

Congress

119
BULLETIN



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Comment: Post Passover Message

Jews the world over early this month have again enacted the miracle of generations of commemoration of the first supper. The first supper of liberation, the first supper as a free community, the first supper of the first of the emerging nations. Passover is essentially a festival of gratitude. This mixture of religious observance and folk worship has sustained Jews in their direst of all times. These generalizations may mean little to the Jews in Arab Lands who are under a form of bondage and from which they have, indeed, not been liberated. The matzoth to these tragic remnants is truly the bread of affliction and the maror truly the bitter herbs evoking not only the plight of Jews 33 centuries ago but their own fate. It is neither a holiday of gratitude nor freedom. We are enjoined by the Seder liturgy of the Pesach Haggada that every man must see himself as though he himself has departed from Egypt. How ironic to the Syrian, Iraqi and Egyptian Jews of today to perpetuate this cycle, when there is not true symbolism for him but an actuality that he is in physical bondage himself. For the large Jewish population of the USSR, these Jews who retain some stubborn resistance to complete assimilation, they are in a cultural and intellectual bondage. In Poland the recitation by those still anxious to retain their national identity, the four-fold cup of wine is not personal deliverance.

But we too in the free Western world have our own chains of special bondage. We see what is going on but feel powerless to effect changes. We view with a sickening feeling the recent events in Iraq and decide to protest. We write letters to the editors and hopefully expect that we help create a public opinion, which public opinion is transmitted through special alchemy into reversing the actions.

But this freedom to act is precious and every action is demonstrable proof of the merits of the society in which we live that we can take certain steps without hindrance or punishment. We celebrate with profound gratitude this festival of freedom.

And all of this brings up the larger question of where the Jewish community really stands on matters of deprivation of human rights.

Religious obligations aside, it is necessarily good for our collective soul to celebrate the feast of freedom and to recall the emergence from bondage. By doing so, are we completing the job? The younger, articulate Jewish world is not satisfied at all. It wants participation and the participation of the community in all matters affecting human rights and their attrition wherever this occurs. On the other hand, the constant movement on all fronts on all matters of justice creates a diffusion of strength and a reputation as a resolution-passing old women do-gooders society. The New Left contains Jews to whom the whole world is (indelicatly simile) their oyster. Some members of the Jewish organizations at colleges are striking their blow for freedom by concentrating on Israel's position in the Mid-East; others believe their fight for freedom lies in fostering protests and demonstrations against the civil war in Nigeria, or the Viet Nam disasters.

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Conference on Yiddish

Delegates from across the country are expected to attend the first National Conference on Yiddish to be held in Canada on May 17-18, 1969 in Montreal, according to Dr. Joseph Kage, chairman of the conference, which is being held under the auspices of Canadian Jewish Congress.

The general theme of the conference is "Our Yiddish Cultural Heritage — Considerations for Communal Action" which will open on Saturday evening, May 17, with Maurice Samuel, renowned Jewish author, as guest speaker. The festive opening will include a reception for guests and delegates sponsored by the Allied Jewish Community Services of Montreal.

The Hon. Jean Noel Tremblay, Quebec Minister of Culture, will speak at the luncheon session on Sunday, May 18, to be held at the Adath Israel Congregation in Montreal.

On Sunday morning, delegates will discuss "Yiddish Heritage as a Means of Communal Cohesion & Strength" and the afternoon session will deal with recommendations received from delegates and methods of implementation.

Recommendations Invited

Dr. Kage called upon all persons, organizations, schools or fraternal groups to submit and express their views on any aspect on the question of Yiddish and Yiddish cultural heritage. Briefs

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National Leadership Meets in Winnipeg



Pictured above: Samuel Bronfman, C.C., honorary president of Canadian Jewish Congress, addressing the National Leadership Conference held in Winnipeg on March 9, 1969. Flanked by (left) Monroe Abbey, Q.C., president of Congress; and (right) Sol Kanee, chairman, Congress, National Executive Committee; and Jacob Lowy, president, United Israel Appeal of Canada, Inc.

Delegates from across Canada gathered in Winnipeg on March 9, 1969, to attend a special National Leadership Conference to work out guidelines for the 1969 Israel Survival Fund.

The agenda for the meeting included: Opening remarks by Samuel Bronfman, C.C., honorary president of Congress; review of 1968 campaign by Jacob Lowy, president, United Israel Appeal of Canada, Inc.; Report on Israel Prime Minister's Conference, as well as Welfare Needs by Saul Hayes, Q.C., executive vice president, Canadian Jewish Congress; messages were delivered by Monroe Abbey, Q.C., Con-

gress president, and Samuel Chait, Q.C., president, Federated Zionist Organization of Canada. Summation was given by Mr. Justice Roy Matas, who together with Sol Kanee, chairman of Congress National Executive Committee, chaired the meeting.

During the course of his remarks Mr. Bronfman expressed his gratification at the "wonderful gathering." He said "It is an excellent sign that such a group of men from Montreal to Vancouver can meet together at such short notice."

Mr. Bronfman reminded the dele-

(Cont'd on page 2)

Refusal of USSR Visas Deplored

Mr. Monroe Abbey, Q.C., president of Congress issued a statement expressing regret that almost all of the Jewish religious leaders, who were invited by the leadership of the Moscow Synagogue to participate in a tribute to Chief Rabbi Yehuda Leib Levin of Moscow on his 75th birthday, could not be present because visas were refused by the Government of the USSR.

Mr. Abbey stated that "This refusal brought home again the lack of communication between the Jews of the Soviet Union and Jews elsewhere and the complete isolation our brethren in the Soviet Union who have no opportunity whatsoever for any collective and communal activity, which is available to other ethnic and religious groups in accordance with the Constitution of the Soviet Union.

"We are deeply worried about this discrimination which is yet another indication of the precarious position in which Soviet Jewry finds itself and we urge the Soviet Union to secure for the Soviet Jewish Community the same rights accorded all other groups such as contact and communication among congregations at home and with religious bodies abroad; the education of rabbis and other religious functionaries, for the production and distribution of religious publications and materials; opening the door to the emigration of those Soviet Jews who wish to be reunited with families living outside the Soviet Union who were separated through the holocaust; providing chan-

nels comparable to those assured other Soviet nationalities through which Soviet Jews may maintain close cultural intellectual and communal ties with Jewish communities in other countries; and enabling Soviet Jews who so desire to lead culturally fulfilled lives as Jewish Soviet citizens by restoring to them the necessary educational and publication facilities in Yiddish and Hebrew, as well as Russian."

Message Sent to Mrs. Meir

March 11, a telegram over the signatures of Monroe Abbey, Q.C., Congress president, and Saul Hayes, Q.C., executive vice president was sent to Mrs. Golda Meir congratulating her on appointment to the office of Prime Minister of Israel. The message read as follows:

"The Officers and National Executive of Canadian Jewish Congress extend to you their heartiest congratulations and good wishes on your appointment as Israel's Chief Executive. The Jewish Community of Canada remembers with affection your numerous visits to our country and is cognizant of your outstanding contributions to the State of Israel and, indeed, to World Jewry. Your diplomatic acumen and voice of moderation will be of inestimable value in guiding Israel through the complex problems which today it confronts. You may be assured of our certain support."

Congress Agenda Reflects Western Region Major Concerns

Canadian Jewish Congress is concerned with the protection of the rights of the citizens of the Jewish faith and equally with the obligations and duties inherent in good citizenship. Although it is primarily devoted to the welfare of the Canadian Jewish community, Congress is also concerned with discrimination and prejudice which affect Canadians irrespective of origin or faith. In addition, Congress has played a pioneer role in the rescue, relief and rehabilitation of the victims of oppression and in reconstituting Jewish life in the aftermath of the Nazi holocaust. In this context, Congress works actively to facilitate the rescue and rehabilitation of Jews in certain Arab states as well as in Eastern Europe.

Some of the problems of major concern confronting Canadian Jewish Congress today are briefly as follows:

Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism

In its submission to the Government on September 5, 1963 Congress praised the undertaking of a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which study was also to take into account the contribution made by other ethnic groups to Canada's cultural development to allow nothing to impair the position, rights and privileges of Canadians of non Anglo-Saxon (Celtic) and French origin and to study, even outside the ambience of the Royal Commission, the necessity of amending the BNA Act under some Bill of Rights to include the inalienable rights of all citizenry as part of the Constitution.

Unhappily, Congress has deemed it necessary to traverse this matter in all subsequent submissions to the Government. The essence of Congress' objection, which is shared by a number of organizations representing Canadians who are non Anglo-Saxon and non French in origin, is that the terms of reference undermine the concept of a society where all citizens are equal, regardless of origin. Congress rejects unequivocally the implications of the proposition "an equal partnership of the founding races." Congress believes that the thrust of the Commission's examination ought to have been to examine the "equal partnership of the language and culture of the founding groups" within the context of our Federal society. Despite our remonstrances and those of other interested groups, the government has taken no steps to clarify the issue or amend the offending phraseology. Indeed the phrase "an equal partnership of the founding races" has become the lingua franca of the proceedings of the Commission where the term enjoys constant and uninhibited use and has persisted as currency outside the framework of the commission. Congress is apprehensive that legislation may flow from the Commission's report based on the imprecise language of its terms of reference, which are unscientific in concept and provocative in terms. The dangers implicit in the terms of reference may well lead to a further step towards national disunity rather than to a Confederation based on equal partnership of language and culture encompassing all the diverse peoples which make up the Canadian mosaic.

Congress continues to seek assurance that the concept of equal partnership between the two founding races will be abandoned for one more in harmony and in spirit with our changing Canadian society.

It must be pointed out that Congress supports the provisions of the official Languages Bill, which is based on the concept of an equal partnership between the languages and cultures of the founding groups, but which in no way diminishes the status of those citizens whose origins are neither French nor Anglo-Saxon.

Immigration

Congress for many years, joined by the Jewish Immigrant Aid Services of Canada, has worked with governmental departments on immigration matters affecting Jews who wish to enter Canada.

Congress has recently made two submissions to the Department of Manpower & Immigration relating to Jewish Communities in Iraq, United Arab Republic & Syria.

In October 1967 new immigration regulations came into effect which removed certain unsatisfactory applications of the Immigration Act. Congress holds a "watching brief" to ensure that appropriate governmental departments continue to pursue existing policy which permits the reunion of families. Joinder of families is a most essential and humane feature of Canadian Immigration procedures.

On February 13, 1969 a joint delegation of Congress and JIAS met in Ottawa with the Hon. Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State of External Affairs, and the Hon. Allan MacEachen, Minister of Manpower & Immigration, to submit a request that Canada admit Jews from Iraq and certain other Arab countries. Subsequently, it was announced that the Cabinet had approved our request that special permits be issued allowing Jews in Iraq to immigrate to Canada and that technical procedures were being worked out between the various governmental departments involved.

Congress has also urged the government to regard Jews living in countries of oppression as refugees, notwithstanding the fact that they are still resident in their countries of origin.

In respect to Jews in Iraq, immigration to Canada is, of course, dependent upon Iraq's response to their request for exit permits. The Canadian Government has been urged to persist in its endeavours to ensure that Iraqi Jews (also Jews of UAR and Syria) are permitted to leave their country and, further, to insist that the countries involved respect the clauses of the Charter of the United Nations regarding mobility of people.

It is, of course, understood that many such persons desiring to enter Canada are unable to be nominated or are unsponsored or have sponsors who may not be able to show settlement arrangements. Congress, in association with JIAS, has advised the Government that it is prepared to give an undertaking for the reception, housing and financial assistance of such refugees. The Government was advised that the services of JIAS and the resources of the Jewish Community will be placed at the disposal of these refugees in order to assist them to find employment and provide occupational adjustment, where necessary.

Congress has also requested that missions from the Department of Immigration be reinstated to Morocco where 60,000 Jews are living — under less onerous conditions perhaps than in most other Muslim countries — many of whom may wish to come to Canada.

The White Paper on Immigration, 1966, recognized that refugees and those living in countries of oppression cannot be subjected to ordinary standards and procedures of admission. Congress hopes that the Government will continue its policy of recognizing the specific and often unique problems facing Jewish people in countries where they are subject to persecution and that the regulations will be so interpreted to permit such persons lawfully to enter Canada.

Legislation to Combat Hate Propaganda

The Special Committee on Hate Propaganda appointed by the late Hon. Guy Favreau as Minister of Justice was

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50th Anniversary Celebrated

The 50th anniversary of the founding of Canadian Jewish Congress in Montreal in 1919 will be celebrated in Winnipeg on Wednesday evening, May 21, at a banquet in the Rosh Pina Synagogue, it has been announced by Abe Steinberg, Chairman of the Western Region, CJC.

The Western Region Executive has decided to plan this banquet in observance of the Congress anniversary to draw attention to the accomplishments of the Jewish community of Western Canada in the past 50 years.

Louis Rosenberg will come to Winnipeg for this occasion to be the guest speaker. Mr. Rosenberg came to Canada in 1915 and spent many years in the West with the Jewish Colonization Association and later in the Winnipeg Office of Congress. He subsequently was appointed Congress National Research Director from which position he recently retired and at a recent meeting of the National Executive of Congress



Sidney G. Sheps



Louis Rosenberg

was named Research Director Emeritus of Congress, to be available for special assignments.

A special program is being planned to honour Western founders and long time leaders of Congress. Arrangements are also being made to honour Jewish pioneers of Western Canada.

Mr. Sidney G. Sheps, has been named chairman of the planning committee for the 50th anniversary banquet and the co-chairman is Mrs. L. (Freeda) Fineman.

Leadership (Cont'd from page 1)

gates of the Leadership Conference of Canadian Jewry which was convened in Montreal on June 4, 1967, and of the tremendous campaign results which were achieved all over Canada that year. However, "he continued, "in 1968 everyone thought that peace would soon come to the Middle East and campaign results for that year were not so successful."

"In 1969," he said, "we are much more aware of the tense situation in the Middle East and of the dangers confronting Israel. The demands on Israel's defence budget are so great that she cannot begin to meet the welfare needs of her people, especially the thousands of new immigrants who are continuing to arrive in the country."

Delegates attending the meeting undertook to approach the emergency campaign in their own communities with a special appeal for maximum giving that would come much closer to the 1967 level.

A number of the speakers at the conference emphasized that it is important to undertake more effective long-term planning and to use a more imaginative approach to obtain help for Israel from every possible source, especially in the area of stimulating economic development and trade. This concept was accepted as something for which planning should be initiated. It was agreed, however, that for 1969, when Israel is still in a crisis situation, Jewish communities throughout Canada should be asked to respond accordingly.

Also present were: Hon. Sydney Spivak, MLA; David Levin, Q.C.; David Kaufman; Murray Rosenberg; Sam Cohen; J. Cohen, Arnold Portigal; M. Nathanson; Ed Vickar; Martin Burney; Maitland Steinkopf, Q.C.; Gabriel Broder; Sydney Morantz; Saul Simkin; Abe Simkin, Q.C.; Aaron Feld (Winnipeg). Alvin Liban; Sol Kolchinsky (Calgary). Jack Goldenberg, Q.C.; Al Krolick (Saskatoon). S. Promislow; David Margolese (Edmonton); D. Ratner (Regina). Jules Loeb; Hy Bessin (Ottawa). Wayne Tanenbaum; Nathan Silver; Stephen Berger; D. Marks (Toronto). Stanley Abbey (Montreal) Dr. Roy Waldman; Sydney Zack (Vancouver).

Comment . . . (Cont'd from page 1)

One thing seems clear that not everything can be done by proxy. Marches to freedom by their very definition require participation. The Jewish Congress will, within its own structure, act as a proxy for the community but individual actions on a wide variety of issues in this generation are required if the Jewish preoccupation with freedom stemming from the divine intervention in the Egypt of Moses and Pharaoh is to be maintained as one of the truly noblest of Judaic traditions. Through the year we must constantly remember that the feast of freedom does not exist for all Jews and it is the individual's responsibility to be concerned that he was once a slave in Egypt and this slavery of mind and spirit, and, in some cases of body, exists and must be extirpated. If this is not his feeling then Passover has too little meaning for the celebrant — but as long as it persists and to encompass all peoples the Jewish meaning in civilization is precise and precious. Arnold Toynbee himself would find no fossilized Syriac elements in this age-old tradition of worshipping freedom and fighting for it.

Leadership Brunch

Prior to the National Leadership Meeting, a special meeting of campaign leadership was held on the same day in Winnipeg to assist the Winnipeg campaign and to help National Leadership in connection with the overall 1969 campaign. Mr. Martin Burney, chairman, 1969 Winnipeg campaign, presided.

Mr. Bronfman was the main speaker. Also present were: Mr. Abbey; Mr. Chait; Mr. Lowy; Mr. Hayes; and Mr. Stanley Abbey, chairman, Allied Jewish Community Services of Montreal Fundraising Committee.

Top Names Meeting

A dinner function was held following the National Leadership meeting for special names givers in Winnipeg, under the chairmanship of Abe Simkin, Q.C.

Mr. Bronfman was the principal speaker and exposed welfare needs in Israel and the Canadian 1969 fundraising program. The Hon. Sydney Spivak, MLA, was also on the program.

Interpretative Meeting with Youth

Mr. Saul Hayes, Q.C., executive vice president of Congress, met with Jewish university students to discuss areas of Congress concern and outline the role students can play in Congress. Mr. J.A. Lyone Heppner, national chairman of the Youth Committee of Congress, and Mr. Michael Kovshoff, chairman, Youth Committee, Congress, Eastern Region were present.

World Jewish Congress

The Inaugural Meeting of the International Affairs Committee of the North American Section of the World Jewish Congress was held in New York on March 13. Dr. Joachim Prinz, chairman of the Governing Council, WJC, presided.

Congress was presented by Mr. Monroe Abbey, Q.C., president, and the executive assistant to the executive vice president.

Human Rights (Nova Scotia)

Congress has received a copy of Bill 1, an act to amend the Statue law relating to Human Rights (Nova Scotia) codifying anti-discrimination legislation in employment, public accommodation, and housing.

Keiller Mackay Committee Report

The Report of the Keiller Mackay Committee on Religious Education in the Public Schools was tabled in the Ontario Legislature on Friday March 14 by the Hon. William Davis, Ontario Minister of Education. The Committee held its first sessions in April 1966 and its report was published just under three years later.

Basically its recommendations are as follows:

— "that the present course of study in religious education... be discontinued, and that its aims as set out in related legislation, programs of study regulations and guide books be abandoned."

— "that in the elementary schools... opening exercises consisting of the National Anthem and a prayer either of universal character... or the Lord's Prayer, be held in the home rooms each morning."

— "that in the secondary schools a similar arrangement apply except that it be held at the beginning of a school assembly but not daily in the classroom. (This means that Bible reading ("Old" and "New Testaments") are to be discontinued as part of opening exercises.)"

— "that a "universal program pervading every curricular and extra-curricular activity in the public school system" be introduced to foster character building. This program is not to be a course of study but an emphasis" carefully planned and administered incidentally throughout the entire school spectrum. It will have as its focus character building, ethics, social attitudes, and moral values and principles."

— "that the acquisition of information about and respect for all religions be recognized as an essential objective of the educational system from Kindergarten to grade 13. This should be achieved by a program of incidental teaching and study, not through a formal syllabus."

— "that a formal course of study on comparative religion be offered as options in grades 11 and 12 of the secondary school to be taught by members of the history department.

— that teachers colleges alter their courses to take into account the proposed changes.

— that credits in university courses in religion be recognized in teachers' qualifications.

The Report's recommendations follow quite closely the pattern of the proposals made in the CJC brief submitted in February 1967 regarding just about every one of the above recommendations. In the case of opening exercises (prayer) where we made no recommendations the Committee's proposals are in the spirit of the substance of the CJC brief. On the dropping of the present course, the informal integration of moral and ethical values of a non-doctrinal nature into the general school program, the avoidance of a course on comparative religion in the junior grades, and the new emphasis in teachers colleges on these matters — on all these the recommendations are in harmony with the views set forth in the CJC brief. The Mackay Committee Report echoes the opinions expressed in the CJC brief on a variety of subjects; the undesirability and impropriety of indoctrinating in a public school setting, the personal and subjective nature of religious doctrine, the divisive nature of the exemption provision, the inordinate proportion of time sometimes spent in Kindergarten on religious songs, games, etc.

Of the 141 briefs mentioned and listed that were presented to the Mackay Committee, the Canadian Jewish Congress brief is the only one directly quoted in the text and footnoted. This was a reference to the disparaging references to other religions in the teachers' guides.

Members of the Mackay Committee were: Hon. J. Keiller Mackay, chairman; Mary Q. Innis, Ph.B.; M. Paul Forestell, Q.C.; Marsh Jeanneret; Hon. Judge Harry Waisberg; John W. Whiteside, Q.C.

Mr. Sydney M. Harris, Q.C., chairman, Congress, Central Region, appeared on CBC news with his comment on the report on behalf of Congress.

Jewish Schoolchildren in Montreal

The number of Jewish children attending the Protestant schools of Greater Montreal increased from 77 in 1877 to a peak of 17,887 in 1962, and a peak of 18,905 in 1963 if Jewish children attending the Protestant schools in Chomedey are included. The number had decreased to 13,849 in 1968 in the Protestant schools of Greater Montreal and to 16,835 in 1968 if Jewish children in Protestant schools in Chomedey are included.

The number of Jewish children attending the high schools of the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal increased from 2,119 in 1924 to a peak of 7,133 in 1962, and had decreased to 6,678 in 1968, and had increased to peak of 7,653 in 1967 if Jewish children attending the Protestant high school in Chomedey are included.

The number of Jewish children attending the elementary schools of the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal decreased from 12,015 in 1924 to a low of 5,778 in 1945, increased again to a peak of 12,085 in 1959, and has fallen again to 7,171 in 1968. If Jewish children attending the Protestant elementary schools in Chomedey are included the new peak was 11,819 in 1963, and the number had decreased to 9,279 in 1968.

The percentage of all Jewish children in the Protestant schools in Greater Montreal enrolled in high schools was 15 percent as compared with 9 percent among non-Jewish children in 1924 and increased to 48.2 percent in 1968 among Jewish children as compared with 37.4 percent among non-Jewish children in the Protestant schools of Greater Montreal.

In 1924 Jewish children formed the majority in 11 of the 66 Protestant Schools in Greater Montreal, and all of these eleven schools were in the old area of Jewish settlement between Hutchison and St. Denis Streets. In 1968 Jewish children formed the majority in nineteen of the Protestant schools in Greater Montreal and Greater St. Martin (Chomedey), of which none were situated within the old area of Jewish settlement-east of Hutchison Street in Montreal, seven were in the newer residential areas of Montreal such as Cote des Neiges, Snowden and Notre Dame de Grace, while four were situated in Cote St. Luc, three in Chomedey, two were in Ville St. Laurent, and one each in Outremont, Hampstead and Montreal West.

The school with the largest number of Jewish children in its enrollment in 1968 was Wagar High School in Cote St. Luc with 1,491 Jewish children in attendance, and the school with the largest percentage of Jewish children in attendance in 1968 was Westminster School in Cote St. Luc with 96.1 percent of its enrollment Jewish.

Czech Refugees Welcomed

Approximately 125 Czech refugees were invited by the Jewish Immigrant Aid Services to a welcoming reception on March 16, 1969 at the Saidye Bronfman Centre, Montreal. Greetings were extended on behalf of Congress by Mr. Nathan Gaisin, chairman, Congress, Eastern Region. Greetings were also extended by Messrs. Lou Orenstein, president, JIAS and Thomas Hecht of the Allied Jewish Community Services of Montreal.

The Pope and the Jews

Jack Winocour

The Swiss guards saluted the three Jews as they passed through the portals of the Vatican not too long ago to see the Pope in his private library. The leader of the group was Nahum Goldmann, who persuaded Konrad Adenauer 15 years ago to enact the massive corpus of West German legislation that made some amends for some of the crimes committed by the Nazis (although it could not restore the lost generations). With Goldmann were Joachim Prinz, the last of the rabbis in Berlin, expelled by Hitler in 1937 and now an American, and Gerhart Riegner, the first man to learn in 1942 of the plans for the 'Final Solution' and who, from his precarious listening post in Geneva, vainly tried to alert and alarm the world.

The encounter with Pope Paul this month was fortuitous but timely. It had been in the wind, but the circumstances were awkward, to say the least, after the Pope's pronouncement on the raid on Beirut, which had infuriated some religious leaders in Israel. The Jews were going on there after a meeting in Rome of the governing council of the World Jewish Congress (Goldmann is its founder-president, Prinz chairman of the council, and Riegner secretary-general) to attend a meeting in Jerusalem, called by Prime Minister Eshkol, at which Jewish leaders from all over the world were to pledge their solidarity with Israel. The gatherings in Rome and Jerusalem had been planned long before the latest flare-up in the Middle East.

When Goldmann emerged from the Vatican after 40 minutes' conversation with the Pope, he was quietly satisfied. For much more important than anything that was said on either side about the Middle East was what the Pope had to say about the Jewish people. The Vatican cannot yet find it politic to recognize the state of Israel, but it has at last recognized that the Jewish people exists, that Jews are more than adherents of a religion, as Riegner, the ideologue of the Jewish side of the dialogue with the Catholic Church, is always careful to stress. 'His Holiness', as the agreed communique stated, 'expressed to Dr. Goldmann his esteem for the Jewish people and also the hope that opportunities would be developed for the cooperation of the Church with the Jewish people as well as with the other peoples in the service of common human causes.'

The new chapter in Catholic-Jewish relations began with Pope John, who gave it inspiration. Its opening pages were written by Cardinal Bea, whom the Jews regard as a saint. Without Bea there would have been no statement by Vatican II on the Jews. It was not all that was hoped for but it was an historic turning point in the relations between two traditions that had always regarded each other as enemies. Once the Church had accepted that the Jewish people had inherited no guilt as the killers of Christ, the door could be cautiously opened. Goldmann's visit to Paul opened it still wider.

The road to understanding between Catholics and Jews is craggy and full of pitfalls. The collective memory of Jewry is long and tends to be unforgiving, but if there are Christian roots to anti-semitism, as one can see in some of the Gospels and the writings of the early Fathers, the Jews know, too, that Pharaoh, Haman and Hitler were not Christians. On the Catholic side there are those who work towards love: the devoted Order of Our Lady of Sion; Prof. C. A. Rijk, the Dutch theologian who heads the Vatican Office for Catholic-Jewish Relations; the Catholic bishops of the United States, who declared a year ago that 'a particular responsibility (lies) upon writers and producers of Passion plays, preachers, catechists and educators, because it is easy to portray Jews even inadvertently, in such a way as to misrepresent or exaggerate their role in the Passion.'

In some Latin American countries, however, little has changed since Vatican II. Where orthodoxy on both sides remains rigid and uncompromising, there is small progress. In the Argentine, for example, a maverick political priest like Fr. Julio Meirvielle can still foment anti-semitism, and his bishop seems powerless to stop him. Paradoxically, as many may think, Spain has shown a new tolerance towards Jews. The first Synagogue since the expulsion in 1942 was consecrated in Madrid a few weeks ago and the expulsion edict itself publicly revoked. All Jews of Sephardic origin are entitled to Spanish nationality, if they wish to claim it. And, whatever one's views about the regime, this right has proved a godsend to many persecuted Jews from Egypt and some of the North African countries. The wheel has come full circle and Christian has replaced Muslim tolerance.

But anti-semitism is too often imbibed at the breast or learned in the school-room or on the playground. A great deal remains to be done in the cleansing of hate, even 'inadvertently' taught, from school text-books and religious primers in countries where the Church still clings to authoritarian ways. Some Jews remain wary, suspecting too close an embrace by the Church and fearing renewed attempts at conversion. The Vatican has gone a considerable way towards dispelling these suspicions, grounded in history and experience, by saying that it respects and acknowledges Jews as they are and want to be.

It is in this light that Goldmann's meeting with the Pope is of some historic significance. Those who wonder whether the Church is really changing may care to look back at an earlier meeting between a leader of world Jewry and a Bishop of Rome. It is just 65 years ago since Theodor Herzl was received by Pius X. The founder of Zionism went away empty-handed and did not return. There is reason to believe that Nahum Goldman will go back to the Vatican.

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BULLETIN



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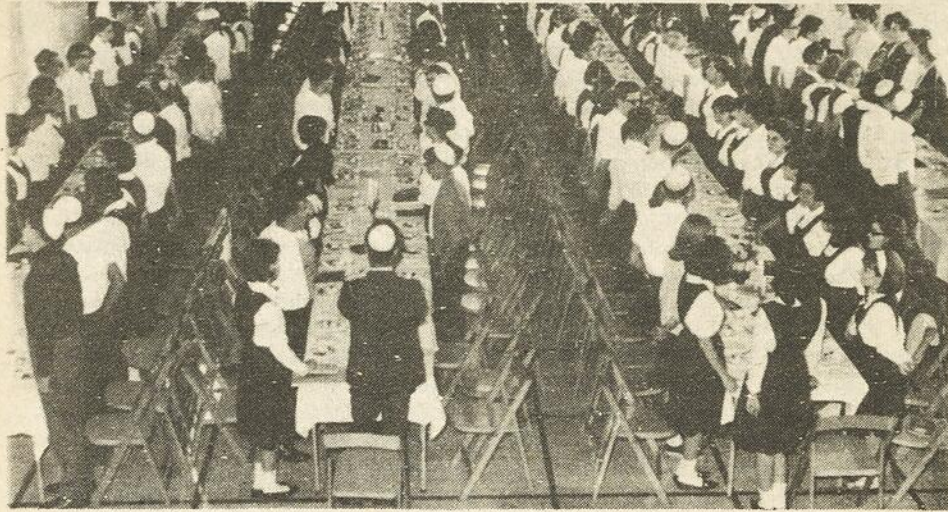
Monroe Abbey, Q.C.

Saul Hayes, Q.C.

Jean Sadler

Jews in Venezuela — The Country of Black Gold

by Jacob Beller



Students of the Herzl-Bialik Hebrew School in Caracas standing while making Kiddush at the Pesach Seder.

Unofficial dates of Jewish history of Venezuela are found as far back as in 1610, when a third Inquisition Tribunal was established in Cartagena, Colombia, with jurisdictions in the neighboring countries as: Panama, Santa Marta, Venezuela, Puerto Rico and Santiago de Cuba. A commissar was appointed in each country.

Following the destruction of the Jewish communities in Brazil after the Portuguese conquest, many Jews escaped to Surinam, Cayenne and Curacao. Venezuela lay at the junction of these countries. Many of them remained in Venezuela. The family of Rabbi Choumsaya, whose grave lies in the historic cemetery in Curacao still lived in Maracaibo a short time ago. The daughter of the household never married for lack of Jewish menfolk. As in other Latin-American countries, many scions or aristocratic families have Jewish blood in their veins.

Only historic data remain from the early period. Thus, it is known that General Antonio Sucre, the friend of Simon Bolivar was of Marrano descent. Also, that the Jew, Luis Byron, helped Bolivar in his struggle. Dr. David Lobo, a Jew, was a famous scientist. He served as professor and as rector of the National University in Caracas and had a large part in the scientific development of the country. The first railway in Venezuela was built by the Jewish engineer, Jacob Noaz. Isaac Seligmann organized the banking system of Venezuela. In Core, where a few recently arrived Jewish families are still to be found, there is an old cemetery with Hebrew inscriptions going back a hundred and thirty years.

Official government records show that a larger group of Sephardi Jews in Venezuela, in 1873, were joined as one community with El Porvenir community in Curacao. In 1891 the Sephardic Jews founded a communal organization called Armonia and published a paper by that name. There is still a Sephardic community there known by the name of Association Israelita.

Organized Jewish Life in Venezuela begins after World War I, when Jews came in from European countries and from other countries in Latin America to find better fortunes in this land of promise. By the end of 1917 there were about five hundred Jewish families in Venezuela. The number increased during the years between the two world wars.

Following the great tragedy in Europe, despite severe restrictions on Jewish immigration, Jews did manage to find their way into Venezuela. Many came in on baptismal certificates on which there was a thriving trade somewhere in Europe. The conversion certificates were necessary not only in Venezuela but in many other Latin American countries. Immediately after disembarking, many tore up the documents. It was told that in one Latin American country some kept these

certificates — who can tell what the future may bring?

Others merely stated their religion to be "Orthodox" or used other subterfuges. If the officials knew who the "Orthodox" people were, they made no comment, as long as the record did not show them to be Judios. Most of holders of baptismal certificates threw them away, but few became active in Jewish life or mixed much with other Jews.

We may figure that the Jewish population of Venezuela far exceeds 14,000. The majority of these Jews live in the Capital City of Caracas. Smaller Jewish settlements are found in Valencia, Maracai, Barcelona, Maracaibo and as few as three or four families live in the farthest part of the country.

These immigrants utilized their contacts and experiences at first on a small scale, and later, as the country developed, on an ever larger one. They became mostly importers. There is a saying in Venezuela: export of oil and import of gold. In a country so dependent on imported goods, the Jewish importers contributed much to the economic welfare and became successful. Also, the former pedlars became at first the operators of small stores and later of large ones. Over 300 Jewish-owned factories employ over two thousand local workers, producing furniture, leather goods and textiles.

The pride of the Jews of Caracas is the Herzl-Bialik School, where 90% of the Jewish school population attend. Among them are non-Jews, including the children of the Minister of Education. The staff consists of 100 teachers, among whom are a conspicuous number of Hebrew teachers. The school starts with kindergarten through high school and secondary grades, and upon graduating the children enter a school of higher education in the country. The director and founder of the school is Dr. David A. Gross, a well known pedagogue from the United States. Every year at vacation time a group of students go to Israel under the auspices of their Hebrew teachers. The school participated last year in the Bible contest in Jerusalem. The student delegated won the sixth place among the fifteen countries participating.

Jews have contributed much towards the development and growth of the land and have built new industries producing articles which formerly were imported from other countries.

The government recently gave citations to several Jews who distinguished themselves by contributing to the growth and industry of the country. The children of former immigrants who had difficulty in entering the country are now occupying important positions in the professions, as well as in the field of Literature.

Because immigration for Jews was closed they had to enter the country as "Orthodox" ... some former "Or-

(Cont'd on page 8)

We Must Preserve the Heritage of Yiddish

by Isaac Bashevis Singer

At my lectures I am often asked: what will happen to Yiddish literature if Jews in America, Israel and elsewhere discontinue using Yiddish?

My answer is: no matter what happens to Yiddish, its creative treasures can never be lost. The Ashkenazic Jew is a product of Yiddish, whether he be orthodox or atheist, whether he still speaks this language or no longer knows it. No less than six hundred years of Jewish history in Eastern and Central Europe are connected with Yiddish. We cannot conceive of an Old World Yeshiva without Yiddish. Hasidism is a product of Yiddish, The Enlightenment, which often scorned Yiddish, arose among Yiddish-speaking Jews. Moreover, sad thought it may sound, even assimilationism began in Yiddish. Yiddish was the air breathed by many generations of Jews. Yiddish was the language of the Lovers of Zion and of most Zionists. "Congress-Deutsch", the so-called German spoken at Zionist congresses, was really a dressed-up Yiddish.

Many young Hebraists forget that the creators of the neo-Hebrew literature were also classicists of Yiddish literature. Some of the Hebraists who repudiated and hated Yiddish still thought, spoke, dreamed, and often wrote in Yiddish. Indeed, they used Yiddish to deprecate Yiddish. For many maskilim Yiddish became the symbol of backwardness, provincialism, superstition, spiritual petrification, in short, the symbol of the shtetl. But where did the maskilim, Zionists, Jewish socialists, halutzim, and even the present "Canaanites" come from if not from the shtetl? And was not the shtetl also the original home of most Jews now in America, England, France and Soviet Russia?

The tremendous importance of Yiddish literature, from the Bovo-Bukh until the present, has not yet been appreciated. There is no exception to the rule that literature as an art form can be created only in the language of the people. Russian aristocrats spoke French for generations and often did not permit their children to learn Russian lest it spoil their French accent. But as long as they used French the Russians had not created a single work of art in this language. They read French literature, imitated the French, nourished themselves on spiritual remnants. But from the moment the Russians began to write in their own tongue, there arose among them Pushkin, Gogol, Tolstoi, Dostoevsky, Lermontov, Turgenyev — literary giants revered by the Russian people and by mankind everywhere. Polish aristocrats spoke French even longer than the Russian nobility. But I am unaware of a single important literary work created by the French-speaking Poles. Kochanowski, Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Reymont, Sienkiewicz, all wrote in Polish.

Jews were not the only one who called their language "jargon". Russians, Poles, even Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans and Italians in earlier eras designated the language of their masses as a "vulgar" language. For centuries intellectuals wrote a crippled Latin. But only the "vulgar" languages produced Dante, Boccaccio, Shakespeare, Milton, Rabelais, Moliere, Racine, Lessing, Goethe and Schiller.

The difference between Jews and other peoples was that long after the others abandoned their prejudices towards the mother tongue, a number of Jews still continued to spit into the well from which they drank. To this very day one hears that Yiddish is a "jargon", a German dialect, a hodge-podge. In this respect Jews are more backward than other people. Millions of Jews still believe in assimilation, while some still look upon Yiddish as a hostile rival of Hebrew; and since Hebrew has

been revived, Yiddish should be buried.

The truth is that not only has Yiddish produced works of high artistic merit but even the works of lesser quality and the numerous memoirs, press articles, party literature represent an incalculable abundance of Jewish history and culture. Also the best Hebrew writing of the last few centuries bears distinctive Yiddish characteristics and can be understood only if one is conversant with Yiddish. Hasidic books are written in Hebrew but they are full of Yiddish idioms and Yiddish expressions. The profound influence which Feirberg, Peretz, Smolenskin, Bialik, Brenner, Agnon, Zeitlin, Frishman and other Hebrew writers had upon Hebrew readers was not unrelated to the fact that these writers thought in Yiddish even when they wrote in Hebrew, and kept on portraying the Jew of the Galut, his sorrows, his hopes, his doubts. So did Mendele, Sholom Aleichem, Peretz, Schneour, Berkowitch, Smilansky, Schoffman, Berdyczewski, Sackler, Aaron Zeitlin, Uri Zvi Greenberg and many others.

It is true that there are now Hebrew writers who no longer know Yiddish. Some even boast that they have no kinship to Yiddish and to Galut Jewry, but such writers have not yet created any great works. I believe this is equally true of Yiddish writers who do not know Hebrew, who scorn Loshen-Kodesh and the ancient sources. Among Ashkenazic Jews Yiddish and Hebrew are really one language. Naturally, there were several talented Yiddish writers who knew little Hebrew, for example, I. M. Weissenberg, Yona Rosenfeld and A. M. Fuchs; but even their Yiddish is full of Hebraisms. Yiddish writers who eschewed Hebrew from their beginning and courted the Soviet Yevseks remained spiritually naked and subsequently dried up. The persistent effort to convert Yiddish literature into a tool of the Leftists failed everywhere. The language was rooted in Jewishness, in Jewish history, in the Jewish book, in the Jewish laws and customs, in the hasidic court. The literary talent of writers like Bergelson and Moshe Nadir disintegrated when harnessed to Stalinism. Not everybody will agree with me that the spiritual crisis which Jews in Israel are now undergoing is largely due to their forgetting Yiddish. But I still believe this to be true. Amnesia is a dangerous malaise for the human spirit. For the people of Israel, whose entire survival is based on remembering, amnesia is fatal. It is not chauvinism or boastfulness when I assert that Ashkenazic Jewry carried on its shoulders Jewish progress in the last five or six centuries. In trying to forget or ignore the language of these Jews, their creativity, their problems, hopes, traits, peculiarities, we are succumbing to a national psychosis, to complexes that can lead to national dementia. Yiddish is our memory, the bridge between our yesterday and our today, between the diaspora and Israel. This holds both for the language and for its genuine literary productions. The Sabra who prides himself on not knowing Yiddish negates the Jewish past; he speaks and behaves like an Hebraic convert. He has excommunicated himself and destroyed his roots. It is not enough to trace one's lineage to Abraham or even to the heroes of Massada and to Yehuda Halevi. We cannot disclaim centuries of Jewish existence in Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Galicia, Rumania, Russia, and wherever Ashkenazic Jews lived, struggled, suffered, worked. Generations before Ben Yehuda began to talk Hebrew in Eretz Israel, Jews conversed in Yiddish in Jerusalem and Safed, and interpreted the Torah in Yiddish. When Rabbi Nahman Bratslaver

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Books in Review

Abraham Mapu — The Creator of the Modern Hebrew Novel
by David Patterson

Cornell University Press
Saul Tschernichowsky — Poet of Revolt

by Eisig Silberschlag
Cornell University Press

reviewed by
Rabbi Solomon J. Spiro

It is unfortunate that the Western intellectual world knows so little about the Hebrew classics. Whenever a reference is made to Hebrew culture in works written for non-Jewish readers, the basic ideas involved must be spelled out, and even then there is no assurance that they are understood to the degree which is often necessary for the proper comprehension of the references and ideas. Such a great man as Albert Schweitzer confessed in his autobiography that he gave up trying to learn Hebrew in his university years. How then can we expect lesser mortals in the non-Jewish world to understand it? The development of Hebrew as a literature apart from the Bible is a closed book to most of the general intellectual public. It may be due to the prevailing Christian attitude towards Judaism and its culture, that it was a forerunner of Christianity and has exhausted itself in giving birth to its alleged successor. It is assumed that anything worthwhile in Judaism was absorbed and improved by its daughter religion and culture. Many liberal and well-read intellectuals are surprised when the treasures of post Biblical literary development are pointed out to them. Agnon is to them an amalgam of Kafka and Proust in another language, rather than a unique writer whose talents were more forged by Midrash, Medieval Hebrew poetry and nineteenth century Hebrew literature than by Western literature.

To correct the distortion and add to the sum total of cultural scholarship, there has happily appeared a series on Hebrew literary personalities by the East West Library called "Studies in Modern Hebrew Literature". The intentions of this series, in the words of one of the prefaces, are to "present an outline of a selected (Hebrew) author's background, followed by a brief biography and a serious literary appreciation of his work." Each work includes a representative selection of the author in English translation. The series when completed, will give an insight into modern Hebrew literature during the last 100 years to the interested layman and the student of literature.

At least two works of the series have appeared dealing with two different literary personalities, Abraham Mapu, a novelist of the earlier period of modern Hebrew literature (b. 1808) and Saul Tschernichowsky, a poet of a somewhat later period. (b. 1875). The former is written by a Lecturer at Oxford University and the general editor of the series, David Patterson, and the latter by the Dean of the Hebrew Teacher's College in Boston, Eisig Silberschlag. The treatment of each author by the two scholars is as different as the authors are themselves. There are copious footnotes in both volumes to support every contention, attesting to much scholarship and research, however, Patterson's exposition seems to be a smoother and more readable one than Silberschlag's, whose packing of paragraphs with relevant comparative information mars the narrative flow of the work. Silberschlag, for instance, treats us to a lecture on ballads, with definitions and theories with Scott, Burns, Wordsworth and Coleridge, as an introduction to Tschernichowsky's ballads; all in a few paragraphs. On the whole Patterson's treatment is measured, deliberate and impartial, though one may take issue with many of his literary and historical judgments, while Silberschlag's tends to an inflation of his subject by

indirection through comparisons to literature's greats beyond deserving merits. For example, in one note he compares the habits of Tschernichowsky and Yeats in reviving materials, a good psychological comparison but not a terribly apt literary one. This is "Boswellism" which exalts by innuendo.

Abraham Mapu is considered the father of the Hebrew novel. As Patterson points out, the early Maskilim used the available materials of the Bible for the raw materials of their efforts. This "neo-Biblical style" may sound quite trite and immature to us now for we have travelled far in literary accomplishment from Mapu's time, nevertheless, these efforts represent a stirring and energetic experimenting in a new vein. Heretofore Jewish creativity was exercised in religion and philosophy but not in literature as such. Mapu's pioneering accomplishments, prompted by the fervour and ideals of the Haskalah, are interesting models of Jewish strivings to break into the literary culture of the Western world using only the Jewish tools available. Patterson shows how Mapu used Biblical Hebrew to convey his thoughts. One may disagree with Patterson's assertions that Biblical Hebrew proved "to be a clumsy and inadequate medium." Clearly much of the poetry and wit of the early Hebrew writers of this period is contained in the ingenuity with which they employed Biblical Hebrew to express themselves — a tradition still strongly in evidence in some modern Hebrew writers. Mapu wrote many novels but only three survive *The Love of Zion*, *The Guilt of Samaria* and *The Hypocrite*. Some fragments of another are also extant.

Tschernichowsky was an intellectual poet rather than a novelist and he is therefore more difficult to analyze. His poems contain a great deal of strength and vividness. He translated and imitated Greek classics and also other poetry of the ancients. Silberschlag gives us a little of the feeling of his vitality and the range of his intellect. He naively associated Judaism with "life building forces of exuberance... he exalted Judaism rich in innocence, inner strength and stamina." "Ignorant Judaism" he believed gave us Herzl, Zionism, ha'utzim etc., and in his mind the brave leader is a Greek hero. The bald strength of his lines bears out his philosophy. G-d and Zeus are in poetic balance. Tschernichowsky's restless mind brought him into contact with the traditions of a great many cultures. He mastered Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Russian, German, French and English and translated much classical poetry of each language into Hebrew. Silberschlag, himself a poet, discusses most of the poems with great erudition and sympathy and offers personal background history, literary analysis and critical assessment.

In speaking about Jewish accomplishments in fields such as literature, it may be painful to judge with impartiality, but the proper perspective must be projected if we are to be honest with ourselves in absolute terms. Ahad Ha'am said the Jews are great imitators. They will take a borrowed idea, imitate it and subsequently improve it to such an extent that it appears original. And he is quite right. Our philosophy was borrowed from the Greeks. In later times we borrowed from Kant from Hegel and now from Kierkegaard. From Mapu to Tschernichowsky, and even later, the literary geni of our nation in the main imitated and improved upon the classical literature of the West. In our era the "Jewish novel" may be considered the point of improvement to the extent of seeming original. However, in both of these fields we should not allow our Jewish pride to induce the illusion that we are that original or even great, in an absolute sense, compared to the great of other nations. We do not have a Hebrew Shakespeare or Milton. It is doubtful that if Mapu or Tschernichowsky were to be judged by general standards, they would be able to stand next to George Eliot or Browning. They are Jewish and we judge them with compassion. The same may

be said of our philosophers. They are great but we do not have a Hebrew Aristotle or Kant. We have made noble and notable contributions in each field of learning worthy of study and attention by all, but we have never been absolutely supreme and original except in religion. No other nation has had a Moses.

Portnoy's Complaint

by Philip Roth

Random House

274 pages

reviewed by
Sandra Kolber

Even before publication (several sections having appeared in U.S. literary reviews) *Portnoy's Complaint*, by Philip Roth, was hailed as a major breakthrough in novels, particularly since the rash of similarly-toned American Jewish novels was nearly beginning to pall.

Uproariously, side-splittingly funny, laugh-aloud comic and sad — yes, tenderly, poignantly sad — *Portnoy's Complaint* is sure to elicit as many responses as readers — for this is the kind of personal book which insidiously demands identification. A sort of group therapy, if you will, where the reader is free to associate or dissociate from Roth's Alexander Portnoy according to whatever disgust or approval he feels for the singular self he nonetheless irrevocably shares with the anti-hero in neuroses, dreamlife, whatever. And, whereas on the one hand it is surely reassuring to know that none of us is unique (who has not heard screamed at him, "Someday you'll be a parent and you'll know what it's like"), we are somewhat loath to surrender secret distinctions (grievances) never admitted to be cherished — which nevertheless justify what we've become.

Jewish readers will enjoy the book, I believe in proportions inverse to their self-consciousness as Jews. Albeit the Portnoys are Jewish — from which fact certain of Alexander's hang-ups most undeniably stem. However, Anglo-Saxons are not born parentless either, and must, on occasion, be born into families with parallel mix-ups of sexes (mother should have been father, father should have been mother) and who need only delete the word "Jewish" when they helplessly, hopelessly cry, "A Jewish man with parents alive is a fifteen-year old boy and will remain a fifteen-year old boy until they die."

Alexander Portnoy, as analysis, is the book. He tells his story in a stream of consciousness purportedly to an invisible psychiatrist (who never speaks until the end) in so free-flowing and easy a way. It belies the skill of construction and organization Roth so fastidiously fashions.

Portnoy tells it as he sees it, and is honest enough to admit he has not always seen it as now. Is he merely a whiner and injustice-collector, he cannot help but wonder — blaming on innocents retrospective anger for a boyhood which "at the time" seemed not half as bad as it was? An omnipresent, overwhelmingly castrating mother from whom he could never escape (who still calls him "Lover" past thirty, in front of her own husband) yet who still managed to conjure up his puerile, silent awe making "jello with sliced peaches hanging in it, peaches just suspended there, in defiance of the law of gravity". His father, her husband, a man so completely constricted, succumbed to female dominion, even his bowels are uptight. So Alexander proceeds with his story, hating his guilts and his fears of teenage compulsive masturbation, multivariied affairs with shiksas, always shiksas (to sidestep the oedipal trap?) which he inevitably ends up mistreating, and the infinite, endless desires his gobbling-up hungers don't sate. In constant terror of punishment, Portnoy longs to be punished — with syphilis or other horrors he tacitly knows he deserves. His fantasies and fervours consume him — he loves them too much to let go. Just as he literally masturbated through

puberty and beyond, even as he is grown into every connection of sexing, the habit is deeply ingrained — the symbolic masturbation he can neither master nor part with — of rending and ranting his psyche with guilts he insists he must feel. "To be bad, mother, and enjoy it — is the real struggle".

Alexander Portnoy knows he is fraud — in all these years of pretence of sophisticated freedom and worldliness he has never really gotten away with anything — his conscience has crippled sexuality, spontaneity, courage. While the rest of the world gets off scot-free with murder, for him the smallest pleasure is illicit, and this is a large part of Portnoy's complaint.

Finding himself impotent in Israel with an Amazon Kibbutz girl berating him as self-deprecating yellow Ghetto Jew, he takes her advice and goes home. (She looms hugely over his prostrate body — the guiltless patriot in victory.) He ends his recital in an agonized protracted scream after which the analyst speaks his one line, "Now we may perhaps to begin. Yes?" and so the novel ends.

Although *Portnoy's Complaint* contains more four letter words per inch than any book before it, not to mention slews of inventive suggestions for objects of singular and multicoupling love, it cannot be construed as a dirty or pornographic book. Indeed, the very redundancy of vocabulary and concept diminish their own shock effect. There is certainly nothing here that could be considered 'prurient' — that favourite censorship word. The most Portnoy's affair with a piece of liver might even conceivably manage would be to put a few meat-eaters off, for solely a butchers' lament. It hardly titillates. Even in the triumvirate orgy scene, Portnoy minimizes the eroticism he describes by reducing it to the ludicrous, "Boy, was I busy." The ingenuousness of Portnoy questioning motives and manners, colours his most far-out experimentation with something more tender than lust.

A common, and certainly not completely unfounded conception, is that first novels are inevitably autobiographical. A catharsis that either says all there is to be said and must then be content to be still, or else — whatever there was to say leading to much more for saying — go on to another plateau. But this is not Roth's first novel. It is his third novel and fourth published book. And it is not an individual catharsis anyhow, but a comprehensive catharsis for all Jewish novels and novelists until now. No doubt they will say part of it over, or even say parts of it better, but never as thoroughly well. So, hopefully, it's a new beginning at last.

National Yiddish Meet

(Cont'd from page 1)

may be written in Yiddish, Hebrew, English or French and should be addressed to: Dr. Joseph Kage, chairman, National Conference on Yiddish, c/o Canadian Jewish Congress, 493 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal 111, Que. All briefs should be submitted no later than May 10, 1969.

Dr. Kage, in announcing the conference, said "For centuries Yiddish has been a major means of Jewish cultural expression. These were the words spoken by our parents, prayed by our grandparents, preached by our Rabbis, narrated by our rebbis, sung by the people. In Yiddish words the experience and wisdom of millenium of Jewish life were incorporated. Shall we surrender all these values? Shall we accept the loss of this cultural treasure? Or shall we find ways of treasuring this phase of Jewish culture as we have found ways of perpetuating other aspects of Judaism in the New Age and in the New World?"

"This challenge is directed to every Jew," said Dr. Kage, "whether he knows Yiddish or not. It is directed to every Jewish parent, teacher, rabbi, communal worker, student to every member of our Jewish organization, and to every Jew who identifies with his people."

CJC Agenda (Cont'd from page 2)

named in January 1965. (Mr. Saul Hayes, Q.C., executive vice president of Congress, was a member of this special committee.) The findings of this committee were reported on November 10 of that year. The report was not tabled in the House of Commons until April 4, 1966. On May 30, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson reported that another committee (Justice Department officials) was still studying the report of the Special Committee and preparing its own report for the cabinet. The cabinet would, in turn, study the officials' report and in due course determine appropriate action.

In August of 1966 Mr. Pearson gave assurance at a press conference that the government would be bringing down a bill to make "hate propaganda" a crime. Eventually such a bill, named S-49, was submitted to the Senate in November 1966 and was given second reading. No hearings were held and this bill died with that session of the House. It was restored in December 1967, more than a year later, being renumbered as Bill S-5 and again submitted to the Senate. The Senate then referred it to a Special Committee on the Criminal Code dealing with hate propaganda, chaired by the Hon. J. Harper Prowse. Officials of the Justice Department addressed this committee as did the Canadian Jewish Congress on February 29, 1968. Mr. Maxwell Cohen, Dean of McGill Law School and chairman of the Special Committee on Hate Propaganda, also testified before this committee. Shortly thereafter, the House and Senate prorogued and the country faced a general election.

The proposed legislation subsequently re-appeared under a third number, named Bill S-21. This time the previous 18 member committee was not convened and the legislation was referred to a 33 member committee, the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. Two-thirds of the members of this body were not members of the previously submitted convened Special Committee and the previously submitted briefs and testimony of witnesses were not brought forward to be incorporated, as read, in the evidence and consequently has to be reintroduced if required.

The long drawn-out procedural history of this legislation makes plain the inordinate delays and procrastinations to which this particular piece of legislation has been submitted. Four years have elapsed since the special committee named by the late Mr. Favreau was appointed to examine the problem and make recommendations, three parliaments have gone by and two general elections have taken place. The present government and the previous government under Mr. Pearson have indicated that they are committed to this legislation yet its fulfilment is just as far away as it was five years ago. To quote from an article by the late Blair Fraser in Maclean's magazine of October 1966, "Why has it taken so long to enact something which, apparently, all parties approve in principle?"

True, in the past an unstable situation made it difficult to enact desired and vital parliamentary legislation, however, this is no longer the case since the last general election.

In spite of the fact that we are not presently facing a threat which may undermine the security of Canadians in the foreseeable future, it is evident that efforts are still being made in this direction: witness the taped messages being disseminated through the Toronto telephone system which exploit the absence of corrective legislation and the continuation of the distribution of hate propaganda by mail.

It will be recalled that Congress presented a brief to the Senate Standing Committee on Constitutional & Legal Affairs in Ottawa on February 25, 1969, which voiced support of the legislation embodied in Bill S-21 and considered it 'on the whole wisely conceived and drafted.'

Regarding the definition of identifiable groups, the Congress brief noted that

the category of 'religion' has been omitted from the list of descriptive qualifications. The brief stated "This in our view is a serious omission. It was present in the recommendations of the Report of the Special Committee and we can find no adequate reason for its removal."

The Canadian Jewish Congress is taking all possible steps to ensure the early passage of anti-hate propaganda legislation which would concretely demonstrate that the Canadian government does not intend to tolerate forces seeking to plant seeds of destruction and genocide within our midst.

Jewish Communities in Eastern Europe

It will be recalled that when the CJC delegation met with the Prime Minister on May 16, 1966, we drew attention to the condition of Jews in the U.S.S.R., noting at that time there had been some improvement in their condition.

It is a matter of regret that since making our last submission to the Government, the condition of Jews in the Soviet Union and other countries in the Soviet bloc has sharply deteriorated. This deterioration was brought about in the aftermath of the Six Day War, when an unparalleled campaign of calumny, scurrilous and even pornographic in tone, was launched against Soviet Jewry. Although this campaign was aimed ostensibly at "Zionism", it is well known that "anti-Zionism" is in fact a euphemism for anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. This anti-Semitic campaign, aimed at a defenseless minority, has further exacerbated the precarious situation of the Jews in the Soviet Union.

The Canadian Jewish Congress has been in constant communication with the Secretary of State for External Affairs in regard to Soviet Jewry and tribute should be paid to the sympathetic and helpful initiatives which have been taken by the Canadian Government on humanitarian grounds to alleviate the condition of Jews in the U.S.S.R.

Congress calls upon the Soviet Government to extend to its Jewish citizens the same rights enjoyed by other nationalities under the 1936 Soviet Constitution. On May 29, 1966, Congress convened a special conference on Soviet Jewry which decided to make the following submission to the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa: restore its Jewish citizens to a position of equality with all other nationalities; permit its Jewish citizens freely to practice, enhance and perpetuate their culture and religion by removing all discriminatory measures designed to restrict this freedom; make available all the institutions, the schools, the textbooks and the material necessary to teach Jewish children the languages, the history, the beliefs, the practices and the aspirations of the Jewish people; permit the Jews of the U.S.S.R. freely to develop Jewish groups and to associate and work with Jewish groups inside and outside the Soviet Union; use all the means at its disposal to eradicate anti-Semitism; and permit Soviet Jewish families, separated as a result of the Nazi holocaust, to be re-united with their relatives abroad.

These six points are the substantive demands which Congress makes in respect to our persecuted brethren in the USSR.

It should be further noted that Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union has virtually ceased since the Six Day War. We have requested the Secretary of State for External Affairs to continue to do all in his power to ameliorate the condition of Jews in the USSR.

Poland

The Polish Jewish Community, which numbered in excess of 2½ million prior to 1939, is now reduced to 25,000, most of whom are the survivors of the Nazi occupation. It is known that anti-Semitic campaigns in Poland are being used

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DAVID CAPLAN

by Lawrence Sabbath



David Caplan

are not much but for students the extra \$350 for a season is a useful addition to school fees... maybe we'll have four more to add to the six and some day there will be the permanent nucleus of a professional orchestra."

The orchestra's presence in the city has brought valuable side benefits. Mr. Caplan was instrumental in forming a well of junior musicians from which the orchestra will some day draw its permanent members. There is as well a junior symphony composed of 60 older elementary and highschool students and which is sponsored by the local Kiwanis. The women's committee of the orchestra sponsors a junior strings group of 30 youngsters. In addition, a summer symposium workshop was begun five years ago with 90 children enrolled for a three-weeks session. Mr. Caplan has also formed a quartet in residence. Saskatoon, as already noted, is not without its share of musical activities.

One of the advantages of a community orchestra is that it is unfettered by tradition and top-heavy management. Thus it can often undertake new and interesting programs ahead of large professional companies. The Saskatoon orchestra, Mr. Caplan pointed out, was the first in Canada to start a regular policy of commissioning original works by Canadian composers. Murray Adaskin, now a professor of music in Mr. Caplan's department, and also a composer-in-residence, initiated the program. The response has been encouraging. The cash award of \$150 has since gone up to \$500, plus travel expenses.

Starting in September of this year the university will give Bachelor of Music degrees, a giant step forward that reflects highly on the growing influence of the department in music in curricular and extra-curricular activities. The event is promising for the orchestra and its significance has not been lost on the community which is so intimately involved.

The one-year old Centennial Auditorium has also boosted orchestral prestige. Until it came along the local gymnasium was the unlikely site of performances. "It has brought us a new kind of public", said Mr. Caplan. "In the gym we were out to educate the public but now we have added the element of entertainment. Some of my colleagues think I am giving in to popular tastes, but it is important that we convey the image that attending our concerts is not difficult, that it is pleasant."

Programs are a blend of classical and contemporary. "The season of 10 performances must be a full diet," observed Mr. Caplan. "Sometimes we are able to include a Canadian work in each program... we'll never fill the hall the way Gordon Lightfoot does but we have gotten up to a 70% average in attendance... of course we would like to have more internationally famous soloists, more Maureen Forresters. But many of these artists' fees have gone beyond the \$1000 we can afford... however, I want a season of events, not names..."

He is optimistic about the orchestra's future and says: "I couldn't be busier anywhere else. We're as busy here as in New York or Europe. The important thing is that we are making it here, with ourselves. We are creating a musical environment, on our own. We are not imposing a structure from the top — we are digging from the bottom."

Symphony orchestras are not easily come by, amateur or professional. For a community body of 61 musicians, such as the 37-year old Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra which is led by David Caplan, the problems of survival, public recognition and continued growth are challenges of daily confrontation.

Saskatoon, the second city of Saskatchewan, has become in less than a decade one of the most culturally progressive cities in the country. There is the beautiful Mendel Art Gallery, the impressive 2000-seat Saskatchewan Centennial Auditorium, the swelling University of Saskatchewan, and a symphony orchestra of spreading reputation. In prospect is a new Fine Arts Building for music, art and drama.

The population of 125,000 is composed largely of English, Ukrainians, Mennonites and several hundred Jewish families. Mayor Sidney S. Buckwold has been a tireless supporter of the arts. As a result, the city possesses many cultural facilities which much larger cities do not have.

Music in all forms is one of the elements all ethnic groups have in common, and Saskatoon is exceptional in this respect. The community orchestra is not unlike those which are found in some 60 other Canadian cities — progressive, hard-working, run by and for the pleasure of the citizens. The Saskatoon orchestra consists of university professors, teachers, students, and citizens of many ages who take part for the love of making music in their spare time.

When Mr. Caplan took over as conductor nine years ago the orchestra had a complement of 40. Today it goes as high as 70 depending on the musical selections, and has become a potent musical force in the community. The importance of its role in the province can be gleaned from the size of the budget which has gone to \$50,000. The city gives \$2500, the Canada Council \$10,000, the Saskatchewan Arts Board \$15,000, and the remainder of the revenue comes from ticket sales.

"This is a very challenging place," said Mr. Caplan. "Until recently this city was thought of as a kind of Hickville, but no longer. We had a habit of apologizing for what we did but this is no longer necessary. Today we have all the facilities of a large city many times our size... I would rate this orchestra as very good, one of the better community orchestras."

46-year old David Caplan was born in Chicago. He came to Saskatoon from the University of Illinois, where he received a Ph.D. in musicology, on invitation of the Dean of the College of Education to initiate a new program in music education at the university. At the same time he became Head, Department of Music and later took over direction of the orchestra. He has taught, lectured and conducted in many parts of the United States and Canada. He is also the composer of some 40 chamber and solo instrumental works. "Since coming here," he said, "there are so many good things to do that I have not had time to compose."

An accomplished clarinetist, he still finds time to perform with other groups and on the CBC. He and his wife, a clinical psychologist at the university hospital, raise scotties as a hobby. One of their five children is, at 15, a member of the orchestra.

The principal problem of a community orchestra is, as one might expect, the shortage of full time professional musicians. Few stay longer than a year. "The search," said Mr. Caplan, "is for high quality musicians who can combine university teaching with practical performance. Each year the turnover is almost 40%, each season it's a new game. But let me add that this is a real community orchestra and we do now have six members who make their living by teaching music and making music with us. The minimum union fees

CJC Agenda (Cont'd from page 7)

by factions contending for power within the Polish Workers Party. It is difficult to understand why this small community should now be subjected to such harassment for political purposes. CJC has urged the Government to convey its concern to the Polish Government and to facilitate the immigration to Canada of those Polish Jews who wish to make their home here.

The Canadian Jewish Congress wishes to place on record its appreciation for the speedy processing of applications in respect of Czecho-Slovakian Jews who were able to immigrate to Canada in 1968. Congress has urged the Canadian Government to intercede on behalf of those Jews remaining in Czecho-Slovakia who may wish to enter Canada. In Czecho-Slovakia there are numerous signs of a revision to neo-Stalinist anti-Semitism, with all its attendant implications for the Jewish community.

Polish Claims

Congress has played a pioneer role in urging the Canadian Government to pursue claims against Poland by Canadian citizens for property nationalized or otherwise taken away from them by its communist regime.

The United States and the United Kingdom have arrived at special agreements with Poland and compensation is being paid to their nationals who became victims of the communist system in Poland.

Again, in 1968, Congress urged some action by the Government to rectify this situation and was advised that negotiations were being entered into between Canada and Poland sometime in October 1968.

It will be recalled that in 1965, after several years of effort, Canada was able to obtain from the Polish authorities an undertaking to negotiate these claims. The next step was to invite Canadians to submit claims and, because of the large number involved, the deadline was extended from January to May 1966. There followed the lengthy process of examining each of the approximately 600 claims that were filed and corresponding with the claimants. This phase was substantially completed by early 1967.

In view of the inordinate delay in settling Canadian claims against Poland, Canadian Jewish Congress is pressing the Government to give the issue immediate consideration.

War Criminals in Canada

Canadian Jewish Congress has on numerous occasions drawn to the attention of the Government proof that known murderers and accessories before and after-the-fact are living in Canada. It is improbable that they will ever be brought before the courts for their unspeakable crimes. It is known that these war criminals, in most cases, came to Canada in the early postwar years in the great flow of immigration of that period.

Canada adheres to the principle of refusing to surrender citizens or landed immigrants for trial or punishment, unless extradition legislation exists or if the Government is convinced that the accused will not be accorded the protection of his legal rights as these are understood in Canada. The Canadian Government maintains that such principles are immutable even if their application will result in certain individuals not having to answer to courts of law for crimes against humanity. Congress comprehends that the Government is reluctant to legislate especially for these cases, which would be a radical departure from Canadian legal practice. However, this matter cannot be permitted to rest and Congress has requested the Government to instruct the appropriate law officers to ascertain if such persons entered Canada fraudulently and whether legal steps can be taken to deprive them of their citizenship.

To permit such persons to enjoy the privileges of Canadian citizenship is not only an insult to our country but a sorry reflection on judicial processes which allow such a travesty of the most ele-

mentary fundamental principles of justice.

The issue is a moral one and we must not permit the moral principles involved to be circumvented by legal complexities for to do so is to negate and pervert the spirit of law in its best sense. To permit the situation to go unremedied makes a mockery of the intent of genocide conventions, international statutes relating to war criminals of which our Government is a signatory, and, indeed, Canadian citizenship itself. Congress, however, is not at all optimistic of results.

United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights

On frequent occasions spokesmen for our Government have pleaded for more effective implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which has been in existence for more than 20 years. Although progress has been achieved in some member states in adhering to the principles of the Declaration, a number of states (including Canada) have expressed the view that the time is now opportune to put "teeth" and some measure of enforcement machinery at the disposal of the United Nations Human Rights Commission. Congress brought this matter to the attention of the Government in its submission of May 16, 1966.

Canada has an honourable and enviable reputation in the international community as a champion of Human Rights and can make a further contribution by taking the initiative for the appointment of a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at the next session of the General Assembly.

Reproduced below is the text of a draft resolution submitted of the Twentieth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations upon which, Congress believes, any new draft resolution should be based.

Considering that one of the purposes of the United Nations as enunciated in Article I of the Charter is to achieve international cooperation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all.

Considering that under Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter all Members of the United Nations have pledged themselves to take joint and separate action in cooperation with the United Nations to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

Recalling its proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.

Convinced of the urgent need for the United Nations to take more effective action to discharge its obligations in the matter of human rights."

Israel and the Middle East

Canadian Jewish Congress, since its inception in 1919 has been actively associated with the aspirations of the Jewish people to build a homeland in Palestine and to achieve statehood through the United Nations. It has been a tradition for the Canadian Jewish Congress to work closely with the Federated Zionist Organization of Canada on matters affecting Israel and the Middle East.

Loyola

Mr. Myer F. Pollock has been appointed a member of the Loyola Board of Governors of Montreal. Mr. Pollock is a member of the Board of Administration of the Jewish General Hospital and has served on the board of the YM-YWHA, Montreal.

Condolences

Congress, Central Region, conveyed condolences to the widow and children of the Rev. Nathan Stolnitz who served as a cantor in Toronto and was associated with numerous musical, cultural and literary ventures and projects in the Jewish community. He was a member of the National Council of the Canadian Jewish Congress and attended regularly Plenary Sessions.

URO For Canada

The difficulties and complications in settling pending claims as described in last year's report have not diminished during the past year. On the contrary, our efforts to obtain indemnification for our clients met with even greater difficulties in 1968.

An aura of increased weariness surrounds the German authorities and courts dealing with indemnification and it seems that in 1968 and at present the feeling of guilt towards the persecutees has reached such a low point in Germany that it is most unrewarding from the political point of view to grant indemnification in cases where obvious injustice was done. New legislation which would improve the existing status quo seems to be out of question.

The situation has become even more precarious in 1968 than ever before as the German Courts began to treat the Indemnification Law in the same way as any other law or legal problem and use very technical hair-splitting arguments in their decisions.

U.R.O. Canada is working on steadily. The case load has become considerably lighter in 1968 which resulted in a reduction of personnel in all our offices. The diminished number of cases not yet documented, however, is counterbalanced by the fact that a considerable number of cases is before the courts, many of them before the Supreme Court in Germany, and these cases require great knowledge and a lot of hard work in preparation.

One of the, as yet, unsolved problems in health damage cases is the question as to what extent an illness which has existed for a long time, i.e. prior to new developments and views in medical science and was not previously duly diagnosed as being the result of persecution, can now be re-assessed. This category includes in particular nervous disturbances. Several test cases represented by U.R.O. are now before the Supreme Court in Germany whilst all other cases of this kind were shelved pending the Supreme Court decision.

Another problem which was a stumbling block in the progress of health claims seems to be easing off. The very strict treatment of the question of refugee status, which is one of the prerequisites of eligibility according to the first indemnification Law of 1953 has been relaxed considerably after Supreme Court decisions in two test cases which were won by the U.R.O. So far, however, the results of these decisions are not felt as the considerable number of cases in which the adverse decisions will have to be reversed are being statistically compiled in Germany before a way of settling them can be found. Most of these cases will require additional medical substantiation as many of them were fought on the basis of the recognition of refugee status alone.

Another problem so far unsolved is the stubborn refusal of the German authorities to grant adequate refund of expenses incurred for medical treatment. The German authorities are cutting these arbitrarily to almost negligible proportions and the refunds offered and granted are in no way commensurate with the real and legitimate claims.

The so-called "Post-1953-Fund" cases are now documented and the greater part of them has been settled. There are, of course, still requests coming in

from the German authorities for additional proof and documentation. Also, since a large number of claimants are receiving so-called "Steigerungsbeträge" (additional amounts) which are to be paid when all the first payments will be fully paid, follow-up work will have to be done in these cases.

There are still close to 1000 jewelry claims to be documented and payments are now beginning to come in with some regularity though the amounts are negligible (between \$250.00 and \$350.00 per claim).

For many years now we have been asked by people whose forced stay in Russia during the war resulted in damage to their health to represent their claims in Germany. Up till recently, it was the policy of the U.R.O. to accept only such cases where the damage to health was obvious and completely documented from the medical point of view. In the Spring of 1968 a series of articles appeared in the Yiddish Press encouraging people who had been in Russia to submit their claims as quickly as possible as a change in the attitude of the German authorities was expected. We were asked repeatedly to take on the representation of such claims and after consultation with the U.R.O. Central Office, we accepted a few cases which we thought had merit. These claims have to be documented with great care, particularly with respect to the justification of the delay and necessary "restitutio in integrum" and are, therefore, rather time consuming.

The U.R.O., particularly our Toronto office, has been approached by a number of people who arrived from Czechoslovakia after the Russian invasion in 1968 with requests to forward indemnification claims for these people. These people have not been eligible as the time for submitting of new claims elapsed long ago. We contacted our Central Office and on their suggestion we are now accepting claims from recent Czechoslovak immigrants. Here again, the chances of success are so slight at least for the time being, as to be non-existent and a change of this situation depends on a change in the Law. Since the question of "restitutio in integrum" will be of importance here, too, we are accepting claims from such people who can prove the first prerequisite that their mother tongue is German, and we make it a condition of our acceptance that they sign a declaration stating that they realize that their claim is at the moment only a formality whose success depends entirely on a change in the indemnification Law. We are neither advertising nor encouraging these doubtful claims.

The following is a breakdown of monetary results as per offices in Canada, and as of February 28, 1969, these figures being roughly commensurate with case loads handled in these locations:

| | | |
|-----------|----------------|-----------------|
| Montreal | DM 91,031,657 | \$24,578,547.39 |
| Toronto | DM 70,868,156 | \$19,134,402.12 |
| Winnipeg | | |
| | DM 6,135,443 | \$ 1,656,569.61 |
| Vancouver | | |
| | DM 2,373,057 | \$ 640,725.39 |
| | DM 170,408,313 | \$46,010,244.51 |

(These figures do not reflect the full value of pensions awarded for life.)

Venezuela (Cont'd from page 4)

thodox" who came to Venezuela as orthodox are now truly orthodox and have their own community synagogue, Shomrei Shabbat. The founder of this synagogue was the late Pinchas Gabel, who lost his life in an accident. They even have their old-fashioned cheder, and an orthodox Rabbi.

The Sephardic Jews have their own community and a synagogue. The Union Israelita de Caracas of which all the organizations are constituents built a million dollar centre for the convenience of young and old, start-

ing with the synagogue to a sport centre.

The Venezuelan Jewish community has won the respect of the non-Jewish population. The intelligentsia among the latter feel particularly sympathetic to the Jews. This, too, is related to the formation of the State of Israel. Venezuelan intellectuals have established a committee of "Friends of Israel" which has often made known its admiration and sympathy for the State of Israel and the Jewish people. On Israel Independence Day a special program was performed on television.