

JEWISH AFFAIRS

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used to outvote growing opposition to the government's policy by giving citizenship to Zionists in the capitalist countries.

When the British government was debating the Balfour Declaration, important and influential British Jewish circles opposed the Zionist scheme because they considered it damaging to the Jewish communities in the world. To allay their concern the Balfour Declaration noted that nothing in it would prejudice "the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country." The Zionist leadership did not show concern at this reservation then. The important influential Jewish circles no longer see any danger to their status and rights in the establishment of a Jewish state.

But both work together now in order to damage the status and rights of Jews in the Soviet Union and use the "cause of the Jews" to slander it: as a means of covering up the aggressive policy of the Israeli ruling circles in the Middle East and the international arena in general. It is no accident that in this the Zionists have the full support of the imperialists. But it is certain that this is not in the interest of Soviet Jews. It is not in the interest of the Israeli people, because such a policy can only lead to catastrophes in the tense Middle East where the Israeli ruling circles are adamant in their policy of expansion and opposition to the rights of the Arab peoples.

The Israeli people is not interested in anti-Soviet incitement. It is interested in friendship with the Soviet Union and in peace.

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hoodlum Kahane, exponent of extreme racism, anti-Sovietism and gangsterism, who pleads guilty to serious criminal acts, is given a slap on the wrist and remains free to continue his despicable activities. The one is an unyielding enemy of the monopolist ruling class; the other is a useful tool.

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"While the median income of American Jews is higher than the general average, there is more poverty among them than among American Protestants and Catholics." So writes Arie Weinrath in Israel Horizons (June-July 1971). He cites a paper by Mrs. Anne Wolfe, a sociologist, entitled The Invisible Jewish Poor. Mrs. Wolfe finds that 15.3 per cent of Jewish families had an income below \$3,000--some 700,000-750,000 people. If the "near poor" are added--those earning \$4,500 or less--the number of Jewish poor exceeds 900,000.

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EDITORIALS.U.S. "JUSTICE": JAIL FOR ANGELA DAVIS, FREEDOM FOR KAHANE

The trial of Angela Davis has been set for September 27, and she has been granted the right to act as her own counsel, working with the defense team headed by Attorney Howard Moore. With these developments the need for her to be able to participate actively in the preparation of her defense becomes increasingly imperative. Yet she continues to be vindictively confined to prison while the appeal for her release on bail drags on in the courts.

A mass petition campaign for bail has been under way for some time and petitions containing several tens of thousands of signatures have already been submitted to the attorney general of California and other key authorities. Now the campaign must be greatly speeded up and the volume of protest must be increased many times over. Especially urgent is the need to break through in the organized Jewish community, which has so far totally boycotted the defense campaign.

We urge our readers to act at once. Demands for the immediate freedom of Angela Davis on reasonable bail should be sent to the following individuals:

Albert Harris, Assistant Attorney General, California
 Ronald Reagan, Governor, California
 Richard Nixon, President, United States
 U Thant, Secretary General, United Nations

In addition, petitions may be obtained for circulation from the New York Committee to Free Angela Davis, 150 Fifth Ave., Room 736, New York, N.Y. 10011.

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In glaring contrast to the bestial treatment accorded Angela Davis is the kid-glove handling of the notorious fascist hoodlum Meir Kahane. Last May he was arrested and charged, along with others, of conspiring (1) to transport considerable quantities of arms across state lines and (2) to make, receive and possess explosive and incendiary devices. In a deal with the prosecution, he pleaded guilty in Federal Court to the second charge, and in return the first was dropped. He was then sentenced to five years' imprisonment and a fine. However, both the prison term and the fine were suspended, and Kahane is now off to Israel to organize a branch of his hoodlum "Jewish Defense League" there.

Here is displayed only too clearly the class character of "justice" in these United States. The Black Communist woman, Angela Davis, who fights for an end to racial oppression and a socialist America, is framed on false charges, threatened with death in the gas chamber, and subjected to the most brutal treatment. The fascist

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ISRAEL'S OPPRESSED MAJORITY: THE SEPHARDIC JEWS

By Hyman Lumer

In recent weeks the American press has carried--for the first time--stories of widespread poverty in Israel. About 20 percent of the population, it is reported, live at or below the officially designated poverty level. In Tel Aviv, one family out of four lives in what are described as slum dwellings.

What prompted this departure from the usual practice of painting Israel as a virtual utopia? It was not a sudden burst of conscience but a series of demonstrations by a group calling itself the Black Panthers, after the organization of that name in this country. Attention was attracted especially by a demonstration in Jerusalem on May 18 which was attacked by the police, who beat up a number of demonstrators and arrested more than a hundred.

To these events Golda Meir reacted by cynically dismissing the demonstrations as acts of juvenile delinquency. But they have rocked the Israeli establishment, and have made the issues raised by the demonstrators the subject of widespread discussions.

The Black Panthers, an organization of young Sephardic Jews, was formed in January of this year, and since then its membership has mushroomed from a few score to several thousand. Its declared purpose is to expose and combat the discrimination and degradation visited upon the darker-skinned Sephardic or Oriental Jews in Israel.

These, who come from Asian and African countries such as Yemen, Iraq, Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt, today comprise some 60 percent of Israel's population. And they suffer marked discrimination at the hands of the minority of Ashkenazi or Western Jews, coming from Europe and America. Much poorer and less educated than the latter, they have been pushed down near the bottom of the economic and social ladders, only a rung or two above the more severely oppressed Israeli Arabs.

They are crowded into the most unskilled, lowest-paying jobs. According to a government survey, in 1967 their average per capita yearly income was only 38.5 percent of that of Western Jews and 42.6 percent of that of Israeli-born Jews. (Central Bureau of Statistics, Income Surveys, 1965-67, Jerusalem, 1969, p. 5.)

They are likewise packed into "old city" slums, with a housing density three to five times that of other groups. Here is how one such slum-dwelling family lives, the family of Zohara Amoyel:

Life has not been too kind to Zohara, aged forty-one, who lives with her husband and her nine children in the main street of Jerusalem's Mussrarah Quarter--Ayin-Het Street. Her apartment is one of ten spread over the second floor of an old Arab building. They all share one toilet. As each family here has

eight, ten or even fourteen children, the tiny toilet has to serve 120 men, women and children every morning...

None of the apartments has a shower. The 120 residents on the second floor wash in their kitchens, among the pots and pans and baby-baths. The dirty water is carried in pots to the toilet, where it is poured out. In this way, the toilet is kept busy the whole night...

The Amoyel apartment contains a two-by-two-and-a-half yard entrance hall and a three-by-two-and-a-half yard living room. The entrance hall is the kitchen, laundry-room and, at night, a shower. Here a little water is heated on a gas plate and poured into a baby-bath. Then ten members of the family use this water to wash themselves. During the day, the living room serves as the dining room. The table stands in the center. Two beds, one underneath the other, stand against the wall. At night, the table and chairs are moved to the kitchen, and the "big" room is prepared for sleep. (Baruch Nadel, "The 'Black Panthers' of Israel: Reaping the Fruits of Neglect," Israel Horizons, May 1971.)

And this situation is far from exceptional.

They also lag far behind in education. Whereas about 60 percent of all children entering primary school are Sephardic, at the secondary school level the proportion falls to 25 percent and at the university level to 10 percent. A study made in February 1968 by the newspaper Haaretz, as reported in the March 1968 issue of Israel's Oriental Problem (a publication of the Council of the Sephardi Community in Jerusalem), states:

...For example, 85 percent of Israeli-born youths aged seventeen and whose parents come from Europe have had three years or more of secondary schooling, whereas only 27 percent of those whose parents hail from Islamic countries managed to get to the same educational standard.

If we keep in mind that of all the seventeen-year olds only 56 percent in all have attained three years of post-elementary education, the proportion of Oriental youths who have had any secondary education turns out to be very meager indeed. Moreover, since "post-elementary education" in this context includes vocational and agricultural training, and as Oriental children make up the overwhelming majority of pupils in these schools, the percentage of those Oriental youths who will have the minimum qualifications for joining an institution of higher learning becomes almost completely negligible.

To complete the picture, a New York Times article (May 30, 1971) notes that of some 250,000 Israeli youth aged 14-17, about 20,000 are dropouts, and of these, nine out of every ten are Sephardic. And, most disturbing, the gap between the conditions of Ashkenazi and

Sephardic youth is widening, not narrowing.

Sephardic Jews are also subjected to all sorts of insults and indignities. "'Cushi,' the Biblical term for Negro," says a New York Times story (January 29, 1965), "has taken on the same pejorative meaning in Israel as 'nigger' in the United States."

Illustrative of the prevalent attitude toward Oriental Jews is an article by Yael Dayan, daughter of Moshe Dayan, in the Israeli newspaper Yediot Aharonot (March 22, 1968). In it she tells of her difficulties in selling a house. "It's the neighborhood," the real estate agent tells her. She explains:

The house's only neighbors are "Orientals"....It borders on a Yemenite quarter called Morashah, and actually forms the borderline between the respectable neighborhood of Naveh Magen, which boasts of Israeli commanders, and the Yemenite quarter, with one-story houses and nice gardens and whose sons serve in the army of the Chief-of-Staff who lives on the right side of the neighborhood--a matter of two or three hundred meters.... It was thus that ghettos were formed. Thus grew the Negro, the Puerto Rican and the Jewish slums. Would you want your daughter to marry a Negro? Would you want to have a Jew as your neighbor?

I don't know which is more insulting--the fact that the whole phenomenon exists, or the total lack of shame implicit in openly admitting it. "I would have paid 5,000 more for the house had it been in another neighborhood," a respectable lady told me. Five thousand Israeli pounds more so that Rabinovitz's children won't play with the children of this quarter. Five thousand pounds more so that they won't mix, God forbid, with those who have black eyes and black hair!

Does not all this have an all too familiar--and disturbing--ring?

In addition, Oriental Jews are deprived of proper representation in the Israeli government. Of 120 seats in the Knesset, they occupy only some 20-odd. In the Israeli Cabinet they hold only the Ministry of Posts and the Ministry of Police. But even this minimal representation is meaningless, since these officials were not chosen by political parties speaking for the Sephardic Jews, but were designated by the dominant Labor Party which is completely controlled by Western Jews. Says Elie Eliachar, a leading spokesman of the Sephardic Jews:

...Neither the cabinet ministers nor the senior officials have ever had any chance to say what they or their community really think. They were and will continue to be mere mouthpieces of the political parties which nominated them to office. It is the instructions of these parties that they have to obey, even if that went against their personal views and convictions....

It is common knowledge that none of the existing political parties in Israel was either founded or is in any way influenced by Oriental Jews. (Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs, Council of the Sephardic Community, Jerusalem, 1970, p. 25.)

The fact is that Israel has been ruled since its birth by a group of Zionists mainly of Eastern European origin, to whom a "Jewish state" and "Jewishness" mean a state based on the culture of Eastern European Jewry. Nissim Rejwan, a prominent Oriental Jewish writer, says: "When, therefore, Israel's present East European Zionist Establishment and its spokesmen talk of the absolute necessity of preserving the country's Jewishness what they in fact have in mind is little more than their own brand of Jewish culture. For them, this now thoroughly secularized culture of the Jews of the Pale of Settlement represents 'Jewishness' pure and simple." ("Israel as an Open Society," The Jewish Spectator, December 1967.) Correspondingly, the culture of the Middle Eastern Jews is rejected as not being "Jewish," and the Ashkenazi ruling group, though now in the minority, nevertheless seeks to impose its culture on a majority whose cultural traditions are quite different.

Underlying this is the Zionist conception of Israel as a "Western" society which is Middle Eastern only geographically. The greatest fear of the Zionists is that Israel will become "Levantinized." And what greater source of such a danger is there than the already "Levantinized" Oriental Jews who are a majority of the population, not to speak of the added 12 percent which is Arab? Accordingly, every effort is made to smother their culture--to "Ashkenazize" them, to teach their children "Western" ways in the schools, and to relegate them to a subordinate place in Israeli society.

Such is the nature of the oppression and discrimination visited on the Sephardic Jews in Israel, an oppression born of the racist Zionist conception of the Jewish state which, moreover, limits the definition of "Jewish" to the narrow confines of the Eastern European tradition. It is this shocking state of affairs which the actions of the Black Panthers have begun to bring to public notice--to expose "the tip of the iceberg," as one writer puts it.

No less shocking is the general apathy and insensitivity to this situation in Israeli leading circles, which was scathingly criticized by Dr. Arthur Hertzberg, a leading American Zionist, on his return from an extended visit to Israel. "As of this moment," he stated, "there is not a single rabbinic figure of public consequence in all of Israel who is publicly pleading for that one-fifth of its population which is abysmally and well-nigh hopelessly poor." And he adds that there are few professors to make the point that a country with such a high percentage of Oriental Jews entering primary school and such a low proportion finishing high school "has something radically wrong with it." (New York Times, June 15, 1971.)

The Israeli leaders have attempted to explain the situation on the grounds of a threat of war from the Arab states, of a state of

virtual siege. Hertzberg notes, however, that "during the four years from 1967 when the country was under siege, the standard of living of the middle class has doubled; the number of cars on the roads of the country have doubled, and so has the rate of travel abroad by prosperous Israelis. It seems the country is only under siege when it comes to the needs of the 20 percent of the population who are below the poverty line."

The young Sephardic Jews face a life of repeated frustrations and despair. Growing up in slum ghettos, they often become involved in acts of delinquency or petty crime. Thus they acquire a police record which, in turn, contributes to keeping them out of the army, and this then becomes the basis for keeping them out of many kinds of employment. Added to this is the fact that better-paying jobs generally go to Ashkenazi Jews.

Typical is the case of Reuven Abarjal, one of the founders of the Black Panthers. Born in Morocco, at the age of twenty-eight and with a wife and child, he finds himself washing floors at a monthly wage of 366 Israeli pounds (a little over \$100) and living in a dank one-room apartment. On the grounds of an act of juvenile delinquency, he was refused much better-paying employment in the merchant marine, though he passed all the tests. And he was rejected by the army which, he says, "put a blot on the rest of my life."

He states: "A few months ago we decided, here in the Quarter, all the people who grew up together, to start the Panthers. For a long time I tried to contact Bareli (the Chief of Police in Jerusalem) in letters, and he didn't answer me. In the end, when there was a demonstration, and I was with him in a three-man delegation, I asked him: 'Why didn't you see us sooner?' Now that the organization has taken shape, they have suddenly begun to make promises, but they won't do anything else." (Baruch Nadel, op. cit.)

The fight to get beyond promises is indeed a difficult one. It demands an organized mass struggle not only against the discrimination and poverty inflicted on Sephardic Jews, but also against the oppression of Israeli Arabs. And it entails a struggle against the ideology of Zionism, which is a basic source of the racism that pervades Israeli society. But it is becoming increasingly clear that one day this struggle will be won.

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JEWISH CURRENTS: MOVING TO THE RIGHT

By Lee Carr

In a previous issue we dealt with how the editors of Jewish Currents had moved that magazine significantly to the Right, in the direction of bourgeois nationalism and Zionism.

Since then, we have examined ten issues covering the period from May 1970 through the June 1971 issue. This examination reinforces the conclusion that the editors have made this magazine a vehicle of attack on the Soviet Union and other socialist states from the "Left" and to provide a "Left" cover in support of the policies of the Israeli leadership. The rhetoric of this position is often very clever and somewhat disguised; lip service is paid to socialism and the Soviet Union as well as the struggle against American reaction. Nevertheless, the basic line and policy of Jewish Currents emerges as follows:

1. The magazine devotes itself largely to attacking the Soviet Union and other socialist states under cover of the "right to criticize errors." Its method is to pick up every instance of a survival or remnant of anti-Semitic thought or utterance and to magnify it all out of proportion to the real situation in the country. It peddles the canards about forced assimilation and the "destruction" of Jewish culture. It decries the denial of the "human right" to emigrate to Israel, with no consideration of the imperialist subversion and other factors which underly the restriction of emigration by all the socialist countries.

2. The editors have accepted and become complete apologists for the main lines of Israeli policy in the Middle East. Their method is to picture Al-Fatah and the Palestine Liberation Organization as the main force in the Arab countries and then proceed to attack their policies as representative of the entire Arab world's effort to "destroy" Israel. They ignore or downgrade the struggles of the Arab peoples for liberation from imperialism. They ignore or misrepresent the position of the UAR and other Arab states for a political solution in the Middle East. Their ideological and political mentors are the Mikunis-Sneh group in Israel, which has been rejected by the world Communist movement.

3. The magazine has become an apologist and defender of Zionism, although it professes disagreement with its principles. It accepts the basic line that attacks upon Zionism are really anti-Semitism in disguise.

4. It says practically nothing about the severe oppression of the Israeli Arab population, and has remained almost completely silent about exploitation and oppression of Sephardic Jews in Israel.

5. While speaking out for the defense of the Panthers, it nevertheless continually stresses their "opposition to Israel" and support of Al-Fatah and the Palestine Liberation Organization. There are continual articles about Black people's wrong attitudes to Jews, and the stressing of individual anti-Semitic utterances gives credence to the line of the bourgeois Jewish leaders that "Black and New Left anti-Semitism" is today the main danger to Jews in the United States.

6. Because of the above, it downplays anti-Semitism in the

U.S. and the danger from neo-Nazi and ultra-Right groups in this country and abroad, relegating this to a secondary consideration.

7. It has almost totally ignored the Angela Davis case and has failed to fight for her freedom.

8. While voicing opposition and pointing out the reactionary character of the Jewish Defense League, it accepts its basic allegation that Soviet Jewish policy is oppressive. It attacks JDL tactics "as not helping Soviet Jews."

It points to the fact that the major Jewish organizations have spoken out against the tactics of the JDL but criticizes them for "neglecting the needs and interests of the urban Jews in favor of the suburban Jews," thereby permitting the JDL to make progress among the former. These "needs and interests" are not specified. Do they embody a struggle against anti-Semitism or a struggle to protect Jews from "crime in the streets" that the JDL has capitalized on?

Jewish Currents points to the Torrington, Connecticut Bnai Brith as a model of how to "fight for Soviet Jewry." There an ad was published welcoming the Omsk Dancers and wishing them success in their tour--and calling on them to go back and fight for the "right of Soviet Jews to migrate to Israel." This is presented as the right way to "fight for Soviet Jewry."

9. Lastly, the editors have replaced emphasis on the class struggle, a class approach, and working-class internationalism with overemphasis on nationalist attitudes of "Jewishness, Jewish identity" and similar ideas so common to the bourgeois-liberal journals of the American Jewish Congress, Bnai Brith and other magazines of this stripe.

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Let us examine some of the issues. The May 1970 issue features an article by contributing editor, Louis Harap, entitled "The Defective Arab Case." In reviewing Maxime Rodinson's book, Israel and the Arabs, Harap begins with the statement that "the issue is not that the Arabs are totally unjustified, but rather that Israel's right to existence has the more compelling case in the light of Western history since 1933." From this he moves on to place the responsibility for the refugee problem on the Arabs, saying that "by their active resistance to the U.N. decision (1947) the Arabs must be held basically responsible for the creation of the refugee problem." Nowhere does he mention Israeli annexation of a large part of the Arab Palestinian state in 1948 as a factor in the refugee problem, nor does he mention the persistent refusal of Israel to honor the U.N. General Assembly resolution on this question, reaffirmed each year since 1948 by that body.

In the same issue there is an article by Jack Nusan Porter,

"radical" Jewish student leader at Northwestern University on "Jewish Student Activism." Giving as one of the reasons for the growth of the Jewish radical movement that "they (the students) knew that they would face (at least in the form of verbal abuse) anti-Zionist, anti-Israel and even anti-Semitic rhetoric from black and white radicals." Porter further states that "for the sake of revolutionary solidarity and third-world rhetoric black and white radicals have taken anti-Israel and anti-Semitic stances. Jewish student movements have arisen to meet this challenge." Once again, "Black and Left anti-Semitism" is pictured as the big danger that must impel Jewish youth to action. Jewish Currents has reprinted 10,000 copies of this article at the request of ATID, the college youth division of the United Synagogue of America (Conservative).

This is the same Jack Nusan Porter who admitted being a member of JDL and participating in the stink bombing of the Omsk Siberian Dancers show in Chicago and who also addressed an open letter to Jewish students urging support for our "Jewish brothers and sisters of the JDL." This caused no end of embarrassment to Morris Schappes who engaged in a public exchange with Porter, asking him to leave and repudiate the JDL. Porter answered Schappes that "my interest and activism with JDL was solely around Soviet Jewry. I took part in the stink bombing of the Omsk Siberian Dancers show in Chicago (it was unsuccessful--the people stayed in their seats)." Schappes' final letter took issue with the latter statement on the grounds that if it had been successful "would that have helped any Jews in the Soviet Union. Would it help the Jews in the Soviet Union for the Omsk Dancers to go back to Omsk and tell" what happened? This basic agreement about Soviet Jews "needing help" is what makes it possible for the editor of Jewish Currents to open the pages of this magazine to the likes of a Jack Nusan Porter.

The September 1970 issue starts off with an editorial stating: "A big and open question now is whether the socialist states, the World Peace Council and the other forces of the international Left, which have encouraged the Arab terrorists, will be able to use their powers to get them to agree to a political settlement." This distortion needs no answer. The world knows full well the role of the Soviet Union in support of the U.N. Resolution of November 1967 and its active efforts for a political settlement.

Much is made in the editorial of the word "all" being dropped from the U.N. Resolution. This is used to interpret the U.N. Resolution's wording "withdrawal from territories occupied in the 1967 war" as grounds for something less than total withdrawal, ignoring the Resolution's emphasis on "inadmissibility of acquiring territory by war." The editor asks, "Could Israel be expected to consider any arrangement satisfactory that brought Tel-Aviv back to 12 miles from the Jordanian border, from which it could readily be bombarded by artillery?" Thus the editors of Jewish Currents report the demands of the Israeli annexationists and, in this day and age of rockets and missiles, accept their argument that a few square miles of ter-

ritory can bring security.

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The attitude of Jewish Currents towards the 1956 Suez invasion by Israel, France and Britain can be gauged by the editor's review of Nahum Goldman's autobiography. He speaks of Goldman's opposition to that war and adds, "but as a Zionist organization man he helped mobilize U.S. Jewish support for Israel's misguided adventure." (Emphasis added.) Only someone with a non-class, non-Marxist outlook could label such collaboration with imperialism as "misguided."

The same issue devotes a full-page box in bold-face type to "Yevseyev Rides Again and Again." The author attacks two articles by Yevseyev which basically attempt to link Zionism with fascism. Whatever criticisms one may have of Yevseyev's treatment of Zionism, the important thing is that Jewish Currents tries to impute anti-Semitism to the Soviet government as a policy.

This issue also contains a letter from Louis Dinnerstein calling attention to a condemnation by the Argentinian Federation of Jewish Cultural Communities of the anti-Soviet campaign being waged by Argentine Zionist groups. He points out that the "anti-Soviet uproar distracts people from the real fight against fascism and anti-Semitic provocations that are now a daily occurrence in Argentina." Dinnerstein further states: "That sure sounds like what is going on in the good old U.S.A., only here the Zionists and anti-Sovieteers are getting a free assist from publications like Jewish Currents and the Freiheit." Schappes' answer was that "criticism is an obligation" and that because of it "we have strengthened the progressive Jewish movement in this country, increased its influence and by the same token weakened the forces of reaction, including anti-Sovieteers." We are at a loss to see how continued Jewish Currents attacks upon the Soviet Union have stopped the violent anti-Soviet campaign and the growth of such reactionary organizations as the JDL. The fact is that under cover of "Left" and "progressive" verbiage, it has helped the anti-Soviet forces.

The fight against American anti-Semitism, against the ultra-Right and neo-Nazi groups is given either scant or token attention. In the section "Around the World," which covers the last two pages of each issue, there is a subdivision called "Anti-Semiteca." About a third of a page, in very small print is usually devoted to incidents generated by the ultra-Right, but this is merely reported as information. Articles rarely appear to be written about these incidents, and in the issues examined, we saw no editorials on them, and least of all, did we see any attempt to organize a movement against American anti-Semitism, much less against the neo-Nazi resurgence in West Germany and other capitalist countries.

The last page of this section is usually devoted to the USSR and one or more other socialist countries, with the Soviet Union rating a

whole column. Much of this column reports Yiddish cultural activities in the Soviet Union and belies the magazine's own propaganda about cultural suppression, but about half of it is the usual slander picked up from various sources. In the April issue, for example, we are told of the Vilna, Lithuania Yiddish Theatre and Dance Group giving its 200th performance in 14 years, witnessed by 250,000 spectators over that period. We are told of the December 15, 1970 concert of Jewish music by the tenor, Mikhail Alexandrovich, filling the Philharmonia Hall. In the next sentence, however, we hear of the "sit-in" in the office of President Podgorny by 24 Jewish citizens in support of their application to emigrate to Israel. No doubt the editors are trying to appear "balanced." Along with some "good things" they report some "bad things." However, the January 1971 issue saw the whole page devoted to the letter of "the 92 heads of Jewish families in Riga to 23 Communist Parties." The editors did not mention that many of these names appear to be the same on the various petitions and letters being circulated about the right to emigrate to Israel.

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On the Angela Davis case, there is practically nothing. The only material given any prominence was the statements of the Urban League and Bishop Spottswood of the NAACP calling for a fair trial for Angela Davis. Statements of the Emma Lazarus and Jewish Cultural Clubs were also printed. Aside from this, while Angela Davis was sitting in solitary confinement for over eight months and brutally mistreated, the editors of Jewish Currents said nothing for her freedom, this from a magazine whose editors constantly talk of "freedom and human rights." Even the bourgeois press prints more on the Angela Davis case than does a magazine which calls itself a progressive publication. A test of a Marxist, of one dedicated to socialism, is how he fights against racism and on behalf of its victims. In the cases of Angela Davis, Ruchell Magee and Bobby Seale, Jewish Currents has failed this test.

Space does not permit us to list the large amount of anti-Soviet material in each issue. We should like, however, to call attention to a few such items. In the March 1970 issue there is an editorial entitled, "Questions for the Soviet Party Congress." Among the questions are the following: "Will a stop be announced to all contemplated trials of those Soviet Jews who have declared their desire to emigrate to Israel?"

"Will a halt be declared in the provocative practice in the Soviet press of trying to equate Zionism with Nazism or Israeli practice and policies with Nazi theory and practice?"

"Will there be a loud restatement of socialist and Soviet opposition to anti-Semitism in all its forms and manifestations, both obvious and subtle?"

"Will there be an analysis and a forthright repudiation of the

practice of forced assimilation of the Soviet Jewish nationality?"

"Finally, if the recent international concern with the Soviet Jewish situation has caught the Party Congress unprepared to deal with the complex problem at this Congress, will the Congress at least announce that it will in the near future prepare a Party Conference on the Soviet Jewish question?"

In short, will it capitulate to the anti-Soviet crusade? What monumental arrogance! This to a country that literally bore the brunt of defeating the Nazi armies; that saved hundreds of thousands of its own and other European Jews from the advancing Nazi armies; that abolished the prison house of anti-Semitism that existed under Tsarist rule; this to a country where all areas of life are freely open to all Jewish citizens; where there are none of the bombings of Jewish synagogues that disgrace our country; where no neo-Nazi organizations, with their tons of anti-Semitic filth are allowed to exist. To accuse such a country of oppression of its Jewish citizens is a monstrous falsehood that aids only the most reactionary enemies of the people.

Even C.L. Sulzberger, veteran anti-Sovieteer of the New York Times was compelled to admit "that the Soviet regime is not committed to internal anti-Semitism" and that "real anti-Semitism is concentrated among relatively few bigots"; that "open anti-Semitism is unusual." Sulzberger further states: "For most of this vast country anti-Semitism as such is socially and politically not evident." Would that we could say that about our own country!

In the same issue is another piece of distortion by Louis Harap entitled, "The Soviet Jewish Situation." Harap tells us that "the concessions yielded on Jewish nationality rights in these years (after Krushchev) have not been made out of principle but in order to blunt protest at home and abroad that was damaging to Soviet prestige. The basic practice of forced assimilation remains in effect." And he proceeds to repeat a number of the standard anti-Soviet slanders. Harap calls upon the Soviet leaders to "return to a Leninist policy." He adds that "silence is surely not the way to help Soviet Jews restore their rights....But the utmost responsibility must be exercised in public appeals and protests." Thus, he poses as an exponent of "responsible" anti-Sovietism.

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To conclude, we would like to call attention to a speech by Dr. Nathan Hurvitz, a Los Angeles psychologist, to the March 14th Annual Conference of the Los Angeles Jewish Currents Committee, appearing in the June 1971 issue.

Hurvitz talks of problems faced by Jews who are progressives, radicals and socialists. The first problem he lists is that of Blacks who spread stereotypes about Jews. He says that "we must explain to them" that Jews are members of a minority too. Why explain

to Blacks, unless you feel that the main threat of anti-Jewish action is now coming from that direction? Hurvitz says that "not Jews or Blacks, but the white ruling establishment is the common enemy." If this is the "explanation" to be given Blacks, it would better not be given. It is not the white ruling establishment but the capitalist class that is the common enemy. At any rate, a little less explaining would be necessary if Jewish Currents fought among the Jewish people for the freedom of Angela Davis and other political prisoners and against the oppression of Black Americans. The second problem posed is "that some Jewish and non-Jewish progressives, radicals and socialists have a very harmful attitude to Israel." "Again," we must explain "that it is a perversion of the truth to label Israel as a product and tool of imperialist forces."

Problem number three is that "There is a great distress about the situation of the Jews in the socialist countries of Europe.... And progressives must not permit efforts to alleviate the present situation of Jews in the socialist states to be perverted into a campaign against the socialist countries or against socialism." Mr. Hurvitz states that "the Soviet Union has created anxiety among its Jewish citizens." He downgrades Jewish cultural life in the USSR as insignificant "despite Sovietish Heimland and Birobidjaner Shtern, the recent publication of a few Yiddish books, the development of few amateur drama groups and a few touring acting companies...." Mr. Hurvitz should read the back pages of his own magazine to see how Jewish culture flourishes in the Soviet Union. He would also do well to look about in his own Los Angeles and see how many Yiddish theatres there are there, or how many Yiddish books or records are issued.

Mr. Hurvitz conceives the main role of Jewish Currents to be to "point out errors in socialist countries." "If this is the purpose, where is the concept of Jewish Marxists of previous years that fighting their own exploiters and oppressors is the main struggle?"

Perhaps the best answer to the policies of Jewish Currents has come from a reader in London, England, in the May 1971 issue. Cecil Nightingale writes:

In every part of the world American imperialism stands as the enemy of the people (you understand this probably better than I do!) and I cannot believe the Middle East is any different.

I would go further and claim that the Soviet Union stands throughout the world for the socialist advance we both desire....

In these critical days, when the stakes are so high it seems to me tragic that Jews in the capitalist countries have so largely been captured by a Zionist chauvinism which binds them to imperialism--against all those forces with whom they should be united.

The central issue today is the movement towards socialism-- in many different ways, along differing paths--but alliance with imperialism cannot possibly be an option. To see the friendship between Golda Meir and Nixon makes me ashamed to be a Jew. How can we support a political line which leads to unity with the killers of Vietnam?

It is logical that the capitalist ruling class of Israel-- and their branches in Britain, USA, etc--should lead anti-Communist and anti-Soviet campaigns--as pace makers for imperialism--but surely it is our Jewish responsibility to the world liberation movement to expose the real aims that are behind this, to show the class interests at the heart of the struggle over the Middle East....

It seems to me that while we could easily make mistakes of analysis in 1967 when the situation certainly was confused, we are not entitled to make them three years later when political developments have thrown a blinding light on the whole situation.

Mr. Nightingale's letter shows clearly the state of political deterioration to which its editors have brought Jewish Currents today.

We are confident that the readers of Jewish Currents, devoted to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, to working-class power, to a struggle against racism and the real anti-Semitism in this country, and to proletarian internationalism, will not accept the line and policies dominating Jewish Currents today.

* * *

JEWISH COOPERATIVES IN POLAND

By Sol Flapan

WARSAW, April 10 - The Moshe Olgin Cooperative in Wroclaw, southwest Poland, has just been hailed in a special broadcast over the local station of the Polish radio network. The occasion was the 25th anniversary of this Jewish shoe manufacturing cooperative named after that sterling American Jewish Communist leader and longtime editor of the Morning Freiheit of New York.

This is reported in the current week's issue of Folks-Shtime, organ of the Social and Cultural Society of Jews in Poland, by Leib Czaper, an activist of the organization's Wroclaw branch.

The radio program recalled that the Moshe Olgin Cooperative was organized by a group of Jewish workers, repatriates from the Soviet Union. They set up shop in a tiny room on Wladkowica Street in war-devastated Wroclaw. They started out with no money or machines. But what they did have was an abundance of enthusiasm and faith in the new life being born then.

From a name and a hope, the cooperative soon became a thriving business which now employs 400 men and women turning out 300,000 pairs of shoes annually. Increased output is being mapped out now.

Reporter Leib Czaper says the special Wroclaw Radio program wished the collective of the Moshe Olgin Cooperative continued fruitful work. The entire Jewish community, he says, has joined in celebrating the organization's silver anniversary.

Meanwhile, a corner of the Polish language page of this Yiddish journal is devoted to "Bumet," another Jewish producers' cooperative.

For the 26th time, reports Folks-Shtime, Warsaw-based "Bumet" displayed its wares at the recent annual National Trade Fair in Poznan. This midwest city is also the site of the International Trade Fair held every June.

"Bumet" presented 58 products it manufactures - 18 general household appliances, 17 models of toys and 13 types of plastic foil products and it won 12 million zlotys worth of contracts in stiff competition.

This sharp rivalry with manufacturers of similar products keeps "Bumet" on its toes, an official told Folks-Shtime. He also underscored the importance of the National Trade Fairs for his enterprise and he expressed satisfaction over deals concluded.

The role and workmanship of Jewish cooperatives has always been highly rated here since the dawn of People's rule. Reporting on an exhibition of Jewish cooperative-made products in Wroclaw in the Autumn of 1946, the Trybuna Dolnoślaska, (Lower Silesia Tribune), said, "We refer all those sceptics who doubted in the possibility of the existence of a viable Jewish community in Lower Silesia to that exhibition." Three years later, the First Secretary of the Wroclaw Province Committee of the Polish United Workers Party praised the achievements of the "Zgoda" and the Moshe Olgin Cooperative. (Bulletin No. 75 of the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, 1970.)

For the working Jews, socialist Poland has become synonymous with social justice.

* * *

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE JEWISH CULTURAL CLUBS IN CHICAGO

By Jack Kling

Dear Comrades and Friends,

In writing this letter to you, I should like to convey some of

my impressions of the annual dinner sponsored by the Clubs and held on Saturday, June 5, 1971.

On the whole, I thought it was a very fine and successful affair. The attendance and the composition of those present seemed very good. It was a pleasure to see the number of Black people present. The presence of such people as Mrs. Anna Langford, Professor Curtis McDougall, the Secretary of the Soviet Embassy and others helped strengthen the character and importance of this affair.

I also feel your selection of Attorney Irving Steinberg to be honored for the reasons given was most appropriate. Steinberg is indeed an outstanding personality and well deserving of the honor given him.

To have carried through such a successful affair at a time when during the last few years the Clubs have been weakened because they sustained the loss of some of our most able and devoted leaders like Sam Cheifetz, Hyman Sherman, Simon Ross, Leo Berman, Martin Joffee, Helen Lewis and others is a tribute to both the present leadership and membership of the Jewish Cultural Clubs.

It has been said before, and it's worth repeating, that the Jewish Cultural Club movement has a rich history and experience in the struggle for peace although there are differences especially on matters relating to the Middle East, Israel, etc. The Club movement, going back to the IWO days, has proudly contributed and supported the struggles of the working class to improve their conditions and build the trade unions. They also have an unforgettable history in the struggle against racism, anti-Semitism and McCarthyism. Joe Rosen ably spoke of the Clubs' role in the struggle against McCarthyism. The Clubs also have given support to every effort to strengthen and improve the progressive traditions of the Jewish people. This is reflected by its being the main support of the Jewish Children's School, and by its support to the Jewish Peoples Choral Society, the IKUF, the Reading Circles, etc.

It is because of this history and role and because sections of the progressive Jewish movement look to the Clubs for leadership, that I am prompted to write this letter to you.

I would like to call to your attention, in a comradely way, to what I consider some negative features, which I feel may bring irreparable harm to the Clubs if not rectified.

1. It seems to me that today it is not enough to speak about McCarthyism in general, but we have to be very concrete. Today, one of the sharpest expressions of McCarthyism and racism is the Angela Davis case. Certainly it is not the only case--we must support every case against repression--but the Angela Davis case is the most important one because it embodies within itself political persecution of a well-known Communist, a prominent educator, a Black woman and an outstanding freedom fighter. Yet the only person at

the banquet who mentioned the name of Angela Davis and discussed her case and spoke well of it was Irving Steinberg. I don't think this was accidental. In fact, I know people in the progressive Jewish movement, including the Clubs, who have a wrong, harmful and even racist position on the Angela Davis case. Should not the Club leadership, in light of its long history of fighting repression, have spoken up and even given leadership on this case?

2. I understand that at a meeting of the City Committee, when a discussion took place on how I should be introduced at the banquet, a proposal to introduce me as the Secretary of the Communist Party was voted down. Instead it was decided that I should be introduced as the former manager of the Morning Freiheit and one active in other progressive movements. Thought should be given as to why the Committee took such a position. I contend that those who voted against announcing me as the Secretary of the Party reflect a fear as a result of political pressures and are themselves victims of present-day McCarthyism, and by persisting in such a point of view they really don't help the struggle against McCarthyism but capitulate to it.

Dear comrades, just stop and think. I attend a conference of the Martin Luther King Commemoration Committee. At this meeting there are present trade union leaders, peace and civil rights leaders, church leaders, etc., and I am introduced as a representative of the Communist Party. And this is true also of the Peace Council. Communists, including myself, are invited to speak before church groups, colleges and universities but at the Club banquet, we are "afraid" to introduce Kling as Secretary of the C.P.

3. When I was the manager of the Morning Freiheit, I was invited regularly to speak before clubs, Emma Lazarus Clubs, reading circles, etc. But since I have been Secretary of the Party, I have been invited to speak only once at a Freiheit conference and that was all. I have been invited to speak at memorial meetings, unveiling of stones, funerals, but never at a Club meeting.

In the past two years, the progressive Lithuanian movement has invited me twice to speak at banquets with over 200 in attendance at each, and they have introduced me as what I am. The Russians have done the same. Should we in the progressive Jewish movement not ask ourselves how come we have not done so?

In my honest judgement, we have to face up to this matter. To fight present-day McCarthyism and the growing danger of fascist reaction, requires frankness, boldness, bluntness and courage which the progressive Jewish movement has in the past displayed in abundance.

I write this letter with pain, for I know almost all of the leaders of the Club movement personally and I have deep feeling, respect and love for most of our comrades. I urge you to pause and think over what I have raised in this letter. If you want to discuss this, or any other matter with me, I will be happy to make myself available.

ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS
TO "SOVETISH HEIMLAND"

Editorial Board
Sovetish Heimland
17 Kirov Street
Moscow Center
U.S.S.R.

July 23, 1971

Dear Comrades:

It is with great pleasure that we, the Editorial Committee of the journal Jewish Affairs, extend to you our warmest greetings on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Sovetish Heimland. Your journal has been a beacon light of Jewish culture, not only for Soviet Jews but for Jews in other parts of the world as well. Its high literary standards, its encouragement of the development of writers in the Yiddish language, and its contribution to peace, progress and the building of communism, all give the lie to the enemies of the Soviet Union who spread the foul slander of "Soviet anti-Semitism" and accuse the Soviet government of stifling the cultural life of Soviet Jews.

We, Jewish Communists in the United States, know very well the tremendous advances made by the Soviet Jewish people since the overthrow of the hated Tsarist rule, and the full equality with all other Soviet citizens which the victory of socialism has brought about. Those among the Jews in our country who carry on the vicious campaign of slander against the U.S.S.R. work against the best interests of Jews everywhere and serve only the cause of political reaction and racism. On our part, we are waging a determined struggle against this campaign of vilification and slander in our country, and we are determined to intensify our efforts and to work to strengthen the bonds of friendship between our peoples.

We wish you, dear comrades, all success in your endeavors and many, many more years of fruitful work.

Fraternally,

David Fried
Alex Kolkin

Jack Kling
Hyman Lumer

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WORLD-WIDE ISRAELI CITIZENSHIP -
AN ELABORATION IN ZIONIST IDEOLOGY

(The following statement was published by the Communist Party of Israel as a supplement to its Information Bulletin, No. 6, 1971.)

The Israeli rulers have found a new gimmick in translating Zionist ideology into Zionist practice - an amendment to the Israeli Citizenship Law which gave the Israeli Minister of Interior the right - at his discretion - to grant citizenship to any Jew, wherever he is, notwithstanding his legal status, provided "he expressed a desire to settle in Israel," but before he reaches its shores (The press, May 18, 1971).

The Israeli authorities did not hide the fact that the amendment is meant to "meet the situation of Soviet Jews."

Directly after the Knesset endorsement of the measure, heads of the Zionist parliamentary factions went to the Western Wall to inform immigrants from the Soviet Union of the "historic" step (!!).

The danger in the amendment lies in the intentions of the Israeli ruling circles to use it to grant Soviet citizens, even though accused of crimes and law breaches, Israeli citizenship and thus extend their "legal" protection over them. It is enough that these Soviet people be certified as Jews--and the Minister of Interior be convinced of their plan, at some future date, to migrate to Israel. For this purpose a statement of a relative could satisfy the Minister.

Obviously the Israeli-Zionist strategists believe that their anti-Soviet slanders would be more convincing when they defend "Israeli" citizens in the Soviet Union!

* * *

The protagonists of this step emphasized that the amendment in the Citizenship Law was a "qualitative development" of the Law of Return of 1950 which acclaimed that "a Jew who comes to Israel and after his arrival expresses a desire to settle there may, while in Israel obtain an immigrant certificate" (of citizenship).

The truth is that the new amendment cancels the rational conditions for granting citizenship as observed by states and decides that a Jew no matter what he has done and not withstanding the laws of his country, can become an Israeli citizen by a minister's decree. Thus the Israeli ruling circles put themselves above international law and practice.

Furthermore this is an extension of the Zionist ideology. For if until now the Zionists considered the Jewish communities everywhere an organic whole of one world nation, but conceded that loyalty to Israel

be confined to its citizens, and that Jews may be loyal to other countries, today they want the world to recognize that Israel is the state of the world Jewish nation, that Jews everywhere must be loyal to the world Jewish state, and that this world Jewish state will extend its wings over the Jews irrespective of boundaries and limitations.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to escape the fact that only a racist approach dictated the amendment which gives a Jew wherever he lives citizenship in a country he never saw or knew, while an Arab of this country is denied citizenship because he changed his residence sometime in 1948. Moreover, the refugees are denied the right to return to their homeland.

There is only one government in recent history - Nazi Germany - which claimed "guardianship" over Germans - irrespective of their status and centers of residence - and carried out aggressive acts in "their defense"!

The banner of "defense of Soviet Jews" has become conspicuously suspect. The legends of the "Jewish national awakening" in the Soviet Union and the desire of Soviet Jews to return to the "ancestral homeland" are dissolving slowly but surely.

Thus a number of Soviet Jews who came to Israel have returned to their country, and still more have unsuccessfully tried to do so, after discovering the truth of Zionist propaganda and feeling the weight of alienation in the "ancestral homeland."

Another group used Israel as a transit station and moved to other lands where they are endeavoring to settle.

And some who settled in Israel have shown a reactionary racist outlook which gives little credit to Israel. One group, for example, - according to the Jerusalem Post of May 24, 1971 - appealed to the Prime Minister Golda Meir to change the law on "Who is a Jew" as it applies to immigrants, because "It opens the way for gentiles to become part of us by fictitious conversions and false registration." After saying that this is a Bolshevik conspiracy "to destroy our people" these ex-Soviet Jews ask for an amendment to fit the "Halakha," the religious racist tradition which governs the concept of who is a Jew.

* * *

To understand the essence and the timing of this amendment to the Citizenship Law, it has to be seen as part and parcel of the general line of Israeli official policy of which anti-Sovietism forms a main plank.

Anti-Soviet slander has become an inseparable part of Zionist ideology and practice and is being elevated into a basic dogma of faith.

The world Zionist leadership - including the Israeli ruling circles - have elaborated anti-Sovietism by using all means and all avenues to expand incitement against the Soviet Union.

The trials in Leningrad and Riga in May 1971, of Soviet citizens accused of transgressing Soviet laws were exploited for intensive anti-Soviet agitation. This process stretched from passive demonstrations to rowdy harassment of Soviet diplomats and have now been "formalized" into a complaint submitted on May 26, 1971 by the Israeli U.N. representative J. Tekoah to the U.N. Secretary General U Thant, protesting against the "show trials of Jews" (!!).

The Zionist leaders in their attempt to deceive public opinion "discount" the facts that the accused breached Soviet laws, and attempted to undermine public faith in the policy of the Soviet Union; they deny emphatically that those accused - and subsequently condemned judicially - carried instructions issued by Israeli-Zionist authorities.

But accumulating facts show that the Zionist-Israeli leadership are the architects of the "spontaneous" (!!) anti-Soviet world-wide campaign. On May 15, 1971 the Soviet Embassy counsellor in London, C. Kuznetsov, provided reporters who attended the press conference with copies of documents proving the complicity of the Israeli ruling circles with anti-Soviet activities in Britain.

Some documents were detailed instructions to British Zionists to organize "street demonstrations at the embassy and mobilize public figures to provocatively 'request' visas to attend the Riga trial."

The documents were actually seized at the London Soviet Embassy when a certain Alan Freeman, heading a noisy group of Zionists which tried to invade the embassy, left his brief case in the scuffle which ensued.

Moreover, it is becoming more and more clear that the anti-Soviet, Zionist-inspired agitation is losing ground, and decent people are increasingly shunning such activities*; consequently it is falling into the hands of fascist elements organized in the Jewish Defense League. These are now the spearhead of the "struggle in defense of Soviet Jews."

The true character of the Zionist Jewish Defense League was profoundly emphasized lately when its leader Rabbi Meir Kahane signed a pact of mutual cooperation with Joseph Colombo Sr., one of the leaders of organized crime. (Jerusalem Post, May 16, 1971.)

* The Jewish Chronicle, May 7, 1971 lamented the "poor attendance of forty people" in Manchester at a meeting called to warn against the "plight" of Soviet Jews.

The French sociologist of Jewish origin, Georges Friedmann, in his book The End of the Jewish People, explains the question posed by Zionism and writes:

In the last analysis the existence of the state of Israel seems to leave the Jews of our "second twentieth century" only two alternatives, not three, in the matter of national allegiance:

(1) Those who are "Israel centered" must go there, become citizens of the young state, take an active part in its construction and devote themselves wholeheartedly to the success of the experiment.

(2) Those who are not Israel-centered and do not believe that the "Jewish people" constitute a national community must be citizens of the state in which they live, like any others, having only one allegiance and one country, however great their sympathy with and interest in Israel may be. (Doubleday, New York, 1967, p. 247.)

This is exactly the process which Zionism is trying to arrest through its pressure on Jewish communities in various countries. Granting of "absentee" citizenship is the latest means.

It is significant that imperialist countries do not show any concern at this development. This is more glaring in view of the fact that the U.S. imperialists - to take them as an example - accuse Communists of lack of loyalty to their countries, by falsifying their class attitudes and feelings of solidarity with the Soviet Union, which correspond to the best interests of the working people.

This is due to the collusion between imperialist policies and Zionist practice as embodied in the policy of the Zionist Israeli ruling circles and the World Zionist Organization.

Dr. William Wexler, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of major American Jewish organizations has expressed it in these words: "Mr. Nixon's policy towards Israel is very much in line with Jewish desires. In this case, it's all a matter of what is right and best for the country" (meaning best for US imperialism). (Time, March 16, 1970.) Therefore it was natural that a number of imperialist countries - such as the US and West Germany - should favour a "double nationality" and accept the fact that their citizens are also citizens of Israel.

* * *

It is not clear yet from the amendment whether these "Israeli citizens," who never had been in Israel and never had been involved in its political life, will have voting rights - active and passive - thereby influencing Israeli policies. Since the granting of citizenship in these cases is handed over to the sole discretion of the Minister of the Interior (that is, the government) the law may be