THE PRICE OF LIBERTY

A History of The American Jewish Committee

"Eternal Vigilance is the price of liberty"

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THE PRICE OF LIBERTY

A History of
The American Jewish Committee

BY

NATHAN SCHACHNER

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
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PREFACE

It must be stated at the outset that this is not an official history of the American Jewish Committee. Though sponsored by and issued under the imprint of the Committee no attempt has been made by its officers or members to censor or influence in any way the judgments and interpretations of the author. He is to be considered as solely responsible for the material that has gone into this book.

The archives, documents and reports of the Committee have been placed freely at the disposal of the author without let or hindrance. He has attempted, though himself currently a member of the staff, to be wholly objective in the writing of the history. He has also attempted to place the activities of the Committee as adequately as possible against the background of world events during the forty years of its existence. Whether he has succeeded or not is for the reader to judge.

Grateful thanks are due to the following for their assistance and cooperation: Mr. Jacob Blaustein, Mrs. Carol S. Diamond, Mr. George Hexter, Miss Dessie Kushell, Judge Joseph M. Proskauer, Mr. Richard C. Rothschild, Mr. Harry Schneiderman, Mr. David Sher, Mr. Zachariah Shuster, Dr. John Slawson, Dr. Leo Stein, Mr. Alan M. Stroock, Mr. Morris D. Waldman, Mr. Leonard Weil, and the members of the staff of the Committee as a whole.

New York, November, 1947.

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF EVENTS

ON the morning of April 19, 1903 the Jews of Kishinev, in the Russian province of Bessarabia, were celebrating the last day of Passover while their Christian neighbors were similarly engaged with Easter Sunday, dedicated to the Prince of Peace. Nothing seemed likely to mar the sanctity of either occasion.

At the stroke of noon, however, the church bells of the city burst into a sudden clangorous din. As if by preconcerted signal, bands of armed men swarmed out into the streets and converged with torch, gun and knotted whip upon the Jewish quarter. Another pogrom was under way.

For two days and two nights the horror reigned unchecked. Drunken, howling mobs roamed the streets at will, burning, looting, raping, killing. Defenseless Jews were dragged from hiding places and tortured in bestial fashions until then unknown. Babes in arms were dashed to death; women dishonored and then mutilated beyond recognition. The synagogues were invaded and the sacred scrolls trampled under bloody boots. The shops were smashed and the loot passed from hand to hand. The police stood idly by, preserving a complacent neutrality until some desperate Jew sought to defend himself with fist or club. Then the upholders of the law swung into action—against the victim!

On the third day the unslaked mobs prepared to resume their dreadful work. But official word came down from St. Petersburg. A reluctant government, bowing to external pressure, had finally ordered troops upon the scene. The rioters disappeared as if by magic, the idle police once more patrolled the streets, and the sur-

viving Jews were left to bind up their wounds and search out their dead.

Forty-five lay lifeless, with their tortures plain upon them; almost six hundred more were wounded and disfigured; fifteen hundred shops and dwellings had been gutted and destroyed. Thousands of dazed survivors huddled in the smoking ruins, destitute, homeless, without food or clothing or further hope. The Kishenev Massacre was over; but the sound of its reverberations had only begun.

The news as it flashed over the telegraph wires and the cables brought a thrill of horror and revulsion to the entire Western world. Christian and Jew alike united in denunciations of the barbarity that had appeared in eastern Europe. There had been pogroms before in Russia, notably in Kiev, Odessa and elsewhere in 1881, that had sent hundreds of thousands of terror-stricken Jews in flight from the country of their birth. Other excesses had occurred in Rumania and Galicia; while the infamous "May Laws" of 1882 had herded the Jews of Russia into designated Pales and restored the Ghetto system to a world that had thought it swept forever into the discard.

But civilized conscience had not yet been dulled by an excess of horrors as it was later to become. Christian precepts still evoked response. It was true that anti-Semitism was not an unknown factor in western Europe. The generous humanitarian and equalitarian ardors that had hailed the beginning of the nineteenth century had become considerably blunted by the end of that era. Anti-Semitic agitation had reared its head in Germany in obedience to the new "racist" myth; France, the classic initiator of Enlightenment and Emancipation, had just passed through the Dreyfus Affair; other countries had had their uglier moments. By and large, however, anti-Semitism in western Europe and America was still a matter of sentiment and covert talk rather than of open action, and certainly nowhere did it obtain official approbation and sanction.

Neither denunciation from western pulpits nor representations from western governments deterred Russia or Rumania from further persecutions of their Jewish citizens. Disorders, riots and expropriations continued. Anti-Semitism was officially linked with absolutism and the status quo. When the struggle for liberalism commenced and demands for a constitutional government arose, reaction countered with cries of "Down with the Constitution and the Jews" and organized its "Black Hundreds." The revolution of 1905 was crushed in blood, and the occasion seized for additional widespread pogroms. Again there was a desperate rush of Jews to flee terror and death. A new Diaspora was in the making which threatened to outdistance the initial mass migration that had begun with the pogroms of 1881.

Where could these hapless victims of brutality and reaction go? The Balkan countries were almost as bad as Russia. Germany and France viewed unfavorably a sudden mass descent. England had absorbed from previous dispersals as many as she felt she could. Only America, vast, illimitable, generous, remained.

* * *

The Jews were no newcomers in the land across the sea. They might indeed be said to have a proprietary interest in the western hemisphere. For without the encouragement, financial and otherwise, of the Marranos of Spain Columbus might never have been able to sail. And it was a Jew who first set foot on the virgin soil of the New World.

From the earliest times the Colonies had Jews in their midst. In fact, the matter was brought sharply to the attention of the world in 1905 when the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the landing of a sizable boatload of Jews in New Amsterdam was celebrated with due pomp and ceremony.

The first groups to come to America were chiefly Sephardic, of Spanish, Dutch and Portuguese origin. They found little opposi-

tion to their coming and they were able to integrate themselves rapidly into the American scene. While there were initial difficulties in certain of the Colonies, chiefly with respect to political disabilities rather than to human rights, these matters were gradually ironed out and the Jew took his place in the community on an equal basis with American citizens of other faiths.

Up to the eighteen-forties the Jewish population in the United States was comparatively static. Only a trickle of immigrants continued to arrive each year, and the great majority of those who adhered to the Jewish faith were either native-born or already long-established. Each community had its synagogue and its traditional customs; but the Jews of America felt no need for any communal organization on a national scale or for any undertaking involving conjoint action.

By 1848, however, the situation changed. The revolutions that had swept Europe in that year of crisis collapsed. Liberalism died; repression and reaction were the order of the day. The defeated revolutionaries and their liberal sympathizers fled to the freer shores of America. Since the reaction was heaviest-handed in Germany, the political refugees were largely German; included among them was a considerable number of Jews.

It must be emphasized that these German Jews were not fleeing religious persecution so much as political reaction and the loss of economic opportunities. They continued to come all through the Civil War and during the post-war reconstruction period. Hard-working, industrious, frugal, these newly arrived German Jews spread through the hinterland of America and soon carved out respected niches for themselves in American society. The old Sephardic Jews became the minority; the newer immigrants of German descent the majority. Nevertheless, this second wave was by no means of tidal proportions. In 1876 the total Jewish population of the United States did not exceed two hundred and fifty thousand.

By the next decade, however, the situation had again changed. A third wave of immigration, larger by far than any that had yet

preceded it, swept upon the American shore and continued in full flood right into the twentieth century, when the barrier of restrictive legislation dammed it once more to a thin trickle. Within a quarter of a century the number of Jews had risen to a million and a half.

This tremendous increase brought in its train certain serious problems. For the newcomers differed in many respects from their earlier brethren. They came from eastern Europe—Russia, Rumania, Galicia—and not from Germany. They were fleeing religious and "racial" persecutions which were directed specifically against them as Jews and not a political reaction which included Jews and Christians alike. Immured perforce behind almost medieval walls and having little contact with their Gentile neighbors or with the main stream of western civilization, their manners, customs and religious orthodoxy were alien to the German Jews of the second wave and to the Sephardic Jews of the earliest group. These problems called for solution.

But solution was not easy. The newcomers remained largely on the eastern seaboard and in the great cities. They tended to inhabit the same quarters in those cities. They brought with them the beliefs and traditions that had served them for centuries in eastern Europe. The German Jews, longer on the American scene, had been possessed, even before their coming, of a different heritage. It was small wonder, therefore, that the two bodies of Jews momentarily confronted each other with something of suspicion and a lack of mutual confidence.

The Sephardic and German groups, comparatively homogeneous in point of origin and culture, had formed their own Jewish communities and organizations. These adequately expressed their needs and aspirations. In 1859 a number of congregations sent representatives to a Board of Delegates of American Israelites, a loose general organization whose avowed objects were to aid Jews overseas, gather information and statistical data, promote Jewish education and work for a larger unity among American Jews. In 1878 this

Board of Delegates was merged with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, established five years earlier by Rabbi Isaac M. Wise, the leader of Reform Judaism in the United States. Also in existence was the Order of B'nai Brith, a fraternal and social lodge whose activities included somewhat similar aims.

But these early organizations did not pretend to be all-embracing or to speak authoritatively in the name of the Jews of America. Certainly the Union, which was Reform in religion and largely German in background, had very few points of contact with the newly arrived Orthodox immigrants from Russia, Rumania and Galicia. The newcomers promptly established their own congregations, lodges and associations. The two segments of Jewish life in America tended to remain apart, to work independently of each other. There was little unity of action, or any attempt to solve their common problems.

Nor did the world at large possess a Sanhedrin or General Council that could presume to speak for all Jewry. The struggle for Jewish emancipation, for the preservation of Jewish rights and liberties, was left either to individuals loosely associated or to the interaction of forces not of their making.

In 1858, however, the Mortara affair in Italy had pointed up the need for some closely-knit, substantive group whose tongue could speak with the voice of combined Jewry. Edgar Mortara, the six-year-old son of a Jewish family in Bologna, had been secretly baptized by his Catholic nurse during a serious illness. On his recovery the Church insisted that such baptism so administered, even without the knowledge or consent of his parents, necessarily made him a Catholic and therefore within the jurisdiction of the Church. To ensure his proper Catholic upbringing Papal gendarmes took the lad by force from his protesting family. The violence of the act and the medieval doctrine asserted shocked even Catholics. Protests poured in on Pius IX from such Catholic monarchs as Napoleon III of France and Franz Joseph of Austria.

The Pope was obdurate, and the boy remained in the hands of his captors.

The immediate result was the organization in 1860 of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris with the avowed object of defending Jewish rights wherever attacked. The scope and membership of the Alliance was intended to be worldwide and branches were established in various other European countries. Primarily, however, it remained a French association. The Board of Delegates of American Israelites also came into being as a result of the Mortara kidnapping.

But the Alliance and kindred groups, such as the Anglo-Jewish Association, organized in 1871, were ill-adapted to perform the functions for which they had been called into existence. They possessed neither authority nor adequate funds nor tight-knit structure. And, with the passage of the years, they lapsed to narrower and more local objectives.

So that, when the Kishinev Massacre and the systematic, semi-official campaign of persecution of the Jews in eastern Europe again startled the world, there was no Jewish organization or established body that could properly cope with the situation.

The first and most immediate task was to succour the survivors and supply them with the necessities of life. Thousands on thousands were homeless, starving, ruined. Vast sums of money had to be raised, and at once. All eyes turned imploringly to America, the only country where the Jews had sufficient means to meet the gigantic need. But the machinery for action was not at hand. It had to be improvised.

Three American Jews undertook on a private and voluntary basis to organize relief for their suffering co-religionists. They were: Oscar S. Straus, jurist, philanthropist and former ambassador to Turkey; Jacob H. Schiff, head of Kuhn, Loeb and Co. and philanthropist extraordinary; and Cyrus L. Sulzberger, whose wide range of human interests covered not only welfare work among Jews

but the furtherance of good government in the United States.

These three men set promptly to work. As officers of a National Committee for the Relief of Sufferers by Russian Massacres they sent fourteen hundred telegrams broadcast over America setting forth the need and appealing for instant funds. The response was immediate and overwhelming. Over a million and a quarter dollars was collected, pooled with similar funds raised in Great Britain, France, Germany and elsewhere, and turned over for relief work to Jewish communal organizations in Russia.

Its work accomplished, the Committee disbanded. It had done its job thoroughly and well, though not without criticism from certain sections of the Jewish press as to the handling of the fund and querulous complaints that a few men had unduly arrogated to themselves powers that might better have been left to existing local congregations.

The immediate task was finished. But the pogroms in Russia were by no means ended and anti-Semitic outbreaks continued sporadically in Rumania and Galicia. There were also ominous rumblings in other portions of the world. It could not be expected that the same three men would again, and on every occasion, assume such tremendous personal responsibility. Mr. Schiff declared himself emphatically on that point.

But the need remained. What had happened proved the necessity for a permanent organization of national scope and representation, which was geared to act swiftly and efficiently whenever emergencies arose. Why not, it was asked, establish an American Committee or Congress that would, without interfering with any local organization, deal with contingencies of this nature and furnish assistance to the Jews of Europe generally? Why not also, it was further inquired by others, permit this same Committee or Congress to handle in a broad, overall fashion Jewish affairs of interest to the Jews of *America*? It is important to note that these were two distinct proposals. It was from the latter that much of the difficulties and misunderstandings were to come in the future.

The agitation for such an organization increased. Toward the end of 1905 the American Hebrew, national Jewish publication, ran a symposium discussing its desirability. Dr. Cyrus Adler, noted scholar, archaeologist and accepted leader of conservative Judaism in America, contributed an article to the issue of January 5, 1906.

He argued that "the affairs of the Jew throughout the world are so important as to make it necessary and desirable that there should be a national Jewish organization in the United States which can, in cases of necessity, cooperate with similar bodies in other countries for the welfare of the Jews elsewhere. No existing body or committee represents the Jews of America, but even in the most favorable case, only a very small number of them."

Yet he felt that a Congress that would assume to act or legislate in local Jewish matters or on matters of religious controversy was "neither possible nor desirable." Instead he advocated the formation of committees in every state "to act on behalf of the state in matters affecting the people of that state." These state committees were to elect delegates to a national committee whose single voice "should speak in behalf of the Jews of America on matters of national and international importance."

Different proposals were submitted by other contributors. There were contradictions and vehement objections. While it was generally agreed that something *ought* to be done, no one seemed able to propose a plan that would meet with universal acceptance. Under these circumstances there was grave danger that the discussion would end in considerable heat and no light.

Five men met in New York to consider the situation. All of them were leading Americans as well as Jews and held in universal esteem. They were: Louis Marshall, one of the great Constitutional lawyers of his time; Samuel Greenbaum, Justice of the New York State Supreme Court; Nathan Bijur, then a prominent New York attorney and later likewise to be elevated to the Supreme Court bench; Cyrus L. Sulzberger, prominent advocate of good

government; and Joseph Jacobs, Australian-born historian and authority on folk-lore.

The five men were in general agreement that talk was not enough, and that action was indicated. But they, no more than the body of Jews at large, could unite as to the powers and scope of any proposed organization. It was therefore decided to summon a group of Jews, representative of all sections of the country, to meet in conference and resolve, if possible, the questions in dispute: Should the organization be constituted on a religious or philanthropic basis, or a combination of both; or should its fundamental structure rest on a national and geographic base? These were the vital questions which had aroused so much acrimonious controversy. Perhaps the group of men they had in mind could solve them satisfactorily.

They chose their list of invitations with the greatest care, making certain that every part of the country, every class and condition of Jew was properly represented. Even the Jewish Morning Journal, later critical of the conference, was compelled to admit that all shades and kinds of Jews were present. As the Morning Journal had it, "there were Rabbis, Multi-millionaires, Zionists and Socialists" among the assembled conferees.

On January 8, 1906 a letter was sent to fifty-seven prominent Jews extending an invitation to meet in New York on February 3rd. The purposes of the call are sufficiently indicated in the text of the letter:

HEBREW CHARITIES BUILDING
356 Second Avenue
New York, January 8, 1906.

Dear Sir:

The horrors attending the recent Russian massacres, and the necessity of extending to our brethren, a helping hand in a manner most conducive to the accomplishment of a permanent improvement of their unfortunate condition, have, with remarka-

ble spontaneity, induced thoughtful Jews in all parts of the United States, to suggest the advisability of the formation of a General Committee to deal with the serious problems thus presented, which are likely to recur, even in their acute phases, so long as the objects of our solicitude are subjected to disabilities and persecution, owing to their religious belief.

Appreciating the importance of such a project, and the absolute necessity that, if such a Committee be organized, it shall be on such lines as shall not only meet with the approval of the general public, but shall be free from all objectionable tendencies, the undersigned have concluded to invite a number of representative Jews from the several States in which there is a considerable Jewish population, for the purpose of consulting as to this important subject, and, if it is concluded that such a Committee be formed, to devise a plan and basis for an organization, and to consider the ways and means of effecting its purposes and objects.

You are therefore earnestly requested to meet for such a consultation on Saturday, February 3, 1906, at 8 P.M., and if necessary on the following day, at the Hebrew Charities Building in the City of New York.

If it is your intention to come, will you kindly so state, on enclosed postal card.

Cordially yours,

LOUIS MARSHALL,
SAMUEL GREENBAUM,
NATHAN BIJUR,
CYRUS L. SULZBERGER,
JOSEPH JACOBS, *Secretary.*

CHAPTER II

GENESIS OF AN IDEA

IT is sufficiently indicative of the caliber of the men who sent out the letter of invitation that thirty-two out of fifty-seven answered the summons in person. New York attended unanimously; others came from Baltimore, Boston, Cincinnati, Chicago, Milwaukee, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Washington, Richmond and distant San Francisco. Twelve sent letters of apology for their failure to attend. Only fourteen did not trouble to respond.

The group that sat in the conference room of the Hebrew Charities Building on Saturday evening, February 3, 1906, was as representative a roster of responsible American Jews as had ever come together to discuss Jewish communal problems. Besides the five initiators of the call there were such men as Judge Julian W. Mack of Chicago, Professor Morris Loeb, well-known scientist, Rabbi H. Pereira Mendes, Dr. Cyrus Adler, assistant secretary of the Smithsonian Institute, Rabbi Judah L. Magnes, Adolf Kraus, president of the B'nai Brith, and Simon Wolf, its past president, Oscar S. Straus, former ambassador to Turkey and shortly to be appointed Secretary of Commerce and Labor, Jacob H. Schiff, banker and philanthropist, Judge Mayer Sulzberger of Philadelphia, and Dr. H. G. Enelow of Louisville, who later became Rabbi of Temple Emanu-El in New York.

The meeting was representative, but it was not homogeneous. Among them were Orthodox and Reform, radicals and conservatives, the very rich and the moderately circumstanced, business men and intellectuals—in short, a cross section of American Jewish

leaders. They knew that as Jews they had certain problems in common. But their views on how to handle those problems were sharply divergent. Some even questioned the necessity or the advisability of a permanent central organization and were prepared to quit the conference if matters went too far. There was a tinge of scepticism and even suspicion in the attitude of others.

If the sponsors themselves had come prepared with some definite plan on which they had all agreed, at least there might have been an immediate focal point for discussion. But the five signatories to the call were themselves at odds. The outlook was therefore singularly unpromising.

Mr. Marshall was frank to admit the difficulties they faced when he opened the session. There was a general desire for an organization that could deal generally with Jewish questions, he said, but the nature of such an organization, its structure, method of selection and area of authority were matters of dispute, and he and his colleagues hoped that the assemblage might be able to devise a plan that would prove generally acceptable.

After a brief intermission in which Judge Mayer Sulzberger of Philadelphia was elected chairman and Professor Joseph Jacobs of New York secretary, Mr. Marshall resumed the floor. In order to establish a basis for discussion he proposed the following resolution:

"RESOLVED, that it is the sense of this meeting that there be formed a general organization of the Jews of the United States, for the purpose of dealing with such problems as affect them as a religious body, and their brethren who suffer from persecution throughout the world."

The resolution touched off an immediate and acrimonious debate. There were those who, like Judge Mack of Chicago, were opposed to any organization as superfluous. He felt that the existing bodies were adequately equipped to take care of normal philanthropic and religious needs; emergencies could always be handled by special committees. Others, like Mr. Kraus, president of the

B'nai Brith, objected to any Congress or Central Committee that would assume to speak authoritatively for the Jews of America. Such a Congress, he declared, would in fact be un-American in character; and his own organization, he warned, intended to pursue an independent course, no matter what the assembled group might propose or do.

Mr. Marshall's resolution had said nothing about a *Congress*, nevertheless the debate centered violently around that dread appellation. All were insistent that it was contrary to the American way of life and the spirit of American institutions. If at times it appeared that the objection was purely verbal in nature, the substantive thread that ran through the argument was the fear that a Congress, so named, would invite comparison with the Congress of the United States, and set off the Jews of America in the eyes of their fellow-Americans as a body politic, thereby giving rise to a "Jewish question." As Mr. Schiff significantly remarked: "America might have Jewish questions, but had never hitherto had a Jewish *question*."

Nevertheless, Mr. Schiff felt that a permanent central committee ought to be formed. He recalled his own experience with the volunteer emergency committee to raise funds for the Russian victims. A few individuals had suddenly to decide on actions of immense importance and they had been the targets of considerable criticism. "He would not care," he added bitterly, "to take such responsibility on himself again."

Another stumbling block in the eyes of many was the feeling that though the call for the meeting had specifically mentioned only a committee to deal with the persecutions and disabilities of Jews *abroad*, its powers might be broadened to include legislation binding on Jews at *home*. Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch of Chicago expressed this view with considerable vehemence.

But Dr. Cyrus Adler of Washington brushed aside all qualifications. He was, he declared, forthrightly in favor of a general Jewish Committee as a permanent institution. Nor should its agenda include merely cases of emergency relief; there were plenty of mat-

ters on which it could act right here in the United States. For example, were not American citizens who happened to be Jews deprived of their civil rights when Russia refused to honor their passports? Was there not an increasing tendency in this country to pass laws restricting immigration and limiting the right to naturalization? These and kindred questions demanded a vigilant committee which was representative of the Jews of America and spoke in their name. But such a body must be truly representative and democratic in its selection.

He was seconded by Dr. Magnes of Brooklyn. So far, as he put it, "Hofjuden" or private individuals had presumed to use their own personal influence for the accomplishment of communal purposes. He disapproved of such private endeavor. "The Jewish people ought to have a voice in their own affairs," he said.

The discussion was now gradually taking a significant turn. While a *Congress* might now be considered as definitely dropped, a *Committee* was enlisting increasing, if still mostly cautious support.

Even Mr. Wolf, of the B'nai Brith, though avowing that he saw no need for a new organization, declared that he would not stand in the way of its formation. Only Mr. Kraus, its president, seemed unalterably opposed.

At length, after three and a half hours of continuous debate, the conference adjourned until the following day.

On Sunday morning Mr. Marshall, who had hitherto been content to listen, took the floor. The course of the debate had clarified his own ideas and he had a definite plan to propose. The only way in which a democratic representative body could be selected, he said, was on the basis of the Jewish congregations of America. Such a method would consider the Jews as a religious group only; any other would imply that they were a "race," which was a thoroughly "aristocratic" concept and foreign to American traditions. In order, however, to make the proposed Committee as widely representative as possible, and to provide for the inclusion of laymen as well as religious leaders, he proposed a resolution calling

for a national convention to be convoked quinquennially, with delegates chosen by the Jewish congregations in the several States at meetings held for that purpose.

But Mr. Oscar S. Straus was not in favor of large conventions or religiously-based qualifications for membership. He proposed instead a small committee of fifteen to be chosen by the present conference, "with power to add to their numbers, whose purpose shall be to promote the welfare of Jews in general and to aid in securing their civil and religious rights in all countries where these are denied them."

It should be noted that this resolution of Mr. Straus proposed general aims as well as a method of selection, while Mr. Marshall's resolution had left the matter of aims and powers completely open.

To avoid endless debate a committee of five was appointed to bring in a report on these resolutions and others which were offered from the floor.

The committee returned to report that its members could not come to an agreement on the advisability of forming a permanent organization. But they unanimously recommended that *if* an organization was eventually determined on, then the following procedure should be followed: Let the chairman of the meeting appoint an executive committee of fifteen, which in turn would increase its membership to fifty, representative of all sections of Jews in America. "Its purpose shall be to aid in securing the civil and religious rights of the Jews in all countries where these are denied or endangered, and to this end, to cooperate with any existing bodies or organizations in this and any other countries as they, in their judgment, may deem best." This plan was in effect the Straus resolution.

With this recommendation as a springboard, the debate went on. Curiously, no one seemed to notice the *if* in the proposition. It was from now on taken for granted that an organization was to be effectuated; the whole concern was with methods.

Mr. Bijur thought a smaller committee would be more effective. Mr. Marshall insisted on his original resolution calling for a representative body on a congregational basis. The new scheme, he argued, denied the very essence of democracy and representative government. The committee as proposed was not only not representative but "doubly self-elective."

Judge Greenbaum offered an amendment to Mr. Marshall's original resolution which reiterated the congregational base of the proposed Committee but left the plan of organization to be decided "by a special committee of 7, to be appointed by the Conference." Mr. Marshall indicated that he would accept the amendment.

There were now two clearcut plans before the conference: (1) by the Committee of Five which made the new organization narrowly appointive and co-optive; (2) by Mr. Marshall and Judge Greenbaum which demanded general election on a congregational basis.

Mr. Kraus and Mr. Wolf, both affiliated with the B'nai Brith, endorsed the first plan; Mr. Cyrus Sulzberger, Dr. Magnes, Mr. Straus and Mr. Schiff preferred the second.

By this time practically everyone had had his say, and it was decided to bring the various resolutions to a vote. The first and fundamental one was a preamble declaring "that it is the sense of this Conference that it is advisable and feasible to establish a general Jewish Committee in the United States."

The preamble passed, though the minutes do not disclose whether it was passed unanimously or by a majority vote. However, its adoption established the principle of a permanent organization. Now the conference could proceed with the specific proposals.

The Marshall-Greenbaum resolution, somewhat modified, was then put to a vote. It was defeated by 12 votes to 16. Next in order was the plan for a self-perpetuating committee of fifty. This was carried by a majority of 16 to 13.

The passage of the resolution should have put an end to debate. But man after man arose to point out the closeness of the result and the obvious split of the conference into almost equally divided camps. Such a narrow division, it was argued, was an ominous portent for the success of the plan. The substantial discontent disclosed in the discussions and in the vote must militate against its widespread acceptance elsewhere. The Chairman, Judge Mayer Sulzberger, remarked that it was clear that the conference had not yet made up its mind as to any definite plan except as to the desirability of some kind of committee.

Dr. Cyrus Adler then proposed that a committee of seven be appointed by the chairman to study the various schemes brought before the conference as well as any others that might be proposed and, when ready, reconvene the conference by summoning to New York all of the original fifty-eight to whom the first call had been issued.

The weary delegates agreed to this delaying of a final decision, and the meeting was adjourned.

* * *

The committee of seven appointed by Judge Sulzberger to study the several plans and re-summon the conference when they were ready to report consisted of Mr. Marshall, chairman, Mr. Straus, Dr. Magnes, Mr. Kraus, Mr. Lewin-Epstein, Dr. Philipson and Dr. Jacobs. It was fairly representative of the several points of view disclosed in the debate.

The committee went to work at once. That it did not have clear sailing is evident from later developments. There were violent disputes within its own ranks and in the outside Jewish world. The Jewish press teemed with comment, controversy and denunciation. But at length a majority report was hammered out on the basis of what was practically the old scheme of organization proposed by Mr. Marshall.

It made the base of the Committee primarily congregational and therefore representative of American Jewry as a religious group, yet it also provided a place for those Jews who were unaffiliated with any organization. It proposed a convention of 150 delegates to be elected by all incorporated Jewish congregations paying a nominal fee which entitled them to as many ballots as they had seat holders. Unaffiliated Jews could send independent ballots. General conventions were to be held every five years, with interim powers to be exercised by an executive committee of twenty-three.

The second summons went out to the original fifty-eight invitees to meet in New York on May 19, 1906 to consider this report and continue the conference. This time only twenty-two attended. Several newcomers were present, but there were also a number of defections. The most outstanding of the seceders were Dr. Hirsch and Mr. Kraus of Chicago, Mr. Wolf of Washington, Dr. Calisch of Richmond and Dr. Leucht of New Orleans.

These five men, associated with Mr. Jacob Furth of Cleveland and Mr. Josiah Cohen of Pittsburgh who had not attended the initial conference, issued a letter or manifesto out of Chicago setting forth their reasons for refusing to heed the second call and dissociating themselves from anything that the conference might do. It should be noted that four of the signers of the manifesto were active and highly placed members of the Independent Order of the B'nai Brith and might well be taken as representing the official line of that organization. The text of the letter follows in full:

Chicago, May 12, 1906

Hon. Mayer Sulzberger,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sir:

The undersigned have concluded to absent themselves from the conference called to meet at New York on May 19th. They

deem it due to you to explain the reasons for their refusal to further participate in the deliberations begun February last. The plan drafted by the committee clearly exceeds the authority vested in the committee. At the meeting in New York in February, the consensus of the majority of the participants was that it was inadvisable to organize a new body. For this would lead to duplication, and therefore also to waste of energy. The field was believed to be thoroughly covered by the existing organization. The necessity was perhaps recognized of calling into being a sort of clearing committee, which should be an instrument to facilitate the cooperation among existing organizations especially in cases of urgent emergency. We notice that the Brussels conference, held on January 29th, came virtually to the same conclusion. The delegates there were also of the opinion that it was wise merely to take steps with a view of supplying a ready instrument for consultation and cooperation among existing organizations. They did not propose to supplant the agencies that up to the present time had undertaken to do the work in the field of philanthropy, diplomacy or in any other direction.

The scheme drafted by the committee proposed to ignore all existing organizations, and in their stead to call into being a new body. It will be remembered that in the debate had in February the point was raised that to convene a Jewish Congress would not only be inadvisable but almost dangerous to the best interests of the Jews of America. It is true the committee had abandoned the name "Congress"; it substitutes the word "Conference," but under the new name it has proposed now to launch the very organizations which met with general condemnation at the meeting in February. The object for which this conference is to be organized is not clearly stated, the term used "The cause of Judaism" is exceedingly vague. It may in the future open the door to all sorts of attempts on the religious liberty of the Jews and the autonomy of the existing congregations and fraternities. It smacks somewhat of ecclesiastical pretensions.

Certainly the communities among whom we live, believe that they have been loyal to the cause of Judaism, and do not propose to delegate the special stewardship of this cause to any conference or similar body, even if the right is given them to select the delegates. Nor is it true that the new agency is required to do whatever the American Jew may and can do to secure the civil rights of co-religionists in other countries. Both the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Order of B'nai Brith have, whenever occasion arose, acted in behalf of our persecuted brothers abroad and almost invariably with effective success; therefore, even with this end in view, the necessity of duplicating existing agencies is certainly not apparent. The plan of election proposed is exceedingly complicated, and as we know the temper of our communities and as experience teaches us, will not work in practice. The danger must be clear to any unbiased observer of the situation that unless this proposed new corporation or conference be composed of the most conservative men, the standing of the Jews in the American nation, will be seriously affected for the worse. With the machinery for election as outlined, the probabilities are that conservative elements, using this term, not in a religious significance, will be crowded to the rear and the new organization will fall into the hands of radical theorists whose vagaries will then be accepted by the American nation as expressive of the views and the intentions of the whole Jewish community. We must leave it to your imagination to picture what will be the inevitable result of the attempt of this contingency. American Jews have won for themselves a position in this country by being loyal Americans; they have approached the American government whenever occasion arose, to bespeak its good offices in behalf of persecuted Jews, not as Jews, but as American citizens. To abandon this policy strikes us as bordering on folly.

To further unite existing organizations for prompt action on behalf of our persecuted brothers in foreign lands is commenda-

ble. To create a new body "To promote the welfare of Judaism" and to speak for American Jewry, would be not only inexcusable but dangerous.

Moved by these conditions, we have made up our minds that it is best to proceed no further.

A careful examination of the manifesto discloses some inaccuracies of fact. For example, it was not "the consensus of the majority of the participants" at the February meeting "that it was inadvisable to organize a new body," as claimed in the letter. The copious minutes disclose that while such a statement of the case might have been true during the early debate, toward the end the majority had swung over to a belief in the desirability of some kind of organization, and a resolution to that effect was legally carried.

In the second instance, the claim that Mr. Marshall's plan "clearly exceeds the authority vested in the committee" is obviously exaggerated. Dr. Adler's resolution, on which it had been appointed, gave the committee the right "to consider the various schemes brought before the Conference, *and others that might be brought before them.*" (Italics added.) Actually, the plan embodied Mr. Marshall's original proposal, with some additions that had been thoroughly discussed in the conference.

The manifesto was total. It was not merely a specific attack on the Marshall plan but a general declaration denying the necessity of any comprehensive organization. It professed to find serious dangers implicit in such a group, and feared especially that control would slip from the hands of "conservative" Jews and fall into the hands "of radical theorists whose vagaries will then be accepted by the American nation as expressive of the views and intentions of the whole Jewish community."

What was implied by this curious fear is obvious enough. The Marshall plan called for almost universal Jewish voting. On a count of heads, and even of congregations, the newcomers to

America from eastern Europe considerably outnumbered the older German and Sephardic elements. There was a tendency, rightly or wrongly, to associate these newcomers with radical sentiments as opposed to the conservatism of the older groups. The signers of the manifesto did not wish the influence of their community organizations, rooted in the earlier strata, to be swamped by the new influx.

But Mr. Schiff and Mr. Marshall, just as representative of the old Germanic stock, and thoroughly conservative in the sense of the manifesto, had no such fears. Rather, they desired to welcome the newcomers of eastern European origin into the ranks of American Jewry and to put an end to the mutual suspicions and divisions that had placed them into two separate camps.

Mr. Schiff had objected to the small, appointive committee plan for that very reason. "A new Jewry had arisen in the United States since 1881," he had remarked to the first conference, "and their confidence is necessary for any general representative body."

It was precisely to avoid such dichotomy that Mr. Marshall put his plan on the basis he did. "If it had been practical," he was later to declare, "for existing organizations to affiliate with themselves the sixfold greater mass of newcomers, and to have been recognized by them as their representative organization, the problem would have solved itself."

* * *

The earlier meetings in February had been tentative and exploratory. The meeting in May, stripped by defections of those who opposed all action whatsoever, was determined to remain in session until some viable plan was forthcoming.

It listened to the reading of the Chicago manifesto in silence and then proceeded to business. That business was to consider Mr. Marshall's report in detail.

But the group bogged down on the very first paragraph of the report, which stated the general aims:

"It is recommended that the Jews of the United States form an organization to be known as The American Jewish Conference, whose purpose shall be to promote the cause of Judaism and to aid in securing the civil and religious rights of the Jews in all countries where such rights are denied or endangered."

The innocent-seeming phrase—*to promote the cause of Judaism*—evoked immediate opposition. The signers of the manifesto had already violently attacked it as opening the door in the future "to all sorts of attempts on the religious liberty of the Jews and the autonomy of the existing congregations and fraternities," and declared that "it smacks somewhat of ecclesiastical pretensions." And now Judge Seligman J. Strauss of Wilkesbarre, who had not attended the initial sessions, demanded that it be stricken out.

But Dr. Adler considered it strange that a proposition should be made in an assembly of Jews to defeat a plan "to promote the cause of Judaism" and Mr. Marshall defended his report against the criticism leveled against it both within and outside the conference. The only basic principle on which the Jews could be united, he declared, was Judaism. "If we are not Jews, we are nothing." There are all types of Jews, "yet, after all is said and done, there is Judaism upon which they all rest." There can be no reason for an organization that does not take that fact into account. Any other scheme would be both unrepresentative and undemocratic. "Let the conference," Mr. Marshall insisted, "go to the people and get its authority from them direct."

Thus there were two fundamental questions in dispute. The first was the proposition that a national organization should concern itself with problems at home as well as with the protection of Jews abroad. The second was the method of selection in that body: should it include *all* Jews in this country, or should it be limited to delegates from already constituted Jewish groups?

On the second question the debate was interminable. Mr. Oscar Straus pointed out that Mr. Marshall's plan for a democratically representative committee was foredoomed to failure. Witness the

defection of the B'nai Brith over that issue. Let us then, he declared, have a small executive committee, and bring them back into the fold.

Dr. Adler sought to save the conference from wreck by offering a compromise resolution. It proposed that "it was desirable to form a body to be known as the American Jewish Committee of the United States; that an Executive Committee of Fifteen be appointed with power to increase its number to fifty to cooperate with the different national Jewish bodies in the country."

By the terms of this new proposal, all controversial matters were eradicated. The new Committee was no longer to make any pretense of being representative of American Jewry at large or set itself up as an overriding, authoritative organization. Mr. Marshall remained intransigeant, adhering to his original scheme; but Judge Mack was certain that those who had remained away because they disagreed with the report of Mr. Marshall's committee would agree to Dr. Adler's new proposition. Both Mr. Straus and Judge Greenbaum thought that the plan had a chance of success.

A vote was called for and the resolution was passed by ten votes to three.

The long debate had come to an end. Plans of those who desired a more authoritative committee had been compelled to yield to the opposition that came from so many powerful and influential quarters. It was the consensus that the more modestly constituted committee might eventually prove its worth.

* * *

On May 17, 1906 Judge Sulzberger announced the new Committee of Fifteen. They were:

Dr. Cyrus Adler, Washington, D. C.
Nathan Bijur, New York
Joseph H. Cohen, New York
Rev. Dr. E. G. Hirsch, Chicago

D. H. Lieberman, New York
Judge Julian W. Mack, Chicago
Rev. Dr. Judah L. Magnes, New York
Louis Marshall, New York
Isidor Newman, New Orleans
Hon. Simon W. Rosendale, Albany
Max Senior, Cincinnati
Jacob H. Schiff, New York
Hon. Oscar S. Straus, New York
Hon. Simon Wolf, Washington, D. C.
Hon. Max C. Sloss, San Francisco

It will be noted that the Committee was selected with a due regard to geographical distribution and a variety of occupation and opinion. Three of the members had not been included in the original call, and two others, though invited, had not attended. The selection of Simon Wolf, one of the signers of the secession manifesto, was a conciliatory gesture aimed at placating the B'nai Brith. So were some of the later appointments.

On July 1, 1906 the Committee of Fifteen met in New York. Its first task, in accordance with the resolution which called it into existence, was to increase its membership to fifty by co-option. It proposed to do this by dividing the country into fourteen districts and apportioning the number of committee men to be chosen from each district to its total Jewish population. A suggested list of names for each district was then placed in the hands of the Committee and the meeting was adjourned for a consideration of the nominees.

The Committee reconvened on October 7th and elections were held on the basis of twelve districts instead of the fourteen originally contemplated. It was not, however, until October 26th that the final selections were made, and the full Committee of Fifty was definitely constituted.

* * *

The larger Committee—now known as the American Jewish Committee—held its first meeting at the Hotel Savoy in New York on November 11, 1906. Thirty-three of the fifty members were present, with Dr. Cyrus Adler acting as temporary chairman and Professor Joseph Jacobs as Secretary. Among those elected and present who had not attended the original conference were such prominent figures in American Jewish life as Lewis N. Dembitz of Louisville, Ky., Adolf Lewisohn of New York, Julius Rosenwald of Chicago, and Henry N. Butzel of Detroit. Also present were Simon Wolf and Adolph Kraus, signatories to the manifesto, temporarily at least reconciled to the aims of the Committee.

With amazing dispatch, though not without considerable debate over individual clauses, a constitution was drafted and approved.

The preamble stated the general duties of the Committee, and its formal clauses provided for a method of election by geographical districts which followed largely the plan of co-option by the Committee of Fifteen. Election was to be for five years; one-fifth of the total membership to be chosen each year. Meetings of the entire Committee were to be held annually, while an executive committee of thirteen, including the four officers, were to exercise the Committee's powers during the intervening periods. The constitution also provided for Advisory Councils, organized in each of the twelve districts, which could recommend action to the General or Executive Committee "on matters of Jewish interest." These Councils were to consist of the members of the General Committee resident in each district, plus ten other residents nominated by them for each such resident member.

The Constitution, as finally approved, was in the very nature of things a compromise. It did not meet with all the ideas of Mr. Marshall who, though willing to go along, still hoped that later on some more democratic plan of selection might be found acceptable. But the form of organization had to meet the sharp critical scrutiny of men like Mr. Simon Wolf and Mr. Adolf Kraus who, as representatives of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the

B'nai Brith, were alert to see to it that the work of their organizations was not interfered with.

A last attempt by Mr. J. H. Cohen of New York to add to the aims of the Committee that it "take up all questions affecting Jewish life in the United States" was voted down. Mr. Wolf remarked: "You cannot deal with the questions that will affect orthodox, or reform, or Zionism, or any other question. It is not for this Committee to do. We have been elected for a specific thing, and to protect the Jews." And, on the general issue of democratic representation, Mr. Kraus had made an impassioned speech, declaring that he had not come to the meeting to see his own organization, the B'nai Brith, in effect read out of existence. "I believe this cry that you have got to be elected by the people is humbug. You cannot get them to elect you. It is absolutely impossible in this country to unite the Jews on any proposition, and no matter how many of them you get together, there will always be thousands who do not take part in it and who will say that you do not represent them." The B'nai Brith, the Zionists and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations will support you as you are, Mr. Kraus continued. "Is it necessary that this Committee represent the riff raff and everybody? If this Committee represents the representative and high class Jews of America, that is enough."

The speech led Dr. Magnes to remark sarcastically that Mr. Kraus favored an "autocratic form of government" and that his "denunciation of popular movements and of the so-called people and of the masses is not in place."

After the adoption of the constitution, the Committee proceeded with the election of officers. Judge Mayer Sulzberger, in spite of his protests, was unanimously chosen as president, Judge Julian Mack and Isidor Newman as vice-presidents, and an Executive Committee of nine was elected, with power to choose the Secretary. Then the meeting was adjourned.

Thus, after half a year of discussion, debate and slow, arduous labor the American Jewish Committee was born.

CHAPTER III

YEARS OF GROWTH

THE constitution which was finally adopted after such long debate declared in its preamble:

"The purpose of this Committee is to prevent infringement of the civil and religious rights of Jews, and to alleviate the consequences of persecution. In the event of a threatened or actual denial or invasion of such rights, or when conditions calling for relief from calamities affecting Jews exist anywhere, correspondence may be entered into with those familiar with the situation, and if the persons on the spot feel themselves able to cope with the situation, no action need be taken; if, on the other hand, they request aid, steps shall be taken to furnish it."

The initial resources of the American Jewish Committee were modest enough. The permanent staff consisted of the newly appointed secretary, Dr. Herbert Friedenwald, later on to be assisted by a single clerical aide. Its tiny office was located in the Hebrew Charities Building at 356 Second Avenue in New York. It depended for funds on the voluntary contributions of its members, based on an annual budget apportioned by the executive committee to the various districts into which the Committee's membership had been divided. During these early years the annual income averaged about $8,000.00 and never exceeded $10,000.00 prior to World War I.

But the Committee was fortunate in possessing the unpaid services of a small group of prominent men, animated by an unselfish devotion to the cause of their fellow-Jews everywhere and tireless in the expenditure of their energies and private wealth to the fur-

therance of that cause. It was on the basis of the efforts of such men as Judge Mayer Sulzberger, Mr. Louis Marshall, Mr. Cyrus Sulzberger, Dr. Judah L. Magnes, Dr. Cyrus Adler, Mr. Jacob Schiff, Judge Julian Mack, Mr. Harry Cutler, Mr. Oscar Straus, Dr. Herbert Friedenwald and others of similar stamp that the Committee was able to accomplish the amazing results that it eventually did.

The first appeal to be made on the Committee's resources came not from Russia, Rumania or any other distant land, but from within the confines of the United States itself.

Disaster had come to the city of San Francisco in the shape of a devastating earthquake, followed by an even more devastating fire. The large Jewish community suffered equally with the rest. While the private needs of the stricken city, Jew and Gentile alike, were alleviated by a generous outpouring of funds from all over the United States and by the heroic ministrations of the Red Cross, the shattered community life of the Jews demanded specific aid from their own co-religionists. Several synagogues, one of them only recently erected, as well as the building of the Jewish Educational Society, had been utterly destroyed and their membership, themselves penniless, left scattered and distraught.

Rabbi Jacob Voorsanger of San Francisco made a moving appeal to the Committee for help in rebuilding these centers of Jewish life and it responded with a resolution to raise funds for the purpose.

Work was promptly begun. A specific sum was allocated to each district, and a vigorous campaign for contributions was commenced by private canvass and the public prints. By the end of 1908 $37,650.79 had been raised through the efforts of the Committee and turned over to the stricken institutions. This amount, in addition to large individual gifts, was found sufficient to complete the work of restoration.

The raising of funds for the San Francisco community had been a specific, non-recurring appeal and it had been met. But the Committee immediately found itself involved in matters of much larger and more general import, which were to engross all its efforts for

years to come. These may be conveniently divided under three heads; two of them domestic and one foreign.

It was to meet the foreign problem that the American Jewish Committee had come into existence; viz., the continuing pogroms, persecutions and disabilities of the Jews in Russia and other countries of eastern Europe. But there were domestic matters as well that demanded the closest attention: (1) the refusal of Russia to honor American passports issued to American citizens of the Jewish faith; (2) the growing agitation in this country to limit immigration by restrictive tests and prohibitions.

It will be readily seen that these three divisions, seemingly separate and distinct, were in fact but facets of a single gigantic problem. And that problem was the existence of a brutal regime in Russia whose avowed policy was the extermination or exile of its Jewish population. For it was Russia alone in all the world who refused to honor an American passport; and it was the swelling tide of emigration to escape the Russian terror that was responsible in part for the demand for restrictive legislation.

The Committee recognized the interrelation of these pressing problems and evolved a strategy that attacked all three on a common general front as well as in specific detail. Each part was considered not only on its own merits but in relation to the larger picture, and the steps taken to solve the particular were carefully dovetailed with the overall plan. For purposes of simplicity the three objects of the Committee's activities during the ensuing years will be treated topically and individually; but it must be kept in mind that they were all component parts of a single picture and that the Committee recognized them as such and acted accordingly.

1. Overseas Activities

The plight of the Jews in Russia, Rumania and elsewhere had been responsible for the formation of the American Jewish Committee. It was therefore to a consideration of what could be done

to ameliorate the condition of their co-religionists in those distant lands that the Committee immediately directed its attention.

It would be well to recapitulate briefly the situation in Russia. The pogroms that had first startled the world in 1881 had been repeated on a larger scale at Kishenev in 1903. From that time on persecution, brutality and slaughter had become the settled policy of the Russian government and there seemed no indication in 1907 of any change in that policy. Rather the Czarist regime openly and cynically announced its intention of intensifying its drive against the Jews.

The reasons for this deliberate program of organized savagery were not far to seek. At the beginning of the twentieth century the regime of the Czars, absolutist in conception and corrupt in administration, was tottering. Inspired by the triumph of liberal reform in western Europe and America the people of Russia were engaged in a life-and-death struggle for similar reform in the archaic despotism of their native land. The demand for a Constitution, a popularly elected Parliament and the end of corrupt bureaucracy, rose to revolutionary pitch in 1905. That revolution was smashed with ruthless brutality; but the agitation went underground to gnaw relentlessly at the buttresses of power.

The little clique about the Czar, in a desperate attempt to stop the continuing clamor, adopted the age-old technique of "the scapegoat" to divert the attention of the nation from its present wrongs by offering it a victim upon whom it could wreak vicarious satisfaction. The most convenient scapegoat, as in too many instances before and after, was the Jew.

"Here are your enemies!" proclaimed the governing class in effect to its people. "Your economic distress is due to the crushing exactions of the Jewish traders. It is the Jews that are responsible for the revolutionary agitation and for the attempts to draw you away from your proper allegiance to your 'little father,' the Czar."

Befuddled by the ceaseless propaganda, and led by bands of hoodlums with secret governmental sanction, the illiterate peasantry fell

upon the hapless Jews while, on a more official level, anti-Jewish legislation increased in scope and severity.

What could the American Jewish Committee—or the Jews of the western world generally—do to help their Russian co-religionists in their desperate need? They had already raised large sums of money for financial aid and the amelioration of their immediate lot, and were to continue to do so for years to come. But financial assistance, and even the expediting of emigration, were mere palliatives. As soon as the Jews in Russia were rehabilitated another wave of pogroms reduced them to destitution again; and emigration was not possible for all the millions in eastern Europe, especially in view of the rising agitation for stricter immigration laws in the United States.

The Committee realized that the problem could not be attacked frontally. It could not call on the American nation for official intervention in Russia. The plight of the Jews in Russia, though shocking enough to the generous conscience of Americans, both Jews and Gentiles, did not come within the proper sphere of direct governmental action. There were, however, indirect methods that could be properly employed by the Committee in their capacity as American citizens.

For one thing, the Committee decided that the Jews would best be aided in their fight for human and legal rights in Russia by adequately informing all Americans "of the existing status of Russian affairs, with particular reference to the character of the Russian people and of their existing methods of government, and also of the differences existing between the national government at St. Petersburg and the Russian people."

A campaign of education was adopted to enlighten the American people on these points. A series of articles on Russia was prepared, and a Press Bureau organized to collate all news items on Russian affairs and to distribute the information to the American press. A similar plan was adopted with respect to Rumania, where a series

of upheavals in 1907 had found its chief victims in the Jews. Nor was the increasingly grave Moroccan situation neglected.

In 1908 various Jewish organizations in France, Germany, Austria and England met in Berlin to discuss the possibility of forming an international Jewish organization which would deal concertedly with the problems of oppressed Jews in eastern Europe. The American Jewish Committee was invited to join. Jacob Schiff, then in Europe, attended a series of organizational meetings. His first reaction was one of enthusiasm, but later developments proved to him that the several national groups were mutually suspicious and antagonistic, and that the two German organizations were more intent on assuming leadership than in the common cause. His report on the proceedings and the behind-the-scenes bickering decided the Committee to adopt a waiting attitude.

"Pending the completion of arrangements by the Jewish organizations of France, Germany, Great Britain, Austria and other countries, looking to concerted action in the interest of oppressed Jews," they resolved, "the American Jewish Committee reserves action on the several invitations extended to join an international organization, declaring however, that in view of events now transpiring in the East, which must necessarily affect our brethren, it is deemed imperative that cooperation be speedily effected." The wrangling of the national organizations abroad eventually broke up the negotiations and international cooperation on an official basis never came into being.

In the winter of 1908-9 the Committee learned through private sources that Finland, controlled by Russia, had been the scene of a series of repressive acts against the Jewish inhabitants climaxed by wholesale expulsions. The American press, dependent for its European news on the service of the Associated Press, had printed hardly a line on the subject.

The Committee made an investigation and discovered that the Russian bureau of the Associated Press was virtually controlled by the official Russian governmental press agency and that no news was

transmitted out of Russia except such as the government was willing to release. This explained what had puzzled the Committee for some time—the non-appearance in American newspapers of much vital news from Russia on outrages and repressions against the Jews.

These facts, properly documented, were laid before the officers of the Associated Press. As a result the St. Petersburg bureau was completely revamped and uncensored reports began to flow in a steady stream to the newspapers of this country.

At about the same time the Russian government demanded of the United States the extradition of two political refugees, Jan Janoff Pouren and Christian Rudowitz, who had fled to this country. The ostensible offenses with which they were charged were murder and arson, both extraditable crimes under the terms of the extradition treaty of 1887.

The American Jewish Committee decided to intervene, though neither of the refugees was a Jew. An important principle was at stake, for the charges against these men were mere pretexts. Actually Russia wanted their return in order to wreak vengeance on them for their political activities.

In cooperation with others, the Committee fought through the long and difficult legal battles opposing their extradition. The facts of the alleged arsons and murder were examined and found wanting, and the United States government refused to extradite the men.

The next case to focus attention upon Russia was of much graver importance. In 1913 an obscure Russian Jew, Mendel Beilis, was arrested in Kiev and formally charged with ritual murder. The charge, resurrected out of the dark ages of the world's history and formerly directed against the early Christians themselves by their pagan enemies, shocked the conscience of the civilized world. Was it possible that a modern government—even though it be the czarist regime in Russia—could for a moment entertain such an outworn, completely disproven accusation against the Jewish religion? It was soon discovered that the government could and did—that the arrest and trial had been carefully concocted, not in local Kiev, but in the highest

councils of St. Petersburg; that it was the initial deliberate step of a bureaucracy to lend a semblance of justice to a new series of persecutions, pogroms and savage legalities against that ever-convenient scapegoat, the Jew.

The American Jewish Committee helped mobilize American opinion during the course of the trial by incessant publicity and a historical analysis of the absurdity of the charge itself. At the suggestion of the Committee the Christian Churches of America adopted resolutions denouncing the accusation of "ritual murder" as an infamous libel against the Jewish religion. A petition to Czar Nicholas II, signed by an extraordinary number of bishops and ministers of both Catholic and Protestant churches and demanding that the charge be withdrawn, was widely published in the United States. Nevertheless the Russian government persisted in the charge. After a lengthy trial a verdict of acquittal was rendered by the jury and the structure of the regime that had thus vainly tried to bolster itself against internal discontent was exposed to the eyes of the world for the decayed and shaken thing it really was.

In October, 1912 another section of eastern Europe disputed with Russia for the unenviable attention of the world. This was the Balkans, that seething witches' cauldron of disparate and mutually inimical elements that boils over periodically and brings calamity on all mankind. As usual, the Jewish inhabitants were the worst sufferers. The Balkan wars brought untold hardships, starvation, disease and death to the Jews of Greece, Bulgaria, Rumania, Servia and Turkey. No matter which side won, the Jews were treated as worse than conquered folk; and those who had gained an uneasy sufferance under Turkish rule found themselves now under the harsher and more anti-Semitic sovereignty of *Christian* states.

The American Jewish Committee, in conjunction with other organizations, both European and American, helped raise money for relief work and forwarded it to the distressed areas; it attended an international conference of Jewish groups at Brussels and joined a united effort; it called on President Taft to urge upon the peace

conference then in session at London the inclusion of a clause in the forthcoming treaty of peace "which will effectually secure to all people of every race and religion whatsoever, now domiciled in the conquered territory, ample protection for their lives, their liberty and their property, equality of citizenship and the right to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience."

At this particular time the treaty powers refused to incorporate the clause, though the Rumanian government assured the American minister in Bucharest that "the Jewish inhabitants of the territory about to be transferred to Rumanian sovereignty will be accorded the same rights and privileges as are given to persons of other races and religions." The pledge thus privately made was soon to be cynically disregarded, but the fundamental principle laid down by the Committee was later to be revived as one of Wilson's Fourteen Points, in the current Declaration of Human Rights under the United Nations, and in the provisions of the first five peace treaties entered into after World War II.

Wherever Jewish rights were invaded, wherever Jews required a helping hand in their hour of need, there the American Jewish Committee was prompt to appear. From Russia, the Balkans, Morocco, Turkey, Persia, Palestine and Abyssinia, Jewish distress found a ready ear and an open hand. Not a year passed that funds, raised through the instrumentality of the Committee, did not flow out to the four corners of the earth.

2. Passports to Russia

In a speech delivered in 1909 Louis Marshall declared that "the flaunting disregard by Russia of the American passport, which in 1880 was negligible, became a momentous insult in 1905." This flat, unequivocal statement correctly appraised a situation that had been a sore spot in American diplomatic relations with Russia for several decades, but which had suddenly gathered momentum and become insupportable during the revolutionary era of 1905.

Back in 1832 President Andrew Jackson had negotiated a treaty of commerce and navigation with Russia, Article I of which set forth:

"The inhabitants of their respective States shall mutually have liberty to enter the ports, places and rivers of the territories of each party, wherever foreign commerce is permitted. They shall be at liberty to sojourn and reside in all parts whatsoever of said territories in order to attend to their affairs, and they shall enjoy, to that effect, the same security and protection as natives of the country wherein they reside, on condition of their submitting to the laws and ordinances there prevailing, and particularly to the regulations in force concerning commerce."

At that time the Jewish population of the United States was comparatively small and Russia itself had not yet entered upon that course of special dealing with its Jewish subjects which was later to become so marked with barbarity and discrimination. So that, at the time of the execution of the treaty, neither party contemplated that American citizens of the Jewish faith, or any other particular group, were to be excluded from its benefits.

But the situation changed around 1865 when Russia embarked on a policy of discrimination against her own Jews. She then decided that the local restrictions imposed on Russian Jews applied with equal force and effect to Jews of foreign citizenship resident on her soil. Included in this category were American Jews, in spite of the treaty of 1832. Russia maintained that the provision in Article I relating to submission to the prevailing laws of the country of entry, gave her the right to apply those laws against Jews of American citizenship to the same extent as against her own.

The first case to come up under this new interpretation by Russia of its obligations under the treaty was that of the Rosenstraus brothers, naturalized American citizens of Russian birth. They had returned to Kharkov on American passports and one of them had purchased real estate only to discover that a municipal ordinance forbade such purchase by Jews except under almost impossible con-

ditions. He appealed to the American Chargé d'Affaires for help and the case became the subject of a desultory diplomatic correspondence between the two governments that extended from 1866 to 1879.

In 1880, however, another case arose that was clearcut and fundamental, and had none of the confusing technical problems which beclouded the central issue in the matter of the Rosenstrauses. Under the pretense of an alleged plot against the life of the Czar, the Russian police decreed that all foreign Jews then resident in St. Petersburg depart forthwith from its precincts. Among those so banished was an American citizen, Henry Pinkos, who had established a business some months before in the capital. His appeal to his own government for protection against the decree of expulsion gave rise to a notable series of pronouncements setting forth our stand on the entire problem. In 1880 Secretary of State William M. Evarts declared that "it should be made clear to the Government of Russia that in view of this Government the religion professed by one of its citizens has no relation whatever to that citizen's right to the protection of the United States." And, in the following year, the new Secretary, James G. Blaine, stated roundly that "we can make no new treaty with Russia nor accept any construction of our existing treaty which shall discriminate against any class of American citizens on account of their religious faith."

The tedious, longwinded exchanges of diplomatic correspondence over these and similar cases may have helped to alleviate specific hardships in specific instances, but did nothing to cause Russia to withdraw from her alleged sovereign right to hold American Jews on her soil to the same disabilities that hedged in Russian Jews.

The deadlock continued until 1893 when, following a long series of pogroms and intensified persecutions, it was discovered that Russian consular officials in America were inquiring into the religious affiliations of American citizens who applied to them for Russian visas. In all instances where the applicant declared himself Jewish, or where the official *thought* him to be Jewish, a visa was denied.

The State Department protested in a sharp note, dated February

28, 1893, in which the principle was laid down that "it is not constitutionally within the power of this Government or of any of its authorities to apply a religious test in qualification of equal rights of all citizens of the United States; and it is therefore impossible to acquiesce in the application of such a test, within the jurisdiction of the United States, by agents of a foreign power, to the impairment of the rights of any American citizen or in derogation of the certificate of this Government to the fact of such citizenship." But this protest met with the same fate as all other previous protests. Russia ignored it.

The situation remained unchanged until 1907. For over forty years the State Department had steadfastly refused to yield from its position that an American passport must be honored abroad without any inquiry as to the religion of its holder, and the House of Representatives had supported that stand on occasion by appropriate resolution. Then something happened.

Elihu Root, succeeding John Hay as Secretary of State, issued a circular dated May 28, 1907, entitled "Notice to American Citizens Formerly Subjects of Russia who Contemplate Returning to that Country." In this amazing document Root reversed the long-settled position of the American government. While claiming to dissent from the stand of the Russian government, it nevertheless informed the world that "an American citizen formerly a subject of Russia who returns to that country places himself within the jurisdiction of Russian law and cannot expect immunity from its operation. Jews, whether they were formerly Russian subjects or not, are not admitted to Russia unless they obtain special permission in advance from the Russian Government, *and this department will not issue passports to former Russian subjects or to Jews who intend going to Russian territory, unless it has assurance that the Russian Government will consent to their admission.*" (Italics added.) In one fell swoop, Mr. Root undid the patient, continuous work of almost half a century.

The American Jewish Committee had been then organized only

a short while, yet as soon as the objectionable circular came to its attention it took action. On February 1, 1908 Louis Marshall and Edward Lauterbach, both members of the Executive Committee, addressed a strong letter of protest to the Secretary of State. This new policy, declared the letter, "segregates from the mass of American citizens those of the Jewish faith" and expressed astonishment that our government should in effect justify Russia's violation of a binding treaty.

The reaction to the protest was immediate. President Roosevelt ordered the offending circular withdrawn. On February 11th Secretary Root so notified Messrs. Marshall and Lauterbach and invited them to express their views on a new one he had drafted to take its place. The Committee found the second circular almost as unsatisfactory as the first. While all reference to Jews as such were stricken out, it still retained the objectionable clause that former Russian subjects who returned to Russia submitted themselves to the jurisdiction of that country and could not "expect immunity from its operation."

Marshall and Lauterbach pointed out that such a statement was inconsistent with our treaty rights and a "tacit recognition of the contention of the Russian Government that a Russian subject could not expatriate himself without her permission," and requested that it be stricken out.

Secretary Root acceded and issued a *third* circular which was found proper in form.

The Committee had won a victory, but it felt that the triumph was essentially negative in character. The more it studied the entire situation, the more it was forced to the conclusion that the use of diplomacy on the passport question had failed. A long line of notes, protests and démarches from our State Department had not budged Russia from her position in the slightest. American Jews, armed with the most unimpeachable passports from the American government, could not enter Russia, reside there, or conduct their business except at the whim of the Russian authorities, and subject to humili-

ating conditions. The Committee resolved to have done with mere palliatives and further protests. They must cut the tangled Gordian knot at its most vital point. That point was the ancient treaty of commerce and navigation between the two countries.

Under the treaty of 1832 Russian subjects entered the United States and traded freely without let or hindrance. Under the same treaty it had been contemplated that American citizens would have the same rights in Russia. But in point of fact American citizens of *Jewish* faith had no such rights. The Committee therefore determined to demand of our government that it abrogate the treaty and negotiate a new one which would specifically put an end to discriminatory practices.

On May 18, 1908 the Committee's president, Judge Mayer Sulzberger, embodied these views in a formal note to President Roosevelt. It was followed on June 17th with another and more comprehensive communication which demanded that the United States give "due notice . . . to Russia of the intended termination of the Treaties of 1832 and 1887 (Extradition), and that no new treaty be made unless all the provisions covering both subjects and such others as may be agreed on are contained in one instrument which shall likewise contain practical provisions to secure its enforcement by denying its further benefits to the party disregarding its obligations thereunder or any of them."

But American officialdom had in the meantime shifted from the anti-Russian policy that existed during the Russo-Japanese War to a new one of diplomatic benevolence, with a special eye to trade in the Far East; and neither President Roosevelt nor the State Department was inclined to take the drastic steps that the Committee suggested.

The Committee then went to the American public. A presidential election was impending, and there was no difficulty in causing planks to be adopted in all major party platforms insisting upon "the just and equal protection of all our citizens abroad" and the prompt

removal of any discriminatory practices. Nor was there any difficulty in obtaining a public commitment from William Howard Taft, the Republican nominee, that his administration would, if elected, "continue to make every endeavor to secure the solution of such distinctions which in our eyes are both needless and opprobrious."

Also with an eye to the approaching election, Secretary Root wrote a letter dated October 19, 1908 to Jacob H. Schiff, which marked a tremendous advance on all previous governmental stands and brought the official position measurably closer to that demanded by the Committee. Heretofore, the State Department had contented itself with diplomatic protests which had no teeth in them because they failed to impress upon Russia that we would take positive action if they were unheeded. But in this letter Root stated flatly that "we have now communicated to Russia an expression of the desire of this government for a complete revision and amendment of the treaty of 1832, which provides for reciprocal rights of residence and travel on the part of the citizens of the two countries. We have expressed our views that such a course would be preferable to the complete termination of the treaty, subjecting both countries to the possibility of being left without any reciprocal rights whatever owing to the delay in the making of a new treaty."

This was strong language, and the Committee had a right to be jubilant. Unfortunately, it was to prove just another campaign document. With the election out of the way, and Mr. Taft safely installed as president with a Republican administration, the definite commitments contained in the Republican platform, in Mr. Taft's pre-election speeches and in the statement of Mr. Root, were allowed to lapse into a state of innocuous desuetude.

The Committee, however, had no intention of letting the matter drop as quietly as the administration would have wished. It continued the campaign on every possible front—through the public press, through conferences with President Taft and Philander Knox, the new Secretary of State. Its representatives interviewed Mr. W.

W. Rockhill who was leaving for Russia to assume ambassadorial functions and obtained from him certain assurances of support which he was later to repudiate by an avowal, once safely in St. Petersburg, that he considered the whole matter of the passports as of little or no importance. It cooperated with church groups and other public bodies in America in denouncing Russia's position and calling for the abrogation of the treaty.

On June 3, 1910 the Committee, in a letter signed by Mayer Sulzberger, Jacob Schiff and Cyrus Adler, reiterated its position. It also called the President's attention to the existence of commercial conventions between Germany, Austria, France and Russia that specifically guaranteed to Jewish traders and manufacturers the right to travel in Russia under the same conditions as persons of other faiths. As Mr. Schiff remarked, "the President of the United States needs a special reminder of his pledge to take active steps regarding the matter."

When all these methods failed to budge the administration from its policy of inaction, the Committee decided to appeal directly to the American people. The opening gun was fired by Louis Marshall in an address before the Union of American Hebrew Congregations on January 19, 1911. In a memorable speech he laid bare the historical, diplomatic and legal aspects of the controversy and demanded that action be taken to abrogate the treaty. "The painfully slow methods of diplomacy have failed," he declared. "We, a nation of 100,000,000 Americans, stand at the door of Russia, hat in hand, pleading with it that it shall recognize and perform its contract. With a sardonic smile Russia answers: 'Not yet' . . . But it may be argued that the suspension of commercial relations between the two countries may hurt our trade. I have a higher opinion of the American people than to believe that they are so destitute of idealism, so devoid of a sense of honor, as to regard a matter of this supreme importance with the eyes and souls of mere shopkeepers. However extensive our trade with Russia might be, we could well afford to jeopardize it rather than to have it said that our country rates the

dollar higher than it does the man, that it esteems the volume of its trade more than its national dignity."

The speech had immediate repercussions. Thirty-five thousand copies were printed and sent to press, pulpit and influential individuals. The White House found itself deluged with protests against the treaty, emanating from American organizations of every kind and description. Fifteen State legislatures passed resolutions on the subject, ten of them unqualifiedly calling for an abrogation of the treaty. A National Citizens' Committee was organized with Andrew D. White, former ambassador to Russia, as president and William G. McAdoo as chairman of the executive committee.

One month later, on February 10, 1911, Representative Herbert Parsons of New York introduced a resolution in the House calling for the termination of the treaty in accordance with its terms; to wit, a notification of intention to abrogate within one year after the filing of the notice. A similar resolution was introduced in the Senate on February 28th by Senator Charles A. Culberson. An avalanche of other resolutions to the same effect poured into the House and Senate Committees on Foreign Relations. Hearings were held at which the American Jewish Committee appeared in the persons of Messrs. Sulzberger, Marshall, Schiff, Cutler and Oscar Straus. Other Jewish organizations joined the procession; so did Mr. McAdoo and other prominent Christians.

In all the hearings the same fundamental principle was insisted on: the passport question was not a Jewish problem but an American problem; it was Americanism and American democracy that were on trial.

Immediately following the Marshall address and the introduction of the first resolution in the House, President Taft invited a representative group of leading Jewish organizations to a conference at the White House. Judge Sulzberger, Louis Marshall and Jacob H. Schiff attended for the Committee, and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the B'nai Brith sent their representatives. The invited conferees held a meeting in advance at which it was

unanimously agreed to stand firm for total abrogation and to accept no compromise.

The President was cordial and declared that there was no question in his mind that Russia *had* violated the terms of the treaty. But he also spoke of the extensive American business interests in Russia that would be jeopardized by a denunciation of the treaty, hinted vaguely at the possibility that war might ensue, and disclosed to them a report of an interview between Ambassador Rockhill and Sasanoff, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, in which Sasanoff accused the Jews of Russia and, by indirection, of foreign countries of being revolutionaries and anarchists.

When the conferees expressed their surprise and indignation at these disclosures and pressed the President for positive action in line with his pre-election commitments, he refused on the ground that abrogation was futile and would only mean the ending of *all* safeguards. With this denial the conference ended.

The campaign of publicity was now pushed to the hilt. American opinion, slow to mobilize, was thoroughly aroused. Sermons, editorials and mass meetings opened the eyes of the hitherto unknowing or indifferent. And, on December 4, 1911, Representative William Sulzer of New York introduced a joint resolution in the House which superseded the former resolutions and provided that the treaty of 1832, after due notice, be terminated. On December 13th the resolution passed the House by an overwhelming vote of 300 to 1.

In view of the fact that a similar resolution was pending in the Senate and would undoubtedly pass, Secretary Knox determined to anticipate such action. After an abortive attempt to obtain a simultaneous announcement of the termination of the treaty by both countries and a declaration that they would negotiate a new one "more responsive to the interests of both Governments," on December 15, 1911 he officially informed Russia that the United States elected to abrogate the treaty of 1832 as of January 1, 1913. On that day the treaty ended, and no new pact was ever entered into with the Czarist government.

The long and arduous struggle of the American Jewish Committee had finally borne fruit. Notice had been given to the world that the United States would no longer be a party to any treaty or act of a foreign nation which would permit discrimination against American citizens because of their race or religion.

CHAPTER IV

YEARNING TO BREATHE FREE

FROM its very beginning America had been the classic haven for the adventurous and the oppressed. The immigrant founded its colonies, developed its resources, turned illimitable forest into farm and city. He was America.

The sons of these original immigrants did nothing for generations to place impediments in the way of those who followed in their footsteps. The lines inscribed on the Statue of Liberty were more than mere poetic license: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free . . ." If here and there outcries were raised against the "foreigner," as in the case of the Know-Nothing Party, the vast mass of the American people was singularly untouched by their propaganda.

But during the decade of the eighteen-eighties a change occurred in the policy of the open door. The wave of persecutions in eastern Europe had sent a flood of stricken people to the American shore, to the hitherto unprecedented number of 788,992 in the peak year of 1882. This *new* immigration, unlike the older type from western Europe, alarmed certain sections of the American people who had been willing to accept the earlier and smaller groups. In addition, a clamor arose from the Far West against the so-called "yellow peril" of Chinese and Japanese moving in across the Pacific. Labor in particular expressed fears over the competition of the newcomer.

As a result, the first really restrictive legislation on immigration went into effect in 1882. A Chinese Exclusion Act was passed and lunatics, idiots and persons likely to become a public charge were

added to the list of those previously denied entrance. From then on other categories were added which, however, as President Roosevelt was careful to point out in 1906, were and ought to be selective only as to individuals, and not as to a race or religious belief. "Not only must we treat all nations fairly," he told Congress, "but we must treat with justice and good will all immigrants who come here under the law. Whether they are Catholic or Protestant, Jew or Gentile; whether they come from England or Germany, Russia, Japan, or Italy matters nothing. All we have a right to question is the man's conduct."

In spite of this ringing declaration, the situation took a turn for the worse that very year. The new influx of immigrants, again largely Jewish and resulting from the Russian and Rumanian pogroms of 1903 and later, had given rise to renewed demands for more stringent legislation. A flood of bills, harsh in content and tending dangerously to keep a substantial percentage of Russian Jews out of the country, made their appearance at the opening session of Congress.

The very first executive meeting of the American Jewish Committee on January 27, 1907 recognized the danger and took steps to counteract it. A concise pamphlet was proposed, setting forth the arguments against restriction, a brief was submitted to the Immigration Commission, and representatives appeared before the pertinent Congressional Committees. As a result of these activities and the cooperation of other groups the pending bills were shelved by Congress and, instead, the Act of February 20, 1907 which was finally passed, provided merely for the exclusion of additional classes of immigrants who were criminal, ill, etc. The most important provision, however, was the creation of an Immigration Commission for further study and control.

The Committee cooperated wholeheartedly with the new Commission. It furnished them with factual data on the various phases of Jewish immigration so that fair and unbiased conclusions might be arrived at; in response to the Commission's invitation, it submitted a list of recommendations for the revision of the current

immigration laws and regulations in order to correct certain injustices and abuses, especially with reference to the prima facie requirement of the authorities that incoming immigrants should have a minimum of twenty-five dollars in cash, besides a prepaid ticket to their point of destination. This requirement, which had led to considerable hardship and consequent deportations, was finally withdrawn in 1909.

The agitation, however, for a decided cut in immigration steadily increased in volume and clamor. Samuel Gompers, speaking for the American Federation of Labor, publicly demanded the most stringent measures to prevent competition with American labor. The question of "alien" races, long dormant in American politics, was resurrected. The Bureau of Naturalization went even so far in 1909 as to rule that no Asiatics were eligible for naturalization on the ground that they were not "free white persons" as specified in the statutes governing the granting of citizenship. Such a ruling would obviously exclude Jews from Syria, Palestine, Arabia and Persia. A bill was introduced in the House of Representatives proposing to grant the privilege of naturalization only to "white persons of the Caucasian race." This classification too might readily be twisted to bar Jews in the above categories. The Committee therefore entered its vigorous protest, and the ruling of the Bureau was legally contested in the Federal courts, where it eventually met with defeat.

But the proponents of restriction received aid and sustenance from an unexpected source. The Commission on Immigration, after three years of study, brought in a report recommending a literacy test for prospective immigrants. A series of bills was promptly introduced in Congress to effectuate these recommendations. Of these the most serious threats were posed in the Burnett bill in the House and the Dillingham bill in the Senate. Both called for a reading and writing qualification.

The Committee pointed out that such a test would inflict espe-

cial hardships upon Jews seeking the safety of our shores from the pogroms of Europe. In Russia and Rumania restrictive legislation had been shaped in such a way as to prevent Jews from procuring an education. They were denied entry into the general schools and were even, to a large extent, forbidden the establishment of schools of their own. Representative Burnett, to whom this situation was pointed out, admitted the cogency of the argument and offered a loophole permitting immigration officers here to exempt those aliens from the test who could prove to their satisfaction that they sought admission to the United States "solely for the purpose of escaping from religious persecution."

But the Committee felt that such a saving clause was too vague for practical purposes and suggested instead a broader statement of exemption for those "seeking admission to the United States to avoid religious or political persecution, whether evidenced by overt acts, or by discriminatory or oppressive laws or regulations."

Burnett refused to accede to the amendment, and the fight was joined. The election of 1912 was at hand, and the Committee sought to place all major parties and their presidential standard-bearers on record as to the literacy test. Woodrow Wilson replied that he was "in substantial agreement with you about the immigration policy which the country ought to observe." The Committee publicized Mr. Wilson's reply on a large scale, issued pamphlets, arranged mass meetings and urged upon Congressmen generally the injustice involved in the bills.

The Senate, however, passed the Dillingham bill by an overwhelming vote of fifty-six to nine and, on December 17, 1912, the House followed suit with the Burnett bill. The conference committee of both Houses retained the literacy test of the Burnett bill and added a new provision which demanded that the immigrants furnish certificates of character from their country of origin. The Committee protested that this novel insertion would in effect exclude "the majority of all Jews coming to this country from

Russia and Rumania and practically all immigrants suspected of being political offenders and a large number of immigrants of all religious denominations from Oriental Europe."

On the strength of the Committee's representations the bill was sent back to conference, the offending clause stricken out, and the bill was finally passed by the House on January 20, 1913 and by the Senate on February 1st. But the literacy test remained.

Faced with a country-wide protest, President Taft called for hearings on the measure before signing it. The Committee joined representatives of numerous other groups to state their objections and the President, determined by their arguments, vetoed the bill. The Senate repassed the bill over the veto, but the House voted to sustain it by a bare five votes. The proponents of a literacy test, temporarily defeated by the presidential veto, persisted. Substantially the same bill was introduced the following year, and again it was passed by overwhelming majorities. This time it was President Wilson who wrote the veto message, with the declaration that a literacy test seemed to him a radical departure from the traditional policy of this country. Once more the House missed short of overriding the veto by a bare four votes, and the bill lapsed.

Undaunted, at the next session its proponents again introduced the bill. Again it passed; and again President Wilson wrote a veto message. This time, however, Congress overrode the veto, and the Immigration Act of February 5, 1917 became the law of the land. Literacy as a requirement for entrance was thereafter enforced with varying degrees of stringency. It is noteworthy, however, that the action of the American Jewish Committee had considerably softened the rigors of the earlier proposals: the reading of Hebrew or Yiddish was accepted as a fulfillment of the test, and the exemption of those fleeing religious persecution was provided for. Thus Jews in general were not particularly affected by the provisions of this Act.

But the Committee feared that these comparatively simple and general restrictions were only the entering wedge for much more

drastic and more specific legislation. That it was correct in its fears is shown by later events.

Along similar lines the Committee in 1909 successfully opposed a bill which required census enumerators to include in the census the racial background of the inhabitants of the United States. The Committee believed that such a classification would lead to invidious comparisons and furnish fuel for troublemakers. Distinctions based on race had no place in the American scheme of things. And, to the same effect, the Committee disproved conclusively before Congressional committees the charge that recent immigrant groups had contributed disproportionately to the criminal and pauper classes in the United States.

* * *

Though the major portion of the Committee's attention was necessarily devoted to the consideration of Jewish problems on a broad national and international scale, it did not neglect more local matters. Everything that related to the Jew and his position in the world came within its proper domain. An examination of the agenda of a typical Committee meeting discloses the far-ranging nature of its work; Russian passport, immigration bill, establishment of a press bureau, appeals from the Jews of Rumania and Morocco, preparation of the American Jewish Year Book, the formation of a Jewish Community in New York, proposal for an international Jewish organization, etc., etc.

The paucity of funds was ameliorated considerably toward the end of 1912 when, after a *pro forma* court proceeding, the unexpended balance of the fund in the hands of the Committee for the Relief of Sufferers by Russian Massacres was turned over to the Committee for future distribution. The total came to the very respectable sum of $190,000 and the Committee promptly surrounded this windfall with the most careful safeguards against abuse. It was placed in a separate Emergency Trust Fund and "de-

voted to the alleviation of the consequences of persecution of Jews in any part of the world, to rendering them all lawful assistance in the event of the threatened or actual invasion or restriction of their rights, and to afford relief from calamities affecting Jews wherever they may occur." Not a penny was to go to the general, office or administrative expenses of the Committee.

It was early felt that the organization of the Committee should be given a proper legal status and on March 16, 1911 the American Jewish Committee was incorporated as a membership corporation by special enactment of the New York Legislature. The powers of the Committee were considerably enlarged over those stated in the original preamble. They were no longer contingent on precedent requests for assistance and contained a positive clause that the Committee would henceforth consider as its province the securing of "equality of economic, social and educational opportunity" for Jews throughout the world. Its affairs were to be conducted by an executive committee of "not less than thirteen or more than twenty-one" elected in accordance with the provisions in the by-laws.

In 1907 the Jewish Publication Society, which had for many years published an annual American Jewish Year Book containing vital statistics on the Jews of America and their religious and communal activities, found itself unable to continue the project. The American Jewish Committee assumed all editorial functions, including the gathering of material at its own expense, while the Publication Society continued only as publisher and distributor. Thereafter the annual reports of the Committee became an integral part of the volumes. As it later declared: "The book is of singular usefulness to the Jews of the United States and is practically indispensable to the Committee for the proper carrying on of its work." The Year Book remains to this day one of the regular projects of the Committee.

In conjunction with the Year Book the Committee found it advisable to add a Bureau of Jewish Statistics and Research as a

permanent department, whose function it would be to gather and make available to students and the general public statistical and other information of interest to Jews. Professor Joseph Jacobs, the famous historian, was installed as director and he built up during his incumbency a vast store of material on which publicists and scholars have ever since continued to draw. During World War I this included a complete dossier on all American Jews serving in the armed forces. On Professor Jacobs' death in 1916 Dr. Samson D. Oppenheim became director.

The Jews of New York City made up the largest single community of Jews in the world. Within its sprawling mass were descendants of some of the earliest settlers in America as well as the most recent immigrant who had fled the Russian Pale. They held every shade of opinion as to politics and religious ritual; there were radicals and conservatives among them, orthodox and reform. Differences in background and cultural heritage led to separateness and mutual distrust. It was difficult to obtain unity even in such matters as help for their unfortunate brethren abroad.

To remedy this situation the American Jewish Committee joined in a call for the formation of a Jewish Community of the City of New York (Kehillah) to act as a clearing house for the common concerns of the Jews of the city.

The Kehillah was formally organized in 1909 with a constituent membership of local Jewish groups. At the same time it was made an integral part of the American Jewish Committee, so that its executive board of twenty-five became by virtue of their office the New York City district of the Committee, and a division of functions was arranged between the Kehillah and the Committee. According to its constitution all local matters were reserved to the Kehillah, while the Committee received "exclusive jurisdiction over all questions affecting the Jews generally, not of a purely local character."

For a number of years the Kehillah, with the active cooperation of the Committee, worked effectively in its chosen field. It set up

boards of arbitration for the amicable settlement of disputes, organized a Bureau of Jewish Education and interested itself in social and philanthropic work of all kinds. So successful were its efforts that the Jewish community of Philadelphia followed suit and affiliated itself on similar terms with the Committee. Eventually, however, the Kehillah failed in its functioning for a variety of reasons and ceased to exist.

During the prewar years anti-Semitism was not a major factor in the United States. Nevertheless there existed sporadic undercurrents of what has been termed "parlor" or "clubroom" prejudice. The refusal of certain clubs to admit Jews into their social bosoms may have been irritating, but not important. When, however, hotels and other places of public resort not only refused admittance to Jews as such, but openly avowed the bar in folder, circular and advertisement, the Committee decided to act.

A bill was introduced into the New York Legislature which in express terms made it a criminal offense and a derogation of the civil rights of American citizens for any hotel or public resort to discriminate against any race, color or creed. With the backing of the Committee the bill became a law in 1913 and has remained on the statute books ever since. Other states followed New York's example with similar laws. The Committee was vigilant in tracking down violations of these statutes and in most instances achieved satisfactory results.

By 1913 ominous adumbrations of future disaster were already plainly visible in eastern Europe. The Balkan wars, though ended, had left death and disaster in their wake to thousands of Jews. Defeated Turkey, fairly well disposed toward its own Jewish inhabitants, had nevertheless made it a fixed policy to keep Jews out of Palestine. The rise of the Zionist movement, with its avowed aim of converting Palestine eventually into a Jewish national homeland, had alarmed the Turkish authorities. They embarked on a series of repressive measures, the last of which sharply limited the entrance of Jews into Palestine and subjected them to humiliating

conditions. Jews of foreign citizenship who had business in the Holy Land were compelled on entry to deposit their passports with the Turkish government and get in exchange a distinctive red document permitting the holder to remain in the country for three months only. At the end of that period the special passport expired and the bearer was required to leave.

This so-called "Red Ticket" became the subject of diplomatic representations. The Grand Rabbi of Turkey feared that the intervention of foreign governments in behalf of their Jewish citizens would arouse resentment among the Turks and nullify his own efforts. The American Jewish Committee disagreed with him and called on the State Department in a letter dated July 3, 1913 to demand the abolition of the Red Ticket so far as American Jews entering Palestine were concerned. On October 21st word was received that the Turkish government had cancelled the offending passport by executive order.

The Palestine situation continued to exercise the attention of the Committee. Within a month after World War I began, an urgent cablegram was received by the Committee from Henry Morgenthau, newly appointed Ambassador to Turkey, to the effect that the Palestinian Jews were faced with starvation and the destruction of their flourishing colonies. The impact of war had forced the Jewish communities in all the belligerent countries to abandon their hitherto regular grants of assistance. The same day it received the Ambassador's plea the Committee cabled back a guarantee of fifty thousand dollars for relief. Within a few days the sum was raised: $25,000 from the Committee's special account, $12,500 by donation of Jacob Schiff, and $12,500 from the Federation of American Zionists.[1] Because of the difficulty of transmission of funds in the wartorn areas, arrangements were made with the Standard Oil Company to make payment through its representative in Constantinople direct to Mr. Morgenthau. With this emergency relief safely delivered, the Committee proceeded to call a conference of Jewish organizations for the establishment

of a general relief fund for the use of Jews everywhere in Europe. The outcome of this call was the formation of the American Jewish Relief Committee.

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During the years prior to the outbreak of the war the American Jewish Committee had grown steadily in size and influence. Under the aegis of Judge Mayer Sulzberger, and later of Louis Marshall, it left its imprint not only on Jewish affairs but on the national and international scene generally. Its representations were considered with respect by both State and Federal governments, its weight was felt in the far corners of the earth. Its membership expanded and was not confined to any one section of the country. The members participated actively in the affairs of the Committee through the Advisory Councils and their elective representatives on the Executive Committee. When Judge Sulzberger declined re-election to the presidency for the term of 1913, Louis Marshall was chosen by acclamation to take his place. Judge Julian Mack and Jacob H. Hollander became vice-presidents and Isaac W. Bernheim treasurer.

From its organization late in 1906 to the eve of World War I the Committee had established a proud record of accomplishment. Almost single-handed it had brought about the abrogation of the treaty with Russia; it had delayed and watered down a series of restrictive immigration bills to a point where Jews were not seriously affected; it had caused New York to prohibit by law public discrimination against Jews; it had fought for the rights of Jews all over the world as well as at home; it had raised large sums of money for relief and initiated the call that led to the formation of a permanent Relief Committee. Wherever the rights of Jews were invaded, there the Committee was prompt to defend. Wherever the cries of the suffering and the oppressed arose, there the Committee came to the rescue. No call was left unheeded, no injustice remained untouched.

CHAPTER V

THE HOLOCAUST OF WAR

1. To Bind Up the Wounds

THE sudden flame of war across the seas at first stunned the American people. In those early days of August, 1914, when all Europe resounded with the tread of armed men, it seemed incredible that war on such an unprecedented scale could last for any length of time. It seemed even more incredible that America, safe ensconced behind three thousand miles of ocean, could ever be sucked into the distant maelstrom. "It will be over in four months; six at the most," declared the experts. They cited the modern weapons of destruction, the irrefutable facts of economics and finance, in support of their contention. Most Americans agreed, and settled back as spectators to watch the far-off strife.

At the first meeting of the American Jewish Committee after the outburst of hostilities, however, it was gloomily prognosticated that the war would be prolonged. And it was also clearly recognized that the Jews of Europe, as always, would be the chief sufferers in the tremendous struggle. It was pointed out that "one-half of the Jewish population of the world was trapped in a corner of eastern Europe that is absolutely shut off from all neutral lands and from the sea. Russian Poland, where over two million Jews lived, is in a salient. South of it is Galicia, the frontier province of Austria. Here lived another million Jews. Behind Russian Poland are the fifteen Russian provinces, which, together with Poland, constitute the Pale of Jewish Settlement. Here lived another four million Jews. . . . Behind them was Holy Russia, closed

to them by the May Laws of 1881. In front were hostile Germany and Austria. To the south was unfriendly Roumania."

The Committee declared from the beginning that within this "trapped" area problems surpassing by far any that had hitherto arisen must be met and solved with every resource at its command. Already, by the end of 1914, its grimmest forebodings had been amply justified. As the armies rolled back and forth in desperate conflict over the borders of Poland, Galicia and East Prussia, terror, desolation and death descended on the civilian population in general, but most of all upon the seven million Jews.

The Christian Poles, Ruthenians and Germans suffered the inevitable hardships that attend all warfare; but the Jews, already proscribed by the Russians and Poles, met with a concentrated orgy of hatred, blood lust and vindictive opportunity that threatened to wipe them out in one vast holocaust.

Hundreds of thousands—men, women, children, the aged and the ill—were forcibly driven from province to province, immured for days like cattle in filthy freight cars, tortured by hunger and thirst, treated with contumely and contempt, whipped and executed on the slightest provocation, their religion insulted and their synagogues burnt.

No matter where they turned, the Jews had none to help. The Russian reactionaries, in the midst of war, saw an opportunity to rid themselves by total extermination of those for whom they had proposed the cynical solution in time of peace: "one-third will accept the Greek Church; one-third will emigrate to America; and one-third will die of starvation in Russia." Even the Poles, who formerly had suffered equally with the Jews from Russian persecution, now that they saw the chance of political freedom ahead, turned on their fellow victims with a hatred born of religious bigotry and personal prejudice. Rumania, still neutral in 1914 and 1915, nevertheless expelled all Jews from the towns bordering on the Austro-Hungarian frontier as a preliminary to a campaign of equal tortures and destruction when it finally joined the conflict.

The American Jewish Committee entered on a two-fold program. One was the immediate—the organization of a vast relief fund for its helpless co-religionists in the war-torn areas and the amelioration of their plight by inducing neutral and allied pressure on Russia. The second was long range—to chart the course to be taken at the inevitable peace conference so that the fundamental rights of the Jews might be incorporated into the final terms of the treaties.

For the immediate program the Committee decided that the joint effort of *all* the Jews in America was required. It had already, on its own, responded to the appeal of the Palestinian Jews with a prompt remittance of $50,000. It had sent $5,000 to the Jewish community of Antwerp and $2,500 to an orphan asylum in Bulgaria. But the calls kept coming in ever-increasing flood. Millions were required, not specified thousands. For the raising of such sums all America had to be mobilized.

Accordingly, the Committee sent out an appeal to every Jewish organization in the country to send three delegates each to a conference in New York on October 25, 1914 "to consider the organization of a general committee and the formulation of plans to accomplish the largest measure of relief, and to deal adequately with the various phases of the problems presented." The Jews of America, declared the Committee's appeal, "must again come to the rescue. . . . Unity of action is essential to accomplish the best results. There should be no division in counsel or in sentiment. All differences should be laid aside and forgotten. Nothing counts now but harmonious and effective action."

Thirty-nine Jewish organizations, representing hundreds of thousands of members, responded to the call. Mr. Marshall, president of the American Jewish Committee, presided. It was determined by the conference to form an American Jewish Relief Committee of one hundred or more members, in which each of the constituent organizations would have at least one representative; that this committee should elect an executive committee of twenty-five to

take charge of the collection and distribution of funds. Felix M. Warburg was made Treasurer of the Fund.

The Relief Committee commenced to function at once and issued an appeal to American Jewry to contribute to the utmost in this unprecedented hour of need. The American Jewish Committee turned over $100,000—practically the entire balance of its emergency fund—to the general Relief Fund to be employed "upon such terms as they may deem advisable."

In the meantime, however, an Orthodox group had established its own fund-raising agency, called the Central Jewish Relief Committee. A year later, a group of Jewish labor leaders organized the People's Relief Committee to solicit contributions from what they termed "the masses." Nor did the B'nai Brith and the Zionist organization, in spite of their affiliation with the American Jewish Relief Committee, cease from independent collections. Such duplication of effort, by virtue of which would-be contributors were bombarded with appeals from many sources, naturally led to inefficiency and confusion. Consequently, the American Jewish Relief Committee joined forces with the Central Jewish Relief Committee to set up a unified organization—the Joint Distribution Committee, with which the People's Relief Committee promptly affiliated.

This final agency functioned with magnificent dispatch. Through its channels money, food, clothing and medicines poured in a steady flood all through the war to the helpless victims in Europe and Asia. And, after war's end, it continued its humane offices to aid the torn and shattered to rehabilitate themselves. Without its aid and the staunch assistance of the organized Jews of America, millions would have died abroad instead of hundreds of thousands. So effective was its work that the Joint Distribution Committee was eventually made into a permanent organization, to prove itself one of the greatest humanitarian agencies in the world during the later and even more disastrous years of terror that entered with Hitler and have not yet run their course.

The reports that came out of the different war zones and appeared in the daily press were confused, garbled and cut to the particular measure of special-pleading propagandists abroad. Even on such obvious issues as the dreadful treatment of the Jews there was confusion worse confounded. The truth was twisted and distorted to conform with the official denials of the Russians and the Poles. Massacres were dismissed as mere "atrocity stories" and the Jews branded as spies and traitors to the countries of their origin. Such hideous tales of Russian regiments being slaughtered wholesale through the machinations of the Jews were broadcast to the world and repeated unwittingly in the American press that the American Jewish Committee decided to set forth in calm, dispassionate detail and with complete documentary evidence from unimpeachable sources the true situation that confronted the Jews in Russia and elsewhere.

The result was "The Jews in the Eastern War Zone," published in 1916. Scholarly, factual, yet written in vivid, moving prose, this little volume did more than any other single factor to clarify the true nature of the horror and to make the American public aware of what was going on behind the curtain of censorship and deliberate distortion. Twenty-five thousand copies went to the leaders of American thought and the molders of public opinion—President Wilson, members of the Cabinet and Congress, the press and the magazines, influential men and women everywhere.

The Committee also prepared and forwarded to Pope Benedict XV on December 30, 1915 a petition calling his attention to the unspeakable cruelties suffered by the Jews beyond all other creeds during the war and requesting that the Holy See exercise the "profound moral, ethical and religious influence with which the Roman Catholic Church is endowed, upon those who regard Your Holiness as their Shepherd, but who have unfortunately participated in this persecution." The reference, of course, was to the conduct of the Catholic Poles. The Pope replied that since in principle the Church "considers all men as brethren and teaches them to love

one another, he will not cease to inculcate the observance among individuals as among nations of the principles of natural right, and to reprove every violation of them."

2. The Call for a Jewish Congress

From the very inception of the war the American Jewish Committee had been deeply concerned with the status of the Jew *after* the titanic conflict would come to an end. But it recognized, as many others did not, that the end would be long in coming and that the shifting and unpredictable tides of events might nullify or render harmful any overt action or premature public commitment. As Mr. Marshall remarked in executive committee session: "We have avoided publicity, public meetings, congresses, conferences and public discussion of matters which are of a delicate nature. We have believed that it would be useless to do these things, that it might do more harm than good. The situation changes from day to day. Until it is definitely known which of the opposing forces is successful, and what terms of peace may be arranged, it is useless to spend any time in discussing what we can and cannot do."

But this policy of watchful waiting aroused the ire of certain groups of American Jews who demanded, as early as 1915, the convocation of a general congress to formulate and publish immediately to the world a program for the Jews in the postwar era and the concessions they required from the various belligerent countries. It was contended by these groups, backed by some of the Jewish press, that the American Jewish Committee could not and ought not to speak on behalf of American Jewry in presenting these demands to a peace conference because the Committee was unrepresentative in its constitution and constituency.

The attacks evoked a sharp retort from Dr. Adler. He pointed out that all of these groups had been invited to join the Committee when it had first been organized and had either failed to avail

themselves of the invitation or withdrawn when a truly representative Committee had been proposed; that at a later date the Constitution had been enlarged to include practically every national body of Jews in its constituent membership with the exception of the American Federation of Zionists.

Dr. Adler felt that such a Congress as proposed would be a mere "talking Convention" and have no standing before an eventual peace conference. He would prefer to work through the American government to obtain the just demands of the Jews. Mr. Schiff agreed. "It is the old standing contention against which I have raised my voice year in year out. The question is now to be decided, and I am afraid decided in the affirmative as to whether the Jews are a nation within a nation. The holding of a Jewish Congress means nothing less than a decision in the affirmative, that we are Jews first, and Americans second."

Dr. Magnes had no such qualms. He brushed aside the "neutrality in thought and feeling" requested by President Wilson and demanded that the Jews of America, through a popularly elected Congress, obtain by whatever means in its power commitments from the belligerent governments on the vital issues affecting Jews.

Underlying all the discussion was the fear that a general Congress would become a springboard for violent attacks on Russia which might evoke dangerous repercussions from her allies and for an equally violent agitation for a Jewish State in Palestine. It was also believed that the presentation of demands at this particular moment would seriously embarrass the American government. The *Lusitania* had just been sunk, and relations between the United States and Germany were strained to the eventual breaking point.

In the meantime, however, the Kehillah of New York City had forced the entire issue into the open by recommending that the American Jewish Committee call a general meeting of its members to discuss the advisability of initiating a conference of Jewish organizations. The Committee had been willing enough to call a conference for limited objectives, and had previously passed a

resolution to that effect, but the conference now recommended by the Kehillah was more in the nature of the Congress about which it had expressed such misgivings.

Bowing to the rising clamor, though not without opposition from within its own ranks, the Committee issued a call for "a Conference to be held of delegates from Jewish national societies throughout the country, for the sole purpose of considering the Jewish question as it affects our brethren in belligerent lands." Approximately one hundred and fifty delegates were to convene in Washington, D.C. on October 24, 1915. Every Jewish organization of national scope in the country was invited to attend.

Many of the invited organizations, however, raised objections to the proposed allocation of delegates, to the limitation on the subjects to be discussed by the conference, and to the discretion lodged in the constituent groups as to the mode of election of their respective delegations. These dissidents demanded a "popular" election on a mass base and a definite world organization of Jewry with an American group or Congress as its local national member. This, especially, was the aim of the Federation of American Zionists, in conformity with the Basle platform adopted by their international organization.

Non-Zionist groups, with the American Jewish Committee as their leader, stood firm, however, against any proposal to inject nationalist and statist issues into an American convention of Jews. Accordingly, the Zionists refused to attend. They proposed instead "a Jewish Congress . . . called jointly by Jewish organizations, and organized on a democratic basis, which shall discuss the whole Jewish problem in all its phases."

The B'nai Brith, with conflicting invitations before it, attempted the part of a mediator. A meeting of interested groups was held on October 3, 1915 to discuss the respective merits of a "conference" or a "congress." The opposing camps failed to come to any agreement on what was a fundamental ideological cleavage, and the B'nai Brith decided against participation in either conference.

It became increasingly evident to the Committee that any conference at this time was doomed to failure, since less than half of those invited had accepted. It was therefore decided to postpone the conference "pending negotiations with various organizations and bodies."

Meanwhile the Committee was moving to determine at first hand what the views of *European* Jews were on the nature of the requests to be made on a future peace conference. The replies from western Jewry were practically unanimous in calling for a formula on which *all* Jews wherever situated could agree without factional splits and dissensions. The Committee set up such a formula: *Full rights for the Jews in all lands, and the abrogation of all laws discriminating against them.* It proposed that these minimal requirements be incorporated as guarantees in the forthcoming treaties, with the right of appeal to the Hague Tribunal in the event of violation.

Negotiations were also continued with representatives of the National Workmen's Committee on Jewish Rights and the newly formed Congress Organization Committee to seek a *modus vivendi* on the moot question of "conference" or "congress." At its annual meeting on November 14, 1915 the Committee had stated its considered position: that it would be willing to join with other Jewish organizations "in the calling of a conference for the purpose of considering the rights of Jews in belligerent lands and in Roumania, and that it take steps to call a congress on a democratic basis *after the termination of hostilities* . . . for the securing of these rights." (Italics added.) The Committee insisted that it could not partake in any conference where this proviso as to the *time* for calling a congress was not explicitly understood. It was willing to concede, however, that delegates might be elected in advance so as to permit the congress to convene immediately on the cessation of hostilities.

While these negotiations were still pending and without advance notice to the Committee, the Congress Organization Com-

mittee called a conference for March 26, 1916 in Philadelphia to arrange for a congress in the immediate future. The American Jewish Committee declined to attend and suspended further negotiations pending a clearcut declaration of policy. So did the National Workmen's Committee.

Since the Congress Organization Committee had thus taken unilateral action, the Committee felt free to proceed with its earlier contemplated call for a conference in New York City on July 16, 1916. This time it associated with itself in the invitation seven other organizations, including the National Workmen's Committee, the B'nai Brith and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Yet when the call *did* go out, it embodied a significant compromise. The conference, it declared, was to discuss the question of the "organization of a Jewish Congress, to secure full rights for the Jews of all lands and the abrogation of all laws discriminating against them . . ." No time limitation was mentioned.

Most of the invitees accepted, though the Congress Organization Committee declined full participation. It sent, however, three representatives to present its views.

The conference opened in an atmosphere of tension and sharp divisions of opinion. Outside, the Zionists were conducting a campaign of vilification against the Committee in the Jewish press. Their special target was Jacob H. Schiff, though the mud spattered over the others as well. Mr. Schiff, deeply hurt, declared that hereafter "Zionism, nationalism, the Congress movement and Jewish politics in whatever form they may come up would be a sealed book to him." Nor was the Committee wholly immune from attacks from within. There were those who thought that the call, as finally issued for the conference, by contemplating a Congress that might take place *during* the war, had deviated from the express resolutions passed by the Committee. Among these dissidents were Cyrus Adler and Oscar Straus. Others, on the contrary, like Dr. Harry Friedenwald, former president of the Zionist organ-

ization, thought that even this compromise had not gone far enough.

The debate in the conference was furious, if not acrimonious. Justice Brandeis, speaking as an invited guest for the Congress Organization Committee, called on the conference to join his own organization and thereby make any other unnecessary.

This was resented by many of the delegates, especially when, on inquiry, Justice Brandeis declared that the terms on which the Congress was to be held by his group could not be altered or amended. Dr. Magnes and Mr. Straus both took him to task for what Dr. Magnes called the "autocratic attitude" of the Congress Committee. Mr. Straus was in favor of the convocation of a Congress, but was opposed to its meeting prior to the end of the war.

For three days the issues were discussed and battled over, with Mr. Marshall in the chair as presiding officer. Finally a series of resolutions was agreed on which represented a middle course between the disputants.

The conference went on record as favoring the calling of a Congress of the Jews of America for the "sole purpose" of obtaining united action "to secure full rights for the Jews of all lands, and the abrogation of all laws discriminating against them." This, it will be remembered, was the terminology originally advocated by the American Jewish Committee. But the conference went further. It gave its own Executive Committee, in cooperation with such groups as the Congress Organization Committee, carte blanche to call such a Congress at any time and place on which they might agree, and to determine on the method of election of delegates. This insured, in effect, an immediate Congress.

The resolutions, which Justice Brandeis agreed to submit to his own Committee, led to a series of conferences between the two groups and finally to a call issued jointly by what was known as "the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Congress." It asked the Jews of America to select representatives to an American

Jewish Congress for the furtherance of the aims already specified in the resolutions passed by the Conference, but with one significant addition: *The securing and protection of Jewish rights in Palestine.* This added section was intended as a compromise with the Zionist elements and its vague phraseology could conceivably be twisted to cover considerable ground. By subscribing to this addendum and to the principle of a Congress prior to war's end, the American Jewish Committee had seemingly receded from its original position.

The event, however, was to prove that the recession was more illusory than real. For the picture of world events changed swiftly within the next few months, and continued to change in unpredictable fashion, just as the Committee had foreseen when it sought to hold off the convocation of a Congress until *after* the end of the war.

The conferees had set September 2, 1917 as the date for the opening of the Congress. Then it was postponed to November 18th. But the sudden collapse of the Czarist regime in Russia in the Spring of that year, coupled with the entry of the United States into the war, altered the situation so completely that even the most vehement insisters on an immediate Congress now agreed with the Committee that it would be wise to await the cessation of hostilities. Similarly, when the Committee was invited by the Alliance Israélite Universelle to attend an international conference of Jewish organizations from the Allied countries, it declined on the ground that the time was not yet ripe for such a meeting.

3. America Enters the War

The decision of the United States to throw its armed might into the scale of the Allies posed an entirely new set of problems for the Committee. With wholehearted loyalty it joined in the war effort and called on every American Jew to strain every nerve

and sinew to the utmost. Not that the Jew needed any exhortation. He volunteered for service in Army, Navy and Marines in numbers considerably above his numerical proportion in the general population; he fought and died gallantly on every battlefield of France; he contributed generously to every Liberty Loan Drive and humanitarian fund; he worked in shop and factory to shape the arms and equipment that backed the soldiers in the field; he proved his devotion in a thousand different ways.

The Committee mobilized all its resources. Its members were conspicuous in the Council of National Defense, on Liberty Loan Committees, in the placement of the Government's War Loans, in the drafting of the Soldiers and Sailors' Allowance Compensation and Insurance Act, and in a host of special projects. In particular it felt called on to aid its co-religionists who bore the brunt of battle and to mitigate their hardships. Together with other Jewish organizations it instituted the Jewish Welfare Board to minister physically and spiritually to the boys in camp and field. The Board's first chairman was Col. Harry Cutler, a member of the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Committee. It favored the appointment of twenty chaplains-at-large to the Army, of which a proportionate number were to be Jewish. It helped gather vital statistics as to the Jewish personnel in the armed forces and recorded their individual achievements. It cooperated with other groups to prepare a monograph on Jews in the wars of the United States.

The task which the American Jewish Committee had set itself in assembling all the available data on the role of the Jews in the war was a gigantic one. An Office of War Records was established at the end of 1917 and it continued its operations until 1920. The amount of detail work was staggering. Literally hundreds of thousands of individual biographies were carefully assembled, catalogued and cross-indexed. Interim reports were published, and the whole made available to writers and researchers. The final record demonstrated incontestably that the Jews had done their share

and more toward the winning of the war. Representing only three per cent of the population of the United States, their participation in all major war efforts amounted to almost five per cent of the total.

* * *

War always brings tensions and inner conflicts. The people of the United States were not immune from the effects of this psychologic truism. Since anti-Semitism is one of the mechanisms by which men seek to escape the consequences of their own disturbances, it became incumbent upon the American Jewish Committee to combat these manifestations whenever and wherever they occurred. In particular, the Committee was vigilant in uncovering instances of discrimination on an official and semi-official level and bringing them to the attention of the proper authorities. Inasmuch as the Committee was careful to sift the evidence first and lodge complaint only when the facts were irrefutable and the discrimination substantial, it was able in all instances to obtain satisfaction for the wronged party and a prevention of any repetition of the abuse.

Culled from numerous examples are the following: Advertisements appeared in the New York *World* for carpenters to work on government camps which specified *Christians only*. A complaint to Secretary of War Baker elicited a general order to discontinue such practices. In a Manual of Instructions for Medical Advisory Boards there appeared the astounding statement that "the foreign born, especially Jews, are more apt to malinger than the native born." On the representation of the Committee, the President of the United States caused the entire edition to be recalled and destroyed, and a new one printed without the offending clause. Coarse witticisms about Jews which appeared in a paper printed in connection with a Liberty Loan Drive, when called to the attention of Secretary of Treasury McAdoo, brought about steps "to prevent in the future the circulation of stupid and irre-

sponsible publications at the Government's expense." The vicious hazing of two Jewish students at a State Nautical School ended through the intervention of the Committee in the expulsion of the ringleaders and a request that the victims return to the school "with the assurance that they will receive absolutely proper treatment and fair play." When a Red Cross Associate Director publicly laid down as a condition for Red Cross service abroad the requirement that applicants must not have any German antecedents "for even three generations back" the Committee denounced it as an unwarranted insult to hundreds of thousands of loyal American citizens and the Red Cross repudiated the statement.

4. Revolution Abroad

The smash-up of the rotten-ripe Russian regime and the emergence of a revolutionary liberal government was hailed at first with every manifestation of delight not only by Jews but by every decent human being throughout the world. Even the Allies, with whom the Czar had ostensibly been a partner, breathed a sigh of relief that it was no longer necessary to apologize for their ally. It was generally assumed that a renascent Russia would be able to wage more vigorous warfare than the old corrupt bureaucracy.

Among Jews certainly there were prayers of thanksgiving. The Russian government had been the chief author of all their woes, their most implacable enemy. Now that government and all it stood for had been swept aside, and the liberals—their friends—had come into power. Small wonder that the Jews of the world rejoiced. The American Jewish Committee cabled on March 21, 1917 to Dr. Paul Miliukov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the new Provisional Government: "Every Jew hails free Russia's advent with prayer, thanksgiving and pledges for cooperation. The ideal of human rights now proclaimed by you and your associates with the voice of liberty has caused the horrible spectre of abso-

lutism to vanish forever and the true Russia long hidden from the world to rise triumphant."

But almost at once rumors came to disturb the first fine flush of enthusiasm; rumors that Russia contemplated a separate peace with the Entente. As Jews, the Committee had rejoiced at the downfall of the oppressors; as Americans, they viewed a separate peace as a major calamity. In April, therefore, they cabled Miliukov again to voice their concern at the reports and to declare that such a step might lead "to the ultimate restoration of an autocratic Government and the degradation of the Russian Jews below even their former deplorable condition."

Miliukov cabled back the new government's appreciation of the Committee's good wishes and an assurance that the rumors were unfounded. There the matter rested for the balance of the year, with American Jews finding new cause for congratulation in the elimination by the Provisional Government of all laws and regulations which discriminated against any race or religion. The long and fearful struggle to save the Jews of Russia and restore them to the dignity of free men and free citizens seemed to have come to an end. It was true that Rumania still remained a sore spot and the Poles, unmindful of their own desperate fight for freedom, continued to massacre their compatriot Polish Jews; nevertheless the skies were bright with the portents of a new day.

By the end of 1917, however, the situation changed. The first Provisional Government of Lvov and Miliukov was overthrown; the succeeding government of Kerensky followed suit; and the Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Nicolai Lenin, assumed power. The consequent withdrawal of Russia from the war, the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and the sweeping economic and political changes that followed the advent of the Bolsheviks, caused a change in the attitude of many Americans toward the revolution. When further reports followed in swift succession of ruthless expropriation, persecutions, mass executions of the bourgeoisie and all the other concomitants of a bitter social war, that

attitude shifted over to horror and revulsion. The very word *Bolsheviki* became an epithet at once libelous and opprobrious.

The misgivings of the American Jewish Committee deepened as it watched the course of events. Since most of the Jews in Russia were merchants, traders and members of professions which the Bolsheviks had denounced as *bourgeois* and therefore subject to liquidation, the clock of history seemed to have turned back again —though this time the Jews were being persecuted not for religious, but for ideological reasons.

The situation became worse confounded, however, because a few radical Jews had achieved office in the new regime. The American people, fed by an inflammatory press with a garble of lies and half-truths, were told that *all* the Bolsheviks were Jews; that Jews everywhere were radicals, socialists, anarchists and communists— the terms became interchangeable in the vocabulary of the rabble-rouser; that the Jews of the New York East Side in particular were reds of the deepest dye, aiming only to foment in this country the same kind of revolution as in Russia.

On September 24, 1918 the matter was discussed at an Executive Committee meeting and ways and means suggested to bring the true facts before the American public in order to dissociate Jews and the Bolshevik regime in the eyes of the world. The Committee resolved that a statement be issued "to clarify public opinion with regard to the relationship of the Jews to that species of radicalism which has come to be called Bolshevism."

Several drafts were prepared and sent to members of the Executive Committee for emendations and suggestions. While these were being studied, a certain Dr. George S. Simons appeared on February 13, 1919 before a Senate sub-committee headed by Senator Overman of North Carolina which was conducting an inquiry into the subject of Bolshevism in Russia and the United States.

Simons alleged that the Jews were largely concerned in the Bolshevist movement in Russia, that it was led by Jewish agitators transplanted from the East Side of New York, and that it received

financial and moral support from certain elements of the East Side Jews in this country.

Faced with this sensation-mongering testimony and its wide publicity in the nation's press, the Committee scrapped its original drafts on the general subject of "The Jews and the Bolshevik Party" and, through its president, Louis Marshall, issued a counter-blast denouncing Dr. Simons and his allegations. The statement appeared in the New York *Times* of February 15th, and was later disseminated on the widest possible scale.

Mr. Marshall categorized Dr. Simons' remarks as "inaccurate, unreliable and unfair. The Jews of Russia, as a mass, are the opponents of Bolshevism, both because they belong to the bourgeoisie and because they cherish their religion." They are "largely represented in the Social Democratic and the Constitutional Democratic parties, who are the sworn foes of Bolshevism . . . The fact that Dr. Simons may be able to prepare a list of Jews who are Bolsheviki means nothing. I could go to Ossining tomorrow and prepare from the records there a list of criminals who may happen to be of English, French, Italian or Slavonik parentage or who may belong to the Episcopalian, Methodist, Baptist or Catholic churches and seek to deduce from such lists conclusions derogatory of the nationality or of the church to which they belong. . . ." Mr. Marshall denied that the East Side was a hotbed of Bolshevism. He pointed to the casualty lists from that sector in the war and intimated that the term "Bolshevik," as then used, "means anything or everything to which the speaker may for the moment be opposed."

"Everything that real Bolshevism stands for," he declared, "is to the Jew detestable. His traditions wed him to law and order, make of him a legalist. The Bolshevists are the enemies of law and order. The Jew makes the very center of his life and of his existence the home and the family. The Bolshevists decry marriage and condemn morality. The Jew is justly noted for being thrifty and economical, and with recognizing as necessary the institution of prop-

erty. The Bolshevist is seeking the destruction of the very concept of property. The great mass of the Jews are faithful to their ancient religion, and are ever ready to help their brethren in distress. The club of the Bolshevist knows no brother and he despises religion."

Both the statement in the *Times* and a letter in defense of the Jews on New York's East Side were forwarded to Senator Overman. They did much to stop the mounting tide of anti-Semitism.

CHAPTER VI

UNEASY PEACE

1. The Balfour Declaration

ON November 2, 1917 the British government electrified the Jewish world by issuing what became known as the Balfour Declaration: "His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object . . ."

With this single stroke, followed up as it was by the capture of Jerusalem and the conquest of all Palestine, the dream of many Jews, particularly in eastern Europe, for a haven of safety and a central homeland seemed on the brink of realization. Zionists everywhere broke into pacans of gratitude and envisioned the rebirth of a national state upon the ancient sacred soil. In the first fine flush of enthusiasm there was no room for those few cynics who saw, or pretended to see, ulterior motives in Britain's wartime gesture. Nor were England's secret, and contradictory, commitments to the Arabs as yet unfolded to the public view.

The American Jewish Committee was more cautious in its expressions of thankfulness. It too believed that "the Balfour Declaration removed the future of the Jews in Palestine from the realm of idealistic conjecture and political propaganda to the plane of a practical probability if not a reality;" but it was quick to point out the many pitfalls in the path and the necessity of careful consideration of all possibilities by the Jews of the world.

A special meeting of the executive committee was called for February 2, 1918 to consider these possibilities. There was unanimity of sentiment on the general proposition that Palestine should be a haven for the oppressed Jews of Europe, but there was no such agreement on the Zionist thesis of a Jewish *nation* on that soil. Mr. Marshall called attention to a public statement by Professor Albert Bushnell Hart of Harvard as an example of what the public reaction might be. "The Jewish people (in America) must either fish or cut bait," declared Professor Hart. "They must either reject their American citizenship or renounce any such dangerous doctrine as Zionism."

Others pointed out the vagueness of the Declaration and wondered if it would not be wise to wait for a clarification of the issues before the Committee joined with the Zionist groups in an all-out attempt to implement its terms. Judge Mack, on the other hand, demanded immediate cooperation with the Zionists. Mr. I. W. Bernheim feared that any other but a middle-of-the-road attitude would result in a general impression along the lines of Professor Hart's assertion "that the American Jew is only a sojourner in this land; that he is ready when the proper moment will have arrived to transfer his allegiance to a foreign land." All were agreed, however, that the Committee should take a stand on the Balfour Declaration and issue a statement embodying its position.

This statement, adopted on April 28, 1918, was such "as was felt would be endorsed by the great majority of American Jews, irrespective of their previous attitude toward the subject."

It made the following points: 1) the Committee will continue to pursue the aims for which it was primarily organized; 2) the Committee regards "as axiomatic that the Jews of the United States have here established a permanent home for themselves and their children, have acquired the rights and assumed the correlative duties of American citizenship, and recognize their unqualified allegiance to this country, which they love and cherish and of whose people they constitute an integral part"; 3) the Committee

recognizes the traditional sentiment of many Jews everywhere for "a home in the Holy Land for the Jewish people. This hope, nurtured for centuries, has our whole-hearted sympathy." But the Committee also recognizes that only "a part of the Jewish people would take up their domicile in Palestine. The greater number will continue to live in the lands of whose citizenship they now form a component part, where they enjoy full civil and religious liberty"; 4) the Committee welcomes the Balfour Declaration and considers of prime importance the stipulations annexed that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country"; 5) the Committee will cooperate in the realization of the aims of the Declaration and in the establishment in Palestine of "a center for Judaism, for the stimulation of our faith, for the pursuit and development of literature, science and art in a Jewish environment, and for the rehabilitation of the land."

This definition of the Committee's attitude on Palestine became the official policy for many years to come. It naturally did not meet with the approval of the extreme Zionists, who redoubled their abuse against the Committee. Nor did it find favor with those who desired a wholly negative position. But the majority considered it wise and statesmanlike.

2. The Jewish Congress Convenes

The great war ended on November 11, 1918 and the executive committee of the American Jewish Congress issued a call for a meeting of that long-deferred body on December 15th in Philadelphia.

The American Jewish Committee sent Messrs. Louis Marshall, Mayer Sulzberger, Abram I. Elkus, Jacob H. Schiff and A. Leo Weil as delegates to the proceedings. Judge Mack, who had resigned from the Committee to devote himself exclusively to the

Zionist movement, was elected president, and Mr. Marshall became one of the vice-presidents.

The Congress opened in an atmosphere of jubilation. Hostilities had ceased. Optimism was in the air. The Balfour Declaration offered glamorous prospects. As for Russia, if there were some qualms over the Bolshevik revolution, there was none about the cessation of persecution of the Jews as Jews. A Peace Conference was shortly to be held, and it was generally expected that President Wilson's Fourteen Points would receive the necessary implementation. There were still certain somber areas, as Mr. Marshall was careful to point out in his opening address, such as Rumania and Poland with their new burden of sorrow and destitution for the Jews. But the general picture appeared bright.

It was the purpose of the Congress to formulate a program to be laid before the Peace Conference so that the principles enunciated in the initial call might be effectuated, viz., 1) the securing of full rights for the Jews of all lands, and the abrogation of all laws discriminating against them; 2) the securing and protection of Jewish rights in Palestine.

But it was soon evident that most of the delegates desired to go much further than these objectives. In all the discussions, in all the resolutions, they insisted on and succeeded in obtaining, the addition of the significant word "national" in the enumeration of Jewish rights to be safeguarded. It was not merely political, civil and religious rights that were demanded, but the recognition of Jews as "a national body" in such countries as Rumania, Poland, the Ukraine and elsewhere.

Mr. Marshall proposed a Bill of Rights to be incorporated in the various treaties as a condition precedent to the creation of any new or enlarged State. The Bill called for the acceptance by such a State of a constitutional clause that "all citizens . . . without distinction as to race, nationality or creed shall enjoy equal civil, political, religious and national rights, and no laws shall be enacted or enforced which shall abridge the privileges or immu-

nities of, or impose upon any persons any discrimination, disability or restriction whatsoever on account of race, nationality, or religion, or deny to any person the equal protection of the laws."

The Congress voted to send a delegation to Europe "to realize the objects for which this Congress was established." It also determined to cooperate with the World Zionist Organization "to the end that the Peace Conference may recognize the aspirations and historic claims of the Jewish people with regard to Palestine" and its development "into a Jewish Commonwealth."

This last provision was a far cry from the original stand of the American Jewish Committee. Its passage by the Congress was to rise like Banquo's ghost to disturb amicable relations between the Committee and the Congress. Mr. Samuel Dorf and Dr. Adler, both intransigeant as far as participation of the Committee in the work of the Congress was concerned, were later to declare that the gathering in Philadelphia was "really nothing but a Zionist Convention."

3. Mission to Paris

Even before the Congress met, the American Jewish Committee had determined to send a delegation to the Peace Conference. That resolve was strengthened rather than abated by the decision of the Congress to send one on its own behalf. It was uneasily felt that the Congress delegation might adopt positions that did not fairly represent the fundamental philosophy of the Committee.

Accordingly, the Committee appointed Mr. Marshall, its president, and Dr. Adler, chairman of the executive committee, to go to Paris. To guide them in the delicate negotiations ahead the Committee went on record to the effect that "it does not claim for the Jews any rights in any land other than those which are possessed by or conferred upon the citizens of the lands in which they dwell; but it does claim these rights in their entirety." Thus it dissociated itself from the "national rights" position of the Congress.

The two delegates set sail on March 12, 1919. Before they went Mr. Marshall visited President Wilson as a member of a Congress delegation to discuss the international status of the Jews. They found the President entirely cooperative. He was determined, he said, "to see that something should be done to end once for all the terrible conditions of the Jews in various European countries." He had even prepared for incorporation in the Constitution of the League of Nations a provision for universal religious tolerance, "but on one of the few occasions when he was absent from the meeting of the Drafting Committee this clause had been objected to, and it was left out." He had made up his mind, however, to insert into all treaties some such provision as Mr. Marshall's Bill of Rights. On such a satisfactory note the interview terminated.

But it was one thing for the President to declare what he intended while yet in the United States; it was another matter when he arrived in Paris and met with the heartbreaking complications and subtle sabotage of the Peace Conference.

Mr. Marshall and Dr. Adler likewise found the task they had set themselves an arduous and a difficult one. Power politics were the chief aim and end of the Conference. The rights and the sufferings of the Jews became merely an incident of that dangerous, if fascinating game.

The first phase of their mission was to confer with Jews of the allied countries in order to establish in advance a common program to be presented to the Peace Conference. Accordingly, from March 30th to April 6th, 1919, meetings were held in Paris under the auspices of the Alliance Israélite Universelle. They were attended by representatives of Jewish organizations abroad and the American delegates from the Committee and Congress. Mr. Marshall was elected chairman.

The chief debate was on the ever-recurring question—should the Jews be considered as an "ethnic" or "national" group and be granted special privileges as such, or should they be considered as individuals on an equal basis with all other citizens of any specified

country. In Paris, as in the United States, there were sharp differences of opinion on this vital issue. The Russian, Polish and Ukrainian delegates sided with some of the delegates from the Congress in insisting on "national" treatment. A Polish delegate asserted that "the Jews are a nation, not a religious sect, and we wish the world to know it." A Ukrainian delegate went even further. He demanded that "Jews throughout the world should organize and send representatives to a general Jewish Parliament" and, as an organized people, "be admitted to the League of Nations." The French and Italians, however, sided with the members of the American Jewish Committee in opposing the nationalist position.

The long, disputatious conference ended without any substantial agreement and left to a committee of seven the task of drafting, if possible, a uniform formula for presentation to the Peace Conference. Both Mr. Marshall and Dr. Adler were placed on this committee.

But first the desperate plight of the Jews in Poland required attention. The stories that filtered through of pogroms, massacres and mass starvation shocked the world. Dr. Adler called on Herbert Hoover, head of the American Relief Administration, to investigate the reports and provide immediate relief. Mr. Hoover agreed to do what he could, but asked in return that American Jews exercise a restraining influence on those Jews in Poland who were agitating for "national rights" and thereby causing bitter political divisions. He considered that such demands were responsible to a large extent for the existing situation. To his mind the Polish Jews ought only to insist on full "political equality and religious liberty." Anything else was a serious mistake.

Meanwhile the work of the Peace Conference was proceeding, and Mr. Marshall and Dr. Adler sought a hearing. Since the Jewish bodies had no official standing, this resolved itself into making contacts with the Big Four and their top assistants. Mr. Marshall, as the president of the Comité des Délégations Juives, pleaded the

case of the European Jews with President Wilson, Secretary of State Robert Lansing and Colonel Edward House of the American delegation. He got in touch with Lloyd George, M. Tardieu and Mr. Paderewski. From the American delegation he demanded the appointment of an American Commission to investigate and propose appropriate measures to put an end to the pogroms and atrocities occurring in Poland since the armistice; from the Conference leaders generally he asked for the insertion of the following clauses in the pending treaties: 1) that the obligation of the new States to their racial, religious and linguistic minorities be made a matter of international concern; 2) that jurisdiction over infractions be vested in the League of Nations and the Court of International Justice; 3) that these rights be incorporated in the Constitutions and remain unamendable except with the consent of the League of Nations; 4) that citizenship, civil, religious and political rights, etc. be defined in the terms of the American Constitution. If these provisions were adopted, he declared, they "would constitute the Charter Freedom of the peoples of Europe."

President Wilson expressed himself as entirely sympathetic to the views laid before him and promised to include them in the agenda of the Big Four.

At the same time Mr. Marshall, Dr. Adler and Mr. Sokolov privately urged on the Jews of Poland that they adopt a less intransigeant attitude and work within the framework of their State. "We urge our brethren in Poland not to dwell on past grievances, but to exercise the precious rights that are now theirs, to give evidence of their readiness to extend the hand of friendship to their fellow citizens, and to cooperate with them for the good of the State."

That the ceaseless and untiring efforts of the group headed by Mr. Marshall and Judge Mack met with measurable success is evidenced by the final texts of the treaties of peace. These not only proclaimed the absolute equality of all citizens in the several countries but included epoch-making clauses for the protection of the

rights of all those "who differ from the majority of the population in race, language, or religion."

The signing of these treaties was universally hailed as a signal victory by the Jews. Mr. Marshall called them "literally a charter of liberty and the final act in the emancipation of those who for centuries have been bereft of human rights."

If the high hopes placed in these treaties, and in the League of Nations itself, failed of fruition, such failure cannot be charged against the Jews. The United States refused to join the infant League and thereby killed any possible chance it might have had of success; the nations of the world lost little time in embarking on selfish power politics that found no room for such matters as the rights of peoples, while the rampant nationalism of the newly erected States trod roughshod over minority groups, in spite of treaties, constitutions and guarantees.

The Peace Conference had left the question of Palestine severely alone. That problem was later taken care of by a meeting of the Allied Powers at San Remo in April, 1920. Great Britain was given the mandate over the Holy Land under the supervision of the League of Nations, and was charged with the duty of putting the Balfour Declaration into effect.

* * *

Its work accomplished, the American delegation returned to the United States and reported what it had done to a general meeting of the Congress in Philadelphia on May 30, 1920. With the presentation of this report the Congress was supposed to come to an end. Such had been the original understanding. The Congress had been convoked for a specific purpose, and that purpose had been satisfactorily completed. The Paris delegation had secured in effect "full rights for the Jews of all lands, and the abrogation of all laws discriminating against them." It had even helped in establishing "Jewish rights in Palestine."

Accordingly, at the end of the report and the final transaction of business, a motion was made to adjourn *sine die*. At once, however, several delegates rose to offer a substitute motion to continue the American Jewish Congress as a permanent body. The chairman, Judge Mack, ruled the motion out of order. An appeal was taken from his decision. He was upheld by an overwhelming vote. Then the motion to adjourn *sine die* was carried. Legally, the Congress was at an end.

But a rump of dissatisfied delegates went into caucus after the meeting and set up a Committee of Seventy-one for the establishment of a permanent American Jewish Congress. Nathan Straus was elected chairman. Among those selected for the new Committee by the dissidents were, amazingly enough, Louis Marshall, Jacob H. Schiff and Abram I. Elkus of the American Jewish Committee. None of these gentlemen had been present at the rump session and were apprised of their selection only by newspaper reports. All three declined to serve.

Undismayed, the dissidents went ahead with their plans for a future convocation. There was even a proposal for a World Jewish Congress to convene at The Hague in May, 1921. Nothing came of the latter idea. But the American Jewish Congress was ultimately organized in 1922 on a permanent basis and has continued to function down to the present day.

4. Henry Ford and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion

Peace had come abroad but it was an uneasy peace, especially for the Jews. In spite of treaties and solemn guarantees, the Jews of eastern Europe continued to be the scapegoats for all manifestations of inner malaise.

The American Jewish Committee maintained a vigilant attitude toward affairs in Europe. It called the attention of our own government and the League of Nations to cases in which Jewish rights, as embodied in the guarantees, were overridden. It helped raise

money for sufferers in various parts of the world, and appropriated $5000 for Mendel Beilis, the hero of the infamous ritual murder trial in Russia and now a penniless refugee in Palestine. It continued to concern itself with the plight of the Falashas, that strange group of black Jews in Abyssinia who had remained loyal to Judaism for two thousand years, though cut off for most of that period from the parent stem in the western world.

But more and more the Committee was compelled to turn to a consideration of the Jewish problem *in the United States*. Prior to World War I this had consisted chiefly in dealing with individual examples of discrimination on a "polite" scale. There had been no *organized* anti-Semitism in America as it had been known in Europe, and certainly no political manifestations of such a disease.

But the end of the war, which had seen the principles enunciated in our own Constitution written officially into the structure of Europe, brought the dread ailment onto our very doorstep.

Originating in Europe, and marked with all the indicia of a concerted movement, it spread across the seas to these shores. The thesis was skilfully implanted in a world weary of war and seething with economic, social and political discontents that the Jews, *as a people*, had been responsible for the war and all its ills; that, in fact, there was a world-wide Jewish conspiracy to rule the world!

The protagonists of the canard pretended to base these allegations on the rise of Bolshevism in Russia and its spread to Hungary, Germany, Austria and elsewhere; they charged that Bolshevism as a movement was Jewish in inception and part of a deliberate scheme by an international group of Jews to obtain domination of the entire world. As "proof" of these charges they offered in evidence a bald forgery entitled "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion." This outrageous document was first published in Russia in 1905 by a man named Serge Nilus, whose very identity has remained shrouded in mystery. From Russia it spread to Germany and France, where the Junkers and the anti-Dreyfusards made good use of it.

Submerged for the while by the overwhelming fact of war, it now reappeared simultaneously in many countries, as the basis for a new outcry against the Jews.

The "Protocols" pretended to be an account of the secret proceedings of "The Elders of Zion", an international group of wealthy and powerful Jews. They alleged the adoption of a plan by these "Elders" to disrupt the economy of the world, to promote wars and revolutions, to destroy property, religion and civilization and, in the resulting turmoil, to set up a Jewish dictatorship.

Actually, of course, the entire business was a brazen fabrication to justify the excesses of the Black Hundreds during the Russian revolt of 1905. Competent authorities tracked down its sources to a prior political pamphlet and an obscure fictional fantasy. The entire sorry mess was ripped to shreds. Later on, indeed, the "Protocols" were made the basis of a legal proceeding in Switzerland and officially declared to be pure forgery.

Such small matters as truth and accuracy, however, did not disturb the composure of those who had their own private interest in disseminating the document. Among the most influential of these was Henry Ford, billionaire manufacturer of automobiles for the masses.

He published a newspaper called the *Dearborn Independent*, which achieved a circulation of 250,000 among the employees of his farflung enterprises and elsewhere. Commencing May 22, 1920, there appeared in its columns a series of anonymous articles viciously attacking the Jews and embroidering its context with charges lifted directly from the "Protocols."

The American Jewish Committee sent a telegram to Mr. Ford demanding that he disavow the offensive articles. The publishing company, to which he turned over the telegram, replied in scurrilous terms. It was obvious that Henry Ford accepted responsibility and intended to continue his campaign.

That the sudden apparition of anti-Semitic articles in the *Dearborn Independent* was not an isolated phenomenon became evi-

dent from the almost simultaneous publication in the United States of an English book called *The Cause of World Unrest*, which attributed the decline of civilization to a joint conspiracy of the Masons and the Jews, and another volume entitled *The Protocols and World Revolution* which appeared in Boston.

There was clear evidence of a concerted campaign against the Jews. The Protocols, originally brought to America for purposes of blackmail, had first been offered to the Committee with the thinly veiled threat that if the Jews did not purchase the manuscript, it would be published to the world. The price demanded was $50,000. The Committee naturally refused to purchase. Shortly thereafter the Ford articles began to appear; so did the books.

The Committee first turned its guns on the publishing firm which had issued *The Cause of World Unrest* and had avowed its intention of bringing out the *Protocols* themselves. Faced with irrefutable facts and documents as to the source of this material, the publishers agreed to drop consideration of the "Protocols."

But withdrawal by one firm did not and could not stop the further dissemination of these forgeries through other channels, especially after the *Dearborn* articles had given them such wide currency. The Committee therefore deemed it wise to prepare a reply to these infamous charges against the Jews, in which all the evidence would be carefully marshaled and the baseless character of the accusations exposed to public view. Invitations were extended to other Jewish organizations to join in the common defense.

On December 1, 1920 the Committee issued a leaflet entitled *The "Protocols" Bolshevism and the Jews* in which the nature of the documents and their utter falsity were exposed, and a vigorous denial interposed that Bolshevism was either essentially or in part a "Jewish" movement. Associated with the Committee in the sponsorship and distribution of the leaflet were nine of the most important Jewish organizations in America.

The response was overwhelming. Aside from a few crackpots, the vast majority of American citizens, including editors, publicists, college presidents and national organizations, expressed their indignation and willingness to join in the fight against the dark forces that were engaged in disseminating suspicion and hatred in this country. The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America denounced "all such cruel and unwarranted attacks upon our Jewish brethren." A stirring protest entitled "The Peril of Racial Prejudice" was initiated by John Spargo and signed by 113 distinguished American Christians from every walk of life. Among the signatories were Woodrow Wilson, William Howard Taft, Cardinal O'Connell, Jane Addams, Newton D. Baker, William Jennings Bryan, Robert Lansing, John Grier Hibben, and many others of similar caliber. Thousands of newspaper editorials followed suit. Books came hot off the presses in the same vein. The most important of these were Spargo's "The Jew and American Ideals" and Herman Bernstein's "The History of a Lie."

The only person in America, seemingly, who refused to believe the overwhelming evidence was Henry Ford. His campaign against the Jews continued unabated. From the columns of the *Dearborn Independent* it spilled over into a series of pamphlets called "The International Jew." But Nemesis finally caught up with Mr. Ford. Faced with libel suits and a boycott of his cars in which Christians as well as Jews joined wholeheartedly, he decided it would be wise to withdraw from the arena of anti-Semitism.

With that in mind he sent intermediaries to the Committee. These gentlemen claimed that Mr. Ford had been imposed on by hirelings, that he was now convinced that the charges were unjust, and desired to know just how he could repair the wrong he had done. Mr. Marshall, on behalf of the Committee, replied that there must be a public and complete retraction, a full apology, discontinuance of attacks in newspapers and pamphlets, and a pledge that they would never be renewed.

Mr. Ford accepted the terms and conditions thus laid down

and, on June 30, 1927, addressed a full retraction to Mr. Marshall. It left nothing to be desired in the way of apology. On July 5th Mr. Marshall informed him that it was accepted "because essentially the spirit of forgiveness is a Jewish trait" and hoped "that never again shall such a recrudescence of ancient superstition manifest itself upon our horizon."

* * *

This did not mean that during the decade of the Twenties anti-Semitism had been confined altogether to the fulminations of the *Dearborn Independent*. The Ku Klux Klan, a sheeted and hooded organization, had begun its mumbo-jumbo career of violence at the very beginning of the decade. Initiated in Georgia, it spread with amazing rapidity through the south, invaded the middle west and proved its presence in the hitherto sedate east by a multiplication of burning crosses.

The Ku Klux Klan, however, was only incidentally anti-Semitic. Its chief propaganda was directed against the Negroes first and the Catholics second. The Jews came last in the order of their attentions. At a later stage, in fact, it proclaimed that it was *not* opposed to the Jews.

The Committee watched the movement with cautious alertness. It was felt during the earlier stages that any violent reaction from Jewish organizations as such would merely provide additional propaganda for the sheeted Knights and spread the fire instead of quenching it. This was exactly what happened when other Jewish groups and individuals rushed into print with ringing denunciations. The Klan profited immensely in the hinterlands and gained large accessions of membership.

The Committee had urged Jews to give the Klan the "silent treatment" and leave public opposition to Americans of good will among the Protestant denominations, for whom the hooded order was pretending to speak. When the New York *World* requested

Mr. Marshall to make a statement on the Klan he agreed, but did so in dignified fashion and on the assumption that Jews viewed the Klan's fulminations as "undeserving of serious consideration." Only in specific instances of overt action against Jewish citizens did the Committee intervene.

This policy of watchful inaction ultimately bore fruit. The American press were unanimous in denouncing the Klan. The New York *World* ran a series of articles exposing the fundamental greed and chicanery of its founders and Kleagles. The churches set their faces sternly against the bigotry and intolerance of the movement. And, after a brief triumph in several States, the Klan relapsed into obscurity and powerlessness. It was not until the following decade, when economic disaster came to America, that it was able to rear its head again. The strategy employed by the Committee had been vindicated.

* * *

Yet when Ku Klux Klan bigotry threatened to spill over into law, the Committee was prompt to intervene. The most notable case was in Oregon where in 1923, under Klan influence, the Legislature enacted a Compulsory Public School Law which made it a misdemeanor for "any parent, guardian, or other person" with custody of a child over eight and under sixteen to "fail or neglect or refuse to send such a child to a public school" on a full-time basis.

This law was aimed specifically at the Catholic parochial schools of the State. Under its terms these schools would have to shut their doors. The Catholics appealed to the higher courts of the State and were defeated. Mr. William D. Guthrie, well-known Catholic lawyer, proposed to take a further appeal to the United States Supreme Court on constitutional grounds. He requested Mr. Marshall, as president of the American Jewish Committee and as an eminent constitutional lawyer, to intervene as *amicus curiae* on the appeal.

The Committee had no *direct* interest in the question. The law was not aimed at the Jews of Oregon. They were only a handful, and what few Jewish schools there were held classes *after* the regular sessions of the public schools and did not come within the prohibition. Yet the Committee took the position that any illiberality in the American scene, even though directed against the citizens of another faith, came well within its purview. Mr. Marshall accepted the task, without pay.

His brief and the argument on which it was based before the Supreme Court have since been hailed as classic. Agreeing wholly with Mr. Marshall's contention, the Supreme Court, on June 1, 1925, handed down a unanimous decision which declared the Oregon statute unconstitutional. In words which closely followed the text of Mr. Marshall's brief, Mr. Justice McReynolds declared that "the fundamental theory of liberty upon which all governments in this Union repose excludes any general power of the state to standardize its children by forcing them to accept instruction from public teachers only. The child is not the mere creature of the state; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations."

CHAPTER VII

BETWEEN TWO WARS

1. America Closes Its Doors

A FAR more dangerous threat to the Jews was posed by the flood of restrictive legislation that began to grind out of the Congressional mills immediately after the end of the war.

Barely had the guns ceased their firing when a number of measures were offered in Congress. In particular it was proposed to extend for a year the war-time regulations governing the issuance of passports and to give the State Department power to bar any immigrant. The Committee entered its protest at once, pointing out the hardships this would entail on families of which some members had come to the United States prior to the war and who now hoped to send for the remainder.

But the opponents of further immigration into the United States pushed vigorously ahead. The chauvinist sentiment aroused during the war now manifested itself in suspicion of the foreigner. The temporary economic decline of 1920 and 1921 added fuel to the ceaseless propaganda. American workingmen, faced with the loss of their jobs, were easily misled into viewing with alarm what was set before them as an incoming avalanche of competing immigrant labor. As a result, the Johnson bill which called for a cessation of *all* immigration for a specified period of years passed the House and came before the Senate.

The Committee interposed strong objections. It had already

appeared before the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization in 1920 to oppose a restrictive immigration policy and it had joined with the Inter-Racial Council in a reasoned publicity campaign addressed to the country at large. It now repeated these arguments before the Senate Committee and placed on record a complete exposure of the fallacious thesis that immigration was responsible for the ills that beset America.

The Senate rejected the Johnson bill and substituted its own measure which limited the number of immigrants of any nationality to three per cent of the number of foreign-born residents of that nationality in the United States as of 1910. The Senate bill was accepted by the House and went to President Wilson for signature. The Committee submitted a brief in opposition. The last official act of President Wilson's expiring term was the quashing of the bill by a pocket veto.

But the new Congress, under the Republican administration of President Harding, repassed the measure. Again, on May 17, 1921, the Committee submitted a long and factual brief pointing out the grave errors embodied in the restrictive bill. It was shown by chapter and verse that the proposed limitations, based as they were on the Census of 1910, in effect discriminated against the peoples of eastern Europe and therefore against the Jews who made up a considerable portion of the immigrants from that area. Nevertheless, President Harding signed the bill and it became law. For the first time in its history, America had substantially closed its doors to the immigrant and denied the beckoning welcome of the Statue of Liberty. Worse yet, on the trickle who were still permitted to enter, it placed quotas based on nationality and race, thereby setting its stamp of approval on the "racist" doctrine that one group or race is inherently superior or inferior to another.

The law had been passed as a temporary measure and was due to terminate within a year. But new bills were introduced before the expiration date. One proposed an extension. Another desired to make the quota system permanent. And a third went so far as

to demand a further lowering of the percentage quotas to two or even one per cent.

Again the Committee intervened. A former speech by Cyrus L. Sulzberger on the subject, entitled "Is Immigration a Menace," was revised and reissued on a large scale. In spite of all its efforts the Committee was unable to prevent the extension of the law for a period of two years, but it *did* manage to prevent any further reduction of the quotas.

A particularly apt example of the hardships worked by the quota system came to the attention of the Committee in 1923. By November 1st there were only 3,800 places unfilled in the Russian quota for that year. Yet, on that very day, over 4,800 Russian immigrants arrived in American ports, and every one of them held a legal passport and a consular visa. If the law were to be obeyed, 1,000 of these uprooted people must be arbitrarily selected and shuttled back to Europe. Mr. Marshall went to President Coolidge and laid the facts before him. The President was sympathetic, but declared he was helpless to act. Then it was discovered that the quota for Russian immigrants had been charged erroneously with nationals from *other* countries, and that there was a sufficient number of unused places to admit the entire waiting list.

Nevertheless, in spite of mounting evidence of the inequities of the quota system, an even harsher and more inequitable law was placed on the statute books in 1924. The new act went back to the census of 1890 for its base and reduced the percentage quotas from three to *two* per cent. By thus harking back to 1890 the "racist" view of "acceptable" immigration was frankly and avowedly followed. For the new percentages overwhelmingly favored the so-called "Nordic" peoples of England, Ireland, Germany and the Scandinavian countries as against the peoples of southern and eastern Europe. The Committee called the President's attention to these facts in a memorial dated May 22, 1924 and urged that he veto the measure: "This is the first time in the history of American legislation that there has been an attempt to discrimi-

nate in respect to European immigration between those who come from different parts of the continent. It is not only a differentiation as to countries of origin, but also of racial stocks and of religious beliefs." But the Act was signed.

The tide of illiberalism against the foreigner was running too strong to be stopped. All that the Committee could do was to keep it from the advocated extreme of barring *all* immigration and to aid in specific cases of hardship.

The sudden passage of the Act of 1924 had caught 10,000 hapless Jews stranded in European ports. They had already sold their belongings, purchased steamship tickets and were ready to embark when the Promised Land shut its doors with a slam. Approximately 8,000 of them had passports, visas and other indicia of approval. They were now mere worthless scraps of paper—the newly computed quotas were exhausted.

To aid these helpless, bewildered, homeless people became the most pressing need of the moment. The Committee joined in a conference of Jewish organizations on June 22, 1924 to meet the situation. The conference set up an Emergency Committee on Jewish Refugees with Mr. Marshall as president. It issued an appeal for $500,000 to be used for the following purposes: 1) to alleviate the plight of the stranded refugees; 2) to make possible the repatriation of those who wished to return to their former homes; 3) to investigate immigration conditions in Palestine and other countries; 4) to settle the refugees in those countries which would accept them. In addition the American government was requested to honor the visas already issued as a matter of justice and humanity.

As a result of the Emergency Committee's efforts, guarantees were given to Canada that her acceptance of 5,000 of these unfortunates would not result in their becoming public charges; financial and other aid was rendered to a large group whom unscrupulous steamship agents had induced to take passage to Cuba; and Mexico was investigated as a possible haven.

By 1926 the situation as to European refugees had considerably eased. Most of those who had been left stranded in 1924 were properly provided for and their immediate needs satisfied. But here at home eternal vigilance had to be exercised. A bill requiring the compulsory registration of all aliens, and another drastically extending the powers of deportation came dangerously close to passage; but the Committee's herculean efforts helped bring these to a final and unlamented disappearance. Also, day after day, the Committee labored in specific cases to ease the hardships of those laws which were already on the statute books; in many instances with considerable success. But the discriminatory "quotas" remained and to this day constitute a blot on the American ideal of democracy and equality before the law.

2. Before the Deluge

The latter years of the nineteen-twenties, aside from the unfortunate closure of America's doors to the oppressed of the world, were comparatively peaceful ones as far as the Jews were concerned. This estimate must, of course, be taken in a relative, not an absolute sense. No single year in the long history of the Jews has been free from trouble, turmoil and persecution, and these were no exceptions. But on the whole they disclosed a considerable drop in the number of problems that the Committee had to face.

The flurry of anti-Semitism in the United States during the first years of the decade had subsided with the public apology of Henry Ford and the decline of the Ku Klux Klan. The implications of the "quota" system for regulating immigration were as yet not as obvious to the average American as they were to the Committee. It is true that there were sporadic local manifestations of anti-Jewish feeling, but the Committee's intervention usually brought these to a satisfactory conclusion.

The worst, possibly, was a shocking outbreak in 1928 of the

ritual-murder charge in the small community of Massena, N. Y. A little girl had disappeared, and the mayor ordered the rabbi of the village brought to police headquarters for questioning as to the custom alleged to exist among the Jews for offering a human sacrifice in connection with the impending high holy day of Yom Kippur. The rabbi indignantly repudiated this line of questioning and he was released when, on the following day, the child was found astray in the woods.

The Committee took up the matter, and addressed a public letter to the mayor warning him of the serious nature of his accusations and demanding an immediate retraction. Other bodies, Christian and Jewish, followed suit. So did the American press. The result was a full apology from both the mayor and the state trooper who had made the arrest. America was not prepared to adopt such hideous and discredited superstitions.

On a much milder level representations were made to the producers of a lavish motion picture called the "King of Kings," purporting to portray the life of Jesus, that some of the pictured incidents were not historically true and were liable to lead to anti-Jewish feeling. The producers agreed to modify the offending scenes.

In 1928 the Committee was advised that Brown University persistently refused to permit the establishment of Jewish fraternities on its campus, even though the fraternities already there did not admit Jews. The Committee communicated with Dr. W. H. P. Faunce, president of the University. He replied that he regarded "the establishment of a Jewish fraternity, frankly founded on racial and religious lines . . . a damage to the University itself and a still greater damage to the Jewish students."

It was pointed out to him that this would be a proper stand *if* the current fraternities did not already discriminate against Jews or if they too were abolished. Under the given state of facts, the University's attitude seemed equivocal.

Dr. Faunce continued his refusal; but the controversy received

so much public attention that the following year the University relaxed its bars.

In Europe the situation was mixed. The Averescu government of Rumania turned out to be even worse than its predecessors. Jews were beaten on the streets, the universities invoked what was in effect a *numerus clausus*, and the government viewed with a benevolent eye the excesses of rioting students. Mr. Marshall met with the Rumanian minister to the United States and obtained from him a promise to lay the entire matter before his government. Meanwhile the Averescu regime had fallen, and with formation of a new ministry under Bratianu, the situation eased. The Jewish schools which had previously been closed were reopened, and eight Jewish members were elected to Parliament.

In Russia the dark deeds of Czarist days were forgotten. If the Bolshevik regime attempted to suppress the religious institutions and beliefs of the Jews, as a part of its campaign against *all* religion, it nevertheless tolerated no manifestations of anti-Semitism as such.

Surprisingly enough, Norway became the scene of a movement to prohibit by law the Jewish method of slaughtering animals for food, called the Shehitah. Sporadic instances of similar agitation had been found in other European countries, as well as in certain sections of the United States. But the Committee publicized the true facts of the Shehitah, its sanitary aspects and the painlessness of the operation as compared with the other methods of slaughter; and the agitation ceased.

* * *

During these interim years the prospects in Palestine seemed bright. On July 24, 1922 the Council of the League of Nations had confirmed the Mandate for Palestine and Great Britain as the Mandatory Power. The Mandate provided for the establishment of an appropriate Jewish Agency which "shall be recognized as a

public body for the purpose of advising and cooperating with the Administration of Palestine in such economic, social and other matters as may affect the establishment of the Jewish National Home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine, and, subject always to the control of the Administration, to assist and take part in the development of the country."

The Mandate also stipulated that the Zionist Organization, "so long as its organization and constitution are in the opinion of the Mandatory appropriate, shall be recognized as such agency." To this identification of the Agency with the Zionist Organization, however, a significant clause was added. The Agency thus constituted was to "take steps in consultation with his Britannic Majesty's Government to secure the cooperation of all Jews who are willing to assist in the establishment of the Jewish National Home." Thereby the groundwork was laid for bringing non-Zionist groups into the Agency.

On February 20, 1923 the Executive of the Zionist Organization adopted a resolution to open negotiations with leading Jewish groups for the purpose of obtaining their participation in the Agency. The American non-Zionist bodies, including the American Jewish Committee, met on February 17, 1924 to consider the invitation and "to consider seriously their relations to the economic problems of Palestine and to its cultural and industrial upbuilding."

Under the leadership of Mr. Marshall as chairman, the conference agreed to organize a Palestine Economic Corporation with a capital of $3,000,000 to develop the resources of Palestine and to study plans for non-Zionist association with the Agency. An extensive survey was undertaken of the resources, economic conditions and possibilities of Palestine and a voluminous report of findings and recommendations was submitted. One of the major financial backers of this corporation over the years was Mr. Felix M. Warburg.

With this report of the special Palestine Survey Commission

on hand, the non-Zionist Conference finally agreed, on October 21, 1928, to join an enlarged Jewish Agency and appointed a committee of seven to designate the forty-four delegates allotted to them under the terms of a prior agreement between Mr. Marshall and Dr. Chaim Weizmann.

But during these years of study and delay the ranks of the Zionists themselves had split sharply over the invitation which had been extended to the non-Zionists. The opposition subsided only when the non-Zionist representatives of world Jewry, under the leadership of the Americans, consented to the inclusion of the phrase "Jewish National Home" in the preamble to the enlarged Agency's constitution and to the endorsement in the body of that instrument of various enterprises and principles insisted on by the Zionists.

The final compromise was reached at Zurich in August, 1929, immediately following the close of the Sixteenth Zionist Congress. Mr. Marshall had made a special trip to attend the negotiations and, on August 14, the Agreement embodying the constitution of the enlarged Jewish Agency was signed. Mr. Marshall, who had been untiring in his efforts to find a common ground on which both Zionists and non-Zionists could unite in the development of Palestine, was elected chairman of the Jewish Agency Council, Lord Melchett of England became vice-chairman; while Baron Edmond de Rothschild of France was chosen honorary president and Dr. Chaim Weizmann president.

Of the 224 members of the Council one-half were to be representatives of the Zionist Organization and one-half were to be allotted to the non-Zionists of the various signatory countries. Forty-four of these went to the United States. For the moment it seemed as though the Jews of the world had achieved a united front on the controversial Palestine question.

But the unity was more illusory than real. Almost from the very beginning the parity agreement between the Zionists and non-Zionists was legally evaded. Allegedly non-Zionist groups, privileged

to vote for the non-Zionist representatives to the Agency Council, elected Zionists instead because of Zionist control of those groups. In almost every election the Zionists outnumbered the non-Zionist members on the Council and tended more and more to whittle down their influence and disregard their opinions. As a result, the non-Zionists began to drop out and the Agency itself, abandoned by them, lost in overall influence and prestige.

* * *

The decade of the Twenties was coming to a close. The Committee could look back with pride to its accomplishments since its formation in 1906. It had established itself as a powerful defender of Jewish rights everywhere in the world. It had steadily enlarged its orbit of membership both among individuals and constituent organizations. Its voice was recognized as one of the great organs of Jewish opinion in the United States. Its policy was pragmatic and free of dogmatism. It acted with boldness when boldness was indicated, and moved warily in cases where a reckless publicity might prove harmful. Its leadership was able and devoted, and its staff worked untiringly. Dr. Friedenwald had resigned as secretary in 1913 and had been succeeded by Mr. Herman Bernstein, well-known journalist and foreign correspondent. When he resigned in 1914 to take over the editorship of *The Day*, Mr. Harry Schneiderman became assistant secretary, while the post of secretary was left open until 1928 when Mr. Morris D. Waldman was appointed.

But the years took their toll of the men who had helped inaugurate the Committee and guided its destinies. Mr. Jacob H. Schiff and Col. Harry Cutler both died in 1920; Judge Mayer Sulzberger, its first president, and Mr. Samuel Dorf in 1923; Mr. Oscar S. Straus in 1926; and on September 11, 1929 Mr. Louis Marshall, who had piloted the Committee ever since 1913 and been a tower of strength to the cause of the Jews, passed away.

It was in a sense fitting that his death came almost immediately

after he had, in Zurich, affixed his signature to the constitution of the enlarged Jewish Agency, in the drafting of which he had played a leading role. The news of his decease was made the occasion for an outpouring of condolences from all over the world. Christians as well as Jews mourned the passing of a great man.

The Committee felt the shock. But it was too firmly entrenched to be any longer dependent on any single individual, no matter how prominent. In Dr. Cyrus Adler, its new president, it found another worthy leader to take up and continue the work. Julius Rosenwald and Irving Lehman were named as vice-presidents. Herbert H. Lehman, Judge Benjamin N. Cardozo and Felix M. Warburg were added to the Executive Committee. They took office at a critical turning point in the history of the Jews.

3. The Deluge

The American Jewish Committee had come into existence in 1906 primarily to combat a succession of virulent anti-Jewish outbreaks in eastern Europe. Russia, Poland and Rumania were the chief focal centers of infection. Anti-Semitism, it was argued, flourished in these so-called backward countries only because of the peculiar combination of a superstitious and ignorant people with a cynical and corrupt autocracy. Western Europe, inhabited by enlightened nations and proceeding steadily toward political democracy, must necessarily remain immune to the plague that beat against its borders.

Of all the western nations Germany was certainly one of the most highly educated, if not the most enlightened. The Jews of Germany had been assimilated more than elsewhere into the general texture of their country's life. The German Jews ranked high in all the activities that make a nation great—the arts, sciences, professions, industry, culture. They were patriotic and devoted; they loved their country and its traditions; they fought gallantly and well in the holocaust of World War I. Certainly it had not

been expected that Germany would become the nexus of an anti-Semitism on a scale hitherto unexampled in the history of the world, and of a savagery that would make the earlier excesses of eastern Europe seem mild and humane by comparison.

It is true that anti-Semitism was by no means unknown in Germany. But it was largely of the theoretical sort, with some practical discriminations in the civil service, the army and academic circles. And the Kaiser, during the course of the war, had shown a tendency toward increasing liberalism in the treatment of his faithful subjects, the Jews.

Even after the war and Germany's consequent collapse, to the outward eye at least, there seemed no change in this attitude toward the Jews. The Weimar republic adopted the very accents and habiliments of liberal democracy. The creed of the Socialists, the largest party and the backbone of the government, directly opposed racial and religious discriminations. Jews were to be found in offices of trust; the name of Walter Rathenau was one to be conjured with. So that, when the dark tide of Nazism commenced to creep in 1929 across the face of the nation, the outer world dismissed it as a brief upsurgence; when in 1933 the tide overwhelmed the land, the world gasped with what was almost incredulity.

Ever since 1920, while still devoting its major energies to eastern Europe, the American Jewish Committee had been watching with growing concern the rise of certain suspicious and significant manifestations inside Germany.

As early as 1920 the Committee had reported on a concerted movement to spread anti-Semitism that had its point of origin in Germany. The alleged Protocols, though fabricated in Russia, had been deliberately fostered and given world-wide publicity by certain German groups. In 1922 the Committee gave clear warning. "On the whole," it declared, "the iniquitous propaganda has met with general condemnation in western Europe, except in Germany where anti-Semitism has been adopted as a rallying cry by a num-

ber of minor political groups and especially those of reactionary tendencies. It is evident from their proceedings that anti-Semitism is the hand-maiden of the broken remnants of militarism and junkerdom and of those forces which are bent on overthrowing the Republic and of combating free and liberal government."

The assassination of Walter Rathenau, the "recrudescence of the Higher Anti-Semitism of a pseudo-scientific character," the appearance of the "Nordic race-symbol" of the swastika, the increasing agitation for a *numerus clausus* in the universities, were all noted by the Committee as dangerous portents.

In 1923, in fact, confidential reports reached the Committee of such urgency that it appropriated a sum of money to be used specifically for combating the anti-Semitic movement in Germany, and it called the attention of our Secretary of State, Charles E. Hughes, to the dangers implicit in the situation.

It was still felt, however, that the Weimar government and the good sense of the German people would eventually overcome these symptoms of post-war breakdown and scapegoatism.

This faith was rudely shattered when the Nazi Party, spearheaded by Adolf Hitler, began its bid for power in 1929. Here was a combination of political party and gangster group whose chief official slogan was "Down with the Jews!" Representatives of the Central Verein Deutscher Staatsburger Judischen Glaubens, one of the chief Jewish organizations in Europe, made a special trip to the United States to seek the aid of the Committee. Their report on recent events in Germany brought immediate response. The Committee turned over the entire balance of its Emergency Trust Fund as a fighting fund to help the Verein in the task of combating the rise of the Nazis and the spread of anti-Semitism.

The Committee began to gird itself for the impending struggle. Though still keeping an eye open for untoward events elsewhere in the world, such as the anti-religious campaign in Soviet Russia and the disturbances in Palestine, it rightly felt that the point of supreme importance was now Germany.

The steady surge of the Nazi movement, with its street riots, beatings, desecration of synagogues and plundering of Jewish shops, the actual achievement of power in Thuringia in 1930 with the adoption of an official prayer asking Divine protection against "people of alien race," and the passage of a law in Bavaria making Shehitah illegal, brought all the energies of the Committee to bear on the problem.

It sent a strong protest to the German ambassador against the Bavarian law; it published a report on European conditions based on the first-hand observations of its secretary, Morris D. Waldman, who had gone abroad to survey the scene; it sought to build backfires in this country, especially among the German-speaking citizens, not only to counteract the effects of Hitlerism among them but to bring about a reaction upon their friends and relatives in their country of origin. It cooperated with other Jewish organizations and with such groups as the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America and the National Conference of Christians and Jews to fight the menace. It assisted the Jewish Telegraphic Agency to expand its cable service with Europe and in its efforts to uncover pro-Hitler propaganda within the United States. Yet it refused to join in an international conference of Jews held in Geneva in August, 1932 because it was felt that such a conference would only be seized upon as proof of the charge that the Jews were an international group without local patriotism, and that actions, not words, were presently required.

But action, however, was hampered by the attitude of the Jewish leaders in Germany itself. Up to the very last moment they protested against any steps being taken by foreign groups to intervene in the German situation. They feared that outside indignation would be resented by the German people and they were confident that the civil rights provisions of the German Constitution, coupled with the sobriety and sense of justice of the large majority of their non-Jewish fellow citizens, would eventually overcome the rantings of the Nazis.

The elevation of Adolf Hitler to the Chancellorship in January, 1933, and the sweeping victory of the Nazi Party in the elections of March 5th, changed the situation with the immediacy of a thunderbolt.

The difficulty was now, not to arouse the Jews of the United States to the terrible threat of Nazism, but to prevent them from expressing their wrath in such manner that the effect would be dangerous to the exposed Jews of Germany.

To consider the entire situation was the aim of a conference held on February 22, 1933, by the American Jewish Committee, the B'nai Brith and the American Jewish Congress. It was unanimously decided that any public action in the United States in the form of mass meetings, protests, etc. was unwise at the particular moment. A sub-committee of six, with two representatives from each of the three organizations, was set up as a semi-permanent group to deal with the rapidly developing situation in Germany.

When the news of the Nazi election triumph reached this country, the sub-committee called a plenary conference for March 14th. Two days before the conference was scheduled to meet, however, and without notice to the other two cooperating groups, the American Jewish Congress resolved to arrange for a series of protest mass meetings throughout the country. The resolutions and accompanying propaganda were made public with considerable fanfare.

The result was that the plenary conference, which was intended to discuss the effect that the Nazi victory might have on their joint strategy, was rendered futile. Therefore the American Jewish Committee and representatives of the B'nai Brith met on March 19th to consider their own course of action. Inasmuch as all advices coming from Jewish leaders and organizations abroad who were close to the scene insisted that public agitation in the United States would not only be premature but actually harmful, the two groups decided to refrain from mass meetings and suggested to the Congress that it do likewise. The Congress refused.

Thereupon the Committee and the B'nai Brith issued a joint statement on March 20th which, while expressing their horror at the anti-Jewish actions in Germany, their resentment over the "pseudo-scientific race theories offered in support of this propaganda," and pledging "continued and unremitting efforts in behalf of the Jews of Germany," by implication advised Americans not to join in provocative mass meetings. "Every proper step must be taken to remedy these injustices," they declared. But "such efforts must at the same time be intelligent and reasonable. Prejudice must not be fought merely with appeals to passion and resentment, however justified passion and resentment may be. We shall take every possible measure to discharge the solemn responsibility which rests on our organizations to marshal the forces of public opinion among Americans of every faith to right the wrongs of the Jews of Germany and for the vindication of the fundamental principles of human liberty."

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIGHT AGAINST NAZISM

1. Strategy

THERE were two schools of thought among American Jews as to the most effective means of combating the Nazi menace. The first called for huge mass meetings, rallies and public protests, as well as a boycott of German-made goods, all to be sponsored by the Jews themselves. The most prominent advocate of such measures was the American Jewish Congress. The second held that public denunciations and boycotts by the Jews of America would make the whole matter appear to be a purely "Jewish" issue, with the result that Americans of other faiths would sit back and do nothing; and might also lead to immediate retaliation on the German Jews by vindictive and exasperated Nazis, thereby rendering more desperate the plight of the very people they were trying to help. This was the view of the American Jewish Committee and the B'nai Brith.

The latter organizations had already set forth their position in a joint statement issued on March 20, 1933. When it was heard that a monster protest parade was being planned for the streets of New York, with similar demonstrations scheduled for other cities, a second statement was issued on April 28th which, while reaffirming their horror at the anti-Jewish attacks in Germany, warned against "public agitation in form of boycotts and mass demonstrations." These, they considered, "serve only as an ineffectual channel for the release of emotion. They furnish the persecutors with a pretext to justify the wrongs they perpetrate

and, on the other hand, distract those who desire to help with more constructive efforts."

The "constructive efforts" which the Committee intended to use instead of agitational protests were many and varied. It took the position, for example, that events in Germany posed far more than a mere Jewish problem, that Nazism was a world menace as well and therefore of profound interest to non-Jews on other than purely humanitarian grounds. At the meeting of the Executive Committee on April 9, 1933 this point was made by Judge Joseph M. Proskauer. He expressed the opinion that, regardless of the specific activities carried on by Jewish organizations, the situation in Germany "warranted a more fundamental and more comprehensive attack." He proposed that under the leadership of a distinguished American non-Jew like Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler "the opposition to such things as are now going on in Germany should be organized in a struggle against the infraction of religious or racial equality in all countries, it being understood, however, that the immediate purpose of the group would be to combat the illiberal movement in Germany; that the group sponsoring such a movement in this country should consist, if not entirely of non-Jews, certainly predominantly of non-Jews."

Dr. Butler, when approached on the subject, agreed with the wisdom of the proposal that agitation should be handled by non-Jews rather than Jews, but felt that he could do more effective work as the head of the Carnegie Peace Foundation than as the head of a special committee. He intended, he said, to bring the influence of the Foundation to bear on the situation in Germany on the basis that it was distinctly a menace to world peace.

The support of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America was enlisted for the use of radio church hours throughout the country to deal with the present activities and the future implications of the Nazi program. Teachers, lecturers and legislators were given the true facts on Germany by the Committee for dissemination in classroom, public platform and forum. In the Senate

and in the House of Representatives this material became the basis of full-dress debates in which the entire situation was thoroughly aired.

In addition, the Committee prepared and published a booklet, "The Jews in Nazi Germany," which became internationally known as the White Book of the case against the Nazis. Sober, factual, restrained, it furnished a mine of information to publicists and reappeared in differing guise and dress in countless editorials, articles and speeches. The facts thus presented reached a far wider audience than might be suggested by the 80,000 copies actually distributed. Many millions of Americans were thereby apprised for the first time of the actual methods, aims and "philosophy" of the Nazi movement. In addition, the Committee gave wide currency to the pulpit utterances of Christian ministers and the comments of the religious press in a pamphlet entitled "The Voice of Religion."

When Hitler's "Mein Kampf" appeared in translation, the Committee discovered that the original German had been considerably modified and bowdlerized for the American trade. It therefore caused to be translated those passages which had been softened or omitted, especially those which virulently attacked liberalism and democracy and glorified war and militarism, and forwarded them to reviewers and commentators generally so that they might not be misled by the simplified volume before them.

The Committee also took up with the United States government the possibility of action to regain for the Jews of Germany their ravished civil and political rights. Both the retiring President, Mr. Hoover, and the incoming one, Mr. Roosevelt, were approached. On March 23rd Secretary of State Cordell Hull conferred with representatives of the Committee and the B'nai Brith; on April 28th, after additional interviews, he officially announced that "he had recently assured representatives of American Jewish organizations that he was continuing to watch the situation confronting the Jews in Germany with careful and sympathetic inter-

est. He would continue . . . to do everything within diplomatic usage to be of assistance."

Meanwhile, in order to deal more swiftly and efficiently with the day-by-day shift in the German situation, a Committee on Policy was set up consisting of Judge Proskauer as chairman, Irving Lehman, Roger W. Straus, Lewis L. Strauss and Sol M. Stroock, with Dr. Adler ex-officio.

On May 21st the Committee invited the outstanding Jewish organizations in the country to meet to discuss the possibility of joint action in the crisis. An Emergency Advisory Council was set up by these organizations to attend meetings of the American Jewish Committee and work within the framework of its structure. On a different level, a Joint Council of the Committee, the Congress and the B'nai Brith was established on June 22nd, with three representatives from each group, to act as a clearing house and consultative forum for the projects contemplated by its members.

Since it was generally agreed that increased emigration of Jews out of Germany seemed the only possible escape from the savageries of the Nazis, the Joint Council sought to obtain from the State and Labor Departments of this country the elimination of red tape and unnecessary obstacles in the issuance of visas. Both departments assured the Council of their sympathetic concurrence and instructions were issued to consuls abroad to "accord such applicants every consideration consistent with the proper administration of the immigration law."

A brief was drawn by Mr. Max J. Kohler, a member of the Committee, called "The United States and German Jewish Persecution —Precedents for Popular and Governmental Action," which cited the precedents justifying governmental activities in behalf of persecuted peoples. This brief was also used in conjunction with efforts to enlist the League of Nations in exerting international pressure on the Nazis. A protest addressed to the League Council against German violations of the German-Polish Convention of

1922 which guaranteed equal rights to minorities in Upper Silesia was made the basis of these efforts.

The Committee added its weight to the complex of hearings, reports and debates that ensued in the League Council. Eventually the League issued a formal report that the anti-Jewish measures in Upper Silesia violated the terms of the convention, but it also accepted German assurances that such measures were the work of subordinate authorities and would be "corrected." Nothing, in fact, was done to implement those assurances.

Of a much more enduring nature was the next activity urged upon the League by the American Jewish Committee through the Joint Council. It petitioned that a Commissioner be appointed to handle all problems relating to refugees from Germany, both Jewish and non-Jewish. The Committee drafted a memorandum on the "International Aspects of the German Jewish Situation" and Judge Irving Lehman, vice-president of the Committee, went abroad during the summer of 1933 to enlist aid in the furtherance of the petition before the League.

After many difficulties and considerable modification of the original plan, a Dutch proposal was finally adopted which called for the appointment of a High Commissioner by the League Council, but responsible to a separate and autonomous Governing Board composed of representatives from fifteen countries. Mr. James G. McDonald of New York, formerly president of the Foreign Policy Association, was appointed High Commissioner and Secretary Hull accepted membership in the Governing Board for the United States.

By July, 1935 Mr. McDonald was able to report that of 80,000 refugees from Germany the Commission had settled 27,500 in Palestine, 6,000 in the United States, 18,000 in other countries in eastern and central Europe, and 8,000 to 10,000 in western European countries. Some 15,000 were still unplaced. The plight of these latter was exceedingly grave, Mr. McDonald warned, and

demanded "fresh collective action" by the League and the nations of the world to avert "existing and impending tragedies."

Using Mr. McDonald's report as a solemn text, the American Jewish Committee in August, 1936 submitted to the League of Nations a petition prepared by it and signed by nine other Jewish and non-Jewish organizations abroad as well as the B'nai Brith and the American Christian Committee for German Refugees at home. The petition called on the League to take action on the recommendations in Mr. McDonald's report and to move to eradicate the causes inside Germany itself. The President of the League Assembly assured the bearers of the petition that the League would continue its humanitarian work in behalf of the refugees, but would take no *political* action in the matter.

2. The World Jewish Congress

The dissension in the ranks of American Jewry over the proper methods to be employed in most effectively combating the plague of anti-Semitism in Germany had been temporarily patched up by the formation of the Joint Council of the three great organizations —the Committee, the Congress and the B'nai Brith. This Council was purely consultative and non-binding on its member bodies; but it had been agreed that no one of its constituents should adopt a course of public action without first discussing it in the Joint Council.

Almost immediately, however, the pre-consultation agreement was broken by the American Jewish Congress. It sent a public protest to President Von Hindenburg in Germany without initial clearance in the Council; it continued to arrange monster Jewish mass meetings in the United States and appealed for a Jewish boycott of German goods without consulting the others.

On the subject of the boycott the Committee adopted the stand that while it "sympathizes with the desire, and recognizes the right, of individuals to refrain from buying goods made in Germany, it reaffirms its definite decision not to endorse, or par-

ticipate in, any boycott organized by Jews in America." This did not mean that it did not favor the adoption of a boycott by *general* groups in this country, nor the holding of protest meetings by such organizations. Quite the contrary. For example, it cooperated with the American Federation of Labor which introduced and passed a resolution at its annual convention calling on organized labor to refuse to buy German goods.

Again, the American Jewish Congress was the most active mover for a World Jewish Congress. As far back as 1932 a Geneva conference had declared for such a World Congress "based on the conception of the Jewish people as a unified national organism." In August, 1934, another conference in Geneva had set the date definitely for 1935. This conference had been made the subject of sensational headlines in the American press as a "Jewish Parliament" and a "Jewish super-government."

The Committee promptly countered the erroneous impressions conveyed in these headlines by pointing out that neither it nor other important Jewish organizations were represented at the Geneva conference and that the conference "cannot truthfully be described as representative of Jews of the world or as expressing the viewpoint of Jewish citizens of the United States."

The idea of a World Congress, however, was affirmed by the American Jewish Congress on October 8, 1934. It launched a much-publicized campaign for the holding of general elections among all the Jews in America for delegates to the World Congress and asked the American Jewish Committee to join it in implementing that Congress and in establishing a general Jewish organization in the United States based on such a plebiscite.

The Committee unanimously declined to enter any conference with the American Jewish Congress which would have the World Congress as the subject of consideration. It declared its unalterable opposition in a letter dated December 6, 1934. The letter said in part:

"We have noted with grave concern the statements of propo-

nents of the World Jewish Congress plan, especially of spokesmen and representatives of your organization, that such a Congress is to be 'a parliament of the Jewish people,' that it is to establish to the world that Jews are a 'nation,' that such a congress is to be 'sovereign,' and that it is to 'deal with the totality of Jewish questions, the problems of inner Jewish life, the representation before the nations of the world.'

"Both as American citizens and as Jews we disapprove the creation of such a 'parliament' or of any such 'sovereign' as you propose. We are convinced that such ideas are repugnant to the great body of American Jews.

"As to the tragic problems confronting the Jewish people, it is and for a considerable time has been plain that Jews ought to cooperate in genuine efforts to meet these grave questions. It was because of a recognition of the importance of such cooperation that the B'nai Brith together with you and ourselves, created a Joint Consultative Council which has been in existence for over a year. Nevertheless, without submitting to that Joint Consultative Council the question of a World Jewish Congress or of the far-reaching policies or implications involved therein, you have proceeded in this matter, participated last summer in meetings in Geneva, and have since then been attempting (again without conference with us) to institute so-called 'elections' in the country looking to a World Jewish Congress. Those activities of yours have already worked serious injury to the cause of the Jews. They have furnished a pretext for spreading the false charge that the Jews are an international body with a divided allegiance,—a claim which is disproved by the history of two thousand years during which the loyalty of Jews to the countries of their citizenship has been unswerving.

"In the light of the foregoing, the American Jewish Committee as a matter of principle and profound conviction, will not join in any conference in which the proposal for a World Jewish Congress is to be the subject for consideration.

"If, however, other ways of securing cooperation are contemplated, we will join in deliberations to that end."

Faced with the determined opposition of the Committee and with the similar opposition of the B'nai Brith and other groups, the American Jewish Congress expressed its willingness to confer with the Committee on the condition outlined in the Committee's letter and even, privately, offered to suspend its efforts for a general Jewish election if the Committee would join with it in calling a conference of the national Jewish organizations in the United States. To this offer the Committee agreed.

Nevertheless, in spite of the Committee's readiness to meet with the Congress along the lines indicated, nothing further was heard from the latter. Instead, after a period of quiescence, the agitation for a World Congress was renewed and condemnations of the Committee's stand again appeared regularly in Congress resolutions which were given to the public press.

By 1938, however, the Congress joined with the Committee, the B'nai Brith and the Jewish Labor Committee in a conference at Pittsburgh pursuant to an invitation extended by Mr. Edgar J. Kaufmann in behalf of the Jews of Pittsburgh. As a result, its long-agitated demand for an American plebiscite was abandoned.

The conference was held on June 13, 1938 and resulted in the adoption of a series of resolutions known as the "Pittsburgh Agreement." These called for "the immediate coordination of those activities" of the four member organizations "which relate specifically to safeguarding the equal rights of Jews, through the creation of a single body in which each of these respective organizations shall have equal representation, but without affecting the autonomy of any of these organizations and excluding the consideration of questions involving racial, national or religious philosophies." It was also agreed to add other American Jewish groups to its membership at a later date.

In accordance with this "Agreement" a constitution was drafted and an organization set up called the General Jewish Council.

The Council functioned for several years on a cooperative and consultative basis. It accomplished a good deal of creditable work by avoiding ideological differences and concentrating on such matters of common concern as the Coughlin movement and similar manifestations on the national scene. In 1941, however, the Congress resigned from the Council in protest against the decision of the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League to raise defense funds jointly. This defection seriously impeded the work of the Council and by 1942, though never officially dissolved, it lapsed into complete inactivity.

3. Domestic Menace

Ideas, whether for good or for ill, cannot be contained within national boundaries. Like the ripples formed in water by the splash of a stone they extend indefinitely outward. And when they appeal to primitive passions, they are well nigh irresistible. For there seems to be a sort of Gresham's law for ideas as well as currency—the debased and the bad tend to drive out the good.

This is exactly what happened with the doctrines of the Nazis. Originating in Germany, they refused to be contained within those narrow limits, but spread with pandemic speed throughout the world. The very nations that viewed with the greatest horror this new cult of barbarism and cruelty were soon to feel the virus of infection within their own hitherto relatively immune borders. Such was the case even with distant America, the source and fount of ideas of freedom and individual human worth.

The American Jewish Committee had been founded primarily to fight intolerance and persecution abroad. It never dreamed that some day it would be compelled to devote its major energies to the scene at home. Yet when Hitlerism and all that it connoted spilled over the German frontier and spread its poison across the world, America did not remain immune.

On May 29, 1933, a bare few months after Hitler gained control

of Germany, the contagion was felt in the halls of the American Congress. Louis T. McFadden, representative from Pennsylvania, made a speech. It was a violent diatribe against the Jews. He quoted as indisputable fact the scurrilous allegations of the Protocols and the charges contained in old issues of the Dearborn Independent, ignoring the repeated exposures of the falsity of the one and the apology of Mr. Ford for the other. He charged that the Jews ran America financially; that they possessed all the gold and lawful money, while the Gentiles "have the slips of paper."

The next day Dr. Adler sent a telegram of protest to the speaker of the House of Representatives. On May 31st the telegram was read into the record and the hope expressed by Mr. Byrnes, the Democratic majority leader, that Mr. McFadden would withdraw his remarks. Mr. McFadden refused. Representative Boylan of New York thereupon moved to have the offending remarks expunged from the record. But this required unanimous consent and Mr. Snell, the Republican leader, declined to grant it.

The episode of Mr. McFadden, and the later discovery that he had met secretly with a certain Nazi agent in New York immediately prior to making his speech, had serious implications for the Committee. For it became evident that this was but a single incident in a coordinated network of Nazi-inspired activities in the United States.

Baron Johann George von Stein, with whom Congressman McFadden had met, was only one of a horde of secret agents, albeit the most dangerous, whom Goebbels had sent over to seek out native rabble-rousers and combine them in a single overwhelming organization to poison the well-springs of American life. Baron von Stein, equipped with plenty of money, entertained on a lavish scale in the best hotels and a Park Avenue penthouse. Into his parlor came Fritz Kuhn, the leader of the German-American Bund, German consuls and diplomatic attachés, as well as native rabble-rousers like Royal Scott Gulden, "Colonel" Edwin Emerson, William Dudley Pelley and others. The Rev. Gerald Winrod

went to Germany to drink deep of the oracular utterances of Hitler, Goering, *et al.*, and returned to his native Kansas to spread the gospel of hate and bigotry. Nazi-imitative organizations mushroomed into existence overnight, like the Silver Shirts, the Order of '76 and others.

The Committee became alarmed. It had seen what happened in Europe, and similar movements were spreading with ominous rapidity through the United States. They had to be fought with vigor, skill, imagination and foresight; they had to be fought with every weapon possible and the aid enlisted of Americans of good will everywhere. It would be a major campaign.

To perform the task adequately required money; more than had hitherto been available for the work of the Committee. It was decided therefore at an Executive Committee meeting on June 5, 1933 to obtain contributions from friends of freedom generally, both Jews and non-Jews, and to cooperate with Christian organizations in the common fight against racial and religious antagonisms.

A special organization, called Information & Service Associates, was set up to handle the domestic fight against Nazism and subversive groups. Mr. Wolfgang S. Schwabacher was placed in charge. Later on it was headed professionally by Mr. Sidney Wallach.

The Associates formulated a detailed program of action under two basic heads: first, the investigation and discovery of Nazi propagandists in this country and their native affiliates; second, appropriate countermeasures to oppose their propaganda. In this connection the National Conference of Christians and Jews and the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America proved towers of strength. Close working relations were also established with the Anti-Defamation League, a subsidiary of the B'nai Brith.

The National Conference initiated a national Brotherhood Day with nation-wide radio talks, editorials, articles and sermons on the subject of interfaith relations. Later on the Day turned into a

Week and became an annual feature in which the Committee cooperated. A lecture bureau was established with speakers who had witnessed Nazism at first hand and could give Americans a proper understanding of what the "New Order" really meant. A religious-press syndicate sent weekly news releases of reports from Germany and this country to 900 religious periodicals in the United States, with a total circulation of some 20,000,000 readers. The labor press, as well as general newspapers, were kept equally informed. The values of democracy were dramatized in radio programs and speeches. Professor Franz Boas, the world-famous anthropologist, was encouraged in his exposure of the false race theories of the Nazis.

When sufficient facts were gathered on Nazi agents in this country and on native hate-organizations, these were turned over to Congressional committees for further investigation; when their activities overstepped the bounds of law, both the Federal Bureau of Investigation and local police agencies were notified.

To combat the rising flood of anti-Jewish libels and the defamatory propaganda of the Pelleys, Winrods, Guldens, Emersons *et al.* a Lawyer's Advisory Committee was formed in 1935 with Mr. Carl J. Austrian as chairman. It was this committee's task to analyze the numerous examples of scurrilous literature, to evaluate existing legal provisions against group and individual libels, and to press for prosecution when such was desirable. However, it was well understood that most of the literature was being put out by ambitious publicity-seekers who would welcome denunciation and even prosecution as a means toward the wider dissemination of their doctrines. Therefore, the Lawyer's Committee considered it wiser to defend the civil rights of Jews not by libel actions but by a long-range campaign of education that would render the average American immune to anti-Semitic scurrilities. The American Jewish Committee agreed with this analysis of the situation and organized its general work accordingly.

By the end of 1936 the educational campaign of the Committee

had been in effect three years. Mr. Waldman, under whose supervision it had been conducted, thought that the time had come to make a thorough study of the work already done and its results evaluated in relation to the needs of the situation.

Meanwhile Mr. Max Warburg had just returned from a trip to Europe, bringing with him confidential news of such gravity and urgency that a small group met to hear Mr. Warburg's report and determine on a course of immediate action.

The suggestion offered by this little group, including Max Warburg, Lewis L. Strauss, Edward S. Greenbaum and Carl J. Austrian, was to the same effect as that of Mr. Waldman: appoint a Survey Committee of lay members to report on what had been done to combat the infiltration of Nazi ideas in this country and what more, if anything, could be done in the future.

After a thorough investigation this committee reported that while some progress had been made, the urgency of the times demanded a complete overhauling of the program to make it at once more intensive in character and more comprehensive in scope. So important, in fact, did the Survey Committee consider this campaign of education that its members expressed a desire to contribute their own time and effort to the work on a permanent basis. The offer was gratefully accepted and full powers were granted to the Committee to intensify and expand the program as it saw fit.

The Survey Committee had a distinguished roster. Starting with a small group, it was later augmented to include the following: Carl J. Austrian, George Backer, Robert M. Benjamin, Alfred L. Bernheim, Mrs. Sidney C. Borg, Benjamin J. Buttenwieser, Phillip Forman, Arthur J. Goldsmith, Edward S. Greenbaum, Harold K. Guinzburg, Mrs. Charles E. Heming, Mrs. William de Young Kay, Samuel D. Leidesdorf, Solomon Lowenstein, Walter Mendelsohn, Victor Riesenfeld, Samuel I. Rosenman, William Rosenwald, Richard C. Rothschild, Mrs. Edward S. Steinam, Roger W. Straus, Lewis L. Strauss, Alan M. Stroock, David Sulzberger, B.

Charney Vladeck, Paul Felix Warburg, Maurice Wertheim, Joseph Willen and Miss Ethel H. Wise, with Morris D. Waldman, ex-officio.

Under the leadership of Edward S. Greenbaum and Lewis L. Strauss, the Committee determined that the task it had set itself was no ordinary one. The seriousness of the situation required extraordinary efforts far beyond the usual routine of a committee. Accordingly, each member pledged himself to devote his full time outside of his regular business to the job at hand, to give up participation in all other philanthropic activities and attend every committee meeting regardless of prior engagements. Mr. Greenbaum, a distinguished and busy lawyer, went much beyond this stringent pledge. For a period of years he devoted a substantial part of his time to the service of the Committee. Mr. Austrian and other members of the group were not far behind in their single-minded devotion to the cause. Mr. Strauss and Mr. Greenbaum became the mainstays of the Committee; Mr. Strauss being chiefly responsible for its founding, while Mr. Greenbaum planned its career and kept it going with unwearied enthusiasm. Through all change and vicissitude he held to the main theme and made it possible to bring it to fruition. All of the members, in fact, gave freely of their time and performed outstanding services.

The Survey Committee set about its twofold task of exposing domestic anti-Semitic organizations and of educating Americans in racial and religious good-will, with a radical departure from former practice. Hitherto the American Jewish Committee's numerous activities had been performed with a small general staff and a limited annual budget. Such a procedure was no longer effective when the threat of Hitler became evident; nor was it sufficient to cope with a world-wide, highly organized and deliberate attempt to exterminate the Jews en masse. Fire had to be fought with fire. A tight-knit organization, the latest scientific techniques, a well-planned, coherent program, and a corps of experts in the various media for reaching the American people were essential for the task at hand.

Mr. Rothschild presented such a program in what became known as the Six-Point Plan. It furnished a blueprint for an intensive campaign to combat anti-Semitism and other Nazi ideas in America, to uncover and expose anti-Semitic organizations and their leaders, to erase prevalent misconceptions of the Jews, and to apprise Jews of the methods by which anti-Semitism could best be combated. It also called for the subvention of non-sectarian, pro-democratic organizations fighting for freedom and good will in America, and finally, for the training of a staff of experts in various aspects of the work.

This was an ambitious program which required substantial sums of money. In 1937 a small group of public-spirited men sat down to dinner together in New York and the entire project was explained to them. Their response was immediate and took the form of generous contributions to finance the work. Others followed suit. The amounts so raised were sufficient to keep the Committee going until 1938 when its activities grew to such proportions that more money was essential. Mr. Maurice Wertheim headed a group to raise the additional sums. His untiring efforts and those of Mr. Joseph Willen were singularly successful, and the "Wertheim campaign" saw the Committee safely through the years prior to America's entrance into the war.

Thus armed and accoutered the Survey Committee commenced full activities in 1938, and soon became the most important single unit of the American Jewish Committee. The tiny office on Second Avenue had long before been exchanged for another one on Union Square; from there the Committee moved first to 33rd Street and then to 31st Street. Now new and much larger quarters were engaged at 386 Fourth Avenue to house the expanding staff.

The procedure which the Survey Committee followed was somewhat complex. The chairmanship was rotated every three months among the members so that no one of the group of busy men of affairs would be overwhelmed by the terrific pressure of work. Occasionally, however. a chairmanship was held for two consecutive

terms. Each member was made responsible for the supervision of a specific field of educational activity. Later on, in 1941, when the Survey Committee returned its semi-autonomous functions to the general Committee, the same techniques were followed, except that instead of single members, sub-committees now handled the delineated areas, such as public relations, legal and investigative department, library, etc.

All fields for reaching the American public were utilized—the mass media of radio, movies, press and posters, and the special class areas of labor, veterans, church, youth and women's clubs. A handful of trained men had been sufficient in the old days to take care of the defense work of the Committee. The staff was now rapidly expanded to about a hundred, including specialists in these vast and growing fields. Popular studies of the "race" question in books, pamphlets, newspapers, and magazines were distributed on the widest possible scale; so were pro-democratic utterances and factual information concerning the Jewish people and anti-Semitism as a historical phenomenon.

Thousands of radio programs over nation-wide hookups stressed true Americanism, religious liberty, the divisiveness of the Nazi propaganda, and the implications of the situation in Europe. Special groups were shown how anti-Semitism affected *them* as American citizens and as members of their group.

The Legal and Investigative Department was expanded. Staffed by competent lawyers, it investigated anti-Semitic movements. Among those whom it exposed to the public view were such professional agitators as Gerald Winrod, Eugene Sanctuary, William Dudley Pelley, Joe McWilliams, Royal Scott Gulden, George Deatherage, Gerald L. K. Smith and many others.

The American Jewish Committee, however, early dissociated itself from answering and refuting charges against the Jews. By responding to every attack with denials and refutations, it was felt, the Jews were falling into the trap which the Nazis and rabble-rousers had deliberately baited for them. Replies only spread the

original canard, and brought it to the attention of many thousands who otherwise would never have heard it. The whole matter was carefully considered in a pamphlet by Mr. Richard C. Rothschild, published in 1939 under the title of "Are American Jews Falling into the Nazi Trap?" Instead, the Committee asserted the positive aspects of Jewish life and the Jewish contributions to America in science, medicine, literature, the arts, inventions, industry and as decent American citizens.

The Committee also associated itself with non-sectarian groups which were engaged in the common cause, the names of which read like a roster of the liberal, pro-democratic, anti-Nazi organizations in the country.

Nor was work among Jews themselves neglected. An intensive education campaign attempted to eliminate certain friction spots and to replace emotionalism with sober thought and action; dignity and self-reliance were insisted on.

The Nazi line of "divide and conquer" was effectively exposed and its function as a technique of penetration into democratic countries for the purpose of eventual ruin and conquest was made clearly evident.

The work of the Survey Committee and of its successors represented a new departure. For the first time long-range educational techniques were used to destroy the roots of anti-Semitism in America. Other groups, observing the successful results achieved, followed suit and today most of those engaged in fighting anti-Semitism have adopted similar methods.

Such, then, was the status of the American Jewish Committee when the long-expected but nonetheless horrifying war broke out in Europe in 1939.

CHAPTER IX

THE ENEMY WITHOUT

1. The Second Armageddon

FOR the second time within a generation the flames of war were sweeping over Europe and threatening to engulf the world. But there were significant differences between this later holocaust and the one of 1914. A new and infinitely more tragic note had crept into the long saga of man's inhumanity to man.

World War I, for all its frightful destruction, had been conducted essentially in the tradition of former conflicts. It remained a war of nations, and groups of nations; and its fundamental bases of political, economic and imperialist aggrandizement would have been thoroughly understood by Thucydides, the ancient historian of the Peloponnesian War. The ill-treatment of minority groups, the pogroms and massacres of Jews, were incidental rather than primary to the larger aspects of the conflict, and were inflicted chiefly upon the inhabitants of invaded enemy domains. If that war proved more terrible in its consequences than any former conflict, it was due to the larger areas involved, new weapons of destruction and the complexity and interdependence of modern life. No threat to civilization as such was implied or intended.

But the Nazis introduced a new and ideologically vicious note in the history of mankind. For the first time the idea of "racism" was made the basis for a war of conquest and enslavement. For the first time a single group proclaimed itself the "master" race and all others inferior by nature. For the first time Jews were attacked as a

"racial" and ethnic group who could not escape from alleged blood-defects even by conversion to Christianity, and were subjected to deliberate extermination not merely in enemy lands but at home as well. For the first time Christianity as a *religion* and the Bible on which it was based were made the subject of vicious assaults by former adherents, and a dark pagan cult of blood and earth substituted in their place. The very foundations of Western civilization were under attack.

The war which, for the rest of mankind, commenced in 1939, as far as Jews were concerned had begun in 1933. From the very beginning the Committee had recognized that patent fact and had repeatedly warned that though the Jews were the initial victims all mankind, and the concept of Christianity itself, were destined to be the ultimate prey.

* * *

The outbreak of war hastened what had long been contemplated—a thorough-going reorganization of the American Jewish Committee that would make it more administratively flexible and responsive to the tremendous problems confronting world Jewry.

Inasmuch as the Executive Committee, necessarily territorially dispersed, was able to meet only at stated intervals, it was deemed essential on January 20, 1940 to set up a smaller and more compact Administrative Committee of twelve to fifteen members who would be instantly available and possess full power to act when the Executive Committee was not in session.

Along similar organizational lines the constitution and by-laws of the American Jewish Committee, as fixed by the charter of incorporation of 1911, and amended in 1930 and 1935, were again amended in 1942. The Executive Committee was enlarged to an upper limit of one hundred and fifty, and provision was made to increase its membership to that permissible maximum. The general Committee, with its three classes of membership (Class A,

Community Representatives; Class B, Delegates from National Jewish Organizations; Class C, Members-at-Large,) was placed on a broader base and the methods of election were modernized.

It was during this period of internal adjustment to the increasingly heavy demands made upon it that the Committee suffered a serious loss through the death of Dr. Cyrus Adler, its president since 1929. He had been ailing for a considerable period; nevertheless his passing on April 7, 1940 marked the end of an era. He had been one of the last survivors of that devoted group who had organized the Committee in 1906 and he had labored unremittingly in the cause of his fellow-Jews ever since.

At the ensuing annual meeting Mr. Sol M. Stroock was elected to the presidency. He had been chairman of the Executive Committee and had long been prominent in shaping Committee policy. In fact, during the extended illness of Dr. Adler he had been the guiding spirit of the Committee. But his term of office as president was tragically brief. He died suddenly on September 11, 1941 and again the Committee was left without a head.

At the end of 1941 Mr. Maurice Wertheim was chosen to lead the organization. Well-known as a banker, a founder and director of the Theater Guild, and equally well-known in Jewish circles, he piloted the Committee until the beginning of 1943 when his outside duties on the War Production Board compelled him to decline renomination. Thereupon Judge Joseph M. Proskauer, former member of the Appellate Division of the New York Supreme Court, one of America's leading lawyers and active on the Executive Committee, was elected president of the organization. Annually re-elected to office, Judge Proskauer has guided the destinies of the Committee from 1943 to the current year of 1947 through one of the most crucial periods in its entire history.

After Mr. Sol M. Stroock's elevation to the presidency in 1941 Mr. Louis E. Kirstein became chairman of the Executive Committee; on his death in December, 1942 Mr. Jacob Blaustein, prominent industrialist and advisor to the U. S. Department of the Interior

since the early days of the war, was elected as chairman and has occupied that important post ever since, as well as the chairmanship of the policy-making Steering Committee.

The chairmanship of the similarly important Administrative Committee was first placed in the hands of Victor S. Riesenfeld; in 1943 Mr. Alan M. Stroock occupied the chair; and in 1944 Mr. David Sher assumed the reins and has continued to hold them to the present day.

These men have given generously of their time and abilities to the work of the Committee and devoted their energies to the solution of the vast complex of problems which have beset and continue to beset the Jewish people throughout the world.

2. Overseas Activities

The rush of the Nazi horde across the plains of Poland and the subjection of large additional masses of Jews to its tender mercies, once more made Europe the chief focus of attention of the American Jewish Committee. The anguish of the persecuted, the blood of the slaughtered and the dark cruelties of the concentration camp inundated Germany, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Poland.

Meanwhile, the non-aggression pact between the Nazis and the Russians which preceded the outbreak of war had unwitting repercussions in the United States. For the native rabble-rousers who had sought to imitate the Nazis in their designs for power had included in their stock in trade a whispering campaign that attempted to link the Jews with communism in a plot to overthrow our government and drag us into war with Nazi Germany. The so-called Dies Committee on Un-American Activities had lent itself to the nefarious campaign and given it semi-official sanction. The Russo-German pact, therefore, burst like a bombshell on the rabble-rousers.

Governor Herbert H. Lehman of New York took prompt advantage of the situation to complete the rout of the discomfited Ameri-

can *Fuehrers*. In a speech on June 5, 1939 he denounced Nazism, Fascism and Communism as equally abhorrent to the vast majority of the American people. But he warned that "we gain nothing if in our fight against Communism we invoke Fascism. We gain nothing if in our fight against Fascism we invoke Communism. Both Fascism and Communism can successfully be fought only by invoking an uncompromising devotion to democracy." The Committee, of which Governor Lehman had been an active member, put itself on record as endorsing to the hilt this attitude on the various "isms" that were plaguing the American scene.

On the world scene the Committee found itself faced with the necessity for the immediate resolution of several puzzling problems. The first, and most gigantic task was to bring relief, insofar as it was possible, to the millions of trapped Jews within the Nazi-dominated areas. This, however, was the special province of the Joint Distribution Committee, which the American Jewish Committee had helped initiate and with which it continued to cooperate.

But the other problems were not so easily or unanimously resolved. A World Jewish Congress had finally been organized at Geneva in 1936 after many vicissitudes that had threatened to wreck Jewish community life in America, a disaster which had only been averted by the "Pittsburgh" agreement for voluntary cooperation. Now, on February 9, 1940, the Congress proposed to the American Jewish Committee that they join with the Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Board of Deputies of British Jews in setting up a Peace Institute in Geneva under the auspices of the Congress for the purpose of preparing a program on behalf of the Jews for submission to an eventual peace conference.

The proposal stirred up a good deal of discussion in the Committee. It was finally decided that 1) it was inadvisable to cooperate in such an undertaking with the World Jewish Congress, since that organization was "the symbol of the nationalist Jewish Weltanschauung" with a fundamental position that the Jews are a

nation and constitute separate political entities in the countries in which they live; a position which the Committee had consistently opposed; 2) Geneva, an island in the sea of Nazi domination, was not a proper place for such an Institute; 3) the apparatus suggested was too elaborate. Accordingly the invitation was turned down.

This rejection did not mean that the Committee was not concerned with the status of those Jews who might survive on that distant day when peace again came to a war-torn world. Historically, the Committee had always prepared itself well in advance for that eventuality. Such had been the case at the beginning of World War I; such was now the case. If there was very little it could do to change or modify the course of war, it might well have some influence on the course of peace.

As far back as March, 1939 a sub-committee on Overseas Activities had been appointed, whose special province was the handling of European and Near-East affairs. Now it set up its own machinery of research in connection with a future peace conference.

A Committee on Peace Studies, including such experts as Professors Morris R. Cohen and Salo W. Baron, studied the entire field of post-war problems. Non-Jewish scholars like Professor Shotwell, of the Carnegie Peace Foundation, cooperated in the task. On the agenda were such broad divisions as relief and rehabilitation, migration and colonization, political, economic and cultural status of the Jews, and the formation of an Institute on Peace and Post-war Problems.

The Institute, headed by Dr. Max Gottschalk, contributed during the course of the war a notable series of studies to the world's thinking on these vital problems. "The New Order in Poland," by Dr. Simon Segal, described the Nazi regime in that conquered country and its impact on the general as well as Jewish population. Dr. Franz Neumann prepared a similar study for Germany which he later included as a chapter in his best-selling volume, "Behemoth." Dr. Hermann Oppenheim contributed "The Social and Economic Life of the Jews in Austria: 1918–1938." A pamphlet was

prepared of the "Documents on Soviet Policy concerning Jews." The effect of the war on the religious and cultural life of Jews in Europe was made the subject of a series of monographs. In fact, a stream of books, pamphlets, monographs and articles on every phase of Jewish life in Europe poured from the presses for the information and conceptual background of those leaders of world affairs who would have a hand in post-war planning and reconstruction.

The idea of an International Bill of Rights was also under discussion. To help clarify thinking along these lines Professor Hersch Lauterpacht of Cambridge University, authority on international law, wrote a volume entitled "An International Bill of the Rights of Man." Other volumes to appear under the aegis of the Institute were "Jews in the Postwar World," "Jewish Postwar Problems," "Legal Claims Against Germany," and "Where They Went: a Century of Organized Jewish Migrations."

Possibly the most important of all the publications in this field was the recommendations of the American Jewish Committee in March, 1945 called "To the Counsellors of Peace." This will be discussed, however, in a later chapter.

3. Palestine

Another area of activity which deeply concerned the Committee was Palestine. On no other question was there less light and more heat, more emotionalism and exacerbation of temper, less factual knowledge and more divisiveness. Logic and rational argument usually went by the board when Palestine was under discussion.

From the very beginning the Committee's position on the troubling issue of Palestine had been logically consistent. It took the stand that Palestine was a natural locus for the cultural and religious aspirations of the Jews; that it served a fundamental purpose as a place of refuge for those fleeing persecution; and it had acclaimed the Balfour Declaration in 1918 favoring "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."

But it had also been careful to point out that as long as the Jewish inhabitants of Palestine were a minority of the whole, it was idle to talk of or agitate for a Jewish state. If the time ever arrived when the Jews in fact became a majority, the matter might then be discussed on a realistic level.

The Committee had always taken an active interest in Palestine. It had worked for the implementation of the Balfour Declaration at the peace conference following World War I. It had helped form the Palestine Economic Corporation in 1926. It had, through its leaders, promoted the organization of the American Friends of the Hebrew University. It had been instrumental in creating the enlarged Jewish Agency for Palestine, over whose sessions Mr. Marshall had presided in 1929. And, at all times, it had unweariedly sought a formula concerning Palestine on which all American Jews might agree, whether Zionists, non-Zionists or anti-Zionists.

But the Committee considered that *political* problems should be left in the hands of the Jewish Agency, created as a semi-official body exactly for that purpose. It had therefore refused to take independent action on its own when, in 1936, the Nazi-inspired propaganda among the Arabs culminated in strikes and bloody riots in that unhappy land. Any such outside interference, it had maintained, would only complicate the situation and impede the efforts of the Jewish Agency.

When, however, as an aftermath of these disturbances a British Royal Commission proposed the partitioning of Palestine into an Arab state, a Jewish state and an enclave administered by Great Britain, the Committee decided that this was a time to take a stand. Accordingly, at its annual meeting of January, 1938, the Committee adopted a series of resolutions which expressed its opposition to such a partition scheme as violative of the terms of the Declaration and demanded that, until a proper solution was offered, the present Mandate be continued. It also pledged itself to cooperate with other Jewish bodies, especially the Jewish Agency,

"to help bring about a just, equitable and workable solution of the present Palestine problem."

The next move was to strike out sharply against a rumored change in British policy which would further restrict Jewish immigration into Palestine and impede the progress of the Jewish settlements in that country. Mr. Morris Waldman, general secretary and executive director of the Committee, went to England to confer with prominent individuals there, both Jews and non-Jews. A cable of protest was sent to Dr. Weizmann for him to use when he approached the British government. The Committee joined in delegations that waited on Sir Ronald Lindsay, British Ambassador to the United States, and on Secretary of State Cordell Hull. As Mr. Sol M. Stroock, chairman of the Executive Committee, emphasized to the general membership on October 19, 1938: "It is the purpose of our Committee, by all legitimate means, to endeavor to keep the doors of Palestine open for immigration of our afflicted brethren and to protect them within the framework of the Balfour Declaration. We are keeping unremittingly at that task." At the same time the Committee warned against emotional appeals and public mass meetings as merely provocative and liable to harm the very cause they intended to further.

The rumors of impending change, however, became more alarming. Palestine and the Arab world seethed with unrest. The report of the Royal Commission had been before the government of England for some time, and it was known that it contemplated definite restrictive action.

The Committee did what it could to mobilize world opinion, and especially American opinion, in an effort to forestall any such British move. On March 13, 1939, Dr. Adler requested Secretary of State Cordell Hull to convey to the British government the Committee's opposition to any change in Palestinian policy which would not be in harmony with the Balfour Declaration and the provisions of the Mandate. "Specifically," his telegram concluded significantly, "the American Jewish Committee strongly hopes that

Palestine will continue to remain open to the immigration of Jews to the extent of its absorptive capacity and that no steps will be taken which would impede the continued development of the Jewish national home in Palestine." From this legally unassailable position the Committee has never deviated.

Nevertheless, the bombshell burst in May, 1939. Though some change had been anticipated, the published terms of the White Paper issued by the Colonial Ministry outdid the worst fears of the Jewish communities of the world. Pleading the wishes of the Arabs and their alleged resentment, the White Paper threw the Balfour Declaration into the discard. Hereafter, it stated, Jewish immigration into Palestine would be sharply limited to annual quotas so computed as to freeze the Jewish population into a permanent minority as against the Arabs, and with an eventual cessation of all entry. Also, the right of Jews to purchase land, even where freely offered for sale by Arab owners, was to be hedged in by numerous restrictions.

This mortal blow was immediately followed by a punitive suspension of immigration for a six-month period in reprisal for alleged "illegal" entry of Jews in contravention of the quota set forth in the White Paper. At the same time, however, continued Arab immigration from the neighboring States was viewed with a lenient eye, if not actually encouraged.

On July 19, 1939 the American Jewish Committee joined with five other American groups in a strong protest to the British government against the indefensible closing of the gates of Palestine at a time of unparalleled persecution of the Jews of Europe and of their desperate need for sanctuary. "It is a problem that should appeal to the conscience of the whole civilized world. To meet this problem by punishing the victims of ruthless oppression and by retaliation against the builders of the Jewish National Home should be repugnant to the British people and their government with their honored tradition of fair play and service to the principles of justice and humanity."

The outbreak of the war soon thereafter underscored the protest in most tragic fashion and the punitive six-month ban was never put into effect.

With the coming of war it was obvious that some modus vivendi was imperative on which all Jews could agree with relation to Palestine. The Committee's leaders conferred with Zionist representatives to explore the possibilities of formulating such basic areas of agreement. In the Spring of 1941 Dr. Weizmann, head of the World Zionist Organization, visited the United States and unofficially met Mr. Sol M. Stroock. Off-the-record meetings with other groups were held to explore the practicability of reconstituting the Jewish Agency and, if feasible, to prepare a program which would envisage the entire Jewish situation. That Agency had gradually come under the control of the Zionists, and the non-Zionists in it had lapsed into inactivity. It was hoped to bring the latter back into active functioning, as had been the original intention.

The exploratory conversations continued for some time, notably with the American Emergency Committee for Zionists Affairs, the American Jewish Congress and the B'nai Brith. A committee headed by Mr. Louis E. Kirstein represented the American Jewish Committee in these negotiations. These four organizations jointly protested on March 19, 1942 the tragic sinking of the steamer *Struma* and the deaths of 769 Jewish refugees who were fleeing the Nazi terror in Rumania and to whom the British authorities had refused permission to land in Palestine. The protest, addressed to the American State Department, placed the blame for the disaster squarely on the British violation of the express terms of the Mandate and demanded the good offices of our own government in bringing about a modification of such practices.

The Kirstein Committee meanwhile was meeting regularly with the other groups, both Zionist and non-Zionist, and it seemed for a while as if an agreement might be reached in which "the nationalist conception of Jewish life was to be renounced by all organizations but that the principle of ultimate self-government

in Palestine by Jews residing in that country was to be endorsed with provisions safeguarding the rights of all inhabitants regardless of race or creed, and the political non-identification of Jews outside of Palestine with that country." High hopes, in fact, were entertained that the American Jewish Committee and the Zionist Organization of America would adopt joint resolutions to that effect and ask all other Jewish organizations in the country to subscribe to them, and that the World Zionist Organization would similarly endorse a renunciation of "universal Jewish nationalism."

But from May 9th to May 11th, 1942, an extraordinary conference was held at the Hotel Biltmore in New York City which was attended by every major Zionist organization in America and Zionist representatives from abroad. The sessions ended in a sweeping victory for the extreme Zionist position. In the so-called "Biltmore Resolution" an all-out demand was made for an immediate Jewish state in Palestine. The Resolution was reaffirmed on October 17, 1942 by the Zionist Organization of America and the Hadassah, and became official doctrine.

The passage and affirmance of the Biltmore Resolution shattered whatever hopes there might have been for unity on a more moderate position. Though the Kirstein Committee still continued its negotiations, it was obvious that no compromise was possible. Many members of the general Committee expressed alarm at the continuance of any negotiations with the Zionists in view of the position they had already adopted. Mr. Wertheim, then president, halted the submission of resolutions already prepared by the Kirstein Committee in order to permit the general Committee to resurvey the situation in the light of the Zionist action. He was not in favor, he remarked, of "exchanging one kind of disunity for another."

After lengthy discussion the American Jewish Committee prepared a general formula or "Statement of Views with respect to the present Situation in Jewish Life," on which its own membership could agree and which could then be used as a basis for further negotiation with the Zionists.

The "Statement of Views," adopted by the Executive Committee on December 5–6, 1942 and ratified at the annual meeting on January 31, 1943, is an important document. Here, in explicit language, is set forth the fundamental position of the Committee on the issues discussed. It reads as follows:

At this time when our country is engaged in an epoch-making war, we, who are united with our brethren of all faiths in the common bond of American citizenship, pledge every effort and every sacrifice to the winning of the war, the achievement for the whole world of the Four Freedoms and the blessings of the Atlantic Charter and the establishment of a just and enduring peace.

We reaffirm our devotion to our religion and pledge ourselves to maintain and perpetuate the vitality of the Jewish religious community, confident that its teachings have constituted and will continue to constitute a basic contribution to the development of civilization and of democracy.

We join with our brethren of all creeds in the continued fight against those who through bigotry and prejudice endeavor in any way to imperil the rights of any group of American Citizens and thus to divide our country and undermine the foundations of American liberty.

We urge upon the United Nations and upon those who shall frame the terms of peace the relief from the havoc and ruin inflicted by Axis barbarism on millions of unoffending human beings, especially Jews, their repatriation, rehabilitation and the complete restoration and safeguarding of their equal civil and religious rights.

To the extent that economic conditions in the war torn lands shall make emigration therefrom of their nationals necessary, we ask the implementation by those who shall frame the terms of peace of a program which shall under international supervision facilitate voluntary settlement elsewhere under the most favorable conditions.

We ask of the United Nations and those who shall frame the terms of peace, reaffirmation of the fundamental principle that Jewish citizens of every land, fulfilling their obligation of complete loyalty to their respective countries, shall be guaranteed the correlative right of complete equality. We applaud the recent statement of the Secretary of State, that we must have a world in which Jews like all others, "are free to abide in peace and in honor."

Thus, while associating ourselves fully with all the purposes of human freedom and betterment proclaimed by the President of the United States, we have special concern with the two objectives, salvation of these suffering people and the preservation of the Jewish community as a spiritual force.

We recognize that there are now more than half a million Jews in Palestine who have built up a sound and flourishing economic life and a satisfying spiritual and cultural life, and who now constitute substantially one-third of the population, and that while this Palestinian immigration has been a blessed amelioration of the condition of this large number of Jews, and has helped to bring about a great development of the country itself, settlement in Palestine although an important factor, cannot alone furnish and should not be expected to furnish the solution of the problem of post-war Jewish rehabilitation.

We affirm our deep sympathy with and our desire to cooperate with those Jews who wish to settle in Palestine.

With respect to the government of Palestine, we recognize wide divergence of opinion and that under existing conditions there should be no preconceived formula at this time as to the permanent political structure which shall obtain there. Since we hold that in the United States as in all other countries Jews, like all others of their citizens are nationals of those nations and of no other, there can be no political identification of Jews outside of Palestine with whatever government may there be instituted.

We endorse the policy of friendship and cooperation between

Jews and Arabs in Palestine and urge that every possible avenue be followed to establish good will and active collaboration between them.

We approve for Palestine an international trusteeship responsible to the United Nations for the following purposes:

(a) To safeguard the Jewish settlement in and Jewish immigration into Palestine and to guarantee adequate scope for future growth and development to the full extent of the economic absorptive capacity of the country.

(b) To safeguard and protect the fundamental rights of all inhabitants.

(c) To safeguard and protect the holy places of all faiths.

(d) To prepare the country to become, within a reasonable period of years, a self-governing Commonwealth under a Constitution and a bill of rights that will safeguard and protect these purposes and basic rights for all.

With this Statement the Committee affirmed its own comprehensive program and at the same time placed on record its opposition to the Biltmore Resolution. The Statement was widely circulated among American Jews so that there could be no misunderstanding of its position. It offered a program which it was felt should appeal to the moderate Zionist as well as to the non-Zionist, and impliedly placed the blame for the failure to achieve unity on Palestine to the extreme Zionist position as exemplified in the Biltmore Resolution.

Both the extreme Zionists and the anti-Zionists took exception to the Committee's position. There were a few resignations of the former, while the latter eventually set up the American Council for Judaism.

4. The American Jewish Conference

On January 6, 1943 Mr. Henry Monsky, as president of the B'nai Brith, invited thirty-five national Jewish organizations, of which

the American Jewish Committee was one, to attend a conference in Pittsburgh on January 23rd. The purpose of the meeting was to consider the post-war status of the Jews and the up-building of a Jewish Palestine.

The Committee declined to participate. In the first place it considered that such an ambitious project should have been cleared by the B'nai Brith through the General Jewish Council, which had been set up for exactly such contingencies. In the second place it thought that such a conference at the present moment was untimely and inadvisable since other discussions and plans were already under way. And there were unpleasant memories of a similar convocation during the preceding war, when the Palestinian question had not been nearly as explosive as now.

Thirty-two of the organizations invited attended the Pittsburgh meeting and voted to issue a call for an American Jewish Assembly that would (1) consider and recommend action on problems involving the rights and status of Jews in the post-war world; (2) consider and recommend action on the rights of Jews relating to Palestine; (3) elect representatives to implement this program in cooperation with delegates of Jews from all over the world.

Following the meeting the American Jewish Committee was again invited to participate. This time there were even more definite objections to acceptance. For the proposed Assembly was seemingly the old attempt to establish a general political body that would assume to speak on behalf of all American Jews and bind them to a common program in spite of minority dissent. Again, the machinery set up for the election of delegates made provision only for voting by *national* Jewish organizations in which the Zionists were in the majority, and gave no representation to the considerable number of American Jews who were unaffiliated or associated in local groups.

Nevertheless the Committee did not wish to stand in the way of unity, if unity were possible in any areas of general agreement. Accordingly it appointed a committee composed of Judge Pros-

kauer, Judge Irving Lehman, George Z. Medalie, Alan M. Stroock and Joseph Willen to confer with a similar committee from the Assembly to determine whether a *modus vivendi* could be arrived at. Judge Samuel I. Rosenman also attended the sessions.

The points at issue were clear. They may be most succinctly stated by quoting from a letter which Judge Proskauer sent to Mr. Monsky on March 16th when the discussions under way had become matters of misunderstanding and dispute.

"Your outline of the proposed Assembly seemed to us from the beginning open to the interpretation," declared Judge Proskauer, "that what was planned was a quasi-political 'Assembly' that would consider itself empowered to speak for and act in this country for Jews no matter to what extent they might hold varying beliefs.

"On principle, the American Jewish Committee is unalterably opposed to any plan that would seem to set up the Jews as a separate political enclave, and your project, with its local and regional delegates, its elaborate electoral machinery, and its very title 'American Jewish Assembly' will certainly have this implication.

"Surely we must studiously avoid not only the reality, but the appearance of creating parallel or subsidiary political machineries through which sections of America's population would rule themselves, deal with the national government, or negotiate with other governments in the interest of their group.

"It had seemed to us immeasurably sounder to call together a Conference of groups representing various points of view in Jewish life, to canvass their various opinions and proposals, and to find what areas of agreement exist that ought constitute a common ground for united action. Such a Conference would not make any claim to speak on behalf of the totality of American Jewry; it would not attempt to bind or coerce its own minorities or in any way challenge their right to express their point of view or to take any action they deem fit or proper."

With these issues in mind the two subcommittees met on February 20, 1943. Judge Proskauer, Judge Lehman, Mr. Medalie and

Mr. Waldman represented the American Jewish Committee; while Mr. Monsky, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Rabbi James G. Heller and Mr. Robert Goldman appeared for the Assembly.

The conference ended in an oral agreement which the committees were to submit for ratification to their respective organizations. Later on, however, the exact terms of this understanding became the subject of considerable dispute. The correspondence that ensued seemed only to befog the issues. Judge Proskauer set down what he conceived to be the agreement in a letter to Mr. Monsky dated February 23rd:

"1. The organization is to be known as the 'American Jewish Conference.'

"2. Its objective shall be to secure the largest possible measure of agreement as to program to be presented to the Peace Conference and the Methods of Presentation. But such agreement is to be purely voluntary, each participating organization and individual retaining, irrespective of the vote of the conference, complete freedom of action."

To this statement of points, after a further exchange of views, Mr. Monsky replied on March 16th that he was prepared officially to report the following action by the Assembly:

"The Assembly shall strive for agreement on and determine action in reference to the objectives outlined in Paragraphs 4A, B and C of the proposals adopted at the Pittsburgh meeting on January 24, 1943. *The right of any participating organization to dissent from, and so dissenting not to be bound by, the conclusions of the Assembly, is recognized.*" (Italics added.)

An additional exchange of letters clarified the Assembly's position on election of delegates. It agreed to provide for the representation of *local* Jewish groups as well as *national* organizations in the Assembly. However, the Assembly's Executive Committee refused, at least for the present, to change its name to the American Jewish Conference.

On April 9th the American Jewish Committee reiterated its

stand. It would participate in the Assembly on three conditions: (1) that the name be changed to the "American Jewish Conference;" (2) that the right of dissent and subsequent freedom of action as specified in Mr. Monsky's letter of March 16th remain in effect; (3) that the understanding contained in Mr. Monsky's letter of April 8th concerning the mode of election of delegates be implemented.

On April 17th the Assembly met the single condition not already fulfilled by changing its name to the American Jewish Conference. At the same meeting it elected the American Jewish Committee to membership in its organization and Judge Proskauer to the Conference Executive Committee.

All difficulties seemed at an end; all disputes ironed out. But almost immediately trouble arose concerning the third condition which the American Jewish Committee had laid down. Mr. Monsky had pledged that additional delegates would be chosen by "special conferences of representatives of local Jewish organizations held for the purpose." The board of elections, however, refused to permit local federations and welfare funds to participate in the election conferences.

The American Jewish Committee protested such exclusion, pointing out that these organizations "constitute the backbone of a substantial part of every Jewish community and to exclude them is to confine membership in the Conference to restricted groups of the community." The Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, as well as many of its constituent agencies, likewise entered their protests.

The Conference Board of Elections thereupon amended its rules to grant token representation to these groups, though not proportionately in accordance with their numbers. The Council expressed its dissatisfaction with the arrangement and warned that it laid the Conference open to the charge of not being "fully responsive to large sections of Jewish life and leadership." The Board stuck to its guns, and many of the constituent agencies of the Council there-

upon abstained from the local elections to the Conference; so did the affiliates of the Jewish Labor Committee.

The elections when held were characterized by intense bitterness and community friction. The "bloc" or cumulative voting system used, whereby electors could concentrate their votes on a single candidate out of a larger slate, also came in for considerable criticism. It gave such disproportionate weight to organizational support that many acknowledged local leaders who had no organizations in back of them to throw solid blocs of votes in their behalf either refused to become candidates or went down to defeat when they were.

Several organizations withdrew because they were not satisfied with the number of delegates allotted to them; others, like the Joint Distribution Committee, National Refugee Service, Jewish Welfare Board, Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, National Conference of Jewish Social Welfare, HIAS and ORT, though fundamentally involved in the items on the Conference's agenda, were excluded under a rigid definition of the phrase "national membership organizations."

Meanwhile, the Executive Committee of the Conference had evolved a plan whereby the business of the Conference was to be transacted by a General Committee and special committees of fifty members each. To gain representation on the several committees delegates to the Conference were compelled to form blocs, since designations were allotted in the ratio of one committee member for every ten bloc delegates. As a result there was a good deal of jockeying behind the scenes in the formation of the requisite blocs. It was well understood that the real work of the Conference would be accomplished in these committees. The plenary sessions, opening on August 29, 1943, were chiefly for speech-making and formal voting.

The representatives of the American Jewish Committee at the Conference were Judge Proskauer, Jacob Blaustein and Fred Lazarus, Jr. One of the welcoming speeches was allotted to Judge

Proskauer. He called on the assembled delegates not to seek mere authoritarian unity, but to explore the areas on which all were agreed so that a common program based on these could be unanimously submitted to the forthcoming Peace Conference.

> What is the nature of this unity which we all seek? [he inquired.] Certainly no one can expect that we will all think alike and believe alike in our ultimate faiths. We have stood out from time immemorial for the right of the individual to follow the dictates of his own conscience. . . . We cannot all be orthodox; we cannot all be reform; we cannot all be conservative; we cannot all be Zionists or non-Zionists or Revisionists. But what we can do is to take counsel together and work out for this emergency which confronts us a program to which all right-thinking Jews can adhere.
>
> We are not legislating; we are not decreeing for all the future; we are trying to create a program to submit to those who shall frame the terms of peace, and surely they will heed us more readily if we speak and act together. We must ask no man to sacrifice a principle. We must ask no one to be false to an ultimate belief, but I suggest to you that the great effective compromises of history have been compromises on immediate conduct and not on ultimate ideologies. . . .
>
> What is the method, then, by which we should endeavor to reach this objective and to redress the frightful wrongs which we have heard so eloquently described?
>
> I suggest, my brethren, that the method should be in the first instance that we emphasize not our differences but our agreements, and that we base our action not on the conflicts but on the great concords and the great achievements of American Jewry.

Judge Proskauer proceeded to propose such areas of agreement: (1) That the United Nations give relief "from the havoc and ruin

inflicted by Axis barbarism on its millions of victims; that the processes of redress and rehabilitation be largely undertaken, as they must be, as governmental functions." (2) "We are as one in demanding the complete restoration and safeguarding of the equal civil and religious rights of the Jews, as of all others. We stand together for the fundamental principle that Jewish citizens of every land shall be guaranteed the right of equality, so that . . . we shall have a world in which Jews, like all others, are free to abide in peace and in honor."

Throughout his speech Judge Proskauer stressed these as the fundamental issues before the Conference, and the necessity for avoiding all other issues that might arouse dissent and discord. One such controversy-fraught issue was the problem of Palestine. In the words of Judge Proskauer, "we are united in recognizing the superb achievement made by our people in Palestine, in our admiration for the skill and devotion which has transformed the desert into the farm, the factory, the vineyard and the orange grove. We rejoice to know that there are today 600,000 Jewish people living under their own vine and fig tree." But by implication he made it clear that though the American Jewish Committee was willing to *discuss* the question of a Jewish state at the Conference, it was not willing to enter into any binding decision thereon.

In spite of Judge Proskauer's plea, however, Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, leader of the Zionist forces, countered in his opening address with an impassioned appeal for the extreme political Zionist point of view. It soon became evident, indeed, that the Zionist bloc of organizations, by reason of the complicated electoral machinery, had gained complete control of the Conference and had come, pledged in advance, to push through a thoroughgoing Zionist program.

Judge Proskauer, Mr. Blaustein and Mr. Waldman remonstrated privately with Dr. Silver and his associates and asked that prejudged resolutions be not introduced into the Conference or steamrolling tactics used in the best "political" manner to achieve their passage.

"How can you go to the American Jewish people," they demanded, "and say that you have summoned us here to a conference for the purpose of telling us that the action of this Conference has been dictated by the meeting of a committee of another organization [the Zionists] to which we have never even had access and of which meeting we never had knowledge?"

Dr. Silver retorted that the Zionist Emergency Committee had called for the adoption of the maximum Zionist program and that under party discipline every Zionist in the Conference was compelled to vote for its passage.

The resolutions so prepared were presented to the Conference on September 1st and were adopted by a show of hands. Four votes, three of them from delegates of the American Jewish Committee, were recorded in opposition; sixteen more delegates abstained from voting.

These resolutions reiterated the Biltmore Resolution of the Zionists in categorical fashion. An immediate Jewish sovereign state in Palestine was insisted on.

The whole program on Palestine was pushed through the Conference with breath-taking speed. There had been no preliminary conferring with the non-Zionist groups. There had been no adequate discussion of the resolution on the floor. There had been no opportunity for exploration of divergent views or attempts at compromise. There was a "take it or leave it" atmosphere about the whole affair. The Zionist program had been brought to the Conference as a unit, with delegates pledged to its adoption as is. The known historical position of the American Jewish Committee on Palestine, as set forth in its Statement of Views of January 31, 1943, had been ruthlessly disregarded. It was all or nothing with the Zionists, and they had the majority with them.

All the doubts and hesitations with which the American Jewish Committee had finally attended the Conference proved amply justified. It now found itself in a dilemma. It could remain a member of the Conference, register its dissent from the resolutions on

Palestine (as it had already emphatically done) and retain its outside freedom of action in accordance with the agreement of March 16th. Or it could withdraw from the Conference.

But, as Mr. Blaustein pointed out in his report to the Committee, a decision to take the first course would lead to certain practical difficulties. "We can dissent from Conference resolutions," he declared, "but we cannot dissent from the implementation of them. That was clearly apparent a few weeks ago when one of the Conference praesidium called Judge Proskauer and invited us to go with a committee of the Conference to present the resolution on Palestine to Secretary Hull. But they wanted our assurance in advance that we would not present a dissenting view to the Secretary—and of course, we did not go."

A special meeting of the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Committee was called for October 24th to decide on the future relations of the Committee with the Conference. The meeting was heavily attended and the debate long and earnest. All shades of opinion were represented. When the final question was put—"Shall the American Jewish Committee withdraw from the American Jewish Conference?"—it was carried by a vote of 52 in favor, 13 opposed, and 2 not voting.

A public statement of the reasons for withdrawal was then issued. It called attention to the step by step procedure by which the Committee had been induced to join the Conference, the utter disregard once the Conference was in session of the assurances previously given, and the fundamental divergence between the resolution on Palestine which the Conference had adopted and the Committee's own historic position.

"Holding these views," the statement continued, "we do not see how, on the one hand we can in good conscience usefully continue membership in the Conference which, through its Interim Committee, is now seeking to implement the Resolutions from which we dissented, or, on the other hand, how that Committee, on which we have been asked to take our place, could function

unembarrassed were we to remain as a dissenting element. Moreover, in view of the fact that the pre-determined position of so many of the delegates renders impossible consideration of ideas that do not conform to that position, it is futile for us to continue what in reality can only be nominal participation. Our remaining in the Conference would give the appearance of unity of action—but only the appearance, not the genuine unity of action that we have always hoped for."

CHAPTER X

THE ENEMY WITHIN

1. United Front

FOR many years after its inception the American Jewish Committee had been the only organized group engaged in the unceasing struggle against anti-Semitic tendencies here and abroad. Then other groups joined in the fight. With the coming of Nazism the number of these multiplied, and for a time there was a certain duplication of effort.

Recognizing the necessity for coordinating the activities of these organizations to the best advantage the Committee in 1933 joined with the B'nai Brith and the American Jewish Congress in setting up a Joint Consultative Council. This Council functioned for several years; then dissolved because of a series of misunderstandings unconnected with the fundamental issue of American defense.

In 1938 another effort was made to get together. This time the Jewish Labor Committee was added to the former three in a new overall policy-making and coordinating agency known as the General Jewish Council. Its functions were to provide a clearing house for the exchange of information and views, for the unification of those activities which could be performed in common, and for the coordination and allocation of all others in order to avoid wasteful duplication.

It was not an easy task. Aside from the manifold difficulties normal in any collaboration among independent organizations there were also divergences of opinion as to underlying philosophies and the practical methods to be employed in attacking the

common problem. Nevertheless for some years a certain amount of progress was made and the Council finally split on the rocks only because the American Jewish Congress, one of the constituent organizations, made certain demands for changes in the structure and functioning of the Council.

These demands included an expansion of membership by the addition of other organizations, a consolidation and merger of hitherto autonomous activities on the part of the member organizations, the creation of local and subsidiary councils, and joint fund-raising by all the members.

In September, 1939, at the request of the Congress, the Council appointed a committee of eight to consider these proposals. But this committee, composed of two representatives from each of the member groups, soon found itself hopelessly at odds on two of the proposals, to wit, limitations on member autonomy within the Council, and joint fund-raising. On January 18, 1940 it so reported to the Council.

The real reason for the failure to come to an agreement on the Congress plan lay in the increasing divergence between the aims and methods of the Congress and those of the other groups. This divergence extended to the whole gamut of operations at home and abroad. It was felt by the others that if the Council became in fact a policy-making organization which could override the dissent of any constituent member, this must necessarily lead to a struggle for control of the Council by particular groups with particular views in mind and that the common cause would suffer as a result.

Nevertheless, in spite of the collapse of the Congress plan in the General Jewish Council, the American Jewish Committee expressed a readiness to move toward closer cooperation with other groups in special areas where joint efforts were desirable. Such an area was the domestic defense program. Even before the Congress had placed its proposals on the agenda of the Council there had been in progress negotiations between the Survey Committee of

the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai Brith for a joint working arrangement. Both of these groups were specifically engaged in the problem of domestic defense.

Mr. Maurice Wertheim, of the Committee, now proposed a plan whereby the defense programs of *all* the members of the Council would be consolidated. It called for the formation of a new organization which, for a limited period of emergency, would take over the defense work of the four groups. This organization was to consist of a committee of twenty-five, to be appointed jointly by the presidents of the member bodies on the sole basis of qualification and without regard to proportional representation.

The American Jewish Committee adopted the Wertheim plan at a meeting of its Executive Committee on June 5, 1940. It was later agreed to in essence by Mr. Philip Haberman of the Anti-Defamation League and Mr. Louis Lipsky of the American Jewish Congress, and thereafter became known as the Haberman-Lipsky-Wertheim plan.

But Mr. Henry Monsky of the B'nai Brith rejected the idea as too all-embracing. It was his idea to limit consolidation to general fund-raising only, and to allocate the sums raised to the member organizations without any requirement for merger of functions.

The American Jewish Committee, in a statement issued on December 22, 1940, reaffirmed its adherence to the Haberman-Lipsky-Wertheim plan. It pointed out that under Mr. Monsky's proposal the funds raised through a joint appeal could be used by the separate organizations for any purpose whatever and not merely for defense work in the United States. Those who disagreed with the philosophy and policies of a particular member organization would therefore be understandably reluctant to contribute sums on any such indefinite basis. The same objection also applied to the formation of a superbody in which *all* functions would be merged, as had been advocated by the American Jewish Congress.

The Haberman-Lipsky-Wertheim plan, it was argued, elimi-

nated these fundamental objections. It called for a merger of defense activities only, and for a limited period. "We have supported this proposal for the following reasons," declared the Committee:

> It promised to bring about real coordination of defense work.
>
> It did not suppress the differences in basic philosophy or compel any individual to support a point of view to which he is intrinsically opposed.
>
> It made possible the enlistment of the ablest leadership of the country without regard to organizational loyalties, prejudices and the legitimate strivings for group prestige.
>
> It made possible the raising of comparatively adequate funds for defense purposes which could not under any circumstances be diverted to activities, however laudable, outside of the defense field.
>
> The American Jewish Committee believes that the problem of defense against anti-Semitism in the United States is one of sufficient urgency and importance to call for such a merging of the forces of the Jewish community.
>
> We recognize that in this proposal to give up the defense activities, sacrifices will have to be made by all of the four organizations. On our part it will mean the relinquishment of what has grown into the largest part of our activities to a new organization independent of us, as of any other existing agency. Similar sacrifices will have to be made by all organizations, but the interests of the Jews of the country demand that these sacrifices be made generously and wholeheartedly.

The B'nai Brith, however, was adamant against any merger of departments as contemplated in the plan and insisted that only the raising of funds for the specific purposes of domestic defense be considered. The American Jewish Congress insisted, on the

other hand, that such joint fund-raising be for *all* the purposes of the organizations in the General Jewish Council.

The American Jewish Committee was unalterably opposed to the latter, but was willing to accept the former as at least a step in the right direction. Accordingly negotiations were continued between the Committee and the B'nai Brith and on March 1, 1941 an agreement between them was signed that was announced as follows:

> The American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai Brith are pleased to announce that in the interest of reducing the number of competitive appeals for funds for Jewish defense, they have agreed to project immediately a joint fund-raising campaign for their defense programs. The plan also contemplates increased cooperation between the two organizations in their operations. In taking this step, the two organizations hope to bring about the maximum attainable efficiency and economy in their defense activities.
>
> This plan in no way affects the administration of either organization nor does it affect the integrity of their respective defense programs. Furthermore, both the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith will continue to take full part in the General Jewish Council for the settlement of questions of policy affecting all of the constituent members.

The Joint Defense Appeal was set up as a separate organization to take care of these joint fund-raising activities. Each year it makes an appeal for contributions, which are shared equally between the two defense groups. Certain projects are jointly undertaken and there is in general an exchange of information and ideas to avoid any unnecessary duplication. This arrangement is still in effect.

In spite of the express provision in the agreement that "full

part" would continue to be taken in the General Jewish Council by both parties, the American Jewish Congress charged that the Joint Defense Appeal contravened the purposes of the Council and on April 6, 1941 withdrew from that organization.

2. Techniques against Rabble-Rousers

The proclamation by the Nazis of anti-Semitism on an organized world-wide basis had given aid and comfort to the rabble-rousers native to the United States. Up to then they had struggled in vain against the sense of decency and fair play of the average American citizen and had been hampered by a lack of organization and funds. From 1933 on, however, they were in a different, and from their point of view, a better position.

Nazi money poured into the country and Nazi agents were busily engaged in fomenting disunity on a grandiose scale as a preparation against the day of total conquest. With a new and ample source of funds at their disposal and with patent evidence that power could be achieved through the "scapegoat" technique, the trade of rabble-rouser began to flourish. New demagogues appeared to take advantage of the lucrative pickings, and hate-organizations mushroomed over night.

One of the major tasks of the Survey Committee had been to smoke these men from their lairs and expose them to public view. By 1938–9 this particular phase of activity had become so important that it was determined to place it on a professional, full-time basis. Accordingly, a group of lawyers and trained investigators were organized into what later became known as the Legal and Investigative Department of the Committee. Members of the Survey Committee with legal experience acted in an advisory capacity.

An important part of the new department's work was to obtain information on rabble-rousers and their organizations, both public and secret. Complete files of such information were made, with

full dossiers on men and movements. Backgrounds, sources of funds and possible ties with foreign governments were thoroughly investigated. Nazi agents in this country were kept under surveillance.

The information so gathered proved of particular value during the war. It disclosed the multiplex strands through which the enemy hoped to weaken American unity and sabotage the war effort. Pertinent items were turned over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Army and Navy Intelligence. Much of this material had not previously been known to these agencies and was put to effective use in tracking down Nazi spies, saboteurs and promoters of subversive activities. Time and again government officials expressed their gratitude for the effective cooperation of the Committee. "From what I know of your files," wrote an officer in Naval Intelligence, "I believe you have much on subversive activities that our files do not contain and knowing you and your organization I take unusual liberties in asking your aid and you never fail." Military Intelligence declared that the information obtained from the Committee had been "extremely valuable" and wished to express to "your committee . . . our deep gratitude for same and for the patriotic motives which prompted you."

Aping Nazi methods, rabble-rousers organized street meetings in the major American cities to preach hate against the Jews. Attended by gangs of hoodlums they became foci for outrages against persons and places, and pretexts for riots generally.

The worst of these were the meetings held in New York under the auspices of the so-called "Christian Front." In the background was the nationally notorious figure of Father Coughlin. The implications of these meetings were exceedingly dangerous because of the vast, heterogeneous population of the city and the antagonisms already engendered among its racial groups by the war in Europe.

The Legal Department met the threat by organizing a volunteer panel of public-spirited lawyers who attended the street meetings with stenographers to take down the proceedings verbatim. When

it became obvious that the peace had been breached and riot instigated, they would demand the arrest of the offenders. Prosecution followed and briefs on the law were presented to the District Attorney's office for use in the trials. During the troubled years of 1939–40 sixteen such arrests were made and cases prosecuted. Of these, eleven convictions were obtained and five cases were otherwise disposed of. The Department's activity had much to do with lowering the incidence and potential threat of these street meetings. American entry into the war brought them to an end.

Father Coughlin's radio thunder and his magazine, "Social Justice," claiming an audience of millions, also received proper attention. A pamphlet entitled "Father Coughlin, his Facts and Arguments" was distributed by the hundreds of thousands. It was a merciless and reasoned exposure of Coughlinism.

There were many hate-organizations in the United States; but as long as they were individually led and engaged in an internecine struggle for power they were comparatively impotent. In 1939, however, a group of these little Fuehrers, including some of the most dangerous Nazi-inspired agitators in the country, decided to coalesce and form a single national anti-Semitic organization. To perform such a feat required the services of a nationally prominent, native-born *Man on the White Horse*. After a long search they thought they had found such a man. He was Major-General George Van Horn Moseley, U. S. Army, retired, and formerly Deputy Chief of Staff.

A meeting was called at the home of Mrs. Rudyard Uzzel in Jamaica, N. Y. on the night of May 7, 1939 to introduce the doughty general to a large group of anti-Semitic leaders. The meeting was held under circumstances of the utmost secrecy, guards were thrown around the building and credentials carefully inspected. Among those present to welcome the potential Fuehrer were the Bundists Fritz Kuhn, Wilhelm Kuntze and James Wheeler-Hill.

The next morning, however, a full report of the proceedings was

laid on the desk of the Legal Department. It was turned over to the Congressional Committee investigating un-American activities. General Moseley was subpoenaed and confronted with the report of his secret activities. The public exposure was sufficient to retire the fire-breathing general to complete obscurity.

During the national elections of 1940 Joe McWilliams, one of the most violent of the New York hatemongers, filed as an independent candidate for Congress in the 18th District. He submitted a petition allegedly signed by 4440 voters of the district. But the Committee investigated the appended signatures and proved that 2439 of them were forgeries with fake addresses, non-citizens or void for other legal reasons. The petition was thrown out and McWilliams was compelled to seek other sounding-boards than the halls of Congress for his gospel of hate.

During the years 1939–41, just before America's entry into the war, the Nazis sponsored a so-called German Library of Information in this country whose chief job it was to disseminate high-grade Nazi propaganda. The "Library" put out a magazine called "Facts in Review" in which the *facts* were carefully doctored for American consumption and sent it free to a list of some 100,000 leaders of American opinion.

The Legal Department obtained a microfilm copy of the mailing list. To each of the recipients of "Facts in Review," and hard on its heels, went a new magazine called "Facts vs Fiction," containing a reply to and exposure of the alleged "facts" in the preceding issue.

Early in 1945 Robert Rice Reynolds, former U. S. Senator from South Carolina and chairman of the powerful Military Affairs Committee, announced the formation of a Nationalist Party in this country. It was intended, by means of a pyramided hierarchy of imitation Nazi cells, to gain control of the nation in either the 1946 or 1948 elections.

A thorough investigation of the roots of the Nationalists was instituted by the Committee and important discoveries were made.

Among them were (1) that the support of such notable rabble-rousers as Gerald L. K. Smith had been solicited and received by Reynolds; (2) that among his emissaries engaged in soliciting funds from important industrialists was the previously convicted Joe McWilliams, masquerading under a pseudonym.

The results of the investigation, complete with photostats of incriminating letters and checks, were turned over to the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain. One of their ace reporters wrote a series of articles on Reynolds and the Nationalists which ran for a week in every one of their newspapers. Within a few days after the exposure Reynolds announced the abandonment of his plans.

After the war was over and the Axis decisively defeated, American rabble-rousers, who had been forced underground by stringent wartime regulations, thought the time had come to appear in the open again. It was decided to hold a test street meeting, reminiscent of the old Christian Front days, to determine if those regulations had been relaxed.

On October 6, 1945 Homer Maertz and Ernst Elmhurst (né Fleischkopf) addressed a crowd in the borough of Queens, New York City. The speeches were virulently anti-Semitic in tone and resurrected the hoary "Ritual-Murder" myth, with modern examples, for the delectation of the audience. Members of the Legal Department were inconspicuously in the assemblage. After the meeting was over, Maertz and Elmhurst were arrested and charged with inciting to riot.

In January, 1946 the case came on for trial. The court convicted the pair—Maertz received a year in jail and Elmhurst six months. Judge Henry Curran remarked of the pamphlet peddled by the defendants: "I can't imagine a more dastardly thing to do than to put out in black and white a statement of that sort. For either Jews or Christians it is a terrific gesture against peace and harmony for the United States of America."

Early in 1946 the Legal Department published an exposé of an international network of anti-Semitic organizations with ramifica-

tions all over the world. The white light of publicity thus cast upon its inner workings is helping scotch it in those countries where democracy is still a valued possession.

These examples represent only a few of the many case-histories of the Legal and Investigative Department. Through public exposures, through prosecution where criminal activities are involved (and anti-Semitism as such is not a crime recognized by the law), the Department has performed and continues to perform an important public service both for Jews and for the country at large.

3. Let the People Know

By 1941 it was felt that the time had come to integrate the Survey Committee, hitherto a semi-autonomous group, into the fundamental structure of the general Committee. It had fulfilled its special duties as an emergency organization magnificently, but one of its chief functions, the raising of funds for the work of defense, had already been superseded by the Joint Defense Appeal; and for some time both legal defense and the broad educational program for combating anti-Semitic attitudes had been left increasingly in the hands of full-time professionals employed by the general Committee. Accordingly, the Survey Committee as a separate group was disbanded and its various activities distributed among the regular departments of the Committee; though its members continued to act as advisors and consultants.

One of its most important functions was taken over by what later became known as the Public Information and Education Department, headed by Mr. Richard C. Rothschild, formerly a chairman of the Survey Committee. It was not enough merely to counteract and expose the specific activities of rabble-rousers and hatemongering organizations—though that too was vitally important—the ground must be cut from under their feet. This could only be done by a process of education directed to the American people as a whole.

For almost a decade Americans, as well as the rest of the world,

had been subjected to the most vicious anti-Semitic campaign in history. All the old lies and myths had been refurbished and new ones invented to present a distorted picture of Jews. From the inner fortress of Europe propaganda flowed in an endless stream, backed by the resources of a powerful state and charged with high emotional content. Too many Americans were unwittingly infected in greater or lesser degree.

To counteract this propaganda and to establish in the American mind a healthy immunization against its insidious poisons became the aim of the Department. This was not so much a matter of detailed defense; i. e., the answering of specific charges. It had long been realized that the enemy could invent new charges faster than the old ones could be answered; and that the necessary publication of the original lies in order to furnish the refutation actually brought them to the attention of wide sections of the population to whom they had hitherto been unknown.

The aim rather was to attack and discredit the entire basis of anti-Semitism in its various manifestations, to destroy misconceptions by substituting in their place *positive* pictures of the Jews as they really are, to create a better understanding of their religious beliefs, culture, traditions and achievements, and to enlist the cooperation of non-Jews in the struggle against obscurantism. This was made possible because the basic philosophy subsuming the campaign was that anti-Semitism is not only a Jewish problem—it is equally a Christian and an American problem. Anti-Semitism, it was pointed out, struck at the foundations of the Christian religion, based as it is on Judaic concepts and the idea of the universal brotherhood of man; and at the substantive principles of American democracy.

The educational program so envisaged was broken down into two areas. The first of these was comparatively short-term—for the duration of the war and while Nazi ideology and armed might continued to flourish. It was brought sharply to the attention of the American people that anti-Semitism in this country was

chiefly inspired by Nazi propagandists and their stooges as part of a "divide and conquer" technique to weaken the United States by internal dissensions.

The second was long-term and wholly educational. It could continue in peace as well as war. It called for the reorientation of American presuppositions about the Jews; it proposed a positive identification of American Jews as integral partners in the American scene.

To accomplish this gigantic feat required reaching the minds and hearts of 140,000,000 men, women and children of every class of society. Every available medium of communication was utilized —magazines, newspapers, pulps and comics, movies, radio. No field was left untouched. Hoary prejudices and the old, seemingly immutable stereotype of the Jew were attacked from every angle. Positive, realistic pictures were offered in their place. Ideas, articles, stories, cartoons, comics, posters and editorials were created for use in the various media. Cooperation was sought with and received from editors, publishers and writers generally.

It was realized that the average American obtains his ideas about the Jews not so much from personal contacts as from the presentation of them in stories, comics, radio and on the stage and screen. These ran usually to "stereotypes" and "stock" characters, depending for their effect on dialect, exaggerated gestures, foreignisms, and comic relief generally.

To combat these "stereotypes" it was necessary to bring to the attention of writers and editors the untold harm they were doing by perpetuating easy characterizations that had no basis in reality. In the Spring of 1945 the Writers' War Board, an organization of writers whose aim it was to help fight the war aga nst fascism and nazism to a successful conclusion, called a meetin ; of 600 of the top writers, editors and publishers in the country. In a series of speeches, skits and dramatizations "The Myth that Threatens America"—that this is overwhelmingly an Anglo-Saxon, white, native-born, Protestant country—was successfully exposed. Rex

Stout, Christopher La Farge, Eric Johnston, John Mason Brown, Carl Van Doren, Margaret Mead, Moss Hart, Gipsy Rose Lee and others participated.

As a result of these various activities, it became more and more rare to find in stories, comics and radio snide references to the Jews or distorted characterizations of them. Instead, more and more stories and scripts portrayed them as solidly American. Tales of Jewish war heroes appeared in abundance, together with stories of heart-warming interfaith relations on battlefield and at home; while Jewish scientists, humanitarians, doctors, educators, rabbis and the ordinary man-in-the-street received their due. Even in fiction, where formerly no Jew had made his appearance except as a stock character and every "hero" and "heroine" possessed an Anglo-Saxon name, it was no longer uncommon to find a Jewish character in the leading role.

Human interest stories and newspaper editorials stressed the unity of America as a congeries of many faiths, races and origins. So did advertisements sponsored by local groups and public-spirited individuals. National magazines contributed articles on matters of timely interest. Nor were the pulp magazines and the comic books, with their phenomenal circulation of some sixty million copies a month, neglected. In bright colors and stirring texts the message was presented in a hundred different ways. Cartoons were also utilized. With barbed wit and clever drawing, bigotry, intolerance and rabble-rousers were ridiculed. Millions of reprints were distributed through schools, community organizations, the armed forces, ministers, labor unions and farmer groups.

The radio networks have cooperated generously in the unceasing struggle against intolerance. Literally thousands of broadcasts stressing the theme go on the air each year. Free time has been donated which, had it been paid for at commercial rates, would have cost millions of dollars. Some of the programs directly sponsored by the American Jewish Committee have been "Behold the Jew," a dramatization of Ada Jackson's prize-winning poem, with

Florence Eldridge in the lead role; "The Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto" with Raymond Massey, a stirring and moving drama which evoked such widespread applause that it had to be repeated; "The Third Commandment" with Philip Merivale; and "The Four Questions" with Melvyn Douglas. For the high caliber and effectiveness of these programs, Variety, the national amusement magazine, in 1945 awarded the Committee its plaque of the year.

In cooperation with National Scholastic Magazine a series of posters called "Speaking for America" was prepared for teachers all over the country for use in classrooms. Each poster featured the picture of some nationally known American, with a hard-hitting, signed message against prejudice underneath. Among the many who lent their names to this project were President Truman, General Eisenhower, General MacArthur, Admiral Nimitz, Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, Kate Smith, Judy Garland and Gene Autry. The fact that such top-flight Americans, idolized by millions, are vigorously opposed to anti-Semitism and other forms of prejudice, tends to make a profound impression.

The educational value of 16 mm. films for use in labor unions, churches, schools, clubs and elsewhere has long been recognized, and preparation of a number of films is now under way.

Campaigns like these were addressed to *all* Americans. But the Committee realized that it was essential to appeal to Americans not merely in the indiscriminate mass, but also as members of well-defined groups or "classes" whose social, economic and age interests were peculiar to themselves. Such "classes" are exemplified by organized labor, business and industry, farmers, women's clubs, youth organizations, veterans, foreign-language groups, churches and religious denominations. It was necessary to prove to these special-interest groups that they personally, and their particular interests, were being irreparably harmed by anti-Semitism and kindred prejudices; that it was for their well-being and to their own advantage to combat vigorously the forces of bigotry and disunity.

These appeals to class groups, drafted by a staff of experts thoroughly familiar with their respective fields, have been largely successful. Organized labor has responded magnificently, fully understanding that in order to have a strong labor movement group strife and inter-group hostilities must be eliminated in its own unions. Top business leaders are being made increasingly aware that anti-Semitism is the spearhead of fascism, and that there can be no system of free enterprise in a fascist society. Veterans are warned that rabble-rousers are only too willing to capitalize on their legitimate discontents and swing them by repeated lies and blatant misstatements to the search for a scapegoat.

A well-integrated program aims to bring ministers, priests and rabbis, churches and synagogues together in a common understanding and respect, and to combat the disease of prejudice which might otherwise poison the well-springs of their respective faiths. Material which will effect such a better understanding is distributed on a large scale through the religious press and radio. Of particular importance was an exhaustive study made in 1935 by Professor James V. Thompson of the religious textbooks currently used in the Protestant and Catholic parochial schools. These were found to contain certain errors of fact and misstatements of the historic role of the Jews in the earliest stages of Christianity. As a result of his survey much objectionable material which tended to give a distorted picture of Jews and Judaism was eliminated. A new series of studies along similar lines is now being undertaken.

In the same field Judge Proskauer, president of the Committee, proposed on January 11, 1944 that every American subscribe to a four-point pledge as a step in combating all forms of religious bigotry. The pledge read:

1. I will spread no rumor and no slander against any sect.
2. I will never try to indict a whole people by reason of the delinquency of any member.
3. I will daily deal with every man in business, in social and in

political relations, only on the basis of his true individual worth.

4. In my daily conduct I will consecrate myself, hour by hour, to the achievement of the highest ideal of the dignity of mankind, human equality, human fellowship and human brotherhood.

The pledge was subsequently endorsed by Archbishop (now Cardinal) Francis J. Spellman, Bishop Henry St. George Tucker of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of the Massachusetts Council of Churches, and many other prominent clergymen and lay leaders. With the appended endorsements, the pledge became the subject of numerous editorials, radio presentations and classroom discussion. Comment was widespread and uniformly favorable. It is still in use.

Cooperating with the Committee is the Bureau for Intercultural Education, specifically devoted to the problem of breaking down prejudices, bias and intolerance, and developing in their stead mutual understanding among the children and youth of the country through the educational system and the public schools.

A unique experiment has recently been instituted by the National Institute of Social Relations, whose president, Mr. Frank L. Weil, is also a leading member of the Executive and Administrative Committees of the American Jewish Committee. The Institute has brought over into civilian life, with considerable improvements in techniques, the system of group discussions which the United States Army had employed in its Orientation Program during the war. It is believed by the Institute that the most effective way to change attitudes and overcome prejudices is by means of active participation in the give-and-take of free discussion by groups of people. Experts in the field prepare topics, pertinent background material and a series of thought-provoking questions. Under the guidance of competent leaders such concrete, current subjects are discussed as: "Must Men Wage War," "Atomic

Energy—Disaster or Blessing?" "Unity or Chaos?" and "Learning to Live Together." Discussion groups have already been set up in a number of American communities and more are contemplated.

4. Scientific Approach to Prejudice

The Committee had long been aware that the techniques it was employing to combat anti-Semitism were essentially empiric in nature; that certain procedures were followed because they seemed to work or had already been used successfully in other fields. But of the root-nature of anti-Semitism itself, of the internal psychologic mechanism that made one man an anti-Semite and another not, little or nothing had been discovered through the ages. Yet the tremendous advances in the scientific study of man during the twentieth century furnished clues which, if thoroughly explored, might prove of immense value.

It was with this in mind that the Committee sponsored a notable conference of social scientists on May 20-21, 1944. Twenty-five leading psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists and economists gathered to discuss the problem under the guidance of Professor Gordon W. Allport of Harvard, Rabbi Joshua Loth Liebman of Boston and Professor Mark May, Director of the Institute of Human Relations at Yale.

As a result of the findings of this conference, and on their recommendation, the Committee established a department for the scientific study of anti-Semitism and for testing the effectiveness of current defense techniques.

Materials used by the Committee, such as radio presentations, cartoons, comic strips and newspaper advertisements, are subjected *before* release by the experts of this department to spot checks to determine comprehension, positive educational value and possible "boomerang" effects, and the findings are made the basis for modification or even withdrawal. *After* release further tests, interviews and polls disclose what changes, if any, have occurred in the beliefs, attitudes and sentiments of the readers or auditors.

But the larger function of the Scientific Department is to conduct long-range research into the bases of anti-Semitic sentiment in America, in the etiology of the development of anti-Semitism among children, in the interrelations of anti-Semitic attitudes, other forms of prejudice, reactionary sentiments and psychiatric maladjustments and disturbances. Several clinical studies are already in progress: one is being carried on in collaboration with the University of California; another, at the University of Chicago, is attempting to trace the behavior patterns of veterans in connection with minority groups; a third in New York City has enlisted the services of practicing psychoanalysts and psychiatrists to gain an insight into the structure of the anti-Semitic attitude. Other studies probe the nature of the fascist agitator and seek to analyze the factors which led to the growth of anti-Semitism in Germany. The curious differences in the "visibility" of Jews by prejudiced and unprejudiced people are being examined in detail. It is expected that the results of these studies will prove of immeasurable value to all future work in fighting anti-Semitism.

Thus, under many guises and on many fronts, the Committee engages in its ceaseless and long-range program of enlightening the American public on the nature of anti-Semitism and the sources of prejudice and intolerance.

CHAPTER XI

ON MANY FRONTS

1. Reorganization

FOR some time it had been evident that the Committee's internal structure and administration required thoroughgoing reorganization. It had grown so vastly in multiplicity of functions and in personnel during the hectic years since 1933 that the older, simpler scheme of things had become outmoded. New departments had been added, new areas of activities opened, and these required to be integrated into the general structure of the Committee.

It was with this in mind that Mr. Morris Waldman, general secretary of the Committee, commenced in 1941 a voluminous and detailed study of the current condition of the Committee, and proposed specific administrative and structural changes.

As previously indicated, the Survey Committee was disbanded as a separate, semi-autonomous group and its various activities distributed among the professional departments of the Committee. The two broad areas in which the Committee functioned—defense work and the general field of Jewish affairs—had formerly followed separate lines of responsibility. These were now brought together under the direction of a single responsible head by the creation of a new office—that of Executive Vice-President. This new officer became the executive and administrative head of the entire professional staff, charged with the duties of general supervision and counsel.

Mr. Waldman was appointed to this important post and served

until 1943 when he became vice-chairman of the Executive Committee, retiring therefrom because of health in 1945. Dr. John Slawson, who had long been prominent in welfare service and had been in succession the executive director of the Detroit Jewish Welfare Federation and the New York Jewish Board of Guardians, was appointed Executive Vice-President of the Committee in 1943 and has continued in that position until the present day.

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To study the entire subject of reorganization and to make the Committee more flexible and better able to support its expansion of activities became the goal of a special Committee on Reorganization under the chairmanship of Mr. Jacob Blaustein. The general policy of the Committee was re-examined in the light of recent events and numerous modifications were suggested and put into effect.

One of the recommendations related to the establishment of chapters. It had long been felt that the Committee's base should be broadened to include a representative constituency of responsible American Jews in the larger communities who believed in the Committee's program and philosophy and were willing to work actively toward their consummation. Hitherto the membership of the Committee had been based on a system of corporate members and of affiliated Jewish organizations whose major interests lay elsewhere. The corporate members, it is true, were deeply interested in the affairs of the Committee and were geographically well distributed. But they were comparatively few in numbers and acted merely as individuals belonging to a national organization.

It was now proposed that the Committee organize local units or chapters of the American Jewish Committee in key communities of the United States, in which the members could meet at regular intervals and work together in the common cause. Such chapters, it was believed, would provide a much needed channel through which responsible segments of the Jewish community in

each area could transmit their own thinking to the national Committee and in turn obtain information as to the basic philosophy, ideals and problems of the Committee. Thereby both parent and local groups would gain mutual enlightenment and be in a better position to implement those ideals on every possible front.

Under the current chairmanship of Mr. Willen the chapter movement has spread rapidly. By the end of 1946 chapters had been organized over the length and breadth of the land. Thirty-three are now in active operation, ranging from New York to Portland, Oregon, from Chicago to New Orleans.

These chapters represent the national Committee in local affairs, are kept in touch with all major developments, help interpret the Committee, its activities and philosophy to the local Jewish communities of which they are a part, and participate in local defense work and long-range educational programs.

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Another method of relating and coordinating the national Committee's manifold activities with the local communities of the United States is accomplished by means of the Community Service Department. This division of the Committee was created with five objectives in mind: (1) to acquaint local Jewish leaders with the point of view of the Committee; (2) to guide local defense groups in the formulation of local policies and projects; (3) to familiarize local groups with the Committee's national program and stimulate them to execute it on the local level; (4) to act as a clearing house for local activities; and (5) to train professional and lay leaders in community work.

Outlets were established in cities and communities all over the United States, by means of which a constant stream of educational and informative material is distributed to hundreds of communities for use in their own areas. Field representatives visit them regularly to advise and bring about ever-increasing cooperation.

Several volumes by Dr. S. Andhil Fineberg, director of the department, notably "Overcoming Anti-Semitism," published in 1943, explained the basic principles governing the Committee's work in the defense field and have been made the basis for study groups in a number of communities.

In February, 1944 the National Community Relations Advisory Council was organized. It brought together in a single master unit local civic protective agencies in key cities of the United States and representatives of the national defense organizations, including the American Jewish Committee. Through the Council more and more matters of general concern are being cleared and policies adopted for implementation by the several defense agencies.

2. Cultural Activities

The Committee's aims have broadened through the years to include all factors pertaining to the position of the Jew. It is not enough merely to defend Jews against outer attack; it is necessary to strengthen them from within and give them a sense of security and dignity so that they might adjust freely and without friction to the American scene.

Such a program required a re-examination of Jewish educational and cultural activities. Today there is considerable concern over the future of Jewish children; in the world of tomorrow will they be able to take their place firmly and securely? Is their present education in religious, historical and cultural Judaism sufficient to make them whole men and women—whole Jews and whole Americans?

The first step was taken by the Committee in December, 1945 when it convoked a Conference on Jewish Adjustment, the first of its kind ever held in the United States. Thirty outstanding scholars attended, including Professors Salo W. Baron of Columbia, Louis Wirth of Chicago, I. L. Kandel of Teachers College and Dr. Abraham A. Neuman, president of Dropsie College.

The conference came to certain definite conclusions: (1) the Jews of America constitute a distinguishable group, whatever the particular definition of Jewishness may be; (2) Jewishness ought to carry a positive connotation to Jews and non-Jews alike; (3) there must be faith in America and in the possibilities of affirmative Jewish life in this country; (4) the Jewish cultural heritage requires reinvigoration and reinterpretation.

Concretely, the conference suggested that a commission of inquiry be formed (1) to take stock of the studies and researches already available on the subject of cultural adjustment and of programs already in being; (2) to outline a master plan for further areas of investigation; (3) to formulate an organizational plan for the promotion and financing of approved projects.

To implement these findings and as part of a far-reaching educational program the Committee organized the Research Institute in American Jewish Education in 1946, under the auspices of a committee headed by Mr. Alan M. Stroock. It is designed to engage in psychological research in the difficult and tangled problems of Jewish adjustment by analyzing the self-regarding attitudes of Jews themselves and relating the results of such research to the educational process itself.

A discussion guide has been made available to the local chapters of the Committee relating to the problem of Jewish education for the young and a pamphlet by Mr. Israel Rappoport, director of the Institute, entitled "Education for Living as American Jews" embodies some tentative conclusions. As definite findings flow from the experimentation of the Research Institute they will be made available to the communities at large, in order that, as Dr. Slawson put it in a recent address, "American Jewish education might be enriched, made more contemporary and become a genuine instrument for healthy and wholesome Jewish adjustment in the American scene."

* * *

In effect this preoccupation with the problems of Jewish education and culture is no novel departure from the established policy of the Committee. From its very inception it had assumed full editorial responsibility for the material embodied in the American Jewish Year Book, published under the imprint of the Jewish Publication Society. Under the guiding policy of the Committee the annual volumes have grown steadily in importance and today constitute the standard authoritative reference book for Jewish statistics, events and current information. Its "Review of the Year" is notably complete, accurate and informative, and is widely quoted. Nothing like it exists in any language.

Furthermore, the Committee has always realized the importance of accumulating a storehouse of specialized material in the form of books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers and archives which would serve not only as a research center for students of Jewish affairs but would play a dynamic role in the work of the Committee itself.

Up to 1930, however, this was rather a pious hope than a reality. Aside from a miscellaneous collection of reference books and the laborious data assembled on Jews in the armed forces during World War I, the library was an initiator of publications rather than a formal depository of books and other material.

With the awareness that Nazism posed a serious threat to the world at large and Jews in particular, the emphasis began to shift. By 1930 the Committee began to acquire complete files of contemporary German publications such as the Völkischer Beobachter and then broadened the field to examples of anti-Semitica from all over the world. By the beginning of World War II the collection had reached such proportions that it was universally considered as the largest and most complete in the country. Government agencies hastened to avail themselves of the material in the Committee's files; students and researchers in the field of Nazism and anti-Semitic movements generally used the facilities; but more important, perhaps, the professional staff in its daily task of com-

bating anti-Semitism found it an invaluable arsenal of facts on which to draw.

In addition to mere anti-Semitica, moreover, the library steadily enlarged its collections to include every phase and aspect of Jewish life and culture until today the library contains over 20,000 books and pamphlets, including much archival material, the files of approximately 700 periodicals and newspapers, and a large collection of pertinent newspaper clippings which are culled daily by the Committee's own clipping bureau from the American and foreign press.

Some of the major subjects on which the library has considerable material are: contemporary Jewish affairs throughout the world, anti-Semitica, the history of the Nazi movement and of Nazi Germany, group relations and interfaith cooperation, immigration and aliens, refugees, civil liberties, international relations, minority problems, war and peace, and Palestine. In addition, there is a basic collection of general and Jewish reference books for background material.

In 1939 it was decided to coordinate and expand the existing research facilities of the Committee into a Library of Jewish Information which would include not only the library collections themselves, but the research staffs of other departments and the various regular publications issued under the auspices of the Committee. The purpose of the Library of Jewish Information so enlarged and coordinated was to furnish the basic data necessary for the proper functioning of all the departments of the Committee and to provide a central medium for the dissemination of authoritative information about Jews and Judaism in general. As a result, the reports and publications issued by the Committee are widely recognized as being among the most accurate and soundly authoritative in the field.

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The Committee has not been content merely with an analytical and experimentally scientific approach to the problems of Jewish

self-acceptance and self-dignity. It considers that the American Jew requires spiritual and cultural nourishment on the level of creative achievement as well. A knowledge of the meaning of Judaism in all its manifold connotations, a pride in his cultural, religious and philosophical heritage without chauvinistic overtones, a free and flexible interplay of relationships with the heritages of non-Jews in the common unity of being Americans are all essential if any true health of mind and spirit is to be attained.

Accordingly the Committee, in September, 1938, inaugurated a bi-monthly magazine called the Contemporary Jewish Record. Providing a medium for thoughtful articles and comments, it met the needs of both Jews and Christians for an intelligent understanding of the position and achievements of Jews in the modern world.

In November, 1945, under the guidance of a committee on publications, of which Mr. Ralph E. Samuel is chairman, the Record was replaced by a regular monthly magazine, Commentary. Commentary, under the editorship of Mr. Elliot Cohen, is intended to be a journal of opinion as well as of information, a profound commentary on major Jewish issues in every field of human endeavor. It gives authentic information and analyses of such problems as human rights, Palestine, social prejudices, position of the Jews in Europe, treatment of rabble-rousers and kindred topics; but it also interprets Jewish life and culture and the roots of democracy on historical and philosophical levels. Its contributors include such notables as Sidney Hook, Hans Kohn, Irwin Edman, James Rorty, Reinhold Niebuhr, Kurt List, H. N. Brailsford, Waldo Frank and many others. One of its outstanding achievements was a series of articles generally entitled "The Crisis of the Individual," in which prominent thinkers and philosophers expressed their ideas on a major problem of modern times. Already, in the short period of its existence, it has met with enthusiastic acceptance from historians, men of affairs and leaders of thought generally and has

become widely recognized as a legitimate molder of leadership opinion.

In addition, the Committee has issued since March, 1944 a monthly report of its activities and of the contemporary scene called the Committee Reporter. It is much more than a mere house organ; with a current circulation of over 40,000 copies it helps to shape and clarify Jewish public opinion on the important issues of the day, presents those issues in clear, reportorial style and describes what the Committee and others are doing to resolve them.

3. Discrimination in Education and Civil Rights

Very much in the public eye today is the situation in the colleges and the universities, and especially in the medical and dental schools. The so-called "quota" system whereby certain minority groups are barred from obtaining a college education or the right to practice a profession of their choosing has attained the proportions of a national scandal.

Instead of rushing into the public prints with denunciations, the Committee determined to study the problem *de novo*. For example, the proposal to establish a Jewish University had been immediately acclaimed in other quarters. But the Committee felt there were certain dangerous aspects to the plan, such as the possibility that it might become a "ghetto university" and thereby afford a plausible excuse for other colleges to continue their "quota" system.

Accordingly the Committee convoked a Conference on Higher Education for Jews which met on October 11–12, 1946 and was attended by more than twenty Jewish trustees of colleges, professors, educational experts and communal workers under the joint chairmanship of Mr. James Marshall and Professor William Haber. The Conference's deliberations resulted in the recommendation of

four lines of action for the Committee to pursue, all of which were subsequently approved and adopted.

The first recommendation called for a direct approach to the educational institutions and associated groups themselves. In pursuance thereof a meeting was arranged whereby Mr. James Marshall as chairman, Governor Herbert H. Lehman, Judge Charles E. Wyzanski, Mr. David Sher and Dr. John Slawson, representing the American Jewish Committee, met with a group of college and university presidents, representing the Association of American Colleges. As a result of this meeting, the Association appointed a committee to study the entire problem of the relation of minorities and higher education. This Committee at the date of writing is engaged in drafting a statement of principles concerning admissions to colleges and related subjects which will be submitted to the next annual meeting of the Association for action.

The second recommendation called for strong support for the extension of public facilities for higher education. This was directly related to the proposition to establish a New York State University. At the present moment such a project is being studied by a Commission appointed by Governor Thomas E. Dewey and its report will very likely be made public by the time this volume appears in print. The American Jewish Committee will press for action when the matter finally comes up before the State Legislature, and has already appeared to testify before the Commission.

The third recommendation called for the education of the public itself to the urgent need for the abolition of all educational restrictions and the Committee is employing all its facilities in this direction.

The fourth recommendation called for attempts to obtain appropriate governmental action, including legislation. That such legislative support in the fight against discrimination is possible, at least in New York, was proven by the passage of the Ives-Quinn bill in 1945, barring discrimination in employment because of race, color or religion. An impressive group of advocates, including Judge

Proskauer as president of the Committee, attended the hearings before the joint legislative committee in Albany on February 20, 1945, and their testimony did much to ensure its adoption by the legislature. The opponents of the bill had prophesied dire doom and the flight of business from New York if it became law. Nothing of the sort has occurred; after more than two years of operation the Ives-Quinn act is universally hailed as a success and a substantial step forward in the fight against discrimination.

However, the Austin-Mahoney bill, which was sponsored by another organization in the New York Legislature early in 1947 and which attempted to do for discrimination in education what the Ives-Quinn bill had done for discrimination in employment, came up against a different set of facts and patterns. The F. E. P. C. had already done much to educate the public in the area of the Ives-Quinn type of legislation. No equivalent background existed for state control of private education. The sponsors of the Austin-Mahoney bill had not been successful in their attempt to line up public opinion in advance, or to obtain the support and cooperation of other groups. As a result the bill encountered strong opposition and was withdrawn. With these lessons in mind the Committee, in cooperation with a number of other interested groups, is at present engaged in drafting a modified version of the Austin-Mahoney bill which it is hoped will obviate the chief objections to the original bill and which may have a chance of obtaining at least the neutrality, if not the support, of the educational institutions themselves.

On the national stage and with wider aims in view Dr. John Slawson, Executive Vice-President of the Committee, presented on May 1, 1947 to President Truman's Committee on Civil Rights a national program for civil liberties, including a series of far-reaching measures for the affirmance and safeguarding of civil rights and the combating of group dissensions and racial and religious discriminations. The specific recommendations, presented in oral testimony and three prepared memoranda, called for (1)

expansion of the Civil Rights Section of the Department of Justice; (2) enactment of a Federal anti-poll tax bill; (3) enactment of a Federal anti-lynching bill; (4) enactment of the pending Ives-Norton bill to curb discrimination in employment; (5) Federal and State legislation barring discrimination because of race, creed or color in educational institutions which receive public funds; (6) enactment of State civil rights, fair employment and fair educational practices bills; (7) State legislation outlawing restrictive real estate covenants; (8) a Civil Rights act for the District of Columbia; (9) a permanent Federal Commission on Civil Rights to serve in an advisory capacity to the President and other government officials; (10) a government education program to promote civil rights and combat prejudice through the various Federal agencies.

Note—Since going to press the President's Committee on Civil Rights has issued a comprehensive report embodying most of the recommendations proposed above.

CHAPTER XII

THE POST-WAR WORLD

1. Aiding the Victims

BY the middle of 1943 the tide of battle had turned sufficiently to make it clear that the titanic assault of the Nazis on civilization was doomed to failure. Victory for the United Nations was in the offing, though the end might be long in coming and the cost heavy. For the Jews of Europe—those who still survived—that end might indeed be too long delayed. Human endurance has its limitations, and the pitiful remainder had passed through experiences that staggered the imagination. Millions of co-religionists had been massacred; they themselves were largely in concentration camps, starved, beaten, tortured and expecting daily the gas chamber and the incinerator. The heroic resistance of the Warsaw Ghetto had thrilled the world, but when it was over, few remained alive in that waste of rubble and blood.

The work of the Committee, through its Foreign Affairs department, fell into three categories: (1) to rescue wherever possible the surviving victims; (2) to deal with the problems arising in the course of liberation; (3) to secure, after liberation, the equality of Jews, both in law and fact, with their fellow nationals in every country.

In the first category came the mass deportations, actual and threatened, of Hungarian Jews after the Nazi occupation of that satellite country in March, 1944. Though the Committee realized that there was only slight hope of stopping the Nazis in their course by threats of retribution, nevertheless it urged that such

warnings be issued by the United Nations powers as well as appeals to the Hungarian people themselves to resist the brutal decrees. The warnings were in fact issued by President Roosevelt and British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, without any real effect. A direct appeal was also made to the Vatican through the Hon. Myron C. Taylor, President Roosevelt's personal envoy; and the Committee was assured that the Holy See would use its good offices with Hungarian Catholics to assist the Jews. It must be confessed that very little resulted from all these efforts.

Even in territory ostensibly held by France, a former ally, the Jews had their full share of suffering. Under the Cremieux Decree of 1870 the Algerian Jews had been granted French citizenship en masse. That citizenship was now arbitrarily revoked by the Vichy government, honeycombed with anti-Semitic officials and subservient to Hitler. The revocation was continued in effect even after American and British troops landed in North Africa and reconquered the old French territory. Neither Admiral Darlan nor General Giraud, installed with the aid of American bayonets, evinced any desire to nullify the revocation.

Apprised of the situation by the news dispatches out of Algeria, the Committee called on the American State Department to see to it that the Cremieux Decree was reinstated and Algerian Jews restored to all their former privileges as citizens of France. A detailed memorandum, emphasizing the historical and legal aspects of the problem, was submitted. After much delay and diplomatic interchanges, the Vichy revocation was itself revoked, and the Cremieux Decree once more became the law of the land.

In Rumania also, after that ex-satellite country had sued for peace, it was soon discovered that her government was not complying with the terms of the armistice relating to the restoration of Jewish rights. The attention of the American, British and Soviet governments was called to this dereliction, and replies were received from the first two that the Allied Control Commission in Bucharest would investigate.

Late in 1944 a group of Jewish organizations, including the Committee, succeeded in having the scope of UNRRA's operations extended to include the victims of Nazi aggression, even though of enemy or ex-enemy nationality.

In July, 1945, after Germany had finally succumbed to the might of the invading armies, Mr. Jacob Blaustein and Judge George Z. Medalie, representing the Committee, urged on the State Department and on UNRRA that Jewish organizations be permitted to designate experts who would be accredited to UNRRA in Germany and work on behalf of the displaced Jews in that land of concentration camps. The request was granted and Dr. Max Gottschalk, Professor Herman Gray and Mr. Lewis Neikrug as representatives of the Committee spent several months examining at first hand conditions in the camps and returned with a full report which stressed both the magnitude of the problem and possible methods of alleviating the conditions found.

Mr. Blaustein and Judge Medalie also urged on Acting Secretary of State Joseph C. Grew that a Jewish layman be attached to American Army headquarters in Germany to act as advisor on matters relating to displaced Jews. The suggestion resulted in the appointment of Judge Simon H. Rifkind to that post.

When, during the summer of 1946, there seemed grave danger that the American zone in Germany might be closed to Jews fleeing the pogroms of Poland and elsewhere, a delegation of Jewish organizations under the chairmanship of Mr. Blaustein met with Secretary of War Patterson and Under-Secretary of State Acheson and convinced them that asylum should continue to be granted to these post-war victims of continuing savagery. A few weeks later General Joseph T. McNarney, Commander of the American occupation forces in Europe, invited Mr. Blaustein and Judge Forman of the Committee and three representatives of other Jewish organizations to Germany for a conference on the situation. He too gave assurances to the representatives that the zonal borders would not be closed.

While in Europe, the delegates saw also the Director-General of UNNRA, Fiorello H. LaGuardia, on the threatened withholding of relief to displaced persons after the dissolution of UNNRA in December, 1946. As a result of their intervention Mr. LaGuardia agreed to continue such relief until June, 1947, when the new International Refugees Organization would assume responsibility.

What to do with displaced Jews became a major problem that has not yet been solved at the date of writing. Most of these unfortunate people had been violently torn from their former habitations. They could not or would not return to their countries of origin. Their homes had been leveled, their kin slaughtered, their possessions scattered and lost. In many cases anti-Semitism, like a smoldering fire creeping under the dead leaves of a forest, was beginning to flame in renewed fury. They had nothing to which to return. Yet equally they had no place to go.

Before President Truman left to attend the Potsdam Conference, Judge Proskauer and Mr. Blaustein urged on him that the Conference substantially liberalize the old policy of limited immigration into Palestine. On his return, they met with the President in conference and urged that he call on Great Britain forthwith to issue 100,000 emergency visas for Jews to enter that country. No matter what the ultimate political solution for Palestine might be, it was pointed out, this was a question of saving human beings who otherwise were almost certain to perish. President Truman has on several occasions made public his request along these lines to the British government.

Nevertheless, while the Committee then and still is wholeheartedly for the prompt admission of as many Jews into Palestine as desire to go there, it does not believe that a wholesale exodus to Palestine is the only solution. Jews, maintains the Committee, have the right to remain where they wish and go where they wish. It contends that everything possible should be done to improve the position of the Jews in western Europe by facilitating their rehabilitation and helping them to counteract any current anti-

Semitism in the European scene. Furthermore, Palestine is not the be-all and end-all for the Jews of Europe and the world, whether displaced or not. The Committee has explored and is still exploring the possibility of lifting exclusion barriers in other areas of the world to which Jews might properly emigrate.

In this connection, toward the end of 1946 the Committee instituted an all-out campaign under the chairmanship of Mr. Irving M. Engel for a relaxation of the bars to the United States. Such a relaxation, the Committee argued, could be achieved without permanent alteration of the existing laws covering immigration. Under the current quota system, which limits immigration to a specified number each year from every country in the world, and further limits that number on a non-cumulative percentage basis for each month, many countries have never in any month or any year come even close to filling their quotas. Such countries include England, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Belgium. Others, however, like Poland, Rumania and Austria, from which by far the larger number of Jewish refugees would normally come, fill their quotas within a few weeks after the beginning of each year.

The Committee therefore proposed that the unfilled quota of any nation be added to the quotas of those already filled, that the division into monthly quotas be abolished and that, as an emergency measure, the unfilled quotas for *all* countries during the war years be lumped together and used immediately for the benefit of the displaced persons. The Committee also pointed out that Jews constitute only twenty-five per cent of such proposed immigrants; that Catholics and Protestants are very much in the majority.

The formation in 1946 of a non-sectarian Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons, sponsored by men and women of national reputation, and working in cooperation with the Committee, has brought the issue sharply before Congress and the country. Already, at the time of writing, some of the obstacles in the path of liberalizing the immigration laws have been overcome and it is hoped that the next session of Congress (1948) will take some

action on pending bills to that effect. President Truman has repeatedly pledged his support to such legislation.

The increasing tension in Latin America has also become a major concern of the Committee. In 1944 Mr. Morris Waldman and Mr. Jacob Landau investigated conditions in the various countries of Central and South America both as the home of Jewish communities and as an area for possible immigration. As a result of their detailed reports an expert well acquainted with South America and Mexico has been added to the staff. The rise of Col. Juan Peron in Argentina, with the aping by his followers of Nazi techniques and anti-Semitic agitation, brought demands from the Committee to Secretary of State James Byrnes and Assistant Secretary Spruille Braden for concerted action by the American republics or the United Nations to bring a halt to anti-Jewish outrages in Argentina.

2. A World Bill of Rights

With the end of the war definitely in sight early in 1945, at least as far as Europe was concerned, the Committee set up a Committee on Peace Problems. The proposals at Dumbarton Oaks for an international organization were studied and a memorandum submitted to the State Department praising them as a necessary step toward a true comity of nations and welcoming in particular those provisions which attempted to safeguard human rights everywhere. Suggestions were made for implementing the general language in which the proposals were couched.

The Committee on Peace Problems reported that "a permanent commission should be set up at the earliest possible time by the United Nations Conference to formulate an International Bill of Rights embodying the principles of human rights, fundamental freedoms, religious liberty and racial equality. . . ." It also demanded that the United Nations "declare public or organized incitement against religious, ethnic and racial groups to be contrary

to the principles and interests of world democracy and a danger to the peace and security of the world."

These recommendations, together with many others relating to repatriation, migration, reparations, Palestine, etc. were embodied in a notable publication dated March, 1945 and called "To the Counsellors of Peace—Recommendations of the American Jewish Committee." Copies were sent to the members of every one of the delegations attending the San Francisco Conference and to key figures everywhere. Previously, on December 15, 1944, the Committee had issued a declaration calling for an International Bill of Rights, signed by 1326 distinguished Americans of all faiths, races and political creeds. The American press supported the declaration with enthusiasm in lead editorials and comments. On March 20, 1945, less than a month before his death, President Roosevelt met with Judge Proskauer and Mr. Blaustein and authorized them to say for him that he was "profoundly interested in the establishment of an International Bill of Rights as well as in other suggestions contained in the Interim Report of the American Jewish Committee."

Under these benign auspices and with the express approval of the President, coupled with a formal request from the State Department, representatives of the Committee went to San Francisco along with those of other organizations to attend the Conference of the United Nations as consultants to the American delegates. Judge Proskauer, as president of the Committee, and Mr. Blaustein, as chairman of the Executive Committee, accompanied by a staff of experts, comprised the delegation.

As the Conference, however, proceeded on its interminable way, engrossed in the slow and tortuous building of a world organization and rent with bickerings and disputes, the early optimism of the delegation faded. The Conference assemblage did not appear anxious to consider concrete provisions to implement the abstract, inadequate formulation on the subject of human rights adopted at Dumbarton Oaks. Even the official American delegates did not

see how they could go, or were indisposed to go, beyond that pious statement.

It was obvious that nothing would be done unless some eleventh-hour heroic measures were taken. On the initiative of Judge Proskauer and Mr. Blaustein a meeting was held of all the consultants and a decision taken that joint representations be made to the American delegation demanding that provisions safeguarding human rights be inserted in the Charter.

A committee was appointed which met with Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, Jr. and his principal advisor, Dr. Isaiah Bowman, President of Johns Hopkins University.

The presentation of the case was made by Dr. O. Frederick Nolde of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. Then Judge Proskauer rose to make what Professor Shotwell afterwards declared to be "the most eloquent and convincing argument I have ever listened to in my life." Professor Shotwell continued: "Judge Proskauer's argument on that occasion is destined to become one of the chapters of American history. And I am very happy to bear witness to his great success for he completely won over the meeting and Secretary Stettinius instantly promised that he would do all he could to have the human rights clauses inserted in the Charter."

In addition to Judge Proskauer's speech, Mr. Blaustein and Professor Shotwell also spoke at this meeting. Mr. Blaustein offered certain practical suggestions designed to meet the objections of the American delegation and of the Big Five. Dr. Bowman declared that these suggestions "hit the nail on the head." After the meeting, Mr. Blaustein continued his efforts through Dr. Bowman toward the entire objective.

"The next morning," declared Professor Shotwell, "it was accepted by the American delegates as a whole. And soon it was sponsored by the Big Four. It then got into the Charter in the fullest possible way.

"I, as a historian," concluded Professor Shotwell, "with all the careful reserves that a historian is bound to think of, pay this tribute to the leader of the American Jewish Committee. It was a magnificent victory for freedom and human rights."

At least, it was a magnificent beginning. "We, the peoples of the United Nations . . ." runs the text, "reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small . . ." and shall promote "universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion."

These are basic objectives. But they will have to be implemented if they are ever to become what the American Bill of Rights has become, a sturdy fortress for the defense of human beings wherever situated, and whatever their language, customs, color or creed. The Committee, however, has not abated its efforts with the inclusion of the spirit of the Declaration in the Charter. It has unweariedly urged both upon the United Nations and upon the Big Five that machinery be set up to insure that the provisions of the Charter are effectively carried out and made a part of the fundamental law of the world.

Along these lines a Consultative Council of Jewish Organizations was established in September, 1946 consisting of the American Jewish Committee, the Anglo-Jewish Association of Great Britain and the Alliance Israélite Universelle of France with the announced purpose of uniting Jewish activities on behalf of human rights and fundamental freedoms and to coordinate efforts to promote the economic, social, religious and cultural welfare of Jews under the United Nations Charter. The way was left open for other Jewish organizations of similar aims to join later. On March 29, 1947 the United Nations gave the Consultative Council formal consultant status to its own Economic and Social Council.

One of the major proposals which the Consultative Council has already urged upon the United Nations is the adoption of a con-

vention on genocide which would make "the intentional destruction of a group of human beings . . . on religious, racial, political or any other grounds" a crime under international law.

3. The Treaties of Peace

Peace finally came to the nations of the earth, but it brought in its train a host of complex and seemingly insoluble problems. It is not necessary to go into the details here. They are only too well known to the reader of the daily newspapers. Attention will be called therefore only to those phases in which the Committee has played an essential part. The Paris Peace Conference was such a one.

The Committee sent a delegation to attend the sessions. It was headed by Mr. Jacob Blaustein, and included Judge Phillip Forman, Dr. Simon Segal and Dr. Max Gottschalk, together with a staff of experts. The delegation soon discovered that the climate of opinion at Paris, for all the lip service paid to the cause of human freedom, was distinctly chillier than at the Versailles Conference following World War I, when the suggestions of Jewish leaders under similar circumstances were treated with cordial respect by President Wilson and the other conferees. Human rights, and especially Jewish rights, were definitely not major items on the agenda.

Nevertheless the delegation went to work. The first task was to ensure a degree of working unity among all the Jewish organizations present on the scene, so that a single set of proposals could be submitted to the Conference carrying the unanimous endorsement of all. This was no easy task, in view of the wide ideological differences among these organizations. Nevertheless it was finally achieved and Joint Peace Proposals were formulated which the several Jewish groups cordially collaborated in urging upon the Conference delegations.

The first section of these Proposals dealt with "human rights

and fundamental freedoms." While the draft treaties for allied and neutral countries already contained general provisions somewhat similar to those incorporated in the Charter, it was felt that these should be made much more specific in the case of former enemy countries such as Rumania, Hungary and Italy. The second section dealt with "economic clauses in relation to victims of persecution," such as the right of those victims, although nationals of enemy countries, to restitution of property on the same basis as United Nations nationals. The third section dealt with "questions specifically relating to the status and position of Jews in the particular former enemy countries," including the rights of citizenship and emigration, and the transfer of property rights of deceased Jews without heirs for Jewish relief and rehabilitation.

In the beginning it seemed as though very little of this elaborate program would be considered, much less achieved. Political cross-purposes, and the struggle between the so-called eastern and western blocs of nations, absorbed all the energies of the Conference. The combined Jewish organizations had no official standing, and it was difficult even to meet unofficially with particular delegations in order to obtain a hearing. Russia and her satellite countries in particular objected to those few proposals which were offered by the other nations for inclusion in the draft treaties with former enemy countries. But meetings were eventually had with all of these.

However, after much jockeying for position, the three most desired clauses were incorporated in those treaties. *All* of them already contained a general provision for the "enjoyment of human rights and the fundamental freedoms . . . without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion." *All* of them agreed "to repeal discriminatory legislation and restrictions imposed thereunder" against anyone, irrespective of nationality or citizenship, on account of his activities or sympathy for the United Nations or because of his racial origin. Rumania and Hungary now agreed specifically not to discriminate between "different classes, sections or categories of persons . . . irrespective of race, sex, language or religion, whether in

reference to their person, property, business or financial interests, status, political or civil rights, or any other matter." The same two nations also undertook to transfer to the International Refugee Organization for "purpose of relief and rehabilitation" all property hitherto owned by persons or communities who were "the object of racial, religious or other fascist measures of persecution or discrimination," and which were "ownerless, heirless or unclaimed."

This was a decided victory; but the draft treaties still had to pass the scrutiny of the Council of Foreign Ministers. This Council, enmeshed in other matters, seemed hopelessly deadlocked and the work of the Paris Peace Conference headed for destruction when, by the middle of November, the log jam suddenly opened. Meeting in New York, the Four Powers were individually approached by the collaborating Jewish groups. The Americans, British and French assured them they would fight to maintain the Paris clauses in the final treaties.

That left Russia. Andrei Gromyko was personally approached and a memorandum given to him. Thereafter the Russian position softened and it asked merely for some minor alterations in the drafts, notably in connection with "heirless property." Instead of being turned over to the IRO such property, declared the treaties, "shall be transferred by the [Rumanian, Hungarian] Government to an organization in [Rumania, Hungary] representative of such persons, organizations or communities" and used for the relief and rehabilitation of "surviving members of such groups, organizations and communities" in the particular country. Thereby supervision by an *international* organization in these two countries within the Russian orbit was eliminated. With these modifications the treaties became final, and the Jewish groups could justly pride themselves on their accomplishment.

A determined effort by Australia and others to put teeth into the obligations of former enemy states to respect human rights by erecting a Court of Human Rights with powers to hear complaints and enforce decisions was almost immediately wrecked, even though

the treaties did provide for arbitration machinery. As a result there is no permanent machinery for enforcing the provisions of the treaties, and tragic past experience has shown how little faith can be placed in these glib clauses without such machinery. Real international enforcement of human rights even in former enemy countries, not to speak of victor or neutral nations, must await future events in the United Nations organization.

At the time of writing the German and Austrian peace treaties are still under consideration, and the American Jewish Committee has called on the treaty-making powers to insert not only the human-rights clauses of the earlier treaties but new ones which would provide penalties for violations and punishments for the advocacy of genocide and inciting religious or racial hatred and discrimination. It is necessary, declared a letter signed by Judge Proskauer and Messrs. Blaustein and Slawson, that the treaty with Germany establish her guilt for the sufferings inflicted on the Jews under Hitler, and include a guarantee of human rights and fundamental freedoms which would make a resurgence of Nazi tyranny impossible.

4. European Operations

Ever since the end of the war the American Jewish Committee has realized that the problems posed in the European area, in which are included North Africa and the Middle East, have grown too complex to be handled only on the old level of "human rights" through the American State Department and occasional visits of investigation and inquiry. Constant "on the scene" attendance is essential if the Jews in these areas are to be helped in the vast and intricate problems of achieving property restitution, political and legal rights, and a solution found in terms of permanent resettlement and a return to normal living for the displaced persons now housed in army camps in the occupation zones.

These constitute immediate objectives, but just as important is

a long-range functional program for combating old and new manifestations of anti-Semitism in the European area and contributing toward the Jewish cultural communal development of the Jewish communities in the various European countries.

To implement these objectives a Paris office was organized as headquarters, in addition to the already existing London office, for European activities. These European offices would be the focal points for a four-point program, viz.: (1) the formulation of general governmental policies and their enforcement by the several European countries in connection with the problems of restitution and reparations to their Jewish inhabitants; (2) the protection and furtherance of the civil, political and religious rights of Jews; (3) the combating of anti-Semitism in Europe through the Jewish communities themselves wherever it was necessary; (4) the enrichment of Jewish cultural life on a communal basis.

Liaisons have been established with the Jewish communities of many of the European countries and cooperative work is now under way.

* * *

The same problems which induced the Committee to establish permanent offices in Europe determined it also to join in convoking a conference of Jewish organizations on a world-wide basis in order to explore the possibilities of closer cooperation among them —with complete autonomy nevertheless to the conferring groups —on such topics as rehabilitation, restitution, resettlement, human rights, Palestine and cultural reconstruction, as well as anti-Semitism in their respective countries and the best methods for combating it.

Accordingly the American Jewish Committee, in association with the Anglo-Jewish Association, called what became known as the London Conference of Jewish Organizations. Meetings were held in London from February 23 to March 2, 1946 and were

attended by sixty delegates from thirteen countries in Europe, Africa, North and South America, and Australia. The delegates of the Committee to the Conference were Messrs. Jacob Blaustein, chairman, Alan M. Stroock, Edward A. Norman, Jerome J. Rothschild and Dr. John Slawson, accompanied by a staff of experts. Intensive sessions were held at which the various problems and the possibilities of parallel action in the countries represented were discussed. The results of the deliberations were summarized and the areas of agreement outlined in a report of the Conference's Program Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Alan M. Stroock. The Conference recommended to its constituent delegations that a conference be called to take steps toward the reconstruction of the educational and cultural life of European Jewry, that a central service be established for clearing information on anti-Semitic activities and methods to combat them, that the Jewish communities in each country work to secure the inclusion in the constitutions of their own lands of guarantees for human rights and fundamental freedoms and to persuade them to support the adoption of an effective International Bill of Rights, that the proposals of the American Jewish Committee for special provisions in the pending peace treaties (as specified in *Toward Peace and Equity*) be expanded and developed and attempts made to incorporate them. Various steps in connection with rehabilitation, war orphans and Palestine were also recommended.

No attempt was made by the Conference to set up a formal, continuing organization or to force a common point of view on the attending groups; but the delegates had discovered sufficient areas of agreement on which to predicate a considerable degree of effective collaboration in the future.

5. The Palestine Problem

In January, 1943 the Committee had clearly indicated its position on the troubled question of Palestine by the issuance of a Statement of Views which called for the abrogation of the White

Paper, reaffirmed its adherence to the Balfour Declaration and demanded the right of unlimited immigration for Jews into the Holy Land. At the same time, however, it refused to endorse the agitation of the political Zionists for the erection of a Jewish national state.

Ever since its adoption the position of the Committee has been consistently misrepresented and distorted by the more militant Zionists and their organizations. When these militants gained control of the Zionist Organization of America that body also joined in the hue and cry.

As the war rose to a climax, and the slaughter of European Jews reached the proportions of near extermination, the Committee intensified its campaign to open Palestine immediately as a place of refuge to those who yet survived and to prepare that country for ultimate self-government. Time and again the Committee asked the American Zionists to join in a common Jewish program for the prime objective—getting as many Jews out of Europe and into Palestine as possible. But the Zionists refused cooperation unless their other objective was also included in the agenda—the demand for the establishment of a Jewish national state. Accordingly, the various Jewish groups in this country went their several, and often contradictory, ways.

Dr. Chaim Weizmann, president of the World Zionist Organization, however, was not as intransigeant in his position as the American Zionists. Adopting a more moderate stand, he expressed his willingness to get together with representatives of the Committee to survey the entire situation. Mr. Blaustein and Dr. Slawson conferred with Secretary of State Byrnes to urge on the American government that it continue to ask the British government to make available immediately 100,000 visas for Palestine. They also called his attention to the fact that haven could be given to many stateless and displaced Jews here in America by utilizing for them the unused visas under the various existing national quotas.

When the war finally ended and the concentration camps of Europe yielded up their pitiful survivors, the necessity for opening Palestine became even more exigent. The British government, now Labor in complexion, failed to live up to pre-election promises. Palestine remained closed, except for a trickle of permissible immigrants, and the White Paper was still official policy.

Under world pressure from Jews and non-Jews alike, the British set up an Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine to take testimony from all sources and make recommendations on the course to be followed. The British government gave assurances that if this report was unanimous, the recommendations would be put into effect.

The Anglo-American Committee, composed of six distinguished Englishmen and six equally distinguished Americans, commenced hearings toward the end of 1945 at which all who had a stake in the proceedings were invited to testify. The testimony was decidedly heterogeneous in character—Arab representatives were unanimously opposed to any change in the status quo; Jewish representatives were unanimous for letting down the bars to immigration, but were at odds among themselves on everything else. Zionist demands ranged from a Jewish state in the future to a Jewish state almost at once. Some voices were raised for partition between Jews and Arabs; others for a bi-national state administered by both.

The position of the American Jewish Committee was given by Judge Proskauer at the hearing of the Anglo-American Committee held in Washington on January 9, 1946. Judge Proskauer first turned his attention to the present plight of the Jews in Europe and the immediate need for positive action. "When the house is burning down, you don't stop to argue what kind of house you want to put in its place," he declared. "Your immediate task . . . is not to wait while you are determining what shall happen in Palestine in the ultimate; not to stand by until you complete the investigation of other, more obscure and difficult questions . . . but

to do the thing that we were never able to get done during the war . . . take these human beings immediately out of the misery in which they find themselves." This could only be done by opening wide the gates of Palestine.

Briefly sketching the historical background, England's role, and the remarkable achievements already accomplished in Palestine by the existing Jewish settlements, he urged the following: (1) the immediate creation of a trusteeship for Palestine, probably under the United Nations; (2) requests upon governments of countries of potential immigration other than Palestine to receive substantial numbers of displaced persons; (3) recommendations to the countries of present refuge to permit as many refugees and alien Jews as possible to remain and eventually acquire citizenship; (4) protection of the stateless by the United Nations by the creation of special passports; (5) protection of the rights of Jewish immigration into Palestine.

When queried as to the American Jewish Committee's views on the future of Palestine he painted it in these words: "A country where Jews can live in peace and dignity, where Arabs will live with them as fellow citizens, where the democratic fundamentals of society shall prevail, and where nobody dominates anybody else."

Judge Proskauer's testimony and supporting memorandum made a deep impression on the members of the Committee of Inquiry. Judge Hutcheson remarked: "I would like to say that your approach is familiar and pleasant to me because it is the approach and attitude of what I call judicial. It is practical. It is definite. In your paper (referring to the memorandum and the volume, *To the Counsellors of Peace*) you have many things that are well gotten together and things about which we have been troubled."

The Anglo-American Committee, in its final report, unanimously recommended: (1) that immediate effect be given to the provision of the United Nations Charter calling for "universal respect for and observance of, human rights and fundamental free-

doms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion;" (2) that 100,000 certificates be issued for the earliest possible admission of Jews into Palestine; (3) that Palestine be neither an Arab nor a Jewish state, but a land under international guarantees and possessing the fullest measure of self-government consistent with the rights of all the inhabitants; (4) that until internecine strife desists the government of Palestine continue under the Mandate pending a trusteeship under the United Nations; (5) that there be equality of economic, political and educational standards for Arabs and Jews; (6) that the mandatory power "facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions;" (7) that the restrictions on land transfers be lifted with "adequate protection for the interests of small owners and tenant cultivators;" (8) that plans by the Jewish Agency for the large-scale agricultural and industrial development of Palestine be further examined; (9) that the educational system be reformed; and (10) that all terrorism and illegal armies be suppressed.

The American Jewish Committee, while taking no stand on the report as a whole, emphasized "the importance of putting first things first and subordinating all controversy over ultimates in securing among Jews and with our fellow-Americans of other faiths united action in the endeavor to give prompt force to the immediate affirmative recommendations in the Report." In particular, it endorsed the recommendation for the prompt admission of 100,000 Jews and pledged full support toward its implementation.

But the British government, in spite of pre-inquiry assurances that it would accept the findings if unanimous, now evaded its responsibility. Disregarding the unanimity of the report, it called for a new and delaying conference, while the plight of the displaced Jews of Europe hourly grew more desperate and a wave of resentment and terrorism swept Palestine.

In spite of the fact that the proposed new Anglo-American Committee was obviously a mere delaying tactic President Truman appointed an American delegation on June 14, 1946 in the hope

that something might eventuate which would break the impasse. Before the delegates left to attend the conference Mr. Blaustein and Dr. Slawson, on behalf of the American Jewish Committee, urged them to press especially for the immediate immigration of 100,000 Jews into Palestine.

But the report of the conferees, as announced on July 26, 1946, ignored almost completely the recommendations of the previous Committee of Inquiry and proposed instead what became known as the Morrison-Grady Plan. This called for the federalization of Palestine by the establishment, in addition to two British zones, of an Arab and a Jewish zone. The Jewish zone, as outlined, was to consist of only 1500 square miles. The Arab and Jewish zones were to be granted a sharply limited autonomy; effective control, including decisions on immigration, remained in British hands. The plan evoked widespread opposition and no support.

With terrorism mounting, with revenge and counter-revenge turning Palestine into a bloody shambles, with the time for rescuing the Jews of Europe fast running out, some of the members of the Jewish Agency (including Dr. Weizmann) indicated that they were prepared to discuss a partition plan which would divide Palestine into two areas so constituted that one would contain a Jewish majority and the other an Arab majority. Both areas were to be wholly autonomous, with full control over their own immigration; but equal rights were to be guaranteed to all inhabitants—Arabs, Jews and Christians. The exact boundaries of the partitioned areas were to be determined by negotiation among all the interested parties.

Some of the leaders of the American Jewish Committee—among them Judge Proskauer, Mr. Blaustein and Dr. Slawson—considered that such a solution, though far from ideal, had the great and controlling merit that, if accepted, it would save hundreds of thousands of Jewish displaced people from disaster and would permit that large-scale immigration into Palestine which, as Judge Proskauer phrased it, "all Jews must regard as their chief immediate

aim." It had the further merit of not contravening the democratic principles which the Committee had always insisted must be a necessary prerequisite to any final settlement in Palestine.

The entire matter was discussed at an Executive Committee meeting on September 15, 1946, together with the policy to be adopted by the Committee in the event it receive an invitation to be represented at a proposed conference of the Agency and the British government in London. Nothing official was resolved in relation to the tentative plan of the Jewish Agency for partition; but it was agreed to accept such an invitation to London *provided* the invitation came from the British government.

The conference never took place, and the World Zionist Organization, convened at Geneva in December, 1946, repudiated both Dr. Weizmann and the Jewish Agency for their reputed willingness to confer with the British before any official announcement from the latter that they were prepared to grant concessions not contained in the Morrison-Grady Plan. Instead, the Zionist Organization reaffirmed its old platform calling for a Jewish state covering the whole of Palestine.

As conditions in Palestine grew steadily more exacerbated, with what was tantamount to a state of open war, the United Nations set up a Committee of Inquiry on Palestine. The American Jewish Committee asked for and obtained leave to appear before the Committee of Inquiry and present argument and a brief. On June 1, 1947 the Committee, through its president, Judge Proskauer, and its chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Blaustein, submitted a statement to the United Nations Committee which affirmed the right of Jews to emigrate to and settle in Palestine as conferred on them by the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate, urged the establishment of a United Nations trusteeship to see to it that that right was enforced and declared that the British White Paper of 1939 was a "breach of trust" which "must be struck down." It opposed an immediate determination of Palestine's final political constitution but declared that if it must be made,

partition along the lines suggested by members of the Jewish Agency in 1946 was the only possible solution.

Nevertheless the American Jewish Committee hoped that the Committee of Inquiry would decide against any present determination of the permanent political status of Palestine, and in that event offered an alternative solution as follows: (1) an immediate grant of 100,000 immigration certificates for Palestine during 1947 to Jews in the displaced persons camps; (2) subsequent facilitation of maximum Jewish immigration, and guarantee of Jewish land purchase rights; (3) plenary power to the United Nations trusteeship council to determine the rate of Jewish immigration and the character of land ownership; (4) immediate and general placement of Jews and Arabs in positions of political and economic responsibility with the aim of ultimate complete self-government with full equality for all citizens; (5) protection for the sanctity of the Holy Places of all faiths; (6) provision by the United Nations for adequate policing of Palestine at the request of the administering authority, and reservation of such right even without any request; and, (7) continuation of the trusteeship until the United Nations shall determine that the time for independence has arrived, with complete equality to all citizens guaranteed by a bill of rights.

The report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine was issued on August 31, 1947. It was voluminous and detailed. In many matters the Committee was unanimous. Such, for example, were the recommendations to the General Assembly that the Mandate for Palestine be ended as soon as possible and independence granted at the earliest practicable date, with a transitional period during which the authority entrusted with administration would be directly responsible to the United Nations; that the General Assembly undertake immediately the formation of an international agreement to deal with the urgent plight of the Jews of Europe; that a prior condition to a grant of independence would be the inclusion in Palestine's fundamental law of democratic structures, guarantees of human rights and the rights of

minorities, and the acceptance as a cardinal principle that the preservation of the economic unity of Palestine is indispensable to the life and development of the country and its inhabitants.

Thus far there was unanimity. But on the problem as to what to do with Palestine *politically* there was a divergence of opinion. A majority of the United Nations Committee—seven in number—proposed a scheme of partition into an Arab state, a Jewish state, and the city of Jerusalem under an international trusteeship. The Arab and Jewish states were to become independent after two years on the conditions outlined in the unanimous findings. The boundaries of the two states were fixed with some attempt at placing majorities in their own states.

The minority—three in number—proposed instead of partition a scheme for a federal state of Palestine with subsidiary Arab and Jewish states with limited autonomies, but subject in specified particulars to the sovereignty of the federal government.

The American Jewish Committee, after a careful consideration of the report and the recommendations of the majority and the minority, endorsed the majority report. Under the signatures of Judge Proskauer and Mr. Blaustein a telegram was sent to the United States Secretary of State George C. Marshall:

"The American Jewish Committee has never been a part of the Zionist movement but has always been deeply concerned with the development of Jewish settlement in Palestine.

"After the most careful consideration by its Committee on Palestine of the reports submitted by the UNSCOP, the American Jewish Committee urges upon the United States Government that it vigorously and speedily endorse and support the report of the majority group.

"The UNSCOP, an impartial international body, has come to substantial agreement on the dangerous and difficult problem in a troubled area. Acceptance of this report would in our judgment tend to bring about the quickest possible beneficial results in the handling of the problem. It offers immediate means for relieving

the desperate situation of 150,000 of the Jews in the displaced persons camps of Europe.

"We express to our Government our wholehearted endorsement of the spirit animating the majority report and our confidence that the American people impelled by a love of fair play and justice will back our Government in supporting it."

At the time of writing the Palestinian issue, together with the report of its committee, is squarely before the General Assembly. Great Britain has already announced its decision to withdraw from the Mandate. A solution that will be wholly satisfactory to all the interested parties is inconceivable; a solution that will somehow combine peace with justice is greatly to be desired. The American Jewish Committee is supporting the majority report for that reason.

Note—Since the above has gone to press, word has been received that the Assembly has officially voted in favor of partition.

CHAPTER XIII

PATHS FOR THE FUTURE

ON November 11, 1946 the American Jewish Committee ended its fortieth year of uninterrupted activities on behalf of the Jews of the world. Commencing as a small group of public-spirited men associated together for specific and limited ends it has grown through the years to a great organization of thousands of members and a broad program embracing matters of Jewish concern.

The world of today is not the comparatively simple world of 1906. Then it was fairly easy to focus the attention of a world at peace on the dark areas of eastern Europe and rouse its indignation at the slaughter of a few hundred Jews and pogroms involving thousands.

But forty years have witnessed many changes, not all of them evidences of an advancing civilization. Two cataclysmic wars have intervened, subterranean forces of hate and fury have been unleashed and an atomic age impends which offers with one hand the horn of plenty and with the other the bomb of annihilation. Instead of mere hundreds, millions of Jews have lost their lives; instead of sporadic pogroms that flared and ended in a circumscribed area, deliberate, cold-blooded extermination engulfed the earth. The very capacity for indignation and sympathy has been blunted by long years of constant horrors.

The problems facing the Committee today have become infinitely more complex. Anti-Semitism is no longer an isolated phenomenon peculiar to eastern Europe. It is now world-wide, a threat in the United States as in Rumania, in Argentina as in Ger-

many. It has become international in its ramifications, and the fight against it must be waged on an equally world-wide basis.

With this in mind the Committee has embarked on a long-range program which embraces Europe, North Africa, the Near East and the countries of Central and South America. By means of a Paris office and in continuous collaboration with Jewish organizations of other lands and local communities, the Committee is striving to achieve speedy rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Jewish communities in the war-devastated areas and a status of absolute equality for them, as well as to clear the atmosphere of the poisons disseminated by Nazism and Fascism. In those lands untouched by war all energies are directed to keeping them free from the taint of anti-Semitism and to strengthen the forces of democracy. The shift in emphasis has been from ex *cathedra* activities on behalf of Jews to intimate cooperation with the communities themselves in the processes of enlarging and integrating their Jewish cultural communal development and of achieving a sturdy self-awareness and self-dignity.

More and more the Committee has become convinced that piecemeal activities, though essential at the particular moment, are nevertheless mere palliatives; and that the future of all mankind, including the Jews, depends on the building of a new world order, in which the freedom and dignity of every individual, regardless of race, color or religion, is the fundamental cornerstone and paramount objective. Toward this end the Committee has hailed the formation of the United Nations as a beacon of hope, obscured though that beacon may be at the moment by the confusions and rivalries inherent in a new organization of such world-embracing significance.

The Committee has done its share in helping shape some of the objectives of the United Nations; witness its efforts on behalf of the human rights provisions which were incorporated in the United Nations Charter, and its present collaboration as official

consultant with the Social and Economic Council and the Human Rights Commission of that body.

Totalitarian threats to human liberty have become matters of increasing concern to the Committee. Mr. David Sher, chairman of the Administrative Committee, has declared that "the menace to Jewry, as well as to a free and decent society for all men, is not merely fascism but the rejection of freedom, embodied in the totalitarian mind—that negation of all the values we respect and cherish. The basic struggle in the world today is the struggle between the free spirit and the totalitarian mind." And he ended significantly: "We Jews of America are not afraid of freedom."

In spite of its increasing preoccupation with world affairs the Committee nevertheless remains a truly American organization, with its chief interest in and among American Jews and their relations with their fellow-Americans of other faiths. The earlier idea of mere "defense" of Jews when they are attacked or their rights invaded has given way to a more positive and far-reaching program which calls for a fundamental assault on the roots of anti-Semitism. This involves an increasing use of the techniques and tools evolved by the social sciences and an intensification of research into those darkly obscure regions of the human mind where prejudice breeds and has its being. It also involves a ceaseless and long-range educational campaign addressed to the American people as a whole and as members of various "common-interest" groups. Such a campaign may not be as dramatic as "defense" and "attack" procedures but its results over the years will unquestionably prove more permanent. Increasing attention is also being paid to legal and civic action in such fields as restrictive covenants and the relations of Church and State in public education.

The Committee's pragmatic approach to the Jewish situation has also animated its attitude toward the Palestine problem. It has never been blinded by preconceived and theoretical doctrines of pro- or anti-Zionism. It has always recognized the role of Palestine in Jewish sentiment and tradition; it followed with sympathetic

interest the tremendous work of construction achieved by the Jews in the Holy Land; it endorsed and urged the implementation of the Balfour Declaration and the ensuing series of promises for the establishment of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine.

The unprecedented tragedy of recent years and the dire necessities of the displaced Jews of Europe have prompted the Committee to work intensively for immediate and large-scale immigration of Jews into Palestine and for the continuous development there of Jewish social, cultural and economic life. The Committee has not been bound by the declared political objective of the Zionists—a Jewish state—as the only means for realizing these goals. But it has certainly not ruled out the possibility of a state in which the Jewish inhabitants are a majority, provided it be established on sound democratic principles. It has therefore supported the recent majority proposal of the United Nations committee calling for partition of Palestine because it feels that such a procedure at the present time will insure immediate Jewish immigration and the rescue of large numbers of displaced Jews from an increasingly impossible situation.

Nevertheless the Committee does not look upon Palestine as the only solution to the "Jewish problem." Pursuing a policy based on the philosophy of emancipation and the right of Jews to go where they wish, and live where they wish on terms of absolute equality with their neighbors, the Committee is conducting an extensive campaign to open the doors for Jews and others in all countries of potential immigration, with special emphasis on the United States.

A major development in the Committee's recent policy and one that points the way to a new and fruitful approach to the position of the Jews in the world and in particular in America is the serious consideration that is being given to the personality structure and "adjustment" of Jews *qua* Jews. It has come to be realized more and more that such "personality health" is a focal point in any considered program. Dr. John Slawson, executive vice-president,

stated the problem in these terms: "While admitting that in the long course of history the attitude of the Jew toward himself is not necessarily decisive with reference to his status—for basic economic and political forces are the principal determinants, and that prejudice must be treated in the prejudiced and not in the victim —it must nevertheless be recognized that in our time the image that the Jew has of himself in large measure determines the image that his non-Jewish neighbor has of him." If the Jew refuses to accept himself with dignity and an awareness of his achievements and religio-cultural contributions to the main stream of Western civilization, it is difficult to ask others to do so for him.

Accordingly the Committee is engaged in a far-reaching program which is intended to stimulate and organize a stable cultural and spiritual *milieu* for the Jews of America both as individuals and as members of communities integrated into the American scene.

Toward the accomplishment of these ends the Committee is attempting to associate with itself thoughtful men and women throughout the country who represent the creative elements of American Jewry and who, in their own communities, can work actively toward their consummation. It has sponsored a magazine, *Commentary*, whose avowed aim is "to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues" and "to promote Jewish cultural interest and creative achievement in America." It has established a Research Institute to seek out new procedures in Jewish education and new content matter that will help the generations of children to grow into free, self-respecting, integrated Jews and Americans. Mr. Jacob Blaustein, chairman of the Executive Committee, has pointed out the ultimate goal: "We in America have become the custodian of an age-old tradition. It devolves on us to remain true to the great lineage which began with the Hebrew prophets and still lives on in acts of selfless devotion and compassion for our fellow beings. We are on the threshold of an atomic world—a world, let us hope, where all will learn perforce the truth that

the basic law of this world is and must be the brotherhood of man."

* * *

The future of the world is clouded with uncertainty. But the American Jewish Committee has never believed in a defeatist philosophy, and will go on to fight for freedom, liberation, dignity and equal rights, and that democracy without which the others are mere hollow shams. The guiding principles of the Committee now and for the future are well expressed by the eloquent statements of two of its leaders.

On May 4, 1946 Dr. John Slawson set the keynote: "We look upon the problem of the Jew both as an American and as a world problem. We look upon it as an American problem because . . . the destiny of American democracy is involved. . . . We look upon it as a world problem because the rights of any group in any part of the world are bound up with the rights of any other group anywhere else in the world. . . . We believe in a positive, constructive Jewish life in America. We believe that it has to be fed from some source that is Jewish; and we firmly believe not only that this is not incompatible with integration but that it in fact helps promote integration into the American scene."

On January 25, 1947 Judge Joseph M. Proskauer, president of the Committee, set forth his vision of the future in Biblical phrases: "I like to vision us as a band of brothers determined by toil, by intelligence, by high-mindedness and self-sacrifice, to improve the lot of our Jewish brethren throughout the world; as a band of brothers joined with our fellow Americans, to bring these United States ever nearer to the time when bigotry and intolerance shall have ceased to be; as a band of brothers joined with all right-thinking people of this sorrowing earth to recreate the troubled world into a haven where every man may dwell in peace under his own vine and fig tree, when the sword shall be beaten into the plowshare and the spear into the pruning hook, and when the nations shall cease to know war."

Appendix A

OFFICERS FOR YEAR 1947

Joseph M. Proskauer
President

Jacob Blaustein
Chairman, Executive Committee

Alan M. Stroock
Vice-Chairman, Executive Committee

David Sher
Chairman, Administrative Committee

John Slawson
Executive Vice-President

Abram I. Elkus * Herbert H. Lehman
Honorary Vice-Presidents

Herbert B. Ehrmann Ralph E. Samuel
Milton W. King Jesse H. Steinhart
Fred Lazarus, Jr. Frank L. Sulzberger
Vice-Presidents

Edward A. Norman
Secretary

Nathan M. Ohrbach
Treasurer

Albert H. Lieberman
Associate Treasurer

* Deceased, Oct. 15, 1947

APPENDIX B

ACT OF INCORPORATION

An Act to incorporate the American Jewish Committee. Became a law March 16, 1911, with the approval of the Governor. Passed, three-fifths being present. Sec. 3 amended in 1930 and again in 1935; Secs. 3 and 4 amended in 1942; Sec. 3 amended in 1947.

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Sec. 1. Mayer Sulzberger, Julian W. Mack, Jacob H. Hollander, Julius Rosenwald, Cyrus Adler, Harry Cutler, Samuel Dorf, Judah L. Magnes, Jacob H. Schiff, Isador Sobel, Cyrus L. Sulzberger, A. Leo Weil and Louis Marshall, and their associates and successors, are hereby constituted a body corporate, in perpetuity, under the name of The American Jewish Committee; and by that name shall possess all of the powers which by the general corporation law are conferred upon corporations, and shall be capable of taking, holding and acquiring, by deed, gift, purchase, bequest, devise, or by judicial order or decree, any estate, real or personal, in trust or otherwise, which shall be necessary or useful for the uses and purposes of the corporation, to the amount of three millions of dollars.

Sec. 2. The objects of this corporation shall be, to prevent the infraction of the civil and religious rights of Jews, in any part of the world; to render all lawful assistance and to take appropriate remedial action in the event of threatened or actual invasion or restriction of such rights, or of unfavorable discrimination with respect thereto: to secure for Jews equality of economic, social and educational opportunity; alleviate the consequences of persecution and to afford relief from calamities affecting Jews, wher-

ever they may occur; and to compass these ends to administer any relief fund which shall come into its possession or which may be received by it, in trust or otherwise, for any of the aforesaid objects or for purposes comprehended therein.

Sec. 3. The business and affairs of said corporation shall be conducted by a board of not less than 15 or more than 200 to be known as the Executive Committee. Upon passage of this Revision of the Act of Incorporation, the existing Executive Committee shall have the power to add to its membership up to the permissible maximum. New members shall be designated as of three groups: one to serve until the next Annual Meeting the following year; one to serve for an additional year thereafter, and one to serve for an additional two years thereafter. At the expiration of the term of any member of the Executive Committee his successor shall be elected for the term of three years. All vacancies which may occur in said Executive Committee between annual meetings of the Corporate Membership may be filled by said committee until the next Annual Meeting. Regular vacancies of the Executive Committee shall be filled by general vote at the Annual Meeting of the Corporate Membership upon the recommendations of a Nominating Committee designated in accordance with the By-Laws now in force or hereafter adopted.

Sec. 4. The members of said corporation shall consist of American citizens or those who have declared their intention to become citizens of the United States who shall be designated and chosen for membership by such method or methods and by such organizations, societies and nominating bodies as shall be provided in By-Laws, such By-Laws shall however be subject to alteration, revision or amendment at any regular meeting of the members of the corporation or at a meeting called for such purpose provided that thirty days' notice be given of the proposed change and that such alteration, revision or amendment shall be carried by a majority of at least twenty votes; and not otherwise.

Sec. 5. This act shall take effect immediately.

INDEX

NATHAN SCHACHNER'S outstanding talent as an historian is marked by a literary ability which breathes full-bodied life into his subject matter. He is the author of what have been acclaimed as the best biographies of Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr ever written, and he has written novels and histories to which the critics have responded with glowing praise.

Mr. Schachner, who is a member of the staff of the American Jewish Committee, has an amazingly broad and diversified background. He has written hundreds of articles and stories for national magazines. He holds the degrees of Bachelor of Science and Juris Doctor, and has been a research chemist and a practicing lawyer. He is a founder and past president of the American Rocket Society, and has conducted valuable scientific experiments in that field. He is a writer of national reputation.

THE PRICE OF LIBERTY is the absorbing and fascinating story of a great organization — the American Jewish Committee. Founded in 1906 to defend the civil and religious rights of Jews throughout the world, the Committee has grown steadily in stature, until today it is recognized not merely as the defender of Jewish rights but also as the champion of basic civil liberties for all of the oppressed and downtrodden groups of the world, whatever their race, creed or color.

THE PRICE OF LIBERTY is a stirring chronicle of the ceaseless battle for human rights against a background of world events. The spotlight swings from Russia to the Near East, from Germany to Argentina; yet through it all America and American problems remain the focal point.

In this volume are recreated the dreadful events in Czarist Russia which led to the founding of the American Jewish Committee and the crucial years that followed, the struggle to rescue the victims of pogroms everywhere. Here is the story of the tremendous impact upon Jewry of two World Wars and of the Nazi horror that intervened. A searching light is thrown upon the long and troubled history of Palestine. The activities of the Committee in connection with the writing of the peace, the organization of the United Nations and the reconstructive tasks of the postwar world are handled in masterly fashion. The ceaseless struggle against the enemy within, the preachers of hate and anti-Semitism and the would-be destroyers of democracy, is presented in fullest detail. Men and events move across the printed page in memorable and fascinating array.

Historically accurate, intensely readable, this is an unforgettable picture of a great human adventure, a ceaseless fight for basic liberties and harmonious group relations.