P. NOVICK

JEWISH LIFE

in the

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and the role of the "Morning Freiheit"

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JEWISH LIFE IN THE U.S.A.

AND THE ROLE OF THE MORNING FREIHEIT

By PAUL NOVICK

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Thirty-five Years of the Morning Freiheit

Thirty-five years ago, on April 2, 1922, a significant number of Jewish workers in the United States, led by Moissaye Olgin and Morris Winchevsky, founded a new Yiddish daily—THE FREIHEIT.*

Thirty-five years! More than a third of a century—the 20th century! Is it possible to encompass in a short, or even an extended review, all the important moments of this period all the storms and upheavals, retreats and accomplishments, throughout the world and in America, in general life and in Jewish life, among the workers generally and among the Jewish workers in particular?

Thirty-five years ago a new Yiddish newspaper was born. This institution was, as its first editorial affirmed, a child of a new time that called for new slogans, new demands. In the garment "markets" of New York, Chicago and other cities, the workers raised demands for a new, militant unionism. The Jewish masses were faced with the necessity of building organizations to promote Jewish culture. The slogan current in those post-Woodrow Wilson years was "Back to normalcy." But life did not become "normalized"-at least, not for long. The years of crisis immediately after the first World War were followed by the Coolidge prosperity-then by the crash of 1929. Then came the years of storm and stress, the 30's, the years of mass struggle for unemployment insurance, social security; the years of anti-nazi struggle, the united front and people's front; the years of the Roosevelt "New Deal." Then the second World War, the terrible, bloody, heroic war against fascism-nazism, which was won through the united effort of the United States, the Soviet Union and their allies, at the cost of untold millions of lives, among them six million Jews. Amidst the upheaval of nations and peoples, new socialist states were born, colonies won their independence from imperialism. The United Nations was

The Freiheit was originally an afternoon paper, as were most of the Yiddish newspapers in the 20's. On June 17, 1929 it became a morning paper and the name was changed to Morning Freiheit.

born, and with its help the new state of Israel was established. During these 35 years the world changed drastically. A United States which did not even want to hear of the League or aNtions, during the post-Wilson years, now finds itself, in this age of the Atom and Hydrogen Bomb, in the lead of the so-called Free World, with bases in more than 70 countries on every continent, and military pacts with many countries. The socialist world in 1922 consisted of the young Soviet Union under the leadership of Lenin. Today it encompasses a third of mankind and has grown into a world socialist system. The ferment in the former colonial world continues; the struggle for independence reverberates in Asia and Africa.

A Period of Historic Developments

We live in a period of tremendous, world-embracing, historic developments; a period of change, of transition, of soul-searching. In the socialist world a new era of change was opened by the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in February, 1956. The events in Poland and Hungary were signs of this change. What is, what should be the role of the MORNING FREIHEIT in the unfolding of these events?

In the course of its 35-year existence, the Morning Freiheit has had one aim-to serve the Jewish masses in America and the American people in general, to stimulate their forward movement to a better life. Not a single significant event or trend in Jewish or general life was alien to the Morning Freiheit. It was a witness to great struggles during these 35 years, and often participated in them and made its own contribution. The Morn-ING FREIHEIT was a banner-bearer of the aroused Jewish workers for a new, militant unionism; in the struggles which led to industrial unionism, to the birth of the CIO, to the historic unification of the 16-million-strong trade union movement. The Morning Freiheit was a dynamic force in the upswing of Yiddish culture-beginnig with the establishment of choruses and orchestras, children's schools, workers' clubs, until the founding of the YKUF and the establishment of that splendid organization of the Jewish masses in our country-the Jewish People's Fraternal Order. The Morning Freiheit went along with the masses on the hunger-marches, in the struggles for unemployment insurance and social security, in the fight against anti-Semitism in America, in the anti-nazi struggles, in the struggles against pogroms in Hitler Germany and Pilsudski Poland. It played its part in the Second World War, to safeguard America and to secure the future of the Jewish people. It was the first Yiddish newspaper to raise the slogan that only the UN could solve the Palestine problem, and participated actively in the movement which led to the birth of the State of Israel. In the field of Jewish reconstruction, first in the farm colonization in the Soviet Union—through IKOR, AMBIDJAN, and later, after the war, in Poland, Israel and other countries, the MORNING FREIHEIT fulfilled its modest role.

New Times—New Slogans

It is impossible to enumerate every area in which the Morn-ING FREIHEIT made its contribution. It served the people without stint, it always responded to the needs of the day. It could not, therefore, work under petrified slogans. The slogans of the sos for a united front and people's front were different from those in the 20's, or those immediately following the October Revolution. Likewise, in the war years, when people of various classes worked together, the slogans were different. Yet, the MORNING Freiheit remained faithful throughout to its fundamental position, the position of Olgin and Winchevsky, Debs and Heywood, that in socialism alone was the ultimate solution for all peoples, including the Jews. It holds fast to the progressive traditions of America and the best traditions of the Jewish people. But a people's newspaper like the Morning Freiheit must carry forward slogans which mobilize the masses for a better Today and thereby lay the foundations for a better Tomorrow. If we are to evaluate the work of the Morning Freiheit and its objectives in the present and the immediate future, we need to understand our period in order to determine the slogans that our period demands.

Peace—The Issue of Everybody

We live in a grave movement of history. The struggles in our own country, the events in the Middle East and the role which Washington has now undertaken to play in that area, the unrest in Hungary, all emphasize that peaceful co-existence is the central question of our time. Upon the realization of co-existence depend the outcome of the struggle against reaction, the struggle

against anti-Semitism and racism, for better working conditions, the development of culture, for improving the welfare of the people, as well as the struggle to secure the State of Israel. All these struggles are inextricably bound up with and are stations on the way to end the cold war, to achieve disarmament, to stop hydrogen bomb experiments, in short, the fight for peace and co-existence.

These are the most vital issues for the people, irrespective of political opinion. Success in these struggles requires the evergreater mobilization of the masses, an ever-broader approach to the problems of the people.

Experience proves that the American people, despite political immaturity and the absence of a party of the laboring masses, have more or less understood the nature of the problems which confront them at this moment. Twice in recent years, in 1952 and in 1956, the American people elected Eisenhower on a Republican ticket and at the same time have voted in a Democratic Congress. The majority of the American people hope through Congress to maintain the gains of the New Deal, and through Eisenhower to maintain the peace. Whether this is the correct way to achieve these aims is another question. But the votes went, in large measure, for slogans and for candidates, not for parties. That is why there were so many "split tickets."

These developments, in some respects unprecedented in American history, reveal a certain independence on the part of the voters. They result from the present political situation, the fear of war, as well as the fact that for the first time the trade union movement is unified in an army of over 16 million—a powerful force that is as yet more potential than actual. This independence may force the two major parties, especially the Democratic, to be ever more responsive to the voters, or it may in time drive the voters to seek a new party. The progressive elements can help the American people solve such problems, provided they are closely linked with the people—without giving up their own principles and opinions.

It needs to be recognized that the insignificant number of votes cast in 1956 for the parties which campaigned under the slogans of socialism—about 55,000 out of 62,000,000—does not mean that the traditions of Debs and Heywood have disappeared. It means only, I would say, that today, in a time of the atom bomb, the questions of existence or non-existence have taken first place for

the masses, and the advocates of socialism have, again, as they did in Roosevelt's day and many of them during the war, found it necessary to be with the masses, to influence them, rather than being separate from them.

Together with many followers of socialism, the MORNING FREHEIT is participating in the task of helping to mobilize everbroader sections of the people in the struggle to safeguard America and to secure the well-being of the American people.

At this moment, efforts are being made to warm up the Cold War. By the Eisenhower doctrine American imperialism is seeking to replace British and French imperialism in the Middle East. To some extent, the war danger has grown. Monopoly has taken the offensive and is trying to hold and take over the resources of the former colonial countries. At home, monopoly opposes attempts at maintaining and improving the well-being of the American people. It is necessary to mobolize ever greater numbers of the American people against the monopolies and the war-inciters.

The Morning Freiheit stands firmly in the camp of peace. We emphasize this fact proudly, although we regret that the same is not always true of all Yiddish newspapers. If only for its role in the fight for peace, it is clear how vital the Morning Freiheit is. But many more immediate problems, as we shall see, also heighten the necessity of the paper's existence.

The Fight Against Anti-Semitism

Events that quickly followed the Geneva summit conference, particularly the blows against McCarthyism, showed that the struggle for peace is closely tied to the struggle against reaction. There were, of course, other forces acting, not the least of which was the united labor movement. Progressives also made a contribution toward the fight against McCarthyism. But the strongest influence was Geneva. Thanks to the Geneva spirit a number of people such as Norman Thomas, A. J. Muste and others, including rabbis, ministers, artists and scientists, renewed their opposition to the Smith act and the McCarran Act. In recent months, however, the impetus of Geneva has been weakened and great residues of McCarthyism have remained. The Eastlands and the Walters still rave; the McCarran-Walter Act and the Smith Act are still law.

The American people, especially the Jewish masses, who know

from experience what a bitter enemy reaction is, still face important tasks. Anti-Semitism is still being uncovered in the colleges, in companies which refuse to hire Jews, in the activities of the State Department, in the effects of the McCarren-Walter Law. The Morning Freiheit is constantly on the alert to the fight against anti-Semitism and plays a special role in this fight among the Yiddish newspapers. The Freiheit does not look for anti-Semitism where it does not exist. But it does not close its eyes to all sorts of evils, least of all those which plague the Jewish people. It holds that the Jewish people have, and must have, allies in this fight—allies among the American people generally and among the Negro people in particular. It needs a consistent struggle against America's "Nuremberg Law," the McCarran-Walter act, it fights for the rights and interests of the foreignborn.

The Morning Freiheit itself is an "interested party" in this struggle. It should surprise no one that its writers and workers are persecuted under the "Nuremberg" law. Reaction knows that the Freiheit is—in its modest way—an instrument against it. Large sections of the Jewish masses understand this, too, and they fight therefore, to defend the paper, to defend its writers and staff workers whom reaction seeks to deport or denaturalize.

The Struggle of the Negro Masses and Jewish Leaders

The struggle of the Negro people for full quality is closely tied to the fight against anti-Semitism. But the Morning Freihut is responsive to the struggles in the South against segregation and to all acts of violence against Negroes also because of the tremendous significance which the historic struggles of the Negro people, together with the progressive white elements, have for our country as a whole.

We cannot too often emphasize that reaction in the United State will not be defeated so long as the Dixiecrats and the racists of the Eastland type rule the South. Reaction both in the South, in the Republican Party and in Congress depends on them. The victories of the Negro masses in the South in the struggle against segregation in the schools and public places are helping to break the stranglehold of the Dixiecrats. Montgomery and similar places have become the front lines of the forward march of all Americans! The struggles of the Negroes are an inspiration in

the fight for all civil rights and against racism, including anti-Semitism. The fight of the Negro masses is of historic significance for all America. It is the fight of all decent Americans and the Jewish masses among them.

In the struggles against segregation, Jewish organizations have taken a positive position. Notwithstanding the fact that on many issues in foreign affairs and in American Jewish life itself, most Jewish organizations unfortunately take positions which are far from progressive or even liberal, they play an important positive role on many domestic issues. Even the American Jewish Committee takes positive positions, as it does on the "filibuster" issue in the Senate.

There has been much discussion in recent years about the social "restratification" of American Jews and the consequent shrinking of the Jewish working class. Many have concluded that significant sections of American Jewry would therefore go over to reaction. Unquestionably, on the Cold War and even the rearmament of Western Germany, many Jewish leaders take positions close to those of reaction. But on the Cold War, unfortunately, one also finds leaders who speak in the name of the workers taking similar positions. Yet, on domestic issues, as we said before, the leaders of Jewish organizations often take a progressive stand.

Among the Jewish petty-bourgoisie, and even among certain upper middle class elements there exists some understanding of the danger which reaction, not to speak of fascism represents for the Jewish people. And although Jews in general are not immune to white chauvinism, and certain elements among Southern Jews are found among the segregationists or are "neutral" in the struggle, most Jewish national organizations are taking part in the fight for Negro rights. Especially is this true of the American Jewish Congress, the Hadassah, and to a certain extent the Bnai Brith and Anti-Defamation League. The Jewish Labor Committee, too, which is led by right-wing Social-Democrats, many in the Cold War camp, had in the past few years a creditable record on the question of Negro rights.

But it remains necessary to show the Jewish masses, including the members and leaders of these organizations, the close connections of foreign affairs with domestic, that it is impossible to fight reaction effectively without fighting against the Cold War.

There Is a Jewish Proletariat

When one speaks of the restratification of American Jewry, the impression is sometimes created that all Jews, or almost all, are "prosperous," or even in the class of big business. The fact is that there are almost a million Jewish workers and employees in America, among them significant section of workers in the shops and factories. If one includes the large number of self-employed artisans who labor hard and long for their living, one sees the Jews in the main, as toiling people, many of whom are progressive Americans.

The Morning Freiheit was founded 35 years ago mainly by workers in the shops and factories in stubborn struggles for a "better union." The Jewish working-class, especially in New York, but also in other centers, still forms the basis for the Morning Freiheit. At the same time that the Freiheit concentrates on the role of the Jewish toilers, it also addresses itself to the role of the Jewish middle-class which is anti-fascist and an enemy of reaction. Many lower middle class Jews are permeated with socialist and working class traditions.

The Morning Freiheit was founded by the working people and is today oriented upon them, their interests and their struggles. The declaration issued by the Freiheit on the eve of its founding, committed it to go out among the Jewish workers, in the shops and unions, to clarify their problems and fight together with them for clean, honest, progressive unionism and better conditions. The paper has remained true to this pledge throughout the years. However, the possibilities were not always equally favorable and the paper did not reach the workers in the shops under the same conditions.

Ties With the Workers in the Shops

In the early years these conditions were largely favorable, Needle trades workers, painters, carpenters, bakers, and other proletarians, were fed up with bureaucracy and even gangsterism which then dominated certain unions. The workers welcomed our outcry against betrayal and other evils. The slogans of our paper were widely echoed. Workers streamed into the editorial offices with stories about what was going on in their shops and unions. Many wrote their own stories. Often, leaders of the pro-

gressive groups in the unions participated in "getting out the paper."

This close tie between the Freiheit and the workers in the shops was very helpful in the stormy battles which led to the Joint Action of the cloak and dress makers in 1925 and to the victorious strike of the furriers in 1926. Without the Freiheit the struggles and the achievements would perhaps not have been possible. The gangsterism which had run amuck among the furriers and painters, the shady characters who lorded it over the bakers and shoe-workers were cleaned out. In all these struggles for the workers, the Freiheit did its share, striving always for the unity of workers of all tendencies.

In recent years the contact between the Morning Freiheit and the workers in the shops has unfortunately been weakened. This is largely because the number of Jewish workers in the needle trades and other trades has declined. The majority of the workers in these trades are now proletarians of other nationalities. We should be careful not to fall into errors to which this development could easily lead. In the needle-trades shops, as well as in others, there are many tens of thousands of Jewish workers. Our orientation upon the workers in the shops persists. Moreover, problems have now come to the fore in the needle trades which emphasize the need for the Morning Freiheit and the necessity for broader contact with the workers. The great early historic strikes and struggles in the needle trades won for the workers in these trades some of the highest wages in the country. But today, when the unions in the needle-trades are rich and powerful, conditions in the shops have become worse, and the wages are very far from the highest in American industry. The Morning Freiheit therefore needs to write about the working conditions, wage cutting, determination of piece-rates, etc., and prove this by examples from this or that shop.

But we meet difficulties in gaining the necessary close contact. While the mailed fist is no longer present, there is the terror of red-baiting. Many workers fear that if they reveal what is happening in the shop, they will be victimized. Many rankand-file union leaders who used to write often for our paper, now do so seldom or not at all. At the same time our staff has been cut. Our staff members themselves simply have not the possibility of going into the shops to investigate conditions. This makes it increasingly difficult for the MORNING FREIHEIT to main-

tain contact with the workers in the shops. But we cannot under any circumstances give up this contact. We must take steps to establish and strengthen it. It will therefore be necessary to call a special conference with union leaders and shopworkers to consider and solve this problem.

Socialism, Jewishness and Dimitrov's Warning

It is vital for the Jewish workers to be a part of, and leave their mark on Jewish life in the United States. If some people think that a concern for Jewish problems conflicts with the class struggle, then I would say that this view is primitive and false. Mechanically separating "Jewishness" and the struggle for socialism, or the question which one takes priority are similarly false approaches. Those who argue for this separation do not see, perhaps, how they unwittingly carry over the erroneous theories of certain pioneers of the East Side in New York, who considered the building of Jewish schools or the work for Jewish culture in general, as "chauvinism."

The working class is the backbone of the people. Is it possible that anything of concern to the people should not concern the working class and its progressive sections? Is the fight against anti-Semitism not also its fight? Is the culture of Peretz and Winchevsky, which grew up under the aegis of the labor movement, which was supported by the working masses, not a matter of concern to the worker? And not the worker "too," but him first of all? Or, is he not concerned with the State of Israel—a subject which the people, and rightfully so, is interested in? And what about the progressive traditions of our people—from the Prophets to the socialist pioneers, from the Maccabees to the Ghetto fighters, from the fighters against the sweatshop to the anti-nazis in the 1930s, to the peace-fighters of our own day? Who is a better exponent of these traditions than the worker?

We need to recall Dimitrov's warning in the 'thirties that many militant workers had adopted a false attitude to national traditions and national heroes. They had allowed fascism, he said, to make use of these traditions. One of the "infantile disorders" of the earlier American socialist movement was its negative attitude towards the fathers of our country, to Washington, Tom Paine, Jefferson and Lincoln, and to the flag which embodies American tradition, the flag of the United States. In the Jewish socialist movement this infantile disorder was manifested

More Content in Jewish Life

We must conduct a struggle for a healthy Jewish life here in America.

In recent months we have heard warnings about the dangers threatening Jewish life here. At the World Zionist Congress in Jerusalem, last April Dr. Nahum Goldmann used the word "facade" to describe Jewish life in America. This life has an imposing "front," behind which is barrenness. The Zionists and other elements were aroused by Dr. Goldmann's challenge and began to talk about building Jewish life here. We shall not now embark on the question as to whether it is possible for those who regard life in the U.S. as "Exile" to build upon a solid foundation. But Dr. Goldmann's alarm was justified. We too must raise the alarm among the Jewish workers, and especially among the progressive Jews, about the dangers which threaten the American Jewish community.

Some Zionists have begun to say that the "there"—Israel—must not override or nullify the work here at home. In a certain sense the progressive Jewish elements here also suffer from an orientation on happenings affecting Jews outside our country.

In 1956 the tragedy of Jewish culture in the Soviet Union was laid bare. We will deal with this matter in greater detail later. Not because we think this question is less important—by no means! But if our Jewish life here in America is not to go on declining—a process which will, in a sense, weaken the work we do here for the other side—then we must first of all, every single one of us, basically revise our approach to the work that must be done here, the work of building a progressive Jewish culture, of revivifying the progressive Jewish community.

These tasks are even more pressing now because an increasing number of "theoreticians" maintain that the Jews are only a

religious group and that Jewish identity consists solely in belonging to a synagogue or congregation. These "theoreticians" emerged particularly during the attack of McCarthyism, when reaction greatly damaged cultural life. Intellectuals were persecuted; cultural workers were placed under suspicion; all sorts of obscurantism appeared. This "way of life" was also applied to the Jewish scene.

The Role of Progressive Organizations

Reaction succeeded in destroying the largest organization which progressive Jews in America had built — the Jewish People's Fraternal Order—an organization which had been a significant force in Jewish life in this country. Directly and indirectly, by its example, it helped to nurture Jewish culture and brought its own, sometimes dynamic, tone into the Jewish community. This organization fell victim to the cold war and McCarthyite reaction. A void was created in Jewish life which has not been filled to this day.

It is the opinion of the Morning Freiheit that, in order to keep alive progressive Jewish traditions, to build Jewish culture and to bring significant content into Jewish life generally, the organizations which fulfill these functions must be safeguarded, built and strengthened. The clubs and societies which, by coordinated work, have made a beginning in this direction, must be built and strengthened. In addition to fulfilling their fraternal functions, they should exert an ever-greater influence in the building of Jewish culture—which includes building the progressive Jewish press.

The Morning Freiheit, led by its unforgettable editor, Moissaye Olgin, took an active part, together with others, in building the YKUF (Yiddish Kultur Farband) and Yiddish reading circles. Soon after the birth of the Freiheit the choruses and orchestras were born and flourished under its influence. Through the years the paper helped to build the children's schools, which are the basis for continuity in Jewish life. The Morning Freiheit projects as its vital duty to give utmost help to these and other organizations.

All these organizations are by no means as strong as they should and *could* be. Progressive Jewish elements possess the forces which could prevent the shules, the YKUF, the Jewish Music Alliance, etc., from remaining in the difficult situation in

Jewish Cultural Work in English

We must seek by all means to strengthen our Jewish culture in Yiddish. At the same time it is impermissable to overlook the fact that the overwhelming majority of the Jews in America speak English. This is a fact, no matter how it is interpreted. Among these English-speaking Jews are our children, the new generation. Jewish cultural work in English is extraordinarily important in the struggle for a healthy Jewish life. Others are already extensively working along these lines.

Jewish cultural work in English is, of course, the work of English speaking people. Yet a special responsibility falls upon Yiddish-speaking Jews. They have more experience in cultural work. By cooperation between Yiddish-speaking and English-speaking Jews, cultural traditions will be transmitted in a living manner to the new generation.

With this in mind the MORNING FREIHEIT over a year ago added an English page to its Sunday edition. This was in fact an English column in the FREIHEIT. During the war years we ran a renewal of an old tradition. For years Olgin himself wrote a special Sunday supplement in English. It is possible that our present English section will have to be expanded. This will depend on the way the present English section is used, and how well it is circulated among English-speaking readers.

An important task in the field of Jewish cultural work is to help the progressive journal Jewish Life. It should be pointed out that the very existence of this magazine, endangered many times in recent years, is now in question. Yiddish-speaking progressive Jews, for the reasons we have stated, and indeed, in order that their own children may properly understand Jewish prob-

lems, can be of great help in strengthening this magazine and securing its existence.

The slogan of the Morning Freiheit is: BROADEN THE FRONT OF JEWISH CULTURAL WORK! We must not allow the progressive traditions of our classical writers and thinkers to die. That is why the progressive organizations are so necessary for the Jewish people—to help bring beauty and content into Jewish life. For this reason progressive Jews and their organizations must not be separated and isolated from other sections of the Jewish people.

Striving Toward Unity

Contacts between Jews of various political views need to be broadened in the interest of peace, defeat of German rearmament, institution of peace negotiations between Israel and the Arab nations, the struggle against the McCarran-Walter law, against segregation, etc. We pointed out above that the work of such organizations as the American Jewish Congress, Hadassah, B'nai B'rith, is often of a positive character. Such work deserves to be supported.

This common work among broad sections of the people does not mean, of course, that people of varying tendencies give up their principles or their organizations in the process. Common efforts are possible on the basis of unity on common objectives. At the same time each one respects the other's opinions. Only in this way can the millions of Jews in America be mobilized for a unified fight on the tasks which confront them.

Progressive people do not give up their principles any more than other groups do so when they engage in common actions. But it is the opinion of the MORNING FREIHEIT that adherence to principle does not mean sectarianism, a phenomenon which existed in the past among progressives, and which still exists here and there. Sectarianism occurs when we raise slogans which are not on the order of the day, or when we display a totally negative attitude toward other people because their principles and beliefs do not agree with ours. Such attitudes destroy the possibilities of establishing ties for united actions.

The fight of the Morning Freiheit for a secular Jewish life in America and for progressive Jewish culture does not mean a fight against religion, or against religious people merely because of their beliefs. Nor does it mean that the Morning Frei-

HEIT, because of its position toward Israel, or because of its opposition to Zionism, should lead a fight against Zionists in matters concerning war and peace, for instance, merely because of their Zionist beliefs. It is possible and necessary, as experience has shown, to carry on united actions with religious Jews or with Zionit Jews for common objectives.

Distinctions Between Zionists and Zionists

On the question of Zionism, the Morning Freiheit, as well as progressives generally, have made serious errors. We reject the libel, of course, that in 1929 the Morning Freiheit supported the anti-Jewish pogroms in Palestine. This charge is reminiscent of the accusations against the Jews in Pilsudski Poland—that they used to carry out pogroms against themselves! But it is true that sectarian slogans were advanced; that correct positions were ineptly formulated. It is also true that at that time and for a long time afterward, a struggle was waged against Zionists in general, without distinguishing between one Zionist faction and another, between one Zionist leader and another. The same stamp was affixed to everything: "Imperialism."

There is no question that from the very beginning of the Zionist movement, many spokesmen of political Zionism cooperated with imperialism or let themselves be used by it. But it is just as certain that the masses of followers of the Zionist movement in old Russia and Pilsudski Poland saw in Zionism a way out of their woeful lot and thought it held a solution for the Jewish people. Events have shown that our position—that Zionism cannot solve the problems of the Jewish people—was and remains correct. That is another question. But the feelings and convictions of the masses of Zionist followers, even if they are not well-founded, must, we believe, be taken into consideration. These were masses of people who were being oppressed!

There are leaders in the American Zionist movement who prefer to work with American imperialism and who keep repeating that Israel is an "outpost of the West" upon which Washington can rely. This position, which is dangerous for the Jewish people as well as for the State of Israel itself, must be combatted. But the masses who follow the Zionist movement are less concerned with political Zionism as such than they are with helping Israel. Many of them are not involved in the building of Jewish culture in this country, either in English or Yiddish or Hebrew, and seek in

Zionism an expression of Jewishness, of identification with the Jewish people. The Morning Freiheit disagrees with identification in these terms but that is hardly a reason for being antagonistic to these Jewish masses.

In the Zionist movement there are reactionary and chauvinist tendencies, such as the Herut movement, and there are more or less progressive tendencies opposed to the Cold War, even if this opposition is not completely consistent or is passive, like the Hashomer Hatzair. One can believe, as does the Morning Freiheit, that the complete orientation of these groups on Israel deters the building of a healthy Jewish life in America. One can show, as does the Morning Freiheit, that Zionism and the existence of the State of Israel do not solve the problems of the Jews in the lands in which they live. Actually, American Zionists have largely recognized this fact and have given up "Kibbutz Galuyot"—("ingathering of the exiles"). But all this belongs in the sphere of differences of opinion, of conflicting principles, and should not express itself in antagonism.

That it is possible and necessary to work together not only with the masses of Zionists, but with their leaders, was proved in the case of Andre Blumel, leader of the French Zionists, and by the role he played in the fight against German rearmament. Blumel was chairman of the World Jewish Conference Against German Rearmament in Paris in 1955. Sidney Silverman, British Labor MP, also took part in this movement. Here in America, the voice of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver is often heard on the side of peace and co-existence, even if not always in a consistent manner. The position of Dr. Nahum Goldmann for neutralism and peace between Israel and her neighbors is often one which should be supportee by non-Zionists.

The Morning Freiheit has learned from these experiences and believes that the approach which regards Zionism as some kind of international conspiracy or world menace is incorrect and destructive. To repeat, it is necessary to distinguish between one Zionist tendency and another, between leaders and followers and also between one leader and another. It should be kept in mind that together with a number of religious leaders, many Zionist leaders in America have played a positive role in the fight for civil rights, against segregation, against the McCarran-Walter Law, and even against the Smith and McCarran Acts.

Position on the State of Israel

In our report to the Morning Freiheit convention five years ago, it was stated: "Our attitude toward the State of Israel has not changed since the period when we fought for a just solution in the UN and sought to mobilize help for Israel in the war which was forced upon her." Today we re-emphasize this: Our position has not changed at all! The Morning Freiheit has repeatedly stated that Israel was born thanks to the upsurge of the anti-imperialist forces after the second World War, thanks to agreement between the U.S. and the Soviet Union (although Washington immediately tried to backtrack) and to the help from the socialist countries. The State of Israel was born in a progressive struggle of the people of Palestine with the help of forward-looking people everywhere. It was an important historic event in general and for the Jews in particular. We unceasingly proclaim that "Israel is here to stay!" It must be made clear to all the great powers, and especially to the Arab states, that Israel is here and will stay!

The Morning Freihert holds with the words of the greatest Jew of our time, Albert Einstein, who only three months before his death, in January 1955, set forth the following two points. (Letter to Mapam leader, Zvi Lurie.): 1) Israel must be neutral between East and West. 2) Discrimination against the Arab minority in Israel must cease. We believe that as long as this advice is not followed there can be no solution for Israel. The march into Egypt has worsened the situation of Israel politically and economically. Israel's outlook for peace with her neighbors has deteriorated as a result of the disastrous policy that "Israel is an outpost of the West" in Asia. For this is the "West" which is so hated in Asia and Africa because of the terrible legacy it has left after generations of "civilized" rule; the "West" which seeks only to exploit the wealth of the former colonial lands, leaving the people in privation and disease.

The Morning Freiheit was the only Yiddish newspaper in the U.S. which opposed the march of the Israeli army into Egypt, whether or not there was a previous understanding with British and French imperialism. Events have shown that the Morning Freiheit was correct in not allowing itself to be swept up by the hysteria and that its position was in the real interests of Israel. Events have shown, too, that we were correct in urging

Israel to follow a neutral policy, and that our struggle for this policy was in the interests of Israel. We support the position of Dr. Nahum Goldmann, President of the World Zionist Organization, who said in September 1956 in an interview with Drew Pearson that the Israel government must follow an active peace policy and that Israel must become a part of a Middle East Federation.

We must recognize that the vital interests of Israel are not served by the cold war, as they are not for other countries, including our own. The Baghdad Pact was set up as a cold war measure. Iraq, Turkey and other countries received shipments of arms from the West. This impelled the socialist countries to reach agreements, including arms agreements, with Egypt and Syria. An end to the Cold War would mean the end also to military pacts and arms shipments to the Middle East. The influences striving to inflame hatreds between the Arab states and Israel would be at least partially, if not completely, nullified.

The Morning Freiheit fights against the Cold War. We support the slogan that NO ARMS AT ALL should be sent to the Middle East—not from the West and not from the East.

The Upsurge in Asia and Africa

The Arab countries and a host of other countries—Algiers, Tunis, Morocco, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Cyprus—are engaged in a historic struggle which began immediately after World War II. This movement has already brought independence to India, Indonesia, Burma and other countries and led to bringing the State of Israel itself into existence. It is a fight for national liberation, for independence, for an end to colonialism and feudalism. It does not necessarily follow that here and there the struggle is not distorted, that the struggle is everywhere led by the right people—whether it be the Sultan of Morocco, the Archbishop of Cyprus or Nasser in Egypt. Nor does it mean, either, that we must not oppose a pernicious act or a pernicious statement of this or that leader. But neither does it mean that if a leader is not to our liking, we should take the side of the colonial oppressors or the oil trusts.

THE MORNING FREIHEIT condemned the action of the Nasser government againts the Egyptian Jews. We have not ceased to demand that our government urge the UN to take steps to stop the attacks of the Fedayeen. When a short time ago the Sultan

of Morocco tried to void the agreements concerning the emigration of Moroccan Jews to Israel, we protested. Moreover, the governments in Africa and Asia are far from being consistently progressive or liberal. In some of the countries, strikes are persecuted, Communists and peace fighters generally are jailed. Because of the backwardness in which these lands were kept by British and French imperialism, they do not have a significant proletariat or even a developed bourgeoisie. We are dealing here with a liberation movement in countries which are only beginning to emerge from feudalism. In this movement there are various elements, some of whom are politically backward. But there can be no doubt that the peoples of Asia and Africa are living through a historically progressive process. Without understanding of this process one cannot offer any solution for Israel. Whoever speaks in the name of Israel, or for the interests of Israel and takes his stand with the colonial oppressors or the oil trusts and their servants in Washington and against the peoples of Asia and Africa, thereby undermines the vital interests of Israel.

Solidarity of Israel with the struggle against colonialism, a neutral Israeli foreign policy between East and West while seeking help from both—this will help create an atmosphere conducive to peace between Israel and her neighbors. Eliminating discrimination against the Arabs inside Israel—and these discriminations are at the root of the terrible tragedy in the village of Kasim on October 29, 1956— will also help create such an atmosphere. A readiness to negotiate the problem of the Arab refugees and other issues will also help to create the basis for peace, without which Israel cannot exist.

The Morning Freiheit tries to mobilize the masses for the above program. It calls upon organizations and individuals to ask President Eisenhower to instruct our delegates at the UN to work for peace negotiations between Israel and her neighbors.

Aid to Israel

The Morning Freiheit favors aid to the State of Israel both by governments and by the people directly. This assisatnce, however, must not be a medium for interference in the affairs of Israel politically or economically. This applies to the aid given by United Jewish Appeal and other bodies, which is being used to influence the political course of the Israel government and directly to help parties and groups in Israel, while progressive

elements are discriminated against. Experience has shown that aid used for purposes of dictating to or influencing Israel politically and economically is no help at all.

Projects of a humanitarian nature dererve to be supported. This is the case with Hadassah, whose medical services in Israel are given without discrimination. This is also true of that modest project, the Reuben Brainin Clinic, to be set up in one of the poorest sections of Jaffa on the basis of complete equality for the children of all the inhabitants. This is also the case with the Emma Lazarus Federation's assistance to the children's homes of the Tarbut Laam.

Israel's situation following the march into Egypt has been severely worsened economically, politically and with respect to peaceful relations with her neighbors. Living conditions of the masses are becoming more and more difficult. Attempts are being made to freeze wages while the cost of living rises. In addition to the usual taxes, which up to now have hit the workers hardest, new taxes, direct and indirect, have recently been instituted. Unemployment is rising and the worker over 50 is suffering particularly because he can not register with the unemployment bureaus. Politically, the invasion has brought Israel isolation in the international arena. The attacks of the fedayeen have not ceased. Israel needs the help of the Jewish masses in various ways. Most important now is to get Washnigton to place before the UN the questions of putting a stop to the attacks of the fedayeen, of Israeli's access to the Suez Canal and of peace negotiations.

We express our solidarity with the people of Israel! We should not forget that in the past the masses in Israel have given a relatively verye high number of signatures to peace petitions. Representatives of various Israel parties participated in the World Conference against German rearmament and in other united actions. We have faith that the Israeli people will find a solution to its difficult problems and will find a path to security and real independence in a world at peace. The fight of the American people, of all of us, for peace and an end to the Cold War, is one of the most effective ways of helping the State of Israel.

Problems of the Jewish People

We are interested in the people of the State of Israel because we are interested in all peoples and in their strivings for peaceful development. But Israel is of especial concern to us because we believe that its establishment was and is an event of great historic significance in general and for the Jewish people in particular. We are interested in the State of Israel because we are concerned about the Jewish people everywhere.

The Morning Freihert always was and still is opposed to the nationalism which seeks to separate the Jewish masses from the masses of other peoples. Hence its principled opposition to Zionism, which tries to keep the attention of the Jewish people riveted almost exclusively on Israel. We oppose the chauvinism of the Revisionists, the Herut and others. We are internationalists and see in brotherhood between Jews and other peoples, between American Jews and the American masses, a stage on the way to a solution to Jewish questions. But Jewish questions concern us wherever they arise. We are against nationalism, but we are for the national interests of the Jewish people.

The Jews are a nation only in Israel, because "nation" is a political-economic-territorial concept. American Jews are a part of the American nation. They are organically connected with its political and economic development, the problems and the struggles of America. The Jews helped to build America, they made sacrifices for it in the Revolutionary War, in the Civil War, in all its conflicts. America is the country of all who live in it, including the Jews. But American Jews are interested in the life of Jews in other countries because there is a JEWISH PEOPLE throughout the world—not a nation, but a people—which is related through history and tradition (especially the progressive, freedom-striving traditions), culture (Yiddish and Hebrew), and by the persecutions and discriminations which Jews have undergone. Religion is a factor among many Jews.

We are truly interested in the life of Jews-in Israel, in Egypt, in Tunis, in France, in Argentina, in Canada, in all the capitalist countries, as well as in the Soviet Union, Poland, and other socialist countries. When Jews are deprived of their political or cultural right we react to it keenly as fighters for justice for all peoples. But as part of the Jewish People, we feel it especially as Jews. We are directly interested in the development of Jewish culture, especially progressive culture, among the Jewish masses everywhere, and every achievement in this field is also our achievement.

THE MORNING FREIHEIT supports the activities of Jews of

various lands in the fight against anti-Semitism, or against the rearmament of Germany, or in the meetings to honor the memory of the Ghetto heroes and the six million Jews who perished in the war. We support the united efforts of Jews throughout the world to build Jewish culture. We are in favor of continuous cultural exchange between Jews of various countries.

Yiddish Culture in the Soviet Union

When regular contact was established during the last war between Jews of the Soviet Union and Jews in the U.S., we regarded this as an important development in Jewish life and in the building of progressive Jewish culture. American-Yiddish culture, especially literature, was born here and "grew up" here. But its classical writers made their voices heard in pre-czarist Russia and were in turn influenced by the classicists of Russian literature. The upswing of Yiddish literature in Russia both before and after the Soviet revolution further influenced and encouraged cultural workers here. The ties established between Soviet and American Jewish cultural figures were of great significance for the development of progressive Yiddish culture in America and were also an important element in the cultural relationships between the peoples of America and the Soviet Union.

Jewish cultural workers in America, especially the progressives, were hard hit when in November 1948 the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee and its publication EINIGKEIT were suddenly shut down. At first the affair seemed to be a misunderstanding, then a puzzle and later, as the years passed, an inexplicable nightmare. All attempts by organizations or individuals to find out what had happened were unsuccessful. Ominous reports kept coming from sources which had been notorious for their fabrications. On the other hand, reports kept cropping up that this or that Yiddish writer had been "seen" somewhere, but the nightmare was not dispelled. What really happened we did not know.

At the end of December 1955 a notice appeared in the LIT-ERATURNAYA GAZETA about a commission charged with publishing the "heritage" of Peretz Markish. This was the first shocking intimation that the great poet was gone. But the complete picture was not yet clear. When the FOLKS-SHTIME on April 4, 1956 published the article, "Our Pain and our Consolation," the terrible truth was revealed. It should be said here that the action of the FOLKS-SHTIME was of historical importance. It would certainly have been better if the truth, no matter how terrible, had been revealed openly and clearly by the Soviet Union. THE FOLKS-SHTIME FULFILLED AN IMPORTANT FUNCTION.

Hundreds of Millions in the Same Situation

This article was published after the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party had disclosed before the entire world something of which friends in the Soviet Union, hundreds of millions of them, had had no idea. Friends of Jewish culture, who in their justifiable anguish accused this or that person that he "knew and kept quiet," should bear this in mind. We are here not only dealing with unjust accusations or defense of anybody. It is a qusetion of correctly understanding the truth of the mater.

It is true, after all, that hundreds of millions of people, including party leaders and some of the most important people in the intellectual world had had no idea of the crimes committed against various Soviet peoples, including the Russian people, who lost party leaders, Marxist theoreticians, army commanders, writers and thinkers. Jewish progressive leaders in America were no less ignorant of the facts than the progressive leaders of other countries.

Now that we know why these things happened and that the 20th Congress has led to a new approach by friends of the Soviet Union toward questions dealing with Socialist countries, one feels a painful regret at having kept quiet, and not following up inquiries that were made with openly expressed questions and requests. In the light of what we know now, the silence really does look criminal. But we must conclude that it is, to put it mildly, not realistic to decide now, in the light of the present situation and our present knowledge, how we should have acted then, when the situation was different and when we simply could not believe that such crimes were possible. This is not an excuse, but rather, it seems to me, a realistic view. In the previous situation, not only leaders and active workers tried not to play into the hands of the warmongers, the people themselves who were friends of the Soviet Union and fighters for peace looked with suspicion upon those who in any way added fuel to the Cold War.

The Discussion in the Morning Freiheit

How did the Morning Freiheit react when the Folks-shtime article appeared? There were some who, though shaken by the facts and aware that a great tragedy had occurred, did not wish to see the Cold War specialists and the professional enemies of the Soviet Union make capital out of it. They maintained that defense of the socialist countries was still their main task and expression of their pain too openly would place these countries under a shadow. When the Morning Freiheit printed its first editorial about Khrushchev's secret speech and pointed out that he had failed to mention the complete destruction of Yiddish culture, advocates of that position disagreed with us. They looked askance, too, at our publication of Khrushchev's speech on the period of Stalin's "one-man rule."

Others maintained that only an outcry of anguish and condemnation should be heard. They did not understand that what had happened was a cataclysm which had hit many peoples and which the 20th Congress was trying to remedy. They refused to acknowledge that the Cold War had much to do with the crimes. They refused to see that these were really crimes against socialism. They gave vent to their pain and refused to be consoled by the consolation which FOLKS-SHTIME itself had pointed out.

The Khrushchev speech and the article in the Folks-shtime were a terrible shock—especially to progressives. Their aftermath bore the danger of demoralization, of despair. Capitulation to these feelings would have hampered the struggle for remedial action and would have undermined Jewish cultural work here. The perpetual enemies of peace saw their opportunity and opened a new offensive. How did the MORNING FREIHEIT act in this critical situation?

It voiced the anguish of the Jewish masses—the anguish of all of us. It criticized, made demands. It gave a full picture of what had happened, printed many articles by its own writers and those of other countries, which explained what had happened and what could be expected. The building of Yiddish culture in Poland and Rumania were held up as living proof that not socialism was guilty of these crimes against the Jewish people, but that these were crimes against socialism; that what had happened was a distortion of the sound Soviet solution of the national and the Jewish question.

It was for this—rehabilitation and reconstruction—that the MORNING FREIHEIT began a struggle which, while it does not stifle the pain, does not overlook the consolation. We remembered the words of the *Folks-shtime* that the 20th Congress "gave the signal to root out the cult of the individual, the source of the distortion," and that the Congress thereby "justified the profound hope and conviction of the masses in the victory of Leninist truth."

Did we follow the correct approach to this historically tragic and historically important matter? I think we did.

Attitude Toward the Soviet Union

The 20th Congress and subsequent developments, the revelations about the Yiddish writers and the crimes against the various Soviet peoples taught us on the MORNING FREIHEIT, together with masses of people here and in other countries, a historic lesson. In certain respects a new attitude was taken toward the Soviet Union and the Socialist countries. In what does this consist?

Before this question can be answered, one must first make clear, it seems to me, whence came our continual positive attitude to those countries? First, from the fact that we are followers of socialism. It was only natural that countries which were building socialism should have our sympathy and that we should constantly seek to acquaint our readers with this great forward development in the history of mankind. This was the special role of the MORNING FREIHEIT during all this time.

Second, our positive attitude to the socialist countries stemmed from our recognition—together with hundreds of millions of others—that they were a force for peace. In the sense that we were—and are—convinced that socialism does not need to seize markets and has no interest in profits in armaments, we do not doubt that these countries represent a great force for peace.

It can be firmly stated, we believe, that in both these respects

worker's and people's paper. The only ones who control it are the representatives of the broad Jewish masses. We are indebted to no one but them. Our approach to political and other questions is formulated at meetings of the editorial staff every morning by a free, comradely exchange of opinions. The editorial staff is the body which formulates the approach to various problems as they are presented in the Morning Freiheit.

In the discussion around the 20th Congress and Yiddish culture in the Soviet Union many varying opinions were expressed, often quite sharply. It is the intention of the Morning Freiheit to continue to publish such letters and articles whether the editors agree with them or not. As long as they help to clarify important problems they have a place in our paper. The Morn-ING FREIHEIT is not limited to expressing the views of any single

group-it is the paper of the broad Jewish masses.

At our convention five years ago we further stated: "The MORNING FREIHEIT seeks to unite Jews of various beliefs in struggles for peace and justice, to build a healthy Jewish life, to build Jewish culture in accord with our classical traditions, and to guarantee a democratic, independent and prosperous State of Israel." We shall remain true to these pledges. We shall carry on our work so as to further every opportunity for an ever-broader

unity in the interests of the people.

The manner in which the MORNING FREIHEIT tries to clarify the questions of the day has certainly established this approach. This does not mean that we make no mistakes or that occasionally an improper tone will not slip in. It is also true, unfortunately, that indigenous American Jewish problems are not adequately treated in our paper. We do not sufficiently acquaint our readers with the activities of the American Jewish Congress, Hadassah, B'nai B'rith and other important American Jewish organizations. We have already mentioned the weakening of our ties with the workers in the shops and unions. There is not enough reportage in the Morning Freiheit. Certain American problems are not properly handled. But, it seems to me that, generally speaking, the Morning Freiheit has followed a line of policy which can best serve the broad Jewish masses.

There was the assignment of our Managing Editor, I. Freed, to cover the World Jewish Conference against German Rearmament, held in Paris in 1955. The Morning Freiheit was the only Yiddish newspaper that reported this important conference. At the end of 1955 our colleague N. Buchwald (now deceased) travelled to Western Europe and Israel and sent us back reports of great interest to the Jewish public. In May 1956 our manager, Chaim Suler, visited the Soviet Union and was the first representative of an American newspaper since the tragic events of 1948 to meet with Soviet Yiddish writers

Writers from the Soviet Union, Poland, Israel, France

The Morning Freiheit is not only the sole Yiddish newspaper in the U.S. which fights constructively for the rebuilding of Yiddish culture in the Soviet Union, but it is also the only one which brings the creative work of living Jewish writers in the Soviet Union to the Jewish reading public, just as it was the only one in previous years to print the work of those writers who were executed. Since last summer we printed articles, poems, and stories by S. Halkin, Noah Luria, A. Gonter, I. Platner, Z. Vendroff, M. Belenki, I. Serebreni, H. Polianker, A. Cahan, S. Rabinowich, I. Katznelson and others. And although we are far from satisfied with developments thus far, it is important that the Jewish public should know about them. Such events as the revival of Yiddish concerts in Moscow, the many Sholem Aleichem celebrations, cultural activity in Biro-Bidjan, are not only interesting in themselves, but represent important beginnings. The Morning Freiheit is also the only Yiddish newspaper in the U.S. which informs its readers about Jewish cultural life in Poland and Rumania.

New Readers—a Vital Question

Of course, the daily work of the paper falls upon the editorial staff. As you know, the work has become more difficult. The staff has been cut to the bone. We suffered a severe and bitter loss in the death of our colleague N. Buchwald. The editorial staff is overburdened with assignments. Nevertheless, by and large, it is fulfilling its duties.

We must remember, however, that the Morning Freiheit is published not because there is a group of zealots who carry out their duties under severe difficulties. It is published because large masses of Jews in America are determined to maintain it. It is not published by caprice, but because the people need it. That is why great masses of Jews of the United States have during the thirty five years of its existence contributed literally millions of dollars to keep it going. That is why they are now engaged in a mass campaign for a fund of \$200.000 to cover the deficit of the MORNING FREIHEIT for the year of 1957.

For thirty five years it has been like that—and for thirty five years the Morning Freiheit has sought to fulfill the role it has been assigned to by the Jewish masses when it was established, on April 2, 1922. For thirty five years it has been in the service of the people.

We are now engaged in another campaign which to a certain degree is even more important than the financial drive. That is the campaign for readers—readers of the paper every day and readers of the week-end edition and its English page.

Without steady contact with the Morning Freiheit it is impossible for progressive Jews to be adequately acquainted with Jewish problems!

The 35th anniversary of the Morning Freiheit is an occasion for joyful celebration and for serious reflection. Let everything be done to strengthen the Morning Freiheit in the struggle for peace, in the fight against anti-Semitism and all forms of racism, in the building of a healthy Jewish community in this country and in the struggle for the preservation of the State of Israel.

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