No. 12, November 1992
Tel Aviv University
Journalism Studies Program
Institute for Research on the Jewish Press

CONTENTS

A Tale of Two Newspapers / Shalom Rosenfeld — 2e
The Rise and Fall of “Dos Nych Leben” / Yoel Goldkorn — 4e
Reflections on the 60-Year History of “The Jerusalem Post” / Alexander Zvieli — 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 Vitshak” (”Which Yitzhak,” or “Who will Laugh”) / Shalom Kitul — 33e
Army Radio: Elections from the Field / Uri Paz — 33e

“Ma’ariv”: The Trial Polls Predicted the Electoral Upset / Yankov Erez — 34e

The Media and Election Propaganda —
• Election Propaganda in the British and the Hebrew Press / Yohanan Ben-Porat — 35e
• Politicians Dragged Along by the Press / Uri Avner — 36e
• What the Media Consumer Doesn’t Know / Shimon Narkis — 36e

“From Our Political Correspondent in France”: Eliyahu Ben-Yehuda’s First Political Articles in “Haavrelet” / Joseph Lang — 37e

The Sensationalist Press in Eretz Yisrael, 1908-1917 / Uri Elyada — 38e

Ber Borochov: The Jewish Press in America / Moshe Lipman — 39e

“Ha-Asha” — An Exclusive Women’s Magazine / Hava Diner — 40e

“Arnon Ha-Yirah”: “Lev Ha-Yirah” Newspapers / Dan Ganzky — 41e

“Mahatnamyn” — The Story of a Religious Military Periodical / Akiva Zimmerman — 42e

Secret Agents as Journalists in Eretz Yisrael, 1918-1920 / Narkis Narkis — 43e

English Cover: The Palestine Post (later, The Jerusalem Post) of April 10, 1945, the day Dos Nych Leben first appeared (see Hebrew cover). Artworks on both newspapers appear in this in this issue of Qeshet. 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 fine 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)641340, 549066; 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 events 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, Germany 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 vanguard fighting against the Germans, thousands of Jews who had been in prison, in camps, in cities of exile and in Soviet kolkhozes, as well as in the front lines and in partisan forces where they fought the Nazis, began returning to their old homeland.

The Polish (Jewish) "emancipators," who arrived in liberated Lodz - liberated from the Nazi occupiers as well as from the regime of the all-powerful "Jewish king" of the ghetto, Chaim Rumkowski, included several former journalists and publishers. And what is surprising in the minds of journalists and printers scarred and exhausted by the war, in a state of shock and despair as a result of the Jewish reports of the unbelievable extent of the destruction? A newspaper. Publishing 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 territory, among a population nursing its wounds, wandering between bombcraters and mass graves, between groves and fields in search of a sign of life, there is evidence of the death of bond-servants.

And why a newspaper? Because for Jews, a newspaper has always been the faithful link that connects the near to the far away. A Hebrew newspaper could always convey messages between the lines that could not or ought not to be stated explicitly. A newspaper could be the harbinger of new life for survivors, or the alarm signaling 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 Naye 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 *Dos Naye Leben* 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 Naye 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 Naye Leben* are unique not only because they received the "first draft of history," in the familiar description of the press goes, but also because they themselves made history, or at least were a part of it.

In forming the English-language paper in Jerusalem, Chaim Agnon (Agronom) 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 turmoil that enveloped the first Etzel Yisrael under the British Mandate and later the State of Israel put an end to this hope. Agronom, 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 Yiddish paper 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 moderate, advocates of compromise within the mainstream of the Zionist movement, and even though Gershon Agronom continued to maintain contact with the British administrative echelons 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.
A TALE OF TWO NEWSPAPERS

April 1945, spring of liberation in Europe. The leading blanket of the Paleostate Post - the only English-language Jewish daily in the world - on April 10, 1945, described a crescendo explosion of British and Allied forces into Germania to prepare for liberation 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 under the headline in sequence with the major news items of the day, is important in understanding the background of an massacre 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 emerge 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 Marshall fighting against the Germans, thousands of Jews who had been in prisons, in camps, in cities of exile and in Soviet kolchozes, 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) "separatists" 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 apparent in the minds of journalists and printers staved and exhausted by the war, in a state of shock and despair as a result of the Holocaust reports of the unbelievable extent of the destruction? A newspaper Establishing a newspaper with a few pieces of Jewish C type that, like the people themselves, surfaced 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 conquered territories, among a population numbering, or the demands of the Jewish community to maintain the Hebrew language and its cultural heritage, the situation of the press was critical. The press was in a state of shock, and the situation was critical to the survival of the Jewish community. The need for a newspaper was urgent, not only because they recorded the "first draft of history," as the familiar declaration of the great poeta, but also because they expressed the spirit of the time, or at least a part of it.

In founding the English-language newspaper in Jerusalem, Gershon Agnon (Agronsky) hoped that it would promote mutual understanding between the areas of the newborn state, the Jews, the English and the Arabs. But the political situation that emerged in post-Yishuv 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 causes of enmity between radical Zionist 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 moderate, advocates of compromise within the mainstream of the Zionist movement, and even though Gershon Agron continued to maintain contact with representatives of the British Mandate in order to blunt the severity of certain decrees or obtain a waiver in one matter or another, the newspaper became 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 Erste Visnul elected to hostile a response as the Post does, on February 1, 1946, a book-strap car expelled from the editorial building, causing considerable casualties and destroying part of the building that contained the editorial offices and the printing. The act was a British-Arab "cooperation" 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 printers who came to the rescue, and continued to form a threat to the 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 Pessach, a veteran staff member who, in lending through his paper, illuminates the central events of the Yishuv and the state, the small newspaper and the large - reflected in them. Gabriel Yefromis, a veteran Jerusalem journalist, rounds out the portrait with personal profiles of Post editors and writers whom he knew.

Deor Yishuv Lebaa 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. Under the independent paperarity 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, than 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 reeducation state in every sphere - political and defense policy, economic life, social and cultural life, literature, theater and the press. But let us not overlook the facts. Deor Yishuv Lebaa was founded in April 1945, before the war was actually over, when the USSR entered Western and, especially, for reeducation. Operating in the climate of expectation of a "new world order," the USSR was forced to enact at least the illusion of freedom in the occupied territories. The Jewish newspaper fili into this niche of illusions.

And why a newspaper? Because for Yitzhak Eshel, who himself was a longtime member of the Deor Yishuv Lebaa staff, to tell the story of the newspaper. He shaft 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 undermined Muslims 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 Deor Yishuv Lebaa, a sense of alienation could be discussed increasingly between the lines of propaganda articles: the freedom to write on subjects other than nostalgia disappeared; situation had to be exaggerated 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 born between loyalty to the new regime and loyalty to the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

The last issue of Deor Yishuv Lebaa, no. 547, appeared on October 30, 1950. A notice in the upper part of page one informed subscribers that hereafter they could receive the Polskie Slowo - the official Yiddish-language Governmental organ instead.

On the same day, October 30, 1950, the Jerusalem Post ran reports on page one that reflected "Jewishism at work," an immanent solution to a cabinet crisis between Mapai and the Orthodox Bloc; an appeal to American Jewry to contribute $150 million to meet "urgent needs of the country," a proposal to supply tourists at hotels with special meals that would be exempt from the austerity restrictions imposed by Minister of Supply and Rehousing David Joseph; and, lastly, 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.

Salmon Rubinoff
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 an 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 Memoriam," with an initial listing of 357 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 Yakhlah — the "Finn," 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 Communist. The paper, edited by Michael Mervsky (Communist), contained eight pages and cost five zlotys.

The second issue, which appeared on April 18, 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, noting 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
THE RISE
AND FALL OF
"DOS NYEH LEBEN"

YOSEF GOLDKORN

This is an abridged 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
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. Sitting through the remnants of a Yiddish
printing press in the ghetto, the survivors painstakingly
retrieved images from the snow and mud to compose a
single page of text, and after running the press, 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 Memoriam,"
with an initial listing of 357 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 Vakhsh, the "Fain," 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 Communist. The paper, edited by Michael
Minsky (Communist), contained eight pages and cost
five shillings.

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, marking 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.
attacks by Poles on Jewish survivors and returnees. Issue number 4 ran a large headline: "Polish Retribution: 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 event, 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 and the opening of the first movement "Pionier Home" among the former "kibbutzim" with some 150 members ages 15-25, and a conference of "Labor Israel" representatives from 13 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 relationship, 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 Jeho, 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, heading both to increased Jewish participation in the anti-communist struggle 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 particular Habima and Hapoel Ha'Aliya "The Fight"—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

The Pogrom in Kielce

The major headline of the June 21, 1946, issue was: "Only a Jewish State Can Save the Problem of Eretz Yisrael. — According to the Jewish Agony." One whole page was devoted to news of Eretz Yisrael. The same issue reported that repatriations from the Soviet Union had nearly ceased, with 115,000 Jews having arrived and some 20,000 still on 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 unidentified — 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 productionization of the Jews."

Essays on Eretz Yisrael also continued to be printed in detail during the summer and fall of 1946, especially the
The issue described death sentences for members of the underground Leh.

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-backed Democratic bloc. After the elections, the issue of February 6, 1947, ran an article by the general-secretary of the Jewish Central Committee, condemning German occupation, 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 immigration and the Zionist view, which gave immigration 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 Govt. Helps 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 Govt. Helps Yishuv in its Struggle." Side by side with detailed reports 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 10-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: "Jewish State in Eretz Yisrael Proclaimed Today," 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.
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 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 Jewish culture and the stabilization of Jewish life in Poland. Yet Jewish life was far from stable.

An angled mention of the executive of the Jewish Central Committee in March 1947, reported in the April 10 issue, reflected the deep divisions between the Cominform on emigration — that it must not come at the expense of the continuity of Jewish life in Poland — and the Zionist wing, 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 "Jodocus" 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 January 14, 1948, issue read: "Polish Jews! 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 Jews! Remember Your Brave Brothers in Eretz Yisrael!"

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 the anti-democratic imperialists."); 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 with 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 accelerated, with Israel emerging entangled as well. An editorial on November 10, 1948, expressed concern lest Israel succeed to serving imperialism. At the end of the year, another editorial urged that the

Sculpture of the new Israel Defense Forces in 1948. The paper showed great sympathy for Israel's struggle even if it fought for its Jewish population of Poland join the effort to "harness all the forces of the anti-imperialist camp."

An editorial on January 29, 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. A letter that month, a report on the opening session of Israel's parliament drew attention to the attendance of representatives from the Soviet Union and of the "people's democracies" at the event, and the absence of the US, France and England, "for 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 (labeled the) praised the 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 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 concerned 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 strains of Al Hamashbir - the Mapam newspaper, and the dismantling of the Paluchs.

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 minutes 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 "not 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 having 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: "Israel Reactionism Leads the State Toward Fusion." Another headline declared: "Police Slaughter Demonstrators in Tel Aviv on January 23," 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 Nye Labevo might be near. Indeed, the last issue of the paper appeared on October 30, 1950, informing subscribers that they would receive Folks Stimme ("The Voice of the People") — an undesignated Communist organ — instead.

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

Reports of a partial tension 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 consistency vis-a-vis integration into the Polish state, while several participants denounced the Zionists for interfering with the work of the Jewish committee and dehumanizing 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 houses and described demonstrations and protests against the Ben-Gurion government because of its attitude 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 enlisted 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 cited: “Israel’s Commercial Ties Negate the Interests of the Masses.”

A lead headline on February 3, 1950, “Military Base in Israel Built to Counter the Soviet Union,” referred to an idea to build a highway connecting Istanbul with Cairo, which would have passed through northern Israel for 10 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, depositions of the immigrants as being in a desperate state, and a report that the Ministry of Labor 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 Dies Nyeh Leben might be near. Indeed, the last issue of the paper appeared on October 30, 1950, informing subscribers that they would receive Foreign Slavinites (“The Voice of the People”) — an upgrade to Communist organ — instead.

Dies Nyeh Leben had appeared for 5 and a half years in 547 issues, but, although it had been forced to use the puny 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 (Agron), 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 by the last minute. The great Depression was still worldwide. On the previous day, the Post reported from Cairo, hundreds of American demonstrations had startled 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 pursue an exemplary newspaper, in English, in the Holy City.

At the start 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
For many long years, he had cherished the vision of bringing news, information and ideas to the over-grown English-speaking public in Erez 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 middle-class, English-speaking public, as well as at the local Araba, 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 Erez Yisrael and abroad, whose contributions had made this feat possible. Agnon’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.

Agnon 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 Agnon’s correspondence and personal memorabilia went up in smoke, so that the most important evidence of the Post’s, Agnon’s and the Yishuv’s struggle against the increasingly hostile British administration was lost. But from other sources we learn that the Post’s steady growth influenced and editorial commentary helped facilitate many of the Yishuv’s undertakings.

The paper successfully fought the Mandatory authorities’ 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. Agnon 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 MI5 had a special respect for Agnon’s local and international connections.

Agnon was eminently suited for his post, but he was also called upon to spend a good deal of his time and energy on services for the Yishuv, the Haganah, the Jewish Agency, the Zionist movement, theHistadrut and the press. 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 Agnonsky

Gershon Agnonsky’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 Podolocia. He studied at a yeshiva and was perhaps the first of the famous Jewish pioneers of 1903 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 Yiddishke Welt. Eventually he became managing editor of the daily Yiddishke Folksblat.

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

Agnon started his career in Erez Yisrael with the Press Bureau of the Zionist Commission and then became editor of The Palestine Bulletin. He was editor and correspondent for various foreign journals, and it was in this capacity that he developed a working relationship with Ted Lurie. They discovered Lurie to be a 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.)
For many long years, he had cherished the vision of bringing news, information and ideas to the ever-growing English-speaking public in Erez Yisrael and abroad. He hoped — and the future was to prove him right — that current and precise information would win the hearts and minds of even the most sophisticated readers. He aimed at the predominantly sympathetic 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 pious-spirited people, both in Erez Yisrael and abroad, whose subscriptions had made this feat possible. Agnon’s hopes were fully justified. Within the first year, the daily circulation reached almost 4,000 copies, 500 of which were sent by train to Cairo. On April 20, 1934, the Post issued its first major supplement, celebrating the opening of the Levant Fair in Tel Aviv.

Agnon 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 launched on February 1, 1934, all of Agnon’s correspondence and personal memoreanda were lost in smoke, so that the most important evidence of the Post’s Agnon’s and the Yishuv’s struggle against the increasingly hostile British administration was lost. But from other sources we learn that the Post’s steady 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. Agnon was on a first-name basis with many British officials, and almost all the Jewish Agency worked closely with him 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 splendidly. Both the High Commissioner’s Office and a sizable number of British MPs had a special respect for Agnon’s local and international connections.

Agnon was amenable 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 Hagana, the Jewish Agency, the Zionists, the Histadrut and the principalities of the Labor Party. On such occasions, Tedi Lurie, assistant editor, frequently took over. The two men differed greatly in character and appearance, but both served the paper well and increased its political importance.

The Young Agronksy

Gershon Agronksy’s story, like that of so many other early Zionists, began in Russia. He was born in December 1894 in the small town of Znesina in the province of Tobolsk. He studied at a yeshiva and might perhaps have become a rabbi had not the Tzarist 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 Yiddishhe Velt. Eventually he became managing editor of the daily Yiddishhe Folks.

During World War I, Agnon volunteered for the Jewish Legion. He fought in Palestine together with Ikhak 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.

Agnon 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 Tedi Lurie. He discovered Lurie to be an indomitable worker who also had some financial backing, and thus secured his services for The Palestine Post project. (Tedi Lurie, Ted’s father, became Post shareholder Number One.)

Agnon and Lurie cooperated well at the building 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 wisely 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: Agnon 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 1935, he fully supported the Labor movement. To those who openly or by devices meant sought to obstruct the policies of the Jewish Agency, the increasingly hostile Mandatory administration and to those anxious to respond to anti-Semitic 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, Agnon showed himself to be a master of public relations. He welcomed such diverse personalities as Herschel Seidell, the Zionist leader, and Norman McLean, the Church of Scotland moderator. On the staff, Rouwen Shlissel, the Yishuv activist, and Bishop Danby, translator of the Mishnah, had their contributions printed side by side. The Post became — and continues thus for more than five decades — a practical university of journalism for new arrivals, chiefly from English-speaking countries. (Later, Agnon referred to his paper in an “Anglo-Saxon, machzara, or immigrants’ camp.” Many of them were later to make their names in various parts of the Western world.)

A Historic 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 difficulties 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 directed 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 volunteers 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 Shalom 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 10th anniversary, Agnon 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 Leo 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 had 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 languishing in the displaced persons' camps in Europe and barred from joining their brothers and sisters in Etzel Yishuv.

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 countered 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 editors were crowded with foreign journalists and observers. No Jewish Agency communiqué 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.

Agnon 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, Agnon
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 printing their own English-language publications in Cairo and distributing them throughout the whole Middle East.

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

The Sfzuma and the related Paddo 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 Leo 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 40,950 copies. It welcomed the election in Britain of the Labour government, on which it had 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 painted were the articles about the tragic fate of the Holocaust survivors languishing 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 outwarded 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 correspondent or official Mandatory administration official could be compared with the newspaper's free 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 boarded 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.

Agnon 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, he decided to continue its publication. The Post 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 was printed with its largest-ever headline: "The State of Israel Is Born."

Other Post headlines 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 Ramat.

No sooner was the War of Independence over then Agnon 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!" Agnon 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...
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 30th anniversary at Jerusalem’s Azmon Cafe. On September 8, 1955, with the election of Oferon Agran as mayor of Jerusalem, Ted Luxe became the paper’s second editor. In 1953, the Post produced a Hebrew-language daily, Zionism.
In 1948 the Post established a Hamutka 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 issues.

On December 1, 1952, some 200 members of the Post family celebrated the paper's 20th anniversary at Jerusalem's Arnon Cafe. On September 8, 1953, with the election of Gershon Agnon as mayor of Jerusalem, Ted Lurie became the paper's second editor. In 1953, the Post produced a Hebrew-language daily, Zionism, on behalf of (the now defunct) Progressive Party, with Lurie serving as editor of both papers simultaneously. Zionism 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 Alcu In Israel today, has a circulation of 70,000, and is sold in some 80 countries. A French-language version was added in 1991.

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's 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 Goet 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 to its entirety.
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 Freidkel 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, Shalom Dafghi 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 retained. The press work force was reduced considerably. Further changes were introduced in June 1987, when the Avesta 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 Nuna Keren-Hasid. 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
Ted Leir, who died while at a conference in Tokyo in June 1974, was succeeded by Len Ben-Dor, who became the paper's third editor. On her retirement in August 1975, Ari Ratz and Erwin Frenkel became joint editors, with Ratz also serving as managing director.

On November 24, 1977, the Post's special "Welcome Sadat" issue beat all previous records, selling 33,000 copies. On January 15, 1980, The Jerusalem Post went on sale again in Cairo.

In 1981, Susan Bellows established the Roy Three Years 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 Leir'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 Ates electronic system went into operation. The press, typesetting and proofreading departments were shut down, with the number of typesetters and proofreaders drastically reduced. Henceforth, reporters were required to type their own stories into the computers.

January 1989 saw the launching of the Jerusalem Post Information Service, now headed by Nina Krein-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 news clippings provide, the Post's computerized system is remarkable 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 on 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 new 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 managing editor 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 Ratz 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-Ilan, editor-in-chief; 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
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 50th 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 practiced 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-story 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 Hora, 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-llan 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 Jerusalem 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, harrased by 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 advantages, as were his professional journalistic connections, in helping turn him into "Mr. Spokesman." The Arabic riots of 1936-37 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 Moche Rothkopf.

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 Sharet'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 Hebrewized 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 Courtey, 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 the two and embraced a neo-conservative ideology, working for the General Zionists faction in the Knesset. Later he returned to Britain as a correspondent for Haaretz, became prominent in the Conservative Party and was eventually knighted by Margaret Thatcher.

The New York-born Ted Jaffe, Agron's successor at the Post, was his protégé 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. Jaffe, 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 34c
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, and 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 constitutional 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 Agrawal in Kol Israel — has pinned 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 Rubinstein and the chairman of the Constitution, Law and Judiciary Committee, MK Uriel Livni, 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 religion; 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.
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 subordinate 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 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 cooperation and development, scientific progress and cultural ferment all depend on freedom of expression, which includes freedom of the press. The crudity 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 facts 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 Aharon at Knesset — has placed the State of Israel among the most progressive and free 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 freedom to publish opinions and information publicly in any fashion" (section 8) be established as a basic civil right. Jointly with MK Amnon Rubinstein and the chairman of the Constitution, Law and Judiciary Committee, MK Uriel Land, 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 opinion for the right to free expression of ideas and opinions, freedom of the press and freedom of the press and protection of the press from the state's interference 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.

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 freedom is a fundamental human right — 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 is 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-sufficiency 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 inseparable 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 mass media 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 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, distortion 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 name (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 at the journalist's, without further investigation, it is unprofessional and perilous.

A profession 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 this 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 published "All the News That's Fit to Print," shows that 80% of information are items submitted by spokespeople of various kinds. Have the interested parties, politicians and businessmen managed to outwit the journalists, turning them into 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
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 free to criticize 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 existence, 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 accurately 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 noisy, united, organized people. It is a question of a responsible and reliable public where we call journalists in serving the public.

Restrictions on the press that are imposed externally are, in my mind, unsound, 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 cannot be absolute or 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 these interests.

We may recall a person’s right to good resort (the Law of Defamation) and to privacy (the Basic Law in this regard), as well as matters relating to the security of the state and public order (the Penal Law). The Supreme Court has ruled that 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 pre-publication action (after criminal or civil proceedings) to anticipatory actions preventing publication.

It is of the utmost importance for the authorities to act selectively and avoid interference by the media. There is a very natural inclination on the part of those in power to try and restrict intervention 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 the 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 provided 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 supersensitive and pernicious.

A profusion of official notices and releases inundates the press. Whether or not one possesses the necessary abilities, they are often merely published and unverified. The same system confronts editors. Even if every item was truthful, it is impossible 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 cannot disclaim responsibility — that research conducted by the New York Times shows that 80% of information is more reliable and accurate than that submitted to the media, that it is a problem that requires work. Working rules must be laid down by the press itself, if it wishes to preserve its credibility, professional standards and recognition of its public service.

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 codes. 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, and 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 satisfy all means and ought not to 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. Precision that had existed for many years and were barely criticized are now under critical, investigative and judicious review. For example, political appointments, a malignant practice that we have known from the very beginning of the state, have never dealt with, has recently become a matter of concern. Naumburg, the question of funding political parties by contributions and favors is also being dealt with. Pecuniary objective criteria for allocating public funds, canceling special allocations to those not entitled, the prohibition of "Kalanisterom" (unilateral shifting of mandates across party lines), the duty to disclose political agreements, interrogation by police and secret service have all 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. Whatever is new 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 judgment, 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 of 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 perceive 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 but the press has been given protection from revealing its sources, within the limitations established by the Supreme Court (Shamgar P. in the Citron decision).

Decentralization of the Media

How can we pursue the information flow — "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, with the existing government arrangement. 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 fairly 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 the law, 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 intensive 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-term 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.
behavior of the media during this period. One possible
reason is mutual media criticism: Do they make much
to talk free-mindedly and sincerely, 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 such societies, the struggle
has been waged over the issue 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 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-term
considerations may lead to disregard of such
elements in order to increase sales, prevent losses or
increase profits.

The best guarantee for maintaining high journalistic
standards is the journalists' self-image: their view of
their 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-wracking silence, this time — I don't know why
more than ever I glanced at the screens behind the backs of the computer typists and see the second electoral
upset taking shape in front of my eyes: Bar-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. Yehoshua Peres whispers
with Dr. Mina Zemah and Prof. Cami Fried at
the election desk. They are dropping a quarter of a
mandate, adding half a mandate, reevaluating.

Everyone is on edge. Airline approaches like a
menacing shadow. If we're not ready in time, we'll have
to resort to an alternative plan prepared in the
event of just such a situation. We practically force
the shift of paper with the 1992 election results from Mina's
and Yehoshua's hands. Now the computer conputer
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, Rabbi has an outright Blue
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
prelude to the real 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 deadlines.

The signal to start. The usual ritual: a description of the
studio, the relevant 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
election 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
straining battles against those who did everything
they could to shut our mouths, to prostitute our
profession, to sell off what we held dear — the love of
a good broadcast — for a mess of pottage of political
experience. Services rendered for promotion, jobs in
exchange for towing 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 very different story entirely.

It all began with Amram Nir's. May he rest in peace,
wooden boxes: Israel Television's sample polls.

And when I think it was the video that Dov Shilhom
brought from London. Here, Shilhom 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. Amram 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 sample. He was rather confident 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 boards in the Ahuzza 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, wait the signal to start. In those days the directors took complete responsibility. For failures too.

Shallon, Arnon Zuckerman, Yishak Levi decide to go on the air.

I don’t make 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-Lav. Don’t take this too 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 Mezuza (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, “matapakh,” 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 pomposities, rather frightening declaratives, dominated everything.

There was even an upset in dress — suits and ties.
I don't take any chances. It's only a sample, I warn the interviewers again and again. On Yarkon Street (site of the Labor Party headquarters) they make light of us. Hayim Bielski: Don't take this too 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 Westman 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 telephone became even happier and the interviewers went home with their tails between their legs.

The "upset" (in Hebrew, "mishmashk," 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, 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 Makevia (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 bear 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 Maasikin!"

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

Yitzhak Ben-Asher would not come to terms with the upset. He sat off to one 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, drawcatus. What will be? They began to talk about Begin and war. Eliyahu 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 next 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 usual high frequency of expressions must be preserved now especially, but for Tiv, the Haganah 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 chair, declaiming: There will be many more Eliyahu Mochra (one of the first post-1967 Jewish settlements in Samaria).

The upset brought Yosef Lifshitz, Aaron Pappo, Reuven Yaron and others to the Broadcasting Authority — all with one ambition: to get rid of the leftist mafia. Suddenly we were PLO advocates, deceptives 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 exploded 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 Pappo and Shlomo Ker.

We struggled against it time and again, first by arguments, shouts and accusations, and later by petitions, by going to the press and by protest meetings, and finally by broadcasting strikes, slamming doors, almost by violence. The Supreme Court recognized the injustice 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 Hajski termed us. PLO members were what they called us in the street. There were also threats and attempts to scare us.

Mainly, there were forced resignations: Yalov Agnon, Zuckerman, Yaron London, Yavin — a partial list. And there were disqualifications — of telecasts, of interviewees, of the treatment of "sensitive" subjects. The Moshe 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 liberals and to divers, 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 knew where censorship begins, but you never knew 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 oppressioniveness 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 "peoples" culture.

And perhaps we 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 million of ultra-orthodoxy and demagoguery. But Shmueli was rough, Perah Tikva and Lod even rougher. In some places we feared for our lives. After all, we were the despised Jew. 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 covered. The election sample, with Hanoch Smith, went well — at first. Then came the slip-ups, when Hanoch suddenly announced that the Ma'atza'ah 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 Aron Sharon "minister of war." And beforehand there was an incident when Begin demanded not to cut an interview of him, "and if Mr. Yaron 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: Dauly Topaz's (a well-known entertainer) "heavenly father" (a 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 Sheetrit, Moshe Katsav and David Mugni. 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 Segalma 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 Romans (the Television building in Jerusalem) broadcast. no matter what.

From time to time news broke, the victory in Paris, and the Mawikah turned into an eternal opposition.

1984

On the night of the election sample in 1984, the only thing we wanted was for our release 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-Forat (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 was no sample. There was no ungodly tumult.

What do we do? Five minutes to ten. And then, Yaron bangs on the table and announces: "We're going out!" The force of the bang silenced everyone. They hurried to their places and the broadcast 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 stuffs, driving the country crazy as it waited to hear who won and who lost. Everyone was on edge, hoping that Hanoch's sample would revolve 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 'teleseth like this, of course, is exhaustive concentration, both mental and physical. It is a difficult teleseth that lasts for 12 hours consecutively and involves great responsibility — a sense of fate 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 tasteless 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
series "The Electoral." Peres struggled against Begin. He didn't have a chance in the city squares against the master of the rhetoric and demagoguery. Netah Yeshiva was rough. Philip Tikhonov and Yehoshua Rezniker. In some places we feared for our lives. After all, all we were the despised men. 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 controls configured. The election sample, with Hannukh Smith, went well — at first. Then came the slip-ups, when Hanukh suddenly announced that the Likud was leading and they started singing at (Labor) headquarters and Yisrael Polgin presented Peres as the next prime minister of Israel. And there was my slip of the tongue when I called Avik Sharon "minister of war." And beforehand there was an incident when Begin demanded not to cut an interview of him. "If Mr. Yavin makes a face, let his face stay that way," and Yossi Sorkin asked if Begin intended to bring in the Likud to make my face crooked. And there were Dudu Topaz's (a well-known entertainers line "vakhbitchim"
 (slang for vulgar people), and the birth of the new leadership of the Laborites sector.

"The Electoral," an eight-part series, showed the social and political revolution that had changed Israel, with David Levi, Meir Shire, 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 revolution. 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 opposition. On several occasions Begin said to me bitterly: We agreed to a Broadcasting Authority that wouldn't be under government control, but not to an anti-government authority.

The Likud put the blame on the people that it itself had appointed to fabricate 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 replacing the slaughter in Sabra and Shatila. And reporter Dan Simon (a broadcast the satirical rhyme "Come down to us, assassin, and you'll come back in coffin." It became evident that even the Likud couldn't completely silence the voices and scenes that Romea (the Television building in Jerusalem) broadcast, 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 M schleak turned into an eternal opposition.

1984

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

At 5:45 Smith announced that we couldn't go on the air because according to the sample, Mofed, Ben-Peretz (leader of a new 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 bounces on the table and announces: 'We're going on!' The force of the bang silenced everyone. They hurried to their places and the telecast went 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 Hanukh'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 the audio and video, both mental and physical. It is a difficult telecast that lasts for 4 hours consecutively and involves great responsibility for the production component, nor are you the editor or the producer of the show, you are the showman. 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 open — the election campaign of 1992 — but I can recall how it all began.

"The Electoral" in 1981 was a project conceived by Director-General Yisrael 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 Electoral" 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 dejected 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 rallies 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 cast itself off from us. Instead, the Likud alumni said, we got the "sevenths" face (a system devised by the Likud for choosing its candidates) with the shelve 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 Rahmi, who was always a certain kind of idol for the masses, and with him the fresh faces that emerged from the Labor primaries: Avigdan Kahalani, Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, Eliezer Sneh, Dahlia Itzik, Shimon Shertok, Hayim Ramon and the others.

and, of course, Avram 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, Rafi Rapha'el Elian quadrupled his electoral strength, and Meretz won a significant victory. The state acceded to the will of the voters and made a 180 degree turn around. The vote was more than the victory of Labor in the Likud's anti-candidate Shamir, sunk in interminable 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, deputy Ezer 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 can be continued; 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 Makorot down during the first upset 15 years ago?

Voting patterns, photographed from the TV election sample, June 25, 1990.

Wasn't it a similar scenario? Hadn't the Makorot regime become too haughty, cut off from the people, falling not 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 convince 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.
The answer to all this came in the person of Yitzhak Rabin, who was always a certain kind of ideal for the masses, and with him the fresh faces that emerged from the Labor primaries: Ayoub Kalma, Roy Bennett, Efrayim Szub, Shimon Shetreet, Hayim Ramon and the others - and, of course, Avram Burg, the leader of the struggle against the ultra-Orthodox.

Suddenly, Laut Acker's remark that every regime corrupts, but an absolutist regime corrupts absolutely, became crystal clear. Thus, Rafi (Raphael Littman) quadrupled his electoral strength, and Meir was chosen in a significant victory. The state was toward the will of the voters, and the stage was set for a tremendous showdown. 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 muddied the state since the first electoral upset.

Yes, the voter said 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 talk was over, 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 Meirahk down during the first upset 15 years ago?

---

**ISRAEL RADIO: “MI YITZHAH” (“WHICH YITZHAH,” OR “WHO WILL LAUGH”) / Shalom Kital**

Like the recent Israeli elections themselves, the coverage of the elections was replete with 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 yitzeh - 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 teams 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 other.

Even though election night is essentially a television night, the quiet hour, the more listeners turn 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 the 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 usual 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, four-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 dynamic 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 amend 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 hits 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 p.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 541 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 immigrants' Du Party 9, and the small rightist parties a total of 11. A survey published by Ma'ariv at the end of May by statisticians Hanoch and Ra'fi 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 2,100 fans. The results were: Labor over 34%, Likud 33.4%, Meretz 7%, Meledet (right-wing) 7%, and Tsomet (right-wing) 6%. The same week, Hanoch and Ra'fi 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 HaHukva Quarter and Neveh Sharet, and the HOD participants voted 45.3% Likud, 23.2% Labor, 5.7% Shas (a religious party), 4.7% Tsomet, and 4.4% Piki (a one-man party). Although this would appear to indicate a Likud victory, Labor staff 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, Tushiy'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 Avnery, editor for 48 years of Haaretz Ha-cher, and Shlomo Nakdimon, of Yediot Aharonot. Introducing the theme, the moderator of the symposium, Dr. Uri Elgada, 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

Labour leader Neil Kinnock, in acknowledging defeat in England's recent elections, attacked the media, claiming that the evening press in particular caused Labour'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 suit, 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, at 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 devoted 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 1969 entirely on the basis of the newspaper's backing. That circumstance, however, was the exception that proves the rule, because his newspaper, Ha-Olam Ha-Chad ("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 piece on the English language, but his non-influence as a right-wing political analyst and his pugnacity 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 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 reporting 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 proven 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.
POLITICIANS DRAUGED ALONG BY THE PRESS / Uri Avneri

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 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 Nakhdimon

While political reporting 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 spend heavily in the electioneering tactics that are permitted by the law, even though viewers interest in the public has been low. Moreover, the influence of TV on the press has grown to such a point 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.

Periodically, therefore, while the press has progressed in many areas, it has focused 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 tickets. What is in it for the past, reporters tried to in every 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 tactics. This in itself constituted a form of well-orchestrated tabloid electioneering.

What was absent in the press was reporting 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

Jew Hebrew journalists have attracted as much attention as Eliezer Ben-Yehuda both in his lifetime and thereafter. His critical and forward-looking works consistently echoed intense reaction. Most students of his prolific output (1879-1922) have focused on his highly innovative work in the area of the Hebrew national language. However, there is a less well-known body of some 55 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 were 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, Ben-Yehuda's life style and outlook were diametrically opposed to the conservative Jerusalem milieu, he had many opponents who had no interest in preserving his work.

Ben-Yehuda is remembered as the revivaler 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 Eliaoum. 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") — Cheshkovsky — who employed him as a translator and became his guide and patron. Through Cheshkovsky, Plisnev became acquainted with journalists, society figures and politicians, enabling him to gain access to governmental deliberations and an understanding of the tumultuous events of the times.

He also befriended the Jewish Maskilim in Paris, most of them immigrants 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 flavor, and French and Jewish social and political topics. These articles, signed "Ben-Yehuda," were published in Peretz Smolenskin's Hashkofot (Vienna) in Hebrew (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 occasionally. 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 ill 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 phrasing, 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.

Ibnamar Ben-Avi's Ha-Zvi ("The Deed") gradually introduced a sensationalist approach to political and military news, in addition to "extraordinary" reports. 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-quarters of the paper's four pages, written in Ben-Avi's typographical style.

Ben-Avi also invented 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 summarily 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 system's tyrants, labeled Antebi "Little Herod" and created a sensation 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 and 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. Shalom Israel Shirzil, Ben-Yehuda's former publisher, founded El Paradiso (Latin), Der Pardes (Yiddish) and Pardes (Hebrew) in 1909, shocking scenes and ridicule from Ha-Zvi, and in the event these publications faded away quickly. Another Jerusalem publisher, however — Moshe Aziel — was more successful. Although his El Liberal (Ladino), a biweekly begun in 1909 and edited by Hayim Beciari and Avraham Elmaleh, lasted only about a year, a
THE SENSATIONALIST PRESS IN ERETZ YISRAEL, 1908-1917 /

Uzi Elyada

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

In 1909 Ben-Avi's Ha-Zvi ("The Deer") gradually introduced a sensationalist approach to political and military news, in addition to "sensational" reporting. In April 1909 a giant headline announced the overthrow of the Ottoman Sultan, Abdul Hamid, followed by daily full-width headlines on developments in Istanbul, 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 column - 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 13 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 sensation 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 boshmishel."

By its eighth month as a daily, Ha-Zvi, which had begun with a run of 800, 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 1909 - 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 three, however, belonged to the "serious" category of journalism. Of more immediate concern to Ben-Avi were new papers started up by several young Sopharists in Jerusalem. Shlomo Israel Shnir, Ben-Yehuda's former publisher, founded El Paradiso (Laodicea), Der Paradies (Yiddish) and Portarea (Hebrew) in 1909, eliciting scorn and ridicule from Ha-Zvi, and in the event these publications faded away quickly. Another Jerusalem publisher, however - Meshe Arzou - was more successful. Although his El Liberal (Laodicea), a biweekly begun in 1909 and edited by Hayyim Brenner and Avraham Elmaleh, lasted only about a year, a new Hebrew newspaper published by him the same year, Ha Heret ("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 Benarot. Apparently, at first Ha-Heret 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 sensational press, especially under Benarot's editorship.

Ha-Heret 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 Benarot. From 1909, Ha-Heret struggled financially and searched for backing, eventually going into partnership with Ben-Yehuda's erstwhile colleague/companion Shlurik. But the newspaper, renamed Ha-Or ("The Light"), appeared irregularly and lost readership to Ha-Heret. 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 agencies. Each editor resorted to personal connections abroad to obtain news, relying desperately with each other a competition that benefited the local readership.

Ultimately, the sensationalists 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 Haim Brenner in his column in Ha-Pal'ah Ha-Zvi ("The Young Worker"). Brenner labeled all of Ben-Yehuda's yellow journalism, vulgar, ridiculous, the bane of the street press. He attacked them for demoralizing young readers, for spurning invitations, such as Ha-Heret, 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 the papers represented the interests of merchants, grove-owners and middlemen.

World War I reduced Ha-Or's and Ha-Heret's publishing capability, and in 1915 Ben-Yehuda and his son closed Ha-Or and left the country. Ha-Heret lasted until 1917, when Benarot 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 - Da'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 Glickman in Ha-Aretz and Neftali El Halev of Ha-Or. While "serious" journalism appeared to have won out after Da'ar Ha-Yom closed in the mid-1950s, in the long run the sensationalist press proved enduring, and exerted considerable influence on the "serious" press as well.

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

Borocov (1858-1917), 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 Weltzeit ("The Truth"), which had been founded in 1905 by Louis Miller and was later to merge with Die Tag (see Quasar 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, theatre reviews and journalistic surveys.

In a revealing article on journalism in 1916 Borochov portrayed the daily press as diminishing the public's spiritual life, harming mankind to the "sensationalist curvage." 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. Borochov 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 Borochov, 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 Idisher Komet ("The Jewish Fighter") in early 1917, Borochov criticized 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, Borochov credited the Yiddish papers with a higher level, since the "Yankles" received the more sophisticated material for magazines, with the dailies generally being sensationalist, while the Yiddish press combined both "heavy artillery" and material "perfumed by the fish market" in dailies.

Still, Borochov 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 Toj ("Day") on esthetic and literary matters, the Forward on "proletarian" matters "spiced up by pornography," the Tagblatt ("Daily") on petty and kaufman, and the Morgan 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. Borochov said, warning against this capitalist trend.

Reviewing the Yiddish weekly, Borochov criticized the old-established Freyher Arbeiter Shitsim ("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. Nyehe Welt ("New World"), on the other hand, was a young, vital weekly which was biologically anti-Communist and anti every other ideology as well, full of temerity but without character. Borochov found Das Rassional Lobn ("Rational Living"), a periodical devoted to health matters, important and interesting because it examined those questions from a critical social and economic point of view. Were it not so vulgar, the numerous Grouser Kudos ("The Big Jokers") could have been rated with the best American and European humor newspapers, Borochov thought, for its humor was vital and its content rich.

Several periodicals were promising because of positive Jewish democratic ideas presented freshly and optimistically: Haroze ("The Mast," Hebrew) - non-party, intelligent, the American Jewish Chronicle (English) - solid, but too pro-German; and the Idisher Komet - proletarian-socialist. A brand new periodical, Die Isidishe Arbeiter Shitsim ("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, Borochov believed.

He was particularly fond of the weekly Ideisher Komet, published by Puleish Zion, which he was involved with as writer and editor during 1916-17, although inter-party conflict ended his tenure there. Borochov left the US with his family in 1917, bound for Russia, where he had been invited to work for Puleish Zion. After a brief, intensive period of activity there, he fell ill and died at the age of 36.
which included pieces on politics, daily events, culture, book reviews, theater reviews and journalistic surveys.

In a revealing article on journalism in 1916, Borochov portrayed the daily press as dominating the public's spiritual life, and pinpointing the need for "the sensationalistic style." Moreover, the press distorted the facts of books through their reviews and through the necessity for publishers to advertise in newspapers, so that books increasingly assumed the sensationalistic 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 weapon. Later, increasingly, into a showcase for literature and art. Borochov 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 Borochov, the primary purpose of a daily was to provide information. Ideally, he wrote, a daily ought to appear continually, like a film, with multiple "extra" editions — even in holiday days — 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 his series of articles on the Yiddish press in the US, published in the Yiddisher Kultur ("The Jewish Flights") in early 1917, Borochov 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 a lack of Yiddishism or secularism — 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 barring ideas or prostitution was one and the same."

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

Still, Borochov 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 War Kokh had focused on Jewish political matters, the Tag ("Day") on aesthetic and literary matters, the Forward on "proletarian" matters "sprouted up by pornography," the Tagblat ("The Yiddish Morning Journal") on objective information. By 1916, though, the difference 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 rate in the price of the papers, with the public viewed as the enemy. Borochov said, warning against this capitalistic trend.

Reviewing the Yiddish weeklies, Borochov criticized the old-established Yiddisher Arbeiter Shimtun ("Voice of the Free Workers") for waging ongoing wars in the name of an undermined goal, possibly anarchic or revolutionary or Jewish or literary, but certainly heretical. The "New World," on the other hand, was a young, vital weekly, which was "fighting against Zionism and all other ideas of misguiding and of temptation, but without character. Borochov found Das Rassionale Leben ("Rational Living"), a periodical devoted to health matters, important and interesting because it examined some questions from a critical social and economic point of view. Were it not so "vague, the humorous Custer Kinds ("The Big Joke") could have been rated with the best American and European humor newspapers, Borochov thought, for its humor was vital and its content rich.

Several periodicals were promising because of positive Jewish democratic ideals presented freshly and optimistically: Ha-Atur ("The Mind"), Hebrew-English, and the American Jewish Chronicle (English) — solid, but too pro-German; and the Idisher Kultur (proletarian-socialist). A brand new periodical, the Idisher Arbeiter Shimtun ("Voice of the Jewish Workers"), 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, Borochov believed.

He was particularly fond of the weekly Idisher Kultur, published by Polski Zoln, which he was involved with, a writer and editor during 1916-17, although inter-party conflict caused him to leave. Borochov left the US with his family in 1917, bound for Russia, where he had been invited to work for Polski Zoln. After a brief, intensive period of activity there, he felt ill and died at the age of 39.

**HAISHA — AN EXCLUSIVE WOMEN'S MAGAZINE / Hava Diner**

Ha-isha ("The Woman") was an unusual monthly magazine published in English by the Jewish Women's Committee of the Netherlands (later unified into one body) from January 1929 to the end of 1949 seven months after the Nazi conquest of Holland. Dedicated to "women's solidarity," it set as its goal, to serve as 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 Ertey Yisrael.

Although the magazine espoused "positive nationalism" 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, beginnings' Hebrew lessons, the Jewish woman and Jewish life, religious and secular revival, and a status of women, literature and literary criticism. Significantly the magazine actually exceeded what is promised in terms of its richness and variety of content, while maintaining a balance between liberal and traditional views.

Zionism and Ertey Yisrael occupied an important place, and were dealt with from various 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.

Indicators of the crisis facing European Jewry with the rise of the Nazis to power appeared in the magazine only occasionally. An appeal to keep 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 disaster.

Ha-isha closed in December 1949, 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-YIRAH: "LEY HA-IVRIS" NEWSPAPERS / Dov Genhovsky**

Rabbi Akiva Joseph Schüringer, a Zionist before Zionism existed and an early visionary of the Jewish state, was an ultra-Orthodox musarist, from Posen in Prussia (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 Ley Ha-Ivris (an acronym of his name, and also "The Heart of the Hebrews"). 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 during wars on plants he devised for settling and developing the country, which angered the local ultra-Orthodox establishment who viewed him as a danger to the Haika system (livelihood based on the distribution of charity from abroad). When Schüringer headed a man could take a second wife if his first wife refused to follow him to Eretz Yisrael, his opponents, particularly the Unservers, burned his book Ha- выбрал ("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 Petach Tikva in 1876 and acquired land there, but he was cheated out of it by the Ungarn group and continued to be harassed by them relentlessly. He met with Herzl when the Zionism leader visited Jerusalem, viewed the Balfour Declaration as the start of the redemption, and pronounced the traditional blessing for the war 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 the area Aida Ha-Yirah ("Column of Reverence"), 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 Elissa — 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 harassment he endured. His loyal family, his son, son-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 Israeli 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 Rabbi Pinhas Hacohen Perl 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 Gorenzikh (Goren), as were the issues to follow. It contained prayers, laws, commentaries and customs relating to Hanukkah, along with surveys and maps tracing the Hasmonian war. 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 (Maisan), 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 Shmuel Yashmov 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 Tisha b’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
“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 Hakohen, the third generation of a rabbinical family that was involved in journalism, and his brothers Rabbi Pinhas Hakohen Peiri and Shmuel Hakohen Abidor also played important editorial roles in the series.

The first issue, a 32-page booklet, was introduced by an article by Chief Army Chaplain Rabbi Shmuel Gorevitch-Goren (Goren), as were the issues to follow. It contained prayers, laws, commentaries and customs relating to Hanukkah, along with surveys and maps tracing the flamboyant war. Articles also appeared by Rabbi Kook, by the two chief rabbis Herzog and Uziel – the first minister for religious affairs, Yehuda Leib Hacohen Finkelman (Maimon), by Rabbi Menachem Berlin (Bar-Ilan) and others, as well as stories about Hanukkah, which 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. 3, which was devoted to Tisha Be-Av, the series was printed by the Army Printer.

In 1953 the periodical became a weekly, titled Mahanayim, with editorials on the holidays published separately. Submitted “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

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 Edir 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) Shomer, its central office, in Jerusalem, channeled information, written up in Hebrew and in English, to Dr. Edir, 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, lymphar Ilan-Avi’s Jerusalem-based newspaper, Davar Ha-Yom, appeared, sponsored by the “Hasid” group, which included Alexander Antonof and others who were connected with the Intelligence Office. The following year, in 1919, the Zionist Executive took up the question of a possible interference of representation by the Commission via-avis 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 the editorial tone of ‘Davar 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

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 Hasidic 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 mid-1948 symposium, with the participation of Chief Rabbi 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 400-200 pages and covering a wide range of Judaism that included 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 Hakohen, was renewed as a quarterly, published by the Saphir Center for Culture and Education with the assistance of the Natan Fund for the Development of Values, Education and Learning.
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 *Davar Ha-Yom*. One of the paper's key reporters in Damascus was Dr. Shlomo Feldman, a member of the "Haired" group, who served as an agent of the Zionist Commission in Damascus during 1919-20, reporting regularly to Edel in Jerusalem and through him to Dr. Chaim Weizmann in London. Feldman, who also opened a law office in Damascus, probably did not request or receive permission from the Zionist Commission to report for *Davar Ha-Yom*. Although he signed his articles with pseudonyms, his identity was no secret, for in June 1920 he was fired as managing editor of the paper. Feldman 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 Edel, who, impressed by his knowledge of the current situation in Syria, immediately brought him to High Commissioner Herbert Samuel, and Samuel relayed Feldman's information to London. Simultaneously, Feldman submitted an article on the situation to *Davar Ha-Yom*.

The newspaper also had a representative in Beirut — Shlomo (Jean-Jacques) Kalai — another founder of the paper. Kalai 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 *Davar 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 Transjordan, 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. Edel, a staunch supporter of the Office, had reservations about the staff, although Simeonson's work was considered very good.

Simeonson was instructed by Edel 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 Simeonson's activity on a limited basis for a time.

*Continued from page 24.*

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

Leo Ren Dor, a staff member from the mid-1930s, succeeded Luiza 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 for a while. Rath also founded the Labor Party sphere. She was succeeded by Ruth, who worked side by side with Erwin Frankel. Frankel established the weekly international edition that Agran had envisioned. He and Frankel 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-Hillel.