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Cover: The noted late author, Nobel Prize laureate Isaac Bashevis Singer, who was also a brilliant journalist. A chapter from his memoirs opens this issue. An issue of *Forward*, May 1948, is in the background.

Photo computerization by Yossi Hirsch.

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IN MANY LANGUAGES

Although his worldwide reputation as a literary writer was vast, from the beginning Isaac Bashevis Singer was firmly rooted in the journalistic firmament. When he started out in his youth — assisted in no small measure by his brother, the writer Israel Joshua Singer — he accepted any and all jobs with the Warsaw papers. Scion of a rabbinic family, he nevertheless drank deeply at the fountain of Russian, Polish and German literature, his expertise in Talmud and Bible serving as an intellectual springboard to the study of secular philosophy. He was graced with an active imagination and an exceptional talent for self-expression. He edited, and sometimes even rewrote, manuscripts by writers and publicists whose names had elicited awe in his youth. He translated news items and articles, proofread and even adapted a series of German penny novels for serialization, which was a popular genre in the Yiddish press in Warsaw then. The young Singer loved the smell of print, at a time when print still had a smell. He even loved deadlines, and during a series of discussions with the writer Richard Burgin, he remarked with a certain sense of pride that during the entire period that he worked for the *Forward*, from 1935 until his old age, he never missed a week, except for short vacations, publishing articles and sketches at first, and later stories written segment by segment each week.

Some fifty years after he first set foot in the *Forward*, which was one of the major Jewish newspapers in the world, it proudly ran the bold headline: "Bashevis Singer Opens his Nobel Speech in Stockholm — in Yiddish."

An American journalist once remarked that a good journalist is "a Homer, not a Plato" — in other words, a storyteller and not a philosopher. During the above-mentioned series of discussions with Burgin, Bashevis Singer said that when he was writing *The Family Moskat*, he felt he was memorializing the Jewish community of Warsaw as he knew it so that it would not disappear forever. Apologizing for the comparison, he added: "I felt toward Warsaw exactly as Homer felt toward Troy." Indeed, despite his expertise in philosophical works and his deep reflections and perceptions on the relationship between God and man, he was, in his

books, a Homer — an outstanding storyteller, perhaps one of the greatest storytellers of our generation, and not just in Yiddish literature.

We dedicate this special issue of our magazine, our tenth, marking five consecutive years of publication, to Nobel laureate Bashevis Singer, who died this year in ripe old age. The issue opens with two translated chapters of his memoirs, published many years ago in the *Forward* in Yiddish, which describe the start of his career as a journalist and author when he was under the spell of the bohemian lifestyle at 13 Tlomacka Street — the address and the embodiment of Warsaw's Jewish intellectuals and writers.

Another major article in this issue is by Joseph Finklestone of London, diplomatic editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*. The article is devoted to a newspaper that has been appearing for 150 years consecutively, making it the oldest Jewish newspaper in the world. (The next-oldest periodical is the Dutch Jewish weekly *Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad*, begun in August 1865, 25 years after the start of the *Chronicle*.)

Having referred to the two major Jewish newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic, one in Yiddish and one in English, which played major roles in the social and cultural lives of their respective communities, we direct the reader's attention to the special supplement — the first of its kind, to the best of my knowledge — contained in this issue: *The Language Atlas of the Jewish Press Worldwide*. Two years ago, in *Qeshet* no. 6, I quoted former President of Israel Zalman Shazar — himself a journalist in his early years — in an address he delivered in 1970 at an evening in his home devoted to the centenary of the Yiddish press in America. Shazar lyrically described Jewish journalists as writing "in seventy pens," that is, in every possible genre, and we added: "and in many languages."

It is impossible, however, not to express a sad reflection on the fate of the Jewish press throughout the world today. The number of extant Jewish dailies, with the exception of Israel, can be counted on one hand, and with something left over as well. There is not one Jewish daily — in Hebrew, Yiddish or English — in the entire enormous and wealthy United States

with its millions of Jews. The same is true for Russia, the third-largest Jewish population center, with the exception of the *Birobidzhaner Shtern* ("Birobidzhan Star") which appears three times weekly. By comparison, there had been a period just before World War II when over 30 Jewish dailies, as well as many hundreds of weeklies, appeared throughout the world, in dozens of languages.

How many were there? The atlas we have included attempts to provide an answer, although still incomplete. I doubt that we can say with certainty that the 40 languages (including some half-dozen variations) cited in the atlas are the sum total of languages in which Jewish periodicals were published throughout the world during the last 305 years, ever since two Yiddish papers first appeared in Amsterdam: *Dinshtagishi Courante* ("Tuesday's Newspaper") and *Freitagishi Courante* ("Friday's Newspaper") in 1686. (Some researchers identify the beginning of the Jewish press with the *Gazeta da Amsterdam* [Spanish] a decade previously.) However, with the assistance of the National Library in Jerusalem, as well as other archival and research institutions, we have tried to survey this entire cultural treasure belonging to our people. We hope that this atlas will find its way into schools and libraries and will serve as an educational aid in the teaching of Jewish history or any other aspect of Jewish culture.

★

As in the past, we have tried to vary this issue of *Qesher* with topical articles. These include pieces by Supreme Court Justice Dov Levin, Dr. Gad Barzilai and Ze'ev Schiff, who examine the media in Israel from different points of view and in different periods, including the Yom Kippur War period and the Gulf war period, and assess how the Israeli press deals with the eternal dilemma: freedom of expression vs. the responsibility to society. There is an article on the topic of journalese — the contemporary jargon of journalism. There are studies of various historical periods, distant and current, including essays on the Zionist leader Meir Grossman, who

was a founder of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency and a prolific publicist; Erich Gottgetreu, the first AP correspondent in Eretz Israel; and "the Fleet Street of Jerusalem," Hasolei Street, where *Do'ar Hayom*, *Hayarden* and the *Palestine Post* — the forerunner of the *Jerusalem Post* — had their offices and presses during the 1920s and '30s. There is an essay by Dr. Menuha Gilboa on the Hebrew press in Vienna during the second half of the previous century, as well as a retrospective by Bella Guterman on an exceptional journalistic "adventure" in Israel during the middle of this century: the publication of a Hebrew daily in Jerusalem — *Zemanim*. Further on the subject of newspapers is Ehud Graf's confrontational analysis of the content of *Ha'ir* as compared to reality.

Two somewhat unusual topics are an Arabic-language Jewish newspaper that appeared not in an Arab country but in Argentina, as described by Dov Sieskel; and the proliferation of synagogue newspapers in Israel, by Yoel Rappel.

★

From newspapers "in seventy pens" and "in many languages" we come to *Qesher*, itself a special phenomenon in the Jewish and Israeli periodical scene. *Qesher* is produced by a small staff under difficult conditions. Five years, and ten issues, merit a good word, but wisdom dictates that we leave that task to another.



Head of the Journalism Studies Program
and Institute for Research of the Jewish Press

IMAGES AND EPISODES FROM THE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION HOUSE IN WARSAW

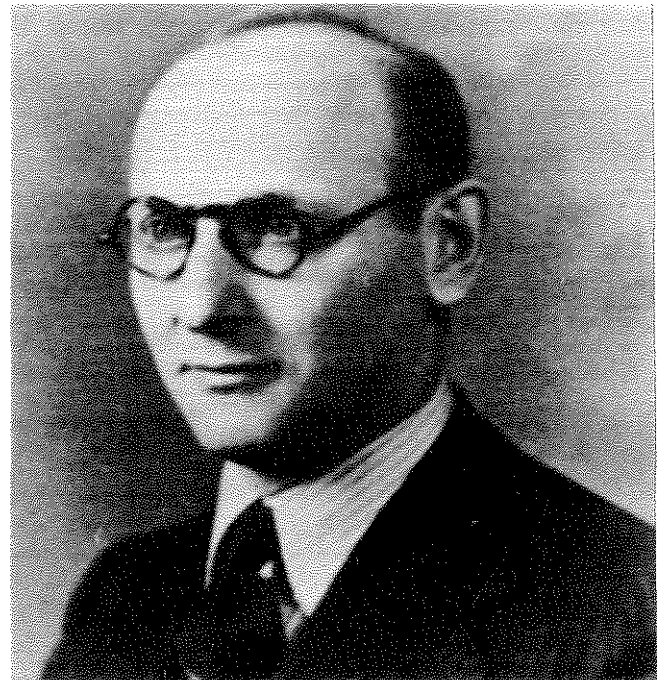
Memoirs of Bashevis Singer, Apprentice Journalist

ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER

The First Visit

The Writers' Association House on Tlomackie Street in Warsaw was more than just a writers' club. It was, actually, a center for Yiddish culture and Yiddish literature, as well as a refuge for actors, members of various political parties and plain intellectuals who would come there — I nearly said: come there on pilgrimage. For me, personally, the Writers' Association House was a kind of second home for 13-14 years, plain and simple. My literary development is closely bound up with the institution.

I had heard about the Writers' Association House when I was still living in Bilgoraj, the city where my maternal grandfather, Rabbi Jacob Mordecai Zilberman, served as chieft rabbi for 40 years. In 1917, when my mother took me and my brother Moses from Warsaw to Bilgoraj, the Writers' Association House did not yet exist, as far as I know. My brother Joshua often spoke of the Zamir singing association, where [Y. L.] Peretz used to deliver speeches and the conductor Shneur led his choir, but I never heard him mention the Writers' Association. My guess is that it was founded in 1918 or 1919. Several daily newspapers and weeklies were being published in Yiddish in Warsaw by then. Jewish journalists, authors, textbook writers, public speakers and ordinary Yiddish and Hebrew writers had a need for a professional and spiritual base. Among the founders of the Writers' Association were such figures as Hersh David Nomberg, Noah Pryluski, S. Stupnicki, Yeheskel Moshe Neumann, Dr. Yehoshua Gottlieb, Pincas Lazaro Zitnitsky and



Bashevis Singer during his Warsaw period

possibly also Hillel Zeitlin, his son Aaron Zeitlin, Efraim Kaganowski and many others. There was an Orthodox newspaper published in Warsaw too, and its staff — religious Jews, men of Torah and tradition — were also drawn to the institution.

At that time, fund-raising and organized appeals were as yet unknown. When a group of hasidim wanted their own synagogue, they rented a room, brought in cabinets with books, a holy ark, a table and benches, and there it was — a synagogue. The emancipated Jews did the same. They rented a hall, brought in a few tables and everything was ready.

The Writers' Association House immediately gained fame and prestige. One of the enlightened Jews of Bilgoraj who visited Warsaw reported that he was there and saw with his own eyes nearly all the writers whose novels, poems and articles we provincials read in the papers or in the books that were in Yona Ackerman's library. The man related that the writers ate lunch, supper and maybe even breakfast at a cafeteria in the Writers' Association House. Yiddish papers arrived there from North and South America, England, France and even the Soviet Union. Hebrew periodicals arrived from Eretz Israel, London and other places. Jewish periodicals in other languages — Polish, English, French and German — were also received. Meetings on literary subjects were held there, as well as deliberations on political topics — Zionism, Socialism, Communism — and professional subjects.

Since I am not recording history but personal impressions, I am not obliged to include exact dates. I have the impression that the Yiddish Stage Actors' Association was founded at approximately the same time, or a bit before. Naturally, Jewish painters and sculptors soon became regulars at the Writers' Association House. Strange, but parallel to the founding of the Polish state, a kind of spiritual Jewish state was also established in Poland — a center for ideas, aspirations, theories, fantasies, dreams.

When I first heard the name Writers' Association House, I felt a strong attraction to the institution, like a pin attracted by a magnet. At about that time I had begun to write, and I knew that my destiny and my life would have to be connected with the Writers' Association House. All I had to do was find a room (or part of a room) in Warsaw, and a morsel of bread. I didn't have in mind wasting my life in a forsaken hole. The wide world took shape for me at the house at 13 Tlomackie Street in Warsaw.

I was well aware that it was a one-sided love. True, I yearned for the Writers' Association House, but for them I was nothing more than an unknown boy from the provinces trying to write, and who had not yet published even one line. There were hundreds, thousands like me, with the same ambitions and desires. The enlightened Jew from Bilgoraj related that only writers who wrote for a newspaper or were published in newspapers and periodicals and had made a name for themselves were allowed in. A person could enter this palace of

literature, art and culture only after he had acquired the necessary credentials.

As for me, I was not entirely a stranger to the Writers' Association House. I had an older brother, I. J. Singer, who had been published in the newspapers. However, few people had heard of him, inasmuch as he had been in Russia during 1917-21 and witnessed the Kerensky Revolution, the October Revolution, the pogroms and the riots. Returning to Poland, he settled in Warsaw and worked on a Yiddish paper.

Before going to Russia he had served as secretary to the Zamir society. He knew Peretz personally. He was a close friend of the historian E. N. Frank. He had taken up painting for a while, sharing his atelier with such artists as Ostazgo and Robinlicht, whom I met in 1914 when my brother hid out with them to avoid the Russian draft.

I also had another tie to literature. I read nearly everything written by Yiddish authors — Linetzky, Isaac Meir Dick, Mendele Mokher Seforim, Shalom Aleichem, Peretz, Frishman, Sholem Asch, Nomberg, Abraham Reisen, Yeushzohn (his novel, *The Rabbi's Court*), David Cassel, Dan Kaplanovitch, David Bergelson, Der Nister, Anokhi (his novel, *Reb Abba*) and many others. I even read several works by Yiddish writers in America, such as Morris Rosenfeld, Kobrin, Libin, Berkowitz and others. Every Yiddish book was an experience for me, every periodical or paper that reached Bilgoraj a revelation. All these writers were like relatives with whom I was involved. This did not prevent me from feeling a similar spiritual closeness with the literary giants of the world whom I read in Yiddish, Hebrew and later Polish and even German translation.

Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Strindberg, Maupassant, Hemson, Lermontov, Chekhov, Andreyev, Szenkiewicz, Mickiewicz and Pushkin were the closest to me. I was more excited about them than about Yiddish or Hebrew writers. I read their works with a fervor that was inextinguishable. I was, if I may say, an anonymous potential writer, a sort of secret literary righteous soul, one of the 36 who would one day be revealed to the world — and to himself. Innumerable obstacles stood in my way until I could arrive at the literary palace, but I knew inside me that I had to get there. I felt creative powers within myself. They churned inside me, along with the desire for love and sex. My adolescent thoughts were sunk in philosophy. The problems that preoccupied Plato, Zeno, Aristo, Spinoza, Descartes, Leibnitz, Kant and Schopenhauer were also my problems, my questions. I spent time with the boys and girls in Bilgoraj as if in a dream. I listened but didn't listen to what they said. I was friendly with them. But sooner or later I would have to leave them and set out on my own way. My small,

private accounts, such as how to earn a few pennies by giving a lesson, how to avoid persecution by the ultra-Orthodox, how to get along with father and mother, went hand in hand with my large accounts with the world.

I got hold of a translation of Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* from somewhere. I heard about Pyotr Kropotkin. I read Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*. A translation of Edgar Allan Poe fell into my hands. I knew poems by Bialik, Tchernichowsky, Jacob Fichmann, Ya'akov Cahan and Shneur by heart. The big intellectuals were not always big. The small ones were not always tiny. Lessons in philosophy, psychology and mysticism flowed from the mouths of simple people, housemaids, women who came to pour out their hearts to my mother. I studied people's behavior, their madresses, eccentricities, perversions in discussions and stories which I heard in the synagogue study hall, in the Trisk hasidim synagogue, from boys who were members of the Young Mizrahi movement. The world appeared to me a golden visage of images, poesy, originality, folklore, mysticism, superstition and much else. My Yiddish language was rich and picturesque, and could convey the subtlest sensations and deepest thoughts. I discovered the world of the spirit in all its richness. Treasures unfolded in the alleys of every village, every remote hamlet. One had only to know how to gather them up. I searched for the means, the methods to accomplish this, and made plans — untenable, fantastical, immature, but still as old as the human creative impulse. I had to acquire my daily bread, a bed to sleep in and patience, as well as ink and paper. The rest was unimportant.

Yes, love. Every girl, every young woman had her own charm which she would share with a mate. In a certain way, they were all alike. But with that, each was different, a unique product of the heavenly Creator. A bundle of individualism.

Years would pass until I received legitimation to enter the Writers' Association House, but actually I already belonged to it.

That was my situation and those were my feelings when I first crossed the threshold of the Writers' Association House.

It was at the end of the summer, possibly the month of Elul 1922, or perhaps 1921. I arrived in Warsaw, and my brother Joshua was already there, having returned from Russia disappointed with Communism, and in fact with all the isms. I came to him and asked him to help me get settled in Warsaw, but he himself had no job or apartment; besides, he had brought a wife and a child with him from Russia. Fortunately for him, his in-laws were in Warsaw, and he lived with them in a tiny back room. But at that time he was at a summer dacha near the railway line and I joined him and his family there. Although it may seem strange, renting a summer house in

Warsaw was something that only near-beggars did. Rich people lived in private villas, and many of them traveled to sanitoriums and spas. The rented summer houses were nothing more than a room and a kitchen located in a sandy area, without electricity, water (which had to be brought from the well), linens or kitchen utensils. It was called living in the forest, but there was no forest, only a sparse grove of short, skimpy fir trees. The engine whistles sounded all day long and late into the night. Various trains passed tiredly (sometimes at a crawl), including the luxury train between Warsaw and Lemberg. The *goyim* in the area, quasi-farmers, were not particularly friendly to the Jews who came there to breathe some fresh air. My brother rented two rooms and a kitchen, but he shared them with me and with his wife's family, who would arrive for the Sabbath and sometimes during the week as well.

Both my brother and I came to Warsaw to find work, any kind of work. Although my brother had been promised a job on a newspaper, it turned out that it was a promise no one intended to keep. He was supposed to have replaced a proofreader at *Folks-Zeitung*, a Socialist newspaper, but he let slip a few words that didn't fit in with the party platform, and at the last minute they gave the job to someone else who had had enough sense to watch what he said. As for me, no one had promised me anything. No one knew me. I was a Bar-Mitzva boy when I had left Warsaw. I had wasted years in a forsaken village. My brother told his friends — beggars like himself — that he had a brother who was trying to write, but every young person who could hold a pen in his hand was also trying to write.

My brother had already become a member of the Writers' Association House and he took me with him to show me the sanctuary of Yiddish literature. We entered through a door that was no grander than the door of the house we had once lived in. A sign indicated that the hall belonging to Mizrahi, the religious Zionist movement, was on the second floor. A Jew dressed in a sort of short half-frock coat, half-*kapote*, which came down to his knees, went up the stairs with us. His black hat was also a sort of combination rabbi's hat and secular hat. His beard was black and thick, but I noticed that he had trimmed it a bit at the edges. A wide black tie extended from under a white collar. That was approximately how the German "rabiners" dressed, as well as missionaries who tried to prove by Biblical verses that Jesus was the true messiah and that so long as the Jews did not accept him, they would have no respite, neither in this world nor the next. My brother let him pass and told me that he was an expounder of Scriptures who was called a "preacher," a person who uttered pearls of wisdom. We went up to the floor where the Writers'

Association House was and my brother opened the door. At that moment, my dream became reality.

I saw before me a large hall with a cafeteria and small tables, like a restaurant but different. The walls were hung with paintings and drawings. The people who were eating at the tables were not ordinary kinds of people such as I had seen in restaurants and cafeterias in Warsaw. These people had different kinds of faces with a different kind of expression. Their clothes also seemed different to me, although at the moment I could not decide in what way they were different. Nearly all the diners wore glasses. Some were eating, some were talking with their companions seated opposite, their discussions accompanied by gestures that also seemed different to me. Simultaneous with eating noodle soup, biting into a quarter of a chicken or sucking bone marrow, they debated a topic which apparently preoccupied them all. Some of the faces reflected anger, some were laughing, others expressed negation, still others tried to protect, to appease, to compromise.

Someone wearing gold-rimmed glasses, with a bald pate that

shone like a mirror, waved his fork, on which a piece of white meat was impaled, and kept shaking his head no. I could not hear what he was saying in the tumult, but it seemed to me that the expression on his face said: "You don't understand me at all. I am referring to something else entirely." One eye laughed mockingly, while the other registered astonishment that someone had interpreted what he had said as totally opposite from what he had intended.

A woman sitting near the door pointed at me angrily, indicating that I had no right to be there, but my brother explained to her that I was his brother, and her eyes laughed and she said:

"Yes, of course, you look as alike as two drops of water."

I was so excited and confused by being there, that for a moment I forgot my shyness. I had the feeling that I knew everyone who was sitting there, that I had seen them before somewhere, that I had heard their voices. But when? Where? Perhaps in a previous incarnation...

A few moments later my brother brought me into a second hall, larger and more elegant than the first. There were small

An Author With Journalistic Habits / Israel Zamir

My father began his literary career as a proofreader for a Yiddish literary newspaper in Warsaw. Later, he became a journalist, but simultaneously he produced literature. All of his books were written chapter by chapter and serialized in the *Forward*, which necessitated constructing the plot so that each segment was self-contained. He had to produce two chapters — about 2,000 words — a week, an intensive pace.

The limitations of a fixed wordage quota dictated that when the plot ran out at, say, 1,500 words, he had to pad the rest of the segment, while, alternatively, he sometimes had to cut descriptive sections and compress the plot for lack of space.

Once all the segments were completed, the material was translated into English, whereupon he reworked the plot, expanding or cutting it according to his literary inclinations. Mostly he cut the journalistic elements and developed the plot further, insisting that all translations be done from the final English version only, as it differed considerably from the original journalistic version.

My father supported himself as a journalist during most of his

life, using various pseudonyms: D. Segal, Y. Varshavski and Isaac Bashevis. His interviewing talent, reflected in many of his stories, was a product of his journalistic experience. Many of his heroes were people whom he sat with at his habitual cafeteria, Steinberg's (later, when it closed, he moved to the American Restaurant), listening to what they said. A skillful interviewer, he minimized his own presence and let his characters speak for themselves.

His lead technique was another example of the influence of journalism on his work. Most of his stories and books open with a gripping lead that immediately brings the reader into the atmosphere and events of the story and does not allow his attention to stray.

He loved the "field," which for him was the cafeteria, or Broadway, where he strolled with friends, or a plane trip. He had a talent for discovering characters, and he extracted their stories easily, without writing down a word.

He was a talented journalist and an equally talented literary writer, and he blended the two with great success.

tables here too, and people were sitting and eating as well, but the place seemed more elegant, more comfortable. This wasn't simply a restaurant, but a club, the kind I imagined when reading novels about England, especially Jules Verne's *Eighty Days Around the World*, the club where Phileas Fogg wagered he could travel around the world in 80 days.

My shyness returned and I felt I was blushing. I was also warm. I felt dizzy for a moment and everything looked hazy. I heard someone call out:

"Joshua, hello. Where did you disappear to during the cold days? And who's this? Your brother! Look, look at the redhead!"

He clapped his hands and began laughing loudly, the nasal laugh of someone who enjoys laughing, who wants to prolong the laughter until it becomes hysterical. Despite my great nervousness, I recognized him: it was the poet Peretz Markish, the Futurist, who wrote in broad lines, in assonances instead of rhymes, in volleys of words like stones, like bullets, like bombs. He, and his portrait, were known even in remote Bilgoraj.

Markish was one of the handsomest men I ever knew: of average height, slim, curly-haired, his eyes proud and intelligent. He could have been a model for a statue of a Greek god, possibly even Apollo himself. He was dressed as befitted a Russian revolutionary, in a black shirt with a folded lapel. Everything about him radiated a sense of the new era, the great revolution that came from the Soviet Union and was going to overtake the entire world. "A broadcast, a broadcast, a radio broadcast to the world, a broadcast from the king of bells of Moscow," he wrote in one of his poems. He announced the advent of the new era in bombastic sentences in the introductions to his books and to the periodical *Khaliastre* ("Gang"), which he edited. The revolution will destroy and uproot everything old and mouldy, faith in God, all the rot of the bourgeoisie and the petit-bourgeoisie, and, of course, it would reduce what was termed the classicists of literature and art, and possibly even of science, to nothing. The entire universe would present itself to serve under the red flag, in the service of the proletarian dictatorship. Everything would be new, different, revolutionary.

I had the opportunity to read this tempestuous rhetoric when I stayed at my brother's summer house, and even though I was a young boy with no life-experience, just starting to write, still I sensed that there was no backing, no truth at all behind this screaming. The world would not become suddenly new, nor would man. The new literature which Markish praised so much was nothing more than wild exaggeration, and was boring from the very beginning.

I said so to my brother, but since he was Markish's friend

and also participated in *Khaliastre*, he could not agree with me. He also spoke tentatively about new winds blowing through the world, and said that literature must be modernized. He even tried to write an article in the new style. In a way, I was older than my brother then. What happened to him did not happen to me. I was not entranced by slogans. I did not get at all excited about Mayakovsky's "A Cloud in Pants" or Alexander Block's verses: "Door and gate are locked / Tonight the gods will be robbed."

I could not become enthusiastic about people who stigmatized Jews like my father with the epithet "black raven" or "blood-sucking clericist," and who condemned peddlers, shopkeepers and all the Jews with whom I grew up, most of whom were as wretchedly poor as the proletariat. There was no justification for blaming them for not becoming Leninists even before Lenin himself was born. I knew that in Russia Jews like that were being shot, and that the local Jewish poets applauded cleaning out the "petit-bourgeois filth" and thanked Comrade Dzerzhinsky for it.

The fact was that I had acquired a great deal of information about the revolution from my brother. He told me about murders that made my blood boil. Most of the time he would end his story by saying: That's human nature.

Yes, that is human nature, I knew. In the name of Christian love, man instituted Inquisitions and dragged Jews and atheists to the stake. In the name of equality, freedom and brotherhood he lopped off heads (mostly his friends' heads) at the guillotine. In the name of anarchism he tossed bombs at innocent people. In the name of nationalism he shed seas of blood. There is no "ism," there is no vision of "a better tomorrow" or "a happy future" which did not elicit murder or torture in its name. My brother knew all this better than I, but he also thought that the phrases by Izzy Carik, Itzik Fefer and Peretz Markish would not make the world any worse than it already was. He was in a position at the time where he had to belong to some group.

I sat and listened to the discussion between Markish and my brother, while eyeing what was happening in the hall. A large picture of Y. L. Peretz hung over a stage. The picture dominated the entire hall. Peretz looked almost alive, and I had the feeling that he was supervising everything that was happening in the writers' club like a father, a spiritual mentor, lest anyone, God forbid, betray his Yiddishism, his mother tongue, his ideal of cultural autonomy. Peretz himself had been a socialist for a while, but his spirit was bound up with Yiddish, with Yiddish folklore, with the values created by the East European Jew. Thank God, I said to myself, no one kills people in the name of Yiddishism, no one throws people into jail or

exiles them to Siberia in the name of Yiddishism. That was the situation then. Later, they imprisoned Yiddish writers and even lined them up against the wall if someone found even a hint of Trotskyism in their works. Sometimes the "someone" was a Yiddish writer or critic himself. But I mustn't get ahead of myself; or, as they say in Yiddish: "One needn't catch the fish before casting the net."

Markish's discussions with my brother encompassed Yiddish books, books that were being published and a certain periodical, possibly the *Khaliastre*, but Markish's tone was deprecating, scornful of all "civilian" Yiddish literature, and in fact of Judaism in general. According to the bible of Communist Jews, progressive Jewish history began in October 1917. What came before included the Torah, the Hebrew language, clericalism, reactionism, fanaticism and Zionism. Even the Bundists, who also opposed Zionism, clericalism and the Hebrew language, were disqualified by "the people of tomorrow's world" and were included with those whom the revolution would have to sweep away with its broom of fire. The Jewish Communist felt the power of the world revolution backing him. He was not in exile like the rest of us. Communism reigned in Russia — a territory that comprised one-sixth of the planet. Today or tomorrow Communism was bound to conquer India, China, Germany, France, England, even America. Every Jewish Communist was a potential red commissar, a second Trotsky, a second Kamenev, a second Rikov, a second Zinoviev and perhaps even a second Dzerzhinsky.

Both of them, Markish and my brother, had a biting sense of humor. I liked a good joke too. But the way the Jewish Communist mocked our entire history and the devotion of the Jewish people, referring to all our values with such derision, in quotation marks — all this saddened me. I had been educated with the sense that there was nothing to fear from anyone who spoke Yiddish. This was the first time in my life that Yiddish words, and even jokes in Yiddish, frightened me. I myself belonged to those Jews whom the revolution was supposed to sweep away, burn, erase. I still wrote in Hebrew from time to time during that period. I took an interest in Kabbalah and in Hasidism. I believed in devils, ghosts and demons. I was in no way prepared to spit on Moses our Master, on the prophet Isaiah, on the *Mishnah* and the *Talmud*, on all the rabbis and hasidim who were my forefathers. Nor was I prepared to spit on all the classicists of world literature and gamble everything on the scribblings that were published in *Khaliastre*.

★

Of all the troubles I suffered from during my youth, perhaps the worst and the most ridiculous was my shyness. I was shy, and I didn't actually know why. Was it because of my neglected attire? Because of my flame-red hair? Because I wasn't able to earn a penny, because I had no profession, no formal education, I didn't speak proper Polish? Young women, girls, would come to the hall. Young fellows my age or a bit older met them, said hello to them, kissed their hand, joked with them, sat down with them at a table, ordered tea, lit up a cigarette and offered one to the girl. And I remained an agitated, frightened yeshiva boy. On the other hand, I might have felt similarly alien in a yeshiva.

The door opened and a tiny man entered — extremely thin, just skin and bones. He wore a light-colored suit, a colorful tie, yellow shoes, a straw hat. He looked ill. One eye was large, the other small, half-shut, and it looked like a glass eye. I knew him: the well-known writer and journalist H. D. Nomberg.

He glanced at the table where my brother sat with Markish and immediately turned his head away. Nomberg couldn't stand the modernists. He called them graphomaniacs.

He cast a questioning look at me and raised his thin shoulders. His feet seemed leaden and he dragged them rather than walked on them. He trudged to the stage, where there was a piano. On it was a gramophone of the type called a patiphone. I watched him place a record on the turntable and start turning the handle. Immediately, instrumental and vocal music was heard. If I recall correctly, it was a tango. That an elderly and ill Yiddish writer should be interested in this sort of thing seemed to me very strange. But I had heard strange stories about Nomberg. The weaker and sicker he became — he was actually critically ill — the more of a hedonist and pleasure-seeker he became in his last years. He abandoned all ideals and came to the conclusion that so long as man breathed, he must grab as much enjoyment as he could. Nomberg learned to dance the modern dances — the tango, the shimmy, the foxtrot, the Charleston. He danced often at the Writers' Association House. I saw that he was looking about for someone — a dancing partner. One of the young women sitting at a table with a young man got up, smiled and gestured to the young man and approached Nomberg. If he was exceptionally short, she was unusually tall. He lifted his small head to her with its remnants of blond and gray hair, barely managing to put his small hand on her shoulder, and they began to dance. Markish's eyes filled with laughter.

My brother and Markish made fun of other writers. I heard them calling S. Y. Stupnicki a good-for-nothing. That made me angry. I had read Stupnicki's book on Spinoza. In my opinion, Stupnicki was a first-rate scholar. And here they

were, calling him a good-for-nothing. If Stupnicki was a good-for-nothing, what was I? Markish said about another writer that everything he wrote was garbage. I had never heard talk like that about a writer. Of course there are better writers and worse writers, but how could one deprecate a person's work that way? I had read that author's works. He wasn't a belletrist, but rather a journalist, or an essayist.

The two began mocking Hillel Zeitlin. I regarded Hillel Zeitlin as a god, actually. I had read his book *On the Problem of Good and Bad*. I had also read many articles of his in *Moment*. Hillel Zeitlin was steeped in Jewish and general knowledge. He wrote in-depth essays on Nietzsche, on Shestov and on the Kabbalah. The two jesters, my brother and Markish, did not actually criticize Zeitlin, but they made fun of his beard, his long hair and his religiosity. They gave the impression that he was only pretending to be religious, and that he was really an atheist. Several years previously, the Bundist leader Jacob Pat had slandered Zeitlin, claiming he had seen him eating non-kosher food at a railway station, I think at Bialystok. I was a young boy then, but I remember the matter was discussed in our home. It turned out that Zeitlin had eaten a hard-boiled egg there, and eggs are not non-kosher unless there is a spot of blood. The whole affair was nothing but a Marxist slander of a religious writer. Jacob Pat no doubt considered it an atheist "mitzva" to embarrass a religious writer. Yatzkan, the editor of *Heint*, a competing paper, was exposed for this gossip, and the controversy over the affair went on for weeks. My brother and Markish referred to the scandal.

I described myself as a secularist then, a free thinker, but even then I differentiated between belief in the revelation of God and belief in a higher force that directs the world. I had read about Kant's and Laplace's cosmological theories that the solar system developed from a nebula, and all that followed from it. But where did the cosmic nebula itself come from? The truth is that the current theory of "the big bang," the enormous explosion that created the Milky Way and the other galaxies, is the direct descendant of Kant's and Laplace's theories, and is as childish and light-headed as theirs. Whether the universe developed from a nebula slowly, or was created by an explosion like a bomb in a fraction of a second, the riddle remains: what is the origin of the explosion? Of course, one could ask similarly: And what is the origin of God? Yet for some reason, it is easier for me to imagine a God who exists for all eternity, than a lifeless mass of material.

I beg the readers' indulgence for this slight digression from the subject. I could never believe that the world was simply accidental. I always believed that a spirit, a plan, a goal lay behind the laws of physics and chemistry, and that brought me

closer to religious thinking. I would put it this way: I believed in God, but not in men, in their testimonies, in their books, in their philosophies. Perhaps this way of thinking was what caused my shyness. I did not belong to any side. This kind of thinking isolated me. I was not a Jew and not a goy, not totally an atheist and not a believer in the accepted sense. I remained that way until this very day.

★

I mentioned graphomania and graphomaniacs before. These are concepts rarely used in English, but frequently used in European languages. The Europeans believe that writing can sometimes become a madness. Actually, the entire civilized world suffers from this madness. There is also a question as to whether it can be defined as a malady. The lust for writing is identical with the need to speak, to communicate. The pen or the typewriter do exactly what the mouth, the tongue and the lips did thousands of years ago: convey thoughts and feelings, mostly expressions of disappointment, fantasies and dreams. If speaking is not a madness, then neither is writing. One cannot expect that only talented people will utilize this power. The number of books, periodicals and newspapers has grown from generation to generation. Man seeks and finds new means of communication all the time: telegraph, telephone, film, theater, television. The Torah says that when Joshua, son of Nun, came and told Moses that Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the camp, and that he, Joshua, was prepared to kill them, Moses responded: Would that all of God's people were prophets.

The Writers' Association House on Tlomackie Street in Warasaw expressed Moses' wish, in a way. There was a bit of prophet, a bit of writer in every Jew in Poland, and in some way the Writers' Association House symbolized the Jewish need (and the general human need) to express the "I" in words.

The founders of the Writers' Association tried to define an author and a journalist precisely — who could belong and who could not — but creative impulses sometimes break down all categories, all definitions, all limits. Sometimes there is only one step between the reader and the writer. The hundreds of thousands of Jews in Poland who spoke Yiddish and read Yiddish papers and Yiddish books were nearly all potential writers. Each one of them had an account with God and with the world. Every one of them had something to say. Every one of them tried to free himself from the trap he had gotten himself into, or others had gotten him into, and the only means of doing so, or the easiest means, was the word, the scream, the claim on himself or on others.

I was one of those young Jews. I could no longer be that type of Jew which my religious parents wanted to make of me — someone who was not me; neither could I be, nor did I want to be, a *goy*. I could not live with faith in God — and I could not live without Him. I strove for the wide and free world, but I had realized for some time that the world was not so wide and so free as I had imagined. Ideas plagued me like locusts. Excitement churned inside me both when I slept and when I was awake. There was only one way I could express it: through the pen, in my Yiddish language. However, I immediately saw that countless others had the same need. Many of us had long sensed the approach of a holocaust. Others believed that the solution to all our troubles was to be found in Russia. Still others hoped that Palestine was the gate of redemption.

The management of the Writers' and Journalists' Association printed membership cards for authors, journalists and a number of guests. They posted a woman near the door to see to it that those who did not belong would not burst in. But no guard, no amount of guarding, could stop the stream of breakers-in, those for whom the Writers' Association House could be, or must be, their home. People came with various excuses. I was I. J. Singer's brother. Someone else had published a poem or an article in some provincial local paper. Others came to buy a ticket to a lecture and meanwhile entered to glimpse the priests of the Yiddish word. Some spent their last meager pennies on printing a book or pamphlet that would entitle them to membership in the association. Many tourists from America were curious enough to visit the Writers' House and convey regards from far-off America.

Actors and actresses and musicians all had some sense of belonging to Yiddish culture, to Hebrew culture, to Zionism, Socialism, Anarchism or vegetarianism and tried to approach the authors in order to share their spiritual experiences.

This whole question of a hall where entry was forbidden was alien to the Jew. Synagogues and study halls were always open to all. A rabbi's door, a teacher's door, a preacher's door was never closed to any Jew. To lock yourself in was an attribute of the *goy*.

Not only men, but young Jewish women wanted to come there. The idea of assimilation had gone bankrupt in Poland by the start of the 1920s. True, many young Jewish men and women had been educated in Polish culture, but Polish society rejected them no less than it did a Yiddish-speaking woman. The jokers in the Writers' Association House called these women "literary supplements." But everywhere the modern man went, the modern woman wanted to go as well. She wanted to exhibit her beauty, her dress, her education, her charm and her intelligence. She dreamed of making contact with an author, of falling in love with him, of helping him translate his work into the language of the *goyim*, which she generally knew better than he, since the parents who sent their sons to a yeshiva sent their daughters to a gymnasium.

I saw these young women arguing with the door-woman, trying to prove that they had some sort of right to enter. Someone had invited them — a member or a guest or a guest of a guest.

I personally had limited right of entry, but sometimes I tried to help someone who wanted to get in.



דבר בעתו מה טוב משלי טו' כנ' "A word in its season how good it is." Proverbs, chap. 15, ver. 23.

No. 1.]

כה מרחשון תרפ"א לפק'

NOVEMBER 12th, 5602.—1941

[Price 2d.

THE "JEWISH CHRONICLE" AT 150: THE WORLD'S OLDEST ONGOING JEWISH NEWSPAPER

JOSEPH FINKLESTONE

When in November this year the *Jewish Chronicle* celebrates its 150th birthday and hammers home repeatedly that it is the world's oldest Jewish newspaper by far, there will be numerous tributes and exaggerated claims for its excellence. The tributes will come not only from Diaspora Jewish leaders, but from Israeli, British and American statesmen. As when the *Jewish Chronicle* celebrated its 100th birthday, and Winston Churchill, then in the midst of his heroic struggle against Nazi Germany, sent a memorable message to the paper, so will the new British Prime Minister John Major commemorate the 150th birthday with appropriately fine words of praise.

Without doubt, much of this praise will be deserved. It is a really amazing achievement for a Jewish newspaper in a world which had seen so many terrible Jewish catastrophes, which almost led to the destruction of the Jewish people, to have survived so strongly and to have gained so much prestige, being all things to all men — and women. For the small Jewish community of Britain it has become such a familiar, even family institution that nobody can be born, be bar-mitzvah, become engaged to be married, have children and finally die without it being recorded in the pages of the *Jewish Chronicle*. Yet at the same time, it is a paper which weekly prints important articles on Jewish life in Britain, Israel and every part of the Jewish world; provides information about the

activities of small Jewish communities throughout Britain, thus helping them survive by making them feel that they are not forgotten; provides extensive information about any anti-Semitic excesses in Britain and every part of the world; and above all devotes immense effort to describing developments in Israel. As it is a completely independent weekly newspaper, proudly rejecting any monetary support from any community or individual — in fact the paper itself regularly gives monetary donations to ailing institutions — it has to retain the loyalty of a vast variety of readers to buy it and advertise in it — young couples setting up home, fashion-conscious women, youngsters, sports enthusiasts, communal would-be Napoleons, charity-function organizers, synagogue-attenders of all varieties — Orthodox, Reform, Liberal and ultra-Orthodox — and those who want immediate and reliable news of what is happening to Jews all over the world and particularly in Israel. The *Jewish Chronicle* is thus not just one paper but a collection of many newspapers, the trivial often standing side by side with the important, and is essential reading for the housewife as it is for the professor at Oxford. For the devoted weekly reader of the *JC*, as it is affectionately called, the purchase or the arrival by post of the paper on Friday is as essential as the purchase of the Shabbat halot and the lighting of the Friday night Shabbat candles. There is a feeling of loss, of

incompleteness, if by some mishap the *JC* does not arrive on a Friday. There would be angry calls to the newsagent or to the offices of the *JC*. The lady of the house will not know who had become engaged to be married, or who had had a child, and the man of the house will not know who had died, or what was happening in Israel. So what would a normal Jewish couple talk about at the Shabbat table? There could be a sullen silence. It is possible that marriages began to break up on a Friday night without the *JC*. When a former editor of the *JC*, William Frankel, sought a title for his collection of notable reports and articles in the *JC*, he enthusiastically grabbed my suggestion to call it *Friday Nights*.

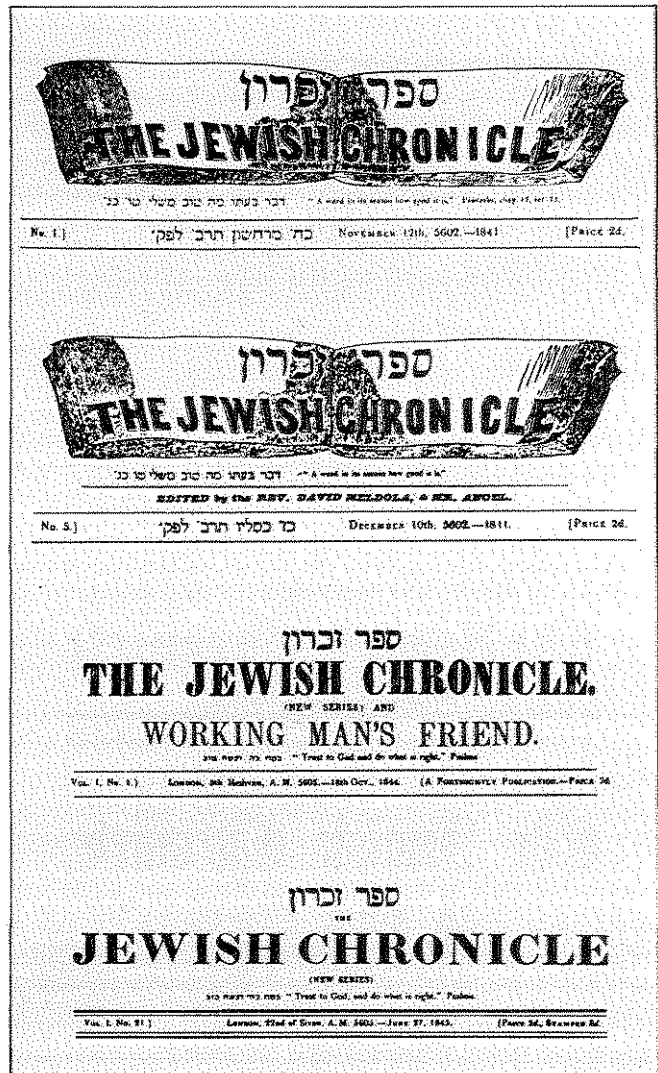
The *JC* has played a very important role in fighting for Jewish rights, by challenging the brutal Tsarist regimes and revealing in full their anti-Jewish excesses; by fighting the British politicians who sought to stop Jewish immigrants fleeing the pogroms from settling in Britain; and above all by giving a platform for Theodor Herzl and his call for Jewish revival, and then — much later — struggling itself for Zionism and a Jewish state. But not all was light or courageous in the house of the *JC*, and it would be wrong to omit this in the midst of the rightful celebration.

Early History

Though the oldest paper in the Jewish world, the *JC* cannot claim to have originated either the English newsheet or the Jewish periodical newspaper. These had their origins in seventeenth-century Holland. However, the *Jewish periodical's* existence and history exemplifies the Jews' susceptibility to outside influences and ability to adapt them to their own use. It was in 1686 that the earliest Jewish periodical publication and the beginning of genuine Jewish or Yiddish journalism began, for the benefit of the Ashkenazi sector of Amsterdam Jewry. The earliest experiment in Anglo-Jewish journalism, the *Hebrew Intelligencer*, first appeared in January 1823 and exemplified the difference between British and Continental European practices. While the Continental periodicals were essentially literary in character and had the object of morally uplifting the readers, in England the periodical was primarily a newspaper aiming to provide news, though frequently what would now be considered of laughably trivial nature. That was the reason for the failure of the *Hebrew Intelligencer*. A community so tiny as the London Jewish community was then, where births were announced by the *shamash* in synagogue, deaths made known by an official who rode around the Jewish quarter rattling a copper charity box and ordinary gossip circulated quickly from mouth to mouth, did not need a news bulletin. Only when comment was added to the news and

opposing opinions were expressed was the Anglo-Jewish press able to establish itself, though at the beginning very shakily indeed.

Other attempts were made and ended in failure before *The Voice of Jacob* appeared in September 1841, described as a fortnightly publication devoted to the spiritual and general welfare of the Jews. It was followed two months later, on November 12, 1841, by the *Jewish Chronicle*. *The Voice of Jacob* had generously welcomed the appearance of the *Jewish Chronicle* as a "fellow labourer" on the Jewish scene. The birth of the *Jewish Chronicle* was to prove an important event in Diaspora and Zionist Jewish history. Its arrival also marked the eventual death of *The Voice of Jacob*.



The development of the "Jewish Chronicle" logo (1)

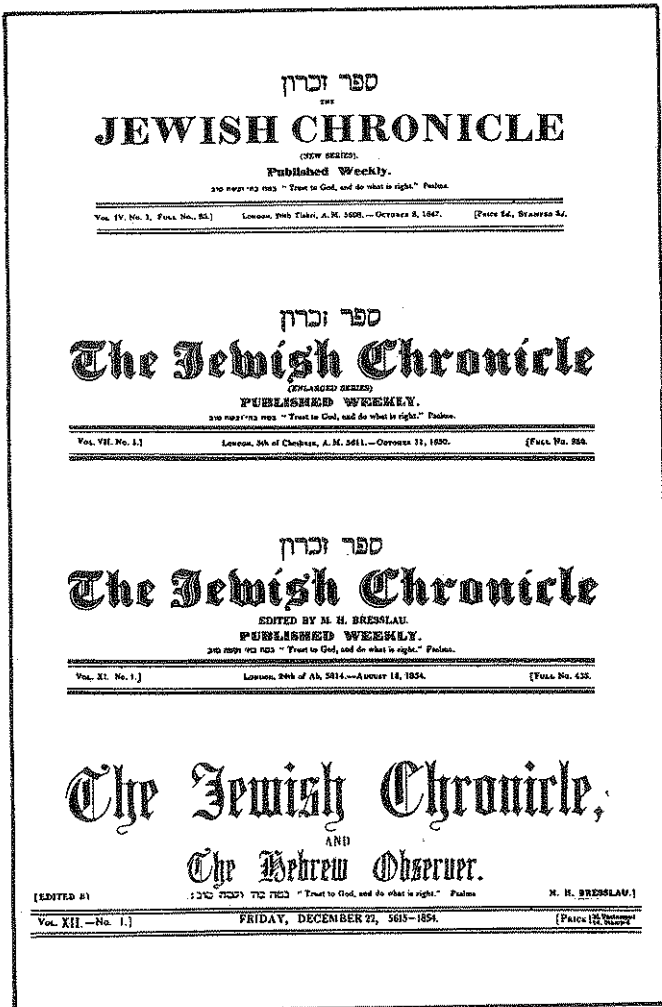
The *Jewish Chronicle* was the brainchild of Isaac Vallentine, a typically worthy, well-intentioned, active member of the Anglo-Jewish community. He was not particularly wealthy, nor highly cultured, but he was filled with enthusiasm for every Jewish cause. He was born in Belgium in 1793, his father being a cantor at a synagogue in London and the author of a bizarre composition on the death of Lord Nelson, the British admiral who destroyed Napoleon's fleet before himself dying in the Battle of Trafalgar. After an adventurous early career, which included service as a sailor on a British ship in the Napoleonic wars, Isaac established himself in London as a printer, book-seller and enthusiastic do-gooder. It was natural that he seize the opportunity of establishing a new Jewish newspaper.

Isaac Vallentine took for his collaborators two men, representing both sectors of the community, Ashkenazi and Sephardi, who were then far more evenly balanced than later when the mass immigration of Russian and Polish Jews made Anglo-Jewry a predominantly Ashkenazi community. One was David Meldola, son of a former *hakham* of the Bevis Marks Sephardi Synagogue, one of the most beautiful synagogues in Europe, and who had himself become its spiritual head. The other was Moses Angel, a promising young Londoner who had studied at the newly established University College, an unusual occurrence those days, and had recently been appointed to teach at Jews' Free School, of which he was to be headmaster for nearly fifty years.

After discussing the matter in 1840 with Meldola, Isaac Vallentine called on Angel and expounded his plan. He proposed, he said, to issue a newspaper to be called the *Jewish Chronicle*, or, in Hebrew, *Sefer Zikkaron*. The young man accepted the editorship, but made two conditions: that his work should be honorary and that strict anonymity should be observed regarding the identity of the editors. Meldola was to supervise the Hebrew portion and Angel had the more arduous task of managing the larger English section. Clearly, Meldola did not see great honor accruing to him by being Hebrew editor of the new newspaper.

There were lengthy discussions which took up many months before Isaac and his two collaborators believed themselves ready to issue the *Jewish Chronicle*. Then, to their consternation, they discovered that a rival, Jacob Franklin, a pious Jew, had plans to bring out *The Voice of Jacob*. He had received contributions from leading members of the community. Sir Moses Montefiore, who was to become so famous during his lifetime of over 100 years, contributed £10, and Baron Lionel de Rothschild £5. *The Voice of Jacob* was duly heard. Had it not been for the fact that Isaac Vallentine was his own printer and thus kept his overhead expenses to a minimum, it is thought unlikely that he would have continued with his plan, in view of the appearance of *The Voice of Jacob*, which appeared to have the support of the leaders of the community. Vallentine refused to abandon his plans, and the first number of *Sefer Zikkaron — Jewish Chronicle* appeared at last on November 12, 1841, simultaneously with the fourth issue of *The Voice of Jacob*.

Unfortunately, the first issue, and indeed the first volume, of the *Jewish Chronicle* has become extremely rare and possibly does not even exist anymore. There is no copy in the British Museum. There were several copies in the *JC* editorial offices and one in the Mocatta Library but these were completely destroyed by German bombing during World War II.



The development of the "Jewish Chronicle" logo (2)

The first issue, like its successors for a long time to come, it is admitted in the history of the *JC* published to mark its centenary, was hardly even a newspaper. It was a moralistic publication, diversified by articles and occasional items of news. Prominence was given to religious and moral instruction. Only when the reputation of the paper increased, and more correspondents were appointed, did the amount of communal news increase. Pride in the achievements of Jews, whether religious or not, which has particularly characterized the *Jewish Chronicle*, was early in evidence. Thus we read: "Mr Mendelssohn, the eminent composer and musician," had conducted "the performance of an elaborate piece of music, composed by himself, in which were employed the astonishing number of one Thousand and Eighty Performers in the Orchestra constituted for the occasion."

Within a year, however, the *Jewish Chronicle* was hit by financial problems, as two newspapers were competing for a very small readership. For 18 months, from May 20, 1842, the *Jewish Chronicle* was in eclipse, struggling to avoid being absorbed by *The Voice of Jacob*. Vallentine, who had become publisher of *The Voice*, told the readers that the best features of the *Chronicle* would appear in *The Voice*. That paper enjoyed a very short period of glory as the only Jewish periodical, under Angel's editorship. However, Vallentine, who refused to accept defeat for his *Jewish Chronicle* venture, made another — successful — effort to give it new life. He broke with *The Voice of Jacob* and was fortunate to find a new partner, Joseph Mitchell, a London Jew of humble origin who has been described as "a rough diamond who sadly needed polishing" and who provided the necessary funds.

A Second Start

Preparations for the new *Chronicle* pushed forward and an advertisement appeared in *The Times* stating:

Sepher Zikkaron. Jewish Chronicle (New Series) and Working Man's Friend. A journal which, answering to its title, chronicles every circumstance connected with the Jewish nation, their laws, their customs, their literature, their position to the government wherever they are scattered, and particularly of those in Great Britain, and whilst the Jewish Chronicle is devoted to the sacred causes of religion and the elevation of the mind of the working man, its columns are thrown open to all creeds for discussion on these highly interesting subjects, not being the organ of any party or sect, but striving for truth and justice.

This advertisement is significant because it gives a vivid picture of the kind of paper Vallentine was reestablishing.

It was on October 18, 1844, that the first issue of the new

series of the *Jewish Chronicle* appeared. The policy of the paper differed from that of its rival, *The Voice*. Its secondary title, *Working Man's Friend*, as well as its lower price — it cost 2 pence while the *Voice* cost 3 pence — was meant to indicate that it wanted to be more democratic and less highbrow, and aspired to appeal to a wider audience. However, the *Working Man's Friend* part of the title was dropped by Mitchell, who had become editor, after 20 issues. Mitchell apparently felt that the proletarian appeal did not appreciably help the circulation of the paper, which was appearing fortnightly. True to the feelings of the owner, the paper took the keenest interest in the struggle for Jewish emancipation, unlike *The Voice of Jacob*, which, of course, did not object to the political betterment of Jews in England but discouraged agitation to bring this about.

British newspapers greeted the arrival of the new *Jewish Chronicle* in a friendly spirit. On October 25, 1842, *The Morning Advertiser* said that the new paper "advocates liberal principles in religion and is calculated to infuse enlightened notions on those subjects, on which there has been much bigotry among the Jews." *The Liverpool Mercury* remarked that the *Jewish Chronicle's* opinions "are liberal so that a Christian may read them with pleasure while those for whom it is principally intended will constantly recognise it as a friend."

On the Continent, the older established Jewish periodicals greeted the new arrival patronizingly, with no way of knowing that the newcomer would outlive them all. However, it aroused such interest that the *JC* appointed an agent in Hamburg.

The newcomer made an impact even beyond the Atlantic Ocean, and not only in Jewish circles. In August 1847 the *Barbados Globe and Official Gazette* republished extracts from two leading articles in the *JC* on the Bishop of Oxford and the Jews, with the following comment:

We have extracted from The Jewish Chronicle two Editorial articles — being in reply to a very gross and intolerant insult offered to the Jews and their religion by the Bishop of Oxford, at the last anniversary meeting of the society for promoting Christianity among them. These articles are beautiful compositions.

The *JC* adopted an attitude with regard to religious conflicts within the Jewish community which was to prove highly beneficial financially, morally and in terms of readership. The *JC* is nominally Orthodox and middle of the road, providing space for all religious groups, including those on the extreme right and the extreme left. This has meant that its readers and advertisers could include both a Hassidic rabbi and a secularist

at a university. While the Reform movement in Britain, which was establishing itself in the first half of the nineteenth century, provoked bitter animosity on the part of *The Voice of Jacob*, it elicited an attitude of sympathy, though not agreement, from the *JC*. The sermons delivered in the bastion of the Reform movement, the West London Synagogue, found a place in the pages of the *JC* equally with those of the older synagogues. In those days the Jewish public read sermons with an eagerness which their descendants find incredible, if not bizarre.

Inevitably, there were bitter exchanges between the two rival Jewish newspapers, which were fighting hard for the readers who would keep them alive. *The Voice of Jacob* at first noted the arrival of the reborn *JC* with supercilious scorn. It then criticized its rival for throwing its columns open to all opinions, which was proudly admitted by the *JC*. In return, the *JC* heaped scorn on Hebrew poems printed in *The Voice* which were far from perfect. *The Voice* accused the *JC* of being the organ of the Reformers; the *JC* replied that *The Voice* was bigoted and had an unfortunate influence on the newly appointed chief rabbi.

The *JC* was to have complete revenge soon. *The Voice* was falling on evil days. Its founder, Jacob Franklin, retired from its administration in 1846 and the periodical passed into the hands of a committee. It struggled for two more years but, deprived of the zeal of its founder, the periodical declined and, after a life of seven years, *The Voice of Jacob* was heard no more. From September 1, 1848, the *JC* ruled alone and unchallenged.

A Fighting Newspaper

From then on, and for the rest of the century, the *JC*, which in 1847 became a weekly, was never again to be so disadvantaged as it had been in its first years. It gained in prestige and in circulation. It fought bravely for Jewish rights, both within Britain and in the rest of the world. Indeed, there were many fights to be fought, and the Jewish people needed fighters like the *Jewish Chronicle*.

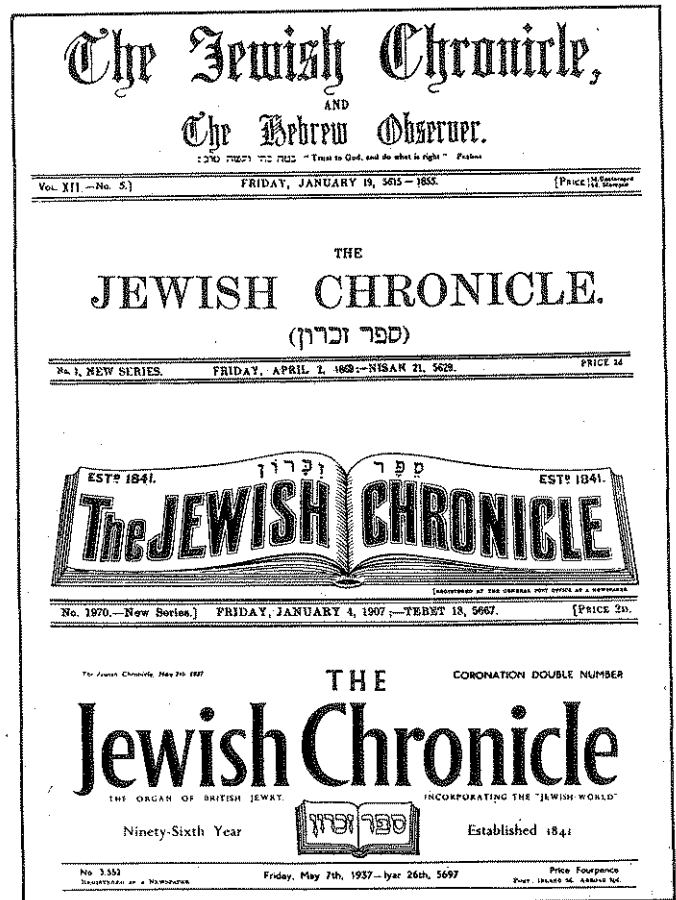
There was, for example, the vital struggle to break the racist anti-Jewish rule that no Jew could sit in Parliament. In typical British style, this was achieved by insisting that every new member of Parliament had to swear an oath of belief in Jesus of Nazareth. Baron Lionel de Rothschild was more than once elected by the English electorate to the House of Commons but he was unable to take his seat. A good part of the space in the *JC* during the early 1850s was taken up with the attempts of Baron Lionel, and later of the impetuous David Solomons, to take their rightful seats in the House of Commons. It was the

Jewish Chronicle which led the press in joyful celebration when Parliament at long last removed the oath clause.

Anti-Jewish excesses were reported and castigated in the *JC*. Attention was drawn to the violence of the Tsars against the Jews, which was to grow in scope and engulf large masses of Russian Jewry. There were protests against the anti-Jewish policies of the Papal States, which were to retain the most reactionary restrictions against Jews until the capture of Rome in 1870. In 1853 a scandal that was reminiscent of the Dark Ages took place when a Jew was imprisoned for the "crime" of employing a Christian servant. When *JC* editor Mitchell asked a cardinal to intervene, the reply was that he could do nothing to obtain the imprisoned man's release.

Surprising and significant evidence of the existence of strong Zionist feelings in Britain in the early part of the nineteenth century is provided by the pages of the *JC*. Zionism existed long before the advent of Theodor Herzl, who was later

The development of the "Jewish Chronicle" logo (3)



to make such a tremendous impact on ordinary Jews. British Zionism was not just a matter of charity for the Jews living in Jerusalem or Safed. There were frequent attempts at colonization and some attempt at political action. For example, a prospectus of an Association for Promoting Jewish Settlements in Israel, sponsored by Christians as well as Jews, was published in December 1852. Sympathizers for this scheme were invited to send their names to the office of the *JC*. The scheme envisaged petitioning the sultan of Turkey for permission for the Jews to occupy and cultivate land in their former country. Foreign governments too, especially England, were to be petitioned for their support at the sultan's palace. It was a bold plan, anticipating Herzl's later unsuccessful efforts. Nothing came of the plan but it showed the extent of the English Jew's abiding devotion to Eretz Israel. There was important non-Jewish support for this early Zionism. It was displayed in a most romantic manner by the novelist and prime minister Benjamin Disraeli, born of a Dutch-English Jewish family but baptized by his father when a child. Zionism was also embraced by the great woman novelist George Eliot. Failure did not stop the pro-Zionist endeavors, which were faithfully recorded in the pages of the *Jewish Chronicle*, though it was to be a long time before the *JC* itself became a Zionist paper.

Abraham Benisch, a Talented Editor

One of the greatest editors of the *JC*, Dr. Abraham Benisch, born in Drosau, Bohemia, had dreamt of Zion while a student at Vienna University, but like so many other dreamers he ended up living in England. He started a rival newspaper, called *The Hebrew Observer*, which challenged the *JC*. It was a serious effort, as Benisch was a capable and learned man and a better journalist than the editor of the *JC* then, M. H. Bresslau. Neither side refused to give in, though it was obvious that the Jewish community could not support two periodicals. The answer was to join forces, and from December 1854 the two periodicals amalgamated. For the next 15 years the paper was called *The Jewish Chronicle and Hebrew Observer*.

There was competition between Bresslau and Benisch for a dominant role, with Benisch apparently envisioned in the agreement to play a subordinate part. However, Benisch, a more skillful and enterprising journalist, emerged victorious, and after the fifth issue Bresslau's name disappeared from the paper. Henceforth the *JC* was in the strong, skilled hands of Abraham Benisch, who was not only editor but also proprietor, printer and publisher.

Benisch found the paper in great confusion, without a proper list of paid subscribers, and it is difficult to understand

how the paper did not sink under the weight of mismanagement. He put all this right and by 1858 announced with great pride:

For the first time since the existence of the Anglo-Jewish Press, a Jewish journal has not only paid its own expenses but even left a surplus. It is true that had we to pay the printer's and publisher's profit and the salaries of the Editor and his staff, such a result could not have been announced.

The reason was, of course, that all these tasks were performed by one man only — Benisch himself.

The *Jewish Chronicle's* special strength then, and later, was that, as Benisch remarked when announcing an enlargement of the paper: "While every class paper is powerfully supported by individuals whose views it represents, 'The Jewish Chronicle' has for its maintenance to depend wholly and exclusively upon the subscriptions [for the paper] and advertisements." Benisch added that it would be a mistake to imagine that it was because the paper was making a profit that he was able to enlarge it.

We are our own printers, and thus save his profit. We are our own publisher, and thus save his commission. We perform all literary labours ourselves and thus save the salaries of the literary staff. Were these resources not at our command The Jewish Chronicle would be a losing concern.

Regarding circulation figures, the editor was satisfied but not very informative, as the history of the newspaper admits. Five hundred copies were sent out by mail every week, he boasted, but "of course included only a small portion of our London circulation, as we employ three distributors for supplying our town subscribers." The paper's influence was not, however, to be estimated by circulation alone. It wrote:

The Jewish Chronicle, we believe, is as yet the only Jewish journal which regularly every week produces a leader in which Jewish interests are comprehensively discussed... Copies of it are not only forwarded to nearly every European country, and to every British colony inhabited by Jews, but also to Syria, the interior of Africa, South America, China and the East Indies. Our remarks are often quoted, translated and commented upon, although journalists are not always honest enough to acknowledge the source whence the articles are borrowed and we not rarely are amused by receiving paragraphs from correspondents copied from other papers which originally appeared in our own. Occasionally we have the satisfaction of being able to trace the eccentric travels of a paragraph setting out from our pages all through Europe, and at last returning to our island disguised in some foreign garb, as copied from the Journal de Constantinople when in fact the English editor might have had it much nearer home.

It is an experience which the *Jewish Chronicle* was to continue to feel for many years to come and still does to this day. As then, so now, the *JC*, while apparently irritated or even angered by this stealing of its news items, privately has some satisfaction that its news columns are considered so interesting as to be worth stealing.

Specially significant is editor Benisch's assurance to his readers in 1856 that he was quite independent of outside support and relied on subscriptions and advertisements, apart from the liberality of "one gentleman who pays an annual subscription of two pounds and about ten other people who pay one pound instead of 12, 16 or 18 shillings." This was in contrast to *The Voice of Jacob* which had publicly appealed for monetary support from rich persons. However, there is reason to believe that under a different editor later on the paper willingly accepted donations from the Rothschilds, never-failing supporters of Anglo-Jewish enterprises. When in 1909 the *JC* was formed into a limited company, it was found that a regular cheque had been received from the Rothschild Bank in London for no particular reason, from time beyond memory. This practice ceased in the twentieth century, though the Rothschilds still believed that they had a special right to be listened to by the editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*.

Benisch was fortunate that his ownership and editorship of the *JC* began at a happy moment in English journalism. The Stamp Duty on newspapers — one penny — was abolished in the Budget of 1855. Six years later the Paper Duty was lifted, and not long afterwards the Advertisement Tax disappeared. A cheap press was now a possibility. The immense development of the *JC* in those years was largely due to these factors.

Although his Zionist dreams, which had first brought him to London in search of supporters, had not been fulfilled, Benisch hammered away regularly at the need to restore the Jewish people in the land of their fathers. He wrote warmly about every collection of funds on behalf of Eretz Israel. He championed the idea of Palestinian settlement as against the idea of the *Haluka* (charity) system, which Chaim Weizmann was later to attack with such contempt. When Rabbi Chayim Zevi Sneersohn of Jerusalem addressed an "Open Letter to the Jews of England" advocating a serious attempt to promote Jewish colonization in Eretz Israel, Benisch devoted an editorial to it, and this in turn provoked an enthusiastic communication, published on October 1, 1863, from a remarkable Christian forerunner of Zionism, Henry Wentworth Monk, on the subject of establishing agricultural colonies in Eretz Israel as a preliminary to the salvation of Israel.

Another result of Rabbi Sneersohn's appeal was the

announcement of a new pilgrimage to the Holy Land by Sir Moses Montefiore, the most respected and colorful personality in Anglo-Jewry during the century. Montefiore's visit aroused overoptimistic expectations in the heart of the *JC* editor. Writing with a passionate enthusiasm, he said:

Can it be doubted that the name of Montefiore would prove the magic spell? It is likely that in the first instance not all standard-bearers of Jerusalem would join the movement. The Continent might for a time hang back. It might at first be found impracticable to enlist for such a project the phlegmatic Germans. But practical England and dependences, as well as the acute Americans, would hail such a project. And after a while all other sections of Israel would join in.

A notable letter supporting the Zionist scheme came from Henri Dunant, the Swiss philanthropist and founder of the International Red Cross Organization. He stressed that the rights of the Jews to Eretz Israel "are superior to all others."

Benisch continued to cherish his early scheme of an organization to undertake action in the political field on behalf of suffering and persecuted Jews all over the world. The infamous Mortara case, which involved the abduction of a six-year-old Jewish boy in Bologna, Italy, in 1858, after being secretly baptized by a servant, and the failure of the desperate parents to get him back despite an international outcry, led to the foundation of the Alliance Israelite Universelle by a group of French Jews in 1860. Benisch gave it his enthusiastic support, as he gave to its English equivalent, the Anglo-Jewish Association, which was started later, but which did not gain the same fame nor could claim the same achievements.

Despite his excellence and his exceptional devotion and hard work, which led to continued progress by the *Jewish Chronicle*, Benisch was to be superceded by a lesser man. The very success of the *Jewish Chronicle* invited competition, and the development of cheap newspapers in the wider non-Jewish community, as exemplified by *The Daily Telegraph*, suggested the direction. In June 1868 a Jewish penny weekly, *The Jewish Record*, appeared and had an initial success. Benisch's alarmed reaction led him to the mistaken idea of publishing a special penny edition of the *Jewish Chronicle*, while keeping the main edition still at 3 pennies. This proved a flop. Another idea, which was to reappear at various times in the subsequent history of the *Jewish Chronicle* and is not even absent today, was that, with the Jews having become emancipated and sharing the good things of life with their fellow non-Jewish citizens, the *JC* should print general news — political, social, even financial. Current affairs were commented upon in the same manner as the national non-Jewish newspapers, so that

the *JC* became both a general as well as a Jewish newspaper. This was not a success. The paper fell between two stools: the Jewish readers seeking Jewish news did not want general information and advice which they could obtain from famous newspapers like *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph*, and at a higher standard, too.

Moreover, Benisch was taken in by the temptations presented by the advertisements in his own newspaper. He forgot the injunction that no politician should believe in his own propaganda and no journalist in his own advertisements. He was persuaded by the claims of prospectuses of gold mining companies and invested his painfully earned savings in enterprises which were both speculative and unsafe, suffering heavy losses. With his slender capital dwindling alarmingly and his efforts to beat off the competition to the *JC* proving unsuccessful, Benisch suffered a breakdown in his health and was unable to carry on as the owner and editor of the paper.

A New Era for the "JC"

A group of influential London Jews, rich and aristocratic, came to the rescue not of the editor but of the paper. They were Lionel Louis Cohen, founder of the United Synagogue, which was to become the largest synagogue organization in Britain; Samuel Montagu, his brother-in-law, and subsequently the first Lord Swaythling; and Lionel Van Oven, their close friend, a member of a family which had played a leading role in London Jewish life for several generations. Significantly, Jacob Franklin, the founder of *The Voice of Jacob* and father of Jewish journalism, acted as the go-between.

Benisch probably hoped to continue as editor after selling the paper to this group, but they had other plans. Their choice was Michael Henry, whose writings were among the most brilliant that had yet appeared in the Jewish press. The paper dropped its secondary title and *Hebrew Observer* and went back to the simple *The Jewish Chronicle*. To this was again appended the Hebrew equivalent, *Sefer Zikkaron*.

Thus, on Friday, April 2, 1869, a new era dawned for the paper. The *JC* was to continue in the same format — having dropped the penny edition — until the outbreak of World War II in 1939. Above all, the *JC* changed from a typical, rather staid, unremarkable Victorian organ of ethnic opinion into one which had its own literary, independent character, and could confidently face the modern world. Henry introduced a new, higher literary standard, more exacting than that of the former German-born editors, while maintaining a religious tone which satisfied even that hypercritical age, as the brilliant Anglo-Jewish historian Cecil Roth termed it. While Benisch was inclined to accept the established Anglo-Jewish

institutions as he found them, Henry, who had been active in communal work and saw their imperfections from within, adopted a policy of constructive criticism. Though no communal leader likes any kind of criticism, constructive or not, Henry's criticisms were of such a weighty nature that his advice had to be adopted and many communal improvements in the 1870s were attributable to him.

Even more important from the paper's point of view, and that of Jewish journalism and literature in the nineteenth century, was Henry's decision to entirely reverse Benisch's custom — brought about mainly by lack of money — of performing most of the editorial work himself. Henry, who had no money problems, attracted brilliant contributors from all parts of the Jewish community, including such men as the Rev. A. L. Green, Asher Asher and the historian James Picciotto.

Michael Henry was an astonishing editor, verging on the quixotic. He spent almost all of his editorial salary on matters connected with the *JC* without charging them to the accounts, fearing that unless the paper was a commercial success the proprietors might become disheartened and he would lose the opportunity to advance Judaism as he saw it.

Henry's editorship lasted only six years, as he was the victim of a tragic accident, but his innovations were of lasting value. His death enabled Benisch to return to the editorship, but he was wise enough not to touch Henry's innovations.

When Benisch died three years later, he left the *JC* to the Anglo-Jewish Association, which he had helped to found. One condition was that the manager would be Asher Myers, an antiquary by taste, a businessman by training and an exceptionally good journalist — by chance. The Anglo-Jewish Association accepted the gift of the newspaper but it had no intention of publishing the paper by itself and immediately looked for a suitable purchaser who would publish the *JC* as a weekly devoted to Anglo-Jewry and the Jewish people but independent of all Jewish institutions. Such a person came forward. He was Israel Davis, a lawyer who devoted much of his time to Jewish affairs. After long discussions, the paper was sold to him, Asher Myers and Sydney Montagu Samuel, a financier and librettist.

While not a literary man, Asher Myers, who became editor, had the faculty of gathering round himself outstanding literary personalities. There was Solomon Schechter, the scholar, Lucien Wolf, a brilliant polemicist and historian, Israel Abrahams, a sprightly writer, as well as Israel Zangwill, an occasional contributor who had won fame as the chronicler of Jewish life in famous novels such as *Children of the Ghetto* and *King of the Shorrers*. The paper helped in the ambitious plan

to translate Graetz's monumental *History of the Jews* into English and made arrangements for the five volumes to be sold to *JC* readers at the incredible low price of one pound. The paper also greatly helped in publicizing and securing subscribers for *The Jewish Encyclopaedia*, considered the greatest Jewish literary enterprise in English of all time.

Myers was responsible for introducing more illustrations and devoting more space to readers' letters, a very important feature even today. But as the century entered its last era, the editor of the *JC* had to take into account developments abroad that were starker — pogroms in Russia and the rise of anti-Semitism in Germany. The barbaric events in Russia prompted the *JC* to print frequent reports with such headings as the one in the issue of May 6, 1881: "Outrages Upon Jews in Russia." With the violence against Russian Jews continuing, the *JC* accepted the advice of the renowned British statesman Gladstone, who held the office of prime minister a number of times, that it should publish the facts of the persecution of the Jews consecutively and collectively. The *JC* performed this task adequately so far as the Jewish community was concerned, but it was essential to find a method of approaching the non-Jewish general community. This was accomplished on July 17, 1891, when the *JC* distributed the first monthly supplement, *Darkest Russia, a Journal of Persecution*. Henceforth, *Darkest Russia* continued to appear once each month with the *JC*, besides being distributed independently in large numbers. There is little doubt that *Darkest Russia* did a great deal to arouse British public opinion against the barbarities perpetrated by the Russian Tsarist Government against the Jews. The Russian Government was embarrassed by this publication, and it is likely that many Jewish lives were saved by *Darkest Russia*, which continued for a year.

Darkest Russia was followed by other supplements printed after major tragic events affecting the Jewish people worldwide. Thus the *JC* included a special four-page supplement with the issue of January 28, 1898, which consisted of an English translation of Emile Zola's great indictment of the persecutors of Alfred Dreyfus, under the title "*J'Accuse*." For many years afterwards the Dreyfus case, with its evidence of a great nation's army being consumed by hatred of the Jews to such an extent as to imprison an innocent man, regularly occupied much space in the *JC*.

The Zionist Question

Paradoxically, while German anti-Semitism, the Russian persecution of the Jews and the Dreyfus case were to lead Theodor Herzl to formulate his ideas for a Zionist movement so that Jews should have their own state to end such terrible

treatment of the Jews, the *JC*, which had done more than anyone to bring these events to the attention of the public, was opposed to the idea of Zionism.

Herzl was to be bitterly disappointed by the response of the leading Jews of Britain, on whom he had counted so much. There is an illuminating entry in his diary for November 26, 1895. He had met a group of people, among them Asher Myers, when "the conversation degenerated into a theological dispute." Asher Myers asked Herzl what was his attitude to the Bible and he replied that "I was a free-thinking man and that it was our intention to adhere to the principle that everyone must work out his own salvation. The upshot, however, is that I have not succeeded in creating a central organisation." Asher Myers told him the organization was unnecessary and added, in good measure, addressing Herzl: "No, you are not the man to conduct it. You must be the martyr of the idea. The religious Jews will follow, though they will regard you as a bad Jew. The Jews will go, not to Argentina but to Palestine." Asher Myers asked Herzl to summarize his scheme in the *JC*, which he promised to do.

This extract shows Herzl's bitterness in finding the influential editor of the *JC*, that typical British Jew in the placid Victorian era, apathetic or even opposed to the new ideas of practical political Zionism. Myers was, however, broad-minded enough and enough of a journalist to give the fullest possible publicity to the Herzl plan, to which he was so opposed. Herzl's promised article, the first draft of his historic work, duly appeared as a special supplement, distributed with the issue of January 17, 1896, under the title: *A Solution of the Jewish Question*.

This was four weeks before the publication in German of Herzl's *Judenstaat*, which appeared in Vienna on February 14, 1896, after several publishers had refused to print it. The publication in the *Jewish Chronicle* was thus the first systematic exposition of the ideas of Theodor Herzl and his concept for a Jewish state. Moreover, though opposed to him, the *JC* brought Herzl's name before the English public as a leader of Jewish thought and a man of constructive ideas for the solution of the Jewish problem. The newspaper paved the way for his historic appearance before the leading British Jews of the Maccabeans organization and, more important, for his acceptance by the masses of East End Jewry as the charismatic new leader of the Jewish national revival. History has probably no parallel of any newspaper or periodical giving such solid, widespread and continuous assistance to a cause which it so strongly disagreed with.

Throughout the following decade the *JC*'s attitude to Zionism remained unchanged: uncompromising opposition to

A Sermon for the Week.

[Specially Written for the JEWISH CHRONICLE.]

THE PASSING OF THE YEAR.

"Ye stand this day, all of you, before the Lord your God."—Deuteronomy xxix. 9.

Thus to-morrow's section of the Law opens. Thus speak Moses, the strong and faithful servant of God, in one—and that one of the last—of those soul-stirring addresses in which the book of Deuteronomy abounds. They were uttered at a time when his life's work was drawing to a close, and the wanderers in the wilderness were in sight of the goal of their wanderings. As 120 years had neither abated his natural vigour, nor dimmed his eye, so the approaching end of his responsibilities had neither quenched the fire of his words nor weakened the force of his convictions. Disappointed of the hope that had all along sustained him in the trials of leadership—the hope of bringing God's people into the promised rest of the Holy Land, he, nevertheless, remained to the last faithful and tender, and wavered neither in his allegiance to God nor his love to man. Setting to all time an example of pure unselfishness, such as the faithful discharge of public duties demands of every leader of men, he summons around him the chiefs, the elders, all the men and women of Israel, the strangers and the children too, not excluding, even, the humble hewer of wood and drawer of water. He reiterates the sanctions and prohibitions of the Law which he has taught and which is called after his name. With a simplicity which cannot fail to go straight to the heart of the most illiterate hearer in that miscellaneous gathering, and speaking with an authority which only long years of devoted service can confer, he invites them to bind their souls in a sacred covenant with God. But the Lawgiver's admonition is not only addressed to the wanderers in the wilderness. Numberless future generations are included in the appeal which the passage we shall read to-morrow sets forth—"Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath, but with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day" (xxix. 14). Hence his words have lost none of their significance, nothing of their freshness, during the three thousand years that have elapsed since their first utterance by Moses himself to the listening multitudes on the farther shores of Jordan. Even to-day their warning rolls to us across the centuries. We, too, are standing before the Lord our God.

The Last Sabbath in the Year.

This is the last Sabbath in the Jewish year numbered 5673. Another year, with its advantages, its privileges, its opportunities, and its failures, its joys and its sorrows, its trials and its compensations, is fast drawing to its close. In a few days it will have been swallowed up in the immeasurable gulf of time. Such an occasion is sufficiently impressive to warrant the application of the words with which Moses prefaced his last discourse—"Ye stand this day, all of you, before the Lord your God." Through the year through which we have passed is practically dead, to us Divine Providence vouchsafes a larger lease of life, and in a very real sense we are standing in the presence of Almighty God. At such a season religion bids us look back upon the road we have been travelling. It urges us to ponder the uses to which we have put our estate of time and to measure the moral progress we have effected in the period of a year. Assuming that we do this, how much of our past conduct shall we have reason to regret? What a number of thoughts, words, and actions would we gladly recall if it were possible! But the past is registered in heaven, and the present is the only portion of time over which we can be said to exercise any real control. And because the past is irrevocable there must always be an element of sadness in any retrospect to which we subject it. That must be a dull heart which feels no pain "in thinking of the days that are no more." None of us, not even the most blameless, has been as upright as he might have been. To all of us, without exception, the year that will shortly expire will have bequeathed to us some legacy of regret. Yet, even if the best man must feel conscience-stricken in remembering how his life has fallen short of his own ideal, on the other hand, let not even the worst of us despair of amendment. This word "despair" should find no place in the creed of the Jew, to whom God is revealed as "merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Let not, then, our retrospect of the dying year degenerate into morbid feelings of gloom. Rather let the sorrowful memories of broken hopes, neglected duties, and broken promises which it arouses give place to lofty resolves for the future. For the fair white page of the incoming year is all unwritten on, and we can determine its contents as we will. The covenant which has been violated can yet be renewed. The brazen wall which our misdeeds have interposed between us and our Father in Heaven is not so high or so solid but what it may be thrown down.

A Wider Application.

The text words are capable of a wider application than has been assigned to them. Assuredly not this day only, when we are standing on the threshold almost of a new year, but every day we are in the Divine Presence. The ancient Hebrews realised this idea of the Divine Presence very vividly. Enoch and Noah, we are told, walked with God. Abraham communed with Him, the elders in the Wilderness saw Him while they were eating and drinking, Elijah heard the whisper of His "still, small, voice." But in these material days, there are many eyes so dim that they catch no gleam of His presence, ears so dull that they never hear the music or the thunder of His voice. And there are moments when even to the best of us He seems silent or afar off. But whether we see or see not, whether we hear or hear not, whether conscience be voiceful to us or silent, God certainly is with us and speaks to us. Adam in his shame strove to hide himself among the trees of Eden, and the divine voice called him forth. Cain would have God from God into the land of exile, but even there he felt the branding finger from God into the land of exile, and lo! His angel appeared before him as he tilled the soil. Hagar, despaired of Him, and lo! His angel appeared before her at the well of Lach-Roi. Jonab rose to flee from Him by taking ship for Tarshish, and lo! met Him in the shattered vessel on the tempestuous sea. He flashed upon the dreams of Jacob in a vision of forgiveness, as the patriarch slept on the rocky stairs of the hill-side. "Whither," sang David, "shall I go from Thy spirit

Continued on p. 22.

Zionism, coupled with warm admiration for Herzl's personality and character, and an objective presentation of the activities of the new movement. When Herzl died in 1904, two years after the death of Myers, the occasion was commemorated with an enthusiastic appreciation of the modern prince of Israel and the use of black borders on the front page, reserved as a rule for royalty and the Rothschilds. The *JC* had by then become the foremost Jewish publication in the world and its regular reporting was of the highest importance to the Zionist cause.

With the death of Asher Myers, the ownership was taken over by Israel Davis, who took full control. The routine editing was given to Myers' brother-in-law, Morris Duparc. Davis, who had even for a Victorian a hyper-delicacy of feeling in regard to anything which might be construed as sexual, was also opposed to Zionism. But, like Myers, he realized that Zionism had to be given the fullest publicity. And he showed courage in the way he and Duparc attacked the increasing anti-Jewish excesses in Russia. It was a general mystery how the *JC* managed to get such detailed reports of Russian atrocities. When the news of the Kishinev pogrom reached England, the *JC* came out with a black border. Another major pogrom, in Bialystok, also elicited the *JC*'s horrified attention. The persecution of the Jews of Romania also received wide coverage in the *JC*. From September 26, 1902, a supplement modeled on *Darkest Russia* was included under the title: *How Romania Treats her Jewish Subjects*.

Persecution led to the mass flight of Jews from Eastern Europe to the Anglo-Saxon countries. Anglo-Jewry was transformed when 100,000 Jews — considered a great number in those years — arrived at England's shores in a period of 20 years. They settled mostly in the poor areas of the East End, living in great poverty and working unnaturally long hours to make a meager living. The Jewish community, to its credit, led courageously by the *JC*, welcomed the newcomers and fought for their rights. The *JC* also showed courage when it fought against those in Parliament who initiated agitation against the Jewish newcomers and brought in legislation to stop or restrict the influx. Israel Davis' personal views were, however, less heroic. He did not want to make much of a fuss once legislation against the immigration was passed.

In the Zionist Cause

Brief competition with *The Jewish World*, yet another rival for the spot occupied by the *JC*, proved expensive. Israel Davis, an indecisive man, over-worried by financial considerations, began to show his anxieties. The owners of *The Jewish World* made it known that they were ready to pay £10,000 for the *JC*

but Davis thought the sum inadequate. He nevertheless never stopped moaning that in the *JC* he had a white elephant, even though others thought it a gold mine. One day in December 1906 he revealed his fears to Leopold J. Greenberg, and a remarkable new era in the history of the *JC* opened. Leopold Greenberg, who had wide experience in journalism, advertising and publishing, was also a leading figure in the English Zionist movement and a close friend of Theodor Herzl, who described him in his diary as "the most able of my helpers." It was through Greenberg that the practical support for the Jewish national movement by the dynamic Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain was enlisted, which was to lead to the offer of Uganda to the Jews. Greenberg had urged acceptance of the Uganda offer but it met with strong opposition in the Zionist Congress and was finally rejected after Herzl's death. When he met Israel Davis in Chancery Lane in London, Greenberg held vital posts in the Zionist movement, being a member of the Inner Actions Committee and a director of both the Jewish Colonial Trust and the Jewish National Fund. Hearing from Davis that he was willing to sell the *JC* for £13,000, Greenberg immediately saw an opportunity to obtain this influential newspaper for the Zionist cause. Greenberg obtained approval from a number of Zionist leaders and bought the paper in his own name. David Wolffsohn, who had succeeded Herzl as the new president of the World Zionist Organization, and had given hesitant approval for the purchase, was furiously attacked by his East European colleagues for what they considered a huge waste of money when money was urgently needed for practical work in Eretz Israel. Did not the Zionist movement lose enough money on its German official organ, *Die Welt*, edited by Nahum Sokolow? And what did English-speaking Jewry matter, after all? Historian Cecil Roth remarks that it was ironical that the purchase of the *JC* was the only sound stroke of business on a relatively large scale with which the Jewish Colonial Trust was associated in those days.

So vociferous was the opposition to the deal, that the Zionist leadership in Cologne abandoned it. Greenberg's position would have been very difficult indeed if a number of his colleagues who had agreed with him had not decided to stand by him. A small private company was formed to take over the *JC*. Among the shareholders was Leopold Kessler, a friend of Herzl, a mining engineer who in 1903 had led an expedition to El Arish to investigate the possibilities of Jewish settlement in the Sinai Peninsula. Leopold and his son, David, were to play vital roles in the *JC* for most of the century.

However, the dominant force was Greenberg who, besides retaining a substantial number of shares, became controlling

editor and director for life. His position was thus unchallengeable. Thus, the most Zionist period in the history of the *JC* and, from the Jewish national point of view, the most historic and fruitful, began on Friday, January 4, 1907. Giving over all his energies to the editorship, Greenberg proved a remarkable journalistic force, brilliant and effective. His attacks on the continued Russian persecution of the Jews, backed by long, accurate reports, led the Tsarist Government to censor the *JC*, crudely blacking out the offending reports. But it was in his advocacy of the Zionist cause that Greenberg proved most effective. He gave up his communal posts because he so much valued his independence. When Lord Rothschild criticized him for something that appeared in the *JC*, he replied: "I am afraid that I cannot call in the edition now but I will give you back your two pence, if you like."

Greenberg's strong and persistent advocacy of the Zionist cause was, according to Cecil Roth, one of the principal reasons why British leaders became interested in Zionism and prepared the way for issuing the Balfour Declaration promising a Jewish national home in Palestine. Typically British, Greenberg allowed anti-Zionist views to be published in the *JC*, though always with a note disclaiming sympathy for those views. Greenberg showed his independence in another way: an emissary of the Russian Government was sent to bribe him with £50,000, and was promptly escorted out of the *JC* offices.

Significantly, Greenberg enthusiastically backed Jabotinsky's plan for a Jewish Legion after the Zion Mule Corps was no longer needed. The Jewish units gave respectability to the Jewish national aims in the eyes of the British Government. But there was a paradoxical aspect in Greenberg's advocacy of the Jewish Legion. He strenuously objected to the use of the word "Jewish" and the inclusion of the Magen David in the badge!

Greenberg played a vital role in the issuing of the Balfour Declaration. When eventually the date of the publication of the declaration was discussed, it was decided that it would be on a Friday so that the *Jewish Chronicle*, appearing on that day, could publish the news simultaneously with the national press. The leading article on that historic day was a magnificent piece of writing, full of enthusiasm for the Zionist dreams.

In those happy days, such a fervently Zionist article had the full approval of the British Government, which translated it into many languages and circulated it in pamphlet form throughout the world.

Yet Greenberg was not happy with the term in the declaration "a national home for the Jewish people." If, he argued, a Jewish state was intended, as he desired, it should

have been so stated explicitly. In view of what happened later, Greenberg was far wiser than the Zionist leaders who felt intoxicated by the declaration and argued that the vagueness of the wording was advantageous because it gave latitude for the future. They were to be proved tragically wrong.

Greenberg led the onslaught on the leaders of the Anglo-Jewish community who wrote a letter to *The Times* attacking the proposed plan to issue the Balfour Declaration because they feared that the position of British Jews would be weakened if the Jews had a home in Palestine. As a result of the *JC*'s campaign, which was backed by the chief rabbi, Dr. Hertz, the leaders, whom Greenberg described as traitors to the Jewish cause, were defeated. Yet their opposition to Zionism may well have weakened the Balfour Declaration.

When Greenberg died in 1931 after 25 years of the most eventful editorship in the history of the *JC*, he was succeeded for a short time by an affable man, J. M. Rich, who was secretary of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the so-called Jewish Parliament. But the really significant appointment came later, in December 1936, when Leopold Greenberg's son, Ivan, became editor. An uncompromising right-wing Zionist, Ivan Greenberg was to cause turmoil in the board room of the *JC* when the Irgun and Lehi directed their activities against the British troops in Palestine during World War II and afterwards. To the horror of the directors, Ivan Greenberg insisted on calling the Irgun and Lehi members "freedom fighters." When hostile questions began to be asked in Parliament, the directors decided in 1948 to dismiss Greenberg, just as the new Jewish State was about to be born.

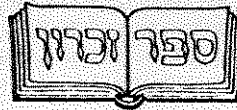
His successor, John Shaftesley, the assistant editor, was not a man of stature. His handling of the birth of the Jewish State left much to be desired. It was William Frankel, a sophisticated lawyer who superceded Shaftesley in 1958 after a coup, who brought a sense of modernity and worldliness to the *JC*. He in turn was succeeded by Geoffrey Paul, an experienced journalist. They all had one thing in common: they supported Israel, although Frankel was critical of the centrality that had been given to Israel in Jewish Diaspora life and felt that the Diaspora deserved to be heard.

From the late 1930s until the late 1980s (with an interregnum during World War II when he served as a major in the British forces in Iraq), David Kessler, chairman of the *JC* Board of Directors, played a vital role as the paper recovered from the effects of the war and from its premises having been destroyed. Although a Reform Jew and socially assimilated, he was a great champion of Jewish rights. Thanks to him the *JC* did not squander the fruits of its prosperous years and could survive when harsher times came along. He also took steps to

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CENTENARY OF THE JEWISH CHRONICLE
Messages from State and Religious Leaders

From THE PRIME MINISTER

(The Right Hon. Winston S. Churchill)

On the occasion of the centenary of *THE JEWISH CHRONICLE*, a landmark in the history of British Jewry, I send a message of good cheer to Jewish people in this and other lands. None has suffered more cruelly than the Jew the unspeakable evils wrought on the bodies and spirits of men by Hitler and his vile regime. The Jew bore the brunt of the Nazis' first onslaught upon the citadels of freedom and human dignity. He has borne and continued to bear a burden that might have seemed to be beyond endurance. He has not allowed it to break his spirit; he has never lost the will to resist. Assuredly in the day of victory the Jew's sufferings and his part in the struggle will not be forgotten. Once again, at the appointed time, he will see vindicated those principles of righteousness which it was the glory of his fathers to proclaim to the world. Once again it will be shown that, though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small.

From THE CHIEF RABBI:

This is the first time that a Jewish religious journal anywhere has lived to celebrate its centenary. Jewry would, in gladness, have taken note of such a landmark in our later-day history, but for the appalling contrast between Israel's position and outlook in 1841 and the heart-breaking situation that confronts us a hundred years after.

THE JEWISH CHRONICLE was founded one year after the Jews of the Old and the New World had united, under the leadership of Sir Moses Montefiore, for their successful protest against the Damascus Blood Libel. This moral triumph was followed within a generation by the removal of every Jewish disability in England, and Jewish enfranchisement in the Central Empires and Italy. It is true that the word "pogrom" was soon to be added to the vocabulary of modern politics by the Tsarist regime, but the millions of Jews fleeing from its oppression strengthened immeasurably our older communities in all English-speaking countries, and furnished the pioneers for the resurrection of the Holy Land. In the 20th century, despite all setbacks due to Reaction, Israel proceeded from strength to strength—till 1933, when Nazism, in outrageous defiance of all civilization and humanity, outlawed the Jew, and announced the policy of his disappearance from Europe. Ten millions of our brethren have accordingly

been hurled into the abyss of defamation and misery, and are facing annihilation.

All the changes in the fortunes of the Jew, his hopes and fears, during these eventful decades are faithfully mirrored in the columns of *THE JEWISH CHRONICLE*. It has from the very first been a wise defender of Jewry against dangers from without, and a fearless mentor of failings within. Pan-Jewish in its cultural consciousness, it has opposed every form of spiritual self-obliteration or revolution in religion, but given its utmost support to all movements that stood for Jewish life and the deepening of Jewish self-respect. It has aimed to be the voice both of our Unknown Warriors and of the architects of Israel's future; and that noble aim has been crowned with a gratifying measure of success.

Each age is a dream that is dying, or one that is coming to birth," sings the poet. The nightmare which now holds Europe in its grip shows the correctness of the first half of the saying. Equally so is the second half. For it would be blasphemy to doubt that, in the cosmic struggle of the nations now raging, the hosts of freedom will prevail. Amid infinite woe, and at the cost of endless sacrifice, a new dream of humanity and justice is coming to birth; and, with the help of the God of Righteousness, we shall yet witness its triumphant realisation among all peoples. In that new day, may it be given *THE JEWISH CHRONICLE* to perform the

(Continued at foot of next column)

From THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY:

I congratulate *THE JEWISH CHRONICLE* on having reached its centenary year. That it should have been issued regularly for these 100 years is a striking proof of the security which British Jewry have had in this country, in contrast with the cruel treatment to which their brethren in other lands have been subjected, especially in recent years. In this country we regard them as in every sense our fellow-citizens. In the present struggle the Jewish people have given abundant proof of their wholehearted association with the British Commonwealth and its Allies. I have always admired the remarkable generosity with which British Jewry have done their utmost to alleviate the lot of their brethren who, in other lands, have been so cruelly oppressed and driven from their homes. I join in their prayers that the tyranny of our common enemy may be overthrown and that their brethren everywhere may be able to live in security and peace.

same mission that it set before its eyes throughout the cycle of years just closing.

I know that I echo the good wishes of the whole House of Israel when I greet *THE JEWISH CHRONICLE* on its centenary with the words, **שמע ישראל** "Hear, O Israel, and continue to deserve God's blessing

ensure that the newspaper would remain independent when he departed from the scene, creating trusts to safeguard the *JC* shares and the independence of the editor, which he was able to do because although the *JC* is a private company, the majority of the shares are held by the Kessler family.

When Geoffery Paul surprised his *JC* colleagues by taking early retirement in 1990 and going to live in New York, where he writes a column for the paper, a 37-year-old American television and print journalist, Ned Temko, became editor. This unexpected development had many interesting features, foremost among them that for the first time the *JC*, which for long described itself as the organ of Anglo-Jewry, had appointed as editor an American and someone from outside the community.

A Difficult Period

Thus, yet another new era opened for the *JC* on the eve of its 150th anniversary. Temko came at a difficult period, with recession hitting the country and therefore cutting down *JC* advertisements. But he insisted on bringing in the newest technology, discarding paper and typewriters for computers and word-processors. He also redesigned the look of the paper, which was approved by most but also caused considerable criticism. The paper has been losing money, and this inevitably causes anxiety and fears. Moreover, with the Jewish community growing smaller — it is now down to only 300,000 — the hopes of a higher circulation of about 48,000-50,000 will be hard to achieve.

The *JC* is thus entering a difficult period. It is fighting hard to retain the title of being "the greatest Jewish newspaper in

the world," a claim that is certainly no longer valid if Israel is included. As far as the rest of the world is concerned, the USA included, the *JC* is still an example to follow, though it is no longer the great force it was when it single-handedly fought for Jewish emancipation and Jewish rights and stood up against the Tsars, the Hitlers and the Stalins.

When the *JC* was 100 years old in 1941, it rightly received a warm tribute from Britain's indomitable wartime leader, Winston Churchill. It deserves even more tributes when it celebrates its 150th birthday in November. It has been courageous, it has been far-sighted, it has helped the Jewish people to survive and the Jewish State to be founded. It is a unique object: a world-class newspaper, a glue which keeps the small Jewish community together, a provider of unbiased news about Israel and the Jewish world, a true picture of the Jewish people for the non-Jewish world.

Yet if the *JC* is to survive not only as a paper but as a source of influence and an inspiration for the whole Jewish people — Israel included — its directors and editors have to be aware that it has more than once fallen below the level of greatness, that it has often lived on the credit won by its ancestors. It has to find an aim and a goal that will inspire the youth as well as the adult readers. This has so far not happened. A major effort is now being made to set a new course, with new ideas. There are critics as well as supporters for the paper's new look. All those who love this unique paper will hope that the *JC* will approach the twenty-first century still as readable, still as wanted, still as influential as it has been for most of its 150 years. But it faces tremendous problems — with no guarantee of success.

MEIR GROSSMAN— A VERY PARTIAL VIEW

RINNA SAMUEL

Contemporary historians of Zionism may well run into some trouble determining the precise place within the Zionist pantheon of Meir Grossman, one of that movement's stormiest and more interesting petrels, but his credentials as a pioneer of modern Jewish, and thus ultimately Israeli, journalism have never been in question. Nevertheless, so far they have not received the attention due them, though Grossman was a charter member of that relatively small group of Zionist leaders who, despite total devotion to the cause of Jewish redemption, not only managed not to abandon their chosen professions but even made significant contributions to them and, as in Grossman's case, trail-blazed.

As tends to be true of people who help lay the conceptual and imaginative foundations upon which, eventually, entire establishments and traditions arise, Grossman's twin preoccupations seem to have been almost inborn. They made themselves manifest very early on in his life, coming into existence under somewhat unlikely circumstances. Just how and why this Jewish boy, born in 1888 to an ultra-Orthodox family inexplicably located in a village outside the Russian Pale of Settlement, deep in Cossack territory in the Kuban district, ever came to decide that he would one day be a working journalist, one will never know. But decide this he did. And as he walked along the banks of the Kuban River, planning his life in adolescent reveries, he decided also to repudiate what he felt to be the stifling orthodoxy of his home and, more than that, to set out for the great, unfamiliar world which he would



indeed be part of from then on.

At 17 he was on his way, already supporting himself by writing and editing in Russian for a series of provincial papers, including the largish and fairly well-known *Kubansky Krai*. Not long afterward, he began also to write in Yiddish, the language in which he was to win impressive laurels both as a writer and later as a riveting, always maverick orator inevitably drawing crowds at Zionist congresses. As soon as he felt adequately equipped, he ended his apprenticeship, as it were, and took off, proceeding first to Petrograd, then to Warsaw and then to Berlin where he joined He-Haver, the Zionist student society whose publications he edited. But beyond sharpening his editorial skills (he was also involved at this stage with the satirical and popular *Der Ashmodei*), Grossman was forming the philosophy of journalism — though he himself would have regarded this phrase as unacceptably pretentious — that was to become his hallmark. He based it on

three simple principles: hard facts, rapid and lucid presentation and the banning of any intrusion of personal bias. Or, more succinctly: brevity, objectivity and speed of transmission.

He could hardly have been better primed for the events that followed. On the day World War I broke out in August 1914, Grossman left Berlin for Copenhagen, where the Zionist Organization had just opened an emergency office and where this determined and resourceful young Russian Jew was at once offered a job as correspondent for *Russkoye Slova*, a Russian daily. A few months later, he embarked on the publication of a Yiddish daily, *Kopenhagener Togblatt* (1914-16). Having successfully brought together his various competences and realized his initial dreams, though he could not have known it then, he was ripe for taking what was to prove a life-altering course. It was in Copenhagen that Grossman joined forces with Vladimir Jabotinsky, with whom he was to be associated, closely and fatefully, from 1916 to the middle 1930s, and, in Zionist annals, permanently.

Jabotinsky, Russian-born and -bred, was a man after Grossman's heart. Gifted, courageous, worldly, he was a free-thinking Jew who shared the vision of proud Herzlian Zionism, Jewish dignity and the rights of Jews. They agreed on nearly everything, including the need for Jews to fight in a Jewish Legion under their own flag, the acknowledged allies of all other men of goodwill, in the war already raging against the Ottoman Empire. But the revolutionary idea of a 20th century Jewish Legion was not yet known to most Jewish masses to be well and truly ignited. Jabotinsky, who had first conceived of the Legion together with Joseph Trumpeldor, suggested that Grossman produce a Yiddish fortnightly, *Die Tribune*, whose purpose would be to promote not only a Jewish Legion but also a World Jewish Congress and equal rights for Jews, and that he do so from London, which was where the campaign for the Legion was to be concentrated.

It is perhaps interesting to note in passing that while, in general terms, the European Enlightenment had passed Russia by, so many Russian Jews, including most of the founding fathers of Zionism — for instance men like the three mentioned above — were quite devoid of parochialism or provinciality, had no "ghetto" mentality at all and never regarded Zionism as being less than entirely logical. It was perfectly natural in their eyes, for example, for Jews to have a state of their own and an army of their own, and to seek to deal with nations of the world as peers. As far as one knows, it never even occurred to Meir Grossman that moving to London in 1916 to produce a Yiddish daily there in order to boost recruitment and support for a Jewish fighting force was, to say

the least, an odd thing for a Russian Jewish journalist (who knew virtually no English and was totally unfamiliar with England) to do. He took it entirely for granted. In the event, the drive for the Legion did not pick up nearly as quickly as Jabotinsky and Grossman, ever optimistic, expected; the *Tribune* closed, and Grossman went back to Copenhagen. In 1917, following the Revolution, he returned to Russia, to Petrograd, where he became a sought-after freelancer, his fountain pen always at the ready, his suitcase always packed. Among other papers, his by-line graced articles in the daily *Petrograder Tageblatt*. Moving to Kiev, he worked both in Russian and Yiddish, reporting, writing and editing for a variety of publications including a Yiddish daily, *Der Telegraf*, another called *Die Welt* and a Zionist weekly characteristically named *Oif Der Vakh*. In the Ukraine he became actively involved in Jewish public life, journalism temporarily taking second place to his work in the Jewish National Assembly and as one of the 50 deputies of the Rada, independent Lithuania's short-lived and very provisional national council.

The year 1919 brought the Bolshevik invasion of the Ukraine and, under Petlyura's notorious regime, the brutal murder of some 100,000 Jews. Twenty-five years later, the World War II savagery of Ukrainian anti-Semitism was to be exposed to the world's momentarily appalled gaze. But in 1919-20, without TV, radio and sophisticated electronics, there was only one way to convey the desperate plight of Ukrainian Jews: by messenger, by authoritative word of mouth, via those who had been there and had seen the horror for themselves and could bear witness. It was predictable that Meir Grossman, already experienced in the ways of the West, provenly adept at the marshaling of facts, should be offered the bitter assignment of informing the Jews abroad of what was happening in the Ukraine and beseeching their help before it was too late. He traveled first to the United States, where at hushed mass meetings, in his heavily accented, inadequate English, he told and retold the terrible story. Then he journeyed to England to do the same. He was never again in Russia, though he was always to remain, at core, the quintessential Russian Jew, and when the course of history permitted, he was to do much in the 1950s to further Israel-USSR relations.

In London, stateless but contentedly equipped with Nansen (League of Nations) papers — he was sure that one day he would flaunt a Palestinian (Jewish) passport and thus never applied for any other — and married, in 1920, to a Russian-born, US-raised young journalist who had been en route to her first major assignment in Europe when they met, Grossman began what was to be a long interlude (14 years) before immigrating to Palestine. Together with another Jewish

journalist, Vienna-born Jacob Landau, he embarked on a project that initially elicited, as did so many of Grossman's endeavors, a flood of cynicism: from a dingy two-room office on Fleet Street, the two established what was to become known as the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (the JTA), the first-ever international news agency wholly devoted to information of particular or exclusive interest to Jews. No one will use it, Landau and Grossman were repeatedly told; no one needs it; it is doomed, a bad idea. But Grossman knew intuitively, and also as a direct result of his recent experience, that Jews did very much want to know about Jewish affairs, about Jewish life, and that the facts of this life were not to be found anywhere in the general press. Of course the project was risky, he understood that, but he greatly believed in it, and though it was to pass from his, and then eventually also from Landau's, hands, the JTA indeed survived and still operates under its original, if by now anachronistic, name. In retrospect, it was a kind of Maxwellian or Murdochian concept; the flair, the big thinking, were there, although not the means, not the essential acumen, not the acquisitiveness.

At more or less the same period, Grossman's professional instincts, his convictions regarding the cardinal importance of communication and his profound Zionist commitment together resulted in yet another unveiling. In 1925, he and Landau decided that, in a country ruled by the British, as Palestine then already was, the news must be made available, however modestly, to the powers-that-be in London, and in Jerusalem, via Jewish sources and in the rulers' own language. Once again, warnings and premonitions were sounded, but Grossman and Landau went ahead with the launching of the *Palestine Bulletin* in Jerusalem. The maiden issue appeared on January 12, 1925 (though a typographical error resulted in the printing of the wrong year!). The *Bulletin* was small, neat, crisply written. Its front page given over to world news, the paper was free of mastheads and of editorials and was devoted mainly to regional coverage that included what people on the spot wanted to know — rates of exchange, sports, the arrival and departure times of ships — and local stories only very lightly tinged with blue-and-white. It too was to pass into other hands; by 1932 the *Bulletin* had metamorphosed into the *Palestine Post*, acknowledged precursor of the current *Jerusalem Post*. In many respects, the *Bulletin* had borne Grossman's personal signature, perhaps mostly in that it was in no way politicized — something that alone made it a rarity — though Grossman himself was forever in the eye of major political storms which buffeted and then tore apart the Zionist establishment.

In 1934 he settled at last in Palestine, a painful and enduring

rift with Jabotinsky behind him, channeling most of his energy into the creation of a vigorous oppositionist right-wing Zionist party — the Jewish State Party — that would, unlike Jabotinsky's Revisionists, remain within the framework of the Zionist establishment. Making a third considerable and nonpolitical contribution, he produced the Yishuv's first afternoon paper, *Iton Meyuhad* ("A Special Newspaper"), whose name and facilities had once served a defunct and dubious product of Jewish Palestine's embryonic yellow press and which Grossman determinedly found the funds to purchase. The birth of his *Iton Meyuhad* was, as usual, preceded and accompanied by skepticism. No one needs an afternoon paper in this small country; no member of the Yishuv can afford to buy two Hebrew newspapers a day or will ever bother to read them; it is sure to fail. And so it did, profitability ever eluding Grossman. *Iton Meyuhad* folded, but it too had not lived in vain. Though never publicly credited as such, it was in fact a forerunner of today's *Ma'ariv* and *Yediot Aharonot*.

In the years that followed, Grossman's political battles took more and more of his time (that tempestuous story does not belong here), but he never stopped writing, most frequently for the right-wing daily press. In 1939, in London, when World War II broke out, unable to leave and with no newspaper to write for, he was rescued by his inventiveness. Using a pseudonym, he concocted a remarkable regular column ("Spotlight Over Germany") for the *Evening Standard*, his sole source of information being what his insight led him to clip from available German and other European papers. The accuracy of his interpretations was dramatically attested to by no less than Lord Haw-Haw, who threatened to "get" the column's author when the Nazis rolled into London. That process never took place, but Grossman nonetheless was given a special visa to the United States where, in the status of a wartime refugee, he joined the hundreds of thousands of other foreign newcomers who, like himself, were skilled, educated, middle-aged and jobless. Typically, since he was incapable either of depression or self-pity, he found an immediate, though hazardous, temporary solution.

Years before such publications existed (outside of Wall Street circles), Grossman founded a subscriber-based newsletter, *The Trend of Events*, written, edited and personally addressed from a minute Manhattan office, intended for distribution to an elite list of people eager to be in the know on Jewish matters, to be one step ahead of others not only in what they knew but in knowing what the news meant. *The Trend of Events* acquired a readership throughout the US and even in South America and Canada. Its contents, again,

were derived mostly from Grossman's own highly selective and penetrating reading of the international press, the Jewish press and whatever came through the mails from Palestine. But though the number and enthusiasm of its readers rose steadily, with the newsletter's scope, terseness and discernment turning many into addicts, it was not, after all, financially viable. Within a year or two it went the way of its predecessors. Still, as a well-known Israeli journalist was to write sadly in his farewell to Grossman in 1964: "Whenever Meir Grossman's journalistic empires shrank, he refused to surrender whatever remained."

What remained at this point, i.e. in the 1940s, were his authoritative articles for New York's *Yiddish Tog*, and a challenging new arena, radio. Grossman's Saturday afternoon current affairs commentary, rendered in his rich, literate Yiddish, for New York City's WEVD (after a while the broadcasts were sponsored by Manishevitz) became a much-anticipated post-lunch, pre-nap Shabbos feature for thousands of grateful Jewish listeners, hundreds of whom already knew him from the *Tog*. Without preaching, without partisanship, without pomposity, somewhat to his own surprise and amusement, Grossman handled the new media expertly,

weekly tying together the loose ends of the "Jewish" news at a moment when the Jewish world into which he had been born was turning, literally, to ashes, and the position, nature and strength of the free Jewish communities had to become shared knowledge.

After the war, back in what had become the State of Israel, he occupied himself with an abundance of other things. An active member of the Jewish Agency Executive, heading first its External Relations Department and then its Economic Department, he found time always for journalism, in particular for the promotion of an entire range of Russian-language periodicals published in Jerusalem and designed to inform the Jews of the Soviet Union about Zion and Zionism, as well as for his regular, much-read "Report from Israel" which for years appeared in the American Jewish Congress weekly. When he died in the summer of 1964, Meir Grossman was buried in Tel Aviv's Nahlat Yitzhak Cemetery, in the shaded section reserved for men of letters, writers, poets and journalists. There he lies, in the company he would surely have chosen for himself, with those who, like himself, viewed journalism as more than a craft or metier, who perceived and practiced it all their lives as part of a central mission.

ERICH GOTTGETREU: A DIFFERENT KIND OF FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

EROL GUNEY

Some thirty years ago, in the early 1960s, there was a highly unusual situation in the foreign press corps in Israel: all four international news agencies — Associated Press, Reuter's, Agence France-Presse and UPI — were headed by Israeli nationals. None was more respected as a journalist and as a person than the AP representative, Erich Gottgetreu, who died ten years ago in Jerusalem in November 1981 at the age of 78. No one had done more to give readers the world over an honest and balanced but nevertheless highly positive view of what was happening in Israel, not only in the military and political fields but also in the social and cultural ones.

Significantly, today, all four news agencies in Israel, as well as the other major news media, which together provide most of the information the world gets about what is happening in and around Israel, are headed by nationals from their own countries, and no longer by Israelis. Undoubtedly, this change reflects the importance that the world attaches to Israel and the conflicts to which it is a party, justifying the increased expense of maintaining foreign representatives in the country. But it also reflects the conviction of the media that in the highly conflicted situation which has developed in the region, an Israeli could not be as objective as a foreigner. I believe that this conclusion is arguable, as quite a few foreign correspondents based in Israel have revealed themselves to be as prejudiced, if not more prejudiced, than Israelis, though not necessarily in the same direction. Moreover, during the War of Independence before the creation of the state, and in the troubled years that followed, objectivity was as difficult to achieve as today, yet news agencies and other news media had no hesitation about hiring Israelis as their chief representatives in Israel. It would seem, therefore, that other factors, apart



from the growing importance of Israel as a center for news, also account for the transformation of the composition of the permanent foreign press corps in Israel.

One of these factors is certainly the overall change of attitude in the West toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. Up until the early 1970s, most of the people in charge of the major media organizations felt that the Israeli case was, on the whole, justified, even if they criticized some aspects of Israeli policy. There was a great deal of admiration for Israeli achievements in the military, social, economic and cultural fields. These achievements themselves had news value and were best covered by Israelis. The media chiefs knew that the vast majority of their audience shared this admiration, which made it possible for their organizations to be represented by Israeli nationals with a positive attitude toward their country.

Today, of course, the situation is rather different. Many media leaders, and their audiences, oppose Israeli policies, particularly since the beginning of large-scale settlement activity in the territories. Furthermore, the major international news agencies now have many subscribers in Arab and Moslem countries, which was not the case thirty years ago, and information from a bureau in Israel that was headed by an Israeli would be regarded as highly suspicious, no matter what its content.

Another significant factor is that in the 1950s and '60s, there were a number of Western-trained journalists who had settled in Israel during the pre- and post-war period. The foreign press organizations, therefore, had no difficulty finding highly experienced journalists then. Which brings us back to Erich Gottgetreu, who was both a journalist and a scholar — two attributes which are rarely combined. When he emigrated to Israel in 1933, he had already acquired a rich journalistic past, despite his youth, and in addition to his native German, he could also write in English and French.

Germany

Born in 1903 in Chemnitz, in what later became East Germany, Gottgetreu studied literature and journalism in Berlin and soon began to write for several publications, including the Social-Democratic newspaper *Vorwaerts*. His journalistic talent led to an assignment in the Middle East in 1927 to write about Egypt and the region. Visiting Palestine, he stayed with a friend at Kibbutz Yagur. Gottgetreu was young, as were the kibbutzim, humanistic socialism seemed the way of the future, and he was enthusiastic. His articles about the kibbutz way of life presented the subject to many readers for the first time, and were also included in a collection of his best pieces published in 1928 when he was only 25. A year later he became

one of the editors of a regional socialist paper, *Luebecker Volksbote*, where he published articles by many promising young writers, including Erich Kastner, as well as a high school student from Luebeck, Herbert Frahm, who later adopted the name Willy Brandt. In 1960, when Brandt, then mayor of West Berlin, visited Israel, Gottgetreu met him again and asked jokingly: "I hope I don't owe you anything for your articles?" "No," replied Brandt, "but you never did pay more than five marks for any of them!"

The circulation of Gottgetreu's paper was then no more than 13,000, and it could hardly pay more. Not surprisingly, he looked for broader horizons, and did not have to wait long. By 1930 he had become a news editor and courtroom reporter for the Sozialdemokratischer Pressedienst, a news agency that supplied the numerous Social-Democrat publications. It was a troubled time, with daily clashes between the Nazis and their opponents, but it was also a busy time for the young journalist, and he acquired the experience that he was to utilize so well in Palestine and in the State of Israel.

In 1933, with the Nazi rise to power, Gottgetreu was arrested twice, but the Nazis were not yet as ruthless as they were to become soon, and he was released both times. In May 1933, still able to leave Germany legally, Gottgetreu made the wisest decision of his life and set out for Palestine. A friend had told him: "You are a journalist, Erich. How can you go to a country where nothing ever happens?" But he had been to Palestine and knew that things were happening and would happen there. What he could not have predicted was that in Palestine he would meet Sonia Reznik, born in Pinsk, who had been forced to interrupt her studies in Berlin and had settled in Palestine. They fell in love, and she became not only his devoted life companion but also an active and important collaborator in his journalistic career. She even filled in for him when necessary, particularly during the brief period when he served in the British Army psychological warfare branch in Cairo during World War II.

Palestine

After a short period at Kibbutz Ein Harod, Gottgetreu came to the conclusion that if he wanted to continue to work in journalism, he would have to live in Jerusalem, and that is what he did. Unlike the many foreign journalists who lived in Tel Aviv, Gottgetreu preferred his beloved Jerusalem, which also gave him an edge on his competitors. He wrote for a number of German emigré papers, as well as for Jewish papers still appearing in Germany. A collection of these articles was published in book form in Vienna in 1934, titled *The Land of the Sons*, a book which became a must for all German Jews

who were considering emigrating to Palestine.

In 1935, Gottgetreu and a friend became the correspondents of an outstanding French-language liberal paper published in Cairo, *La Bourse Egyptienne*. "It was a time," Gottgetreu wrote subsequently, "difficult to imagine now. Early every day we sent 2,000 to 3,000 words on what was going on in Palestine, and it was published in Egypt. This collaboration went on till March 1, 1948." There were difficult times, particularly during the riots beginning in 1936. It was not easy to get objective or complete information on what was going on. The Mandatory authorities, recalled Gottgetreu, "had no spokesman, but every day around noon they published a communiqué on the events of the previous 24 hours. One had to go to the police headquarters in the Russian Compound and get it." It was only when World War II started that the British felt they had to have a real press service.

Gottgetreu worked briefly for the Free French press agency during the war years, and in 1942 he became correspondent for the Associated Press, the world's largest agency, a position which he retained until his retirement in 1968. Working for such an agency at that time, particularly when there was fighting in Jerusalem, was no easy task. There were no telephone or telex connections, and a correspondent had to write his dispatches at home, bring them to the censorship office and then mail them out at the post office. Once, in December 1947, the Jewish underground staged a raid on a police station and set off gunfights all over Jerusalem that lasted for hours. An AP internal report tells the story:

Gottgetreu made his way to the cable office in the heart of Jerusalem and handed in some bulletins. Just then the fighting turned into the cable office street and some half-dozen Arab riflemen on duty there retreated inside. Gottgetreu tried to follow [them in] because bullets were zinging up and down the street. "Sorry," he was told, "it is not allowed that you come inside." So he stayed on the doorstep and wrote bulletins, handing them over his shoulder to guards who were leveling their rifles just under his left ear.

The same AP report describes a typical working day for Gottgetreu:

In the morning he interviewed a French monastic archeologist, went to a noon press conference in the Jewish Agency, talked to a Russian priest and a Polish diplomat in the afternoon, and at night narrowly missed being blown up by a road mine.

On the problem of obtaining reliable information, when each side issued its own version of events, the AP internal report had this to say, based on Gottgetreu's experience and that of special correspondents in Palestine:

Getting bits and pieces of information from Jews, Arabs and British requires three widely divergent techniques. With Jewish sources generally, newsmen must pick up and choose fresh information from the flood of propaganda that inevitably comes forth as an answer to any question about anything. With Arabs, a similar question elicits first numerous paragraphs about the glorious history of the Arabic people and the future independence of Palestine. After that it takes pulling and hauling both by brute force and cajolery to find the simple answer you wanted in the first place. From British sources, civil or military, any question gets the statement first that "because of security reasons, nothing can be said about that at the moment."

Israel

Gottgetreu's work was in a different category from that of many correspondents, particularly Americans, who covered events in the country. Recalls Moshe Pearlman, the first head of Israel's public information office:

I first met him at a press briefing in 1948 during our War of Independence. The conference over, he and his colleagues had dashed to their typewriters to file their stories. A few minutes later, while most of them were still at it, he came to me saying he had sent the "hard news" but wondered if I could give him more background material on the significance of the military and diplomatic moves I had announced, as he wished to write an analytical follow-up story. He introduced himself as the correspondent of Associated Press. I was somewhat surprised, for he seemed unlike the popular image of the wire-service reporter whose constant concern was to be first with the news... What impressed me was his commitment to understanding fully the item he would be reporting so that he could offer a clear and accurate account to his readers.

However, this did not prevent him from being quick, as I personally knew when I worked for a competing news agency. Quite a few times, Gottgetreu had been faster than we.

What distinguished Gottgetreu most in the world of agency newsmen was his deep and many-faceted sense of culture. He was devoted to socialism, to Zionism, to Judaism and to German culture, along with varied literary and philosophical interests, all of which were reflected in his rich library. The interviews in which he seemed to have taken the most pride were those he had done of Martin Buber and S. Y. Agnon. He recalled that when he phoned Buber to request an interview on the subject "The Future of Religion," in which one of his papers was interested, Buber answered: "I don't give interviews about God." But Buber relented and gave the interview, which led to a long friendship between the two. Many years later, Gottgetreu wrote an essay in which he took great pride — a long and scholarly introduction to the 1979

eight-volume reprint of *Der Jude*, the famous monthly edited by Buber between 1916 and 1924. Here Gottgetreu had full latitude to prove himself as a scholar.

Gottgetreu also recalled that Agnon had once told him: "I write only what God commands me to write." When Gottgetreu repeated Agnon's statement to Gunther Grass, the latter remarked: "That makes things much easier for him. I have to do it all myself."

An agency like AP did not limit itself to covering military and political events, and Gottgetreu had the opportunity to write about an astounding number of issues and people. Those items which were not suitable for the agency service appeared in various publications in Israel and elsewhere, especially in Germany.

After he left AP in 1968, Gottgetreu concentrated on the subjects closest to his heart: historical and cultural events in which Jews, Judaism, the Jewish state and its people played a central role. In spite of illness, he continued to work and publish until the end, something that all working journalists can only wish for.

In fact, due to his wife Sonia's efforts, he was published even after his death in 1981. Four years later, in 1985, the diary he had kept of the *Thirty-Seventh Siege of Jerusalem*, the dramatic days of the spring of 1948, was published in German and translated into Hebrew. The diary, a detailed and realistic version of this critical period, was in fact the product both of Gottgetreu and his wife, for she recorded what was happening in the city while Erich was on assignment out of town. Their lifelong harmonious collaboration thus continued even after

Erich Gottgetreu (second from right) accompanying Israel's first prime minister as he leaves a Cabinet meeting



death had separated them. In order to perpetuate his memory, Sonia Gottgetreu also created a fund at Tel Aviv University's Institute for Research of the Jewish Press to encourage the study of the important role Jewish journalists played in the development of the international news agencies. The many books related to journalism which Gottgetreu had collected during his lifetime now enrich the Tel Aviv University library for the benefit of future journalists.

Then and Now

Is there, in fact, any point in foreign correspondents working in Israel today studying how their predecessors worked? After all, the conditions for newsmen of large international agencies are so different today, that the experience of the past may hardly be relevant.

Indeed, we can see how things have changed by comparing how the AP worked when Gottgetreu headed it and how it works today. Then, it was practically a one-man operation, with two or three stringers, including one in Tel Aviv. The situation changed significantly in 1967, as Gottgetreu was preparing to retire, with the opening of an office in Tel Aviv. Today, AP has eight full-time staff members. Although the volume of work did increase, it certainly did not increase eightfold, so that what is demanded now from each correspondent is much less than was demanded from Gottgetreu, a situation which is reflected in all the other international news agencies as well.

At the same time, work conditions have become much easier. Except in rare cases, work does not have to be submitted to prior censorship. Communication is practically immediate, and contact with the home office is easy and constant. Computers make it simple to get background on any story. Moreover, sources of information have become so numerous, and their statements so readily available, that here too the work of a foreign correspondent has become much less tiresome and time-consuming.

However, precisely because there is so much information available, the media needs news analysis that will summarize highly complex situations clearly and concisely and provide perspective about the future. Writing this kind of analysis demands good contacts, serious discussions with experts and officials, and sound judgment — the same qualities that were in demand in the old days, which is why journalists can learn a lot and be inspired by the example of Erich Gottgetreu. His life's work also shows that a rich and many-faceted cultural life, and a deep interest in issues that are not directly tied to actuality, are no impediment to a successful journalistic career. Quite the contrary.

THE MEDIA AND ITS MESSAGE / Dov Levin

International media attention is often focused obsessively on Israel, and the country is judged by demanding criteria that are not applied to other states. Possibly, this results from the lofty principles of social justice, freedom and equality espoused by the Jewish people from time immemorial, which were incorporated into the State of Israel's Declaration of Independence.

Perhaps foremost among these principles is the right of freedom of expression, the living soul of a free and enlightened society. Israel's Supreme Court has laid down that the free exchange of information, opinions and views is a vital condition for the existence of democratic rule, which in turn guarantees other basic freedoms.

The press, and the media generally, are the conduit for passing on information to the public and for reflecting the variety of opinion in society. Because it holds so much power, the media must therefore be vigilant in acting honestly and fairly. It must also be protected. The media has the power and the means to influence and even form the character and image of the state. Not surprisingly, many of the Jewish people's greatest leaders were journalists, writers and intellectuals.

However, there are also limits to this freedom. There are circumstances when other vital interests must take precedence over the principle of freedom of expression, for example when

it is shown that exploiting this right is likely to endanger the welfare of society or the security of the state.

Moreover, freedom of expression may not be exploited for the purpose of defamation of the individual, as the rights of the individual take precedence over the principle of freedom of expression. Freedom of expression, then, is actually a relative, not an absolute, freedom. An important element involved is vigilance regarding facts. Unfortunately, the unresearched or unsubstantiated scoop is widespread in the media as a means of grabbing headlines. An investigative, critical press must guarantee that first and foremost it too is honest and responsible.

The press also has an obligation to report positive news events. For example, the tremendous event that is unfolding at this time — the return of large numbers of Jews to Zion — merits more positive media coverage, in addition to exposure of the inevitable failures in handling all the aspects of such an enormous undertaking.

A narrow, one-sided press distorts the real picture and causes damage. A balanced press which gives space to many truths, positive as well as negative, is constructive and productive. The greater the media's influence on the establishment and the citizen, the greater its responsibility to act in a balanced, restrained fashion.

THE MASS MEDIA IN WARTIME / Gad Barzilai

The role of the media in molding political opinion during wartime is not widely understood, and can be illuminated by studying the Israeli Jewish media from the 1956 Sinai Campaign to the 1991 Gulf war.

The Israeli media never posed any real threat to the country's policy-makers until 1973. Israel was controlled by a dominant party — Mapai, later Labor — which also controlled radio and the single TV channel from 1968. The press was largely party-subsidized, and reflected the broader political dependence on the dominant party. Journalists refrained from criticizing state policy, especially in the area of defense, and what criticism there was, especially from the rightist opposition press and that of the far Left, largely reflected ideological differences.

The government view of the Sinai Campaign received full media support, with no mention of massive French aid and military and political cooperation between Israel and the Western powers. The campaign was presented as a necessary military move to eliminate terrorist bases, to open the Tiran Straits to Israeli shipping and to prevent a war which Egypt was about to launch. The press, including the opposition press, did not present any military commentary; it simply reported events and praised the fighters. This was a classic case of voluntary consensus, which in Israel was intensified by the ongoing state of war.

The 1960s witnessed a lessening of control by the dominant party as a result of internal power struggles, and a subsequent increase of press involvement in the policy-making process, especially on the eve of the Six-Day War in 1967. At that time,

it was the press which projected the image of Prime Minister Levi Eshkol as indecisive, escalated Moshe Dayan to the position of defense minister and fostered great public confidence in the military establishment generally. While most of the press was pro-establishment during the War of Attrition (1969-70), a dissenting press also developed, mainly reflecting the moderate dovish political sector which called for an Israeli peace initiative based on territory in exchange for peace. In this respect the Israeli press was influenced to some extent by the student protest movements in Europe and the United States.

The Yom Kippur War of 1973 ushered in important changes. The press had been prevented from publishing information about preparations by the Arab countries for an attack on Israel. When the extent of the country's unpreparedness for war became known, the media began to lose confidence in the party in power, focusing criticism on Prime Minister Golda Meir and Defense Minister Moshe Dayan in particular and giving wide coverage to protest groups.

Elections at the end of 1973 resulted in a more even spread of power between the two leading parties, Likud and Labor, with the loss of Labor's political dominance for the first time. This led to greater investigative coverage of the elite by the media, with less social/political consensus. Simultaneously, the state was less able than before to control the media.

Despite its increased criticism of the existing regime, the media viewed the changing of the political guard from Labor to Likud as a historical aberration which would soon be rectified. The equalized power balance between the two camps led to a more alert, investigative and ultimately more democratic media, which nevertheless remained loyal to the interests of the various elites and to the principles of the Zionist community.

The political involvement of the media had a major effect on the organization and impact of protest groups during the war in Lebanon in 1982-85. Unlike the pre-1973 war period, the media played an active role in public debate on whether or not to launch a campaign into Lebanon in order to eliminate Russian-Syrian missiles that had been moved into the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon. Most of the print media was hostile to the Begin government and opposed a preemptive strike. However, once the attack was launched, the media behaved as it had done previously during wartime, and as it does elsewhere in the world: it fell silent, adopting consensus values. Yet because the goals of this preventive war were more far-reaching than during Israel's previous wars, anti-war protest began to mount both within the political parties and elsewhere, including the

army, with the media playing an active role in this process. While TV was under strict government supervision, the press, which by the 1980s was mostly privately owned, enjoyed significant freedom.

The Intifada in the administered territories from 1987 onward also elicited greater investigative military coverage by the media than before, with the media reflecting the doubts of the Israeli population about how to handle the crisis. The press in particular exerted an important influence on public opinion.

However, the Gulf war once again revealed how much a part of the political and military establishment the Israeli media is. Censorship was strict, with all electronic media put under military control. Surveys revealed that the overwhelming majority of Israelis were satisfied with this arrangement, reverting to the traditional consensus-values pattern during wartime.

While British Mandatory ordinances are still applied in Israel to the Arab press, allowing for the closing of papers or censorship before publication, the Israeli Jewish press operates according to a voluntary agreement made by an editors' committee to submit all defense-related copy to the censor before publication. The Israeli press, and even moreso the electronic media, are well disciplined in this area. Sensitive security issues are usually first revealed by the foreign media, and then copied in the Israeli media.

A tradition of secretiveness, and ongoing defense pressures in Israel, have resulted in fear of the unrestricted dissemination of information — a situation which lends itself to political manipulation of information in the name of security censorship. The media is thereby hampered in its role as a conduit between society and the state, a situation that is exacerbated by the absence of a civil rights tradition.

The Israeli public regards it as axiomatic that public debate harms national security, especially during wartime. The media, therefore, often functions in a hostile environment and is sometimes even accused of collaborating with the enemy. This negative attitude is shared to some extent by members of Knesset, especially those representing the Right and the ultra-Orthodox.

The Israeli media, especially TV, generally reflects the Zionist principles underlying society and does not question them. It is a conservative force which supports the political establishment. Despite changes that have occurred over the years, mostly in the print media, the Israeli media represents the state to the citizen rather than the citizen to the state, as illustrated particularly during wartime.

THE PRESS — A NEW TYPE OF ARTILLERY / Ze'ev Schiff

The subject of the relationship between the media and the army comes up periodically in Israel, especially in the last few years since the start of the Intifada. Military reportage has always been one of the most important measures of freedom of the press in Israel, and it is an accepted axiom that Israel has a free and independent press.

However, the authorities obviously do intervene in the area of reportage on security matters. In fact, this area is characterized by the limitations imposed on the military reporter. It is the only area which requires censorship. Every military reporter actually has more than one editor: He has his paper's editor, and he has the censor. He is the only kind of reporter who must obtain clearance from the security establishment, in addition to his appointment from his newspaper, in order to work in his field. Moreover, while the law obligates defense sources to maintain direct and open contact with the press, internal military directives often contradict this approach. Furthermore, there is probably no area that abounds in off-the-record communications as the military area.

Overall, Israeli military reportage is praiseworthy. However, an example of poor reporting is Israeli press coverage of the Intifada, because it has been handled by journalists whose beat is the Arabs in the territories rather than by military reporters covering the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). For all intents and purposes, the Intifada is a war, although the weapons are different. It is a war of attrition being waged on home territory, and should have been covered differently.

In 1974, during the post-Yom Kippur War period, and again in 1982, the Israeli defense establishment failed to grasp the changes that had taken place in terms of the public need for information. These failures caused an unprecedented gap between the media and the IDF, resulting in the press

absolving itself of responsibility to check facts, inasmuch as the IDF did not respond to queries. It was also, undoubtedly, one of the factors that contributed to Arik Sharon's downfall.

The absence of a close working relationship between the IDF and the press has ultimately forced chiefs of staff to invest a great deal of effort in rectifying media damage that should have been prevented in the first place. It reflects a basic misconception by the army of the military-press relationship. There are some interests that the two have in common, for example the public good, the welfare of society and state security. Obviously, though, there can be areas of conflict of interest, and this need not be threatening. The existence of conflicts of interest, after all, is part of the democratic process. If the press plays its proper role, and the IDF faces its responsibility to the public as it should, the result is a free press, even with the necessary activity of the censor. The problem begins when one party — the army — tries to block the work of the press.

The army is not doing the press a favor by giving it access, inasmuch as the press is merely the communications conduit between the army and the public. The army needs the press even more than the press needs the army; the army cannot allow itself to disparage the press.

The IDF must realize that the media, worldwide, is a new kind of artillery, as the noted American journalist James Reston has termed it. The media must be an integral part of military planning. The behavior of the Iraqis, however primitive, during the Gulf war, is a good example: The Iraqis effectively utilized a journalist from the enemy side whom they allowed in. The effective use of this "artillery" by the Palestinians during the course of the Intifada is another example. It is a weapon that cannot be ignored.

THE HEBREW PRESS IN VIENNA IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY / Menuha Gilboa

The French Revolution gave rise to Liberalism, which advocated such concepts as freedom of expression, freedom of religion and equality before the law — ideas which were of particular importance to the Jews of Europe. These concepts

were reflected in the literary, political and philosophical content of the Hebrew press.

The position of European Jewry, and of the Enlightenment intellectuals in particular, was complex. On the one hand, they

espoused Liberalism, but on the other, they needed the protection of the rulers, who were conservative. This conflict was reflected especially in the Jewish press in Vienna, as well as in other cities in Galicia, then under Austro-Hungarian rule.

Although the Austro-Hungarian Empire was absolutist, the emperor was an enlightened despot, so that the Viennese press, including the Hebrew press, was able to express liberal ideas, reflecting the broad political, social and cultural outlook of Western Europe. By comparison, the despotism of the tsar in Russia was in no way enlightened, and the press there was severely restricted and censored.

Hatsir ("The Messenger"), a biweekly edited by Isaac Weinert in Vienna during 1861-62, combined general material on current events, technology and nature with literary material relevant to a Jewish audience. *Mimizrah Umima'arav* ("From East and West"), edited by Reuben Breinin during 1894-99, was a literary monthly patterned on European literature and

reflecting the naturalistic trend popular in Parisian and Viennese writing then. *Hashahar* ("Dawn"), published during a 16-year period (1868-84), was a cultural monthly which boldly advocated a Jewish nationalist point of view, opposed Hasidism and championed the Hebrew language. It epitomized liberal European thinking, particularly the thinking of the enlightened Jewish community, as well as that of non-extremist Orthodox Jews. *Hamabit* ("The Spectator") and *Hamabit Le-Yisra'el* ("The Israel Spectator"), edited by Peretz Smolenskin in 1878, were alternating weeklies patterned on the Austrian *Oeisteirischer Beobachter* and the English *Spectator*. They covered current political events, literature — mostly Smolenskin's — and science and nature. Like *Hatsir*, they were typical of the contemporary European press. *Ha'emet* ("The Truth"), edited by Aaron Samuel Liebermann in 1877, was a radical socialist periodical that echoed Marxist philosophy.

"OUR MOTTO — LIGHT": THE FIRST RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE JEWISH PERIODICAL / David Freishstat

The city of Odessa, conquered by the Russians from the Turks in 1789, became a populous and prosperous city during the 19th century, with Jewish inhabitants comprising over a third of the population by the end of the century. Jews gravitated there from various parts of the Pale of Settlement, most of them in search of employment but some drawn by the opportunity to broaden their cultural horizons. Jews also came from Germany and Galicia, as well as from England, Italy and other European countries. They established large trading enterprises, especially in grain, and raised the cultural level of the Jewish community as well.

A number of Jewish journalists wrote for the local and national Russian press and others wrote for the foreign press in German, French and Italian. The idea of a Jewish paper in Russian germinated within this circle of writers and was supported by Nikolai Pirogov, a surgeon and anatomy scholar who was the supervisor of education in the Odessa region. A friend of the Jews, Pirogov submitted a request on their behalf for permission to publish a newspaper in 1857.

The idea was initially opposed by the Tsarist-appointed Va'ad Hayehudi (Jewish Committee), which claimed such a newspaper could "sow destruction" in the Russian community, and suggested it be published in Hebrew or Yiddish instead.

Only when the Va'ad was assured that no religious material would be included in the publication was the permit issued, in 1859. The first issue of the weekly *Razsvet* ("Dawn") appeared in 1860, in a 16-page format, edited by Osip Rabinovich and Joachim Tarnopol, and later by Rabinovich alone. Rabinovich was a Russian Jewish writer who had an unusual educational background for those times: along with Jewish studies he had studied foreign languages and music, and had attended Kharkov University for a while. He had worked as a clerk in a law firm and later became an essayist and translator whose works were published in various Russian periodicals and anthologies. Tarnopol was also an educated Jewish writer, whose work was published in Russian and French periodicals.

Razsvet had regular columns, such as "Domestic News," which covered various Jewish communities, "A Survey of the Jewish Press," "Government Announcements" and others. Serialized literary works were also published.

Reactions to the periodical within the Jewish community were varied. Along with positive reactions, there was dissatisfaction on the part of the religious population, criticism by others for excessive Jewish communal self-criticism and lack of sympathy from the Yiddish press.

The paper lasted only a year, closing in 1861. It had faced

ideological, financial and censorship problems, the last because it espoused equal rights for the Jews. Later on, a number of

other periodicals called *Razsvet* appeared in Russia and elsewhere, but they were not related to this early publication.

JOURNALESE / Shalom Rosenfeld

There are two types of jargone: professional jargon used by journalists all over the world in their work, including such terms as scoop, byline, desk, deadline, follow-up, lead, lay-out, off the record, tabloid, bromide, story and feature; and terminology which journalists use in describing events to the reader, which is the focus of this article.

The journalist's and editor's choice of words molds events, ideas and even the fate of individuals and whole populations. Unfortunately, in addition to responsible journalists, there are also ignorant and careless individuals in the profession, which results in dull or distorted journalism and even linguistic delinquency.

Every language has its jargons — scientific, medical, military, sports, music, theater, criminal, bureaucratic or legal (legalese) — the last, notorious for its purposeful ambivalence. The jargon of the press is often expressed in code words. In American journalism, for example, the Middle East it always "embattled." Kuwait was always "oil-rich." The IRA is always labeled "illegal." The prisoner's pardon is always granted "at the eleventh hour." The adjective "imposing" implies, for a man, impressive, but for a woman, domineering.

Three aspects of Israeli journalism that are relevant to the subject of jargone are: 1. the political rape of words, or the use of code words as political weapons; 2. the linguistic poverty of conventional journalism, especially in daily news reportage; and 3. the use of newly created words taken from daily speech, including slang, borrowed foreign words or translated foreign expressions and four-letter words.

The subject of the politicization of words is unavoidably critical in Israel, which now, more than ever, is so divided on questions of war and peace and the religious vs. the secular. For example, the mother of a soldier killed in action in Lebanon in 1982 struggled for eight years to change the inscription on his monument from "killed in Operation Peace for Galilee" to "killed in Lebanon," reflecting her political position on the war. Or, the Intifada had variously been called an "uprising," a "civil revolt" or "rioting," depending on rightist or leftist political views. Geographic terminology is also affected: the "territories" are no longer referred to as "occupied territories"

or even "liberated territories" but as Judea, Samaria and Gaza, or an acronym of these names, which in itself reflects a political point of view. Unfortunately, political labels of all kinds tend to constrict freedom of the press. On the other hand, the press also has a responsibility to deal with inhumane, illegal acts, such as terrorism, in a manner that is suitably critical, because in this case linguistic neutrality implies a certain acceptance, which in itself is corrupt.

Defining the political Right and Left nowadays has become a confusing task. For example, the conservatives in Russia who want to preserve the Communist regime are labeled the Right, while those who want to dismantle it are considered the progressive Left. These political code words are, therefore, out of date. Other code words have social implications, such as describing people at an important event as "personalities" rather than just "people," or a speaker who "addresses an audience" rather than simply "speaks."

Linguistic poverty — writing in clichés — besides being boring, constricts the readers' imagination. In Israeli journalism, for example, anyone who is described as speaking Yiddish inevitably speaks "juicy Yiddish"; a Yemenite is always an "authentic Yemenite"; the silence after a violent incident is always a "tense silence"; a politician is always a "seasoned politician."

The incorporation of foreign words into language is a legitimate process, so long as it is done logically, aesthetically and in reasonable proportions. It is justifiable in the absence of functional Hebrew alternatives. Such words as sport, university, opposition, option, bourse, politics, telephone and television have become international and are irreplaceable, in the same way that hundreds of Aramaic, Greek, Latin and Arabic words are also part of the Hebrew language. Interestingly, Yiddish words are increasingly being incorporated into Hebrew, although they are generally words and phrases with negative or derogatory connotations, such as *shmattes*, *brokh*, *nudnik* and *nebbich*.

However, the bastardization of the language takes place when copied words and phrases that ring false in Hebrew are eagerly incorporated in speech and in jargone. This includes

such expressions as "in" and "out" (in the social sense), and "like" (as if) before practically any word.

In the final analysis, an aesthetic linguistic style, combined

with inner content, is much more than just communication — it is the living soul of a nation.

"EL JALA" — AN ARABIC-LANGUAGE ZIONIST PERIODICAL IN ARGENTINA / Dov M. Sieskel

El Jala ("The Diaspora") was a rare Arab-language Jewish periodical that began as a biweekly in Buenos Aires in 1917. With only one issue extant, the researcher is faced with the challenge of identifying the publisher and his ideological persuasion; accounting for the publication's pronounced political Zionist emphasis; discovering who backed the paper and who the readership was; and explaining the odd combination of Zionist and Arab topics in one publication.

Apparently, the Balfour Declaration of Nov. 2, 1917, had an enormous impact on Argentinian Jewry, including the Arabic-speaking community that had immigrated from Aleppo and Damascus. The editor, Aaron Sithon, had originated from Beirut and had spent time in Baron Rothschild's colonies in the Galilee as an Arabic teacher. Emigrating to Argentina in 1909, he taught Hebrew and became a Zionist activist within the Sephardi community, which was generally indifferent to Jewish ideological issues. However, a group of Sephardi immigrants from Jerusalem, Safed and Tiberias, along with Jews from Damascus, responded and founded a Zionist association, Ge'ulat Zion. This group probably comprised the readership of *El Jala*, which was the only Arabic-language Jewish publication outside the Mediterranean basin.

Curiously, while the Arabic name of the paper, "Diaspora," reflects a specific nationalistic message, the Spanish translation of the name that appears on the masthead, *La Emigracion*, along with two other highlighted slogans — *Voluntadi* and *Labor* — suggest an opposite connotation. Probably, the editor wanted to emphasize the importance of retaining national Jewish awareness, while also urging the Jewish immigrants to

work hard and make a contribution to their new country.

The extant issue of December 1917 includes articles on the history of democratic regimes throughout the world; the beneficial effect of British democratic traditions on its colonies; a call to Jews to return to Eretz Israel and help build it; similarities between the Maccabean victories and General Allenby's victory in Palestine; a historical survey of the Biblical, Islamic and Crusader periods in Eretz Israel; information about the persecution of the Jews in Eastern Europe and the aspiration to return to the historic homeland; profiles of fathers of Zionism such as Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, Leon Pinsker, Moses Montefiore and Rabbi Samuel Mohilewer; a report on a meeting of the "Benei Yamit" Zionist group, previously unknown to researchers of the Sephardi Jewish community in Argentina; a report on the editor's public relations efforts on behalf of the Jewish homeland; a call for support for Lebanese unity; a listing of Arabic periodicals in South America; and commercial advertisements placed by members of the community.

The primary topic, however, was the Balfour Declaration and the obvious impact it had on the Jewish community, with the varied historical information offered in the periodical integral to this theme.

Additionally, and of special interest, is the identification shown by the editor with the Lebanese Maronites, with the Lebanese cause of unity and with the Arab community in South America generally. *El Jala* was an authentic reflection of an unusual minority community of Arabic-speaking Sephardi Jews in Argentina.

HASOLEL STREET — JERUSALEM'S FLEET STREET / Gabriel Tsifroni

Hasolel ("Paver's") Street, near Zion Square in the center of Jerusalem, created at the start of the Mandatory period, was first dubbed "Jerusalem's Fleet Street" by Britain's first governor of Jerusalem, Ronald Storrs. It was populated by a group that called itself Hasolelim ("The Pavers"), native-born intellectuals who were interested in establishing a modern Hebrew Zionist newspaper, led by Ittamar Ben-Avi, son of the renowned Hebraist Eliezer Ben-Yehuda. Another active member of the group was Alexander Aaronsohn, who was involved in intelligence work for the British on behalf of the Nili movement.

Financed by a pro-Zionist American heiress, Mary Felz, the group acquired printing equipment and a plot of land near the Russian Compound, and on August 8, 1919, the first issue of *Do'ar Hayom* ("The Daily Mail") appeared, edited by Ittamar Ben-Avi. It was, in fact, the second modern Hebrew newspaper in Jerusalem, the first — *Hadashot Ha'arets* ("News of the Land") — having preceded it by six weeks. These two newspapers served a population of less than 60,000 in the entire Jewish community of Palestine.

Do'ar Hayom aimed to promote the Zionist message to the world, including the Arab world. It published an Arabic edition, *Barid il Yom*, and an English periodical, *Palestine Weekly*, aimed at the British civil service in Palestine and at tourists. The Arabic edition was short-lived, as the Mufti of Jerusalem forbade reading it. The English-language publication was more successful — moderate, but reflecting the rightist leanings of the Hasolel group. Ben-Avi deprecated the labor movement's socialist aims in Eretz Israel and espoused a free economy on the American model. The Hasolelim group supported the Benei Binyamin movement, named for Baron Rothschild, which had a vision of Zionism based on the foundations of tradition, as opposed to the revolutionary attitude of the labor movement.

Hasolel Street bloomed during the 1920s and became a desirable neighborhood with new shops and residences. Money was raised abroad for several industries that were established on the street, and the Benei Binyamin Bank was opened.

During the mid-1920s, however, the members of the Hasolelim group dispersed. Ben-Avi tried to finance *Do'ar Hayom* by raising funds abroad, but the paper was sold in 1928 to the Revisionist Party, with Ze'ev Jabotinsky taking over as editor-in-chief. It continued to struggle financially, as did its rival, *Ha'arets*, in contrast to *Davar*, the labor newspaper, which was financed by the Histadrut and by American friends

of the Histadrut.

Hasolel Street gradually became the center of the country's press establishment. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency, founded in London in 1919, opened its Palestine office on Hasolel Street in the early 1920s. Arthur Koestler, who came to Palestine during the 1920s, lived on Hasolel Street and was in close contact with Jabotinsky and with Wolfgang Von Weisel, a noted German-language journalist based on Hasolel Street as well.

During the Arab rioting of 1929, several yeshiva students from the U.S. who had been studying in Hebron were murdered, and the event elicited worldwide press interest. Investigative commissions arrived in Jerusalem, as did foreign correspondents. Since the Mandate government had not yet established a government press office, foreign reporters frequented Hasolel Street where they sought out local colleagues.

During the 1930s, a period of rapid development in the country's press, *Do'ar Hayom* was reacquired by Hasolel Company, while the *Palestine Weekly* was acquired by Gershon Agronsky, a journalist who had worked in the Anglo-Jewish press in the U.S. and had settled in Eretz Israel. Agronsky turned the English-language weekly into a daily, the *Palestine Post*, in 1932, with the backing of the Jewish Agency, and built it into an influential paper. Subsequently, many foreign correspondents opened their offices on Hasolel Street, and the demand for office space there increased to the point that Reuters, which decided to open an office in Palestine in the early 1930s, could not find space there and had to make do on nearby Princess Mary Street.

Do'ar Hayom continued its precarious existence, while other newspapers opened on the street, aimed at the nationalist non-religious, non-Mapai public. The Revisionists launched *Ha'am* ("The People") in 1931, staffed by such political writers as Abba Ahimeir, Y. H. Yeivin, Uri Zevi Greenberg and Ben-Zion Netanyahu. When the paper failed for lack of financial backing, Netanyahu started an intellectual quarterly, *Betar*, which also closed for financial reasons, followed by *Hazit Ha'am* ("The People's Front"), a radical Revisionist periodical which later transferred to Tel Aviv. In 1934 the Revisionists started *Hayarden* ("The Jordan").

The Ahva Press on Hasolel Street began printing the *Palestine Illustrated News* in 1934, published and edited by Ya'akov Hazin, a weekly which enjoyed great success among British soldiers in Palestine during World War II.

Do'ar Hayom was bought in 1936 by an immigrant from Germany, Leo Winz, who soon transferred it to Tel Aviv, where it expired.

The *Palestine Post* remained the only daily published in Jerusalem, to the consternation of the British establishment, which was unhappy about British officials and soldiers relying on a Zionist paper for their news. A few months before the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, a small band of British deserters from the police force, together with several Arabs, attempted to blow up the *Post* offices, an event which received worldwide news exposure. The *Post*, nevertheless, survived.

Today, Hasolel Street is called Hahavatselet Street, named for a newspaper published in Jerusalem in 1863. The *Palestine Post*, which became the *Jerusalem Post*, moved out of the center of town, part of a trend that took place on Fleet Street as well. Other papers that had been printed at the Hasolel Press, such as *Hed Yerushalayim* ("Jerusalem Echo") and *Admateinu* ("Our Land"), folded. A daily published by the Progressive Party, *Zemanim* ("Times"), emanated from Hasolel Street in 1953 but lasted only two years. The only indication of the street's journalistic past that is left is the Jerusalem office of *Ha'aretz* on the corner of Yaffo and Hahavatselet Streets.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE NEWSPAPER "ZEMANIM" / Bella Guterman

During June-July of 1953, the leadership of the Progressive Party in Israel decided to publish its own daily newspaper. Its intention was to provide the Israeli reader with thorough and lucid information about events in Israel and the world in an easy-to-read but high-level paper that would combine the traditions of the Hebrew press with modern journalistic developments. It would view all events critically, not from a partisan viewpoint. It would be published in Jerusalem — the first Hebrew paper to emanate from the capital since the founding of the state.

The decision was opposed by Dr. A. Merton, a member of the Progressive Party, who believed that the plan was too ambitious and that the paper would not attract enough readers to insure a profitable existence. If the party insisted on publishing a paper, he said, it would have to be a broad-based, popular paper so that deficits would be kept to a minimum.

Nevertheless, the party leaders went ahead with their plan. They approached the *Jerusalem Post*, which had a similar political point of view, and worked out an agreement for utilizing the *Post*'s printing press and for borrowing one of its senior reporters, Ted Lurie, to act as editor for a year. Lurie would be assisted by Yehoshua Gilboa, while Yitzhak Artzi would manage the Tel Aviv office. The paper would not be a party organ, although its policy would be compatible with the overall party philosophy.

The name *Zemanim* ("Times") having been selected by the membership, the party also decided that each of its branches form a group of "Friends of the Newspaper" to promote it among the membership.

The first issue of *Zemanim* appeared on September 9, 1953.

It had a weekday format of four pages, and double that on Fridays and holiday eves. The goals of the paper, as presented in the first issue, were to promote "constructive Zionism" which would reinforce what was positive and campaign against negative developments. Political liberalism was what was needed, the paper wrote, and it would be reflected in the kind of journalism that would typify the paper: objective and responsible reporting, and no sensationalism. The choice of Jerusalem as the publishing venue, despite the disadvantages in distribution nationally, was made in order to contribute to diplomatic efforts to gain recognition for the city as capital of Israel, the paper explained. It promised to serve the broad public interest rather than narrow political interests.

A letter to the editor by Moshe Kol, chairman of the Progressive Party, which appeared in the first issue, stressed the Zionist mission of the paper and the need to combat the negative influences of Canaanism and cynicism. He advocated constructive criticism, and not simply the highlighting of national failures. In addition, the paper had an obligation to devote space to culture, qualitative thinking and creativity, he wrote. It must also deal with the attitude toward the Arabs of Israel, and not ignore the issue as the rest of the press did, he believed.

The first issue included articles on the relationship between the two Germanys, the trial of the Tsrifin underground and the problem of emigration from the country. There were few photographs and few columns. The focus was on cultural topics, biblical commentary and archaeology.

New columns, and a series on the Arab world, soon followed. Evaluating the paper's progress ten days after it

began publication, Managing Editor Yehoshua Gilboa expressed satisfaction with the literary and news levels and with the addition of new columns, but was aware that the staff was still small and inexperienced, and concerned that there was no time for gradual development. It was necessary to compete successfully with *Ha'aretz* within a few months, he stated. Other problems were developing sources of information in the government; the absence of an independent printing press; and the need for a supportive atmosphere on the part of the party.

The paper continued at the existing print shop, which produced an inferior product technically and made competing with the 21 other dailies difficult. However, it rapidly added new columns — on music, film, radio and finance — with the aim of broadening the readership base.

Other newspapers, particularly the evening papers, began reacting to *Zemanim*, acknowledging that it had acquired a respectable segment of the market.

The initiators of the paper believed that the only way to assure the paper's existence, in light of fierce competition, was through large-scale financing by the party and the commitment of the membership to acquiring subscriptions. The party undertook to advertise its activities in the paper on a regular basis, thereby assuring revenue for the paper.

But the close relationship between the paper and the party was also problematic. The first hint of differences of opinion between the editorial management and the party leadership came at the beginning of 1954, four months after the paper was initiated. Party Chairman Kol was angered when the paper failed to print a letter to the editor which he had submitted. Rebuking the editors harshly for this and other errors in judgment which he cited, Kol elicited an equally agitated response from Managing Editor Gilboa, who offered to resign rather than submit to editorial manipulation. Although the dispute was smoothed over, party pressure on the editorial management continued and the balance between political interests on the one hand and maintaining objectivity and attracting a non-party readership on the other became increasingly problematic. In April 1954 the paper published several items questioning the personal integrity of two Mapai leaders, Minister of Labor Golda Meir and Histadrut leader Reuven Barkat, which discomfited the Progressive Party and caused further conflict between the editors and the party leadership.

Nevertheless, the paper continued to improve editorially. Talented young reporters were added to the staff, including Dan Horowitz, Yuval Elitzur, Eli Eyal, Yisrael Margalit, Dan Soen, Yeshayahu Ben-Porat and the caricaturist Freidel. The

paper also sent reporters abroad to cover special events.

In June 1954 Managing Editor Gilboa became acting editor after Ted Lurie resigned and returned to the *Jerusalem Post*. Kol made it clear that the relationship between the newspaper management and the party leadership needed to be strengthened, and Gilboa, who had a close relationship with Tel Aviv party head Yitzhak Artzi, assented. A column began appearing which consisted of articles by party leaders and reports on party activities and positions. The paper also published a sizable amount of party editorial material and advertising during the election campaign for the Third Knesset in 1955.

However, it suffered from ongoing financial deficits. While the editors devoted increasing efforts to improving the quality of the paper, hiring talented journalists, increasing world-news coverage and initiating a literary supplement, it faced serious drawbacks which limited growth. In the final analysis, it was seen as a political organ, despite its efforts at journalistic objectivity. Additionally, the fact that it was a morning paper published in Jerusalem involved high distribution and delivery costs. The central problem was the lack of a sufficient financial base, as well as the related problem of not having a press of its own.

The original plan had been to rely on substantial subscriptions from the party membership, but this expectation was frustrated. The idea of transferring publication of the paper to Tel Aviv was raised several times, but was rejected in deference to the significance of publishing in the capital.

Meanwhile, new columns were added continuously: on technology and science, agriculture, women's interests, education and pedagogy, public health, a roundup of foreign newspapers and, most especially, a high-level non-partisan literary supplement which published such writers and thinkers as Uri Zevi Greenberg, David Avidan, Prof. Joseph Klausner, Jon Kimche and Dan Miron. Simultaneously, publicity campaigns were mounted to increase subscriptions, party advertising rates were raised and commercial advertising was expanded.

However, financial difficulties continued. In March 1955 Gilboa wrote to Kol warning of the possibility of having to close the paper. The contract with the *Post* press was not renewed, and the paper had no printer. A decision was made to transfer publication to Tel Aviv. The staff was cut, and many talented staff members left. Gilboa himself offered his resignation, which was rejected.

New financial efforts were invested in re-establishing the paper in Tel Aviv. Gilboa was appointed full editor and Yitzhak Artzi assistant editor. The paper's image was

projected as a "people's newspaper," while efforts were made to retain a high journalistic standard. The format was reduced in size, and the price was lowered. But the financial situation failed to improve and the party was unable to provide enough backing. Staff members left and morale sank. After extensive

deliberations, the party executive decided to close the paper on November 4, 1955.

Gilboa joined *Ma'ariv*, and the rest of the staff also continued careers in the media, having undoubtedly benefited from their experience on *Zemanim*.

THE UNIVERSAL CITY OF "THE CITY" / Ehud Graf

A study of the local Tel Aviv weekly *Ha'ir* ("The City") carried out by the author at Tel Aviv University showed that the paper created its own particular image of the city. The study, which focused on issues of the paper published in the latter part of 1987, revealed that *Ha'ir* conjured up a universal city whose borders were determined by one criterion: a particular concept of quality. Material that was considered socially and culturally qualitative by the paper's editors was highlighted.

The portrayal of the universal city rested on two concepts: classic archetypal — that is, products, images and social codes that are timeless; and contemporary avant-garde — products and persons belonging to the contemporary quality international set. The image of the universal city was created in response to a sense of local cultural poverty. It was built upon reports of new developments, styles and patterns of behavior abroad that serve as models and measures of achievement; ongoing reports of events abroad; and a consistent emphasis on how foreign lifestyles are adapted to Tel Aviv.

The "abroad" referred to is Western, elitist and international. *Ha'ir*, in espousing this lifestyle, rejected what is characteristically local. This was reflected, for example, in an emphasis on an international style in architecture and furnishings; on the importance of being open to foreign rather

than purely local aesthetic influences; and on positive and negative comparisons between Tel Aviv and other major cities, such as London, thereby implying that Tel Aviv is in this urban category. A suitably international journalistic lexicon also helped reinforce the message.

The paper devoted a great deal of space to Israelis who had succeeded, or who were trying to succeed, abroad, for example in the areas of film-making, art and industry.

Simultaneously, *Ha'ir* emphasized successful adaptations of foreign cultural patterns at home, especially in the area of leisure-time activity. One example was spending evenings at bars, which was presented as an international urban phenomenon that bears copying. Familiarity with the latest international rock music was another criterion for being part of a universal city, as was the presence of an orchestra for light music — music from films and musicals.

Clothes, toys, household accessories and foodstuffs from abroad — generally expensive — were also promoted by the paper as essential, and were obtainable in shopping centers which had an appropriately international character.

Interestingly, a random glance at issues of *Ha'ir* during 1991 indicate a retreat from the insistence on universalism and an acknowledgement of local urban elements.

SYNAGOGUE NEWSPAPERS IN ISRAEL / Yoel Rappel

The synagogue press is a recent addition to the local press in Israel. It consists of several dozen weeklies produced locally and nationally, the latter having large circulations.

The most popular of the nationally produced papers is *Sihat Hashavu'a* ("Weekly Discussion"), published by the youth wing of Habad, with a circulation of 190,000, which is equal to the circulation of the largest general local weekly in Israel,

Ha'ir ("The City"). *Shabbat Be-Shabbato* ("From Sabbath to Sabbath"), co-sponsored by the National Religious Party (NRP), has a circulation of 89,000. *Oneg Shabbat* ("The Joy of Sabbath"), published by religious Likud supporters, has a circulation of 40,000-50,000. *Iyunei Shabbat* ("Sabbath Studies"), published by the Conservative movement, had a circulation of several thousand, although it ceased publication

recently because of budgetary difficulties. These figures show that this press enjoys considerable popularity.

The synagogue weeklies are a modern version of an older and highly popular institution — *Gilyonot Le'iyun Velimud Befarashat Hashavu'a* ("Study Pages on the Weekly Bible Portion") which Prof. Nehama Leibowitz had begun to write and edit 40 years ago. Those plain stenciled pages, distributed before the *Minha* service on Friday, enhanced the Sabbath for thousands of readers.

Shabbat Be-Shabbato, which began publication in 1984, was the first of the modern synagogue papers. Edited by Dr. Yitzhak Alfassi, a Hassidism scholar, it is distributed in 3,800 synagogues in Israel, including synagogues in secular kibbutzim. The material reflects a pronounced national religious point of view, which has aroused opposition among the ultra-Orthodox. It includes commentary and supplementary material on the weekly portion, reports from the Jewish world, news about the NRP, a quiz, questions and answers about

Halakha and information from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The success of this paper soon generated other publications.

Sihat Hashavu'a, the most widely circulated of the synagogue papers, began in 1986 under the editorship of Rabbi Menahem Brod in order to support the growing "penitent" movement among young Israelis. Brod, who has a talent for public relations, has done a great deal to increase public awareness of the Habad movement in Israel. He addresses the paper to all traditional-minded readers, covering a wide range in degrees of observance. The paper reflects the Lubavitcher Rebbe's presence and opinions, and also contains commentary by Rabbi Brod, along with Hassidic stories and commentaries. It does not deal with Israeli politics, although it does react to national current events. While it is not directed at the ultra-Orthodox community, surprisingly, that group has reacted enthusiastically to the paper's clear and simple presentation of material.

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