the role of Cojo. A set of rules was presented and accepted permitting Cojo to take action when a substantial majority of its constituents is in accord, thus dispelling the "right of veto".

Dr. Nahum Goldmann was re-elected chairman. He expressed the "full support" of the World Jewish Congress, which he heads, to the development of Cojo's potential for collective action. Dr. William A. Wexler, president of B'nai B'rith, was re-elected co-chairman. The British Board of Deputies was authorised to nominate one of its representatives to serve as vice-chairman.

#### World Council of Synagogues

The World Council of Synagogues met in Geneva, with the Chief Rabbi of Geneva, Dr. A. Safran, as host. The assembly received a message in Hebrew, expressing greetings and peace hopes, from the Chief Rabbi of Moscow, Rabbi J. L. Levin. The president of the United Synagogue of India; Dr. Marcus Melchior, the Chief Rabbi of Denmark; and Rabbi Katz, of Czechoslovakia, were present.

The aim of the World Council, the assembly was told, must now be the "establishment of new beach-heads in other parts of the world", following its success in North and Latin America, India and Israel.

It was announced that Mrs. Helen Suzman, lone M.P. of South Africa's multi-racial Progressive Party, is to receive a citation from the Council. The citation is for her "distinguished leadership" in the battle to translate into living reality the prophetic teaching that "all men are created equal".—(J.C.)

#### Jewish Group for U.N. Body

The bureau of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations (N.G.O.s), which has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, has elected the Co-ordinating Board of Jewish Organisations for a three-year term.

The bureau's tasks are the organisation of the International Year for Human Rights in 1968 and the strengthening of N.G.O.s in view of opposition by the Soviet Union and the Arab States to rights of criticism concerning questions of breaches of human rights.

A bureau of members of ten organisations is elected by the Conference every three years. The Co-ordinating Board represents the British Board of Deputies, the South African Board of Deputies and the International Council of B'nai B'rith.

### EASTERN JEWRY

#### Russian-Yiddish Dictionary

The Kiev correspondent of the Warsaw Yiddish newspaper, *Folks-Sztyme*, has reported that a contract for the publication of a Russian-Yiddish dictionary was signed in June with "Sovietskaya Entsiklopedia", the Moscow publishing house for dictionaries and encyclopedias. According to *Folks-Sztyme*, the publishing house has also given a commission for the preparation of a Yiddish-Russian dictionary. The publication of these dictionaries, if they materialise, would raise the status of Yiddish to the position of other minority languages.

#### Academy of Science Elections

There has been a marked increase in the number of Jews elected to the Soviet Academy of Science, the supreme authority on scientific research in the U.S.S.R. The Academy has increasing political weight, with its institutes dominating such areas as nuclear power and space research.

#### Call for Hebrew Studies

The second conference on Semitic languages was recently held in Tbilisi (Tiflis), Georgia. Non-Jewish scholars as well as Professor Vinikov, a Jew, demanded the building-up of a substantial body of Hebrew scholars in the Soviet Union in order to enable her to catch up in the field of Hebrew studies. The publication of a Hebrew textbook was also called for. There are thousands of manuscripts and other documents, many unique, which remain unpublished because there are not enough learned experts.—(J.C.)

#### Synagogue Chairman's Dismissal

It is reported that the chairman of the small Cherkizovo synagogue in Moscow was dismissed by a representative of the Committee of Religious Affairs.

#### American Rabbis in Moscow

Twenty-two American Liberal rabbis, a delegation from the Central Conference of American Rabbis, visited the Soviet Union. Two of their number preached in Moscow's Baptist Union church to an overflow crowd estimated at over 1,000. Both rabbis emphasised the theme that Jews and Christians in legally atheistic Russia back a common cause—the belief in God. Several of the Americans also preached sermons and were called to the reading of the Law at the Sabbath service in Moscow's main synagogue.

#### Jewish Youth Assembly in Poland

What was probably the first officially approved assembly of Jewish youngsters in Eastern Europe since 1947 was recently held in Poland. On the occasion of the millennium of the Polish State and the thousandth year of Jewish settlement in Poland, 300 Polish Jewish youths, mainly from secondary schools and universities, gathered in Cracow. The Polish press and television services gave extensive coverage to the event. A pilgrimage to Auschwitz was made during the three days of the assembly.—(J.C.)

#### PRIZE FOR "TREBLINKA" BOOK

The controversial book, "Treblinka", by Jean-François Steiner, has been awarded the "Prix de la Résistance" prize. This is the first time the prize has been given to an author who had no part in the fight against the Nazis. The book, it has been alleged, emphasises Jewish co-operation with the Nazis in concentration camps.

The jury of nine former Resistance leaders chose the book by one vote. Only two members of the jury were of Jewish origin.

### SPAIN

The Spanish Government is again initiating measures intended to ensure religious freedom for Spain's 5,000 Jews and other minorities. A second proposed law on religious liberty has been announced, drafted by the Ministry of Justice and the Foreign Ministry. The new draft law guarantees, among other things, complete legal equality for non-Catholics, including the right to occupy any political or administrative post except that of head of State. Also included are the right of free association as religious communities (no Spanish Jewish community has this, as yet) and the right to practise religions freely in private and in public and to proselytise.

Despite the belief of some Spaniards that religious liberty is an inalienable right, the statute can be expected to meet stiff opposition.

### ARGENTINA

The general secretary of the violently anti-semitic Tacuara was received by the Minister of the Interior, despite the fact that Tacuara was outlawed by the last régime. Leaders after the meeting stated that the new régime had their full support.

A delegation from Daia, the representative organisation of Argentine Jewry, met President Onganía to express their concern at the activities of extremist groups. The President stated that the Government would act energetically against extremists who disturbed the peace.

### GERMAN NAZIS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Cape Town correspondent of the *Sunday Times* reported that followers and supporters of the German National Democratic Party have organised cells in Pretoria and South-West Africa.

The National Democratic Party has been organising membership tours to South Africa. A group of 30 neo-Nazis recently visited the country.

### GUESTS AT ROME'S GERMAN ACADEMY

The painter, Isidor Aschheim (formerly Breslau, now Jerusalem), and the author, Max Tau (Oslo), are amongst the artists who will be this year's guests at the Villa Massimo, owned by the "Deutsche Akademie" in Rome.

### COMMUNAL CENTRE ON GERMAN STAMP

The Deutsche Bundespost Berlin has issued a 30 pfennig stamp, depicting the Jewish Communal Centre in the Fasanenstrasse, Berlin.

### OBERRAMMERGAU PLAY REVISED

The Village Council of Oberammergau has decided to remove the antisemitic references of the decennial passion play. Instead of a version used since 1860 they will base the rehearsals for the 1970 performance on a recently rediscovered text, written by a Benedictine monk in 1750. After seeing a dress rehearsal the Council will make a final decision in 1968.

### DEGGENDORF MURALS

After renewed protests by a Christian-Jewish symposium in Niederaltelch about murals on the walls of the Catholic "Grabkirche" in Deggendorf, Bavaria, the office of the Bishop of Regensburg stated they would be removed and transferred to a museum, when the building is restored.

The murals depict the murder of local Jews accused of desecrating the church in 1337. The symposium protested that the defamation of Jewish citizens should have been preserved for so many centuries. They also criticised the annual pilgrimage to the site of the massacre. A church spokesman said that the pilgrimage was an "historic matter" not associated with the murals. Public protests in 1961 were responsible for the inscription below the twelve pictures of the murals being made unreadable.

A. Rosenberg

## BEN URI ART GALLERY EXHIBITION

Let me first say a few general words about the Ben Uri Art Gallery. There is no doubt that it is a splendid undertaking. Our readers will particularly appreciate the fact that the works of so many remarkable painters who once were refugees from Germany have found refuge on the walls of this gallery. But . . . what a pity such a worthy undertaking is so awkwardly presented. Whatever the merits of Dean Street, it simply is not where the art lover looks for a gallery. The building housing the gallery is not specially inviting. A gallery needs a shop window—in the literal sense of the word. The Ben Uri is reminiscent of the (Jewish) closed shop, which surely is not at all intended.

But the genuine art lover should not be deterred. I was not and thus I was there, a lone and solitary visitor. I have no regrets. Out of the 47 exhibits I should like to mention, in alphabetical order, those by artists with a German background.

*Rachel Cegla* was born in Germany and studied in Hamburg until the Nazi regime forced her to leave the country. She settled in Israel, where she now lives in the famous Sfad artists' colony. Her work was recognised when she gave a one-man show in New York earlier this year. At the Ben Uri she exhibits a water colour, "Woman of Galilee", which shows three women (or one?) from three different angles. Although small in format it has a monumental quality.

*Erna Nonnenmacher* (and her equally gifted husband) has by now become a veteran Londoner. Her many years' teaching activities have established her as a respected and well loved personality among art students of all ages. The exhibition shows her sculpture, "Youth". Of polyester bronze, it is distinguished by its extreme simplicity. In this figure of a young girl all is subordinated to a slowing rhythm which makes for the compact unity of the sculpture.

Her bronze statue, "Nude", is proof of Mrs. Nonnenmacher's versatility. It is in the cubist style and has a broken, angular outline. A welter of different shapes and forms seems to dance round this little figure.

*Adele Reifenberg* is an old friend of the visitor to the Ben Uri. She held her first one-man show in Berlin in 1926, after studying with the great Lovis Corinth. Her art and her skill were honoured in this country when her works were accepted by the Royal Academy and the Royal British Artists. "Summer in South Hill Park" has echoes of Corinth's tempestuous colouring. Yet here everything seems subdued, seems to glow from within. The heat makes nature hold its breath. The composition is remarkably balanced and harmonious. Fantastically she sets a flying dove just above the centre of the painting to relieve the motionless stillness of a summers' day.

"Street in Haifa" again deals with the problem of transferring colour and the atmosphere of intense heat on to canvas. And it is only fitting that the colouring should be more luminous, more intense. The curved sweep of the street brings elegant movement into the picture.

*Lotti Reizenstein* (from Nuernberg) long since made a name for herself. No greater contrast is imaginable than that between her two exhibits.

First there is a gouache "L'Appetit d'un Faun". The half-divine creature's greed and lust is irresistibly portrayed. The "attacked" girl is not frightened (and why should she

be?). There is a lovely play of lines and the picture is informed by movement and a sensual liveliness. "In Sicily—Nightfall" is completely different. The oil painting expresses dusk, silence, immobility, rest, relaxation. This feeling is enhanced by a composition based on the interplay of verticals and horizontals.

*Henry Sanders* comes from Dresden but his heart is in the Mediterranean countries. Proof of this is his "Mediterranean Family". But it is also reflected in his "Amsterdam Flower Sellers". Two large faces among all those flowers, and they too resemble great blossoms. The houses in the background glow in a somewhat expressionistic manner but the distortions are moderate and manage not to degenerate into the grotesque. His is a joyful and life-enhancing world.

### PEM

#### THE NEW UNTER DEN LINDEN

The Communists are proud of the fact that the street between Marx-Engels bridge (formerly "Schlossbruecke") and Brandenburger Tor has been rebuilt—21 years after the end of the war. In 1950 they started to plant trees again and placed the Russian Embassy on the site of the old "Bristol". First the State Opera was opened and the Zeughaus became the Museum for German History. In front of Schinkel's "Wache" a guard of the "Vopo" ("Volkspolizei") honours the victims of Fascism. Where once was the Café Bauer now stands a combined wine restaurant, Espresso bar and dance hall, while opposite on the side of the university a hotel for 405 visitors has been opened. The "Kranzler" corner is now a five-storey apartment house with 160 flats. Next to it is a street of shops where one can buy Scotch whisky for 80, and French brandy for 50, East-Mark. Before you reach the Grotewohlstrasse (once Wilhelmstrasse), where Unter den Linden now ends, you come to the Hungarian and Polish Embassies and some ministries. Where the "Schloss" once stood there is now a wide open space for meetings, with stands for the leaders of government and party.

MEMO

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## Old Acquaintances

*Home News*: H. G. Casparius visited Vienna to lecture at the opening of the Institute for Development.—Anton Difrting scored a success in "The Blue Max". Hugo Schuster is also in the cast.—Erich Fried wrote the libretto for the new Alexander Goehr opera, "Arden muss sterben".—Erich Pohlman appears in the new I.T.V. series, "The Informer".

*Obituary*: Otto Sonnenfeld, the well-known importer of films to Israel, died in Zurich whilst on his annual European trip. Born in Bruenn, he discovered Hedy Kiesler-Lamarr and Gustav Machaty. He was also an art collector of repute.—Gussy Holl, Jannings' widow and once a famous "disease", died in Strobl at the age of 78.—The 74-year-old director of Berlin's "Scala" during the Nazi régime, Eduard Duisberg, died in Majorca.—Edwin Heyer, for 45 years a member of Berlin's Opera, died in Berlin at the age of 81.—Peter Nelken, editor of "Eulenspiegel" and son of authoress Dinah Nelkin, died in East Berlin at the age of 47; he lived in London before the war.—The pianist, Leo Taubmann, died in New York in his 59th year. He was the accompanist of many famous singers, both in Germany prior to his emigration and later in the U.S.A. He was also active in the Jewish cultural life of Berlin after 1933.

*Germany*: Hansjoerg Utzerath succeeded Erwin Piscator as director of Berlin's Volksbuehne.—Heinz Hilpert retired from the directorship of the Goettingen Theatre.—Viktor de Kowa will direct "Figaro" in East Berlin.—Carl Zuckmayer will next year direct his "Froehliche Weinberg" in Darmstadt.—Walter Felsenstein will reopen East Berlin's Komische Oper, the former Metropol Theatre, with a production of "Don Giovanni".—W. Dieterle's production of Miller's "After the Fall", starring Sonja Ziemann, is to go on tour.—Lilian Harvey will perform Terence Rattigan's "Olivia" in Hamburg.—Goetz George, son of the late Heinrich George and Berta Drews, married actress Loni von Friedl.—Trude Kolman will produce Deval's "Venus fuer Milo" at Munich's Kleine Freiheit.

*Milestones*: Actress Hilde Koerber, principal of Berlin's Max Reinhardt School for Actors, celebrated her 60th birthday.—Adrienne Gessner, a member of Vienna's Burg, celebrated her 70th birthday. During the war she lived in the States with her husband, Ernst Lothar.—Lazar Wechsler, the Swiss producer of such films as "Last Chance" and "Four in a Jeep", is 70 years old.—Gert von Gontard, who was Reinhardt's assistant and teacher at his workshop and who with F. G. Gerstman directs the German Theatre in New York, is 60 years old. Before 1933 he edited and published "Neue Revue" in Berlin.—Albert Lieven, who until a short time ago lived in London, is 60 years of age.

*News from Everywhere*: Siegfried Arno flew from Hollywood to Berlin to receive the golden "Filmband".—M. K. Caro, former editor of *Pariser Tageszeitung* and Vienna's *Welt-presse*, has joined the staff of *Schweizer Illustrierte Zeitung*.—Walter Slezak, now appearing in "Oliver" on tour in the States, will take part in the "Batman" series.—Mia May celebrated her 82nd birthday in Beverley Hills.—Walter Wicclair, on a visit to Berlin from California, gave a courageous lecture about the Nazis in the German theatre world at the Free University.—Karl Otten's widow, Ellen, is editing publisher Kurt Wolff's letters for Scheffler.—In New Orleans, Otto Preminger has begun directing "Hurry Sundown", starring Jane Fonda and Michael Caine.—Gerd Oswald is directing "The H.A.R.M. Machine", with Carl Esmond-Eichberger in the cast.

PEM

Rabbi Dr. S. Neufeld

## ORANIENBURGERSTRASSE SYNAGOGUE

### Centenary of Consecration

Shortly before the High Holy-days, just a century ago, on September 5th, 1866, the consecration took place of Berlin's magnificent New Synagogue at Oranienburgerstrasse, in the presence of a large concourse of guests, including Bismarck. All our painful memories are reawakened when we catch sight of it today or make it the occasion of a special visit. This magnificent building was erected as a proud indication of the equality of rights enjoyed by the Jewish community in Prussia; its destruction acted as a beacon for the downfall of the Jews in Germany. As in many other places, they did not actually set light to the building for fear of endangering neighbouring structures, but so much damage was done both internally and externally as to render it entirely useless for any other purpose.

The underlying history of this building goes back for many decades, its influence and effect was marked until the bitter end. For a long time the growing community in Berlin, the largest in Germany, had felt the lack of a representative synagogue, and for equally long the absence of a modern liberal form of service. For many decades most other large communities had owned ornate synagogues, often with organs, mixed choirs and revised prayer books; only Berlin had a single communal synagogue, the modest building in the Heidereutergasse. But, in addition, there were a number of private minyanim and private synagogues, partly supported by the community, of which the Lipmann-Tauss Synagogue, in the Gollnowstrasse, was probably the oldest. The delay in deciding to build a representative new building was not so much due to financial considerations as to the unpalatable thought, based on previous experience, that the erection of an organ synagogue and, possibly, the engagement of a progressive rabbi, would cause dissension in the community, as had happened in many other communities. There were bitter memories of earlier attempts. In 1815 two small synagogues had been established in the homes of Israel Jacobson and Herz Beer, father of Meyerbeer, with a prayer book mainly in German, an organ and modern preachers (Israel Jacobson, Leopold Zunz and Eduard Kley).

An attempt at the time to force the community to adopt one of these services as its main service had failed miserably. On the submission of the Orthodox element the holding of these services was forbidden by the Prussian Government; this order was later extended to the whole of Prussia and specifically required prayers to be recited in the Hebrew language. As a concession permission was granted for a German translation to be printed alongside the Hebrew text. King Frederick William IV, initially progressively minded, permitted certain changes. It was then, in 1845, that the "Reformgemeinde" was founded at 11a Johannesstrasse; it was a private establishment with far-reaching revisions in its service. At first, services were held there on Shabbat and Sundays, but later only on Sundays. However, the services never managed to develop. The membership of the "Reformgemeinde" remained almost stationary despite the rapid growth of the community as a whole.

When conditions were finally thought favourable for the building of a new communal synagogue, considerable thought was given as to where it should be built. Before his mental derangement, i.e., not later than 1857, the King suggested to the community a position in the

south of the city, where the Michael Church was built later. This seemed a very attractive offer, a striking building in an open square near the Luisenstaedische Canal, as it then was; but in reality the suggestion was linked with the idea of getting the Jews out of the centre of the city and to settle them in an outlying district that at the time had hardly been developed. The plan was naturally turned down by the community and it was decided to build on a central location in the Oranienburgerstrasse. Year after year went by before the actual construction work was started, was completed and the building could be finally consecrated in the autumn of 1866. From the reports of a conservative communal leader it can be seen how the communal funds were squandered on the building. In order to make the synagogue as splendid as possible, it was decided to sell plots owned by the community in other places.

Combined with all these preparations there was also linked the search for a suitable rabbi. The celebrated preacher, Michael Sachs, had already declared that he would not officiate in the organ synagogue. He did not live to see its consecration, for he died in January, 1864, at the early age of 56. Nevertheless he was prevailed upon to preach in the synagogue before the communal representatives in 1863, but merely—to try out its acoustics. His sermon was a masterpiece; in it he bade farewell to the pews which he would never again address. At the instigation of the Orthodox the sermon was later published in the "Israelit." It was, in fact, in very bad taste that the communal leaders should demand such a function to be carried out by a personality like Michael Sachs, since it was a job that any ordinary teacher could have undertaken.

The unexpected death of Sachs complicated the situation even more, because he had always been thought of as the counterpoise who could well safeguard the interests of the Orthodox element. Now it was necessary to find a suitable rabbi who would also be acceptable to the Orthodox and who would also preach in the Heidereutergasse. The most worthy spiritual exponent of modern liberalism and most powerful preacher was Abraham Geiger, but the community was fearful of electing him, because of the disruptive influence he had exercised both in Breslau and Frankfurt. His extreme views and his attempts to turn them into reality would be bound to rouse even the more moderate elements.

In their search for a suitable rabbi the communal authorities disbursed a great deal of money on travelling expenses. Several communal representatives were sent to various parts of Germany to hear well-known preachers. Finally, the choice fell on Dr. Joseph Aub, of Mainz, who had been particularly extolled by his community. When Aub delivered his inaugural sermon it immediately turned out that his mid-Franconian dialect was not only intolerable to his North German audience, but even somewhat ludicrous. The communal representatives had acted both carelessly and irresponsibly. They had, in fact, attended the synagogue in Mainz, but had arrived too late to hear the sermon. Afterwards members of the congregation had spoken to them very warmly about their rabbi, not only did they praise him, but praised him away. In Mainz, too, and even in Upper Franconian Bayreuth, his accent had proved disturbing. But Aub had been actually elected.

He also preached in the Heidereutergasse and peace was more or less maintained.

Yet there was a growing body of opinion that wanted the really leading personality of Abraham Geiger in addition to Aub, and thus he was finally appointed. His conditions were also met, including the foundation of a modern rabbinical training seminary. This was actually inaugurated in 1872 as the "Hochschule fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums".

When Geiger preached in the Heidereutergasse for the first time there was a violent dispute. The communal leadership was acutely embarrassed, but, as the communal secretary, Philipp Wertheim, explained to Julius Jacoby, already then active as a communal leader, it was impossible to declare an elected rabbi to be trepha. Attempts were, therefore, made to obtain in Rudolf Ungerleider a rabbi who would not only be acceptable to the Orthodox by his conciliatory attitude, but could also in particular take over responsibility for kashrut.

It was, however, precisely on this point that no compromise with the extreme Orthodox was possible. They could, indeed, listen to a rabbi who attended the organ synagogue, even in an Orthodox synagogue, and most certainly could attend an instructive discourse delivered by him in some hall, but they could not agree that the ritual responsibility for meat, matzot and other items could be entrusted to a rabbi who attended the organ synagogue. Notwithstanding their human and personal respect for him, such supervision was not sufficient for them. It would have been simple to appoint a Dayan especially for this purpose or to elect a suitable conservative rabbi similar to Michael Sachs, but the communal board and assembly of representatives as then constituted had no understanding for this question. So with heavy hearts the most Orthodox decided to establish a private association and issued a call as their spiritual leader to Rabbi Ezriel Hildesheimer, who happily combined within himself Torah and modern knowledge. With the help of wealthy members Hildesheimer managed to erect the synagogue at 12a Gipsstrasse and, in co-operation with Samson Raphael Hirsch in Frankfurt, and with the assistance of liberal Jewish parliamentarians, such as Ludwig Bamberger and Eduard Lasker, he succeeded in obtaining in 1876, for the Jews in Prussia, the right to secede from the community on religious grounds without relinquishing their affiliation to Judaism, and to unite with other Jews in their own communities.

There was, however, a difference between the separatist movement in Berlin and Frankfurt. Hildesheimer only reluctantly adopted secession as the solution, to some extent as an emergency measure to meet the circumstances then prevailing, and he continued to co-operate with other Jewish organisations for the benefit of Jewry as a whole, whereas Hirsch and, even more so, his son-in-law and successor, Salomon Breuer, in Frankfurt, raised secession into a principle and rejected all efforts at agreement. Through the influence of Frankfurt, separatism spread to the near-by Hessian communities and in each of such relatively small communities as Darmstadt, Mainz and Giessen, there were established two distinct district rabbinates with equal rights to which the neighbouring small communities affiliated each according to its own convictions. In Bavaria, on the other hand, this division was avoided; in large measure this was due to the strong personality of Rabbi Seligmann Baer Bamberger in Wuerzburg, who was very Orthodox in himself, but understood how to compromise over differences and stress unifying elements.

Thus the establishment of the first modern synagogue in Berlin had a far-reaching effect on the whole religious development of Berlin and, beyond that, of Prussia and Germany.

Josef Fraenkel

## SHOLEM ALEICHEM YEAR

The occasion of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Sholem Aleichem, the greatest Yiddish writer, was celebrated in 1959 in Moscow and in New York, in Israel and in the Diaspora. His 50th *Yahrzeit* in 1966 will be commemorated by Jewish communities all over the world. The Jewish people acclaimed him as their King of Humour and Laughter, and in world literature he has been acknowledged and accepted as the Jewish Mark Twain.

Sholem Aleichem was a Zionist, a member of the Zionist Organisation and a Shekelholder in Kiev where he earned well-deserved recognition for his valuable work in the interest of political Zionism, the aim of which was the creation of a Jewish State.

After the First Zionist Congress in Basle (1897) Sholem Aleichem translated Max Nordau's historical speech on "The General Situation of the Jews throughout the World", into Yiddish, and his pamphlet became one of the first introductions to modern Zionism to appear in Russia. Nordau's speech in Basle was a passionate indictment of the oppression to which Jews were subjected by most of the nations of the world. About Russia, he said: "Who ever possibly can, emigrates, in order to find in a foreign land light and air, which are denied to him in his own country. Those who are not young or courageous enough to do so, remain in their misery and degenerate spiritually, morally, physically."

Kiev, where Sholem Aleichem lived at that time, had only one delegate at Basle: Professor Max Mandelstamm. He was an old *Hovevei Zion* and became a political Zionist and a true friend of Theodor Herzl who immortalised him in his novel "Old-New Land". A few weeks after the Congress, Professor Mandelstamm, at a Kiev meeting, spoke for two hours on the impressions he had obtained in Basle and called upon the Jewish intelligentsia to join the ranks of the new movement. The mission of Herzl's Zionism, he declared, was to "relieve the distress of the Jews and to restore Jewry to its former glory". The words of the veteran fighter deeply moved the audience, which included Sholem Aleichem. A member of Mandelstamm's close circle of friends, he translated and edited the Russian speech of the Professor in Yiddish. The booklet of some 30 pages was printed by the publishers "Achiasaf" (Warsaw) and sold at 15 Kopeks. With the aid of the Zionist Organisation, copies were circulated wherever Yiddish was spoken. Thus Sholem Aleichem became the mediator and messenger between Yiddish masses of Eastern Europe and the protagonists of political Zionism. Popular and loved already in those days, he spoke the daily language of the simple Jew. The pamphlet was often read aloud in synagogues or at meetings, and it sustained the hopes of tens of thousands of Jews—as Sholem Aleichem and Mandelstamm had intended it to do. Sholem Aleichem was the laughing propagandist of Zionism. His readers became Zionist as tears of laughter ran down their cheeks.

How did Sholem Aleichem explain Zionism? In his own pamphlet "Why do the Jews need a country?" (Achiasaf, Warsaw, 1898), he promoted Zionism in his own way. "What kind of a question is that?"—asked the King of Jewish humour. "Could one not ask differently? Why should it be just the Jews who do not need a land?" For Sholem Aleichem the Jewish problem was actually a question of habitation. With the fall of Jerusalem the Jewish people had lost their land, their home—their own habitation. The Jews looked for

a habitation in the Diaspora but they were always given notice to quit and had to go from one dwelling to another. Yet now they had come together in Basle to solve their "housing problem" under the guidance of Herzl.

Sholem Aleichem's booklet, passed by the Russian censor, was widely read. It became text-book for the Aleph-Beth of Zionism in Eastern Europe. Naturally, it was welcomed by the Zionist press, and Professor Michael Berkowicz, Herzl's Hebrew secretary, wrote in "Die Welt" that Sholem Aleichem had succeeded in making plain to the masses the principles of Zionism and in "exposing the natural need of the Jewish people for a Homeland". Berkowicz also admired the fine style "of this extremely successful little publication."

Though Theodor Herzl published some of Sholem Aleichem's humorous stories in "Die Welt", he never mentioned him in his "Diaries". I once found a letter written by Herzl to the editor of "Die Welt" which I included in my booklet "Dr. S. Werner—A Collaborator of Herzl" (1939). In this letter, dated January 17, 1904, Herzl wrote: "Dear Friend, we cannot possibly print the Sholem Aleichem scene. Please send the manuscript back immediately." It is difficult to say which scene he meant—probably one about the Uganda conflict.

Through his writings for "Die Welt" and for other Zionist journals Sholem Aleichem became well-known in Western Europe. At Zionist meetings and on festive occasions the reading of his humorous stories became increasingly popular. Whenever the name of Sholem Aleichem appeared on a programme, success was certain. Almost every funny story had a moral. In "Ma Nishtana" Sholem Aleichem asked four—in fact four times four and more—"kashes" (questions): "Why are we so familiar with the history of all people, ancient and modern—with the exception of only one, our own Jewish people?"—"Why are we so at home in the geography of all countries—with the exception of one, the Land of Israel?"

When Herzl died in July 1904, there was mourning everywhere. In Kiev the Jewish shops were closed, and the Jews gathered in the synagogue where sermons and eulogies were delivered. At that time, Sholem Aleichem, in his booklet "Theodor Herzl", said: "Is it true after all that Israel has no luck?"

The question of whether "it was true that Israel has no luck" was soon repeated. In 1905, pogroms raged in Kiev. Sholem Aleichem sent reports and appeals to a Jewish paper in New York. This was quite a different Sholem Aleichem. No longer tears of laughter but tears of terror and suffering. He then believed that "a time will come when Russians will read the history of their liberation and their hearts will soften, their eyes overflow with tears and they will kneel before our descendants and ask their forgiveness for the sins of their barbaric ancestors". Sholem Aleichem was mistaken.

He left Kiev. His European tour was a triumphal procession for the well-loved storyteller. He was feted everywhere. Everyone—Zionist and non-Zionist, Socialist and religious Jew, Bundist and Territorialist—flocked to see him and get a share of his medicine: "Laughter is health, doctors order laughter!" He attended the 8th Zionist Congress at The Hague in August 1907. Loeb Taubes, a pioneer of Zionism, accompanied him through the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. In other countries reception committees were formed. He also visited England, and was greeted in London by Joseph Cowen, who for many years was president of the English Zionist Federation, and in Manchester by Chaim Weizmann. All newly established Zionist libraries in Eastern and Western Europe ordered his works, either in Yiddish or in translations, and his picture, provided by the Keren Kayemeth, could be seen in all Zionist centres.

In his writings Sholem Aleichem created many types, above all "Menachem Mendel". Max Nordau, in his speeches at Zionist Congresses, used to describe the same type as a "Luftmensch", but he did so with brutality and bitterness and not with Sholem Aleichem's love and humour. "Menachem Mendel" has now disappeared and belongs to the past. But he lives and will always go on living in the works of Sholem Aleichem.

There was a time, when Sholem Aleichem was widely read, more than Mendele Mocher Sforim and Yitzchak Leib Peretz. He has remained the favourite writer of the Jewish people. But is the knowledge of his stories widespread nowadays? Perhaps we find the answer to the question in the words written by Sholem Aleichem himself 50 years ago. "How comes that we know so exactly who Pushkin was and Lermontov, Gogol, Gorki and Tolstoy and that we know nothing of Yehuda Halevy, Levinsohn, Lewanda, Gordon and Mendele Mocher Sforim?"

## PERSONALIA

### DEATH OF KONRAD HEIDEN

Konrad Heiden, the author of standard works on the Nazi movement, died in New York at the age of 64. He was born in Munich as the son of a Protestant father, who was active in the Social Democratic Party, and a Jewish mother. Before he became a free-lance writer in 1930, he worked for seven years on the staff of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. His first book, which dealt with the History and Programme of the N.S.D.A.P., appeared in 1932. It was followed after 1933 by other publications on the Nazi movement, the best known of which is "Der Fuehrer" (1944), a study of Hitler's background and personality. Heiden had to leave Germany in 1933. He first went to the Saar District and later to France. In 1940, he escaped to the U.S.A., where he also worked for the magazine "Life".

### AWARD FOR WERNER KRAFT

The author, Dr. Werner Kraft (Jerusalem), was awarded the Literature Prize of the Bavarian Academy of Arts. Kraft was born in Braunschweig 70 years ago. His works include selected editions of works by Heine, Else Lasker-Schueler and Karl Kraus. Kraft is also an author and poet in his own right.

### REFUGEE EXPERT ON WELSH HISTORY

Several South Wales papers carried references to Dr. W. K. Bernfeld, Hon. Secretary of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society, who has done archaeological research work at the ancient burial chambers in Tinkinswood and St. Lythans and written a pamphlet on the physique of the Neolithic man. Dr. Bernfeld came to Wales as a refugee from Germany and is a member of the AJR.

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## A HISTORY OF GERMAN JEWS

Whatever the reasons may be, there seems to be a steady flow of books about "the Jews" coming out of Germany. Germans have become introspective about this subject. Miss Wanda Kampmann has recently added another book to the list and she gives it the somewhat weighty sub-title "Studies in the History of German Judaism".\*

The origin of the book is interesting. The authoress, so I understand from her, is professionally engaged in the training of German history teachers. While the Nazi period is nowadays well covered by German history textbooks, the young German historian does not seem to know much about the whole period of Jewish exile since the destruction of the Temple, and even in the academic study of German history the peculiar inter-relationship between Germans and Jews is, at least from the German side, not very fully dealt with. To fill this gap the authoress was asked by the Ministry of Education for the State of Rhineland-Westphalia to write a "short historical survey of about twenty pages". She became absorbed in her subject, emotionally as well as intellectually, and the result is a book of 450 pages.

The period she has selected stretches from the Middle Ages to the First World War. Why not up to the present time? one is tempted to ask. The authoress wishes to describe events which prepared the ground and created a certain attitude of mind by paralysing moral reactions, and this finally made the unthinkable crime possible. She does not believe, however, in the casualty of history in the sense that an age-old antisemitism was bound by its very nature to lead to the final destruction of European Jewry, as we knew it.

It is interesting to read that the early Jewish settlers in the valleys of the Rhine and Danube enjoyed the civil status of Roman citizens. The introduction of special protective laws for Jews was a result of outrages, committed by the Crusaders. Voluntary common living quarters now changed into compulsory ghettos in consequence of the decisions of the Third and Fourth Lateran Councils. We know that Christians were not allowed by ecclesiastical law to charge interest, and Jews were forced to undertake this task, which was unpopular and at the same time risky. A usurious rate of interest was therefore frequently fixed by the authorities, e.g., the Association of Rhenish cities fixed it in the late Middle Ages as between 33 per cent and 43 per cent.

The justification for the persecution of the Jews and the consequent loss of liberty was in the Middle Ages, of course, religious, as many people genuinely believed that the Jews had taken great guilt upon themselves by their denial of the Messiah. But, as the authoress rightly points out, motives were even then mixed, and religious reasons frequently provided a pretext for the baser desire to rob, to plunder and to kill. The medieval story of the poisoning of wells by Jews is merely mentioned as a rumour [sic] when the City Fathers of Cologne write to the German Emperor Sigismund justifying their expulsion of the Jews in 1423. The real reason, however, was that Jews were no longer needed as money-lenders as Canon Law had changed by then. But we know the harm this wicked invention did later on. Martin Luther repeated it and added similar accusations about the murder of Christian children by Jews, tales which even the Pope and Emperors of the Middle Ages

had rejected. In the extremity of his anti-semitism, in his demand for forced labour and eventual expulsion of the Jews he may well be compared to Hitler.

In the age of Absolutism, which is followed by mercantilism, the vast majority of Jews lead the miserable life of wandering hawkers and pedlars constantly expelled from one country and not really wanted elsewhere. But when they are expelled from Vienna in 1670, the Elector Friedrich Wilhelm of Brandenburg offers to take forty to fifty families, provided they are well-to-do and can invest money in the country. This situation is typical: a small minority become personally attached to a ruler (so-called "Hoffaktoren") who uses them and exploits them. When, for example, some currency manipulation has to be done because of a chronic shortage of good coin, a Jew in the service of a Prussian king or German prince does the unpleasant job and is afterwards blamed as a cheater. If it is decided to sell abroad some second-class porcelain from the royal factories, Jewish merchants are asked to do this, for they are believed to have the right international connections. This may well be at the root of the lie of world domination by Jewish capitalists.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, in the age of Enlightenment, the first stirrings of the human conscience about Jewish misery and exploitation can be felt and political emancipation now comes to the fore. But assimilation already poses a problem; is it possible, as Moses Mendelssohn wants, to combine loyalty to tradition and to the law with a religion of mere reason ("Vernunftreligion")? His friend, Ch. W. Dohm, the rationalist and pupil of Montesquieu and Rousseau, wants full civic equality for the Jews. But can he see the depth of the conflict between their loyalty to their Judaism and to the State? After all, religion does not matter to him that much!

In the nineteenth century assimilation becomes a near reality. It is, however, only conceded step by step and always in the face

of considerable opposition, which even refuses to give in to the accomplished fact; indeed, we can see a continuous swing of the pendulum forward and backward. The French National Assembly and, later on, Napoleon are prepared to grant equality of status to the Jews as individuals, but not as a separate group (Napoleon had his doubts as to what they really were), and this influenced the German situation for a time, but the first swing of the pendulum in the opposite direction soon set in. Adam Müller's theory of the State as "the totality of human affairs" and the political romanticism of the early nineteenth century with its emphasis on "völkisch" and "Volks-tum" were too narrow and exclusive to allow for the inclusion of the Jews into the State community. Excessive nationalism is coupled with the expression of violent anti-Jewish sentiments in the writings of the influential historian Rühls and the philosopher Fries.

This campaign of academic hatred, together with economic misery, leads to actual outbreaks of violence in 1819. The Prussian king, Friedrich Wilhelm III, now regrets the former progressive policy of Prussia. Administrative practice takes back what had been granted by the Edict of 1812, and his Minister of Justice notes that bravery in the war had not invalidated "the assumption of a lesser morality" among the Jews. Various Provincial Diets consider the Edict a premature step, mention the peculiar national character of the Jewish people and speak of usury and Jewish competition. While, on the one hand, the Liberal Movement held out the prospect of political equality, provided the Jews renounced their group consciousness, the official spokesmen of the State, among them Stahl, the baptised Jew, made it clear that the State wanted to be Christian, and that non-Christians could not form part of the community of the State or enjoy the same political rights. Is the kind of thinking prevalent among many nineteenth-century philosophers and statesmen really so different from the theories of National Socialism?

In 1848 the pendulum once more swings forward and Jews get at last their legal equality. But again the reaction sets in. Jews are excluded from public offices, revolts take place, and in this century we notice a certain decrease of official antisemitism with a simultaneous rise of social antisemitism. Has it all been worth while? Asked in retrospect the answer could well be no. But the authoress rightly points out that, with Hitlerism in mind, no historical analogy is valid and at that time civic equality brought solid gains which no one could have refused lightly.

The second half of the nineteenth century sees for the first time in German Jewish history the gradual disappearance of nearly all official discrimination, but the simultaneous appearance of a particularly powerful and virulent antisemitic movement. Anybody who has lived in this country for some time and is used to the reasonableness and objectivity of English academic writing is amazed at the violence of tone and temper of men like Eugen Dühring, H. St. Chamberlain and Paul de Lagarde. And yet their influence or that of Aldeutsche Verband in German academic circles was very considerable; as for de Lagarde, his language and "thought" is indeed indistinguishable from Hitler's.

Looking at events from this country, it is again surprising that there is in German history a string of Protestant thinkers, writers and politicians such as Luther, Stöcker, C. Frantz and the above-mentioned de Lagarde, the "German Christian", who managed to combine antisemitism with Christianity. This must have weakened the moral influence of Christian

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\* Deutsche und Juden, by W. Kampmann. Published by Lambert Schneider, Heidelberg, 1963.

## HISTORY OF GERMAN JEWS

Continued from page 8

ethics in Germany over a long period of time. Stöcker's influence over the powerful Conservative Party (they adopted a specifically antisemitic programme in 1892) and beyond, anti-Jewish tendencies among the National-Liberals (Treitschke) and even in the Catholic Centre Party (Reichersperger!), all this forces the reader to the conclusion that the greater part of the bourgeoisie was somehow affected by the antisemitic tendencies prevailing at the end of the nineteenth century.

In her description of the plight of the Eastern Jews and of the origin of Zionism, one feels the authoress is almost carried away by her sympathies for the Jewish cause, and so in danger of forgetting her subject. Of particular interest is her description of Herzl's interview with the Kaiser, who wishes to settle in Palestine mainly undesirables, especially "usurers" from the State of Hesse. The idea of a German Palestine Protectorate which is in Herzl's mind at one time, is certainly not helped by the Kaiser's and Bülow's hardly disguised antisemitism. This is contrasted with British matter-of-factness, and a truly Christian spirit in their approach to the Palestine problem.

The final conclusions seem to be as follows: History shows that antisemitism appears under many different guises, according to the spirit of a particular age. It may be based on religion, nationalism, economic or racial reasons, it is, in the opinion of the authoress, fundamentally due to hatred, envy and the baser instincts of humanity.

Why did the attempt at creating a German Jewish symbiosis end in failure? Antisemitism provides only a partial answer. Another reason lies in a conception of super-nationalist statehood and "Volkstum" in which the German Jews could not be included. And yet this sacrifice which entailed the almost complete abandonment of their Jewishness was demanded of them (Treitschke!), but in so far as it was offered, it was rejected, as the Jews were not really considered "Germans." The contrast with Britain is interesting. Should the attempt then never have been made? German Jews had, since the age of Enlightenment, become so deeply rooted in German culture, in the thought of Kant and Hegel, in Lessing and Goethe, the material attractions offered to all Western European Jews in the nineteenth century seemed so tempting that it seemed worth while.

The book convinces the reader all the more, as it is factual and always moderate in tone. A bibliography and an index, such as usually found in similar English books, would certainly be of help. It is to be hoped that this well-written and enlightened book will be widely read in German schools, universities and by the general public.

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## JIDDISCH-EPISCHE DICHTUNG DES MITTELALTERS

Wie bekannt hat es im juedischen Kulturbezirk des Mittelalters neben einem religioes-akzentuierten Schrifttum, das vornehmlich erbaulich-erzieherischen Charakter hatte, auch eine weitverbreitete Literaturgattung gegeben, die den Unterhaltungshunger der breiten juedischen Masse im Ghetto befriedigen wollte. Wir wissen heute nur zu gut von zahlreichen mittelhochdeutschen epischen Dichtungen, von Heldensagen und Ritterromanen, die in ihrer altjiddischen Bearbeitung ihren Einzug im Ghetto fanden und sich dort grosser Beliebtheit erfreuten. Analog dem deutschen, hat es auch jiddische Spielleute gegeben, die ihre epischen Dichtungen in der Volkssprache, bei verschiedenen Anlaessen, im Familienkreise oder auf dem Schulhof, mit Musikbegleitung vortrugen und grossen Beifall ernteten.

Der jiddische Spielmann hat aber nicht nur fremde Sujets uebernommen und epische Werke der deutschen Literatur bearbeitet, sondern auch eine eigene literarische Gattung von Heldensagen juedisch-nationalen Inhalts geschaffen, die im hohen Masse die anderen Werke ueberstiegen. Bekannt ist ja das Meisterwerk altjiddischer Dichtkunst, das "Schmuel Buch", das aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach bereits im 15. Jahrhundert entstanden ist. Daneben verdient unsere besondere Aufmerksamkeit ein zweites, literarisch hochwertiges Epos jener Zeit, das "Melochim Buch" ("Das Buch der Koenige"), das wie schon der Titel besagt, zum Hauptthema die biblische Saga der zwei Koenigsbuecher hat. Dieser altjiddischen epischen Dichtung hat nunmehr der Amsterdamer Jiddisch-Forscher L. Fuks eine umfassende textkritische und literargeschichtliche Studie gewidmet, die in der Schriftenreihe der Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana erschienen ist.\*

Das "Melochim Buch", das erst im Jahre 1543 in Augsburg erschienen ist, soll jedoch, wie Fuks nachzuweisen versucht, bereits ins 14. Jahrhundert zurueckgehen, eine Annahme, der der Rezensent nicht ganz beipflichten kann. Das Epos, von dem nur eine spaete Handschrift (im Besitz der Rosenthaliana in Amsterdam) vorliegt, ist mit seinen 2262 vierzeiligen Strophen das umfangreichste Werk in der altjiddischen Literatur. Wie das "Schmuel Buch" so ist auch das "Melochim Buch" in der bekannten Nibelungenstrophe gedichtet, die der jiddische Spielmann aus den mittelalterlichen Heldenepen uebernommen hat. Seine Handlung ist ganz auf den Erzaelungen der biblischen Buecher der Koenige aufgebaut und schildert ausfuehrlich das Leben und Wirken Koenig Salomons, seiner Helden und Streiter sowie die Geschichte der beiden Koenigreiche Juda und Israel. Neben den historischen Quellen bedient sich hier der Dichter, ebenso wie der des "Schmuel Buches", ausgiebig der Narrationen des Talmud und Midrasch, wobei er manche Sage und Legende der Vergangenheit kunstgerecht in den epischen Stoff verwebt und so eine vollendete kuenstlerische Ganzheit schafft. Ist ja bekanntlich das talmudische und midraschische Schrifttum mit seinem ausgiebigen Sagenstoff seit altersher Gemeingut des Volkes gewesen. Der Dichter konnte sich daher dieser Stoffe frei und nach Belieben bedienen und tiefes Verstaendnis unter seinen Zuhoerern und Lesern voraussetzen.

War der Inhalt dieser epischen Dichtung juedisch, so ist dagegen ihre literarische

Form, ihr Stil und oft der Wortschatz der mittelhochdeutschen Epik entlehnt. Der entscheidende Einfluss auf die altjiddische Dichtung ist nicht, wie es von vielen Forschern angenommen wurde, von der saecularen deutschen Epik gekommen, sondern wie Fuks nachdruecklich den Beweis zu fuehren versucht, von einer geistlichen Dichtgattung, naemlich den Reim- und Historienbibeln. Schon im 11. Jahrhundert hat es in Frankreich sowie in Deutschland, spaeter auch in den Niederlanden, gereimte Bearbeitungen biblischer Stoffe gegeben, die oft durch verschiedene volkstuemliche Geschichten, Legenden und exegetische Deutungen aus nachbiblischen Quellen ergaenzet wurden. Diese mittelhochdeutschen Reimbibeln und Historien mit ihren biblischen Erzaelungen und von zahlreichen Sagen und Legenden umrahmt, sind von Geistlichen oder Laiendichtern zur Erbauung der Massen verfasst worden. Sie duerften, wie Fuks ausfuehrt, die Anregung zur Entstehung und Gestaltung der altjiddischen biblisch-epischen Dichtungen gegeben haben. Auch hier ist die biblische Erzaelung vorwiegend mit viel agadischen Elementen, mit Sagen und phantastischen Geschichten ausgestattet worden. Wie weit Fuks mit seiner recht interessanten Theorie recht hat, ist natuerlich Sache der weiteren Forschung, die uns dann Aufschluss ueber diese und aehnliche literargeschichtlichen Probleme geben kann.

Wer der Verfasser dieses grossartigen epischen Werkes war, wo und wann er gelebt hat, wissen wir heute nicht mehr. Wollte er anonym bleiben oder ist seine Anonymitaet den Verhaeltnissen der Zeit zuzuschreiben? Das eine kann aber mit Sicherheit gesagt werden: Der Dichter des "Melochim Buches" war, sicherlich fuer jene Zeit, ein gebildeter Mann, im juedischen Schrifttum und seinen Kommentatoren, wie Raschi, Redak (R. Dawid Kimche) und Rabag (R. Lewi ben Gerschom = Gersonides), wohl beschlagen. Auch in der deutschen Literatur seiner Zeit war er gut belesen und mit der mittelhochdeutschen Dichtung sowie ihren epischen Formen bestens vertraut.

Wo ist nun das Werk entstanden? Fuks neigt zu der Annahme, den Entstehungsort in Oberitalien anzusetzen. In Oberitalien hat es schon recht frueh groessere Ansiedlungen von Juden aus Deutschland gegeben. Grausame Verfolgungen und Massenmorde haben die Juden zur Auswanderung aus Deutschland gezwungen. Viele von ihnen gingen damals auch nach Italien, wo es bluehende juedische Gemeinden gab. Die aus Deutschland eingewanderten Juden haben nun ihre ganze Lebensweise, ihre religioesen Institutionen und die altjiddische Sprache auf den neuen Boden verpflanzt. Dort konnten auch, nach der Meinung von Fuks, derartige Dichtungen von Bedeutung und Wert wie das "Melochim Buch", die nun weit ueber die Grenzen Italiens an Popularitaet gewannen, entstehen. Oberitalien ist demnach ein Mittelpunkt der altjiddischen Literatur gewesen, wo Handschriften und Buecher entstanden sind und spaeter verlegt wurden.

Mit seiner ausgezeichneten Studie des "Melochim Buches" hat uns Fuks eine sorgfaeltige Ausgabe des Textes, mit Varianten, textkritischen Anmerkungen und einem sprachlich wertvollen Glossar gegeben. Es bleibt nur noch dem Rezensenten uebrig, die Hoffnung auszusprechen, dass auch bald die anderen episch-biblischen Werke in der altjiddischen Sprache in dieser vorbildlichen Form herauskommen moegen.

\* L. Fuks: Das altjiddische Epos Melochim Buch, Band I und II. Van Gorcum & Co., Assen (Niederlande), 1965.

H. G. Reissner

## LEON BLUM—HUMANIST IN POLITICS

Many readers of this journal still lived in Germany when, from June 1936 to June 1937, Léon Blum headed the Popular Front government in France. The German press of that time did not provide adequate information about the internal and external problems facing Blum's cabinet, a coalition of Socialists and two left-of-centre *bourgeois* parties, with parliamentary support from the French Communists. What made us apprehensive—and not only ourselves, but also quite a few cautious Jews in his own country—was the fact that Blum was Jewish. He was not an observant Jew in the religious sense, to be sure, but he had demonstrated his solidarity with disenfranchised Jews abroad when, in 1929, he joined the enlarged council of the Jewish Agency for Palestine. A Socialist "international" Jewish Premier dealing with the Nazi government only three months after the latter had militarily reoccupied the Rhineland—would this constellation not lend additional credence to the propagandistic myth of "world Jewry" conducting a vengeful drive against the long-oppressed and unjustly chained German nation?

Blum himself refused to yield to "racial" apprehensions. On the home front he held a popular mandate for carrying out sweeping reforms; in the international field, his overriding considerations were universal disarmament and peaceful settlement of differences. He was—both congenitally and by subsequent intellectual training—opposed to letting aggressive emotions run their course. His socialism was not of the Marxian revolutionary brand, but rather derived from ancient prophetic and modern humanist-philosophical sources.

In a strictly formal sense, Blum's confident expectation was borne out by subsequent experience. The Nazi government did not permit propagandistic considerations to interfere with diplomatic issues. Blum received and entertained Dr. Hjalmar Schacht twice (they met a third time, in April, 1945—as fellow political prisoners in Dachau). They talked "peace," each according to his particular attitude. No tangible "rapprochement," but, at least, no acute political or unpleasant personal situations resulted.

As already stated, we in Nazi Germany were not in a position to keep abreast in an objective, detailed fashion. A newly published political biography\* shows that we missed much basic political information about Blum's activities. Actually, nearly half of the book devotes itself to redrawing the emergence and fate of the "Popular Front". Moreover, a considerable fraction of the balance deals with its aftermath under the Pétain government (the "Riom Trial") and during the ascendancy of Charles de Gaulle. The author, a professor of history at Duke University, Durham, N.C., and co-author, with R. R. Palmer, of the widely used college textbook, "A History of the Modern World", undertook Blum's political biography after much research into political, economic and labour conditions in France during the inter-war period. He has perused Blum's voluminous writings, speeches and newspaper editorials. In addition to "L'Oeuvre de Léon Blum", collected in seven volumes (of which all but one have appeared in Paris between 1954 and 1965), Colton had at his disposal a private

collection of material belonging to André Blumel, Blum's *chef de cabinet*, law partner and lifetime friend, as well as some touching personal pieces lent by Blum's widow, Jeanne, and his son, Robert. The text is rounded out by a thoughtful selection of photos.

The resultant presentation, spiced with appropriate epigrammatical summaries, recreates the shaky governmental framework of the Third Republic as well as the obsolete technology and backward social structure of the French economy, with its chronic currency instability, mounting unemployment, etc. The sum total of these deficiencies provoked an immediate, impressive series of legislative enactments during the first ten weeks of the Blum coalition cabinet. The first measures, prompted by strikes of more than a million industrial workers, were the introduction of the 40-hour work-week; collective bargaining; paid vacations. In efforts to turn the tide of unemployment (amounting to about 8 per cent of the working population) and to stem the flight of capital abroad (estimated at about 26 billion francs), Parliament adopted a public works programme; compulsory schooling up to the age of 14; a Wheat Office to restore agricultural prices and curb speculation; loans to small and medium-sized industries; revisions of the statutes governing the *Banque de France*; and other related measures.

Blum did not consider it as his mandate to achieve the "revolutionary conquest of power" in the orthodox Marxist sense, but rather, in a conciliatory democratic sense "the exercise of power" within the given structure of society, under the stewardship of the largest parliamentary party, which happened to be his own Socialist. Unluckily for the coalition, private capital lacked confidence and failed to return; the international situation necessitated the inauguration of an armament programme (with an immediate budgetary outlay of 10 billion francs); devaluation of the franc by approximately 30 per cent became unavoidable by September, 1936, and further declines were registered subsequently.

In the international field Blum tried to implement the principle of collective security through a strengthened League of Nations, with a heavy emphasis on progressive disarmament and unilateral (real or professed) non-intervention, the latter in connection with the Spanish Civil War. Within this frame of the mind, even the "nationalisation of war industries" was considered as a necessary initial step towards universal arms control.

An internal financial crisis and the continuation of incidents in Spain precipitated the overthrow of the cabinet after the Senate had refused to adopt the remedial measures approved by the Chamber, with Blum bowing to the rules of the parliamentary game. Another Popular Front coalition cabinet, with Blum as Vice-Premier, was formed, serving from June, 1937, to March, 1938, and a second Blum government of less than a month's duration in March/April, 1938. This was replaced by Daladier's government, still technically "Popular Front", but without active Socialist participation, though dependent on a Left majority for support. Colton sums up: "The Popular Front experiment was limited by its programme, by circumstances, and by the personality of the man who presided over it." The "personality of the man" should, indeed, be the primary objective of any biographical work. Colton has concentrated on a "political" biography.

But Blum was already 47 years old when, in 1919, he first entered the Chamber of Deputies. His previously acquired status as a shining figure in the *fin de siècle* French world of letters as well as his distinguished early career as a jurist in the *Conseil d'Etat* were assessed by Colton only as a "prologue" to Blum's career in politics. While heeding Goethe's advice (in a conversation with Eduard Gans) that a reviewer must not press an author to do something differently from what is on the latter's mind, we can, nevertheless, not entirely suppress regret that Léon Blum has not, thus, found his *Maurois*. An author of similar calibre would, presumably, have fascinated the general reader with an accomplished pen portrait of a truly extraordinary human being.

It could mistakenly be inferred from Colton's definition that the wish to be, and to remain, a "humanist in politics" was the hallmark of Blum's individuality. It would seem elementary to the European-bred student that, contemporary with Blum (who was born in Paris on April 9, 1872) and after, there were two generations of young intellectuals in England, France and Central European countries whose middle-class background had shielded them from any direct experience of poverty, but who espoused the cause of the underprivileged because they applied the leisure bequeathed them to responsible social analysis. Some went the whole length of the way towards Socialism, including, e.g., Harold Laski in England; Léon Blum in France; Hugo Haase in Germany; Victor Adler in Austria. Others—such as Walter Rathenau in Germany or Fernand Kayser, Vice-President of the Radical Socialist party in France (who, strangely enough, is not referred to by name at all in Colton's book)—were pretty indistinguishable from the former in their philosophical premises and social consciousness, though not affiliated to a proletarian political party.

It so happens that all aforementioned individuals were of Jewish parentage, suggestive of the assumption that they must, either in person or by proxy, have been faced with an awareness of social prejudice and discrimination, like Blum himself in the course of the Dreyfus Affair. But in varying degrees and irrespective of political frontiers, they severally had ties of intellectual discipleship and mutual friendship with certainly no inferior Gentiles, including G. B. Shaw and other Fabians in England and the towering personality of Jean Jaurès in France. The conviction held in common by these Gentiles and Jews was that society would change not so much because of the inexorable dialectic of history, but because this would be in conformity with the aspiration and conscience of reasonable men, proletarians and non-proletarians alike.

This instinctive humanitarian decency hallows their memory in the minds of survivors of the European catastrophe, though, in a final analysis, it could also be argued that their mentality paved the way for the subsequent spread of "appeasement" paralysis. At a critical juncture there was no basic difference between the mental and emotional make-up of the "hostages of civilisation" (to borrow Eva Reichmann's phrase) in Germany and that of their potential redeemers in the Western world. We, therefore, hold no brief for posthumously criticising Léon Blum for reasons of shortsightedness, hesitation, or omission to act. We can only bow to the sense of sacred trust with which Blum equally served his country and humanity at large and persevered under duress and persecution. His memory in Israel is perpetuated in the name of the communal village of Kfar Blum.

\* Joel Colton: *Léon Blum, Humanist in Politics*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1966.

Lionel Kochan

## EARLY CHAMPION OF EMANCIPATION

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, following on the Reformation, were periods when some philo-semitism began to make its presence felt in certain areas of Western European society. It was facilitated by the trend towards the separation of Church and State, the growth of the idea of tolerance, sympathetic Christian interest in Judaism and an awareness of the economic benefit to be derived from the activity of Jewish merchants. Such diverse personalities as Grotius the lawyer, John Locke the philosopher, Wagen- seil the theologian and Josiah Child (president of the East India Company at the end of the seventeenth century) all gave expression to various aspects of the new ways of thought.

This was something of the atmosphere when an anonymous pamphlet appeared in London in 1714 entitled "Reasons for Naturalising the Jews in Great Britain and Ireland, on the same foot with all other Nations". It bore the sub-title, "A Defence of the Jews against all vulgar prejudices in all Countries". This pamphlet is extremely rare. Only two copies apparently exist—one in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and one in the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. All the more welcome, therefore, is its republication in a bilingual English/German edition, together with an excellent introduction and notes by Herbert Mainusch.\* Possibly this was also prompted by the desire to rectify the distorted image of the Jews in Germany.

The author of the pamphlet was a certain

\* John Toland: Gruende fuer die Einbuengerung der Juden in Grossbritannien und Irland. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart. DM.15.

John Toland. He was born in Londonderry in Northern Ireland in 1670. Before his 16th birthday he became a convert from Catholicism to Protestantism and then studied theology and church history in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Leyden. In later years he travelled extensively on the Continent where, among others, he made the acquaintance of Leibniz. He became a Deist and his dissenting writings earned him such repute as to incur the anger of Jonathan Swift: "the time is at hand when the free thinkers of Great Britain shall be converted to Judaism; and the Sultan shall receive the foreskin of Toland and Collins in a box of gold".

"Reasons for Naturalising the Jews" is dedicated to the Archbishops and Bishops of Great Britain and Ireland; and the heart of Toland's pamphlet is a denunciation of the persecutions to which Anglo-Jewry had been subjected in the period between their admission in 1070 by William the Conqueror and their expulsion in 1290 under Edward I. Toland, in other words, is primarily appealing to the ideal of tolerance at its most sensitive point—that of theology. But he eventually goes much further than this and proceeds to challenge all the arguments hitherto brought against the Jews in opposition to their re-admission to Britain and their naturalisation—they were not parasites but would make obedient and loyal citizens; if they were at the moment engaged in financial undertakings only, this was because all other occupations were closed; in the past, moreover, they had been farmers, seafarers and soldiers; they had not national characteristics; they did not

seek power; they would favour freedom of conscience; an increase in population was beneficial to the country. Here Toland recounts visits to Cologne, Prague and Lisbon where the restrictions imposed on the Jews harmed the inhabitants themselves. He contrasted this with conditions at Leghorn where what had once been "a paltry fisher town" was thriving since the admission of the Jews. In short, there is no argument in Jewish apologetics of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries that is not anticipated in Toland's pamphlet. It is also of great interest that Toland should quote arguments used by Simeon Luzzato in the seventeenth century to persuade the Republic of Venice to withdraw certain anti-Jewish measures.

When, however, in 1753, a Bill was passed enabling Jews to apply individually for the full rights of British citizenship, it had to be repealed later the same year. For all that, the pamphlet is not only of the greatest value as a document of Jewish history; it also helped to create a climate of opinion that made its own contribution to the movement for emancipation in the nineteenth century. Its value is still not exhausted.

### C.B.F. SPONSORS SUMMER CAMPS ABROAD

Four English girl students have given up most of their summer vacation to look after underprivileged Jewish children in summer camps abroad. Two of them, Angela Birk and Gillian Davidson, went to Colonies de Vacances in France to take charge of North African refugee children. The other two, Erica Canton and Gillian Spiro, went to Morocco, following the successful experiment of last year when the C.B.F. sent one boy and one girl student there for the first time.

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## DIE WUNDE IM JUEDISCHEN HERZEN

Am Tuerpfosten zur Ausstellung im Prager Gemeindehaus der tschechoslowakischen Judenheit, gegenueber dem aeltesten juedischen Bethause, das in Europa erhalten blieb, steht reglos ein Greis mit einer Baskenmuetze auf dem Kopf. Die Sonne beleuchtet warm den niedrigen Eingang und die Wand der Altneuen Synagoge. In der kurzen engen Gasse zwischen Tempel und Gemeindehaus herrscht voruebergehende Stille. Jeden Moment kann eine Schar Touristen kommen und sorglos, in hellen Sommerkleidern und Anzuegen, voll Neugier und Verstaendnislosigkeit hier hereinbrechen. Der alte Herr steht reglos, als behuete er die Ruhe. Stille weiss er zu schaezzen, denn er gehoert zu jenen, die das Schrecklichste an Unruhe ueberlebten. Die Graeber von Millionen osteuropaeischen Juden vergingen als Rauch im Wind. Am Grab dieses alten Mannes —lang soll er leben—wird man wieder das Kaddisch singen.

Die einen sagen, man muss nicht viel gelesen haben, aber viel sehen. Die anderen wieder behaupten, Belesenheit ersetze das Erleben. Doch einer alten talmudischen Weisheit zufolge soll beides zusammengehen, soll das Gelernte zum Handeln anleiten. Was haben die Touristen, besonders die jungen Deutschen unter ihnen, nach dem Besuch der Prager Synagogen und Museen und des weithin beruehmten Ghetto-Friedhofes gelernt?

In der Vorhalle der Synagoge steht angeschrieben, man moege sein Haupt bedecken, ehe man in Sichtnaehe des Thora-Schreines tritt. Viele Gruppen von Touristen sah ich

durch die kleine Pforte ein- und ausschleuefen, aber nur wenige—dann wohl selber glaeubige Juden—befolgt die Vorschrift. Doch oben, im St. Veits-Dom auf der Prager Burg, entbloesst jeder sein Haupt—selbst der Atheist, selbst der Kommunist. Noch nicht einmal die Offiziere der Roten Armee behalten ihre Muetzen auf, wenn sie eine der Moskauer Kreml-Kirchen betreten. Doch hier ist man "nur" bei den Juden. . . .

Der alte Herr, der die Eintrittskarten fuer die Gemeindehaus-Ausstellung reisst, weiss, dass es fuer ihn kein Leben ohne Trauer gibt. In dem aufgelegten Gaestebuch hier und in anderen Gedaechnis-Gebaeuden stehen seltsame Eintragungen. "Brigit Bardot aus Paris war hier" steht da in ungelenker deutscher Handschrift, und darunter "Bildung besitzt du nicht, BB". Oder ein anderer schrieb quer uebers ganze Blatt "Dr. Adenauer". Ausflueglerscherze? Sie verwunden aufs Neue das juedische Herz. . . .

Mag der alte Gemeindeangestellte Troestung in den Gottesdiensten finden, die am Sabbath und an den hohen Feiertagen abgehalten werden, wenn die Synagogen fuer Touristen geschlossen sind. Dann entnimmt der Rabbiner dem Schrein die Thora-Rollen und psalmodiert daraus. Mancher kostbare religioese Gegenstand blieb erhalten—auf Anweisung der S.S. Einer ihrer Fuehrer schrieb in sein Tagebuch: "Wir wollen fuer die Zeit nach der Vernichtung des letzten juedischen Untermenschen ein Denkmal behalten, denn die Ueberbleibsel der ausgestorbenen Inka-

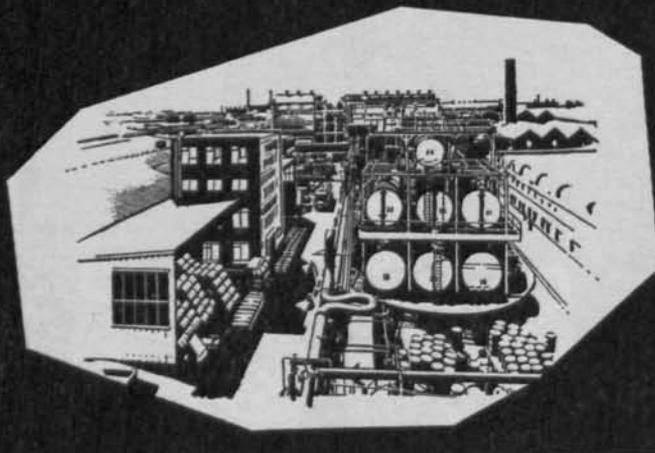
und Maya-Kulturen blieben bis heute auch von Interesse".

Die geretteten Gegenstaende uebernahm der tschechoslowakische Staat als Ausstellungsgut und er versicherte sich dadurch der Moeglichkeit, an den Vitrinen und Wand-Tableaux nach eigenem Ermessen kommentierende Texte anzubringen. Auch sakrale Textilien blieben von der Zerstoerung verschont. Sie sind in der ausser Benutzung stehenden sephardischen Synagoge zu sehen. Der kleine Tempel im pseudo-maurischen Stil birgt auch die Zeichnungen von jenen Kindern, die als Zehn- und Elfjaehrige den Erstickungstod der Gaskammern erlitten. Meine kleinen Brueder und Schwestern—als Gleichaltrige koennten wir heute zusammensein. . . . Vor dem einfachen Gedenkstein liegen Kraenze, einer von einer Besuchergruppe aus Bremen, der andere von einem Kulturverein aus Klingenthal an der Saale. Jemand besass den traurigen "Mut", sich an diesem Ort niederzuknien und mit dem Kugelschreiber auf der Kranzschleife die Buchstaben DDR in Anfuhrungsstriche zu setzen. . .

Die Wunde im juedischen Herz ist zu gross, um sich zu schliessen. Friede ist das Hoechste, was man erbitten kann. Laengst ist er im Ghetto-Friedhof eingekehrt mit dem aufschreienden Gewirr der uebereinander gestellten Grabsteine. Auf dem Denkmal des beruehmten Rabbi Loeb fuettert eine Spatzenmutter ihr mit den kleinen Schwingen betelndes Junges. Friede—und Hoffnung in die Wunder der unermesslichen Schoepfung.

Der alte Herr in der Gasse entlang der Altneuen Synagoge ist wieder mit Billetten-Reissen beschaeftigt. Wieder nehmen Touristen an der Attraktion einer Blitzfuhrung durch den ehrwuerdigen Bau teil, dessen Mauersteine wirken, als sei ein jeder von Gebeten durchtraenkt.

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## FROM THE GERMAN SCENE

### SCIENTISTS ABROAD

Nearly two years ago, after Israeli protests against the participation of German scientists and technicians in Egyptian armament projects, a Bill was introduced in the West German Parliament. However, it never passed the committee stage.

In the new Parliament the Social Democratic Party has again introduced the Bill, which would lay down that German citizens are not allowed to participate in the development and production of arms in other than Nato countries.

### CEMETERIES IN LOWER FRANCONIA

As in previous years, high officials of the Bavarian Ministry of the Interior, accompanied by Dipl. Ing. Stefan Schwarz of the Federation of Bavarian Jewish Communities, inspected the desolated Jewish cemeteries in the District of Lower Franconia. The cemeteries were found to be in a good condition. The following places were visited: Bad Kissingen, Bad Neustadt, Euerbach, Heidingsfeld, Hoechberg, Kleinbardorf, Koenigshofen-Ipphausen, Massbach, Sulzdorf, Schwanfeld, Schweinfurt, Steinach and Unsleben.

### DESECRATION

The Jewish cemetery in Mannheim was desecrated and more than 100 headstones overturned, damaged or destroyed and many graves profaned. A man was arrested.

### JAKOB WASSERMANN'S LIBRARY

The "Institut fuer fraenkische Literatur" in Nuernberg has purchased the library of the author Jakob Wassermann. It includes all works by Wasserman in their German original as well as in their translations into other languages, furthermore many books with Wasserman's hand-written comments or with personal dedications by their authors

### BETSAAL IN KONSTANZ CONSECRATED

The new centre of the Konstanz Jewish community was consecrated on July 16. It consists of a Betsaal and a classroom. The building is on the site of the former synagogue, and a plaque commemorating the destruction of the synagogue on November 10, 1938, is affixed to the house.

### DEATH OF MR. JULIUS DREIFUSS

Mr. Julius Dreifuss (Duesseldorf) died at the age of 70. After having survived the war in Germany under greatest difficulties, he was one of the first Jews who re-established the Jewish community in Duesseldorf. Until recently he was Chairman of the Federation of Jewish communities in North Rhine-Westphalia and of the Federation of Jewish Communities in North-West Germany as well as a member of the Directorium of the "Zentralrat" of the Jews in Germany.

### LECTURE TOUR OF AMERICAN RABBIS

A group of four German-speaking rabbis from the U.S.A. visited Germany recently to talk to students and secondary school pupils about Judaism and to obtain some impression of their attitude to the Jewish question. The idea of the visit was conceived by Rabbi Josef Asher who, on the occasion of his stay in Germany in 1964, had noticed that there was a lack of opportunities for young Germans to obtain expert information about the Jewish religion and Jewish history. The proposition was taken up by the German Ambassador to the U.S.A., Dr. Knappstein, and the scheme was sponsored by Ministries of Culture of several German Lander. At a press conference held in Bonn prior to their departure, the rabbis summed up their impressions as follows: Young Germans had displayed a surprisingly great interest in Jewish matters; "philosemitism" was very widely spread; many Germans automatically associated the terms "Jew" with "Israel" and did not differentiate between Jews and Israelis. The rabbis stated that, in co-operation with the "Zentralrat" of the Jews in Germany and the Ministries of Culture, further visits might be arranged.

### ISRAELIS VISIT BUNDESWEHR

Colonel Davidi, inspector of the parachute corps, together with two aides and the military attaché at the Israeli Embassy in Bonn, were the guests of the West German airborne division during a visit to brigade headquarters at Calw, Wuerttemberg.

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## Birthday Tributes to Mrs. G. Schachne

Birthdays are always family events, and sometimes also public occasions. In the case of Mrs. Schachne, who will celebrate her 75th birthday on October 1, this differentiation does not arise because the AJR Club to which she devotes all her love, energy and experience, is not an organisation but a family. For its members Mrs. Schachne is not just the Vice-Chairman. She is their trusted friend, full of understanding for their personal hopes, joys and worries, and always ready to help. For ten years this work has been going on, and since the Club moved to Hannah Karminski House it has developed almost into a full-time job, the remuneration for which consists of unlimited gratitude.

Yet we also have to see her present daily activities in their wider context. Jewish communal work has always been an integral part of her life. In Germany she worked for Youth Aliyah. When she came to this country, faced, like the rest of us, with a new environment and changed material circumstances, she provided her fellow-refugees with a new home, in the deeper sense of the word. She became matron, first of a boys' hostel, and later, for many years, of the home for elderly refugees at Dartmouth Road. There came a time when she could have taken things easier, but she carried on. In fact nobody who knows her could have imagined "retirement" in her case.

As the parent body of the AJR Club, the AJR has been most fortunate in that it could enlist her indispensable co-operation. Though the age group for which the Club has been established can hardly be termed as particularly young, work for its members has not affected her youthful outlook and her open mind for the joys of life. Above all, she has retained her sense of humour. Many who are her juniors consider "Mutka" Schachne as

an equal because they are treated as equals by her. That she may remain young for many years to come is our sincerest birthday wish.

W.R.

### EIN GEBURTSTAGSBRIEF

Meine liebe 75 jaehrige Frau Schachne,  
Ein Altern fuer Viele, aber nicht fuer Sie!  
Unermuedlich im Geben an allumfassender Mutter- und Grossmutterliebe. Unermuedlich als sorgende Helferin den Hilfesuchenden! Dies zeugt von unbeugsamer Jugendkraft. So kenne ich Sie aus 10 jaehriger gemeinsamer harmonischer Arbeit.

Mein Mann wuenschte sich auf einer Insel der Taetigen zu leben. Ich glaube, dass wir uns diese Insel als Taetige geschaffen haben, zum Segen fuer Andere und zu glueckbringender Befriedigung fuer uns.

Mein Geburtstagswunsch geht dahin, dass uns noch lange vergoentt sein moege, in der uns seit einem Jahrzehnt umschliessenden innigen Verbundenheit und herzerfrischender Schaffensfreudigkeit zu wirken.

In Bewunderung und Freundschaft gruesst Sie

Ihre getreue  
MARGARET JACOBY.

### PROFESSOR KURT PINTHUS

With reference to the announcement of the professorship awarded to Dr. Kurt Pinthus (June issue of *AJR Information*) we have been asked to state that Professor Pinthus does not intend to take permanent residence in Marbach. He is staying there only as a visitor to work in the National Schiller Museum on his two forthcoming publications, "Flegeljahre des Films" and "Dokumente des Expressionismus".

### KURT MAY 70

The Director of U.R.O. in Germany, Kurt May, celebrated his 70th birthday on August 15. He returned from Israel to Germany in 1947 and started work for restitution and indemnification for the persecutees of Nazi oppression in Frankfurt. Under Kurt May's direction U.R.O. has become the greatest legal aid society in history. The Organisation has not only represented thousands of indigent persecutees before the restitution and indemnification authorities and courts in Germany, but has also in the interests of all persecutees founded a research department, the work of which has been recognised by high judges and authorities as an indispensable help for the substantiation of indemnification cases. In the negotiations which preceded the promulgation of the indemnification laws May's suggestions carried great weight with the German authorities. All clients who came in touch with him felt that they had entrusted their case to an excellent lawyer and to a man who had the plight of the persecutees very near his heart.

Our best wishes go out to him and his family. We hope that he will conclude the great work of restitution and indemnification in good health and undiminished vigour and effectiveness.

### WUERZBURG COMMUNAL LEADER A CENTENARIAN

Mr. Moritz Weindling, Hon. President of the Wuerzburg Jewish Community, recently celebrated his 100th birthday. Before 1933 he played a leading part in the economic life of the city and was, among others, an accredited expert to the Chamber of Commerce. When the Nazis came to power he put himself at the disposal of his fellow-Jews and became, under the auspices of the newly established Jewish Relief Organisation, a trusted adviser to many of them. He emigrated to England in 1939. In 1952 he returned to Wuerzburg. During his stay in London Mr. Weindling was an interested member of the AJR, which extends its sincerest birthday wishes to the centenarian.

### FAMILY EVENTS

#### Birth

**Barzel (Brazil).**—On July 23, a son, Guy, was born to Alan and Dr. Monika Barzel (Brazil), of Kfar Hanassi, Hevel Koraum, Israel. (First grandson for Mr. R. J. [Rudy] and Mrs. Edith Friedmann.)

#### Deaths

**Goldschmidt.**—Mrs. Anna Goldschmidt (née Rosenbaum, formerly Schwerin-Mecklenburg), passed away peacefully at Osmond House on July 31, aged 81. Deeply mourned by her children, grandchildren, relatives and friends.

**Hoenigsberg.**—Mr. Hugo Hoenigsberg (formerly Vienna), passed away suddenly on August 8, aged 80. Deeply mourned by his son, relatives and friends.

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INTELLIGENT WIDOW, late 40s, own very nice home and private income, no ties, non-Orthodox, would like to meet gentleman in his 60s, view friendship. Box 731.

MY SISTER, attractive widow, 46 years old, smart, many interests, of independent means and with beautiful house and own car in N.W. London, wishes to meet active cultured Continental gentleman not older than 55 years. Write in strict confidence. Box 737.

GOOD LOOKING GIRL, 19, born and living with her parents in West Germany, expert beautician and knowledge of pharmacy, wishes to meet suitable young man of good family, object matrimony. She will visit her uncle in London in a few months. Box 739.

### MISSING PERSONS

#### Personal inquiries

**Bass.**—Marianne Bass, born about 1920 in Breslau, Germany, emigrated to London in 1937. Wanted by Tichauer-Nellhaus, formerly Loewenberg/Silesia. Please contact: Tichauer, Kir-Bialik, nr. Haifa/Israel, Deganiah Str. 10.

**Lippman.**—Gert and Adolf (twins), formerly of Prinzessinnen Strasse, Berlin, lately in New York. Address wanted by Inge Philipp, 54 Kingsacre Road, Glasgow, S.4, Scotland.

**Wolff.**—Ernst, formerly Berlin, emigrated to New York. Address wanted by Inge Philipp, 54 Kingsacre Road, Glasgow, S.4, Scotland.

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## LETTER FROM JERUSALEM

## Strauss and Wagner—Still Banned

The other day, when a member of the Herut faction in the Knesset appealed to the Minister of Education and Culture to keep in force the ban on playing music by Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss, both by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and by the radio station "Kol Yisrael", the Minister replied that in defence of freedom of expression in the arts the Government would not impose any form of censorship. However, he qualified his reply by adding: "Had the management of the orchestra asked the Ministry for advice, it would have recommended not to include the two composers, one of whom came to be considered as expressing the spirit of the Nazi Reich, while the other was a collaborator. They had not asked, and his Ministry was not called upon to interfere, either in the orchestra or in 'Kol Yisrael'."

The answer reveals only half the story. In fact, there is a censorship in Israel in regard to public performances, be they on the stage, on the screen or in the concert hall, for the "voluntary" body of the censorship board has long become an official institution. Immediately after the "Kristallnacht" in November, 1938, it volunteered to forego public performances of works by Wagner and Strauss, and for 28 years this ban has been in effect although, of course, one can buy their music in any record shop.

The present discussion was set into motion by a decision of the orchestra's board to lift the ban. "Why should we penalise ourselves by this ban which cannot be compensated by the works of other composers, while our streets are crowded with Volkswagen, with all their associations from the Hitler period?" they summarised. In a stormy session, the board was asked by the Orchestra's Public Council to reconsider its decision. An impassioned plea was made by council member and former Attorney-General Gideon Hausner, known from the Eichmann trial, who reminded the meeting that "to the strains of Wagnerian music Jews were herded into the gas chambers"; he made Strauss, as President of the Reichsmusikkammer, responsible for the expulsion of Jewish musicians—"the very musicians who formed the nucleus of the orchestra."

"We tread on dangerous ground", *Jerusalem Post* warned, "if we allow people—with all respect for their sentiments—to ban the music of certain composers on the ground of their beliefs in or acquiescence to political systems. When the Nazis burned books and musical scores of Jewish writers and composers, and forbade the performance of their works, the cultural people of the world gasped

over the viciousness and shortsightedness of the Germans. Are we not doing something dangerously similar?"

The "Mitteilungsblatt" of the Irgun Merkaz Oley Europa (Association of Immigrants from Central Europe) wrote: "Music is being played for music lovers and not from political motives and for political aims. From this point of view, Chopin should not be performed in Israel, as he was an antisemite—although a street in Jerusalem has been named after him. The performance of a work by a composer has nothing to do with the evaluation of his character, of his political opinions but only with the significance of his compositions as a work of art."

The Hebrew daily *Ha'aretz* pointed to the fact that the "Leitmotiv" in Wagner's music is redemption through love, by no means "Teutonic" but just German—not more German than Bach, Brahms and Beethoven who are being performed all over Israel. "The Nazis finally recognised that 'Der Ring' condemns the principle of dictatorship and prophesied their downfall, and in 1942 performances of 'Der Ring' were banned in Germany. The same happened to 'Parsifal' which was too 'Christian' for the Nazi taste". As to Richard Strauss—in 1935 he insisted on having Stefan Zweig's participation in "Die Frau ohne Schatten" acknowledged on the official poster, which was the cause of Strauss' downfall.

The German-language daily in Tel Aviv, *Yedioth Chadashoth* compared the Israel public with a sick man who recovers only very slowly. "Shock therapy is not a suitable cure, but infinite patience and consideration. One day, the enchanting tunes of these two masters will also be heard in Israel—one day, but not yet, not yet in the coming season."

When, some years ago, the orchestra tried unobtrusively to introduce Strauss' "Don Juan" in its concert schedule, a public outcry followed and the Police Minister recommended cancelling the performance. Also this time, the organisations of former partisans and concentration camp inmates voiced their protest and threatened to intervene, if necessary, by force. It is not to be expected that the orchestra will go into battle against tomatoes and rotten eggs.

## New Knesset Building

The new Knesset building, which was dedicated in an elaborate state ceremony lasting two days and attended by 4,000 guests from abroad, is an imposing structure. Standing on an elevation in the western part of Jerusalem, close to the Hebrew University and the National Museum, it commands a beautiful view. Its area of 20 acres is accessible through

a wrought-iron gate, executed by the Jerusalem artist, Palombo, in abstract forms which symbolise the idea of peace.

Some criticism has been levelled at the outer structure of Israel's new parliament, which is a not quite successful combination of functional utility with pseudo-hellenistic columns. The building clings to the hill on three sides; thus the front is three storeys high and three more descend with the hill on the other sides.

The lofty circular Knesset Chamber for the 120 members has walls of massive blocks of stone, with carved motifs to the design of Daniel Caravan, and on the face passages from the Bible are engraved. Above the place of the Speaker there is a bas-relief of Herzl.

Adjoining the Chamber there is a large reception hall, stone-floored, with a remarkable cube-ceiling. On the wall is a tapestry designed by Marc Chagall and executed by French craftsmen in the form of a triptych. The theme is the history of the Jewish People: the first section—Creation, the second—Exodus, and the third—Ingathering. In the same hall Chagall has designed mosaics for the floor and a smaller wall. On the same level there is a library which can accommodate up to half a million books.

After the establishment of the State of Israel the Knesset was first housed in a cinema in Tel Aviv. After its transfer to Jerusalem, a bank building, very limited in space, was provisionally adapted to the purpose. This provisional state lasted for some sixteen years. When James de Rothschild died in May, 1957, he provided in his testament the sum of \$2 million with which to build a new home for the Knesset in Jerusalem. "Let the new Knesset building become a symbol in the eyes of all men of the permanence of the State of Israel," he wrote. Later, the Rothschild Foundation added further sums to cover the whole cost of the building.

## "BEWAHRUNG IM UNTERGANG"

## New Edition of Memorial Book

Last year, the Council of Jews from Germany published a book "Bewahrung im Untergang" in memory of more than 120 rabbis and communal workers in Germany who perished under the Nazis. A review appeared in the February 1965 issue of "AJR Information". In view of the great demand, a second edition had to be printed which will be available shortly. The price is £1 5s. per copy, but will be reduced to £1 (including dispatch) for orders received before September 30, 1966. Orders (together with remittances) should be sent to: Council of Jews from Germany, 183/189 Finchley Road, London, N.W.3.

## "MARTIN BUBER SOCIETY"

According to recent press reports, the inaugural meeting of an "International Martin Buber Society" was held in London. The family and the literary executor of the late Martin Buber and the representative organisations of the Jews from Germany, including the AJR, are not connected with this matter.

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# THE ISRAELI SCENE

## MOSCOW RADIO CRITICISM

Moscow radio, in a French-language broadcast, said that not only were Israeli statements connected with the "alleged danger threatening the Jews in the U.S.S.R." slanderous, but they seemed to be part of an orchestrated and officially sanctioned campaign which was crude interference in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union.

"Like all other peoples of the Soviet Union", the radio added, "the Jews have a fatherland and a country for whose happiness they work today and for whose freedom they have fought. Why should the Jews in the U.S.S.R. feel attracted to Israel?"

Mr. Levi Eshkol told a press conference in Jerusalem that he "deeply regretted" this Soviet comment at a time when, in regard to other nationalities such as the Armenians, the Soviet Union "shows full understanding for their ingathering of exiles as well as for their national rebirth, language and culture."

## "WOMAN'S HOUSE"

Mrs. Manya Bialik, 91, the widow of Chaim Nachman Bialik, the great Hebrew poet of modern times, provided the funds for building a "Woman's House," now dedicated in her honour.

The house, backing on to Bialik's Tel Aviv house which became a national possession after his death, will be a cultural centre and meeting-place, particularly for women's organisations.

## TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

The British Government's decision to cut the basic allowance for travel outside the sterling area to £50 from November 1 will seriously affect travel from this country to Israel.

A record number of 40,000 British tourists were expected in Israel this year. Tourism from Britain is an important factor in Israel's economy and it is possible that Israel will submit proposals to enable the flow to be maintained.

British holidaymakers will still be able to go to low-priced hotels, but, although the currency restrictions would appear to rule out holidays at first-class hotels, the director of the Israel Government Tourist Office in London advises people who have booked for holidays in Israel after November 1 not to change their plans yet.

## VISA-FREE ENTRY

An Israeli approach for a reciprocal agreement to abolish visas for Israeli tourists visiting this country has been made. The annual number of Israeli visitors to Britain is about 25,000.

## WEIZMANN INSTITUTE AWARD

The gold medal of the Weizmann Institute has been awarded to Professor Dr. Richard Prigge, a former director of the Paul Ehrlich Institute in Frankfurt.

## RUSSIA AND SYRIA

The Israeli retaliatory raid on Syrian equipment used in the diversion of the River Jordan was discussed at a specially summoned United Nations Security Council meeting. The Soviet Ambassador declared that by overlooking the tenets of the U.N. Charter on the question of territorial integrity, Israel had shown an "exaggerated militaristic attitude". This attitude, he stated, had the support of the Western imperialist powers. The senior Israeli representative at the U.N. charged the Syrian Government with responsibility for terrorist activities.

Mr. Levi Eshkol, the Prime Minister, has stated that Soviet friendship for Syria must not be at Israel's expense. It had been proved that foreign nations could be friendly with both parties to the Israeli-Arab dispute. Therefore, he did not see any worsening in Moscow's relations with Israel nor, for that matter, any improvement in the relations between the Arab States and the world Powers. He announced that military government in Arab-inhabited areas of Israel would be abandoned at the end of the year.—(J.C.)

## GERMAN GIFT TO WIZO HOME

The Government of North Rhine-Westphalia has handed to German Wizo in Cologne a cheque for 30,000 marks for the Theodor Heuss Home for convalescent mothers in Herzlia, Israel. The State Government expressed pleasure that the home was named in honour of the Federal German Republic's first President.

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