

# JEWISH Frontier

SEPTEMBER ■ OCTOBER ■ 1997

## ZIONISM: A CENTURY OF MIRACLES

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## MYSTERY: MISSING YEMENITE CHILDREN

← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ←

## 1948: I SHOT DOWN AN ARAB WARPLANE

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## THEOCRACY vs DEMOCRACY

← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ←

## BUND and the BOLSHEVIKS

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## ZIONIST CONGRESS ELECTIONS: Program and Slate

← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ←

## MODERN YIDDISH CULTURE (Review)

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# A Century of Miracles

*By Misha Louvish*

**T**he history of Zionism is marked by a long string of processes and events which seem to be outside the normal development of human affairs, and which we may, by a slight stretch of the meaning, call miracles.

The soil in which the Zionist idea took root was the miraculous survival of the Jewish people as a distinct national entity over nearly two thousand years of dispersion and statelessness. Its identity was dominated by religious beliefs and observances, but no other religious community has displayed anything like the solidarity and sense of common destiny displayed by the Jews — characteristics which usually bind the citizens of a nation-state.

In the nineteenth century there was the miracle of the Jewish cultural renaissance known as the Haskalah. The scattered communities produced two literatures: one in Yiddish and one in Hebrew, with their novels and short-stories, their essays and critical reviews. This they did in one language which had been a medium of conversation and folktales and in another which had been used mainly for religious commentary and the interpretation of religious sources. That, too, is little short of a miracle.

Influenced by the rise of European nationalism, a number of Jewish writers began to advocate the creation of a Jewish national home, which some of them coupled with the return to the ancestral homeland. Various groups began to promote this aim by settling in Palestine and establishing settlements which would form the nucleus of the future state. An organization, *Hibbat Tziyon* ("Love of Zion") was set up to help them.

The miracle of Herzl was not only the striking form in which he expressed the need for

the creation of a State for the Jewish people and defined the methods for achieving the aim, but his success in establishing an instrument for realizing it: the Zionist Organization, with its Congress, president and executive, its "citizenship" — the shekel — and its parties: a framework for a state in exile before there was a territory.

**T**he next outstanding stage in the progress of Zionism was the success of one man, Chaim Weizmann, in negotiating with a great power as the leader of a nation which did not yet exist and securing its support for the establishment of the Jewish National Home. The Balfour Declaration was the basis for the League of Nations' recognition of "the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and...the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country," which was the foundation for Britain's rule as the Mandatory Power.

Side by side with the successful political efforts of the Diaspora-based Zionist Organization, there were the efforts of the pioneers in the homeland, who built the Yishuv, the Jewish community which was a state within the state, with its own national institutions, and created a Jewish working class, with its powerful labor federation, the Histadrut.

Not the least of the "miracles" that punctuated the history of the movement was the emergence of a charismatic leader, David Ben-Gurion, whose far-sighted vision played a decisive part in the development of the dominant role of the labor movement in the Yishuv and the Zionist movement, the transition to statehood, and the consolidation of the Jewish State.

Perhaps the most important of the policy decisions for which Ben-Gurion, in cooperation with Weizmann, obtained the support of a majority in the Yishuv and the Zionist movement was the recognition of the need to take into account the power and aspirations of the Arab population of Palestine.

In the early years the strategy was to settle the land, build up the Jewish economy, and increase the Jewish population by aliyah until the Jews were a majority and democratic institutions could be established. In view of the violent resistance of the Arabs and the British refusal to realize the aims of the Mandate by force, it turned out that this policy was not practical.

The proposal of the Peel Commission, in 1937, for the creation of a Jewish State in part of Palestine led to a heated controversy, in which Jabotinsky's Revisionist Movement denounced the idea as a surrender of the basic principles of Zionism. It was the historic decision of the Twentieth Zionist Congress, supported by Weizmann and Ben-Gurion, to accept the principle of partition, that made it possible, when the idea was ratified a decade later by the United Nations, to establish the State of Israel.

This list of highlights may be misleading. Each outstanding achievement was made possible, not only by the insight and vision of the leaders but also by the patient labors of thousands of "Palestinians" (the term was used in those days to designate Jews who lived and worked in Palestine) and Zionists the world over — as many readers of *Frontier* will recall from personal experience.

Weizmann, Ben-Gurion and their colleagues had to sweat blood to get support for their efforts (remember Weizmann's desperate cry: "Jewish people, where are you?"). Thousands of *halutzim* broke their backs in the effort to realize the watchword of "the conquest of labor" — which meant the self-conquest of students and shopkeepers in order to turn themselves into manual laborers.

In a recent book, Professor Ze'ev Sternhel has criticized the labor leaders for giving priority to the building of the nation over the realization of Socialism, but the Histadrut had no easy task to establish health, education and social services and lay the foundations for a

welfare state without powers of taxation and coercion.

Nor was it easy to arm and train the *Haganah*, the nucleus of the Israel Defense Forces, under the eye of the British Mandatory Government, so that when the trial came the small Yishuv could defend itself against the onslaught of the Palestinian Arabs and the surrounding Arab states.

All these efforts were part of the implementation of Zionist aims.

When independent Israel was established in 1948, the Jewish State itself became the major instrument for the realization of Zionism — it was the Israelis who had to build the economy, develop social services and man the armed forces. Ben-Gurion went so far as to say that only those who settled in Israel were entitled to call themselves "Zionists" — Diaspora Jews could be no more than "Friends of Israel." I don't believe there is any need, however, for such semantic exercises.

American Jewry, it is true, is not entitled to be proud of its record of *aliyah*: if one percent of the five million Jews in the United States settled in Israel every year, with a proportionate share of their assets, they could revolutionize the life of Israel in almost every field: economic, scientific, educational, social — and religious.

But *aliyah* from a free, prosperous community cannot be forced. We would like to see much more *aliyah* from America, but we should draw such advantage as possible from American Jewry, with its wealth and political power, and we should make whatever contribution possible to its ties with the Jewish people and its traditions.

I would make this proposal, however, to every American Jewish parent. Enable your children, when they reach maturity, to take advantage of one of the various schemes and come to taste the life of Israel. Tell them that if they decide on *aliyah* you will back them to the hilt, and if you have the means contribute to the cost of *aliyah* for those who haven't — there must be some poor Jews even in "*die goldene medineh*."

There is much talk about a "post-Zionist" era in Israel. The simplest refutation of the idea is the ingathering of the Ethiopians, who had been cut off from the main body of the Jewish people for centuries, and the influx of 700,000 Jews from the former Soviet Union,

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who rediscovered their Jewishness and returned to the ancestral homeland over forty years after the Proclamation of Independence despite more than two generations of Communist brainwashing.

But that is not all. There is an inevitable difference between a movement striving to realize its aims and a nation that has basically implemented them. The 4½ million Jews of Israel are realizing the aims of Zionism by being productive citizens, paying their taxes and playing their part in the defense of their country, but they are bound to want a better life for themselves and their families. They still have serious responsibilities because the future of the country depends entirely on their efforts.

Have all the ideals been realized? Far from it. The absorption of thousands of Jews from the Muslim countries in moshavim and "development towns" was a painful process. They had to face drastic cultural and social changes, the effects of which still exist. There is still a clash between the orthodox religious establishment and the majority, who may be sympathetic with tradition but want to be free from the shackles of religious law.

Israel is not only the place where Jewish potential can be most fully realized; it is also the place where Jewish problems are most concentrated and challenging.

The ideals of Zionism will not be completely realized until Israel's right to exist and its permanent borders are recognized by the entire family of nations, including its Arab neighbors and the Palestinians who are now under its rule. There are peaceful relations today with Egypt and Jordan; peace with Syria and the Palestinians is an essential part of the aims of Zionism.

Diaspora Jewry still has an important role to play in promoting the progress of Israel and defending its international interests through the World Zionist Organization, the Jewish Agency and such bodies as the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations in the United States, but the responsibility for the completion of Zionist aims by the achievement of peace rests on the shoulders of the people of Israel through their elected democratic institutions. □

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# TAKING STOCK

*By Susan Hattis Rolef*

**E**very so often the fate of several hundred Yemenite and other new immigrant children, who allegedly disappeared in Israel in the years 1949-54, returns to haunt Israel. It did so once again on August 13, when Israel TV aired an amateur video tape showing several marked graves of Yemenite children, who had reportedly died in those years, being opened and found to be empty. Two weeks later, the story of a Yemenite family, which found its long lost daughter who had been declared dead in the early 50s, but had actually been adopted by a family in a kibbutz — once again brought the issue to the forefront of the public's consciousness.

The video tape of the empty graves was prepared by the followers of Uzi Meshulam — the controversial leader of a fanatical sect, who is currently doing time on charges of breach of the peace and violence. Meshulam is one of those who have tried to make political hay of the affair, accusing the predominantly Ashkenazi establishment of being "Ashke-Nazis" and "Erev Rav" (riffraff, or "mixed multitude" in the language of the Bible), and of having sold to rich American Jews or made medical experiments on as many as 4,500 Yemenite children, who he claims were kidnapped from their parents. Meshulam's claims should, of course, be taken with a grain of salt. However, there is nevertheless a rather unpleasant mystery involved, which ought to be uncovered and cleared up once and for all — first and foremost for the sake of the parents of the lost children, but also for Israel's sake, as a democratic society, willing and able to contend with the truth, unpleasant as it may be.

The Yemenite children affair relates to about

650 immigrant infants who are supposed to have disappeared between the years 1949 and 1954. According to official records and reports (where records do not exist), these children suffered from malnutrition and various diseases, and were taken from transit camps (*ma'abarot*) for treatment in hospitals, where they died. However — so it was claimed — since their parents could not be located due to the prevalent bureaucratic chaos and the ignorance of the parents, and since in many cases the children's names were unknown, they were buried anonymously.

In the late 1950s people started wondering aloud whether all the children had actually died. These doubts were based on the fact that there were known cases of children who had recovered in hospital and were then handed over for adoption, after their parents could not be located, as apparently happened in the case of the family whose story recently hit the headlines. The issue became public in 1966, when parents who had been informed that their children had died, started receiving mobilization orders for them from the IDF as their 18th birthdays approached.

**A** private investigation was opened by some of the parents, and in 1967 an administrative examination committee — the Hahalut-Minkovsky Committee — was officially appointed to investigate the issue. This committee examined the cases of 342 missing children, of whom 307 were Yemenites. The committee managed to find records (some of which might have been bogus) concerning 320 of them, of whom it was determined that 316 had died. The fate of 22 remained a mystery. A second administrative committee — the Shalgi Committee — was appointed by then-Prime

Minister Yitzhak Shamir in 1988 to continue the investigation. This committee, which reported its findings in 1994, examined the cases of 609 children (including the 342 examined by the previous committee), 90 of whom it was unable to trace. The Shalgi Committee concluded that it could find no evidence of criminal acts around the disappearance of these children, or of illegal adoptions, though it did find that the authorities had frequently acted condescendingly toward certain groups of immigrants, particularly those who had arrived from Moslem countries.

Neither the parents nor other representatives of the Yemenite community (including the current Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani) were satisfied with the findings of this committee, and in January 1995 a National Commission of Inquiry, headed by retired Supreme Court Justice Yehuda Cohen, was appointed to deal with the issue. Two and a half years later, after gathering new evidence — which *inter alia* revealed that some of the children whose names appeared on the lists had died in Yemen and had never reached Israel, and that there had apparently been cases of parents who took home the wrong children from hospital, the Commission is still nowhere near concluding its work, and it is still difficult to tell whether the truth will finally be fully uncovered.

In the meantime the police must cope with Uzi Meshulam's followers, who are becoming increasingly involved in grievous acts of incitement, sabotage and violence, and an insolent refusal to accept the authority of the state institutions.

The phenomenon of Uzi Meshulam (who claims to be a Rabbi but was never officially ordained as one) and his likes, is part of the sour fruit of mistakes made by the predominantly Labor establishment back in the early years of the state in absorbing immigrants from Moslem countries. There were too many cases of such immigrants being treated as primitive beings, who do not know what is best for themselves, and of overt attempts to force them to become "modern" Israelis at the expense of their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and sense of dignity.

However, it is not the Uzi Meshulams and their followers, who should worry those who wish Israel to continue to exist and develop as

a modern, democratic pluralistic state. Fanatics of one sort or another exist today in most Western societies today, and are a problem which the law and order authorities are equipped to deal with. What is much more worrying is that the same bitterness and resentment, which gave rise to the phenomenon of Uzi Meshulam, have also enabled the emergence of Shas, which is anything but a fringe movement. While Meshulam's movement may be defined as a violent and fanatical sect, Shas is a perfectly respectable Sephardi *haredi* movement and political party, whose rhetoric is relatively mild and whose ways are those of pleasantness.

What adds to Shas's moderate and unthreatening demeanor is the fact that its spiritual leader, Rabbi Ovadia Yossef, who might be an extremist in some of his halachic rulings regarding personal conduct, is a political dove, who believes that human lives are more important than land and stones. His reputation as an advocate of a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict is so wide-spread, that Arab emissaries seek interviews with him. With the help of funds it has received from the State, Shas has developed strong education and social welfare systems, by means of which it is managing to reach ever-growing sections of the weaker parts of the Sephardi community in Israel, frequently saving children from delinquency and life on the fringe of society.

And yet, as an ultra-religious movement and party, which emerged and developed against the background of the failure of both the Ashkenazi secular establishment and the Ashkenazi *Haredi* establishment to successfully absorb the Sephardi Jews, which rejects as decadent and objectionable most of what today's Western society and culture stand for, and does not discourage the swarming of the masses to the graves of "holy-men", and to living "holy-men" who offer amulets and parchments as remedies for troubles and as good luck charms — Shas poses a problem.

Since it first appeared on the Israeli political map in the 1984 elections and gained 4 Knesset seats, it has grown in size and power. Today it has 10 MKs, and is represented in Binyamin Netanyahu's government by two ministers: Minister of Labor and Welfare, Eli Yishai, and Minister of the Interior, Eli Suissa (who isn't a Knesset member). Nothing seems to stop Shas from gaining strength among Is-

rael's still disgruntled "Orientals" — neither the fact that its first political leader, Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz, left the movement on ideological grounds in 1992, nor the fact that its second political leader, Rabbi Arye Der'i, has been on trial on charges of financial disorders since 1990, and spends most of his time these days studying at a "Kollel" while attending the Knesset infrequently.

Shas is today at the forefront of the battles against the Reform and Conservative Movements and shops and places of entertainment being open on Saturday, and of increasingly aggressive campaigns to convince Sephardi youngsters to return to a highly unenlightened form of religion and join the non-Zionist camp in the country. Most recently, the "sinful" city of Eilat was targeted by Shas for such activities, much to the chagrin of the city's mayor and secular inhabitants.

After the last general elections one of the Shas elected representatives expressed the hope that before long Shas would gain an absolute majority in the Knesset, which would then turn into a *Beth-Knesset* — a synagogue. Though experts agree that Shas has not reached its full potential, there is, of course, no chance that it will ever gain a majority in the Knesset, if for no other reason than that demographic realities exclude such a possibility. However, for the time being nothing seems to be standing in its way.

**F**or those Sephardim who feel sufficiently disgruntled to vote ethnically (it should be noted, however, that despite everything, the majority of Sephardim in Israel still vote either for the Likud or the Labor Party) there seems to be no real alternative to Shas today. David Levy's predominantly Moroccan "Gesher" party, seems much more concerned with getting prestigious jobs for its more prominent members than with social issues. The fact that Levy himself insisted on being given the Ministry for Foreign Affairs rather than the Ministry for Labor and Welfare or the Ministry of the Interior (which Shas was more than happy to take), speaks for itself.

A new political group — the Democratic Oriental Spectrum — which is made up of intellectuals of Moslem country origin, has been fighting for worthy causes, such as enabling the sons of new immigrants to inherit their parents' rights over the subsidized housing

they were provided with after their arrival, just as the sons of the founders of the kibbutzim inherited their parents' rights over the land on which the kibbutzim were built. However, the members of the DOS are much too secular and much too European in their way of thinking to gain any real influence.

Shlomo Ben-Ami — the only non-Ashkenazi to have contended for the Labor Party leadership, and the only one among the contenders with clear thoughts on what went wrong in the Israeli society in the last 50 years and what should be done to rectify the situation — is also much too much of a European-style intellectual, to appeal to the public to which Shas appeals, and he himself seems more attracted to foreign affairs and security issues. Amir Peretz — another Laborite, with significant popular appeal, who is today the leader of the "New Histadrut" — is a Moroccan who "made it" politically, but his appeal is not ethnic, even though most of the public that at least theoretically requires Histadrut's protection today, is non-Ashkenazi.

It is thus very difficult to see how one can stop Shas at this juncture, unless a way will be found to stop the flow of vast sums of public funds to cover the cost of its institutions and activities. Without money a movement like Shas cannot thrive, and like its Ashkenazi counterparts, it is incapable of earning this money by the sweat of its members' brow. It is simply not an economically viable movement. However, something must also be done to rectify the very real basis for the disgruntlement and feelings of discrimination harbored by the population to which Shas so successfully appeals. If the State of Israel can come up with some real answers on the issue of the Yemenite children, this could constitute a start, at least on the moral level. □

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# THEOCRACY vs DEMOCRACY

By Saadia Gelb

**A** Festival of Judaic Studies took place this June in Upper Galilee at the Kfar Blum Kibbutz Guest House. The festival was sponsored by Roots (*Shorashim*), an association headed by Elazar Shturm, and included 28 events, ranging from lectures, songs, and prayers to seminars led by well-known personalities.

This event generated two surprises. Except for the ultra-Orthodox *haredim*, the participants represented every religious and secular segment of the population. Instead of the expected 800 attendees, over 4,000 showed up. Again and again the small halls proved inadequate and the entire audience had to be transferred to the large auditorium.

The second surprise was the tolerant and up-beat mood, despite the differences in philosophy prevailing among the participants.

**H**ad the millennium arrived? Can the intense friction between religion and freedom be eradicated? A sobering placard signed by the Haredi Community glared in bold letters: "Whosoever hears, both his ears will ring, a mix of rabbis, artists, epicurean professors, consumers of corpses and non-kosher food have arrived to make a festival out of Judaism — all this in the guise of Judaic Studies." That placard did not subdue either the interest or enthusiasm of the crowd nor the glimmer of hope but it emphasized the problem.

To begin with there is the semantic issue of definition. The conflict is not between *religious* and *secular* but a political confrontation between two conceptions of the source of authority: living humanity or the Deity. The controversy is not diversity of conceptions but a power struggle. Politics expresses itself by an

establishment, an organization for enforcement. Theoretically, religion should be devoid of a power structure and should deal only with spiritual values. When religion enters politics, it is potentially a lethal mix. Jewish history provides ample examples of the dangers and consequences. When the priests and lawmakers confronted each other, an accommodation ensued. When the prophets, however, who had no organizational structure, vied with kings and rulers they became "voices who cried in the wilderness". When harmony reigned between rulers and the wise elders (the *Tanaim*) differences were resolved by patience and wisdom as well as the universal acquiescence of the population. After the dispersion, the readjustment to the absence of governmental officialdom unfolded new forms — some of which have persisted to the present.

**J**udaism as a culture, as a religion, as a civilization, as a legal entity, as a philosophy, as a history was from its inception pluralistic. Human differences are inherent in our biological makeup but we vary widely in our attitudes to those differences. The best example of Jewish open-mindedness is the reaction to the momentous clash between the strict, pedantic Shamai and the liberal, human Hillel. Despite the official Halachic ruling in favor of Hillel both views are fully recorded in both Mishna and Gemara and declared legitimate argumentations. The same response prevailed in the endless disputations over the validity of interpretations. The ruling "to lean toward the majority" did not besmirch the minority. All along, there were extremists and zealots, but they were clearly not in the spirit or the common consent of desirable Judaism.

After the Dispersion there was no temporal

power with authority and only spiritual leaders remained for guidance and readjustment to life without a homeland. A remarkable adjustment took place to living in the Galut with unity and diversity prevailing. Pluralism expressed itself in the protective coloration in each country and each area with two main variations, the Ashkenazic and the Sephardic (Yiddish and Ladino). Biblical Hebrew was the unifying link. Each country had its own leadership consisting of scholars, learned elders, professionals, ecclesiastical functionaries, commentators, rabbis, philosophers, scribes. The emphasis was on study, intellectual prowess, wisdom and knowledge even among the wealthy. Disputes and differences were settled by a new class of moderators (*Poskim*, arbiters). A vast literature of questions and answers ensued, the Responsa. Local attitudes were respected and no uniformity was imposed. If there were conflicts, so be it. There being no governmental authority to Jews as a minority, the only available measure of enforcement was public pressure plus two extreme actions: excommunication and withdrawal of burial rights. Appeal to non-Jewish authorities was anathema. In the universal religious atmosphere of the times there was no problem with Jewish theocracy. No one questioned the fact that Jews were a religious minority. All these facts have been amply described and fully documented.

The entire story changed in the wake of the American and French Revolutions. Those revolutions not only affected politics but transformed thinking about mankind. It was impossible not to apply the new idea to Jews. Individual human rights as legal factors were mind-boggling concepts. The immediate expression of East European Jewry was the rise of Hasidism. The minutiae of religious observance were less important than the soul and intentions. There was no need for mediators between man and God. Each Jew could appeal directly and communicate with the Master of the Universe (a privilege allowed by Halacha but considered second-rate).

Another effect was the proliferation of false Messiahs. If every human being possessed the right to act on his own behalf, why should one wait for redemption and the return to the homeland until God in his wisdom and in his own time would send the Messiah? The process can be hastened by human initiative. The false

Messiah surfaced and for all the damage, they were the precursors of Zionism.

By the mid-19th century and after, the ferment jelled into active modern movements: Lovers of Zion, Hasidic dynasties, associations, rabbinic trends, cultural organizations, political parties. In more than a full century of traumas, confrontations, political actions and the Holocaust, 1997 presents a dilemma of theocracy versus democracy in both the State of Israel and the Jewish World in East and West. Zionism was conceived in the new world based on ancient memories. The renewed State was announced as the *State of the Jews* whereas for many it is the *Jewish State* and there is the rub. The definition of "Jewish" involves the plethora of concepts, emotional commitments, philosophical approaches, religious devotion, and lifelong practices.

Since a decision could not be delayed at the founding of Israel in 1948, a practical *modus vivendi* was accepted by the active leadership. The word "God" in the Declaration of Independence was substituted by the word "Rock". The political lifestyle was defined as democratic but retained the *status quo* of the religious practices extant in 1948. From then on there was not a day without confrontation; a tug of war between forces.

Three major errors were committed by the political founding fathers, including Ben-Gurion: continuing the institution of the Chief Rabbinate; allowing the newly established parliament, the Knesset, to deal with religious issues; exempting Yeshiva students from military or national service without any numerical restrictions.

The Chief Rabbinate was a relic from the British Colonial administration who followed the Turkish sympathy for Muslim practice. There was no precedent in Jewish history for a *chief* Rabbi. Ben-Gurion, however, thought that by having the head of the religious establishment as a function of government and under its budgetary control it would be a wise move. The same reasoning applied to the exemption granted to Yeshiva students. That governmental exemption was an assist to training of future ecclesiastic functionaries to supplant the thousands murdered by Hitler. As to religious laws, that was the result of the conditional structure of the new government. Ben-Gurion wanted all Zionist factions represented

(except the Communists and Revisionists) and the Religious Zionist leaders were liberal, understanding, cultured personalities. When they wanted the Sabbath declared as the day of rest, there was no objection. The mistake was to add to that traditional desire the paragraph of State enforcement. Subsequently, when the precedent of religious laws had been established, the religious non-Zionist parties were able to add ever-increasing restrictive laws.

There was another factor to the error of religious legislation. The Labor Zionist political parties who had major influences at the founding included in its ranks an atheist component. Marx, who defined religion as an opiate, had many adherents. Ben-Gurion and other labor leaders wanted to avoid a religious battle. In any case, they were tolerant. They had overwhelming power which allowed for a generous concession. Unfortunately, the religious scene changed during the years and the understanding Zionists were gradually supplanted by hard-line conservatives. Fundamentalist sects influenced the liberals. Orthodoxy turned into ultra-orthodoxy. Anti-Zionist religious parties won representation in the Knesset. A clever brainwashing campaign achieved the definition of "religious" as "strict orthodox". Everyone else was dubbed "secular" without recognition of fine variations. The hard-line Lithuanian Rabbis set the tone and took on the Hasidic sects, the North African Olim, the Yeshivot, the old Mizrahi advocates, the archeologists, academia and all other opponents. Naturally, they were far from achieving supremacy, but they set the rules for the clash. The political encounter, under the guise of ideological differences, is in full force.

## Why?

The simplest answer is that all monopolies fight for survival and expansion. The fundamentalist band has no police power and must resort to the governmental Zionist apparatus, as much as Zionism is disliked. If politics is the required tool and serving as the balance of power in the society's makeup, there must be no barriers for achieving the goal by the democratic rule. Thus far that technique, astutely implemented, has been successful.

There is much at stake. A monopoly provides perks, status, power, honors, self-esteem and dynasties. There is no doubt that in the high command there are also honest believers in the cause alongside the sophisticated manipulators. How many is unknown. There are no research data statistics although there is a plethora of gossip and *pashkevills* (a favorite anonymous public leaflet in the fundamentalist community). An example of a genuine devoted servant to the Jewish people is Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz who is distant from the clique. A reverse example is Rabbi Avraham Shapiro who while an MK served as official representative of his party. He brilliantly manipulated in the parliamentary corridors to receive vast sums from the public treasury while amassing a respectable personal fortune. I heard no disclaimer or dissociation from any of his colleagues for his despicable behavior. I will not proceed with naming names for I'm neither qualified nor authorized to pass character judgement. Let the acts speak for themselves.

A political power struggle has its own rules. Initially one must establish that there can be no middle ground or weasel words. "You are either on my side or my adversary". You are either "religious" which means obedient to authorities or you are "secular" which means devoid of true content. "Empty vessel" is the usual designation. We are the sole interpreters of God's will and our deciphering of the Halacha is the exclusive truth. We furthermore know God's intentions and we know who will be punished and who will be rewarded (that argument is particularly impressive with children). It is our duty to correct errant behavior. That cannot be falsely construed as missionary for every Jew is responsible for another. Thus a return to the fold (*Hozer b'tshuva*) is a valid activity. George Orwell language is legitimate when "Jewish unity" means blind obedience lest the differences lead to cleavage.

Competitors are to be unabashedly maligned. Reform Jews are active assimilationists. Conservative Jews are deficient in their understanding. Modern orthodox are only halfway on the road to the true path. Secular Israel consists of half a million drug addicts and numerous idolators. So-called "intellectuals" are time-wasters lost in the modern chaotic confusion. Archeologists are upsetting ancient groves and disturbing the heritage of the ages.

Kibbutzim are “rabbit fressers” and should be plowed under (a statement by Asher Zukerman, editor of *Kol Hashavua*, one of the *Haredi* publications, on July 7, 1997, entitled “To Dis-mantle the Kibbutzim”).

*Haredi* misbehavior is recorded in the Israeli press almost daily and is noticed seriously only when something outrageous surfaces. When a rabbi seriously declared that a tragic collision of a busload of children with a train was the result of the imperfect lettering on the mezzuzas, the country was in shock. When during the festival of Shavuot in June 1997 feces were thrown at female prayers at the Western Wall, there was an outcry. Otherwise overturned and burned garbage containers, stones thrown at vehicles on Shabbat and particularly on Yom Kippur (even at ambulances), physical punishment by modesty patrols, linking Kashrut certificates to Shabat business behavior, boycotts against construction at previous cemetery locations without special provisions for the escape channels of the departed souls, prohibition of female singers (even in choirs) at public appearances and so on and on — all this is barely noticed albeit distasteful and annoying. The official excuse that those are manifestations of a tiny minority is no longer acceptable.

The turning point arrived when the orthodox community sponsored the law whose implication is the disenfranchizing the legitimacy of Judaic trends (streams). Now there is no retreat from deciding whether Jewry is pluralistic or there is only one valid variety — the ultra-orthodox course. The Jews in Israel have managed to bypass the issue. Some are sentimental and tolerant. Some are angry but docile. Some are frustrated. Some are indifferent. Many are unaware of the implications for the future. Some bravely present an opposition factor. A small minority is preparing for active resistance under the slogan: “*Stop the Haredim*”. Politicians are frightened. Theocracy versus Democracy is a problem on the scale of security, economics, development.

The solution?

Since the real and legitimate fear of the Haredim is the threat of modernism, Israel should permit them ample space for life according to their lights. Simultaneously, they must

understand that we are a democracy which has means to protect itself. Politics must be totally devoid of laws about religious thought and practice. Traditional Judaism is pluralistic and should remain so. There is no need for the artificial creation of a *chief* religious officer. Let every *kehilla* elect its own spiritual leader. Let the Sabbath be a day of rest, recreation and joy — not a pale copy of the East European enclosure.

The conflicts should be resolved by non-stop discussion without threats or force.

Unity does not mean uniformity. Life in Israel can and will be beautiful. □

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## STATE OF ISRAEL IS BORN!

*Arab Planes Bomb Tel Aviv; One Shot Down*

(Palestine Post, Sunday May 16, 1948)

As seen by Max Alper

**W**ho shot it down? You may ask.

"I shot it down," says Max Alper, a Labor Zionist veteran in Los Angeles.

Alper, a GI Technion student in 1947, was in Hagana in that December and January, '48. Eretz Israel had exploded with Arab violence after the UN voted partition; all hands were needed to defend the vulnerable towns and villages, keep roads open, and prepare for an onslaught of Arab armies.

In February, 1948, Alper volunteered his aircraft mechanic skills (U.S. Air Force, WWII) and was posted to Sdeh-Dov, a small airfield north of Tel Aviv, the only air facility under Hagana control. The British had vacated the Tel Aviv area but kept the big military bases, with formidable forces of men and planes.

Sdeh-Dov, with its handful of small aircraft, served many vital functions: reconnaissance, communication, and supply of medicine, ammo, and intelligence to places that were otherwise cut off. Sometimes, we'd taxi a special doctor, a commander, or Ben-Gurion himself, to Jerusalem, when it was unreachable.

Most dramatic, most dangerous to men and machines, was combat using these unsuitable airplanes in daring and ingenious ways for actual fighting.

**M**y job in all this, was to "keep 'em flying". We were a few experienced mechanics, plus a number of young Hagana trainees who were "learning-by-doing" under our supervision. The hours were long, facilities primitive, the work hard and demanding, but morale and resolution were high, bolstered by our responsibility to the pilots, and to the *yishuv* in that time of bitter and uncertain struggle.

Came May 14, '48. My shift was from 4PM till 4PM the next day. I heard much of the proclamation of Israel's birth on the way to Sdeh-Dov, through open windows along the way, as I rode north through the city, and it seemed I wasn't riding a bike but flying.

**I**came down to Earth on reaching the air field. There was work to be done: we maintained and repaired till well after midnight, did needed paper work, and as was customary, had our slab of black bread, jam and tea, and snatched a couple of hours sleep, till before dawn, when we would retrieve the dispersed planes from the ends of the field and prepare them for the day's flights.

That morning, Shabbat, May 15, we were at the margin of the field, dawn showing in the east, when we heard powerful engines. There, flying low out of the rising sun came two Spitfires with Egyptian markings. Each released a bomb, as if in slow motion. There were two tremendous detonations. One blew a huge hole in the concrete wall of the only hangar at the field. We later found it had caused a great deal of dust and rubble but did remarkably little real damage. The other bomb was a different story.

It was a direct hit on a *tzrif* (cabin) in which several of the field "garrison" were asleep. They must have been killed instantly, and the *tzrif* was at once an inferno of flame and exploding bullets from within, the sole cache of arms at the field.

We saw all this from afar, but had no time to react. The planes banked steeply and returned to strafe the airfield. At my order, and example, my crew dove for cover in the dunes along the airstrip, while the enemy made several passes, machine gunning our planes on the ground. They damaged about half of our aircraft, but

fortunately not beyond repair, and none were set afire.

Their ammo spent, the "Spits" flew off, leaving us to assess the damage and to take action. The *tzrif* could not be approached and its occupants were beyond help. Pilots were arriving at the field, and as we determined which planes were flyable and which could be patched, they were flown away to other locations. Fire crews had come to quell the flaming *tzrif* and an ambulance to take the charred bodies.

Suddenly a truck drove up, loaded with crates. The driver called out, "*Heiveinu neshek!*" (We have brought arms.)

We quickly opened the crates, finding pistols, rifles, one machine gun and appropriate ammunition. As the ranking person I apportioned the arms, taking charge of the machine gun myself. A rapid inquiry showed that only I had ever had any training at all to use one (one day in the U.S. Air Force). I chose a trainee to assist me, and we cleaned off the shipping grease. The weapons had just been unloaded at Tel Aviv port.

We carried the gun, two crates and belts of ammunition out to the dunes beyond the airstrip, set the gun on its tripod up on the crates so that we could fire upward. I showed my helper how to feed the ammo-belt, I fired a few test rounds and we waited, but not long.

There were sirens and the sound of bombs from Tel Aviv, and here came two Spitfires at about five hundred feet, one about a half mile to the east, and one coming straight at us.

I started firing, in accord with my barely remembered lessons of so long ago. "Lead the target" (fire ahead of it), "fire bursts" (not continuously). As the plane sped by overhead I turned to follow it, still firing, and saw it trailing smoke as it disappeared over the dunes to the north. We soon learned that the pilot had crash-landed in Herzliya, been captured, and been brought to Tel Aviv within an hour. I, Max Alper, a ground crew mechanic, had shot down the first Arab warplane to be knocked out of the sky in Israel's War of Independence.

But I gave it little thought at that time. The momentous events of those days, grief and shock at the sudden deaths of our fellows in the *tzrif*, and the trials of the weeks ahead, crowded out all thoughts of personal achievement or triumph, let alone recognition.

The machine gun was taken from Sdeh-Dov

that evening to a fighting front where it was badly needed. The next day, crews came to Sdeh-Dov and built authentic sand-bagged gun emplacements, armed with very convincing looking anti-aircraft guns. Made of wood.

The Egyptians never attacked Sdeh-Dov again. □

#### A BIT OF HUMOR

The following incident is typical of the exasperating, confusing and often humorous experiences I have had since immigrating to Israel two and a half years ago.

"I don't understand Israel!" I exclaimed. "Everything is more expensive. Wages are low. Yet, the standard of living is high. How is it possible?"

"Patience," said my Israeli friend. "You're new here. Wait 5 years."

"Then, I'll understand?" I asked.

"No, you'll stop asking questions," she replied.

\* \* \*

Much is written about Israel. However, headlines about bombings and the pictures of riots do not communicate the everyday absurdity of Israeli life. For example:

"Why do you use M-16s?" I asked the soldier.

"America gave them to us," he answered.

"They're great weapons."

"They're lousy weapons," I contradicted.

"They jam up all the time."

"That's why they're great weapons," he explained. "We have orders not to fire."

*Submitted by Dr. William Finn*

### Reflections on "Bibi"

Netanyahu reminds me of what the science fiction author Ray Bradbury once related in an academic lecture, about how he himself was spooked by one of his stories in which an automatic communication center suddenly gains self-generated autonomy and launches the world into a Kafkaesque apocalypse. Bibi is a self-inflated product of a very sophisticated communitocracy. He is a buffoon who started rather successfully as a mixture of Julius Caesar and Antonius. But this stage is hurriedly playing itself out, and soon he'll enter the next phase — Prime Hamlet, to end up, at last, as King Lear. He will probably enjoy himself to the last; but what about the price to pay — us all?

*Froike Shapiro z"l*

*Tel Aviv April 1997*

*(Several months before his death)*

# Drought

## The Curse and the Blessing

By William Finn

*"In Israel, in order to be a realist, you must believe in miracles."*

DAVID BEN-GURION

I am an agnostic. The belief in the existence or nonexistence of God strikes me as absurd. Yet, there is something about living in Israel that instills a mystical view.

Israel's birth, and her continued existence are so improbable that I habitually find myself speculating about Divine intervention. Many Israelis have told me how they have seen Israel saved from disaster — through amazing, almost supernatural incidents.

Now I, too, have a miracle story to tell about Israel.

In the autumn of 1996, I sat down to talk politics with Dov. Dov knew a lot about the Israeli government. He had held civil service positions in the Foreign Ministry and in the Prime Minister's offices. He had just returned from a briefing by Israel's Defense Minister, Yitzhak Mordechai. There, Dov had conferred with his old government buddies.

"War with Syria this winter," announced Dov, "that's what they're saying."

Inwardly, I groaned. Not him too! For months, Israel has been nursing a bad case of war jitters. Native Israelis, in particular, were convinced that war was imminent. It wasn't just a cold rational analysis of the situation that made them fear war. It was more like a feeling, an intuition. Israelis knew war was coming the same way a farmer knows it's going to rain or a cop can tell a witness is lying. It's an instinct born of experience.

I had tried not to think too much about the predicted war. I had talked with my wife about what we would do. We checked our kibbutz's emergency plans. We renewed our gas masks.

I had a difficult time taking the war fears seriously. After all, Israel still has a kick-ass army. Syria would get stomped badly.

"I can't believe Syria would be stupid enough to start a war," I said to Dov.

"Nothing stupid about it," he replied. Dov outlined the scenario that was circulating in Israeli military and intelligence circles. The Syrians believed that they would never get the Golan back through negotiations. A short "little" war would change the political situation. Attack the Golan in overwhelming force. Nip off about 10 to 20 kilometers. Declare peace, and count on America to pressure Israel to agree to the truce, which would in effect cede the land.

According to Israeli intelligence, the Syrians believed that a "six-hour" war would break the political stalemate. The Syrians called it the "1973" option, in the belief that Arab victories in that conflict eventually led to Camp David agreements.

"The Syrians might remember that they *lost* the 1973 war," I said. Dov laughed and so did I.

"From what I hear from my contacts, as soon as it rains for two weeks, they'll attack," Dov asserted. "The Syrians figure that the Israeli military's greatest assets are its mobility and its airforce. Both would be hampered by rain."

"But that's ridiculous!" I objected.

"So?" replied Dov.

"Oh, that's right, I forgot. This is the Middle East."

It looked about me. It was a bright winter's day, full of light and clear azure skies. Days, dry and beautiful, had been the rule this season. The Kibbutz's crops were in danger of failing. The agricultural minister had been threatening water rationing. In a rare show of national unity, everyone had been praying or hoping for rain.

"Well," I speculated, "maybe that's why we have a drought. God is protecting us against Syrian attack."

Dov and I smiled at my stupid little joke, and went our separate ways. In the weeks that followed I took walks in the fields, and tried to spend as much time in the dry outdoors as possible. I stopped feeling guilty about enjoying the sunny winter. After all, drought is preferable to war.

On my walks, I thought about Dov's prediction. I speculated about how the prolonged negotiations on Hebron would affect the possibility of war.

Mubarak of Egypt and Hussein of Jordan were very much involved in the Hebron deal. A Hebron accord, supported by Egypt and Jordan, would derail Syrian war plans. Syria has never attacked Israel unless it was part of a coalition.

I had a revelation. The drought would end the day the accord was reached. God would no longer need to protect us from Syrian attack by withholding rain. I don't want to imply God would reward Israel for the Hebron deal. I've always despised that sort of "God is with us" politics. Nor am I prone to mystical thinking.

What I did was form a scientific hypothesis. Along with the rest of the world, I waited for word of a Hebron agreement, but I had the motivation of a scientific observer.

The negotiations seemed as endless as the drought. Water wasn't the only thing in short supply. Good intentions, good will, and patience were also drying up. The mirage of the Hebron agreement hung tantalizingly out of reach for 7 months.

Finally Israeli television broadcast the sight of an unctuous Arafat standing next to a bleary-eyed Netanyahu. They announced that they had initialed the accord in the wee hours of that morning.

Would it rain now?

The accord wasn't completed yet, at least not in my eyes. No question that the Knesset would approve it. With a lot of snickering, smirking, and overtly hostile "I-told-you-sos", Labor would approve a peace agreement crafted by their archenemy Netanyahu. But Bibi's Cabinet was a different story. Already 7 of 18 members of the Cabinet had come out against the agreement. Sharansky and the Minister of Internal Security were expressing doubts. A defeat in the Cabinet was not out of the question.

So it didn't rain, at least not that day. But the heavens were glorious! Our crystal clear skies were invaded by what an old-timer from my native Arizona called "miracle weather". Floating mountains of clouds, colored neon pinks and iridescent blues, framed rays of golden sunlight streaming down to the dazzled earth. In one small patch of the sky, I counted 6 different hues of pink.

If you're lucky, in Arizona, "miracle weather" will last an hour or two. On the day of the Hebron announcement, it lasted from morning to evening.

The next day, the Cabinet approved the Hebron deal. That day it rained. And rained. And rained some more. The office where I worked suffered a minor flood. My newly cleaned car had its own indoor mud puddle. The deputy director of Israel's most important source of water, Lake Kinneret, announced that there was enough water in the lake for the coming year. Some might dismiss this sequence of events as synchronicity. But for me, my experiment was a success. As predicted, rain came the day of the Hebron deal.

War, like drought, is still a possibility. However, I find the results of my experiment reassuring. It reminded me that the universe is bigger than we are. What may seem disastrous — like a drought or a foolish political leader — may actually be part of a bigger process whose results are unknowable. No matter what we do, and maybe even in spite of ourselves, peace may fall upon us like rain. □

# THE JEWISH BUND AND THE BOLSHEVIKS

*By Harold Ticktin*

**T**he total collapse of Communism in 1991, exactly 143 years after the Communist Manifesto asserted its inevitable victory, has left intellectuals and historians bewildered about how the monster was able to rear its head at all, given the sorry history it belched at every critical juncture. In retrospect, we wonder, how could something that bad have ever been viewed so favorably? How did the evil genie of Bolshevism escape from the socialist bottle to produce the radical evil represented by the Soviet Communist Party from 1917 to 1991?

There is a glib response to these questions which falls easily from the lips of Eastern Europeans and Russians so recently manacled to the Bolshevik tyranny: The Jews did it. For many Eastern Europeans under the Soviet heel after 1944 the image of the Jewish Commissar will never die. And for restive Russians, it is often enough to say "Kaganovich did it" — the one Jew who remained in Stalin's entourage.

Obviously, that form of anti-semitism is still the Socialism of Fools. It is the Protocol of the Elders of Zion painted red. Yet were these benighted Jew haters to look dispassionately at the record, they would indeed find that there was a definite connection between the organized Jewish labor movement in Czarist Russia and the birth of the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Party. In fact, had it not been for the Jewish General Worker's Union of Poland and Lithuania (*Bund*), it is clear that the Bolsheviks would never have taken that first step toward power. It might well have been smothered at birth had the *Bund* not acted out of Jewish self-interest and in accord with the kind of democratic principle which is only now emerging in Russia. It is an interesting and instructive story, to relate how the *Bund*, the organ of the Jewish laboring

population, unwittingly played midwife to birthing Lenin's Bolsheviks [Russian for majority] into power though they never represented an actual majority either as a Party or a government.

**T**he first organized labor group in Russia was, in fact, the *Bund*, founded in precisely the same year the first Zionist Congress was convened by Herzl in Basel, Switzerland — 1897. The *Bund*, unquestionably the best organized labor union in Russia prior to the Bolshevik revolution, was the creation of one of the most overlooked proletarian groups of the 19th century — the Jews of Russia and Poland. When overtures to Russian peasants and workers were repulsed, Jewish workers looked inward and formed the *Bund*, one year before Russian Marxists founded what would ultimately become the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, though the latter did not really become a viable organization until 1903 when the Jewish *Bund* role would prove so decisive.

Just like their counterpart, the Zionists, *Bundists* sought auto-emancipation, to free Jews from the crushing burden of Czarist tyranny and the grinding wage poverty in which well over 50% of Eastern Jewry found itself. The struggle resembled the embryonic A.F. of L. in America — unvarnished trade unionism. The *Bund* was far more authentically working class than any of the left wing movements of the time, most of which were composed of intellectuals [many of them assimilated, Russified Jews] and few real workers. Had matters gone differently, the *Bund* could have served as a role model for Russian workers. That possibility evaporated when the *Bund* refused to abandon its specific Jewish proletarian character and unwittingly produced the Bolsheviks.

Interestingly the tangled history that led to the climactic Congress of Russian Marxists in July 1903 revolved around that most modern of disputes — control of a means of communication — in this case, an underground newspaper, *Iskra* [the spark]. Because of the efficiency of Czarist repression, Russian radicals were, in effect, political moles obliged to work underground with little hope of participatory politics as in the West. The popular press of the era characterized the stereotypical underground Russian radical as a cloaked bomb thrower who issued illegal pamphlets. In large part the stereotype was correct.

From 1898 on, there were embryonic attempts to unite the various Russian factions which ranged from pure Marxists to economically oriented groups akin to the *Bund*. A first attempt in 1898 in Minsk was aborted by police spies. The *Bund*, along with representatives from the major cities, did succeed in issuing a manifesto for a nationwide Party, but when eight of the nine delegates not already dispersed by the all knowing *Ochrana* [the Czarist secret police] were picked up by the end of the conference, the whole idea was socked. It was in response to this setback that Lenin and two of his closest allies left Russia for Europe to found, as they duly stated to the authorities, a newspaper in Europe. Glad to have three of the stickiest revolutionaries out of their hair, the authorities did what bureaucrats often do: shifted the problem elsewhere, sending them on their way.

*Iskra* was to be the vehicle for unity under the guidance of the very weighty Georgi Plekhanov, long out of his country, but a symbol for all Revolutionaries by virtue of his hallowed status as Russia's first Marxist. Plekhanov, like his protege Lenin, with whom he would ultimately split, was at war on more fronts with his erstwhile allies than he was with the Czarist enemy. Splits were the very stuff of radical life. Abe Lincoln may have split rails, but Lenin and Plekhanov split hairs as Solzhenitsin shows in his novel *Lenin in Zurich*. Both were quarreling with a host of alternate theories to Orthodox Marxism: Liberals, Economists, Revisionists, Populists, and more.

**T**he *Bund* loomed large in this spectrum of ideological struggle. As the only truly functioning organization of the Russian Left, it

represented thousands of Jewish workers in critically important cities [outside of Moscow and St. Petersburg, which were forbidden to Jews] throughout Southern Russia and Poland; cities now marked by the Jewish absence. In a country which was then largely rural, the *Bund*, as an organ of the tiny but crucial urban proletariat in largely Jewish cities, was an integral building block in an emerging revolutionary movement.

*Iskra* was conceived as the ideal vehicle by which to reach out from Geneva to all the scattered factions yearning for change in Russia. It was equally clear to the ideologically driven Lenin that control of *Iskra* meant control of the entire movement. Lenin's drive for power over the nascent movement meant, from its inception, the enforcement of a single infallible Party line. Directly in the path of that goal was the Jewish *Bund*, intent on its autonomy, willing to enter coalitions but unwilling to forgo its role as representative of the peculiar situation of the Jewish "nation" within the larger Russian state. It was unthinkable to Lenin that there could be anything but a single national origin or Party representative of the true Marxist faith which only he could define properly. Eighty-eight years ago, the *Bund* hewed to the line of autonomy, a line only now recognized as correct in the USSR (Union of Sovereign Republics) as it is known today.

Lenin, under the ostensible tutelage of his mentor, Plekhanov, organized the paper designed to achieve unity. History knows of few instances where a newspaper's board became the key instrument for revolutionary change. Not even William Randolph Hearst could aspire to such a goal. It was with this specific goal in mind that *Iskra* issued the call for a unity Congress, scheduled for Brussels in the summer of 1903.

**I**n her monumental study of the failed Jewish attempt to rationalize a presence within Russian society by socialist means, *While Messiah Tarried*, the late Nora Levin presented a master portrait of what amounted to Russian Jewish somnambulism. Like sleepwalkers headed for a cliff, all those attempts, whether assimilation, territorialism, unity with the peasants, or *Bundism* itself, failed to solve the problem of Jewish exceptionalism. From a 100 year vantage point, our hearts go out to each failed Congress as if watching an old movie

whose end is inevitable; whose ultimate destination will be Auschwitz, Babi Yar, and the Warsaw Ghetto. The *Bund* looked to the Brussels Congress as a forum where Jews and Russians might begin a great turn toward radical change and a sunny socialist future in Russia. We, the viewers, now know that the bright baby of socialism was to be stillborn and that the Jewish "place" in the contemplated society of the future was exactly as the Zionists contended — nonexistent.

For Lenin and his unitary cabal, the very first order of business in Brussels was to force the *Bund* to give up its autonomy in favor of a centralized Party. "It is necessary to prepare everyone's mind for this" wrote Lenin to a Jewish cohort in Kharkov [another resonant name]. He insisted that if the *Bund* failed to yield, it must be expelled. Though the *Bund* eventually marched on its own feet out of the Congress, the result was precisely as desired by Lenin. In one fateful stroke the *Bund* handed the prize of Russia to the arch splitter. Fourteen years later he would take the helm of state on the basis of exactly the program he espoused on July 30, 1903 when the unity Congress met in the shabbiest of working-class quarters in a district of Brussels, warily eyed by Belgian police and *Ochrana* agents.

Ultimately the Congress was booted out of Brussels and completed its work in the more tolerant environs of London, just as Marx completed *Das Kapital* atop his carbuncles in the British Museum. What was at stake in Brussels was the choice which still lies before the "Russian" nation: autonomous federation versus a centralized autocracy. The issue of *Bund* autonomy was the very first order of business.

**I**t is not useful to do all the convoluted political algebra that rocked the hall during those interminable days and nights of dispute, revolving about a shadowy entity with aspirations to becoming a state, a jest compared with the power and majesty of "All the Russias" ruled by the tyrannical hand of Nicholas II. Suffice to say that control of *Iskra* meant control of the Party because *Iskra* was real and virtually everything else was fantasy. The exception was the *Bund*, intent on continuing the class struggle as good Marxists, but equally intent on retaining control of the "national consciousness" of the Jewish laborers whom it represented, that same consciousness

which would one day create a Jewish state toward which three million Russian Jews now gravitate.

Ludwig Borne once noted that Gentiles often seem caught up in a "magic circle of Jewishness." So it was with the "Jewish" question which opened the Congress as its first and ultimately most important agenda item. The *Bund's* claim as the representative of the Jewish proletariat was specifically rejected, with at least three Russified Jews joining in, not least of all that pivot for so many subsequent Jew haters, Trotsky. In effect Trotsky's vote was anti-Jewish, but that never prevented critics from blaming him as a Jew for the Bolsheviks.

Shortly after repulsing the *Bundist* claim, a further vote was taken which again had at stake centralism vs. autonomy for the Birthing Party. Once more there was a Jewish element. The man who opposed Lenin's centralism was Martov, a Jew who was no friend of *Bundism*, who nevertheless refused Lenin's conception of a Party which, as he put it, "required its members to surrender their minds." The vote was 28 to 22 against Lenin's narrow conception of the Party. While Lenin was tirelessly rounding up delegates, buttonholing, wearing others out, and sleeplessly pleading for his conception, one of those strokes of history that more resemble lightning occurred; the *Bund*, smarting from its failure to square the circle of class versus national interest in the Party, marched out of the hall. The *Bund* represented five votes, all pledged for a federated, decentralized Party [one wonders if Boris Yeltsin knows this history]. The vote against Lenin now stood at only 23 over 22 against his centralized vision, as a result of the *Bund* bolting the Congress on a highly specific Jewish issue. In a quick succession of moves, Lenin made *Iskra* his journal, the only recognized Party organ, driving out *two* more votes belonging to a rival paper and thus handing his faction a "majority" (Bolshevik in Russian) of one vote.

**I**t was that "majority" which became the leading edge of the Party even when the "majority" later became a minority. The retention of the name itself became one of the weapons enabling it to take power in 1917 when it was still a miniscule part of the political scene. Before the Unity Congress ended, Lenin subordinated the entire Party to *Iskra* and there-

after never deviated from his goal of complete power which was completed when, during World War I, the Germans put him on a sealed train to the Finland Station in Petersburg, carrying what has rightly been called the bacillus of Communism.

In his notes, Lenin later commented: "It is incomprehensible to me why the *Bund* left the Congress under such circumstances ... [It] could have put through many things" [quoted in Bertram Wolfe's magisterial *Three Who Made a Revolution*]. In retrospect, every Jew knows why the *Bund* left that Belgian hall, not least of all the grandchild of Trotsky who eventually migrated to Israel to enter a

Yeshiva. Perhaps simple Tevye said it best, at a time very close to the date of that Congress: "Sometimes there is no 'on the other hand'." That is precisely how it was for the *Bund* at that historical moment. As everyone aflame with national passion in Europe now knows [just about everyone], there is no choice between national and class consciousness. The latter, as an organized life principle, is a fantasy. The ultimate irony lies in that first step when Jews attempted to stem the Bolshevik tide and instead facilitated it, not at all in the manner too often alleged. □

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# DAVID PINSKI:

## *Dramatist, Poet and Builder*

(on the 125th anniversary of his birth)

*By David Rosenthal*

**D**avid Pinski (1872 – 1959) was one of the first American-Yiddish writers whom the Jewish youth of Poland came to know. At around the same time (early 1930s), H. Leivich's poem, "Abelard and Heloise," published by *Literarische Bleter*, appeared in Jewish homes along with Pinski's "The Generation of Noah Edon." Pinski's work was published serially in the popular Zionist daily *Heint*.

In my home, when my parents were finished with their newspapers, I began searching through them for articles that were of greater interest to me. I still recall vividly the bundle of newspapers that I collected because I believed that the material they contained was not becoming out of date. Among other publications were *Zew Mlodych* (Youth Call) of Hashomer Hatzair, with articles by Richard Weintraub and Rivkah Gurfein; *W Drodze* (On the Way), with articles by Pinhas Lubianiker (Lavon) and Oser Obarzanski (Lodz), Oser Huldai (one of the founders of Kibbutz Hulda) and clippings of Pinski's "The Generation of Noah Edon." The latter were characterized generally by a reflection on the relationships among parents, grandparents and grandchildren in American Jewish homes.

Several years later, when David Pinski visited Poland with his wife Hodel, he met not only loyal readers but those who held his literary-social path in high esteem. And as a sign of this close and warm relationship, the Poale-Zion named their largest school in Vilna after him.

Where did the roots of his artistic creativity lie? In his Selected Work (two volumes published with the help of the Farband Labor Zionist Order and Machlaka L'Tarbut U'Khin-

uch Poalei Haifa, 1963), David Pinski relates: "One looks for the beginnings of the artist in his parents to see if there was something he had inherited. My father, a Moscow Commissioner of Military Officers' Uniforms and Decorations, was a lover of good music ... Often, on a Sabbath or holiday, he would lead the services, but that happened only in his own dwelling. In our rooms in Moscow stood our own *Sefer Torah*, and on Sabbath and holidays the Jewish tenants of the vicinity held their own services. Aside from that, my father at the lectern sought not only melody but heart, and the congregation praised his abilities as a prayer-leader."

"My mother loved flowers and plants and our apartment in Mohilev on the Dnieper was a veritable greenhouse. In the years before my bar-mitzva I studied a lot of Talmud. I also succeeded in learning Hebrew, Russian and arithmetic." (pp 7-8 in aforementioned book)

In 1888, at the age of 16, Pinski wrote a story in Russian in which the hero, a young Jewish lawyer, falls in love with the daughter of a Russian general, marries her, and converts. After the wedding, however, he begins attending synagogue services and weeps during the prayers. Even in this early story one could see Pinski's inclination to drama.

**I**n 1891, at the age of 19, Pinski decided to go to Vienna to study medicine (although he never pursued the idea). The road to Vienna led through Warsaw, where he met I.L. Peretz, who was already (in Pinski's words) "the rising star in the firmament of Yiddish literature. His 'Monish,' his 'Venus and Shulamith,' his 'Familiar Pictures' and especially his first volume of 'Yiddishe Bibliotek' made him very popular."

Ephraim Auerbach once wrote that gener-

ally the Yiddish reader is in error when he thinks that Peretz was a strong influence on Pinski. The truth is that the much younger Pinski led Peretz onto the path of social thematic (*Goldene Keyt*, 1972). Pinski influenced Peretz to look at Jewish reality not with "romantic eyes" but with passion and artistic protest. This should come as no surprise. The first social story in Yiddish (Auerbach argued) which is rooted in the very soil of Jewishness is Pinski's "On the Job," about a matzo bakery whose workers are young shtetl men and women who labor under difficult conditions. Pinski does not write about them pityingly but with militant outrage.

In the history of Yiddish drama one thinks of the publication of Pinski's "The Family Zvi" as a critical date. Pinski, who wrote this play after the pogroms in Russia, told about this story in the previously cited "Selected Works" (Haifa, 1963): "In 1904, Arkady Kramer, founder and leader of the Bund, visited the United States. We were already friends and I read my new play to him, the first act of which had not been passed by the Russian censor. Kramer immediately took the story from me to publish it by the Bund in Geneva. Early in 1905 the play appeared with a foreword taken from my letter to the publisher."

Immediately after the play appeared, drama groups began organizing to produce it. From Tsarist Russia the movement spread to Galicia and it became a favorite among Jewish students in various universities in Europe. The impression made upon the masses must have been a very strong one and its influence very widespread. It called attention to the various leanings among the people and contributed a great deal to the organization of the Jewish self-defense movement. (Pinski's evaluation)

Zionist youth, too, said Pinski, organized amateur troupes to perform "The Family Zvi." The slogan "if we can't live like *mentshn*, then we must be able to die like *mentshn*" was enunciated by the Zionist Lippman. And did this not become the slogan of the Jewish self-defense? The old *magid* Moshe Zevi paraphrased it this way: "If we cannot live as Jews, then we must be able to die like Jews!" But in this version it became a battle-cry, a battle-cry that was shot through with glowing faith in victory. In his introduction to the drama Pinski says that although people are reading it se-

cretly and performing it in concealed places, hope lives deep — just as the seed lies deep in the ground, but the bread grows mightily out of the earth...

Among the new ideological dramas of David Pinski are "The Story about a Hungry Man," which was published in New York in 1910 by "International Library." Concerning the response to this play, its tone and the newness of its idea, Zalman Schneur wrote: "At that time I had already read a great deal about hunger and pain and a deep impression was left upon me by the sadly famous Knut Hamsun; by Ben Ami's tearfully glowing 'Little Drama;' by Avrom Reisin's 'Nasherke' about a young girl who is punished for munching away a whole onion. It was not hunger itself and its pain that were new. The newness in Pinski's story of hunger was the sharp protest, the resistance of the starving individual against the entire society, the demand (accompanied by the clenched fist) for its share of life..." (*Goldene Keyt*).

Of a similar nature is Pinski's drama "The Mute Messiah." The very idea of placing on the stage a mute person who is a messiah and who wishes to bring salvation to the world, evoked doubt and amazement. Skeptics asked: How can a messiah be mute when his task consists in speaking to people? The idea was that in a redeemer the words are not the main thing; it is the deeds that count (Ephraim Auerbach).

The theme and the ideas these works propounded were in accord with David Pinski's view of literature and his faith in mankind and in the world of tomorrow. For Pinski, literature had a clear and positive role. Its goal was to awaken and develop in the human being the exaltation that lies deep within him. Predominant in literature must be a healthy, humanistic idea. ("Great Friend of Humanity" was the title of Pinski's first story.) This idea (he wrote) demands the liberation of the working-man and deliverance for the Jewish people.

The great value placed on Pinski's dramas is attested to, among other things, by these two facts: When Habimah celebrated its 35th year, it could find no play better suited for this occasion than David Pinski's *Ha-yehudi ha-nitzchi* (The Eternal Jew), a play which emphasizes the eternal Jewish legend of *Moshiakh*, who was born on the day of the destruction of the Temple. During the Zionist Congress in Zurich

(1929), when the Jewish Agency was founded, Hanna Rovina appeared in a program honoring the delegates. Her lamentation for *Moshiakh's* mother at the Wailing Wall (from "The Eternal Jew") shook up the delegates. For the first time she had created the concept of a "national actress" in the Hebrew theater lexicon.

Let us remember, said Aaron Zeitlin when he was awarded the David Pinski prize by the City of Haifa, that Pinski wrote no less than 60 and probably more than 70 dramatic works. And according to Pinski's close friends, in the last year of his life, his dream was to revive the figure of A.D. Gordon.

David Pinski did not seclude himself in the artist's "ivory tower." He himself was part of Jewish reality. This novelist, playwright, literary publicist, political journalist was also a fighter and builder. When Pinhas Rutenberg arrived in America and proposed the idea of a Jewish Congress, his weekly newspaper was not only printed by the Pinski-Mazel Press (Pinski and Jacob Mazel were partners in a print-shop in the Bowery) but Pinski also gave him his full cooperation in the ideological sense.

The editorial staff of the *Yiddisher Kemfer* went through various stages of development. There was a time when it consisted of Ber Borochoy, Joel Entin and David Pinski, but with the passage of time Pinski remained the sole editor (around 1917).

One could see David Pinski not only at meetings with Ben-Gurion and Ben-Zvi

during their stay in the United States, or discussing development programs for "Young Poalei Zion," but also at his daily duties and appointments. Following is a report in the *Yiddisher Kemfer* in the 1930s: "Chaver David Pinski this week was on a lecture tour for the Farband Labor Zionist Order. From Wednesday January 3 to Sunday January 6 he will be in Detroit, where larger meetings have been arranged for the clubs and branches of the Farband and a number of lectures on literary and cultural-social questions. During his present tour Chaver Pinski will also visit Akron, Windsor, Toledo, Hamilton, Chicago and a few other cities." (Cited in *Bleter fun Poalei Zion-Hitachdut*, Tel Aviv, August 1947)

On Peretz's 30th *yortseit* David Pinski wrote the following about him in *Zukunft*: "In his writings, the longer ones and the shorter ones, in his stories and dramas as well as in his essays on public affairs, he gives us the essence of our people, its morals and its ethics, its compassion and its feelings for justice, its respect for human beings and for humanism."

These words reflect Pinski's own essence, his own path as a writer and thinker in Russia, America and the State of Israel. Upon this rich and creative path David Pinski was both the friend of the written word and its guide (he was President of the Farband — Jewish National Workers Alliance — for a number of years beginning in 1933 until his *aliyah* to Haifa in 1950.), and primarily the poet and playwright whom the muse did not deter from being also a fighter and a builder. □

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By Emanuel S. Goldsmith

With the recent publication of a new, updated edition of his impassioned historical retrospective and assessment of a century of Yiddishism, Emanuel S. Goldsmith has provided the Jewish scholar and concerned layman alike with a developmental perspective based on hard data and a vista of the putative benefits of persistence in affirming the future of Jewishness through Yiddish.

First issued in 1976 under the title *Architects of Yiddishism at the Beginning of the 20th Century* and now as *Modern Yiddish Culture, The Story of the Yiddish Language Movement*, Goldsmith's 1997 enhanced edition arrives on the literary scene at a watershed period in Jewish life, when all the certainties and issues that shaped a century of existential expansion from parochialism to westernization are threatened with destabilization, when conspicuous fundamentalism and galloping attrition are ripping apart the weave of Yiddishkeit (Jewishness!) in opposing polarities, away from gravitational centrality, from Peoplehood. In particular, at this *fin-de-siècle* when most of the approximately four to five million Jews, even after the Holocaust, whose natural vernacular was Yiddish have passed into eternity, when the cause of Yiddish and Yiddish culture — once valiantly supported by ideologues, nationalist seers and publicists — has become vested in a narrower cadre of scholars, of sincere but unpolished preservationists and, yes, of nostalgia seekers, this sober, readable, and substantive volume is a more than welcome addition to the Jewish bookshelf.

A fairly brief preamble to *Modern Yiddish Culture* guides the reader through the early history of the Yiddish language and its rootedness in Ashkenaz, through the turmoil of the European Enlightenment, of Haskalah

(wisely glossed as *ration schaft des Judentums*, the trialization and geopolitics, as well as the climate immediately preceding the emergence in 1908. The biographical participation in that land, the architects (of the early yohu Mieses, Yitzhok Ley Zhitlovsky and Nathan presented in sympathetic detail of their Yiddishist role three or four decades of two chapters alone, *The Culture and Yiddishism and Jewish* price of the book.

The Yiddishists, Goldsmith argues, that the Yiddish language, the ghetto and become one of Jewish life, a major faction of Jewry and a promoter of the disintegration and equality and identity. The recent movement of Yiddish (they believe) the survival and growth of Yiddish culture will be a Jewish renaissance and the respect over self-abasement. The entry of the Jewish people into the twentieth century as a people, with a significant contribution could make a contribution.

Professor Goldsmith — Reconstructionist rabbi who teaches at Queens College and is a member of the *Jewish Frontier* — is honest convictions about the possibilities of Yiddish as a language. He would have thought that the Hebrew-vs-Yiddish debate and the issues had long

Instead, the bitterness and obduracy of *shelilat hagolah*, denigration of the Diaspora, linger to this day in Israel and elsewhere, among both literati and well-heeled arbiters of culture, communal leaders, and most certainly in the area of Jewish education.

If the revolting aspects of Borscht Belt humor are fading out, this is due in greater measure to temporal rather than aesthetic causes, while contemporary "Yiddish entertainment" on the level of the lowest common denominator still defies those who invest time, money, and heartache to raise expectations and standards. A random collection of errors in "Yiddish" usage flaunted by singers and entertainers, writers and journalists, rabbis, lecturers and VIPs "who think they know" is enough to make one cringe with embarrassment.

Moreover, Yiddish as a national emblem, Yiddish language and culture, and hothouse Yiddishism have been appropriated into the arsenal of gender politics, fringe-group liberalism, identity crises and Jewish victimhoods. Groups and groupies have adopted Mame-Loshn to do battle with conventional Jewish life, with the synagogue, with rejected parenthood and societal abuse and family norms, real or imagined — all in the name of our cuddly, warm, true Jewish Mother who is folksy, embracing, accepting, in whose bosom both the stumbling and the strident are loved equally. That there is no basis for justification in these claims to possession seems not to matter a whit. This is hardly the rubric for a refutation of some of the bloated nonsense, invariably flawed, mired in ignorance and often destructive which hinders the grounding of sound and proliferative all-Jewish Yiddish.

The fact, for instance, that our grandmothers chanted *Got fun Avrom* at the close of the Sabbath (and let us not forget that in *frum* circles even young women do so today, in Yiddish) does not cast Yiddish onto a trajectory of feminism. There is good reason to attribute the authorship of this prayer to Rabbi Levi Yitshok Berditshever and adequate testimony that he recited it weekly and urged his Hasidim (*i.e.* men) to follow his example.

In a ringing salute to Yiddish, Professor Goldsmith appeals to the modern Jew:

"Today, more than ever, Judaism needs Yiddishism. Now, more than ever, the survival of

the Jewish people requires openness and responsiveness to all Jewish generations and to the totality of our heritage. Once again the stone that the builders rejected must become the chief cornerstone ... Even the secularism or anti-clericalism of Yiddishism, despite its misreading of Jewish history, has a role to play in the present. For modern Jews who tend to see authentic Eastern European Jewry in one-dimensional religious terms, it can serve as a reminder of the complexity of Eastern European Jewish society. Jewish pluralism was already in the making in Eastern Europe in the nineteenth century when new forms of Judaism were aborning. *Teshuvah* or return to Judaism can legitimately take many forms ... Yiddishism must no longer content itself with being a trend. It must become part of the Jewish consciousness of every Jew."

Perhaps Goldsmith's impelling book ought to be included in the required reading list for aspiring students in all aspects of Judaica and communal work and to be billed as recommended reading for incumbents in education and leadership.

At the moment, their unabashed ignorance of the history and momentum of the language which served almost a millennium of Ashkenaz, of its more recent era of literary and national glory, is almost a given. Greater awareness of Yiddish significance for our very future could help eradicate the unwarranted prejudice and animus we bear one another. □

REVIEWED BY CHAVA REICH

## Tashlih

An ocean wasn't big enough to hold my sins,  
but still I came to this Jersey beach,  
schlepping

two stale hoagie rolls and a heavy heart.

After mumbling most of the right words

I cast my bread into the salty waters.

Gulls swooped in on cue, but not redemption.

Could Ezekiel have been wrong?

He argued for symbolism long before Freud,

imagining sins falling from our eyes

like scales, purity rising out of the ocean

more spectacularly than the birth of Greek

gods?

On the edge of the world, I hoped against

hope

he was right, and that God will recombine

these crumbs into the prayers I cannot pray.

— Sanford Pinsker

## A.F.T. Protests Arrest of Palestinian Teachers

Upon learning of the Palestinian Authority's detention of striking teachers in April, the Jewish Labor Committee, of which the Labor Zionist Alliance is an affiliate, requested the assistance of the American Federation of Teachers in this matter. The newly elected AFT President, Sandra Feldman, sent the following letter to Yasir Arafat:

Dear President Arafat:

On behalf of the 940,000 members of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, I am writing to strongly protest the arrest of 25 teachers by the security forces of the Palestinian National Authority on April 21, 1997. These teachers who are leaders of their union were among the 15,000 government school teachers who were on strike to demand improved salaries and working conditions.

It has been reported that these teachers were wrongfully detained and interrogated for their role in the strike and that, in conjunction with the strike, at least 19 teachers were fired from their teaching positions. In addition, we understand that the PNA authorities threatened to arrest every teacher taking part in the strike at the Homeland School, and that a teacher-union meeting had to be canceled as a result of PNA authority closing the meeting place.

These actions clearly violate workers' rights including freedom of association and the right to strike guaranteed under International Labor Organization conventions, numbers 87, 98 and 151. We strongly urge you to ensure that neither PNA police nor security forces interfere in legitimate labor actions of teachers to improve their working conditions. We also urge you to use your authority to guarantee the full rights of Palestinian teachers to associate freely with their colleagues and to organize trade unions as they choose, without fear of being intimidated, arrested, fired or facing other persecution for exercising their rights as workers. □

## NA'AMAT USA

celebrates Israel's  
50<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
by expanding the vital  
Na'amat institutions  
serving the working women,  
new immigrants and  
children of Israel.



*Dina Spector, National President*

## THE LABOR ZIONIST FAMILY OF METROPOLITAN DETROIT

*Extends Warmest wishes for a  
Happy, Healthy & Peaceful 5758*



### LABOR ZIONIST ALLIANCE OF METROPOLITAN DETROIT

*Dena G. Greenberg, President*



### LABOR ZIONIST INSTITUTE

*Helen Naimark, President*



### NA'AMAT USA GREATER DETROIT COUNCIL

*Evelyn Noveck, President*



### HABONIM/DROR

## *In the Movement*

**NATIONAL:** LZA salutes Sidney and Shula Troy of Lakewood, New Jersey, for their generous contribution and fund-raising effort to finance the 1997 Israeli speaker tour featuring Professor Moshe Kerem of Kibbutz Geshar Haziv, Haifa University and the Oranim School of Education.

**MIAMI BEACH:** Shevie Barland and Sarah Kaufman, co-presidents of the Chaim Weizmann Branch of LZA, arranged a significant grant from their Branch to the National LZA as a memorial to Moe Levin, Founder and first President of the Branch. The grant will be used to further Labor Zionist activities and programs to attract new, younger members to the movement.

**ISRAEL BONDS:** The Labor Zionist Division of the State of Israel Bonds in New York, in cooperation with LZA Masada Branch 402, the Holocaust Survivors Organization, will usher in Israel's 50th anniversary of Independence at a gala dinner-dance Saturday, October 25th at Temple Hillel, in Brooklyn. Isaac Pulvermacher, national chairman of the LZA Bonds effort, will recognize 13 distinguished leaders for their ongoing support of Israel and the American Jewish community. For further information about the event call (212) 644-2663x388.

**ISRAEL HISTADRUT FOUNDATION:** Five LaGuardia Community College students have participated this summer in a work - internship program in Israel under the aegis of IHF.

The students — 3 occupational therapy majors, one travel and tourism major and one accounting major — were placed on job assignments to reinforce their educational and career aspirations. The Foundation's gift to each student helps pay for room and board. IHF mobilizes support for social and educational programs in Israel, Israeli health care facilities and other special projects in Israel and the United States.

**CHICAGO:** Phyllis Sutker, past National President of Na'amat USA, will be honored September 21st by the Chicago Labor Zionist family at a festive public gathering in Skokie. Participating in the program will be Yehiel Leket, member of the World Zionist Executive and head of the Rural and Urban Development Department of the Jewish Agency for Israel; LZA President Daniel Mann; and Esther Zackler, former National President of Na'amat USA and past president of Association of Americans and Canadians in Israel.

Phyllis Sutker is a life-long Labor Zionist and a lay leader in world Jewish affairs. She has represented the American Labor Zionist Movement on the Executive of the World Zionist Organization, and attended five World Zionist Congresses. This year she was elected a Lifetime "Honorary Fellow" of the World Zionist Organization. Phyllis holds a master's degree in social service administration from the University of Chicago where she was named to Phi Beta Kappa. □

Congratulations  
and Best Wishes to

### **DINA SPECTOR**

on her election as National  
President of Na'amat USA  
and to

### **SAMUEL NORICH**

on his election as  
General Manager of the  
Forward Association

*Daniel & Elaine Mann*

### **SAM RABINOWITZ Z"l**

- Devoted Chaver
- Dedicated Histadrut worker
- Loyal Labor Zionist

*Irving & Dena Greenberg  
Southfield Michigan*

# The Greater New York Women's Division of State of Israel Bonds

proudly announces that

## Anna Erlich

*LZA Masada Branch 403*

will be honored at its

# 1997 Gala Tribute Luncheon

inaugurating the celebration of  
Israel's 50th Anniversary Year

**Wednesday, September 24, 1997**

New York Hilton and Towers

For reservations, call Stacy Leeman at 212-644-2663, ext. 432  
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