

capital for the maintenance of its system of national oppression and chauvinism.

It was the Soviet Union which took special measures to save the lives of millions of Jews in the face of the Nazi onslaught. It was the Soviet Union which, by its outstanding role in the defeat of fascism, contributed most to preserving the future of Jews everywhere. It was the Soviet Union which was instrumental in securing the establishment of Israel. And it is the Soviet Union which today defends the existence of Israel against those who would attack it.

Drew Pearson, in his column of February 2, 1964, states:

Western diplomats were flabbergasted when Arab leaders ended their Cairo conference on a moderate note. No one knew at first why the Arabs, who had been breathing fire and brimstone, suddenly piped down.

U.S. diplomats have now learned the reason—a secret note received by the Arab states from the Kremlin warning them not to start war with Israel.

. . . The note reminded the Arabs that Premier Khrushchev's New Year's message had urged all powers to refrain from using force to settle boundary disputes and it was imperative that the Arab nations settle their differences with Israel by diplomatic means, not war.

Can there be any clearer indication that Soviet policy embraces the defense of the rights and freedom of *all* nations?

As we have stated, there are in our opinion grounds for criticism of Soviet policy in relation to the Jews, in particular of the failure to wage all-out war against the persistent remnants of anti-Semitism. *But such criticism must be made only within the framework of full recognition of the magnificent achievement of the Soviet Union in wiping out all national oppression and establishing the full equality of all nationalities.* In the case of the Soviet Jews, the transformation from the conditions of Tsarist days has been exceptionally great. Not to recognize these things, and to acquiesce in the accusations of anti-Semitic policies employed by the anti-Soviet forces as a cold-war weapon, is to do a disservice not only to the Jewish people, but also to the struggles of all oppressed peoples for their freedom and to the cause of world peace and friendship.

"SOVIET ANTI-SEMITISM"

A COLD-WAR MYTH

By HYMAN LUMER



A Political Affairs Pamphlet

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hyman Lumer was born in Brooklyn, New York. He earned his Ph.D. in Biology at Western Reserve University in 1935, teaching biology there and later heading the Biology Department at Fenn College in Cleveland, Ohio until 1947.

After leaving Fenn College, Dr. Lumer served as educational director of the Ohio-Kentucky district of the United Electrical Workers until 1950. Subsequently he became national educational secretary of the Communist Party of the United States. In 1961 he was railroaded to prison under the provisions of the infamous Taft-Hartley Act, serving an eighteen-month sentence.

At present he is editor of *Political Affairs*, the theoretical magazine of the Communist Party of the United States.

He is the author of two books: *War Economy and Crisis* (1954) and *Is Full Employment Possible?* (1962). He has also written a number of pamphlets including *The Professional Informer* (1955), *The Promise of Automation and How To Realize It* (1956) and *Disarmament and the American Economy* (1960), as well as numerous essays and articles which have appeared in *Political Affairs* and various other periodicals.

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"SOVIET ANTI-SEMITISM"

A COLD-WAR MYTH

By Hyman Lumer

There has been in this country a long-standing campaign, of mounting intensity, against the alleged evil of "Soviet anti-Semitism." Rooted in hatred of the Soviet Union, and part of the unceasing effort of cold war reaction to denigrate every aspect of Soviet life, this campaign has sought to paint a horrendous—and false—picture of the Soviet Jews as living in conditions of severe persecution, subjected at the very least to deprivation of their basic rights and in the more extreme versions to oppression and terror surpassing the lot of the Jews under Hitler.

Within the past few months, this assault has been brought to a head by the appearance of the book *Judaism Without Embellishment* by Trofim K. Kichko, published in the Ukrainian language in Kiev under the imprint of the Ukrainian Academy of Science. On all sides, the book has provoked a veritable storm of expressions of outrage and condemnation. It was a major stimulus toward the convening of an American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry, held in Washington, D.C., on April 5 and 6. Representing twenty-four leading Jewish organizations and described as "the most comprehensive since 1943," the Conference issued a plea to the Soviet government "to restore the rights of Jews and of the Jewish community and to grant the equality with other religious and nationality groups as required by Soviet Constitution and law." The book was an important factor in the issuance of a similar plea initiated by the Anti-Defamation League and signed by 2,000 Protestant and Catholic clergymen and church officials.

In the light of these and other recent developments, it is necessary to assess seriously and soberly both the actual situation of the Soviet Jews and the current outcry against "Soviet anti-Semitism."

The Book

First, as to the Kichko book itself. This has been widely condemned,

by Communists as well as by others, as a crude and disgraceful piece of anti-Semitic literature. Speaking for the Communist Party of the United States, Gus Hall has stated (*The Worker*, March 24, 1964):

There is no doubt in my mind . . . about the anti-Semitic character of what I have seen. Such stereotyped, slanderous caricatures of the Jewish people must be unequivocally condemned, whatever their source. And certainly they can have no place whatever in Communist or progressive literature.

No matter what the intention of the artist who drew them, such stereotypes have a very specific, unquestionable anti-Semitic meaning, and their use has exactly the same effect as when it is engaged in by those imbued with and motivated by the crassest anti-Semitism.

Similar views have been expressed by the Communist parties of Canada, England, France, Italy and other countries.

Unquestionably such condemnation is merited. For while the book purports to be a criticism of religious beliefs and practices, even a cursory examination of its illustrations leaves not the slightest doubt as to its anti-Semitic character. Nor does the text dispel this impression. Regardless of the writer's intent, and regardless of the truth or falsity of any particular portion of its contents, the total picture it paints is an anti-Semitic caricature which can only be extremely offensive, not merely to religious Jews but to *all* Jews—indeed to any person, Jewish or non-Jewish, who detests racism and chauvinism.

That such a book could appear at all in a socialist country is cause for serious concern. That it could appear in the garb of a "scientific" document, under the aegis of an academy of science, is all the more disturbing. The central question is: how did it happen?

In our opinion, it cannot be simply dismissed as an isolated incident, as the result of carelessness or failure to treat the question seriously by those involved. On the contrary, the book's appearance reflects the continued existence of anti-Semitic ideas and influences among individuals within the Soviet Union. This conclusion is given added weight by the fact that the present instance is not unique. In recent years there have been other books and articles containing anti-Semitic references or statements, indicative at the very least of a lack of sensitivity toward the question.

That such remnants of anti-Semitism should continue to manifest themselves, decades after the socialist revolution has removed the source of national oppression, is not altogether surprising. It is well known that in Tsarist Russia anti-Semitism was very deep-seated and

Jews were intensely persecuted—that among other things they were confined to ghettos, barred from many occupations, excluded from Russian schools by a rigid quota system, and periodically subjected to bloody pogroms. And worst of all in this respect was the Ukraine. To eradicate such a deeply ingrained evil was a truly monumental task, and it is a tribute to the power of socialism and the Leninist policies of the Soviet leadership that it *was* virtually eliminated and the equality of all peoples established in actual fact.

Nevertheless, remnants of the past persisted. And World War II, with the Nazi occupation of large areas of Soviet territory (and especially of the Ukraine), and the accompanying wholesale injection of racist poison, gave anti-Semitism a new lease on life. Added to this was the incorporation into the Soviet Union of large populations which had previously not lived under socialism. Stalin's assault, only a few years later, on Jews and Jewish institutions in the name of combatting "cosmopolitanism" (and on other national groups as well) greatly augmented its influence. And although the Soviet government has, since the Twentieth Congress, taken steps to overcome the effects of the Stalin policies, much remains to be done and expressions of anti-Semitism are still all too frequent.

What the Kichko book demonstrates, therefore, is the great tenacity of national and racial prejudice and the need to wage relentless ideological war against it, even long after its basic cause has been eliminated within the country. It is, we believe, an unjustified feeling that the fight is over, and consequently an insensitivity to continued expressions of anti-Semitism and a failure to see the need of an open campaign to eradicate every vestige of it, that account for the appearance of such monstrosities as *Judaism Without Embellishment*.

There are indications of growing concern about the problem in the Soviet Union. The book has been severely criticized in the press, and has been condemned by no less a body than the Ideological Commission of the CPSU, whose statement says in part:

A number of erroneous statements in the brochure and the illustrations are liable to offend the feelings of the believers and can be interpreted in the spirit of anti-Semitism. . . .

The erroneous theses in the brochure are in contradiction to the Leninist policy of the party on religious and national issues and they provide food for anti-Soviet insinuations of our ideological enemies, who are trying at all costs to create the so-called Jewish question.

Moreover, according to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Alexis

Adjubei, editor of *Izvestia*, has announced that all available copies have been confiscated and destroyed (*The Worker*, April 14, 1964). And there is every reason to anticipate further steps.* To this point we shall return later.

Religion, Zionism and Anti-Semitism

In condemning the Kichko book as anti-Semitic, we must at the same time sharply disassociate ourselves from the character of the criticism prevalent in certain circles in this country. First of all, we must flatly reject any idea that criticism of the Jewish religion, or of Zionism, is *in itself* anti-Semitism.

In his speech at the Washington conference referred to above, Senator Abraham Ribicoff argues that in the Soviet Union, Jews are unique in being both a national and a religious group, with the word "Jew" applying interchangeably to both. From this he concludes: "Hostile words about the Jewish religion inevitably carry over negatively about the Jewish nationality—even for a non-religious Jew."

But there is no *inevitable* carryover. There is nothing *inherently* anti-Semitic about propagating atheist and anti-religious views, whether by Jews or non-Jews. The concept of religious freedom embraces the right to oppose religious beliefs and practices no less than the right to uphold them. To argue otherwise is to support *denial* of freedom of conscience. In addition, it implies that Marxism, since it is materialist in its outlook and rejects all belief in the supernatural as unscientific, is by its very nature anti-Semitic. In other words, communism is synonymous with anti-Semitism; hence to eliminate the latter it is necessary to destroy the former. With this, we arrive at the position of the Right-wing purveyors of anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism, with their incessant railing against "atheistic Communism"—and against the Jews. Such is the ultimate logic of Senator Ribicoff's proposition.

It is the same with Zionism. Marxists have always opposed it as a reactionary nationalist movement operating in league with British

What?
*As this pamphlet goes to press, we have before us a copy of a recently-issued pamphlet by F. Mayatsky, entitled *Contemporary Judaism and Zionism* and published by the State Publishing House in Kishinev. Its contents duplicate in large measure the crude anti-Semitism of the Kichko book. The fact that it could appear *after* the furore provoked by the latter gives renewed emphasis to the gravity of the problem and to the continued absence of a serious ideological campaign against such continuing manifestations of anti-Semitism.

and American imperialism. But Moshe Decter, an inveterate enemy of the Soviet Union who has made a career of being a "specialist" on the status of Jews in the socialist countries, implies that to hold such views is to support the anti-Semitic canard of the "international Jewish conspiracy." He quotes a portion of the Kichko book which purports to describe the intrigues of Jewish and other capitalists concerning Israel under the cloak of Zionism and which opens with this sentence: "A union between the financial oligarchy of the West and Zionism has been in existence for several decades." Decter concludes: "What is this if not an updated and refurbished version of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*?" ("Judaism Without Embellishment": Recent Documentation of Russian Anti-Semitism," *New Politics*, Winter, 1964.)

It is an easily documented fact that certain ruling circles in Israel have made of that country an outpost of imperialism in the Middle East. And to anyone at all familiar with the proclivities of the CIA it should come as no surprise that these same Israeli circles lend themselves through their diplomatic channels to intrigues within the Soviet Union. It is equally a fact that there is widespread opposition to such policies both in Israel and elsewhere. Such opposition clearly has nothing in common with "international conspiracy" slanders. The logic of Decter's implication, again, is to equate Marxism, which bases itself on proletarian internationalism and repudiates the reactionary features of bourgeois nationalism, with anti-Semitism. Again, it leads to equating the fight against anti-Semitism with anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism.

The anti-Semitism of the Kichko book lies not in the *fact* that it attacks the Jewish religion and Zionism but in the *manner* in which it does so. What Kichko does is to identify religious obscurantism and the reactionary role of Zionism not with particular class forces but *with the Jews as a people*, and thereby he abandons Marxism for national chauvinism.

A review appearing in the Kiev newspaper *Soviet Culture* (reported by *Tass*, March 27, 1964) criticizes it along these lines: Instead of presenting a scientifically-based critique of Judaism as a religion, Kichko resorts to such things as presenting instances of unworthy conduct on the part of individual rabbis or synagogue leaders, implying (together with the insulting cartoons) that this is characteristic of all religious Jews. He incorrectly asserts that Zionism is rooted not in social sources but in the Jewish religion, and further that "after the emergence of Zionism the spirit of nationalism gripped all

the sections of the Jewish population." From this he proceeds to identify Judaism with the State of Israel and to attack the latter as totally reactionary.

The reality, the review points out, is quite the opposite:

. . . the Jewish working class and the more advanced section of the intellectuals contributed actively to the establishment and activities of the social-democratic organizations, took part in the revolutionary movement and bravely exposed the Bundists, the Zionists and other nationalists. Moreover, one of the reasons for the emergence of Zionism was the struggle the Jewish bourgeoisie waged against socialist ideas, which at the time had penetrated deeply among the working Jews—as they had among the working people of other nationalities, for that matter.

Nor can one agree with the author when, in criticizing Zionism as a bourgeois nationalist movement, he extends this criticism to the internal life of the State of Israel. For it is known that in addition to Zionist organizations, Israel has democratic, progressive organizations of workers which come out for peace and peaceful coexistence, for democratic freedoms, against colonialism and imperialism.

In general, it seems to us inappropriate for a book devoted to the critique of a religious ideology to make appraisals (which moreover are not always correct) of the activities of Israel as a state, of its role in international relations.

This criticism is aptly summed up in a recent article by Victor Michaut ("Against Anti-Semitism," *France Nouvelle*, May 6-12, 1964), which says:

The criticism of the reactionary orientation of a country or of the religious obscurantism which holds sway there is never directed by us against a people but against the political and social forces responsible. There is nothing Marxist in an attitude which confuses the national characteristics of a people with the defects produced by a system of exploitation.

Further, in opposing religious ideas, it is necessary to guard against the one-sided view that religious institutions invariably play the reactionary role of props for the status quo, and to recognize that as social forces religious institutions (and ideas) may play a progressive as well as a reactionary part in the struggles of their day. Thus, history shows that Judaism, Christianity and later Islam arose initially as religions of revolt against the status quo. At a later time, with the rise of capitalism, the Protestant Reformation served as the ideological

vehicle of the emergent bourgeoisie in its struggle against feudalism. Today we witness the progressive role of the Negro church in the civil rights struggle, accompanied by the growing participation of white clergymen of all faiths. We see, too, the positive role of the church in the fight for peace, highlighted recently by the appearance of the Encyclical *Pacem in Terris*.

Crude anti-religionism, which sees religion only as unmitigated reaction, is a misconception which Marxists must combat. And when it is directed against the Jewish religion in particular, it leads to anti-Semitism. For even while we reject the idea that *any* criticism of Judaism is of necessity anti-Semitic, the fact is that historically the maligning of the Jewish faith has been an intrinsic part of anti-Semitism—for example, the notorious blood libels which falsely ascribe to the Jews the practice of using human blood in religious rituals and even of ritual murder. It is necessary to be extremely sensitive to such things; otherwise anti-religious propaganda can all too easily degenerate into anti-Semitism and encourage such expressions of it as the Kichko book.

While Marxists oppose religious or Zionist ideology, they do not judge people politically on the basis of whether or not they profess to be religious or Zionist. On the contrary, they seek to unite all Jews, religious and non-religious, Zionist and non-Zionist, in struggle for their common interests.

An added problem arises from the small size of the Jewish religious community in comparison with say, the Greek Orthodox. It is not true that the Soviet government singles out the Jewish religion for special repression. The Soviet attitude toward religion generally has been one of toleration but not encouragement, and of strict separation of church and state. Religion is viewed as an institution which is passing from the scene, and churches and synagogues are progressively closed down as the numbers of their adherents dwindle. But this very equality of treatment becomes in practice inequality, for while the Greek Orthodox Church can manage to provide for its needs in the way of religious articles, the synagogues cannot, and are therefore deprived of access to such things as tallisim, tfilin and prayer books.

The crude anti-religionism which pervades much of the current anti-religious propaganda and the failure to appreciate sufficiently the special situation of the Jewish religion in these respects are, we believe, central factors in explaining such seemingly pointless actions as the creation of difficulties in securing matzos for the Passover—actions which give encouragement, even though unintended, to

remnants of anti-Semitism at home and grist to the mills of the Deeters and other anti-Soviet "experts."

Anti-Sovietism and "Anti-Semitism"

Whatever criticism may be warranted, we must above all reject as an out-and-out lie the notion that such occurrences as the Kichko book are in any way a product of an official policy of discrimination and repression against Soviet Jews. On the contrary, such a manifestation of anti-Semitism is in direct conflict with the basic policy and the whole history of the Soviet Union on this question. It is, in the words of Gus Hall, "a gross distortion of the actual position of the Soviet Union. It is in serious violation of the policy and the long struggle conducted by the Soviet Union against the ideology of anti-Semitism. It is contrary to the 45 years of the legal outlawing of all practices and expressions of anti-Semitism." Soviet leaders are a thousand times correct when they indignantly denounce all allegations of anti-Semitic policies on the part of the Soviet government.

The propagation of this Big Lie is not confined to professional anti-Sovieters and rabid cold warriors. Its acceptance extends to large sections of the American people and to leading figures who are motivated by sincere considerations of justice, humanity and peace, among them such outstanding exponents of American-Soviet friendship as Bertrand Russell and Linus Pauling.

The appeal drafted at the Washington conference of Jewish organizations states: "We make this appeal within the framework of our ardent desire to see an end to the cold war and lessen and hopefully eradicate the existing international tensions." And in his speech to the conference, Supreme Court Justice Arthur J. Goldberg said:

In stating my views, I want to make it clear that I do so as a private American citizen here tonight who supports the effort of our government with due regard for our security as a nation to seek ways to better understanding between our country and the Soviet Union; one who shares with the great majority of the American people the desire for an end to the Cold War and for a just and lasting peace.

At the same time, the theme of the conference, which found repeated expression in the speeches presented, was the existence of a vicious policy of persecution of Jews by the Soviet government. Thus, Senator Jacob K. Javits spoke of "the relentless character of the Soviet Union's campaign of repression against the Jewish minority in the USSR," of "cruel and repressive official harassment of a helpless minority" and of "the mounting fears of Jews the world over for the safety of our coreligionists in the USSR." Senator Ribicoff goes further,

asserting that the Jews have been made a scapegoat for Soviet failures. He states: "Jews are frequently used to bear the brunt of public discontent for the low standards of living and shortage of goods in the USSR."

It is small wonder that the convocation of a conference based on such views was met by a number of sharp protests from groups of representative Soviet Jews. For its participants, however sincere their motives, based themselves not on the facts of the life of Jews in the USSR but on anti-Soviet distortions. And in doing so they have placed themselves in strange company.

Among the newly-found "friends" of the Soviet Jews are the Ukrainian nationalists, reactionary Whiteguard elements driven out of the Soviet Union after the October Revolution and given a haven in this country. These were among the most vicious anti-Semites and bloody pogromists in all of Tsarist Russia. Yet today they hypocritically pose as defenders of Soviet Jewry and have even appealed to Jewish organizations to join them on the common ground of fighting "Soviet anti-Semitism."

Another newly-found "friend" is the Hearst press. Scarcely distinguished for its championing of the Jews in the days when they were being exterminated by the Hitlerites and long a mouthpiece for the pro-fascist rantings of a Westbrook Pegler, it now comes forward in a series of articles by one Leslie L. Whitten as the champion of the Soviet Jews against "unrelenting terror." Referring to bloody religious persecutions of past centuries, Whitten writes: "Imagine that only 20 years ago such a bloodbath had drowned your brethren and imagine that already, now, today, the specter of more such horror was abroad in the land. That is what it is to be a Jew today in Russia." (*New York Journal American*, May 5, 1964.)

This fantasy is outdone by still another "friend," Senator Thomas J. Dodd, who, in an article written a few years ago (*U.S. News and World Report*, March 28, 1960), said: "Between the brutality of Soviet anti-Semitism and the brutality of Nazi anti-Semitism, there is little to choose. About all that is lacking so far is the gas chambers."

We could continue this catalog almost endlessly, but we add only one more group of "friends." Among the most vociferous and unscrupulous calumniators and peddlers of atrocity stories are the Right-wing social-democrats, whose hatred for the USSR knows no bounds. The *Jewish Daily Forward* was printing stories of non-existent pogroms in Kiev and Kharkov as far back as 1946, and today it continues to paint a picture of Soviet Jewish life which outstrips even the imagina-

tion of Senator Dodd. Equally notorious is the *New Leader*, which has long devoted itself to crusading against "Soviet anti-Semitism" and whose former managing editor was Moshe Decter.*

Needless to say, the objective of this whole barrage is not the welfare of the Soviet Jews but the undermining of the Soviet Union and the intensification of the cold war. And equally needless to say, it has little in common with the facts. To adhere to such a line, even with the best of motives, can only serve those who seek such objectives.

There And Here

We shall deal more fully with the actual status of Soviet Jews further on. At this point, we wish only to touch on some immediately pertinent facts.

First, even the actions taken so far by the Soviet leadership with regard to the Kichko book belie the existence of any official anti-Semitic policy. The fact that in response to protests the book was not only condemned but confiscated and destroyed is highly significant when one considers what happens in this country.

By way of contrast, consider the following incident. A few weeks ago we received in the mail an envelope bearing the return address "The White American, P.O. Box 2013, Atlanta 1, Ga." It contained two pieces of anti-Semitic filth, one of them a facsimile reproduction of *Der Stuermer* of May 1934. It is designated "Ritual Murder Number" and its page one headline is "Jewish Murder Plan Against

* Where this magazine stands in the political spectrum, and the degree of its objectivity, can be judged by some recent disclosures. Less than a year ago, Senator Fulbright revealed that it had been paid \$3,000 by the Wright Organization, a publicity firm representing Chiang Kai-shek, for an article on People's China by the inveterate red-baiter Richard Walker. More recently it was involved in the behind-the-scenes financing of an anti-Communist book, *The Strategy of Deception: A Study in Worldwide Communist Tactics*, by the U.S. Information Agency. According to the *New York Times* (May 3, 1964), agency officials stated that "the late Sol Levitas, formerly editor of the *New Leader*, . . . had approached the agency with the idea for a book by well-known foreign authors dealing with case studies of Communist operations. The agency then contracted with the *New Leader* magazine to produce the manuscript and arrange for an American publisher to publish it. Myron Kolatch, now executive editor of the *New Leader*, said the magazine had received \$12,000 for pulling the manuscript together and handling translations of the original drafts by the foreign authors." This procedure, which is considered as at best highly questionable and very possibly illegal, was defended by the agency on the grounds that "to label [such books] as Government-financed . . . would undercut their propaganda value overseas."

Non-Jewish Mankind Exposed." There follow twelve tabloid pages whose contents are fully in keeping with the headline. On the back page is a box in English, informing the reader that this sheet is "being distributed world wide" by the National States Rights Party, P. O. Box 783, Birmingham, Alabama.

How many copies of this were printed and distributed we cannot say, though it is well known that considerable quantities of such anti-Semitic literature are circulated every year. Yet there is no outcry remotely comparable to that which greeted the Kichko book, no comparable demands that the dissemination of such poison be suppressed, no Washington conferences and no mass petitions. True, it can be argued that this material is issued by crackpot groups and not by a scientific body. But then the question is: who pays for it? And the answer is: men of means, men regarded not as crackpots but as quite respectable figures in their communities and in American life. Without their money the ultra-Right crackpots could scarcely operate.

A recent item in the *New York Times* (May 17, 1964) reports the uncovering of "a black market in erotic, anti-Soviet *and anti-Semitic* literature" in Moscow. (Emphasis added.) In this country there is no such thing as "black market" anti-Semitic literature. It is distributed legally, openly, with return addresses and offers to supply more.

On November 4, 1960 the *New York Herald Tribune* published a sensationalized story by Joseph Newman about an article appearing in the newspaper *Kommunist*, published in Buinaksk in the Autonomous Soviet Republic of Daghestan. The article, which referred to Jews drinking Mohammedan blood, was ascribed to a Communist Party "anti-Semitic drive." It created a considerable furore, but the true story, as disclosed by subsequent issues of the paper, received little publicity.* The facts are that the very next issue carried a statement condemning the actions of both the writer and the literary editor, and declaring: "This most preposterous and filthy fabrication of the clergy was intended to incite hatred for Jews, and has long been refuted by the most outstanding scientists and lawyers in the

* The Newman article refers to "experts" on anti-Semitism and states: "As far as the experts could recall, the most vitriolic anti-Semitic organs of the Nazi party had refrained from resorting to the libel." We refer the "experts" to *Der Stuermer*, and suggest to Mr. Newman that he become similarly aroused about the dissemination of such literature here.

world." A month later, the paper reported that its editor-in-chief had been removed from his post because of the article and two Communist Party secretaries in Buinaks had been reprimanded. (*Jewish Currents*, June, 1961. See also the account by Andre Blumel, reported in the *Morning Freiheit*, November 20, 1960.)

One further incident. In 1959, in the Moscow suburb of Malakhovka, the synagogue and the home of the Jewish cemetery caretaker were set afire, causing the death of an aged woman. Subsequently, it was reported, the three men responsible were apprehended and sentenced to substantial terms of imprisonment. There is, be it noted, not one comparable case in this country. The bombers of the Birmingham church in which four Negro children were killed have yet to be arrested (though the FBI has announced it knows their identity), let alone any of the perpetrators of the numerous other bombings and acts of vandalism against Negro churches and synagogues in recent years. And if the Birmingham bombers should be brought to trial, is anyone prepared to say that they will receive anything resembling the punishment merited by the heinousness of their crime?

What these examples show, in the first place, is that instances of anti-Semitic propaganda or actions have been dealt with far more vigorously by the Soviet authorities than they ever have in this country. Such reactions on their part are clearly incompatible with the slanderous allegations of an official policy of repression of Soviet Jews. They indicate rather that what is involved is in fact individual manifestations of remnants of anti-Semitism, and that if criticism is due it is, as we have indicated, for absence of a concerted campaign to wipe out these remnants rather than mere reaction to individual instances. And where the question of government policy is involved, the problem is primarily one of failure to recognize sufficiently the dogged persistence of such remnants.

They show, secondly, that there does exist in this country a widespread dissemination of anti-Semitic propaganda of the most vicious kind, financed by American capitalists who are by no means raving maniacs but calculating supporters of the lunatic Right. This, be it noted, is in sharp contrast to the Soviet Union where there are no reactionary monopolists to finance and foster anti-Semitism. This propaganda is spread, moreover, by ultra-Right fascist outfits which are simultaneously identified with the most extreme racist bigotry.

To be sure, there is no official policy of promoting anti-Semitic or racist propaganda here, but there is also no policy aimed at preventing it, even while the Soviet Union is piously castigated for not doing

so. More, the United States has become a notorious haven for all sorts of fascist anti-Semites and murderers fleeing justice in their own countries, where they have been convicted of Nazi war crimes. To cite but one example, there lives in Philadelphia today one Anastas L. Impulevicius, who is one of ten war criminals convicted of the slaughter of 50,000 people in Byelorussia in 1941. Not only has our government refused the request of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs for his extradition, but it has just granted him United States citizenship.

There is also in this country a branch of an international organization calling itself the Daugavas Hawks, consisting of former members of the Latvian S.S. who fought under the Nazis and carried out mass slaughters of Jews. This outfit, posing as a welfare organization, is in reality a fascist political group, viciously anti-Soviet and pro-cold war, and no less anti-Semitic than before.

These are not isolated instances; they are only characteristic of the large number of such fascist fugitives finding refuge and citizenship in our country. It is significant that the professional anti-Sovieteers, including the *Forward* and *New Leader* gangs, who are so concerned about the access of religious Jews in the Soviet Union to *tallisim* or *matzos*, are totally silent about these depraved anti-Semites in our own midst.

The appeal of the 2,000 clergymen to the Soviet government calls upon it, among other things, "to eradicate every vestige of anti-Semitism and to institute a vigorous campaign against all anti-Semitic manifestations." In doing so they pay the Soviet Union an unwitting compliment, for they make no such demand of our own government. Yet if there is any place in which anti-Semitism and racism need eradication it is here. Should they not, as men of sincerity and good will, address themselves to this task with the same vigor and energy as they call upon the Soviet leaders to exercise? We believe that if they did, the true picture of the status of Soviet Jews would also become clearer to them.

Anti-Semitism cannot be condoned, no matter where it appears. But neither can such anti-Soviet fabrications as the Nazi-like use of the Jews as a scapegoat for economic failures, fabrications peddled by cold-war anti-Sovieteers who simultaneously promote or condone anti-Semitism and racism in this country. Those who sincerely seek peace and an end to the cold war must also combat this anti-Sovietism and this anti-Semitism.

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The fate which befell Jewish cultural institutions and leading Jewish cultural figures under Stalin, particularly in the period beginning in 1948—a fate not confined to Jews—is too well known to require detailed recounting here. It is rather on the steps taken to rectify these terrible injustices and crimes that we wish to dwell, since these have become a center of current controversy.

Even a brief survey shows that these steps have been considerable.* Within the past several years, first of all, many Jewish cultural figures who had been unjustly executed or imprisoned have been rehabilitated—a rehabilitation which has been much more than nominal. Memorials have been erected in their honor, streets named after them, exhibits of their lives and work presented. And the works of the Jewish writers among them have been extensively published.

In the Yiddish language, books by the great classical writers Sholem Aleichem, I. L. Peretz and Mendele Mocher Sforim have appeared, as well as an anthology of short stories by David Bergelson and a volume of poetry by Osher Shvartsman. These were printed in editions ranging from 10,000 to 30,000.

In Russian and other languages, Yiddish writers have been very widely published. The Novosti Press Agency reports (*Morning Freiheit*, November 10, 1963) that "in the last seven years 187 books of 80 Yiddish writers have been published in 15 languages of the peoples of the USSR and 4 foreign languages in a total edition of 14 million copies." In 1959, the centennial of Sholem Aleichem's birth was publicly celebrated with the participation of leading Soviet government and literary figures. On this occasion, a special six-volume edition of his works was published in 250,000 copies, and a special commemorative postage stamp was issued. Last year a biography and literary criticism of Sholem Aleichem by Professor Hersch Remenik in Russian appeared, whose introduction states that no less than 500 editions of his works totaling 6 million copies had appeared in the Soviet Union.

Since August, 1961, a Yiddish bimonthly magazine, *Soviet Homeland*, has been published in 25,000 copies under the editorship of

*For additional details not presented here; see among other publications the pamphlet by Herbert Aptheker, *The Fraud of "Soviet Anti-Semitism,"* New Century Publishers, 1962; "Facts and Figures About Jews in the Soviet Union," *Morning Freiheit*, November 10, 1963; Jessica Smith, "Jewish Culture in the Soviet Union," *New World Review*, February, 1963, "On Charges of "Soviet Anti-Semitism," *New World Review*, March, 1963.

Aaron Vergelis—a circulation considerably higher than that of any single Yiddish magazine even in the thirties. More than a hundred Yiddish writers have found an outlet for their creative efforts in its pages. Now, according to a recent announcement by Vergelis, the magazine is to be published monthly. In addition, it will undertake the publication of books in Yiddish.

Numerous theatrical and musical companies exist, which tour the country and appear before audiences totaling millions of people. According to the Novosti Press Agency, these perform before audiences totaling at least half a million each year. Some of these groups are professional, some amateur, some mixed. Moscow boasts a professional drama group headed by the veteran actor Benjamin Schwartz. Riga has a permanent chorus of 100, part amateur, part professional. Vilna has an amateur dramatic group of over 50, recently accorded the official status of a people's theater, as well as a chorus of 30, a string orchestra and a jazz band, recruited from among its Jewish population. All this is aside from the numerous productions of Jewish plays or plays on Jewish themes in Russian and other languages.

Meetings of *Soviet Homeland* readers have been held, at which Yiddish readings and songs were presented. A song book has appeared, and numerous recordings of songs and readings in Yiddish.

The list could be expanded. Clearly, this is a far cry from an official policy of forcibly suppressing Jewish culture, such as is recklessly charged in certain circles in this country. The facts belie the statement of Senator Javits at the American Jewish Conference of Soviet Jewry that the Soviet government "crushes every vestige of Jewish culture." Nor is it true, as Senator Ribicoff asserts, that in the case of the executed or imprisoned Jewish cultural leaders "no effort was made for public rehabilitation as it has been done in the cases of other Stalinist victims." If, to take but one instance, a public monument to the noted actor Solomon Mikhoels in Moscow at whose unveiling leading public officials spoke is not public rehabilitation, we should like to know what is. There is just as little truth in Senator Ribicoff's charge that in Moscow and Leningrad "there is neither a professional nor an amateur Jewish theater nor any other Jewish cultural or artistic group permitted to exist." Such inventions are but a part of the arsenal of unreasoning anti-Sovietism.

At the same time, however, the restoration of Yiddish cultural institutions admittedly falls considerably short of what existed prior to 1948. For example, the publication of books in Yiddish has so far been limited to a small number of volumes. There are no Yiddish

newspapers other than the *Birobidjaner Shtern*. Nor are there any Jewish newspapers in Russian or other languages. The state theater in Moscow, headed by Mikhoels, has not been restored. No schools or classes or even textbooks in the Yiddish language exist. The question naturally arises: why has the process been thus limited?

This is explained by Soviet authorities on the ground that, thanks to the high degree of assimilation among Soviet Jews, the demand for such institutions has drastically diminished. Against this, it is contended that since in the 1959 census some 472,000 Soviet Jews designated Yiddish as their mother tongue, a substantial demand does exist. Further, however small the number desiring Yiddish cultural forms might become, it is incumbent on the Soviet government, in the name of full equality of all national groups, to make them freely available.

We shall not presume here to judge the magnitude of this demand in the Soviet Union. But whatever it may be it can be argued, we think, that the circumstances warrant leaning over backward to assure its fulfillment. Not to do so is to give insufficient consideration to the impact on the Jewish people, including those who do not speak Yiddish, of the excesses against Jewish cultural institutions and leaders in the latter days of the Stalin regime. It is to reckon without the heightened consciousness of Jews everywhere, including Soviet Jews, of their Jewish identity as a consequence of the crimes of Hitlerism. This is aptly described by Jessica Smith ("Jewish Culture in the Soviet Union," *New World Review*, February, 1963) in connection with a visit to a factory in Gorky in 1945. She writes: "When the chief engineer, who showed us around, found out that my husband was also a Jew, he flung his arms around him with special warmth. He told us then that before the war he had practically forgotten that he was a Jew, but that Hitler's brutal anti-Semitism had revived in him a new consciousness of his Jewish heritage." The crimes of 1948 and after, even though they were not confined to Jews, could only serve to strengthen that consciousness.

In the light of this, it seems to us that not to go out of one's way with regard to the availability of such things as Yiddish newspapers or classes (whose viability or lack of it would soon show itself in practice), or of religious articles, reflects an insufficient sensitivity to the continued existence and effects of anti-Semitism.

We must reject, however, the idea that this of necessity represents a policy of forced assimilation of Soviet Jews. Instances of discrimination may well occur as the objective consequence of policies pursued with quite other ends, as we have indicated above in relation

to the results of equality of treatment of the Jewish and Greek Orthodox religions. On this score, the Israeli sociologist Dr. Haim Darin-Drabkin, reporting on a visit to the Soviet Union, says (*Israel Horizons*, May, 1964):

After what I saw and heard, I believe we must draw clear a line between two concepts—a policy of discrimination and a situation of discrimination. The fact that the Jews in the USSR lack a territory of their own in itself creates a situation of inequality. I believe that it would be inaccurate to say that a policy of discrimination against the Jews in particular is practiced.*

He concludes his article with these words: "Admittedly, remnants of anti-Semitism still exist, just as there are still remnants of the past in the USSR, but anti-Semitism should not, in my opinion, be regarded as a characteristic of Soviet society."

We believe, therefore, that the criticisms levelled against the Soviet Union on the grounds of a policy of forced assimilation are ill-founded and harmful in their effects. Elements of such a policy did play a role at one time, especially during the latter part of the Stalin regime, and remnants of this exist, but the trend is today in the opposite direction.

Such critics also fail to give adequate consideration to the pronounced changes both in the character of Soviet Jewry and in Soviet life in general, as a consequence of which the situation today is in important respects not comparable to that prior to 1948.

What Has Changed?

The process of assimilation, whether one likes it or not, has continued to take its inexorable course. This process was already well under way in the thirties, even while the flowering of Yiddish cultural activities was at its peak. And this is not surprising, for the very policies which led to that flowering simultaneously opened the doors to the integration of Jews into all phases of Soviet life. As a result, there soon developed a pronounced decline in participation in these activities, a decline which has been noted by a number of observers of varying political views.

Even so bitter an enemy of the Soviet Union as the Bundist leader

*It should be noted that a serious effort was made to provide a Jewish territory in Birobidjan—an effort which met with small success because it did not reflect the desires of the overwhelming majority of the Soviet Jews themselves.

Gregory Aronson wrote (*The Jewish Problem in the Soviet Union*, 1944, p. 115):

. . . industrialization became one of the most decisive assimilating factors, among others, in Russia. It must be recognized that the mass influx of Jews into industry and into government institutions played an important and progressive role in the social and economic sense. (Translated from the Yiddish.)

More recently, Joshua Kunitz wrote (*Monthly Review*, April, 1953):

By the end of the '30s the Soviet Jewish youth had on the whole ceased to be Yiddish speaking. The number of students in the Yiddish schools had shrunk to about 60,000. The readership of the Yiddish press had shrunk to the vanishing point. . . . Altogether, only a small, inbred middle-aged group of professional Yiddishists had remained to carry on, but they could not have lasted long. There can be little doubt that had it not been for state financing, most of the Yiddish cultural undertakings would have collapsed as long ago as the end of the '30s.

Nathan Ausubel, in his *Pictorial History of the Jewish People* (Crown, New York, 1958), after describing the Yiddish cultural activity in the USSR in the twenties and thirties, states (p. 253):

Yet, for all this unprecedented, large-scale Yiddish cultural activity, its decline was already in evidence at the very time of its flowering. Although hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jewish youth had been raised in Yiddish-language schools, the political and cultural pressures from without proved well-nigh irresistible. . . .

In time, there was a sharp decline in the attendance of the Yiddish-language schools . . . the youth turned more and more to reading Russian newspapers, periodicals and books. In a late census, before the Nazi attack on Russia, more Jews claimed Russian than Yiddish as their mother tongue.

The point is further emphasized by William Mandel in his recent book *Russia Re-examined* (Hill and Wang, New York, 1964, p. 67):

The lowering of the bars against Jews caused more of them to assimilate culturally. In 1897, under the tsar, 97% regarded Yiddish as their mother tongue. Three-quarters still did in 1926. But by 1959, only one in five regarded this as his language, although a much larger number understood it.

True, this trend was affected by the Nazi persecution and by the influx, during World War II, of Yiddish-speaking Jews saved by the Soviet Union from the Nazi gas chambers. But it has undoubtedly resumed its pace in the postwar period, and especially during the last

decade with the development of the transition to a communist society.

The measure of the market for Yiddish publications today is not the fact that close to half a million Jews claim Yiddish as their mother tongue, important as this is in other respects. The actual demand is indicated rather by the fact that Vergelis, even while announcing the conversion of *Soviet Homeland* to a monthly, also stated that the number printed would not be increased. The *New York Times* reports (May 18, 1964): "The editors of Sovietish Heimland are understood to have rejected the idea of an expansion of the present circulation of 25,000 after an advertising campaign in areas with a potential Jewish readership failed to elicit a substantial number of subscriptions."

To be sure, this figure represents a substantial demand, since it is considerably greater than the circulation of any one periodical before the war. But the fact that it represents the *maximum* demand gives the lie to those who insist that the circulation is deliberately restricted and that untold thousands of Soviet Jews are unable to obtain it.

Further, the Leninist precept of the full equality of all nationalities, in contrast to bourgeois nationalism, regards this not as the means of endlessly perpetuating distinct national cultures but rather as the necessary basis for the eventual *amalgamation* of nations, a process dictated by the growth of a common economic life and a world economy. This process is already taking place in the Soviet Union, and will undoubtedly be speeded up as the transition to communism advances. An indication of this is given in a story by Theodore Shabad in the *New York Times* (October 20, 1963). He reports: "The Soviet Union is quietly pressing a far-reaching plan to convert the present structure of the national republics into a system of regional federations. . . . The new system would be an intermediate stage toward the establishment of a unitary state based on a single 'Communist culture.'"

Clearly, such a process is bound to accelerate the assimilation of the Soviet Jews, which is a natural part of the general process of amalgamation, as Lenin has pointed out. In his polemics against the nationalism of the Jewish Bundists, after disassociating assimilation from forcible measures, he asks: "But does anything real remain in the concept of assimilation after excluding any violence and any kind of inequality?" To this he answers:

Unquestionably yes! There remains that universal historical tendency of capitalism to smash down national barriers, to erase national differences, to *assimilate* nations, which with each decade shows itself more powerfully, and which constitutes one of the

greatest motive forces transforming capitalism to socialism. (*Lenin on the Jewish Question*, International Publishers, 1934, pp. 14-15.)

How much more powerfully does this historical tendency manifest itself when the transformation from capitalism to socialism has been completed and communism is on the way.

To be sure, national distinctions are not undergoing rapid obliteration; they continue to exist for a long time after the establishment of socialism and the ongoing process of amalgamation is a gradual one. At the same time, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the prerequisite to amalgamation is complete equality, that the process can only be voluntary, and that any form of oppression or compulsion serves only to obstruct it and to perpetuate national hostilities. But the basic historical direction is nonetheless clear.*

The passage to communism also brings with it a conscious reduction in the role of the state—a fact which those who insist on the restoration of a Yiddish state theater as the *sine qua non* of full cultural rights in this field overlook. As far back as 1959, a Reuters dispatch stated (*New York Times*, January 18, 1959):

State subsidies are being withdrawn from a number of theaters in Moscow, Leningrad and other cities, the newspaper *Sovetskaya Kultura* reported today.

In the future the theaters will be self-supporting, relying on box-office proceeds.

The decision was taken by the Ministry of Culture at the request of the theaters as their "contribution to the building of communism."

This is associated with a growing attachment of such cultural institutions to people's organizations rather than the state. In the face of this, the subsidization of the Vilna group as a people's theater is, if anything, indicative of a particular readiness to encourage the development of the Yiddish theater. There is also a trend toward predominance of amateur and mobile groups. Thus, the Soviet journalist Solomon Rabinowich states ("Jewish Culture in the Soviet Union"):

*It is maintained by some that in later years Lenin himself departed from his earlier emphasis on amalgamation of nations, stressing on the contrary the durability of national differences even under socialism. However, the concept of amalgamation as the fundamental trend, growing out of the development of a world economy, appears throughout Lenin's writings. The expression of this in his 1916 theses (*The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1954) is typical. He writes (p. 169): "The aim

[Critics] ask why haven't we a permanent professional theater—they recall the Mikhoels Theater, so famous in its time. We see no need to return to that today. The Jewish theater is developing along new lines, with many amateurs participating as well as professionals. There is a tendency today to develop folk performances of all our nationalities—even a militia man may become an amateur actor, and the Jewish theater too is developing along these lines.

Aaron Vergelis states ("The Truth About the Life of Jews in the USSR," *Sovetskaya Moldavia*, May 16, 1964):

At the present stage of cultural construction in the USSR, those forms that best conform to the already imminent communist society predominate. As for entertainment institutions, preference is given first to amateur theatrical companies in which the people themselves create art, and, second, on the professional stage, predominantly mobile, light troupes are formed that can make their way into the very midst of the popular masses. These basic principles have also been extended to the Jewish theater arts in the Soviet Union. Here is what this means in fact. We have no stationary Yiddish theater; it would be as a rule confined to a single auditorium and could therefore not effectively and quickly serve audiences in a multitude of settlements, which is easy for a modern road company. And we have many such road companies. New ones are always cropping up, literally right before our eyes.

The fact is that the state of the Yiddish theater in the Soviet Union is far superior to that in the United States, where it has by now all but vanished. Here there are no touring companies performing before large audiences, and what remains of the once-flourishing Yiddish theater in New York is pathetic indeed.

Finally, one should not underestimate the significance of the huge

of socialism is not only to abolish the division of mankind into small states and all segregation of nations, not only to draw the nations together, but to merge them."

He follows this by saying (p. 170): "Just as mankind can achieve the abolition of classes only by passing through the transitional period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, so mankind can achieve the inevitable merging of nations only by passing through the transition period of complete liberation of all the oppressed nations, i.e., of their freedom to secede."

The same thesis appears in Stalin's *Foundations of Leninism*, first published in 1924. In the chapter on the national question, he refers to the Soviet Union, on the basis of its fight to wipe out national oppression, as having become "the living prototype of the future union of all nations in a single world economic system." (International Publishers, New York, 1932, p. 82.)

volume of publication of Yiddish works translated into Russian and other languages. To provide Jewish culture to the overwhelming majority of Soviet Jews—not to speak of the entire Soviet people—is to provide it in these languages. If the Soviet government were bent, as its enemies claim, on obliterating the cultural and spiritual life of Soviet Jews, *it would in the first place suppress this aspect*. But quite to the contrary, the dissemination of Jewish literature is fostered to a degree which is entirely unmatched in this country, and outstanding Jewish literary figures are officially honored in a manner which has no counterpart here. Clearly the Soviet regime, far from wishing to wipe out Jewish culture, views it as a vital element in Soviet cultural life and in the fusion of cultures which is beginning to take shape there.

Jews in Professional and Public Life

A favorite anti-Soviet canard is the allegation that a quota system for Jews exists in Soviet institutions of higher learning. For this allegation no direct proof is offered; rather, the existence of such a system is simply inferred from statistics on Jewish attendance at colleges and universities. In like fashion, an effort is made to demonstrate the systematic exclusion of Jews from various professions and from public posts.

The assumption underlying this procedure is that if the proportion of Jews in a given field is small or declining, this is of itself proof of deliberate exclusion—an obvious fallacy, since such fluctuations may be due to a variety of causes. If it appears credible, it is because in this country such exclusion does exist and hence the absence or limited participation of Jews in a particular field is most often a consequence of it.

Currently, Jews comprise about 1% of the total Soviet population but are 3½% of the college population. In the thirties the percentage was much higher, and it is this decline which has been seized on by such professional anti-Sovieters as Moshe Decter as evidence of a quota system (“The Status of the Jews in the Soviet Union,” *Foreign Affairs*, January, 1963). Others argue that since in Tsarist Russia the quota for Jews, imposed in 1887, was 10% within the Pale of Settlement (it was 5% outside the Pale and 3% in St. Petersburg and Moscow), today’s figure necessarily represents an even greater arbitrary limitation of Jewish enrollment than under Tsarism.

But the quota of Tsarist days was, among others things, 10% of a vastly smaller total enrollment than that of today. Further, that

enrollment excluded the many nationalities which were then largely illiterate. With the rapid growth of literacy and consequently of college attendance among these nationalities under socialism, their proportion of the total enrollment increased while others correspondingly declined. The drop may also be explained in part by the exceptionally high casualty rate among Jews during World War II and the resulting decline in their proportion to the total population.

Decter similarly seeks to make capital of the fact that Jewish scientists have declined from 11% of the total in 1955 to 9.8% in 1960, thanks to a more rapid growth in the numbers of Russians and Ukrainians in this field than of Jews. This, he contends, reflects an official policy of restricting the access of Jewish youth to the universities and the professions in favor of others.

Discrimination against Jewish enrollment is alleged also by others on the ground that preference has been given to other nationalities. But this does not follow. Where we oppose such preferential treatment, it is not because we consider it evil in itself. We oppose the use of quota systems as an instrument of national oppression and discrimination. But, as in the case of the Negro people, we *support* preferential hiring, apprenticeships, scholarship, enrollments, etc. as a means of *overcoming* the effects of oppression and discrimination. The Soviet efforts to make up for ages of oppression by such preferential access to higher education can scarcely be offered as evidence of anti-Semitism.

Moreover, university facilities and enrollments in the Soviet Union have been rapidly expanding, and this has been especially true with regard to the training of scientists. Hence special encouragement could well be given to other nationalities which have lagged behind the Jews in this field without necessarily lessening in any degree the accessibility of scientific training to Jewish youth. But this apparently does not occur to Decter, who is bent on proving the opposite.

Aside from all this, the fact that Jews are 3½ times as numerous among college students as they are in the total population hardly indicates that they are being restricted.

Jews continue to form an exceptionally high proportion of those engaged not only in science but in other professional fields as well. Thus, they constitute 14.7% of all doctors, 14.0% of all writers, 10.4% of all lawyers, more than 13% of all artists and more than 23% of all composers. Such figures, again, are scarcely indicative of the existence of quota systems.

Nor is it true, as the fact sheet issued by the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry alleges, that “Jews have virtually disappeared from key ‘security-sensitive’ areas such as the armed forces, diplomatic

corps and membership in the Supreme Soviets of the 15 republics."

In the top echelons of the armed forces, Jews are represented by General of the Army Yakov Kreizer, Lieutenant-General David Dragunsky, more than 100 others with the rank of general and far greater added numbers of lower rank. Among Jews in top positions in the diplomatic and foreign services are N. Tsarapkin, Chief of the Soviet Mission at the Geneva Disarmament Conference, and G. Men-delevich, Secretary of the Soviet Mission to the United Nations.

Jews in high government posts include Deputy Premier and Chairman of the USSR Economic Council Veniamin Dymshitz, Cabinet Minister of the Lithuanian Socialist Republic Ilya Beliaucus, Deputy Minister of Construction of the Byelorussian Socialist Republic Leonid Paperny, Deputy Chairman of the Minsk City Soviet Israel Kazhdan, as well as many others who are members of Supreme Soviets of republics and other bodies. There are, in all, 7,647 Jews among the deputies to Supreme and local Soviets.

To be sure, this number is considerably less than 1% of the total number of deputies, and this too is seized upon by Dexter as supposed evidence of exclusion of Jews "as a security risk group—suspected of actual or potential disloyalty, of essential alien-ness." But here, too, mere smallness of numbers is not by itself proof of exclusion.* Certainly these "experts" would never think of playing such a "numbers game" in relation to, say, the current absence of Jews from the President's Cabinet or the relatively small numbers of Jews in state legislatures dominated by rural areas.

The contention that Jews have been virtually eliminated from "security-sensitive" areas as being alien and untrustworthy is clearly belied by the facts cited above (as it is also by the fact that some 400,000 Jews are members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union). It is contradicted also by the participation of Jewish scientists in such fields of work as the space program. Concerning this, the *New York Times* writer Harry Schwartz notes (June 16, 1964):

Speaking in Washington in 1959, Premier Khrushchev paid tribute

*One writer, for example, makes much of the allegation that of 1,443 members of the Supreme Soviet only five are Jews. Another source places the number at eight. Apparently this kind of bookkeeping is based on the tallying of recognizably Jewish names. But even if we were to accept such dubious estimates, the fact is that if Jews were present in the same proportion as in the total population (1%) the number would be only 14. Where such small percentages are involved, differences such as this may easily be the result of chance fluctuations and hence devoid of political significance.

to Soviet scientists of Jewish origin by indicating they had played a prominent role in Soviet space technology, which permitted the Soviet Union in that year to land a rocket on the moon. *But the names of Soviet space scientists have in general been kept secret as part of the security arrangements surrounding the Soviet space program.* (Emphasis added.)

The important fact is that Jews are actively involved in all phases of Soviet life, whatever their precise numbers, and that outstanding Jewish figures are to be found in every field of activity. Among these, in addition to the names already mentioned, are such representative individuals as the writer Ilya Ehrenburg, the physicist Lev Landau, the psychologist A. R. Luria, the directors of the Bolshoi Theater and Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow and of the Maly Theater in Leningrad, the musicians David Oistrakh, Emil Gilels and Leonid Kogan. And there are many more.*

Nor has the Soviet government been sparing in its recognition of outstanding achievements by Jews, who comprise a considerable part of recent Lenin Award and other prize winners. Of this, Edmund Stevens, Moscow correspondent of the *Chicago Daily News*, writes (May 9, 1964):

Perhaps the best answer to charges current in the West that the Soviet government is conducting a Jew-baiting policy was provided by the recent awards of Lenin prizes. Out of nine prizes in science four were awarded to Jews. Out of four in literature and arts two were awarded to Jews, ballerina Maya Plisetskaya and cellist Mstislav Rostropovich.

Harry Schwartz points out (*New York Times*, June 16, 1964) that of 103 persons nominated for full membership in the Soviet Academy of Science at least 16 were Jewish, and of 438 nominated as corresponding members at least 58. These proportions, he notes, are well above the proportion of Jews among Soviet scientists.

Certainly, this is not a picture of exclusion. Rather, it demonstrates the very opposite. Far from suffering the discrimination which the anti-Soviet "experts" seek to manufacture through the torturing of statistics, Jews play an active and honored role in Soviet society.

Jews and Economic Crimes

In recent years, a considerable clamor has developed over the high

*For a more comprehensive compilation, the reader is referred to the pamphlet by Herbert Aptheker mentioned above, which has been used as the source of these and certain other facts presented in this section, also of the quotation from Professor Berman cited below.

proportion of Jews reportedly among those executed for economic crimes. Of roughly 150 such executions reported in the Soviet press, it is pointed out, about 60% involved individuals with Jewish names. And this, it is argued, can only be regarded as anti-Semitism, whether deliberate or otherwise.

Anti-Soviet circles in this country have made these executions the basis of a vicious campaign of slander, charging that they are designed to make the Jews scapegoats for the alleged failures of the Soviet economy and the corruption which, they claim, pervades all of Soviet society including the Communist Party itself. But expressions of alarm and protest have come also from individuals not hostile to the Soviet Union, notably from Bertrand Russell who some time ago addressed a letter to Premier Khrushchev on the subject.

The concern is understandable; nevertheless, the charge of anti-Semitism is unfounded in this case, too. The mere numbers of Jews involved are not in themselves proof of an anti-Semitic policy. To illustrate the point, in this country during the past decade several mass trials on narcotics charges have taken place in which virtually all the defendants were Italian. Yet no one has seriously charged the federal government with conducting an anti-Italian campaign, or even with being unintentionally anti-Italian. Why, then, is the Soviet government, on similar grounds, accused of being anti-Jewish? In part, because of the general hysteria which has been whipped up over "Soviet anti-Semitism"; in part because of the extreme severity of the sentences. But not because there is any direct proof that Jews are being singled out as such for execution.

The Soviet Union, as a socialist country in the process of transition to communism, takes an extremely dim view of economic crimes, regarding them as among the worst of offenses, and the penalties are correspondingly severe. In this respect, the Soviet scale of values differs greatly from that of capitalist society, in which graft and corruption are considered part of the normal mode of existence. In his reply to Bertrand Russell, Khrushchev makes pointed reference to this. He says:

Every state has its legislation. Our Soviet state also has its laws that are based on socialist morals. What is often regarded in bourgeois society as valiant is rejected by our morals and condemned by our laws. For example, it is not customary in bourgeois society to show interest in how and from where money has been accumulated. This, you see, is considered to be the private affair of the one who has made this capital. But this capital is made by means of exploiting, robbing millions of people, and sometimes even by way

of murder and other crimes. In such a society a person possessing capital enjoys respect no matter how he made his money. Their principle is: a thief not caught is not a thief. But even when such a thief is caught red-handed he is not often put in prison. More often than not, this case does not even reach court because a person with money has his men among those who are called upon to control the observance of law. . . .

Our morals and our laws are based on other principles. The morals of our society are the morals of the working people. He who does not work, neither shall he eat—such are our morals. Our state, our society, with the help of laws, protects honest working people from parasites, from idlers who trample upon the morals of socialist society and want to live by robbing others, or by appropriating, through dishonest machinations, the values in creating which they have not taken part.

The important question is whether the law is impartially enforced and trials are fair or not. And competent observers have noted that this is indeed the case. Thus, Professor Harold Berman of the Harvard Law School, on the basis of his observations while a Visiting Professor at the University of Moscow in 1962, stated:

In the past months I have read reports in American newspapers that anti-Semitism is supposedly growing in the Soviet Union. To my mind there is a large element of subjectivism and inaccuracy in these reports. I know they are often connected with the recent trials in the USSR of big speculators, thieves and embezzlers. However, this in my opinion, does not mean that discrimination is being pursued against the Jews. My Jewish friends in the Soviet Union, with whom I discussed this question, confirmed this. For among those convicted are not only Jews but individuals of other nationalities.

According to Public Prosecutor Genady Terekhov of the Chief Prosecutor's Office of the USSR, the involvement of Jews is actually *less* than that of other nationalities. Declaring that his own work is concerned with prosecutions for economic crimes, he said: "I state with full responsibility that in our country the absolute number of Jews brought to trial on criminal charges is not only smaller than among other nationalities, but that the proportional percentage of Jewish defendants in relation to the total Jewish population is lower than it is in other nationalities." (*Soviet Homeland*, November-December, 1963, p. 83; cited in *Jewish Currents*, April, 1964, p. 47.)

Hence, whatever the reasons may be for the exceptional involvement of Jews in the press accounts, at least in those tabulated in

this country, it cannot be ascribed to an anti-Semitic policy of singling out Jews for prosecution and punishment.

The USSR and the U.S.

In the preceding pages, we have examined certain aspects of the status of Soviet Jews and the nature of the charge of anti-Semitism levelled against the Soviet government. We have not attempted to cover all of these charges. To do so would require much more space, and in any event the stream of such attacks is endless. But we believe that what we have dealt with is more than enough to demonstrate the false, slanderous character of the campaign against "Soviet anti-Semitism," by which so many honest Americans have been taken in.

This becomes all the more apparent when one examines the over-all conditions of life of Soviet Jews. Far from being ridden by discrimination and oppression and living in fear for their physical safety, as the anti-Soviet calumniators would have it, their lives are vastly more free of anti-Semitism than are those of American Jews.

With regard particularly to economic and social status, matters which affect *all* Jews directly, there is no doubt whatever of their freedom from discrimination to a degree unknown in this country.

In the Soviet Union, Jews are free to live wherever they please. This is not the case in the United States, where Jews are plagued by the all-too-familiar restrictive covenants and "gentlemen's agreements," and where the Jewish suburban communities have come to be referred to as "gilded ghettos."

Nor do Soviet Jews suffer the restrictions in employment characteristic of this country, particularly in higher-ranking positions. There, in addition to their prominent role in such professions as medicine, science, law, art and music, Jews are found widely employed as factory managers and executives. Here, writes Vance Packard in his book *The Status Seekers* (Cardinal Edition, 1961, p. 234):

... It is the rare large corporation that considers Jews on their qualifications alone in filling all its ranks. Some corporations shun Jews almost entirely. This is particularly true in insurance, banking, automobile making, utilities, oil, steel, heavy industry. Others profess hospitality to Jews; but then it often turns out that Jews are really welcomed only in the "inside jobs" requiring high intellectual capacity such as research, creativity, actuarial skill, etc. The "outside jobs," calling for contact with clients or the public or with stockholders, are primarily reserved for Gentiles.

Speaking of his studies in a middle-sized city which he designates as "Northeast City," Packard states (p. 235):

... I was looking for insights that might explain why the lines were drawn against Jews at many points in the city's social and business life, especially at the elite or upper-class level. I was curious to know, in the face of the frequently stated great respect for Jews, why few Jewish names appeared among the officers of most of the banks, utilities and large industrial firms. (Mostly, the leading Jews were merchants, lawyers, or textile plant operators.)

And only recently the American Jewish Committee, on the basis of a study of fifty leading public utilities, charged these companies with "discriminatory practices against Jews and other minority groups in the recruitment and promotion of management personnel," stating that "Jews made up less than 1 per cent of the total executive personnel in these utilities." (*New York Times*, December 29, 1963.)

As for quota systems in institutions of higher education, these have long existed in this country. Indeed, among American Jews they are a familiar fact of life.

Of all such restrictions, Soviet Jews are free, and they truly live as equals with all others. They are, in fact, highly resentful of the false charges of anti-Semitism levelled against the Soviet government. Thus, in a letter to the Anglo-Jewish weekly, the *Chicago Sentinel* (October 10, 1963), Dr. Allen Turban, who had only recently travelled in the Soviet Union, said: "Broadcasts and newspaper reports (attacking the Soviet policy toward Jews), without doing anyone any good, will simmer back to the Jewish people in the U.S.S.R., and I learned they resent it very much. One Rabbi I spoke to, resented it with anger."

To be sure, instances of discrimination and anti-Semitism occur. But these are remnants of the past, exceptions to accepted practice, and violations of Soviet law. In the United States, in contrast, these things *are* the accepted practice, the normal mode of behavior, and as yet scarcely touched by anti-discrimination laws.

There anti-Semitic and racist propaganda are outlawed; here such propaganda is freely distributed. Moreover, in our southern states racist and segregationist practices are *legally* sanctioned and are enforced even in open defiance of the Federal Constitution and decisions of the Supreme Court, while the Johnson Administration insists it is powerless to intervene in the face of unbridled violence, terror and murder. Indeed, whether actively or passively, officially or unofficially, our government has served in fact as the instrument of monopoly

capital for the maintenance of its system of national oppression and chauvinism.

It was the Soviet Union which took special measures to save the lives of millions of Jews in the face of the Nazi onslaught. It was the Soviet Union which, by its outstanding role in the defeat of fascism, contributed most to preserving the future of Jews everywhere. It was the Soviet Union which was instrumental in securing the establishment of Israel. And it is the Soviet Union which today defends the existence of Israel against those who would attack it.

Drew Pearson, in his column of February 2, 1964, states:

Western diplomats were flabbergasted when Arab leaders ended their Cairo conference on a moderate note. No one knew at first why the Arabs, who had been breathing fire and brimstone, suddenly piped down.

U.S. diplomats have now learned the reason—a secret note received by the Arab states from the Kremlin warning them not to start war with Israel.

. . . The note reminded the Arabs that Premier Khrushchev's New Year's message had urged all powers to refrain from using force to settle boundary disputes and it was imperative that the Arab nations settle their differences with Israel by diplomatic means, not war.

Can there be any clearer indication that Soviet policy embraces the defense of the rights and freedom of *all* nations?

As we have stated, there are in our opinion grounds for criticism of Soviet policy in relation to the Jews, in particular of the failure to wage all-out war against the persistent remnants of anti-Semitism. *But such criticism must be made only within the framework of full recognition of the magnificent achievement of the Soviet Union in wiping out all national oppression and establishing the full equality of all nationalities.* In the case of the Soviet Jews, the transformation from the conditions of Tsarist days has been exceptionally great. Not to recognize these things, and to acquiesce in the accusations of anti-Semitic policies employed by the anti-Soviet forces as a cold-war weapon, is to do a disservice not only to the Jewish people, but also to the struggles of all oppressed peoples for their freedom and to the cause of world peace and friendship.

"SOVIET ANTI-SEMITISM"

A COLD-WAR MYTH

By HYMAN LUMER



A Political Affairs Pamphlet