
No. 12, November 1992

Tel Aviv University
Journalism Studies Program
Institute for Research of
the Jewish Press

Editor:
Dr. Mordecai Naor

English Section:
Judy Krausz

Hebrew Copy Editor:
Moshe Or

Designer:
Studio Haim Ron

Administration:
Yardena Bar-Uryan

Typesetting and Production:
Mofet-Rosmarine

CONTENTS

- A Tale of Two Newspapers / Shalom Rosenfeld — 2e
- The Rise and Fall of "Dos Nych Leben" / Yosef Goldkorn — 4e
- Reflections on the 60-Year History of "The Jerusalem Post" / Alexander Zvielli — 11e
- A Free Press and its Role in Society / Dan Meridor — 22e
- Between One Electoral Upset and the Next / Hayim Yavin — 27e
- English Abstracts of Hebrew Articles:
- Israel Radio: "Mi Yitzhak" ("Which Yitzhak," or "Who will Laugh") / Shalom Kital — 33e
- Army Radio: Elections from the field / Uri Paz — 33e
- "Ma'ariv": The Trial Polls Predicted the Electoral Upset / Ya'akov Erez — 34e
- The Media and Election Propaganda —
- Election Propoganda in the British and the Israeli Press / Yoram Peri — 35e
 - Politicians Dragged Along by the Press / Uri Avneri — 36e
 - What the Media Consumer Doesn't Know / Shlomo Nakdimon — 36e
- "From Our Political Correspondent in France": Eliezer Ben-Yehuda's First Political Articles in "Havazelet" / Joseph Lang — 37e
- The Sensationalist Press in Eretz Yisrael, 1908-1917 / Uzi Elyada — 38e
- Ber Borochoy: The Jewish Press in America / Mussia Lipman — 39e
- "Ha-Isha" — An Exclusive Women's Magazine / Hava Diner — 41e
- "Amud Ha-Yir'ah": "Lev Ha-Jvri's" Newspapers / Dov Genhovsky — 41e
- "Mahanayim" — The Story of a Religious Military Periodical / Akiva Zimmerman — 42e
- Secret Agents as Journalists in Eretz Yisrael, 1918-1920 / Nakdimon Rogel — 43e
-

English cover: *The Palestine Post* (later *The Jerusalem Post*) of April 10, 1945, the day *Dos Nych Leben* first appeared (see Hebrew cover). Articles on both newspapers appear in this issue of *Qesher*.

Hebrew cover: Illustration by Paul Pollitzer, engineer and artist. Born in Vienna, Pollitzer escaped to Holland a year after the Nazi conquest and spent most of the war in a refugee camp. Later he studied engineering as well as art, specializing in line portraits and caricatures. His drawings were published in major American magazines. He held a one-man show in Jerusalem. He is an industrialist in Israel.

Editorial and Administrative Offices:

Journalism Studies Program, Tel Aviv University, Ramat Aviv 69978. Tel: (03)6413404, 5450665; Fax: (03)6422318

A TALE OF TWO NEWSPAPERS

April 1945, spring of liberation in Europe. The leading headlines of the *Palestine Post* — the only English-language Jewish daily in the world — on April 10, 1945, described a massive onslaught by British and Allied forces into Germany; preparations in several Western capitals to establish international bodies that would guarantee a new world order; and mass graves discovered in various parts of Europe by the Allied forces. A smaller item on page one of the *Post* might appear to be marginal in comparison with the major news items of the day, but is important in understanding the background of an unusual event in the annals of the Jewish press. The item described preparations for an international conference in San Francisco, and pressure by the Soviet Union to allow the Polish Provisional Government (the "Lublin Government") to participate in the conference, which was scheduled to discuss the proposed new World Court charter, among other topics.

During that spring 47 years ago, Jews who had hidden from the light of day and from man, German and not only German, among them those who had not seen the light of day for years, began to come out of hiding in the territories that had been liberated. During that spring, when large parts of Poland were conquered by the Red Army while other parts still witnessed rearguard fighting against the Germans, thousands of Jews who had been in prisons, in camps, in cities of exile and in Soviet kolhozes, as well as in the front lines and in the partisan forces where they fought the Nazis, began returning to their old homeland.

The Polish (Jewish) "repatriates" who arrived in liberated Lodz — liberated from the Nazi conquerors as well as from the regime of the all-powerful "Jewish king" of the ghetto, Chaim Rumkowski — included several former journalists and printers. And what is uppermost in the minds of journalists and printers starved and exhausted by the war, in a state of shock and despair as a result of the Jobean reports of the unbelievable extent of the destruction? A newspaper. Establishing a newspaper. With a few pieces of Jewish type that, like the people themselves, survived by a miracle. With paper that was left in the warehouses of the very same Rumkowski. No matter what the design, given the existing technical conditions. No matter what the circulation in the disconnected territories, among a population nursing its wounds, wandering between cemeteries and mass graves, between groves and fields in search if not of a sign of life, then of evidence of the death of loved-ones.

And why a newspaper? Because for Jews, a newspaper has always been the faithful link that connects the near to the far away. A Jewish newspaper could always convey messages between the lines that could not or ought not be

stated explicitly. A newspaper could be the harbinger of new life for survivors, or the alarm warning of yet another "time of trouble unto Jacob." Thus, on April 10, 1945, while part of the Nazi armies were being routed by the Russian-American-British war machine, the first issue of a Yiddish newspaper appeared in liberated Lodz, bearing, not coincidentally, the symbolic name *Dos Nyeh Leben* — the new life. It was the first Jewish newspaper for the survivors in Poland, which only six years previously had dozens of Yiddish dailies and hundreds of periodicals.

The main part of this issue of *Qesher* is devoted to these two papers, so far apart geographically and linguistically yet so close in terms of shaping Jewish journalistic history at that point in time; the *Palestine Post*, which eventually became the *Jerusalem Post*, now marking its 60th year, and *Dos Nyeh Leben* that arose in Lodz with the return of the survivors from Russia to Poland, filled with hope and expectation, and that expired after a difficult five-and-a-half-year struggle for its journalistic life and for its existence as an independent and unique Jewish newspaper.

*

The *Jerusalem Post* and *Dos Nyeh Leben* are unique not only because they recorded the "first draft of history," as the familiar description of the press goes, but also because they themselves made history, or at least were a part of it.

In founding the English-language paper in Jerusalem, Gershon Agronsky (Agron) hoped that it would promote mutual understanding between the three sectors of his potential audience: the Jews, the English and the Arabs. But the political maelstrom that enveloped first Eretz Yisrael under the British Mandate and later the State of Israel put an end to this hope. Agronsky, and the paper as well, soon found themselves in a confrontation with the British administration which, under the guise of "balanced policy," restricted the Jewish Yishuv sometimes to the point of open hostility. As for the Arabs, even the enlightened and moderate Arabs, even those who continued to maintain friendly personal relations with their Jewish neighbors were increasingly swept along by nationalist elements in their midst to adopt radical anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish positions. Instead of a bridge of understanding, a wall of alienation arose between the Jews and the other two sectors of the population in Jerusalem. Even though the editors of the *Palestine Post* were moderates, advocates of compromise within the mainstream of the Zionist movement, and even though Gershon Agron continued to maintain contact with the senior administrative echelon of the Mandate in order to blunt the severity of certain decrees or obtain a waiver in one matter or another, the newspaper became progressively more militant by the force of events,

devoted entirely to the struggle of the small Jewish Yishuv against the anti-Zionist policy of the British and the hostility of the Arabs.

No paper in Eretz Yisrael elicited so hostile a response as the *Post* when, on February 1, 1948, a booby-trapped car exploded outside the editorial building, causing numerous casualties and destroying part of the building that contained the editorial offices and the printshop. The act was a British-Arab "co-production" to try to silence a voice that was increasingly troublesome especially in the final months of the British Mandate. But their plot did not succeed: the paper appeared the following day, with the assistance of several Jerusalem printshops that came to the rescue, and continued to function as a vehicle for the Jewish Yishuv in its struggle for independence. The story of the 60-year history of the paper, which became a Jerusalem institution, is told in this issue by Alexander Zvielli, a veteran staff member who, in leafing through his papers, illuminates the central events of the Yishuv and the state — the small history and the large — reflected in them. Gabriel Tsifroni, a veteran Jerusalem journalist, rounds out the picture with personal profiles of *Post* editors and writers whom he knew.

Dos Nyeh Leben made history too. Not only was it the first Jewish daily in liberated Poland, a kind of symbol of the renewal and continuity of Jewish life after the destruction; not only did it follow — and sometimes initiate — the establishment of Jewish institutions — social, cultural and philanthropic — for the survivors, but this first Jewish newspaper in postwar Poland made history by its very existence as an independent paper striving for intellectual and professional integrity as far as objectively possible. In the circumstances, the "objective possibility" was extremely limited. No sooner was Poland liberated by the Red Army, then it was placed firmly into the Soviet orbit, as was all of Eastern Europe. The significance of being part of the Soviet orbit was plain: it meant being part of the totalitarian state in everything — political and defense policy, economic life, social and cultural life, literature, theater and the press. But let us not overlook the dates. *Dos Nyeh Leben* was founded in April 1945, before the war was actually over, when the USSR needed Western aid, especially for reconstruction. Operating in the climate of expectation of a "new world order," the USSR was forced to create at least the illusion of freedom in the occupied territories. The Jewish newspaper fit into this niche of illusions.

We assigned Yosef Goldkorn, who himself was a longtime member of the *Dos Nyeh Leben* staff, to tell the story of the newspaper. He sifted through every issue, month by month, year by year, and the headlines, news reports and articles

speak for themselves. In uncovering the story of the 547 issues, the author also reveals the hopes and the tribulations of the renewed Jewish community, which, alongside its efforts at rehabilitation, was subject to the hatred of Poles once again and underwent murders and pogroms, the most infamous, of course, being the pogrom at Kielce.

While heartbreaking, nostalgic articles on the recent and distant past continued to be published in *Dos Nyeh Leben*, a sense of distress could be discerned increasingly between the lines of propaganda articles; the freedom to write on subjects other than nostalgia disappeared; caution had to be exercised in choosing the right words so as not to offend "big brother"; a loss of hope and expectation was discernible, and the inevitable decline of the renewed Jewish community in Poland was reflected in the pages of the newspaper. Even the paper itself was heading toward its inevitable end. It was torn between loyalty to the new regime and loyalty to the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

The last issue of *Dos Nyeh Leben*, no. 547, appeared on October 30, 1950. A notice in the upper part of page one informed subscribers that henceforth they could receive the *Folks Shtimme* — the official Yiddish-language Communist organ — instead.

On the same day, October 30, 1950, the *Jerusalem Post* ran reports on page one that reflected "business as usual": an imminent solution to a cabinet crisis between Mapai and the Orthodox Bloc; an appeal to American Jewry to contribute \$50 million to meet "urgent needs of the country"; a decision to supply tourists at hotels with special meals that would be exempt from the austerity restrictions imposed by Minister of Supply and Rationing Dov Joseph; and, inescapably, a subject that recurs to this very day: a serious traffic accident on the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway resulting in one fatality and 26 persons injured.



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

THE RISE AND FALL OF “DOS NYEH LEBEN”

YOSEF GOLDKORN

This is an abbreviated version of the article that appears in the Hebrew section, which, in turn, is the basis for an even fuller study of *Dos Nyeh Leben* that will be published as a booklet.

Dos Nyeh Leben (“The New Life”) was the first Yiddish newspaper to appear in Poland at the end of world war II, the product of a determined effort by a small group of survivors to rejuvenate, or rehabilitate, written Yiddish.

The group was made up of several print workers and Yiddish writers who found themselves in the Lodz ghetto during and after its liberation by the Soviet army in January 1945. Their effort was facilitated by the fact that Lodz had been liberated in a surprise attack before the Germans could destroy the ghetto completely. Sifting through the remnants of a Yiddish printing press in the ghetto, the survivors painstakingly retrieved enough lead letters from the snow and mud to compose a single page of text, and after running it off they would reset the letters for each of the following pages.

The first issue, on April 10, 1945, appeared with a black border and the headline: “In Memorium,” with an initial listing of 387 Jewish writers, scholars, artists and public figures who had perished during the German conquest. The lead article cited the sacred testament of those who had perished, and promised to provide “a warm Yiddish word of support” for the survivors. Other articles dealt with the paper’s intention to become a liaison between the Jews of Poland and

the rest of world Jewry, and with the hope for new life in Poland.

“Polish Reactionism Murders Jews”

The political makeup of the editorial staff was similar to that of the *Vakhlaj* — the “Fan,” or umbrella system which also served as the basis for the central and local representative committees of the Jews in Poland. Each of the Zionist parties was represented, as was the Bund and the Communists. The paper, edited by Michael Mirsky (Communists), contained eight pages and cost five zlotys.

The second issue, which appeared on April 19, 1945 (the paper was later to be a weekly, but appeared approximately three times monthly initially), reported on the deep impression that the first issue of *Dos Nyeh Leben* had made on the Jews in Poland. Dedicated to the Warsaw Ghetto revolt against the German conqueror, meriting a special place in the pantheon of Jewish freedom fighters. The following issue, on May 1, 1945, reported on commemorations that were held for the revolt, including the posthumous awarding of high military honors by the government to 50 of the ghetto fighters. It also described the activities of the Jewish Historical Committee, and the establishment of two orphanages in Lodz and one in Lublin.

The following issues, which appeared after the war ended, contained a growing number of reports on

First issue, *Dos Nyeh Leben*, April 10, 1945 ►

ה'יר זוכן אונזערע קרובים

פאלעסט-וואנד רעביס פון לעדווע 6 שטיבן 45 א
מיט איר שוועסטער העלע און שוועגער יעקב
גיס צו וויסן איר טאן דוד וואנד דאס זי גע
טויט זיך לעדווע קילינסקיגע 21 מ. 29
בלויטן סאר רעניע.

א. לעווין-באבא און לעדווע וואנד געזיכט
דורך זיין ברודער יעקלע טאכטער מיס-אריסט
כאפ פון סאן צלוס. שרייבן:
Kalowice, ul. Francuske 11 m. 5.

הערין יחאל, דער זון פון ישראל-הערין און
מלכה וואנד זיינע קרובים און פריינט. שרייבן:
קאצמישבורג, פריד-הנה, א"י.

צווייטע-הערין און לעדווע וואנד איר
ברודער גאטע פלעמינסקי, געב. 1914.
שרייבן: Lond berg Lech., Jewish
Center Blok 35-5. Germany.

לעבנערמאן, דער זון פון שמואל און גיסל
פון לעבנער, זעט קרובים און פריינט שרייבן
צוטאג. יידישע קאמיטעט.

שישער משה הערש פון לעדווע, געווינט
זערווער 43 מ. 45, וואנד זיין ברודער יאסל
שישער, הענדן זיך: M. H. Szyper, Łódź,
11 go Listopada 26 m. 8.

בראד-גיסל פון מאנאכאבי, שוועלעצער פאריש,
וואנד אירע קרובים גורא עט-ליבע און איר
טאן לאמער יחאק און אונגעמינע, און סאפל
גורא און סראגרייך, פאריש הענדן זיך:
גורא גיאל, לעדווע. פאליניאקא 24 מ. 29,
קאטענהאנדלער דוד פון לעדווע, ווארשע 12,
לעדווע.

קארע שפירן, דער זון פון יחאל פון לעדווע
וואנד זיין שוועגער קארע וואנד מיט זיין פיל
מיליא און געווינט און קארע מיט
די פאמיליע און לעדווע. שרייבן: לעדווע,
קילינסקיגע 17 מ. 26 (3934)

פולחער הנה פון זעקסעווא וואנד איר קינד,
געהט אין ר"פ. שרייבן: לעדווע, שווימליע
סקו 20 מ. 39 (3936)

פישען קארע און יחאל וואנד זיינע קרובים
און באקאנטע שרייבן: לעדווע, פלעמינסקי-
ע' 91 מ. 2 (3937)

פלאך רבקה, מינארהיים ווארשעווא וואנד
איר שוועסטער פריד פוקס און ברודער-גיסל
יאקע, שרייבן: לעדווע, פאלינסקי 59 מ. 1.
די פאמיליע וואנד יידישע פריינט הערש גע-
זעט און צענדליקן.

קירל אבא פון פאן בלאך וואנד איר שווע-
טע ליבע און פאמיליע. שרייבן: לעדווע,
הילסאטאקס 7 מ. 21, בלאך. די פאמיליע-
גער יידישע פריינט הערש געזעטן איבער-
דוקן.

גיינדיגס הנה פון לעדווע וואנד איר ברודער
משה און פאמיליע. שרייבן: לעדווע, וואל-
שענסקס 7 מ. 21, בלאך. די יידישע פריינט-
די פאמיליע פריינט הערש געזעטן צענדליקן.

אייניקאייט (יינגע קינדער) קייט פון
לעדווע, לאנדעוואק 8 צווייטע-הערין און
שישער פון לעדווע. געזעט הערש געזעט
דורך אירע קרובים, הענדן זיך: לעדווע, פיל-
טולסקיגע 72, אייניקאייט.

די יידישע פריינט פון אריינפירן פון לעדווע
און פאמיליע. שרייבן:
איר פאמיליע פון לעדווע, אירן געזעט דורך
זיין ברודער אבא פון לעדווע (דוקעווע)
לעבנער, געזעט און פאמיליע. שרייבן:
געט שרייבן אירן אירע:
Redakcja „Dos Naje Lebni”
Łódź, ul. Narutowicza 32.

פלישטאן שמואל פון פלעס ליבע וואנד קרובים
און איר ברודער און פאמיליע. שרייבן:
פלישטאן קאמיטעט.

זעלבנאמיש הערש, הערש זון פון לעדווע,
צווייטע-הערין פון פאמיליע. שרייבן:
פלישטאן קאמיטעט.

פריינט פריינט, די פאמיליע פון הערש
לעדווע, לעדווע 5 מ. 34, וואנד איר פריינט
און פאמיליע. שרייבן: פלישטאן קאמיטעט.
פריינט פריינט און פאמיליע. שרייבן:
די יידישע פריינט פריינט פריינט געזעטן
און פאמיליע.

פריינט פריינט, פריינט פריינט, פריינט פריינט
וואנד זיין פאמיליע קאמיטעט און פאמיליע
פריינט.

ראבינאמיש פריינט פון לעדווע, די פאמיליע
פון יוסף-דוד מיט איר טאן אלטער לעדווע-
פריינט וואנד איר ברודער ראבינאמיש הייט און
פריינט פריינט און פאמיליע. שרייבן:
Dolny Śląsk, Wal-
brzych, Stary Zdrój, Czerwonej Ar-

די יידישע פריינט פון אריינפירן פון לעדווע
און פאמיליע. שרייבן:
איר פאמיליע פון לעדווע, אירן געזעט דורך
זיין ברודער אבא פון לעדווע (דוקעווע)
לעבנער, געזעט און פאמיליע. שרייבן:
געט שרייבן אירן אירע:
Redakcja „Dos Naje Lebni”
Łódź, ul. Narutowicza 32.

פלישטאן שמואל פון פלעס ליבע וואנד קרובים
און איר ברודער און פאמיליע. שרייבן:
פלישטאן קאמיטעט.

זעלבנאמיש הערש, הערש זון פון לעדווע,
צווייטע-הערין פון פאמיליע. שרייבן:
פלישטאן קאמיטעט.

פריינט פריינט, די פאמיליע פון הערש
לעדווע, לעדווע 5 מ. 34, וואנד איר פריינט
און פאמיליע. שרייבן: פלישטאן קאמיטעט.
פריינט פריינט און פאמיליע. שרייבן:
די יידישע פריינט פריינט פריינט געזעטן
און פאמיליע.

פריינט פריינט, פריינט פריינט, פריינט פריינט
וואנד זיין פאמיליע קאמיטעט און פאמיליע
פריינט.

ראבינאמיש פריינט פון לעדווע, די פאמיליע
פון יוסף-דוד מיט איר טאן אלטער לעדווע-
פריינט וואנד איר ברודער ראבינאמיש הייט און
פריינט פריינט און פאמיליע. שרייבן:
Dolny Śląsk, Wal-
brzych, Stary Zdrój, Czerwonej Ar-

פריינט פריינט, פריינט פריינט, פריינט פריינט
וואנד זיין פאמיליע קאמיטעט און פאמיליע
פריינט.

ראבינאמיש פריינט פון לעדווע, די פאמיליע
פון יוסף-דוד מיט איר טאן אלטער לעדווע-
פריינט וואנד איר ברודער ראבינאמיש הייט און
פריינט פריינט און פאמיליע. שרייבן:
Dolny Śląsk, Wal-
brzych, Stary Zdrój, Czerwonej Ar-

Ads seeking lost relatives appeared in every issue of the paper

attacks by Poles on Jewish survivors and returnees. Issue number 4 ran a large headline: "Polish Reactionism Murders Jews," documenting murders in several cities. By issue number 7, on June 10, 1945, the editor described these incidents as occurring virtually daily, perpetrated by nationalist anti-Communist and anti-Semitic gangs of the National Armed Forces (NSZ).

Yet there were also reports, in May 1945, of concerts given by a Jewish musician in Lodz and of the establishment of a Yiddish theater there. Efforts to organize Jewish employment cooperatives and private enterprises were also described, especially in Lodz, despite the anti-Semitism of officials in various localities.

Notices Seeking Relatives

The issue of May 1, 1945, contained an appeal by Jewish religious leaders to rehabilitate Jewish religious life in Poland, along with an official notice of government assistance in this area. A special tenth issue, on July 1, contained congratulatory messages from Jewish writers and artists in the Soviet Union who hoped to return to Poland, as well as reports on a national conference of the Bund in Lodz; the opening of the Ihud movement "Pioneer House" there; the functioning of three "kibbutzim" with some 150 members ages 15-25;

and a conference of "Labor Israel" representatives from 26 cities.

The paper continued to reflect growing Jewish activity in liberated Poland. The establishment of a central Yiddish lending library in Warsaw was reported in September 1945. Despite technical difficulties, the paper established a strong tie with its readership, devoting two and sometimes three pages per issue to notices in search of relatives.

The only Yiddish publication until the start of 1946, *Dos Nye Leben* managed to maintain political objectivity, airing a range of political viewpoints, sometimes in sharp debate. The year 1946 witnessed large-scale repatriation from the Soviet Union, leading both to increased Jewish communal activity and to increased anti-Semitism as well, which climaxed in the pogrom in Kielce in July 1946. Ideological conflict between the Zionist parties, the Communists and the Bund also intensified.

A Record of Events in Eretz Yisrael

The Zionist parties, in an operation called *Habriha* — "The Flight" — aimed at bringing out as many Jews as possible from Poland as quickly as possible. The Communists, on the other hand, hoped to stabilize Jewish life in order to organize a large Jewish

Folkscaftung

№ 1

פאלקס צייטונג

№ 1

פאלקס צייטונג פון פוילן

The Bund newspaper "Folks Zeitung"

community based on "the new Poland." The lead article on February 19, 1946, dealt with the visit to Poland of the Anglo-American Enquiry Commission on Palestine and the report submitted to it by the Jewish Central Committee of Poland citing the figure of approximately 80,000 Jews then in Poland, with an additional 150,000 Jews estimated to return from the Soviet Union in the near future. The report stated that a substantial number of Jews wanted to emigrate, primarily to Eretz Yisrael, and that the entire Jewish community demanded free emigration to Palestine and the nullification of the White Paper.

The repatriation of Jews from the Soviet Union to Palestine gained momentum during this period, with some 48,000 returning in February 1946 alone, according to the March 2 issue. This vast demographic movement became an important element in the struggle to establish the Jewish state, and more immediately, to open the gates of Eretz Yisrael to immigrants. Significantly, the situation in Eretz Yisrael, dominated by the anti-British struggle, was covered extensively in *Dos Nyeh Leben* during this period.

The issue of April 23, 1946, dedicated to the third anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto revolt, included messages from the Polish prime minister and other high officials. Several streets in Warsaw were named for the heroes of the uprising, and a cornerstone was laid for a ghetto memorial, the lead article reported. Emissaries from Eretz Yisrael who arrived for the commemoration were welcomed by the paper. Simultaneously, anti-Semitism and attacks on Jews were increasing, with details of murders of Jews in various parts of the country reported in the paper continuously during April and May 1946.

In May, the paper announced the appointment of a new editor, Ber Mark, and stated its goal of becoming a daily. From June, the paper ran 12 pages instead of the original 8, with 2-3 pages still devoted to the search for missing relatives.

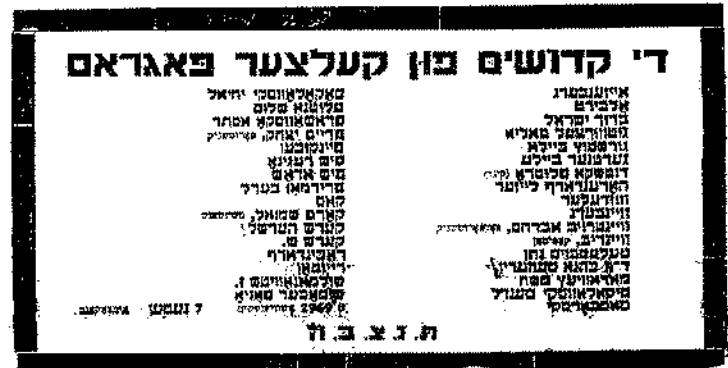
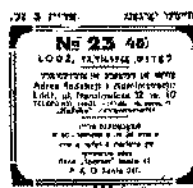
The Pogrom in Kielce

The major headline of the June 21, 1946, issue was: "Only a Jewish State Can Solve the Problem of Eretz Yisrael — According to the Jewish Agency." One whole page was devoted to news of Eretz Yisrael. The same issue reported that repatriation from the Soviet Union had nearly ended, with 115,000 Jews having arrived and some 20,000 still en route.

The July 12, 1946, issue was devoted to the pogrom in Kielce, with the names of 33 murdered Jews listed on page one, framed in a black border. The 34th victim was identified only by the tattooed Auschwitz number on his arm, while seven other victims were unidentifiable — a total of 41 victims. The shocking details and the shocked reactions took up the rest of the issue. A month later, on August 9, 1946, the lead headline was: "For Self-Control, Restraint and Composure, and Against Panic" — an attempt to prevent mass Jewish flight as a result of the pogrom. The following issue, on August 16, again carried an appeal to the Jewish community not to panic, reporting that the government had taken steps to assist the Jews through the establishment of a special department for Jewish affairs under a "commissar for the productivization of the Jews."

Events in Eretz Yisrael also continued to be covered in detail during the summer and fall of 1946, especially the

The issue that appeared after the Kielce pogrom





The issue describing death sentences for members of the underground Lehi

struggle against the British "imperialistic" immigration policy and the detention of "illegal" Jewish immigrants.

Poland or Eretz Yisrael?

The January 1947 issues of the paper dealt with the forthcoming elections to parliament — the first since the war — urging the Jewish community to vote for the Communist-led Democratic bloc. After the elections, the issue of February 6, 1947, ran an article by the general-secretary of the Jewish Central Committee commending economic improvement, the rise of democracy and the stabilization of Jewish life in Poland. Yet Jewish life was far from stable. An agitated meeting of the executive of the Jewish Central Committee in March 1947, reported in the April 10 issue, reflected the deep divisions between the Communist view on emigration — that it must not come at the expense of the continuity of Jewish life in Poland — and the Zionist view, which gave emigration priority.

The spring and summer issues of 1947 continued to give prominence to the anti-British struggle of the Jews of Eretz Yisrael, including the efforts to land immigrants there, and the support expressed by the Soviet Union for the establishment of a Jewish state. Still, the emphasis of the paper was on Jewish life in Poland. Nearly every issue contained two pages devoted to Yiddish literature, both past and current.

Page two of the issue on the eve of Rosh Hashanah 1947 reported on the incident at the port of Hamburg when Jewish immigrants were brutally removed from

the "Exodus" after it had been forced to return from Palestine to Europe by the British.

The early issues of 1948 dealt primarily with the war in Eretz Yisrael. A prominent page-one article on January 30, 1948, announced that the Jewish Central Committee had decided to join the World Jewish Congress in supporting and aiding Eretz Yisrael, a proposal which had actually been put forward by the Communist Party representative. The Bund, while voting for the proposal, simultaneously condemned political Zionism, which it blamed for the situation in Eretz Yisrael.

Still, support for the Jewish struggle in Eretz Yisrael was wholehearted. The first-page headline of the February 1, 1948, issue read: "Polish Jew! Help Eretz Yisrael in its Fight!" The following issue reported on fund-raising activity for Eretz Yisrael by the Jewish Writers' and Journalists' Society, the Jewish Actors' Society and the Jewish Culture Society. The February 27 headline was: "Polish Jew! Remember Your Brave Brothers in Eretz Yisrael!"

Side by side with detailed reportage on the war, there was ongoing coverage of developments in Jewish life in Poland, including, as in previous years, the annual commemorative events of the Warsaw Ghetto revolt, which had gradually expanded in scope, taking up the entire 16-page issue of April 18, 1948. The first of May was also given prominence, with a listing of Jewish workers who had achieved "Outstanding Worker" status.

"Jewish State in Eretz Yisrael Proclaimed Today" was the large headline on page one of the May 14, 1948, issue, followed by various other reports on the situation in Eretz Yisrael. Two days later, "Long Live the Independent State of Israel!" was the page-one headline, with one of the items on the page reporting the favorable response of the Polish Ministry of Industry to a request by the Jewish Central Committee to purchase Polish goods for Israel with money raised by the committee. The following issue, on May 19, featured a large photograph of David Ben-Gurion, with the lead headline: "Exchange of Messages Between the State of Israel and Poland. Poland Recognizes the State of Israel." Two days later, the first page carried a photograph of Chaim Weizmann, while the second page reported on large solidarity rallies in Warsaw organized by the Jewish Central Committee in support of Israel.

The rest of the issues published during the summer of 1948 continued to deal with the War of Independence in Israel and support for the new state by the Jews of Poland and by others, including the Soviet press.

Intensified Communist Emphasis

Although sympathy for Israel was still at a peak, there were certain signs of change. An editorial on September 22, 1948, attacked the organizers of an international Jewish cultural congress (the organizers were the editorial staff of the American Yiddish newspaper *Forward*) as "reactionary servants of American capital and of the anti-democratic imperialist bloc." However, another issue in September warmly welcomed the Israeli ambassador to Warsaw.

The Communist emphasis became more palpable in late October 1948, with a photograph of the Polish president on page one, a reprint of a *Pravda* interview of Stalin, and two pages devoted to the 30th anniversary of the Komsomol youth movement. An item in the November 2, 1948, issue called for "uncompromising war against speculative, capitalistic elements threatening to interfere with our development." This trend intensified, with Israel becoming entangled as well. An editorial on November 10, 1948, expressed concern lest Israel succumb to serving imperialism. At the end of the year, another editorial urged that the

Soldiers of the new Israel Defense Forces in 1948. The paper showed great sympathy for Israel's struggle as it fought for its life



Jewish population of Poland join the effort to "harness all the forces of the anti-imperialist camp."

An editorial on February 1, 1949, quoting the Soviet foreign minister, warned that the establishment of NATO constituted a danger to peace, and that the Jewish people must not remain neutral on the issue. Later that month, a report on the opening session of Israel's parliament drew attention to the attendance of representatives from the Soviet Union and the other "people's democracies" at the event, and the absence of the US, France and England, "lest their presence be interpreted as recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish state."

The newspaper reflected growing identification with the Soviet position in the widening Cold War. Two issues in March 1949 featured the projected participation of the Jewish Central Committee at the forthcoming peace congress in Paris. Elsewhere, the paper noted the non-inclusion of the (left-wing) Mapam Party in Israel's new government coalition, and a no-confidence statement by the Israeli Communist Party.

"Ben-Gurion Got Off at the 'Independence' Station"

While the lead article in the May 4, 1949, issue reported that the Soviet Union and Poland demanded that Israel be admitted into the UN, and the writer was convinced that "Israel would be a fortress for peace and progress in the Middle East," the headline on May 30 was critical: "Ben-Gurion Got Off at the 'Independence' Station," i.e., abandoned socialist ideals. The issue included criticism of Ben-Gurion's approval of private capital, the difficult straits of *Al Hamishmar* — the Mapam newspaper, and the dismantling of the Palmah.

Articles in the summer issues of 1949 fell into three main categories: the rejuvenation of Jewish life in Poland; pro-Soviet bloc "peace camp" material; and growing denunciation of developments in Israel.

Unemployment and lack of housing for new immigrants in Israel was criticized on June 15, 1949. Addressing the first national conference of the Jewish Culture Society, the paper reported on October 17, the minister of culture stated that only socialism and democracy could guarantee the development of progressive Jewish culture, while the chairman of the United Workers Party Central Committee declared that emigration propaganda was not in the best interests of

the Jewish working population.

Reports of a plenary session of the Jewish Central Committee held in Warsaw on November 18, 1949, emphasized the role of Jewish communal activity in building socialism, as well as the attainment of ideological consensus vis-a-vis integration into the Polish state, while several participants denounced the Zionists for interfering with the work of the Jewish committees and demoralizing Jewish life in Poland by advocating emigration. The December 30, 1949, issue opened with reports of "peace and progress" demonstrations in Moscow in honor of Stalin's 70th birthday. An article by Soviet Jewish writer Ilya Ehrenburg on the "oppressed people of the US" also appeared in the issue.

The issue of January 1, 1950, ran an article describing the Ben-Gurion government in Israel as a tool of imperialist war-mongers with a reactionary foreign policy. The issue of January 9 depicted the situation of the new immigrants in Israel as "catastrophic" due to lack of housing, and described demonstrations and protests against the Ben-Gurion government because of its apathy toward the plight of the immigrants. A large headline on January 27 stated: "We Want to Remain in Poland," with the subhead: "Jews Who Registered to Emigrate to Israel are Canceling Their Emigration Papers." Elsewhere in the issue, Israeli legislation encouraging capital investment in the Dead Sea, phosphate industries was criticized as evidence that the Israeli government was handing over "Israel's natural resources to Anglo-Saxon war-mongers." A table in the January 30 issue showing decreased trade between Israel and the Soviet Union and other Soviet bloc countries, was titled: "Israel's Commercial Ties Negate the Interests of the Masses."

A lead headline on February 3, 1950, "Military Base in Israel Built to Combat the Soviet Union," referred to an idea to build a highway connecting Istanbul with Cairo, which would have passed through northern Israel for 18 kilometers. The lead headline on February

6 was: "Israeli Reactionism Leads the State Toward Fascism." Another headline declared: "Police Slaughter Demonstrators in Tel Aviv on January 25," and another stated: "Ben-Gurion Government Blocks Normal Trade Relations with the Soviet Union."

Five Pages for Stalin

The June 23, 1950, issue, devoted to the end of the academic year in the Jewish schools, contained a reprint from *Pravda* of Stalin's essay "On Marxism and the Knowledge of Languages," accompanied by a photograph of the leader, which filled five pages. An editorial on July 31 praised Soviet economic performance, citing the Soviet Union as an example and guide.

A large number of articles on Israel were printed during August 1950, including criticism of the Israeli government for opposing the interests of the masses, depictions of the immigrants as being in a desperate state, and a report that Minister of Labor Golda Meir had attacked workers. Simultaneously, an editorial announced that registration of Jews who desired to emigrate to Israel was coming to an end entirely, while many of those who had registered to leave had changed their minds and wanted to remain.

A Communist Alternative

Significantly, neither of two issues that appeared during the Jewish New Year period in September 1950 made any reference to the holiday, in contrast to preceding years, a hint that the end of *Dos Nyeh Leben* might be near. Indeed, the last issue of the paper appeared on October 30, 1950, informing subscribers that they would receive *Folks Shtimme* ("The Voice of the People") — an undisguised Communist organ — instead.

Dos Nyeh Leben had appeared for 5 and a half years in 547 issues, but, although it had been forced to toe the party line explicitly, higher powers deemed it redundant.

REFLECTIONS ON THE 60-YEAR HISTORY OF “THE JERUSALEM POST”

ALEXANDER ZVIELLI

The Palestine Post, which in 1950 became *The Jerusalem Post*, was born shortly after midnight on December 1, 1932. The birth pangs lasted all night, for the old, flat-bed printing machine was a bit rusty, and Gershon Agron (Agronsky), the *Post*'s founder and first editor, insisted on perfection. The run was 1,200 copies and the price 10 mils. The original intention was to print only 800 copies, but Agron was an optimist and had increased the number at the last minute. The great Depression was still worldwide. On the previous day, the *Post* reported from Cairo, hundreds of American demonstrators had started a hunger march to Washington in anticipation of the opening of the US Congress on December 5. In Jerusalem, unemployed printers were happy to be given work. The risk of producing a new newspaper was high, but Agron was determined to produce an exemplary newspaper, in English, in the Holy City.

At the end of the long night of the first printing, Agron was satisfied. He had turned the *Post*'s predecessor, *The Palestine Bulletin*, into a moderately inexpensive, modern, progressive, European-style newspaper. He had thus launched an experimental vehicle for better Jewish-Arab-British understanding.

A Zionist Goal

Agron was well aware that the 12 Palestine pounds earned by the sale of the first number would hardly cover the cost of his new enterprise. He also knew

that, for the time being, his reading public would be limited and the advertising field restricted. But like the whole *Yishuv* (the Jewish community in Palestine) during those tough days, he set his sights high and hoped for the best.

Gershon Agron, founder and first editor-in-chief



For many long years, he had cherished the vision of bringing news, information and ideas to the ever-growing English-reading public in Eretz Yisrael and abroad. He hoped — and the future was to prove him right — that correct and precise information would win the hearts and minds of even the most sophisticated readers. He aimed at the predominantly unfriendly officials of the British Mandatory administration, as well as at the local Arabs, the many foreign residents, and the increasing number of tourists, pilgrims and local church leaders.

In general, he sought to promote a fuller understanding of, and a deeper affection for, the ancient land of Israel and its ancient people. He fought for Zionism and the aspirations of the Jewish people.

The first issue of the *Post* duly acknowledged the generosity of a number of public-spirited people, both in Eretz Yisrael and abroad, whose contributions had made this feat possible. Agron's hopes were fully justified. Within the first year, the daily circulation reached almost 4,000 copies, 300 of which were sent by train to Cairo. On April 26, 1934, the *Post* issued its first major supplement, celebrating the opening of the Levant Fair in Tel Aviv.

Agron did not pay his backers dividends, but resolved that the time was ripe for further investment, improvement and expansion, as the paper had won universal acclaim as an objective, informative and professional vehicle.

It is a great pity that when the *Post* was bombed on February 1, 1948, all of Agron's correspondence and personal memoranda went up in smoke, so that the most important evidence of the *Post's*, Agron's and the Yishuv's struggle against the increasingly hostile British administration was lost. But from other sources we learn that the *Post's* steadily growing influence and editorial commentary helped facilitate many of the Yishuv's undertakings.

The paper successfully fought the Mandatory officials' lack of understanding and frequent obstruction. While the influence of the Hebrew press in such matters was limited, the *Post's* message carried great weight, both at home and abroad. Agron was on a first-name basis with many British officials, and almost all the Jewish Agency workers, and brought them together at Friday night gatherings at his home. Often, it was the *Post's* behind-the-scenes intervention that secured the fulfillment of Yishuv demands in the fields of

immigration, settlement and the economy.

The *Post* grew together with the Yishuv, and the Yishuv grew together with the *Post*, and the two cooperated happily. Both the High Commissioner's Office and a sizable number of British MPs had a special respect for Agron's local and international connections.

Agron was eminently suited for his post, but he was also called upon to spend a great deal of his time and energy on services for the Yishuv, the Haganah, the Jewish Agency, the Zionist movement, the Histadrut and the precursors of the Labor Party. On such occasions, Ted Lurie, assistant editor, frequently took over. The two men differed greatly in character and approach, but both served the paper well and increased its political importance.

The Young Agronsky

Gershon Agronsky's story, like that of so many other Israeli pioneers, began in Russia. He was born in December 1894 in the little town of Mena in the province of Tchernichov. He studied at a yeshiva and might perhaps have become a rabbi had not the Tsarist pogroms of 1905 driven his whole family across the seas to Philadelphia. Gershon's native Yiddish and rich Hebrew remained with him for life, but he soon made English his daily language. Still, he began his journalistic career in Yiddish, working for eight dollars a week at the *Yiddische Welt*. Eventually he became managing editor of the daily *Yiddische Folk*.

During World War I, Agron volunteered for the Jewish Legion. He fought in Palestine together with Izhak Ben-Zvi and David Ben-Gurion, both of whom became his friends. On demobilization, he decided to remain in Eretz Yisrael for good. He often joked that he would rather live in Jerusalem and miss New York, than live in New York and miss Jerusalem.

Agron started his career in Eretz Yisrael with the Press Bureau of the Zionist Commission and then became editor of *The Palestine Bulletin*. He also served as a correspondent for various foreign journals, and it was in this capacity that he developed a working partnership with Ted Lurie. He discovered Lurie to be an indefatigable worker who also had some financial backing, and thus secured his services for *The Palestine Post* project. (Jacob Lurie, Ted's father, became *Post* shareholder Number One.)

Agron and Lurie cooperated well at the budding *Post* and as reliable sources and contributors for the Central News Agency in London, the *London News Chronicle*, the Columbia Broadcasting System of New York, the Associated Press and other important world news media. Thus they wielded considerable influence, which they used carefully on various occasions. For example, they were instrumental in obtaining entry visas for many German Jewish journalists escaping from Hitler's regime.

The *Post's* editorial policy was extremely simple: Agron demanded a fair approach, objective reporting, informed criticism and a helpful attitude. He stood for firm support for the Zionist cause and for law and order. His concept was that objective reporting did not necessarily imply sitting on the fence; it meant taking a stand on major issues.

As a card-carrying member of the Mapai Party, on whose ticket he was elected mayor of Jerusalem in 1955, he fully supported the Labor movement. To those who openly or by devious means sought to obstruct the policies of the Jewish Agency; to the increasingly hostile Mandatory administration; and to those anxious to respond to Arab attacks with violence, he promised fair presentation of their views and activities, but no other encouragement.

In selecting the members of his board of directors and his editorial staff, Agron showed himself to be a master of public relations. He welcomed such diverse personalities as Henrietta Szold, the Zionist leader, and Norman McLean, the Church of Scotland moderator. On the staff, Reuven Shiloah, the Yishuv activist, and Bishop Danby, translator of the Mishna, had their contributions printed side by side. The *Post* became — and continued thus for more than five decades — a practical university of journalism for new arrivals, chiefly from English-speaking countries. (Later, Agron referred to his paper as an "Anglo-Saxon *ma'abara*," or immigrants' camp.) Many of them were later to make their names in various parts of the Western world.

Eliahu Elath, Walter Laqueur, Arthur Koestler, Martin Agronsky and many other future writers and Jewish leaders in Eretz Yisrael and abroad worked at the *Post* at one time or another. Agron also extended special cooperation and assistance to East European journalists who fled Nazi persecution.



Ted Lurie, second editor-in-chief

A Historical Record

The old volumes of the *Post* stacked up in its archives and on microfilm tell us in great detail about the day-to-day life of the Yishuv. They describe the difficult days of the Arab disturbances which began in 1936. They quote the House of Commons debates on the Palestinian issue and on the policies of the Colonial Office which led to the publication of the infamous White Paper of 1939, limiting Jewish settlement and immigration to Eretz Yisrael.

On September 4, 1939, the *Post* marked Britain's entry into World War II. From 1940 on, the paper demanded the right of Jewish volunteers to serve with the British forces. On September 18, 1940, it appealed to its readers for financial help for Britain's war effort and raised some £30,000 for the Royal Air Force. In 1943, after the formation of the Palestinian volunteer units serving with the British Army, the *Post* appealed for volunteers. Not only that, 12 workers from the

Post's permanent staff volunteered to serve with these units.

Throughout the war, the paper supported the Allied war effort wholeheartedly, following David Ben-Gurion's policy announced at the outbreak of hostilities: "We will fight the war as if there were no White Paper, and will continue to fight the White Paper as if there were no war."

But between the lines, one could feel the bitterness toward the Mandatory administration for the execution of Shlomo Ben-Yosef, the Young Betar activist who was sentenced to death for having fired on an Arab bus; for the implementation of the White Paper, which would practically stop immigration by 1944; and for courting the Arab nationalists at the Yishuv's expense.

The *Post* was very popular with the members of the Allied forces who passed through Palestine on their way to the Western Desert or who spent their leave in the country. The paper was so successful in carrying the Zionist message to the British, Australian, American and other servicemen, that the British started publishing their own English-language publications in Cairo and distributing them throughout the whole Middle East.

On the *Post's* tenth anniversary, Agron flew to Turkey to gather information about the Jewish situation in Nazi-occupied Europe, and was thus able to report on the *Struma* tragedy in which a boat with Jewish refugees sank after being turned away from Palestine by the British.

The *Struma* and the related *Patria* disasters happened at a time when the Yishuv was contributing so much to the Allied success. Yet the *Post* continued to support the Allied war effort. One of the examples of this attitude was the enlistment for army service of Lea Ben-Dor, a leading *Post* newspaperwoman, who served as a driver at British headquarters in Cairo. She was later to become the paper's third editor.

Meanwhile, the *Post* prospered. On D-Day it sold a record 49,999 copies. It welcomed the election in Britain of the Labor government, on which it laid great hopes for the future. After all, the Yishuv had provided some 30,000 volunteers for the British forces and had served the Allies well.

But it soon became obvious that the British had no intention of changing the White Paper policy, and the newspaper joined the entire Yishuv in the struggle for free immigration. Particularly painful were the articles about the tragic fate of the Holocaust survivors

linguishing in the displaced persons' camps in Europe and barred from joining their brothers and sisters in Eretz Yisrael.

On July 10, 1947, the *Post* was punished for publishing reports on the problem of "illegal" immigration on the grounds of contempt of court. *Post* employees found it increasingly difficult to get to work because of British military activities in Jerusalem. Distribution was frequently disrupted by curfews and there were numerous instances of workers with valid passes for night work being attacked by army or police patrols. But it was precisely in those days that the *Post* continued to provide vital information to the whole world. It constantly outsmarted the censorship, and continued to accuse the authorities of crude violations of the terms of the Mandate. *Post* articles and editorials were widely quoted in the world press.

Semi-official Spokesman for the State

There can be little doubt that the *Post's* leading articles and background stories greatly influenced the attitude of the British-American and United Nations commissions of inquiry which arrived in Palestine to study the situation and make recommendations on the Jewish-Arab conflict. The *Post* could thus proudly celebrate the UN vote of November 30, 1947, proclaiming the Yishuv's right to its own state. It was from this date that the *Post* became regarded as a semi-official spokesman of the future state. Its offices were crowded with foreign journalists and observers. No Jewish Agency communique or official Mandatory administration leaflet could be compared with the newspaper's live coverage.

Both British officials and the Arabs became increasingly aware of the *Post's* importance. On the night of Sunday, February 1, 1948, a group of Arabs and British soldiers bombed the *Post*, causing many casualties, three of them fatal, and turning the building into a smoking ruin. Nevertheless, with the help of several other Jerusalem presses, a double-sided edition appeared next morning.

Agron soon had to make the momentous decision whether to continue to produce and print his paper in Jerusalem or move to Tel Aviv, where he was offered excellent conditions and facilities. In spite of grave financial difficulties, for circulation fell to some 2,000 copies daily and there were few advertisements, Agron

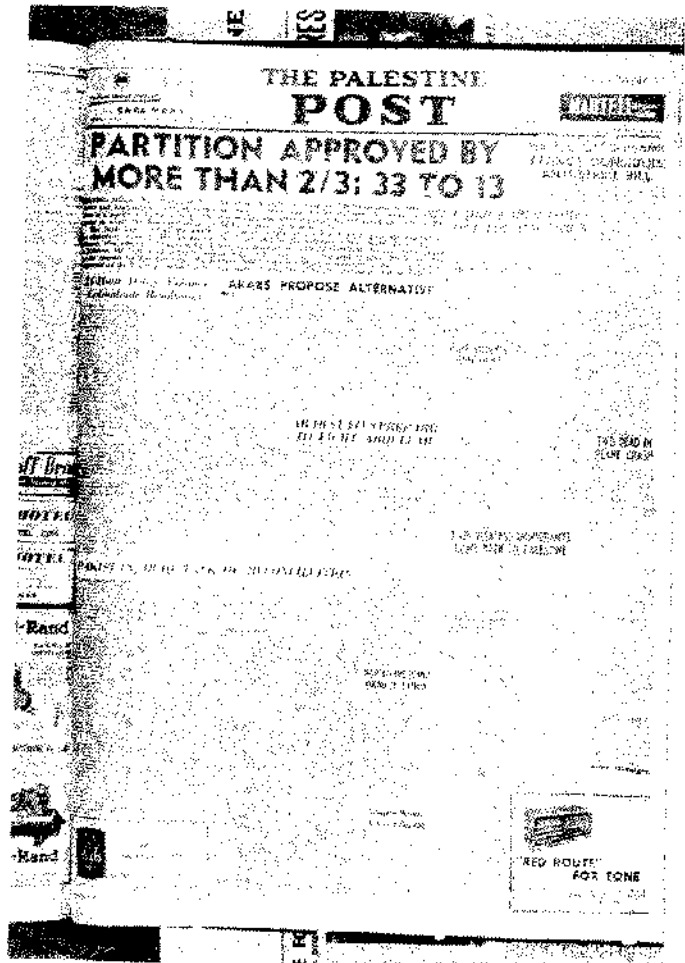
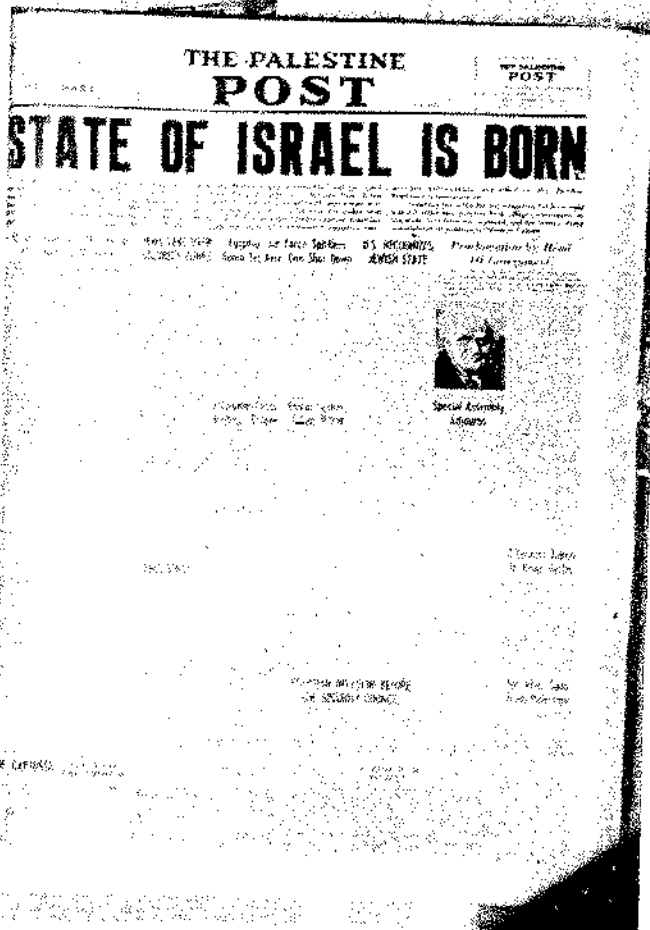


The *Palestine Post* building was bombed by Arabs assisted by British soldiers, February 1, 1948

did not hesitate. He decided that whatever happened, the Post's future would continue to be bound up with Jerusalem and that a new press belonging to the Post would be built within the rented, partially destroyed premises. His magic wand — his friends and supporters, Jewish and Gentile, spread all over the globe — responded splendidly, sending not only letters of support but practical assurances and promises that helped him keep the Post alive. The paper continued to suffer heavy losses during the War of Independence, and once it had to appear in stencil form due to cuts in the electric current. With Jerusalem cut off from the rest of the country, a special edition was printed in Tel Aviv on the night of Saturday, May 16, 1948. The next morning's edition of the paper was prepared with its largest-ever headline: "The State of Israel Is Born."

Other Postheadlines from those distant days tell us all about the siege of Jerusalem, the heroism and sacrifice of the convoys trying to reach the beleaguered city, the breakthrough of the Burma Road, the capture of Lod and Ramle.

No sooner was the War of Independence over than Agron asked Ben-Gurion a pertinent question: "Now, in our own Hebrew state, is an English-language paper needed anymore?" Ben-Gurion's answer was curt: "Now more than ever before!" Agron only smiled, for he thought of the state of the paper's finances with the departure from the country of a large part of its readership — the British. Within a few years, however, the paper, renamed *The Jerusalem Post* in 1950, and by then a foreign-language daily in a Hebrew-speaking state, had become firmly established again. It continued



Two commemorative issues, 1947 and 1948: the UN decisions on partition and on the establishment of the state

to provide the most important and reliable information for foreign representatives stationed in Israel and in the Near East, as well as for tourists wishing to learn more about the country. It also faithfully served the many thousands of Israelis who simply liked the paper for what it was. If the Post was making very little money, and advertising was still scarce, there was by now a new baby: the well-equipped printing press which soon proved to be one of the most efficient, especially in foreign languages, in the country. Job-printing carried the Post during the most difficult times, enabling it, for example, to carry on as an independent newspaper during the prolonged crisis which followed the Sinai campaign of 1956. Patience and perseverance paid off. At the beginning of the 1960s, circulation reached some 20,000 daily and 50,000 on Fridays.

In 1948 the Post established a Hanukka Toy Fund, soliciting contributions from readers at home and abroad to provide toys and other assistance for needy children. This highly successful enterprise was later joined by a Forsake Me Not Fund to assist the elderly. Last year, the Welcome Home Fund was added to provide university scholarships and other help to immigrants. In July 1952, a new and more modern rotary press replaced the worn-out Duplex, and the Post was able to increase the size of its issue.

On December 1, 1952, some 200 members of the Post family celebrated the daily's 20th anniversary at Jerusalem's Armon Cafe. On September 8, 1955, with the election of Gershon Agron as mayor of Jerusalem, Ted Luric became the paper's second editor. In 1953, the Post produced a Hebrew-language daily, Zmanim,

on behalf of the (now defunct) Progressive Party, with Lurie serving as editor of both papers simultaneously. Zmanim used much of the Post's editorial material, but it also gave a start to many young Israeli journalists. It was a bold attempt to establish a national Hebrew paper in Jerusalem, but it folded in two years as it was unable to penetrate the crowded market of daily newspapers.

In November 1959, the Post's first Weekly Overseas Edition made its appearance, a summary of the week's news and background features culled from the daily paper and magazine sections. Later renamed The Jerusalem Post International Edition, it is edited by Alice Israel today, has a circulation of 70,000, and is sold in some 80 countries. A French-language version was added in 1991.

Lea Ben Dor, third editor-in-chief



Innovations and New Techniques

During the Six-Day War, the Post's circulation reached some 33,000 daily and over 50,000 on Fridays. It was at about that time that Ted Lurie conceived his plan for introducing the new methods and techniques needed to meet the 21st century—computerized setting and multi-colored offset printing. To implement this plan, the Post purchased its own building in the Romema Quarter of Jerusalem. A gradual change began with the purchase of a modern Goss offset press in 1968. For a short time, the Post functioned in both the old and the new buildings, but in December 1972, a visit by then-Prime Minister Golda Meir to the new premises marked the paper's transfer in its entirety.

Ari Rath, editor from 1975





Editor Erwin Frenkel at 50th anniversary party of the *Jerusalem Post*

Ted Lurie, who died while at a conference in Tokyo in June 1974, was succeeded by Lea Ben-Dor, who became the paper's third editor. On her retirement in August 1975, Ari Rath and Erwin Frenkel became joint editors, with Rath also serving as managing director.

On November 21, 1977, the Post's special "Welcome Sadat" issue beat all previous records, selling 53,000 copies. On January 15, 1980, The Jerusalem Post went on sale again in Cairo.

In 1981, Susan Bellos established the Hey There, Yours and Student Post monthly newspapers in easy English. The Jerusalem Post Press completed the conversion from hot-metal setting to electronic computerized setting on January 1, 1982. Ted Lurie's bold dream was thus finally realized. The Post was the first daily in Israel to complete this transition.

Older workers were pensioned off or given adequate compensation and younger ones were retrained. The press work force was reduced considerably. Further changes were introduced in June 1987, when the Atex electronic system went into operation. The press-typing and proofreading departments were shut down, with the number of typists and proofreaders drastically reduced. Henceforth, reporters were required to type their own stories into the computer.

January 1989 saw the launching of the Jerusalem Post Information Service, now headed by Nina Keren-David. The paper's news archives, known worldwide for their unique collection of news clippings and photos from pre-state days, benefited from the latest technology with the setting up of a computerized news database. While lacking some of the romance that only faded



Computerization of the editorial process

news clippings provide, the Post's computerized system is remarkably powerful, providing almost instantaneous access to over 80,000 articles. A boon to hardworking journalists, its database can be downloaded to the personal computers of millions of home, business and research users through a number of international database vendors.

In July 1992 the Post joined a select band of the world's top papers with the release of a CD-ROM disc. Now, the contents of two years of the Post can be compressed onto a single disc, resembling the more familiar audio counterpart, operated from a standard PC or laptop. The Post's range of news information resources is complemented by a microfilm version of the newspaper produced in Holland and the US.

The paper is also actively involved in news syndication. Every morning, the Jerusalem Post Foreign Service transmits an electronic news and feature package to leading Jewish newspapers in North America and Europe, enabling them to keep their readers up to date on the latest news and developments in Israel. Recently the Post joined forces with the New York Times Syndicate Service, bringing the paper to a truly international audience eager for The Jerusalem Post's unique viewpoint on Israel and the Middle East. The Book Mart is another profitable Post venture.

In April 1989, the Post's main shareholder, the Koor Company, which had been losing money on the paper

because of a lengthy period of overspending, sold its shares to Hollinger, Inc., of Canada, represented by David Radler and Conrad Black. This sale was finalized on June 21, 1989, and Israel Defense Forces Colonel (Ret.) Yehuda Levy was appointed the paper's president and publisher, with David Radler chairman of the board.

The following August, a number of Post journalists declared a labor dispute and subsequently resigned. In November, Editor Ari Rath announced his early retirement, followed by his colleague Erwin Frenkel at the end of January. The disputes and the managerial shift were brought to an end during the first two months of 1991, when N. David Gross became editor of the paper. Other new appointments around the same time were David Bar-Illan, editorials editor; Jeff Black, news editor; Avi Golan, marketing and advertising manager; and Ronnie Friedman, treasurer. Thus, the Post underwent a complete change in management and senior editorial staff.

The new editor, who had served on the paper in many capacities over 40 years, brought The Jerusalem Post back to what he saw as the mainstream of the Zionist movement, the paper having in the preceding years turned sharply to the left. The new management, after a running-in period during which drastic cuts in expenditure were made and efficiency methods



Editor N. David Gross



Editor David Bar-Illan

introduced, turned the paper's finances around and in 1992, for the first time in many years, it made an operating profit. The paper grew in size, sales and advertising revenue.

In a policy statement published in the Post's 60th Anniversary Supplement this year, Editor-in-Chief Gross promised to continue to tell Post readers what had happened, why it happened and what was likely to happen. He said:

We do not mold the news according to our opinions, nor do we allow others to feed us their opinions in the form of news; we endeavor to present the readers with as clear and as true a picture of the world as it is, enabling them to form their own opinions. Our opinions are given, clearly, we think, in our editorials, but we provide ample opportunity for the expression of views other than our own in our Opinion Pages and in Letters to the Editor.... We see it our duty to give our readers what they need and what they want. But we are not published on Olympus. We are part of the city whose name we proudly bear, and of the nation whose capital it is. We feel a duty to our country and to the Jewish people, those of its members in Israel and those still living abroad. While not whitewashing their faults and errors, we do not intend to assist their enemies. This is the responsible journalism which this newspaper has practised for 60 years with some lapses in the past. May The Jerusalem Post long be privileged to be "the bearer of good news to Zion."

A big day for the Post was April 15, 1991, when a new \$3.5 m. German-made KBA full-color printing press was unveiled in a three-storey annex especially built to accommodate it. The fully computerized press — the only one of its kind in Israel, and one of only five in the world — can print, together with a binding machine that was acquired simultaneously, a 64-page tabloid paper, including 16 pages with full-color process. "If we had not bought these machines," commented Yossi Horn, the press manager, "we wouldn't be ready for the 21st century." Now, at the age of 60, commented Yehuda Levy, "The Jerusalem Post is larger and richer than ever. This is true of both our daily in Israel and our weekly international editions, in English and French, circulated around the world."

In August 1992, David Bar-Illan was appointed executive editor, with N. David Gross staying on as editor until his retirement.

Throughout its long history, the Post has refused to remain a local newspaper, even if the history, the present and the future of Jerusalem were always its editors' main concern. It is through hard work and great sacrifices that The Jerusalem Post has won international esteem as one of the world's six most influential newspapers, according to a rating by the BBC last year. Its proprietors, who own newspapers in all parts of the English-speaking world, have shown that they regard the Post as one of their jewels. They were willing to undertake a major reorganization of the paper's finances and provide substantial investment in order to ensure the daily's continued appearance for the benefit of Israel and the Jewish people.

EDITORS AND WRITERS I KNEW AT THE "JERUSALEM POST" / Gabriel Tsifroni

Gershon Agronsky, who headed the group that acquired the *Palestine Bulletin* in 1932 with the assistance of the Zionist Executive and the Histadrut, and turned it into the *Palestine Post*, was a Zionist pioneer who left America for Palestine because of an idea. On the night that the *Post* was bombed by a group of British and Arab saboteurs, many of the foreign correspondents in Jerusalem, hurrying to Agronsky's aid, asked: "Why did they attack the paper?" Agronsky replied half-seriously: "We at the *Post* are humble servants of the state that is yet to be born. Maybe they wanted to give us free worldwide publicity."

He was so single-minded in his devotion to the paper, that he neglected to acquire an apartment for himself, and lived with his family in a rented apartment all his life.

His Jewish and American education were advantageous, as were his professional journalistic connections, in helping turn him into "Mr. Spokesman." The Arab riots of 1936-39 and the ensuing Mandatory White Paper converted the *Post* into a kind of press agency that was a mecca for foreign correspondents who came to hear his views. The paper had immeasurable public relations value, and Agronsky became the Jewish Agency Political Department's right arm. He was particularly close with Dr. Chaim Weizmann and with Moshe Shertok.

Often stubborn and naive, Agronsky was demonstrative in his opposition to Ben-Gurion's activist stance at the 1946 Zionist Congress in Basel, favoring Weizmann's and Sharett's restraint instead. He assumed, later on, that he would receive an ambassadorial post in Washington or London, but none was offered him. He was, however, appointed director of the Government Press Office. Yet Ben-Gurion ignored him, and Agron (he Hebraicized his name) resigned the post. In 1955 he was nominated as candidate for mayor of Jerusalem

by the Mapai Party and, winning the election, served in that capacity until his sudden death in 1959.

Agron had a talent for choosing devoted and talented staff people. One of the most outstanding was Roy Elston, an Englishman posted in Palestine by the Psychological Warfare Branch of the War Office in London. He soon began writing a regular column for the *Post* under the name David Courtney, which made an important contribution to the Zionist image. In response, the British transported an Egyptian paper every morning for distribution to the British servicemen in Palestine and opened a well-equipped press office to combat the anti-British *Post*, although they never dared punish the *Post* by closing it, as they did most of the Hebrew papers from time to time.

Another talented staffer was Alfred Sherman, a former *Observer* writer who served in British intelligence during the war and joined the *Post* thereafter. However, he suddenly left the paper, joined a kibbutz, eventually left that too and embraced a neo-conservative ideology, working for the General Zionist faction in the Knesset. Later he returned to Britain as a correspondent for *Ha-Aretz*, became prominent in the Conservative Party and was eventually knighted by Margaret Thatcher.

The New York-born Ted Lurie, Agron's successor at the *Post*, was his protege and in turn served as a model for Agron's nephew, Martin Agronsky, who wrote for the *Post* and later became a world-famous journalist. Lurie, as Agron, was a correspondent for several American papers and major broadcasting networks and was a central figure in the world of Jerusalem journalism. He represented Israeli newspapers at foreign conferences and undertook various assignments for the foreign and defense

Continued on page 44e

A FREE PRESS AND ITS ROLE IN SOCIETY

DAN MERIDOR

This address was delivered by then-Minister of Justice Dan Meridor at the Journalism Studies Program graduation ceremony at Tel Aviv University in May 1992.

A state, though it holds free elections in a regular fashion, whose government enjoys public trust, whose laws are binding both to government and to the citizen, whose courts are not subordinated to government — but which, nevertheless, lacks freedom of the press, is not a free and democratic state. A free press is a prerequisite for democracy. The free societies of the West, and those that follow the same pattern, are identifiable by freedom of the press, which they protect from government and other pressures and raise to a fundamental principle distinctive of a free society.

Political stability and flexibility, social struggle and change, economic competition and development, scientific progress and cultural ferment all depend on freedom of expression, which includes freedom of the press. The centrality and the importance of freedom of the press in a democratic regime are axiomatic for political and social thinkers and activists in the free world. In many states the constitution, explicitly or by implication, has entrenched this principle as an inalienable fundamental right.

Freedom of the press has been established as a fundamental right in Israel as well, both in its constitutional system and in its social order, although to its shame the Knesset still fails in fulfilling the basic obligation to protect human rights and establish the face of society by not legislating expressly — whether by constitution, basic law or ordinary law — freedom of expression, and in particular freedom of the press, as a fundamental civil right.

In the absence of such legislation, the void has been filled by the Supreme Court, which, in a series of decisions — the most prominent being that of Justice Agranat in *Kol Israel* — has placed the State of Israel among the most progressive and freest of countries in the world.

In a draft Basic Law: Fundamental Human Rights, which I proposed some three years ago, I suggested that “freedom of thought and expression, as well as the freedom to publish opinions and information publicly in any fashion” (section 8) be established as a basic civil right. Jointly with MK Amnon Rubenstein and the chairman of the Constitution, Law and Judiciary Committee, MK Uriel Linn, several sections of the bill became Basic Laws during the constitutional reversal in the Knesset toward the end of the last session. These included freedom of vocation; the right to life, individual integrity and preservation of human dignity; freedom of entry to and exit from the country; and the protection of privacy and the private domain. Regrettably, freedom of expression has not yet gained the protection of a Basic Law. I hope this deficiency will be remedied in the next Knesset.

The People Determine Their Destiny

Where does freedom of the press stem from? Why do we uphold it and protect it?

The first answer lies in the further question: Why not? Why should there not be freedom of the press? Freedom of the press is one aspect of freedom of expression. The basic premise of democracy is that fundamental human rights — including freedom of expression — are not conferred by the state. Man is, so to speak, born with these rights; they are vested in him and cannot be taken away except for proper cause

and only to the extent necessary. A person has the innate right to express himself, to say his piece — this includes the right to listen to others — and no evidence need be produced for its existence. Whosoever would restrict it bears the burden of proof. The democratic state was created and exists for the individual, and not the other way around. The individual has the right to have his say as he wishes. A person deprived of this right is not a whole person; his right to self-fulfillment is denied.

Indeed, a democratic regime is recognizable not only by its governmental institutions, elections and majority rule, but primarily by the centrality and the equality of the individual. Society must enable the individual to sustain his autonomy and protect it vis-a-vis other interests and values. In this regard, freedom of the press exists as part of freedom of expression and is to be protected as an inalienable element of personal freedom — the freedom of the individual about which John Stuart Mill wrote in his essay "On Liberty."

Yet we uphold and protect freedom of the press not only as part of the freedom of the individual — his freedom of expression — but also because of the essential role of the press in a free and democratic society. For these reasons, protection of freedom of the press extends very far.

From the point of view of the individual's autonomy, there is seemingly no reason in principle to prevent the regime from interfering with and limiting regulating freedom of expression. After all, we are dealing with activity that is not confined to the private domain but, on the contrary, is directed at influencing others and even society as a whole. However, in view of the role of the press in a democratic society, it would seem advisable to restrict state intervention in freedom of the press to a minimum.

In a democratic society, the people determine their own fate, choose their own representatives, criticize them, demonstrate against them and replace them. To do all this, the people must, first and foremost, know the relevant facts, hear differing views, and deal with issues that they consider worthy of attention, and on this basis determine their position in support of or opposition to the regime in office at any given time, for example, by voting in elections.

Thus, the free flow of information and the free competition between ideas are basic to the existence of democracy. The flow of information and the exchange



Dan Meridor

of views is made possible primarily by the media. The larger the population of the state grows, the more complex the issues to be debated and resolved become; and the more representative and less centralized the democracy, the more important the media is to the very existence of democracy.

If freedom of the press does not lead to the free flow of information but to the distortion of reality in the citizen's mind, then a basic principle of democracy — knowledge of the facts in order to make up one's mind and arrive at a decision — will have been sacrificed in the name of that other principle of democracy, freedom of the press. The press, therefore, has been given the supreme obligation of providing the public with information that is reliable and trustworthy, without concealment, disruption or distortion.

Thus, we are not dealing only with the right of the individual to express an opinion and disseminate his views — a right which is his birthright — but with the role that the press plays in democratic society.

Ethical Rules

In defining the activity of the press as fulfilling a public role, we are not simply paying it compliments or conferring privileges on it or granting it protection (for

example, journalistic immunity). Like any other public service, the press has obligations as to the manner in which it fulfills its role. It must be even-handed and credible and indeed maintain a high professional standard.

The journalist must be open to criticism regarding his editorial and publishing decisions, his professional standards, credibility and fairness. A press that disseminates a slanted report, for political, commercial or personal considerations or out of carelessness, presents the public with a distorted, or even completely false version of reality. Without well-grounded information, the citizen cannot cast his vote rationally. The press has the obligation to report matters as fully and as scrupulously as possible.

The public function of journalists also dictates the ethical rules that govern them and they should abide by them scrupulously. They are not doing any favors to the public, nor is it simply a question of a nicety among cultured people, but the obligation of public figures whom we call journalists in serving the public.

Restrictions on the press that are imposed externally are, to my mind, undesirable, and I have indeed on various occasions blocked efforts to harm the freedom of the press, legislatively or otherwise. Nevertheless, there can be no question that, like any other fundamental right, freedom of the press is not supreme and without restriction. It is related to the values and interests of others, of society and the state, and a correct balance must be found between all these elements. We may recall a person's right to good repute (the Law of Defamation), and to privacy (the Basic Law in that regard), as well as matters relating to the security of the state and public law and order (the Penal Law). The Supreme Court has ruled that only the grave and highly probable danger of serious and severe damage to state security or public order will justify suppression of freedom of expression. Even in such extreme cases, we would generally prefer post facto action (after criminal or civil proceedings) to anticipatory action preventing publication.

It is often easier for the authorities to act secretly and avoid interference by the media. There is a very natural inclination on the part of those in power to try and restrict investigation by the press. But the task of government is to rule and the task of the press to convey information. In the event of conflict, it is not

government which should be the final arbiter, but the courts.

A Pseudo-Dilemma

Public figures, government ministers, members of Knesset both of the coalition and the opposition, as well as persons with economic interests have learned how to exploit the media for their own professional ends. Hence, inter alia, they employ spokespersons, media advisors and public relations officers. These indeed have proliferated greatly of late. This too threatens to become a serious obstacle to journalists, and they must be wary of it. It is very easy to be satisfied with officially conveyed material, background briefings or leaks by a spokesperson without investigation. When presented in the name of a spokesperson, or that of his superior, the responsibility for the material is theirs. When, however it is presented much more easily as the journalist's, without further investigation, it is unprofessional and perilous.

A profusion of official notices and releases inundates the press. Whether out of carelessness or lack of resources and manpower, these often proceed to publication unchecked and unverified. The same situation confronts editors. Even if every item were truthful, is it honest to publish them simply because they were submitted, thereby creating the impression that this is all that occurred? Does that not give a distorted picture?

I was once told — and I do not remember by whom, so that I disclaim responsibility — that research conducted by the *New York Times* that publishes "All the News That's Fit to Print," shows that 80% of information are items submitted by spokespersons of various kinds. Have the interested parties, politicians and businessmen managed to outwit the journalists, turning them into their tools against the public? This is a serious matter which requires thought. Working rules must be laid down by the press itself if it wishes to preserve its credibility, professional standards and recognition of its public calling.

On the face of it, media personnel, journalists and editors must sometimes choose between two conflicting obligations — an obligation to the publisher whose interest is to maintain and increase profitability, and an obligation to the public to convey credible and representative information and maintain ethical rules.

I believe, however, that this dilemma is essentially

false. It may possibly exist in the short term, but in the long run, even journalists cannot deceive all of the people all of the time. The truth will come out, provided there is a multiplicity of dispersed media that will enable the credibility and quality of each and every medium to become known.

Even if I am mistaken and it does not always appear worthwhile to the journalist or editor to maintain fairness, credibility and professional standards, the profit motive does not sanctify all means and ought not be the journalists' and editors' sole motive if they fully appreciate their public role or at least value their good name and their professional reputation.

Protecting Sources

I have dealt with the role of the press in conveying information about the situation relevant to the voting and critical citizen. He has the right to know the truth, for the members of the government are in fact his representatives and owe him fiduciary duty, including that of disclosure. The citizen is also entitled to know about the acts and omissions of persons not in government whose activities affect others.

We have been waging a campaign in recent years to preserve the moral integrity of wielders of power, civil servants, soldiers, policemen and elected officials in central and local government. This is a uniquely vital struggle in shaping the image of government and society in Israel. Practices that had existed for many years and were barely criticized are now under critical, investigative and judicial review. For example, political appointments, a malignant practice that we have known from the very beginning of the state, but have never dealt with, has recently become a matter of concern. Similarly, the question of funding political parties by contributions and favors is also being dealt with. Pertinent objective criteria for allocating public funds, canceling special allocations to those not entitled, the prohibition of "Kalanterism" (unilateral shifting of mandates across party lines), the duty to disclose political agreements, interrogation by police and secret service — all have come under review in the last few years. The result may be the erroneous impression that all these are innovations. But in fact none are new. What is novel is the persistent investigation and exposure, the intensity of battle against these practices.

Who is waging this war? The police, the public prosecutor, the courts in delivering judgments, imposing

punishments and creating precedents, the state attorney-general in his directives, the Knesset in its amendments of the law, the state comptroller's reports. All these different bodies act in the cause of duty, but the struggle is also carried on by the press as well. It is a formidable challenge for the press to face the government, expose its deficiencies and call for their correction. The press has done this to a considerable extent, but it could do more, providing it is careful in maintaining the quality of its work and upholding proper ethical rules.

I do not know whether man's nature is indeed evil from his youth, but there is always the apprehension that the wielders of power will pervert or misuse their power and go beyond the limits permitted. Fear of exposure is incomparably potent to deter potential offenders and preserve the integrity of public service. In order to fulfill this public function — and not only by reason of the principle of freedom of expression — the press has been given protection from revealing its sources, within the limitations established by the Supreme Court (Shamgar P. in the *Citrin* decision).

Decentralization of the Media

How can the flow of information — "All the News That's Fit to Print" — be guaranteed? How can we be assured that the media will also function as the forum for the exchange of opinions and ideas? Not, of course, by the government establishment. Even where the government exercises influence or control, as with the Israel Broadcasting Authority, one medium is not the sole channel for the flow of information to the public. The best way to guarantee the free flow of all information and a wide variety of opinion is by a multiplicity of media and divided control.

At present we in Israel are in a transitional stage regarding the electronic media. We have general TV, educational TV, a commercial TV channel (in formation), cable TV (with many channels from Israel and abroad), Kol Yisrael Radio, Israel Defense Forces Radio, local radio (anticipated) and a national and local print press in Hebrew and foreign languages.

We must guard against excessive centralization of ownership of the various media. While the Knesset has passed laws limiting, to some extent, the rights of newspaper owners and cable concessionaires to operate the second TV channel, I am not sure if these limitations are sufficient. We shall have to study the

behavior of the media during this period. One possible test is mutual media criticism: Do the media take each other to task fair-mindedly and seriously, or is criticism silenced because of joint media ownership?

Legislation that ensures division of media control is usual in many countries, including the free and democratic countries. In Israel serious struggle was waged over this issue in the course of legislating on the matter, in view of its public importance. That was to be expected. However, in carrying out its public role, the press should have given this issue full publicity and called for incisive and serious debate in its pages. The fact that not all papers devoted very much space to the matter for a long period gives rise to the fear that editorial judgment, the public's right to know, and the relevant economic interests became mixed up.

The press itself must uphold its standards, its quality and credibility. Sometimes it must convince the reader that these values are also foremost in the mind of

publishers, editors and journalists.

Readers' and advertisers' taste and money constitute criteria for a paper's success. Competition between newspapers alone will not lead to upholding standards, quality and credibility. Sometimes short-range considerations may lead to disregard of these elements in order to increase sales, prevent losses or increase profits.

The best guarantee for maintaining high journalistic standards is the journalist's self-image: his view of his profession not merely as a source of livelihood but as a distinguished and worthy profession, and the newspaper not merely as a source of profits but as a vehicle for public service. All this rests in the hands of the journalists themselves. Their success is important not only for themselves but for Israeli society, for the democratic regime in the state, and even for the government which may also benefit from serious, informed criticism.

BETWEEN ONE ELECTORAL UPSET AND THE NEXT

HAYIM YAVIN

June 23, 1992. 9:00 p.m.

The critical moment before the sample vote. A nerve-racking silence, this time — I don't know why — more than ever. I glance at the screens behind the backs of the computer typists and see the second electoral upset taking shape in front of my eyes: Bat-Yam, Tiberias, Dimona, the same picture at every polling place.

Not entirely a surprise. We knew it weeks before election day. An electoral upset was in the air. But now, with everything showing up on the screens, you can feel the electricity. Prof. Yohanan Peres whispers with Dr. Mina Zemah and Prof. Camil Fuchs at the telecast desk. They are dropping a quarter of a mandate, adding half a mandate, reevaluating.

Everyone is on edge. Airtime approaches like a menacing shadow. If we're not ready in time, we'll have to resort to an alternative program prepared in the event of just such a situation. We practically force the slip of paper with the 1992 election results from Mina's and Yohanan's hands. Now the graphics computer has to be fed. Two minutes to airtime.

It's clear that there's an electoral upset. That the Likud has been brought down. But hold on a minute. Not so fast. One can't make any mistakes with this sort of thing. I say to Yael Chen, the editor: "We have to open with: 'Electoral upset.'" She says: "Are you sure?" I say: "Yes, Rabin has an airtight bloc and the Likud can't form a government. A clear electoral upset."

One minute to ten. The graphics are ready. Everything is ready. Channel One is set to go. The tension is a sure prescription for a heart attack. But why, actually? After all, this is the fifth time I'm doing this.

It's because this time it's especially difficult. So much seems to be dependent on these results. It's been two days that I've been tense, which is unusual for me with these kinds of telecasts.

The signal to start. The usual ritual: a description of the studio, the telecast set-up, introducing the election staffs. Everyone is tense, nervous, impatient, trying to figure out the results from my facial expression. But despite the temptation, this telecast will follow the same opening procedure as was used at the time of the first electoral upset in May 1977.

I finish the round of staff introductions, and then utter the loaded and binding word. Control immediately cuts to the Labor headquarters. Celebration, singing, dancing. Then patriotic songs, the kind that don't allow you to remain unmoved.

Afterward they would tell me they could see the joy in my eyes. And I — objective to the end — would deny it emphatically. The truth was, I couldn't entirely. Even though I tried, something stronger than myself was at work.

Maybe after 15 years it's impossible to stifle a sense of release, a longing for something to change. Maybe after 15 years one is allowed not to be so objective. There's a limit to balance, to objectivity for the national good.

Fifteen years of an electoral upset, of rearguard restraining battles against those who did everything they could to shut our mouths, to prostitute our profession, to sell out what we held dear — the love of a good broadcast — for a mess of pottage of political expedience. Services rendered for promotion, jobs in exchange for toeing the "nationalist" line. Whoever didn't accommodate himself was dropped.

It all began with the election telecast of May 1977. The telecast was a great success. What followed, though, was a different story entirely.

It all began with Amiram Nir's, may he rest in peace, wooden boxes: Israel Television's sample polls. Or perhaps it was the video that Dan Shillon brought from London. Here, Shillon announced ceremoniously — look: ITN broadcasts results the second the voting polls close. We'll do it too. That was how the election sample was born. Amiram assembled a group of

university students, scattered 25 sample polls throughout Smith country (Hanokh Smith, noted pollster), and everything was in place.

Hanokh loved it. He was crazy about the samples. He was rather confusing on the air, and it took a special effort to understand his Anglicized Hebrew, but we were both carried away by our burning love for election-sample nights.

May 17, 1977

Fifteen minutes before the big electoral upset — the first — Hanokh suddenly says he's not ready. One of the sample booths in the Ahuza district on the Carmel gave "Dash" (Democratic Movement for Change) 35 percent, and that was crazy. Ten minutes to ten, pandemonium broke out. We wouldn't go on the air. We would go on the air. Crisis in the studio. I, in my corner, await the signal to start. In those days the directors took complete responsibility. For failures too. Shillon, Arnon Zuckerman, Yizhak Livni decide to go on the air.

I don't take any chances. It's only a sample, I warn the viewers again and again. On Yarkon Street (site of the Labor Party headquarters) they make light of us. Hayim Bar-Lev: Don't take this toy seriously. Let's wait for the true results. Others said the same thing that night of the first sample.

The same thing was happening at the Metsuda (Likud headquarters). Begin and Weizman were smiling but silent. Let's wait for the results because this is just a game. But the sample was accurate. Dead accurate. The most accurate we've ever had. And as the night turned into morning, the celebrants became even happier and the mourners went home with their tails between their legs.

The "upset" (in Hebrew, "*mahupakh*," a new term) was an expression I improvised that historic night. I was looking for a word that meant less than revolution but more than simply change. Indeed, quite suddenly, Begin's flowery style, with the pompous, rather frightening declarations, dominated everything. There was even an upset in dress — suits and ties.

Hayim Yavin and Hanokh Smith review election results, 1984



dark clothes. Suddenly, the General Zionists and the Revisionists were in decisive positions. Up until that night, no one ever imagined that anything like it could happen — a change of regime in Israel, the downfall of the Ma'arakh (Labor) and the rise to power of the Likud.

Was I objective and balanced in the national interest? The first two people I met the next day said what I was to hear hundreds of times afterward:

"What were you so happy about last night? Now we finally know who and what you are!"

"Why such sad eyes yesterday? Nothing terrible happened, you Mapainik!"

And all I wanted to do was get through the telecast safely, without slipping or stumbling.

Yitzhak Ben-Aharon would not come to terms with the upset. He sat off to a side in the studio and said, simply: It's not possible. We won't accept the results.

Some of the terrible leftists among us walked about the corridors gloomily, downcast. What will be? They began to talk about Begin and war. Elimelekh Ram said: You ask if they'll last four years? They'll last the term, and then another, and then another. Zuckerman returned in despair, grey-faced, from the first meeting of the new Broadcasting Authority council. Hard days are ahead, very hard days, he said. Prof. Shlomo Avineri said at the Executive Committee meeting and at the council that freedom of expression must be preserved now especially, but Eli Tavin, the Herut man in the Broadcasting Authority, declared: Start getting used to the new style. And the new style was Begin at his best, standing on a high hill, declaring: There will be many more Elon Morehs (one of the first post-1967 Jewish settlements in Samaria).

The upset brought Yosef Lapid, Aaron Papo, Reuven Yaron and others to the Broadcasting Authority — all with one ambition: to get rid of the leftist mafia. Suddenly we were PLO advocates, defeatists and leftists. The law was laid down: no territories, no Arabs, no interviews with personalities from the territories. Settlements — yes, and Greater Israel — yes.

I imagine that there were those among us who didn't want to, or couldn't, separate their political views from their professional work. And there were those who exploited the screen to advance their political views. But for most of us the struggle was not at all political. It was for a free press, for people who wanted to do

their jobs properly, who wanted to take pride in their journalism and who believed in freedom of expression, in the right of the public to know, in true democracy. And this was denied us. Everything was judged by whether it was good or bad for the Jews, according to the thinking of Papo and Shlomo Kor.

We struggled against it time and again, first by arguments, shouts and accusations, and later by sanctions, by going to the press and by protest meetings, and finally by broadcasting strikes, slamming doors, almost by violence. The Supreme Court recognized the justice of our cause, which was no more nor less — how elementary — than the right of the public to know and to judge. But the Executive Committee, the council and the Likud coalition members didn't see it that way. "Traitors" was how M.K. Benjamin Halevi termed us. PLO members was what they called us in the street. There were also threats and attempts to scare us.

Mainly, there were forced resignations: Ya'akov Agmon, Zuckerman, Yaron London, Yavin — a partial list. And there were disqualifications — of telecasts, of interviewees, of the treatment of "sensitive" subjects. The motto was: "We won't give over the screen to murderers of Jewish children." Or: "We won't provide a platform for PLO supporters." The list started with Arabs and went on to leftists and to doves, until anyone who wasn't in the right camp was suspect unless proven innocent. Certain plays weren't covered, and certain writers weren't interviewed, and "sensitive" issues weren't discussed, and the weekly review of the news was transferred (from Friday night) to Saturday night, and satire was eliminated. You always know where censorship begins, but you never know where it will end.

1981

The pressure reached new heights in 1981, along with the frenzy in the city squares and the chanting: Begin, Begin. A sense of oppressiveness was palpable in the street as well as at work. A feeling that this was all there was — the nationalism, the chauvinistic pressure, the culture of the city squares, which needed to be gotten used to as if to a new "people's" culture. And perhaps — so went a kind of rationalization — perhaps this was right, natural, a reflection of the legitimate will of "the people." A kind of "authenticity."

We toured up and down the country to tape the

series "The Elected." Peres struggled against Begin. He didn't have a chance in the city squares against the master of rhetoric and demagoguery. Beit-Shemesh was rough, Petah Tikva and Lod even rougher: In some places we feared for our lives. After all, we were the despised media. One spark was all that was needed for them to attack us.

We went on the air on the decisive night of June 30, 1981, our faces controlled. The election sample, with Hanokh Smith, went well — at first. Then came the slip-ups, when Hanokh suddenly announced that the Ma'arakh was leading and they started singing at (Labor) headquarters and Yisrael Peleg presented Peres as the next prime minister of Israel. And there was my slip of the tongue when I called Arik Sharon "minister of war." And beforehand there was an incident when Begin demanded not to cut an interview of him, "and if Mr. Yavin makes a face, let his face stay that way," and Yossi Sarid asked if Begin intended to bring in the Likud toughs to make my face crooked. And there were Dudu Topaz's (a well-known entertainer) "*tchahhtchahim*" (slang for vulgar people), and the birth of the new leadership of the Sephardi sector.

"The Elected," an eight-part series, showed the social and political revolution that had changed Israel, with David Levi, Meir Sheetreit, Moshe Katsav and David Magen. It was a profound change, not only political but also social and cultural. And on the opposite side, it appeared that the labor movement had come to the end of the road, unable to go on unless it underwent a radical internal revision. The Likud strengthened its grip on the country's body and soul. But the media — especially the Broadcasting Authority — didn't give in and stood fast in rebellion. On several occasions Begin said to me bitterly: We agreed to a Broadcasting Authority that wouldn't be under governmental control, but not to an anti-government authority.

The Likud put the blame on the people that it itself had appointed to lead radio and TV. Once, in a meeting of the government on the Broadcasting Authority budget, Begin blurted out: Lapid's appointment was a mistake. Because the more they tried to satisfy the government, the more the government's appetite grew for tailor-made broadcasts, for TV that was an instrument of its masters, an "information" instrument — and that was too much even for Lapid. To his credit, Lapid gave instructions to "go all the way" in reporting the slaughter at Sabra and Shatilla. And

reporter Dan Semama broadcast the satirical rhyme "Come down to us, airplane, and we'll come back in coffins." It became evident that even the Likud couldn't completely silence the voices and scenes that Romema (the Television building in Jerusalem) broadcasted, no matter what.

From time to time we scored a victory in points, but the warriors grew tired and one by one went home. The Likud regime turned into a fact of life. The Ma'arakh turned into an eternal opposition.

1984

On the night of the election sample in 1984, the only thing we wanted was for our telecast to work. But nothing worked as it should have.

At 9:45 Smith announced that we couldn't go on the air because according to the sample, Mordecai Ben-Porat (leader of a one-man party) had gotten three seats in the Knesset, which wasn't logical, so apparently there was a breakdown in the sample. Pandemonium broke out. Executives, directors, producers, news managers were all over the studio in a terrible state of confusion. There's no sample. There was an ungodly tumult.

What do we do? Five minutes to ten. And then, Yavin bangs on the table and announces: "We're going on!" The force of the bang silenced everyone. They hurried to their places and the telecast was on the air. To this day I don't understand how it worked.

We went on the air without results, playing for time with the introductions to the party election staffs, driving the country crazy as it waited to hear who won and who lost. Everyone was on edge, hoping that Hanokh's sample would revive itself. Finally, after a half-hour's delay, the results came through, and, as expected, it was victory for the Likud.

What is important in a telecast like this, of course, is exhaustive concentration, both mental and physical. It is a difficult telecast that lasts for 12 hours consecutively and involves great responsibility — a sense of fates being sealed. The opening three sentences are printed before you — all the rest is one long improvisation, managing a program that takes a whole night. It's very important not to say something tactless or insulting. It's very important to be fair to everyone, winners and losers alike. Above all, it's important to concentrate and to make things interesting — serious, but with a bit of show — to grasp as early as possible who won and what the dimensions of the victory, the loss or



What wasn't TV accused of? A demonstration against TV's "Week in Review" program, with the sign: "The Week in Review — election propaganda for the Left"

the draw are, to grasp who will form a coalition with whom, and what the social and political significance of the results are.

All this is difficult technically because the medium is so saturated with statistics, techniques, esthetics and a great crowd of staff people running about. One mishap can foil everything. Even though you aren't responsible for the production components, nor are you the editor or the producer of the show, you are the showcase. The last stop. Anything that goes wrong, that slips, you're left holding the bag.

1992

Actually, as I write this article, I find myself stuck as to how to begin the first chapter of the "second upset" — the election campaign of 1992 — but I can recall how it all began.

"The Elected" in 1981 was a project conceived by Director-General Yosef Lapid for the outgoing news director — Yavin — who would document the election campaign. However, the election law prevented it from being screened at that time. The eight parts of the series exposed the political and social scene in Israel —

the real revolution that took place in the country at the end of the 1970s, the decline of the labor movement, the rise of the "second Israel," Begin's victory over Peres and the accompanying violence in the squares, the domination of Israeli society by the culture of the right.

Now, in preparing "The Elected" number two, we are attempting to sketch in the outlines of the second electoral upset. Even at the start, when we began shooting in May 1992, a month and a half before election day, there was a sense of electoral upset in the air. I daresay that many Likud people themselves secretly hoped for a change, sensing that the situation couldn't continue. After all, M.K. Michael Eitan (Likud) categorically demanded of Yitzhak Shamir to resign.

I myself saw the change taking place in the field. The list of people who were disappointed with the Likud was growing longer. A sense of longing was in the air, wide as the sea. The outcry swept over the microphone and the camera. It was not just a political choice between the Likud and Labor. It was an ethical choice. Embittered young people sitting on

sidewalk railings spoke up. How long must we be out of work, the development towns cried, when millions are being spent in the territories? There was a sense of alienation and disgust. The regime, in its hidden rooms in Jerusalem, with its car telephones and Volvos and trips abroad, has forgotten us. The Likud, for which we sacrificed ourselves all those years, has cut itself off from us. Instead, the Likud alumni said, we got the "sevenths" farce (a system devised by the Likud for choosing its candidates) with the shame of the lust for power and the deals and the intrigues displayed for all the world to see. And what they did to David Levi, and what David Levi did to them. And the corruption, and the special funds, and the yeshiva students who don't serve in the army.

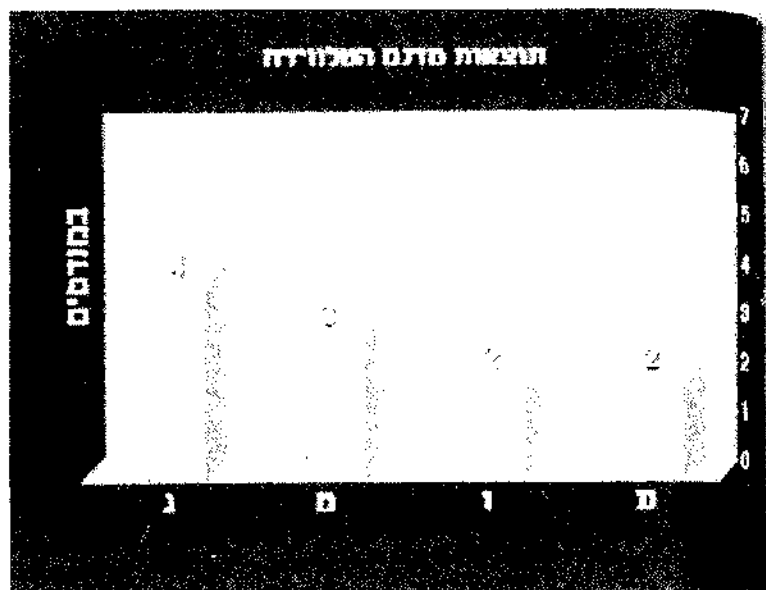
The answer to all this came in the person of Yitzhak Rabin, who was always a certain kind of idol for the masses, and with him the fresh faces that emerged from the Labor primaries: Avigdor Kahalani, Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, Efrayim Sneh, Dalia Itzik, Shimon Sheetrect, Hayim Ramon and the others — and, of course, Avrum Burg, the leader of the struggle against the ultra-Orthodox.

Suddenly, Lord Acton's remark that every regime corrupts, but an absolutist regime corrupts absolutely, became crystal clear. Thus, Rafal (Raphael Eitan) quadrupled his electoral strength, and Meretz won a significant victory. The state acceded to the will of the voter and made a 180 degree turnaround. The vote was more than the victory of candidate Rabin over the Likud's anti-candidate Shamir, sunk in internecine strife; it was a massive protest against the foul waters that had mired the state since the first electoral upset.

Yes, the voter told Yitzhak Shamir, clearly Eretz Yisrael is very important, but what about our agenda, what about our security, what about our children?

On the horizon, perhaps a new, different day. Perhaps the peace so longed for; perhaps, truly, a change in priorities that would place the individual, the human being, at the top of the national agenda, our foremost concern.

Do you, perhaps, remember what brought the Ma'arakh down during the first upset 15 years ago?



Voting patterns, photographed from the TV election sample, June 23, 1992

Wasn't it a similar scenario? Hadn't the Ma'arakh regime become too haughty, cut off from the people, failing in the areas of security, social issues and the economy, making no progress toward peace? A regime that inspired despair in the country? Hadn't we been there before?

One thing had changed: There was a first electoral upset and there was a second electoral upset. In both, the regime had become rotten, disconnected from the people, unable to conceive that it could be brought down in free and democratic elections — and it was brought down. Today, it's clear to everyone that the will of the voter isn't simply an empty phrase. The voter takes note and remembers.

Having delivered the news about the first and the second electoral upsets, I opt for a smile in the face of the promise of a new dawn. It is, in essence, a reflection of the feelings of many who wish for redemption, peace, security, justice and prosperity, exactly as the voters did during the first upset, in May 1977.

And until the next smile, let us move on to the rest of today's news.

ISRAEL RADIO: "MI YITZHAK" ("WHICH YITZHAK," OR "WHO WILL LAUGH") / Shalom Kital

Like the recent Israeli elections themselves, the coverage of the elections was centered on the personalities, and was also gimmicky, as the Hebrew jingle hidden in the title above suggests. (Made up by Israel Radio staffers, it is a play on *yitzhak* — both candidates' first name, as well as a word that means: will laugh.)

Israel Radio viewed its main task on election night as broadcasting reliable information as fast as possible. A total of 21 broadcasting crews were positioned at the headquarters of every political party with the aim of conveying both information and atmosphere. After a two-month diet of restricted broadcasts because of stringent pre-election rules, it was a pleasure to air opinion, conjecture and debate.

Even though election night is essentially a television night, the later the hour, the more listeners tune in to the radio, both in their cars and at home. Israel Radio coverage was beamed throughout the world, and from all reports elicited great interest. A translated update in four languages — English, French, Russian and Amharic — was broadcast every two hours for

the benefit of new immigrant Israelis. Listeners were invited to participate in an election night "lottery" by guessing the closest results, and were also asked to call in and air their reactions to the election results as the night progressed. The "morning after," however, was the real province of the radio, with a focus on the composition of the new coalition.

Although the ban on media exposure of politicians and others during the election period had been reduced from 150 days to 60 days, the problem posed by restricting a modern news medium in a democratic state was not eliminated. Objectivity and balance in news presentation during this period could be maintained without such a draconian measure. In fact, the exposure of the public during this period solely to explicit election propaganda devised by the parties is a distortion of the democratic process rather than a contribution to it. Ultimately, any time there is a confluence between an interesting event and a curious, fair-minded journalist or broadcaster, the public benefits.

ARMY RADIO: ELECTIONS FROM THE FIELD / Uri Paz

Election night in Israel belongs entirely to the medium of TV. With the exception of soldiers in the field, drivers, hospital personnel and the like, who have no alternative but to tune in to the radio, everyone watches the results on TV. Only after the election sample has been telecast and the reactions screened, does radio begin to play a role.

However, if television's advantage lies in the election sample, radio's advantage is its mobility — its capacity to get anywhere quickly using portable equipment. This dynamism allowed the listener to participate in the exciting moments of election night from many perspectives, and to hear the immediate, telling reactions of the protagonists.

The electoral upset of 1992 was not just a governmental upset — it was also a communications upset. The press, and especially the electronic media, played a central role in the contest between the two

major parties. At the same time, in the course of becoming familiar with the symbiotic political-media relationship, the media people had matured, become more cautious, learned to exercise greater restraint.

The electronic media in Israel, which are public/state bodies — unlike the print media — are subject to severe restrictions in covering the election campaign. The most draconian and anachronistic of these restrictions is the one that bans the exposure of persons or subjects that could influence the election and thus be defined "election propaganda." Curiously, the law itself does not explicitly cite radio as subject to this restriction, although the radio in fact has accepted the burden of the law. The law does ban broadcasting the voices of the candidates for 30 days before election day, leading to the absurd situation where news quotes are read out by the reporter in the candidate's name.

How do TV and radio function under the restrictions

of this law? The essential problem is in defining the term "news value," as opposed to "election propaganda," and the only solution, as instructed by the commander of Army Radio, is to apply common sense in each case.

The time has come for an individual or body to initiate the legislative process to annul this law, which has only the most tangential relationship to freedom of speech and expression in a democratic state.

"MA'ARIV": THE TRIAL POLLS PREDICTED THE ELECTORAL UPSET / Ya'akov Erez

In May 1992, a month and a half before the elections in Israel, the daily *Ma'ariv* launched a project to monitor the voter preference of various groups by setting up four trial polls at central locations. The first group to be polled was soldiers, with the polls positioned next to the sports stadium in Tel Aviv where large numbers of soldiers — mostly combat soldiers — get lifts to their bases. Most of the soldiers were glad to cooperate, and the results of 946 votes were astonishing: Labor received 31%, Meretz (a left-of-center composite party) 21%, and Likud 17.5%. The two left-wing parties combined received a majority of 62 of the 120 mandates.

The scent of an electoral upset was in the air. Meanwhile, the composition of the post-election issue of the paper was planned. A major problem was the restrictive 1:00 a.m. print deadline, which left little time for nationwide coverage in view of the 10:00 p.m. closing of the polls.

The second group to be polled was new immigrants, and the four polls were set up outside the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption in Tel Aviv, in Hebrew-language teaching centers and at a "Fun Day" event in Rehovot. The 581 new immigrants from Russia who participated in the trial poll, like the soldiers, also indicated a decisive victory for labor, which won 56 mandates, while Meretz won 14 mandates, the Likud 18, the immigrant's Da Party 9, and the small rightist parties a total of 11. A survey published by *Ma'ariv* at the end of May by statisticians Hanokh and Rafi Smith also showed a large advantage for Labor — 36% — with Likud 27%, Meretz 10% and the National Religious Party 4%.

Ma'ariv then decided that should the TV election sample at 10:00 p.m. on election night indicate an electoral upset as well, the paper would close early and feature the announcement of the upset, without waiting for final results.

The third poll was set up at the gate of the Ramat Gan football stadium just before the national cup final in June, with the participation of 1,100 fans. The results were: Labor over 34%, Likud 33.4%, Meretz 7%, Moledet (right-wing) 7%, and Tsomet (right-wing) 6%. The same week, Hanokh and Rafi Smith estimated Labor at 35%, Likud 27% and Meretz 9%.

The final *Ma'ariv* poll was held in three neighborhoods in the Tel Aviv area: Pardess Katz, the Hatikva Quarter and Neveh Sharett, and the 908 participants voted 45.3% Likud, 23.2% Labor, 5.7% Shas (a religious party), 4.7% Tsomet, and 4.4% Pikanti (a one-man party). Although this would appear to indicate a Likud victory, Labor staffers were pleased because it showed a growing Labor vote in traditional Likud strongholds.

Tension ran high at the paper on election night and the whole staff was glued to the TV. As soon as Hayim Yavin announced the "electoral upset of '92," revealing the first evidence of the Likud's defeat, Tchiya's disappearance, Labor's victory and Tsomet's meteoric rise, the staff got to work putting the paper together. While the first inclination was to use the page-one headline: "Electoral Upset '92," Editor Dan Margalit ended up opting for: "Rabin," to emphasize the personal nature of the victory, with "Electoral Upset '92" as a diagonal banner.

THE MEDIA AND ELECTION PROPAGANDA

A symposium held at the University of Haifa in June 1992 on this subject included papers presented by three noted journalists: Dr. Yoram Peri, editor of *Davar*, Uri Avneri, editor for 40 years of *Ha-Olam Ha-Zeh*, and Shlomo Nakdimon, of *Yediot Aharonot*. Introducing the theme, the moderator of the symposium, Dr. Uzi

Elyada, focused on the newspaper as a formative element in current events, and posed two questions: What is the role of the press as a vehicle for election propaganda, and, conversely, how do political parties make use of the media for their own purposes?

ELECTION PROPAGANDA IN THE BRITISH AND THE ISRAELI PRESS / Yoram Peri

Labor leader Neil Kinnock, in acknowledging defeat in England's recent elections, attacked the media, claiming that the evening press in particular caused Labor's defeat. He may have had a point. For example, on election day, the *Sun* ran an illustration on the front page showing Kinnock in a light bulb, with the caption: If Kinnock wins today, will the last person to leave Britain please turn out the lights.

Undoubtedly, the influence of the media on election campaigns worldwide has grown in recent years, as compared to the influence of political parties. Young people today have no knowledge of political meetings at a local party branch or at the workplace; the mass media have replaced these means of reaching voters. This change reflects the general loss of influence of parties in Israeli political life as well and the rise in the importance of the mass media in setting national priorities. Moreover, with the weakening of the ideological component of Israeli political life, as compared to the past, the professional aspects of media exposure have grown in importance.

The press, therefore, emphasizes the professional communications aspect in its coverage of election campaigns. More space is devoted to the information campaigns than to the organizational aspect of the parties, although the latter is probably more critical in terms of getting out the vote.

This trend is rather odd, because in doing so Israel is imitating the American model, although the country

is actually much closer to the European political model. Israel, as most of Western Europe, has a multi-party system, not a bi-party system, which dictates different rules for communications. For example, the American-style debate between the two candidates gives the American candidate much-needed exposure in the event that he is unknown, as was the case with Jimmy Carter in the 1976 campaign. The candidates in the Israeli political system, however, are old, experienced political leaders whom the public knows well, so that debates are redundant.

Aspects of the English model, on the other hand, are relevant to Israel. The print media there devotes itself to a thorough presentation of the issues and the party platforms. In Israel, by comparison, coverage of the platforms is skimpy, although there is a plethora of gossip. However, the explicit positions taken by the British papers for or against a party is a negative aspect of their election coverage in that it resembles political propaganda, often of the crudest type.

The British electronic media fills an important educational/political role during campaigns, providing a great number of discussions and phone-in opportunities and giving journalists great freedom of range. This should serve as an example for the electronic media in Israel, which, because of an outdated law barring coverage of political figures before elections, has been turned into an anti-democratic and anti-educational element during these periods.

POLITICIANS DRAGGED ALONG BY THE PRESS / Uri Avneri

The law in Israel preventing electronic media exposure of politicians during election campaigns, which was passed when the writer had been a member of Knesset, is justified in his view. Just as the American model ought not be adopted in Israel, neither is the British model applicable. Government in Israel has unlimited opportunities to create news events, while the opposition does not, and the small parties certainly do not, because, unlike England, Israeli TV is government-sponsored, with no professional supervision. During an election campaign, with the party in power fighting for its life, this law, while ridiculous in many aspects, is the least of all evils.

The press actually has only minimal influence on the election campaign, even if the writer himself was elected to the Knesset in 1965 entirely on the basis of his newspaper's backing. That circumstance, however, was the exception that proves the rule, because his newspaper, *Ha-Olam Ha-Zeh* ("This World"), had built up intense loyalty on the part of its readership over a period of 15 years and had formulated a very specific

conceptual approach.

Generally, however, newspapers have less influence than they think they have. For example, the writer cites William Safire's outstanding pieces on the English language, but his non-influence as a right-wing political analyst and his proclivity to preach to the converted.

However, newspapers do have influence through their presentation of the news, for the public reads the news section uncritically and believes it to be objective. This gives newspapers a great deal of power, as they mold the reader's unconscious perceptions.

The press can also set national priorities, thereby dragging the politicians along. Most of the time, members of Knesset formulate their statements and speeches on the basis of what they read in the papers in the morning. In essence, they are reacting to what the papers say. To a large extent, then, the press dictates the political battlefield. On the negative side, though, the Israeli press deals too often with political gossip and with media effectiveness rather than with the issues themselves.

WHAT THE MEDIA CONSUMER DOESN'T KNOW / Shlomo Nakdimon

While political reportage in the print media has undergone a major transformation during the past 15 years, largely as a result of competition from the electronic media, this transformation has not necessarily benefited the reader.

The law in Israel preventing TV and radio from covering election-related news during the campaign gives the print media a certain advantage during this period. Nevertheless, the parties continue to invest heavily in the electioneering telecasts that are permitted by the law, even though viewer interest by the public has been low. Moreover, the influence of TV on the press has grown so palpably, that political coverage in the newspapers increasingly resembles the TV approach. It is more photographic, less textual and it features colorful descriptions at the expense of detailed information.

Paradoxically, therefore, while the press has progressed in many areas, it has forfeited on its task of providing the reader with in-depth information in the political realm.

The journalist's job is to expose what the politician is interested in concealing. Lately, however, the politicians

have worked out a mutually beneficial arrangement with the reporters, particularly in the area of the election telecasts. Whereas in the past, reporters tried in every which way to discover details of the election strategy in advance, during the recent elections the parties opened up their TV campaign studios to the press, and the newspapers were happy to fill their columns with reports on the politicians' reactions to each other's telecasts. This in itself constituted a form of well-orchestrated subliminal electioneering.

What was absent in the press was reports on debate within the election staffs, the authentic views of the politicians and the professionals, reports on the parties' true financial sources, and an analysis of why the major parties avoided ideological debate.

The recent elections were a kind of rehearsal for the enactment of a law providing for direct personal elections, slated for the next Knesset. Even without the law, the elections focused on the two main candidates, Shamir and Rabin, with each party trying to magnify the opposing candidate's weaknesses. The Likud in particular mounted a harsh personal attack on Rabin.

"FROM OUR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT IN FRANCE"

Eliezer Ben-Yehuda's First Political Articles in "Havazelet" /Joseph Lang

Few Hebrew journalists have attracted as much attention as Eliezer Ben-Yehuda both in his lifetime and thereafter. His critical and forward-looking works consistently elicited intense reaction. Most students of his prolific output (1879-1922) have focused on his highly innovative work in the area of the Hebrew national renaissance. However, there is a less well-known body of some 30 articles published in the Hebrew press before Ben-Yehuda settled in Eretz Yisrael, including a series of eight political articles — the "Letters from France" — dispatched by him from Paris to the Jerusalem *Havazelet* during 1879. This material attracted little attention, either contemporaneously or on the part of researchers, possibly because depictions of political and social life in France then was of little relevance to the Jerusalem community, while the writer's approach, which was Francophile, was uncharacteristic of the essential focus of his life's work. Moreover, since Ben-Yehuda's life style and outlook were daringly unconventional in the conservative Jerusalem milieu, he had many opponents who had no interest in preserving his work.

Ben-Yehuda is remembered as the reviver of the Hebrew language and compiler of the first modern Hebrew dictionary, while most of his communal activity, as well as his journalistic output, have been forgotten.

The series of eight political articles can be viewed on two levels: the obvious one — international events juxtaposed with current domestic social and political conflicts in France, and the implied one — the shaping of Ben-Yehuda's thought as expressed later on in his life. The subject matter of the articles reflects his nationalist aspirations and his concern with his people's destiny both in Eretz Yisrael and in the diaspora.

Ben-Yehuda's journalistic career started in Paris, where he arrived in 1878 as Eliezer Elianov. Having attained a secondary education in Russia, he wanted to study medicine in France, since his chances of being accepted in medical school in Russia were nil. In Paris he struck up a friendship with the correspondent of the Russian paper *Ruski Mir* ("The Russian World") —

Cheshnikov — who employed him as a translator and became his guide and patron. Through Cheshnikov, Elianov became acquainted with journalists, society figures and politicians, enabling him to gain access to government deliberations and an understanding of the tumultuous events of the times.

He also befriended the Jewish *Maskilim* in Paris, most of them emigrants from Russia like himself, and became interested in Hebrew journalism and literature. He began sending articles in Hebrew to the editors of the Hebrew press on two themes: language, with a Jewish national focus, and European and French social and political topics. These articles, signed "Ben-Yehuda," were published in Peretz Smolenskin's *Hashahar* (Vienna), in *Hamagid* (Lyck) and in *Havazelet* (Jerusalem) during 1879-81, after which he settled in Eretz Yisrael.

It was *Havazelet* that published his eight political articles, which ran monthly and semimonthly. In them Ben-Yehuda skillfully analyzed the geopolitical situation in Europe and the domestic situation in France, describing the ongoing war waged by the monarchists and the clericalists against the Republican government and its liberalism, and their destructive accusations of anarchy and loss of morality. He attacked the clericalists, especially the Jesuits, for bringing about grave social distortions, and the rural population for supporting the Church blindly, while he lauded the Republican government, especially in its efforts to bring about a separation between church and state. Sensitive to the ills of French society, he included numerous descriptions of the suffering of the poor of Paris that revealed literary talent and effective journalistic technique.

He attacked the educational system of the Jesuit schools, portraying the Jesuits as rejecting progress and enlightenment, a theme which was to occupy him in the context of education in Eretz Yisrael later on. In analyzing political issues in France and other European countries, he sometimes drew explicit parallels to events in the history of the Jewish people.

Ben-Yehuda's political articles offer impressive evidence of the young Russian Jewish immigrant's rapid assimilation of French and European history and his keen political analytic ability. Simultaneously, he devoted himself to the study of Jewish history, and the articles also reflect the development of his Jewish national awareness. Convinced of the viability of national frameworks, he rejected the socialist and communist ideologies a priori. He viewed the Jewish people not only as a religious group but as a nation, which, however, lacked several basic attributes.

Consequently, he set about devising national symbols and concrete — not only spiritual — frameworks.

Linguistically, the articles reflect the paucity of everyday Hebrew terminology, especially in the area of political and social issues. Trying hard to avoid using foreign words, Ben-Yehuda originated new Hebrew terms — some of them far-fetched — and also made use of biblical terminology and phrasology, which resulted in a style that was often ponderous and convoluted.

THE SENSATIONALIST PRESS IN ERETZ YISRAEL, 1908-1917 / Uzi Elyada

The first part of this article appeared in Qesher no. 11.

Ithamar Ben-Avi's *Ha-Zvi* ("The Deer") gradually introduced a sensationalist approach to political and military news, in addition to "esoteric" reportage. In April 1909 a giant headline announced the overthrow of the Ottoman sultan, Abdul Hamid, followed by daily full-width headlines on developments in Turkey, along with photos and detailed reports that took up three of the paper's four pages, written in Ben-Avi's typical dramatic style.

Ben-Avi also instituted another facet of the sensationalist genre in 1909 — the personal crusade — which he patterned after Pulitzer's and Hearst's sensationalist techniques in the US during the latter 19th century in order to increase readership. Ben-Avi chose as his victim Albert Antebi, the director of the Alliance schools in Palestine, a well-known personality with financial and political power and close ties to the Ottoman regime. Although his choice of victim was apparently made by chance, on the basis of a news item he had read about a teacher being humiliated and fired by Antebi, Ben-Avi carried on the crusade doggedly for over a month in a series of 15 articles, all of which appeared on page one. The paper, portraying itself as a champion of the "little man" battling against the *yishuv's* tyrants, labeled Antebi "Little Herod" and created a satanic as well as a ridiculous image of him which bordered on bad taste. Ben-Ami had little factual ammunition against Antebi, and years

later acknowledged that his character assassination was simply a "journalistic bombshell."

By its eighth month as a daily, *Ha-Zvi*, which had begun with a run of 300, had a circulation of 1,200 — an unprecedented accomplishment for the period. Advertising had increased, and another first in Hebrew journalism had been introduced in 1908 — a classified column. This column ran material of an intimate romantic nature — an idea copied by Ben-Avi from the Italian press — eliciting intense criticism by his opponents. He justified the column not only because it was financially profitable, but because it was amusing, which was one of his stated goals, and which accounted too for the serialized romantic novels that he ran.

A period of journalistic awakening began at this time, with various new papers devoted to the Second Aliyah pioneers, new activity in the ultra-Orthodox press, and new Arabic papers in Haifa and Jaffa. All these, however, belonged to the "serious" category of journalism. Of more immediate concern to Ben-Avi were new papers started up by several young Sephardim in Jerusalem. Shlomo Israel Shirizli, Ben-Yehuda's former publisher, founded *El Paradiso* (Ladino), *Der Pardess* (Yiddish) and *Pardess* (Hebrew) in 1909, eliciting scorn and ridicule from *Ha-Zvi*, and in the event these publications faded away quickly. Another Jerusalem publisher, however — Moshe Azriel — was more successful. Although his *El Liberal* (Ladino), a biweekly begun in 1909 and edited by Hayim Benatar and Avraham Elmaleh, lasted only about a year, a

new Hebrew paper published by him the same year, *Ha-Herut* ("Freedom"), lasted for eight years. It started as a weekly, became a semi-weekly and in 1912 became a daily. Elmaleh, a young journalist who had worked on one of Ben-Yehuda's papers, was its first editor, followed by Benatar. Apparently, at first *Ha-Herut* was backed by Albert Antebi in retaliation for the attacks against him in *Ha-Zvi*, but the paper succeeded in its own right by adapting a sensationalist style with all the components of the sensationalist press, especially under Benatar's editorship.

Ha-Herut claimed to have the highest circulation in the country, and competed fiercely with *Ha-Zvi*, a rivalry that also became a personal one between Ben-Avi and Benatar. From 1909, *Ha-Zvi* struggled financially and searched for backing, eventually going into partnership with Ben-Yehuda's erstwhile colleague/competitor Shirizli. But the newspaper, renamed *Ha-Or* ("The Light"), appeared irregularly and lost readership to *Ha-Herut*. At the same time it became more insistently sensationalist, ran ever-larger headlines, and relied less and less on factual reports.

The competition between the two papers reached a peak with the outbreak of World War I. Both papers were under-financed and neither could afford foreign news agency services. Each editor resorted to personal connections abroad to obtain news, vying desperately with each other — a competition that benefited the local readership.

Ultimately, the sensationalist papers contributed to the secularization and Westernization of the Eretz Yisrael readership. However, they were consistently attacked

both by the Orthodox newspapers and by the Second Aliyah papers, especially by Joseph Hayim Brenner in his column in *Ha-Po'el Ha-Za'ir* ("The Young Worker"). Brenner labeled all of Ben-Yehuda's papers yellow journalism, vulgar, ridiculous, the basest of the street press. He attacked them for demoralizing young readers, for spawning imitations, such as *Ha-Herut*, and for failing to use journalism as a vehicle for education and reform. The leftists viewed this kind of journalism as nihilistic, lacking ideology and promoting ignorance. It was no coincidence, they believed, that these papers represented the interests of merchants, grove-owners and middlemen.

World War I reduced *Ha-Or's* and *Ha-Herut's* publishing capability, and in 1915 Ben-Yehuda and his son closed *Ha-Or* and left the country. *Ha-Herut* lasted until 1917, when Benatar was drafted into the Turkish army. But immediately after the war ended, in 1919, Ben-Yehuda and Ben-Avi, who had returned to Jerusalem, started a new sensationalist paper modeled on the popular British *Daily Mail*, giving it the same name in Hebrew — *Do'ar Ha-Yom*. This successful newspaper, edited by Ben-Avi until the early 1930s, was the prime exemplar of sensationalist journalism in Eretz Yisrael then, as well as the object of consistent attacks orchestrated by such prominent journalists as Moshe Glickson of *Ha-Aretz* and Berl Katznelson of *Davar*. While "serious" journalism appeared to have won out after *Do'ar Ha-Yom* closed in the mid-1930s, in the long run the sensationalist press proved enduring, and exerted considerable influence on the "serious" press as well.

B. BOROCHOV: THE JEWISH PRESS IN AMERICA / Mussia Lipman

Ber Borochov (1881-1917), the labor Zionist leader, was a multi-faceted ideologist with the unusual ability of combining political activity in a wide variety of areas with a tremendous creative drive. He was at once an exceptional thinker, orator, researcher, writer, critic and publicist.

Born in the Ukraine and educated in a Russian secondary school, he began to speak and write Yiddish only at age 26, but soon became editor of various

Yiddish socialist periodicals and wrote extensively for this press both in Europe and in the US. He arrived in New York in 1914, became active as a leader of the Po'alei Zion movement there and also became a regular columnist for the Yiddish socialist daily *Die Wahrheit* ("The Truth"), which had been founded in 1905 by Louis Miller and was later to merge with *Die Tog* (see *Qesher* no. 8). He wrote two columns — "In the Company of Books" and "In the Land of Criticism" —

which included pieces on politics, daily events, culture, book reviews, theater reviews and journalistic surveys.

In a revealing article on journalism in 1916 Borochof portrayed the daily press as dominating the public's spiritual life, harnessing mankind to the "sensationalist carriage." Moreover, the press dictated the fate of books through its reviews and through the necessity for publishers to advertise in newspapers, so that books increasingly assumed the sensationalist style of the press. On the other hand, he pointed out, newspapers were influenced by books as well, and where once they had been conveyors of news only, they developed into a political vehicle and later, increasingly, into a showcase for literature and art. Borochof hoped that the gap between the two would continue to narrow and that newspapers would continue to grow and become enriched, for example, along the lines of the *Sunday Times*.

According to Borochof, the primary purpose of a daily was to provide information. Ideally, he wrote, a daily ought to appear continuously, like a film, with multiple "extra" editions — even 10 daily — in order to keep the public up to date. Periodicals, on the other hand, serve ideological purposes in the fields of politics, literature and art. In a series of articles on the Yiddish press in the US, published in *Der Iddisher Kemfer* ("The Jewish Fighter") in early 1917, Borochof criticized both the Jewish press and Jewish life in America generally for its low cultural level. He characterized the primary problem in the press not as yellow journalism or sensationalism — the European and American press were worse, he said — but rather as the lack of ability of the journalists, as well as the attitude of the owners, for whom "trade in herring, ideas or prostitution was one and the same."

Contrasting the Yiddish daily press with other newspapers, Borochof credited the Yiddish papers with a higher level, since the "Yankees" reserved the more sophisticated material for magazines, with the dailies generally entirely sensationalist, while the Yiddish press combined both "heavy artillery" and material "perfumed by the fish market" in dailies.

Still, Borochof complained, the Yiddish press of 1916 lacked initiative in serving public opinion properly. The situation the previous year — 1915 — had been better, he thought, with a kind of division of coverage: The *Warheit* had focused on Jewish political matters, the *Tog*

("Day") on esthetic and literary matters, the *Forward* on "proletarian" matters "spurred on by pornography," the *Tagblat* ("Daily") on piety and kashrut, and the *Morgen Journal* on objective information. By 1916, though, the differences between the papers had become blurred and the reader, therefore, confused. Moreover, a Yiddish press trust had been formed in New York, leading to a uniform rise in the price of the papers, with the public viewed as the enemy, Borochof said, warning against this capitalistic trend.

Reviewing the Yiddish weeklies, Borochof criticized the old-established *Fryeh Arbeiter Shtimme* ("Voice of the Free Worker") for waging ongoing wars in the name of an undefined goal, possibly anarchist or revolutionary or Jewish or literary, but certainly boring. *Nyeh Welt* ("New World"), on the other hand, was a young, vital weekly which was bitingly anti-Zionist and anti every other ideology as well, full of temperament but without character. Borochof found *Das Ratsionale Leben* ("Rational Living"), a periodical devoted to health matters, important and interesting because it examined these questions from a critical social and economic point of view. Were it not so vulgar, the humorous *Groisser Kundas* ("The Big Joker") could have been rated with the best American and European humor newspapers, Borochof thought, for its humor was vital and its content rich.

Several periodicals were promising because of positive Jewish democratic ideals presented freshly and optimistically: *Hatoren* ("The Mast," Hebrew) — non-party, intelligent; the *American Jewish Chronicle* (English) — solid, but too pro-German; and the *Iddisher Kemfer* — proletarian-socialist. A brand new periodical, *Die Iddishe Arbeiter Shtimme* ("Voice of the Jewish Worker"), published by the Jewish National Workers Society — an insurance organization — promised to "insure" not only Jews as individuals but the Jewish people as a whole, Borochof believed.

He was particularly fond of the weekly *Iddisher Kemfer*, published by Po'alei Zion, which he was involved with as writer and editor during 1916-17, although inter-party conflict ended his tenure there.

Borochof left the US with his family in 1917, bound for Russia, where he had been invited to work for Po'alei Zion. After a brief, intensive period of activity there, he fell ill and died at the age of 36.

"HA-ISHA" — AN EXCLUSIVE WOMEN'S MAGAZINE / Hava Diner

Ha-Isha ("The Woman") was an unusual monthly magazine published in Dutch by the Jewish Women's Committees of the Netherlands (later unified into one body) from January 1929 to the end of 1940 seven months after the Nazi conquest of Holland. Dedicated to "women's solidarity," as stated in its motto, it was geared to the educated, or partially educated, middle-class Jewish woman who was either a housewife or who worked in a profession, was involved in voluntary community work, had cultural interests, and above all was aware of contemporary Jewish problems — assimilation, anti-Semitism, Zionism and Eretz Yisrael.

Although the magazine espoused "positive neutralism" regarding ideological, religious and political issues, it was clearly Zionist in orientation, describing Zionism as a "manifestation of the Jewish renaissance." The first issue promised articles on educational questions, communal issues, Jewish developments throughout the world, beginners' Hebrew lessons, the Jewish woman and her home, religious and secular legislation on the status of women, literature and literary criticism. Significantly, the magazine actually exceeded what it promised in terms of its richness and variety of

content, while maintaining a balance between liberal and traditional opinion.

Zionism and Eretz Yisrael occupied an important place, and were dealt with from varied political perspectives. Detailed reports were sent by correspondents in Palestine on a wide variety of subjects.

Traditional women's subjects, such as recipes, were virtually absent, and with the passage of time the magazine became increasingly serious, focusing on contemporary Jewish sociological issues. Although the content was Jewish-centered, there was a sense of openness to Dutch and European culture generally, and the Jewish Women's Committee maintained ties with the Dutch national women's council.

Indications of the crisis facing European Jewry with the rise of the Nazis to power appeared in the magazine only occasionally. An appeal to help refugees from Germany was published in 1933, and an appeal to aid Polish Jewry appeared in 1938. Even as late as the start of 1940, there was no sense of the impending storm.

Ha-Isha closed in December 1940, with no farewell to its readers. On the contrary, the last issue ran the first part of an article that was to be continued.

"AMUD HA-YIR'AH": "LEV HA-IVRI'S" NEWSPAPERS / Dov Genhovsky

Rabbi Akiva Joseph Schlezinger, a Zionist before Zionism existed and an early visionary of the Jewish state, was an ultra-Orthodox maverick. Born in Pressburg (Bratislava), in 1837, he became a rabbi and was a leading figure in the fight against Reform Judaism, publishing a treatise on the subject in 1865 entitled *Lev Ha-Ivri* (an acronym of his name, and also: "The Heart of the Hebrew"). However, his failure to halt Reform led to disillusionment with life in the diaspora and preparations to settle in Eretz Yisrael, a move he made in 1870. Showing an unusual interest

in agriculture in his childhood, he would later describe himself as a farmer after moving to Eretz Yisrael.

In Jerusalem he began publishing daring works on plans he devised for settling and developing the country, which angered the local ultra-Orthodox establishment who viewed him as a danger to the *Haluka* system (livelihood based on the distribution of charity from abroad). When Schlezinger ruled that a man could take a second wife if his first wife refused to follow him to Eretz Yisrael, his opponents, particularly the Ungarn group, burned his book *Beit Yosef Hadash* ("The New

House of Joseph") and excommunicated him. Relatives in Hungary, concerned for his safety, implored him to return, but he replied: "It is better to die in Jerusalem than reign in Egypt."

Schlezinger was part of the group of Jerusalemites who founded Petah Tikva in the 1870s and acquired land there, but he was cheated out of it by the Ungarn group and continued to be harrassed by them relentlessly. He met with Herzl when the Zionist leader visited Jerusalem, viewed the Balfour Declaration as the start of the redemption, and pronounced the traditional blessing for the *nassi* when the Mandatory High Commissioner Herbert Samuel arrived. He was perhaps the only member of the ultra-Orthodox community in Jerusalem who was aware of international developments of the day, and decried every lost opportunity to achieve Jewish self-rule in Eretz Yisrael.

Among his other talents, Schlezinger was a journalist, labeling his collective efforts in this area *Amud Ha-Yir'ah* ("Column of Reverance"), a collection of commentaries on Biblical texts and information about

Eretz Yisrael. Explaining Jacob's blessing to Zevulun and Issachar, in which the former was to engage in trade and agriculture in order to support the latter in his study of the Torah, Schlezinger aimed at encouraging support for the "Torah of Eretz Yisrael." On a visit to Elijah's Cave on Mt. Carmel, he wrote, he heard the story of a miracle involving a young girl possessed by evil spirits who was brought to the cave, was visited by an apparition of an old and a young man -- possibly Elijah and Elisha -- who told her to immerse herself in the Sea of Kinneret, which she did, and was cured. In another piece, Schlezinger advised Jews abroad to purchase land and build homes in Eretz Yisrael, and if they lacked means, to start a savings fund for this purpose.

Significantly, each of his journalistic segments was printed at a different printshop, testimony to the continuous harrassment he endured. His loyal family

his son, sons-in-law, a grandson and even a great-grandson today preserved and published his prolific output of books. The ongoing demand for them reflects the contemporary relevance of his views.

"MAHANAYIM" — THE STORY OF A RELIGIOUS MILITARY PERIODICAL / Akiva Zimmerman

Mahanayim, a series of 300 booklets and magazines published by the Chief Army Chaplaincy, was launched in the early days of the Israel Defense Forces in 1949 as a bridge between the religious and secular populations, aimed at anyone interested in learning about Jewish customs. The first 18 issues, titled *An Army Chaplaincy Anthology*, covered the Jewish holidays, and thereafter the periodical was called *Mahanayim*. It was edited by Rabbi Menahem Hacohen, the third generation of a rabbinical family that was involved in journalism, and his brothers Rabbis Pinhas Hacohen Peli and Shmuel Hacohen Avidor also played important editorial roles in the series.

The first issue, an 80-page booklet, was introduced by an article by Chief Army Chaplain Rabbi Shlomo Goronchik (Goren), as were the issues to follow. It contained prayers, laws, commentaries and customs relating to Hanukkah, along with surveys and maps tracing the Hasmoncan wars. Articles also appeared

by Rabbi Kook, by the two chief rabbis Herzog and Uziel -- by the first minister for religious affairs, Yehuda Leib Hacohen Fishman (Maimon), by Rabbi Meir Berlin (Bar-Ilan) and others. Poems by Bialik, Yitzhak Katznelson and others, as well as stories about Hanukkah, were also included, as were notes from Jordanian captivity by Rabbi She'ar Yashuv Cohen, today chief rabbi of Haifa. The booklet was illustrated, and also contained music notes for Hanukkah songs.

The second issue was devoted to Purim and included the entire Book of Esther. From issue no. 5, which was devoted to Tish'a Be-Av, the series was printed by the Army Printer.

In 1953 the periodical became a weekly, titled *Mahanayim*, with anthologies on the holidays published separately. Subtitled "A synagogue newsletter for the soldier," and eventually "A religious weekly for the soldier," the magazine contained commentaries on the portion of the week and an article by

the editor. The members of the *Mahanayim* staff showed considerable talent, and later became recognized writers, newspapermen, businessmen and public figures. A regular column covered historical events in the contemporary *Chronicles* style, as did a column depicting the events in the portion of the week. The chief army chaplain had a column replying to soldiers' questions on religious practice. The magazine also contained Hassidic stories, biographies and Jewish news around the world.

Opinion surveys on basic religious questions were introduced, eliciting responses from authorities as well as from ordinary soldiers. These questions included the necessity of covering the head, the permissibility of mixed dancing, and the advisability of translating prayers from Aramaic to Hebrew.

The Sinai Campaign was reflected in discussions on the sanctity of the Sinai and descriptions of the battles. A more generalized theme -- "How to Advance the Return to Judaism" -- was the subject of a major symposium, with the participation of Chief Rabbis Herzog and Nissim, other prominent rabbis, and religious and secular writers.

Eventually, *Mahanayim* was distributed among the civilian population as well. It became a monthly in

1960, containing 100-200 pages and covering a wide range of Judaica that involved scholars, writers and artists in all disciplines, both religious and secular. Some of the issues were devoted to a single theme, such as Hasidism, agriculture in Israel, written and oral law, nature in Judaism and the status of women in Israel.

Publication ceased before the Six-Day War of 1967 and was renewed a half-year thereafter, devoted to the liberated areas and the holy places in them. An encyclopedic issue on the European Jewish communities destroyed during the Holocaust appeared in 1969. The last issue of the magazine, in 1972, was devoted to a commemoration of David Ben-Gurion.

During the Yom Kippur War of 1973, approximately ten issues of a periodical entitled *Mahanayim for the Fighting Forces* appeared, and a single issue of *Mahanayim* appeared after the Litani operation in 1978.

In 1992, *Mahanayim*, edited once again by Rabbi Menahem Hacohen, was renewed as a quarterly, published by the Sapir Center for Culture and Education with the assistance of the Nitzan Fund for the Development of Values, Education and Learning.

SECRET AGENTS AS JOURNALISTS IN ERETZ ISRAEL, 1918-20 / Nakdimon Rogel

At the end of 1918, an "Intelligence Office" was established in Eretz Israel by the Zionist Commission at the instigation of Dr. David Eder and Ze'ev Jabotinsky. Staffed mostly by former Nili (a pro-British Jewish intelligence network) members, the "Office" was based in eight regions throughout the country, headed by Levi Yitzhak (Lyova) Shneerson. Its central office, in Jerusalem, channeled information, written up in Hebrew and in English, to Dr. Eder, who headed the Political Department of the Zionist Commission. A weekly survey of the situation in the country was also prepared for use by the Commission press office. One of the tasks of the Intelligence Office was to prepare a detailed listing of all Arab villages and landholdings. Information about arms found in the possession of Arabs, or about wanted persons, was, according to Office guidelines, to be handed over to the British

C.I.D. (the secret service of the police).

At approximately the same time, Ithamar Ben-Avi's Jerusalem-based newspaper, *Do'ar Ha-Yom*, appeared, sponsored by the "Hasolel" group, which included Alexander Aaronsohn and others who were connected with the Intelligence Office. The following year, in 1919, the Zionist Executive took up the question of a possible impression of patronage by the Commission vis-a-vis the newspaper, but decided that there was nothing amiss in the participation of individuals in both bodies, so long as the demands of the newspaper did not interfere with their work in the Commission.

Although the concern of the Executive had been the editorial tone of *Do'ar Ha-Yom's* lead articles, a comparison between news items published in the paper and Intelligence Office reports reveals that there had been a steady flow of confidential material from the

Office to the paper. For example, events in Damascus, then the center of the Arab nationalist movement and a focus of news coverage, were reported frequently in *Do'ar Ha-Yom*. One of the paper's key reporters in Damascus was Dr. Shlomo Felman, a member of the "Hasolel" group, who served as an agent of the Zionist Commission in Damascus during 1919-20, reporting regularly to Eder in Jerusalem and through him to Dr. Chaim Weizmann in London. Felman, who also opened a law office in Damascus, probably did not request or receive permission from the Zionist Commission to report for *Do'ar Ha-Yom*. Although he signed his articles with pseudonyms, his identity was no secret, for in June 1920 he was listed as managing editor of the paper. Felman left Syria with the French takeover in July 1920, a period when contact with Damascus had been cut off. Arriving in Jerusalem, he reported to Eder, who, impressed by his knowledge of the current situation in Syria, immediately brought him to High Commissioner Herbert Samuel, and Samuel relayed Felman's information to London. Simultaneously, Felman submitted an article on the situation to *Do'ar Ha-Yom*.

The newspaper also had a representative in Beirut — Shlomo (Jean-Jacques) Kalmi — another founder of the paper. Kalmi too worked for the Political Department of the Zionist Commission, posted there by Weizmann in 1920, though this did not prevent him from signing his articles in *Do'ar Ha-Yom* openly.

With the end of British control in Syria, there was no need for a Zionist agent there. Moreover, with the arrival of Britain's first high commissioner in Palestine, Herbert Samuel, and the establishment of civil government in Eretz Yisrael, the Zionist Commission attached less importance to the Intelligence Office. The new Zionist Commission chairman, Menahem Ussishkin, disliked the Office in any case, since most of its personnel were Nili people, whom he considered unreliable. Even Dr. Eder, a staunch supporter of the Office, had reservations about the staff, although Shneerson's work was considered very good.

Shneerson was instructed by Eder to close the Office in August 1920, though after the Arab riots of May 1921 the Commission had second thoughts about this decision and renewed Shneerson's activity on a limited basis for a time.

Continued from page 21e

ministries. He was a confidant and supporter of Moshe Dayan and of the Rafi Party in the 1960s.

Lea Ben Dor, a staff member from the mid-1930s, succeeded Lurie as editor in chief. Born in Germany, she learned English from her British mother, and became a central and influential editorial presence in the *Post*, writing thousands of lead articles over the years. She worked closely with Ari Rath, an immigrant from Vienna, who headed the news department, and brought the paper back into the mainstream

Labor Party sphere. She was succeeded by Rath, who worked side by side with Erwin Frenkel. Rath established the weekly international edition that Agron had envisioned. He and Frenkel moved the paper leftward, and in this had the support of most of the editors and writers.

When the paper was acquired by new owners who decided on a change in orientation, N. David Gross, a British-born veteran editor with the *Post*, who was also a moshav farmer, became editor in chief. He recently passed on the reins of leadership to David Bar-Ilan.