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JEW IN EASTERN EUROPE

A Periodical Survey of Events Affecting Jews in the Soviet Bloc

Editorial: 31 PERCY STREET, LONDON, W.1.

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“JUDAISM WITHOUT EMBELLISHMENT”

AN EXAMINATION OF
ANTI-SEMITISM IN SOVIET PROPAGANDA
AGAINST RELIGION

PASSOVER IN THE U.S.S.R.

The American Jewish Committee

AUG 18 1964

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This special number of "Jews In Eastern Europe" is concerned with two subjects, the anti-Semitic book published by the Ukrainian Academy of Science, "Judaism Without Embellishment," and this year's difficult Passover in the U.S.S.R. when Soviet Jews were subject to harassing restrictions in obtaining the necessary ritual food for the Festival. These two events, symptomatic as they are of much that is wrong with Soviet treatment of the Jewish minority, are given careful and detailed examination.

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**ІУДАЇЗМ
без прикрас**

ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE U.S.S.R.

QUESTIONS RAISED BY KICHKO BOOK

An event that provokes open criticism of the Soviet Union by Communist parties in the West is clearly one that goes beyond the divergent points of view that nowadays are known to have unpublicised existence on many levels in internal relations of the Communist movement. The publication by the Ukrainian Academy of Science of Trofim Korneyevich Kichko's "Judaism Without Embellishment" (also rendered as "Judaism Unmasked" and "Judaism in its True Colours") was such an event. The book shocked public opinion by its crude anti-semitism; it was featured in leading articles in prominent newspapers throughout the world, and was sharply condemned by friends as well as opponents of the Soviet Union; it drew unprecedented public censure from Western Communist leaders and the western Communist press to whom it was clearly in profound breach of principle. Anti-semitism arouses disgust and the fact that such a book could appear in the Soviet Union with the imprint of a national scientific institution is bound to pose searching questions. How characteristic is this anti-semitism? What part does it play in official Soviet attitudes to Jews? What are the Soviet authorities doing to combat it?

It has been clear for some time that the growing crisis of Jews in the U.S.S.R. and the discrimination practised against them was leading the Soviet authorities into a direct confrontation with their closest Western supporters. The problem has been festering under the surface for years, periodically breaking out in a rash of guarded criticisms in one or another Communist journal published in France, Belgium, South America, the United States, and elsewhere, and resulting in discreet expulsions, resignations or the silencing of insistent protesters. In Britain, the prominent Jewish Communist and mathematician Hyman Levy was expelled on technical grounds of indiscipline to Party orders after the publication of his pamphlet "Jews and the National Question," which argued that Soviet treatment of the Jewish minority was a mistaken application of Marxist ideology; the Jewish committee of the Party was disbanded and a new one appointed on account of the obstinately critical stand the committee had adopted; in Canada, the Communist leader J. B. Salsberg resigned after a visit to the U.S.S.R. and conversations with Mr. Khrushchev, Mr. Suslov and other prominent Soviet officials; Dr. Chaim Sloves, a Yiddish playwright and member of the French Communist Party, sought unavailingly to publish in France his disquieting impressions of a fact-finding visit to the Soviet Union, which eventually appeared about a year later in a pro-Communist Yiddish journal *Yiddish Kultur*, published in New York. The editors of the two leading

Jewish Communist newspapers in the West, the Paris *Naie Presse* and the New York *Morgen Freiheit* have again and again used their columns to plead with the Soviet authorities for restitution of Jewish rights, pleas that were the more moving in that their emotional dilemma was veiled in Aesopian language.

At the same time information about the extent of Jewish disabilities, disturbing indications that it reflected anti-Jewish sentiments in Soviet society, compelled many non-Communist friends and supporters of the U.S.S.R. to intercede privately and publicly with the Soviet leadership. They could no longer be deflected by arguments that "warriors of the Cold War" had invented the Jewish problem, that, on the contrary, Soviet Jews were free, equal and happy and indignantly repudiated the slanders that they suffered discrimination as a nationality; the facts were self-evident—Jewish culture impoverished, Judaism persecuted, Jews executed as scapegoats for corruption in the Soviet economy, voluminous anti-Jewish publicity in the press, etc.

But strong reluctance to believe that anti-semitism is an active force in the U.S.S.R. remains despite the incidence of racist publications, acts of violence against Jews and outbreaks of primitive superstition in which Jews have been accused of the ritual drinking of human blood. As the playwright Arthur Miller recently wrote in his article "On Obliterating the Jews" (*New Leader*, March 16, 1964): "In the present case, the disabilities, the contempt and the mockery laid upon the Jews, are carried on by people who are the heirs of a long Socialist tradition which, whatever its twists and turns, consistently branded anti-semitism, like racism and chauvinism, as a weapon of reaction." Now the publication of "Judaism Without Embellishment," complete with its ugly drawings of stereotypical "Jews," brings us unavoidably face-to-face with the question of anti-semitism in the U.S.S.R. For no tract of this kind can be published anywhere, least of all in the Soviet Union, without the collaboration of a number of people—in this case, the directors of the Ukrainian Academy of Science, the editors of its publications department, the authors of the book's preface, the printers, proof-readers, binders, booksellers, etc. All of these are concerned in some degree in the preparing, handling and marketing of the book and have, therefore, approved or condoned its publication.

It is reasonable then to assume that many of these people accepted the statements about Jews contained in the book (extracts of which appear below) as justified and could see no valid objection to its illustrations. The more executive their role in the production of "Judaism Without Embellishment," the more one can assume their endorsement of its character. The question that arises from this is (a) is the publication an isolated one and (b) are the people involved exceptional? It will be shown here that "Judaism Without Embellishment," far from being a singular aberration, is an example of a specific *genre* in Soviet propaganda against Judaism which finds expression in books and newspapers. Also, enough is known, or can be inferred,

of the attitudes towards Jews in the Soviet Union to show that Kichko, the author, and his associates at the Ukrainian Academy of Science are not exceptional in Soviet society, and that the influence of the views they express is far from negligible.

Official Recommendation for Anti-Semitic Book

A charitable interpretation of statements by some Soviet spokesmen who energetically repudiate the existence of Soviet anti-semitism—and, in fact, of any kind of discrimination against Jews in their country—is that they do not know what is going on, and are not authorised to conduct a proper investigation into the charges. This might explain the astonishing blunder contained in the repudiation of the Kichko book by the Ideological Commission attached to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, published in *Pravda* on April 4, 1964.

This document makes reference to a number of “useful publications” issued in recent years, such as “the popular text-book, ‘Talks on Religion and Knowledge’, the course of ‘Popular Lecturers on Atheism’, the reader ‘On Religion’, the collection of works ‘Thoughts on Religion’, the books, A. Osipov’s *Catechism Without Embellishment*,” etc. But have the members of the Ideological Commission taken the trouble to read any of the works to which they are giving official endorsement? For A. Osipov’s “*Catechism Without Embellishment*” (Moscow State Publishing House for Political Literature, 1963) is the last book to recommend for its “scientific standard.” Written by a former priest who is now a contributor to *Izvestia*, a television lecturer and one of the Soviet Union’s leading writers on atheism, the Osipov book is even more perniciously anti-semitic than that of Kichko. It is published not in 12,000 copies, like “*Judaism Without Embellishment*,” but in 105,000, and is in Russian, a language far more widely spoken than Ukrainian. Compared to the crudity of Osipov’s anti-semitism, even Kichko’s style is preferable, as the following extracts from “*Catechism Without Embellishment*” show:

p. 276: “Where Jews are concerned, the principal blood-sucker turns out to be God himself . . .”

p. 281: “The first thing we come across is the preaching of intolerance, the bloody extermination of people of other faiths the land of which the Jews themselves prepared to seize . . . God recommends real racial discrimination to the Jews, the very same discrimination which is now branded and cursed by all the world’s progressive people and nations. The very same discrimination for which the Jews paid such a high price in the black days of Fascism when about seven million of them were exterminated. But in the Bible God himself promises the Jews he’ll cast out and destroy other nations, and advises them not to associate with, nor become related to, them and to outrage their religions.”

The Jewish religion, Osipov goes on to explain, is a means of enrich-

ment to synagogues and "greedy, silver-loving" clergy. Surely it can only be ignorance that led the Soviet Communist Party's Ideological Commission to recommend this shoddy and offensive work?

Those who study Soviet propaganda against religion will find that the sentiments quoted from Osipov's "Catechism" have a familiar ring. They are reproduced almost verbatim from an earlier book by the same author "Light Conquers Darkness," published in Murmansk in 1961 (see *Jews in Eastern Europe*, Vol. II, No. 1 of December 1962) in which he also declared that the fifth Commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother" teaches people to do so "for mercenary personal profit..." and where there is pornographic gossip about the sex-lives of Biblical prophets and kings.

More influential than both Osipov and Kichko is the 18th century materialist Baron Holbach, whose "A Gallery of Saints" was republished in 1962 in a Russian edition of 175,000 copies by "Gospolitizdat," the Government Publishing House for Political Literature. The 50 pages which the book devotes to Jews are a compendium of the anti-semitic legends of Holbach's time written, according to the pro-Communist New York journal *Jewish Currents*, "with a very unphilosophical crudity, vehemence and exaggeration in an age in which unbelievers had not yet ceased to be surprised at their own unbelief. We cannot understand why such a book should be published today for general use." Since its publication, "A Gallery of Saints" has been in constant demand as a source book on Judaism by many Soviet atheistic lecturers and writers, who give additional circulation to Holbach's teaching that the Jews "always were enemies of the human species" and were "prescribed cruelty, inhumanity, intolerance, thievery, treason, perfidy."

No less offensive because it employs intimidated elderly Jews as puppet spokesmen, was the publication in October, 1961 of a 60-page booklet, "Towards a Bright Path," by the Kishinev State Publishing House. The novelty here is that the booklet bears the name of a Jewish editor, D. Roitman, and puts the anti-semitic sentiments into the mouths of aged Jewish believers, whose synagogues have been closed down by the authorities and who were then made to abjure their faith in letters extorted from them for publication in the Soviet press. Thus the elderly Rabbi Goligorski, of Tiraspol, is quoted as writing that "the Torah does not preach peace but . . . pushes its adherents towards atrocious bestialities"; the former chairman of the Tiraspol Jewish community, Ovsei Volfovitch Spektor, more than 90-years-old, was made to confess to "unseemly transactions" carried out "within the synagogue walls"; an elderly cantor whose synagogue at Orgeev had been closed reports "loathsome actions of the synagogue leaders," and so-on. It must be assumed that the authorities responsible thought that they were protecting themselves against suspicion of anti-semitism by putting their anti-Jewish propaganda into the mouths of these aged and persecuted Jewish believers.

The Ideological Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party has also overlooked the earlier writings of the author of "Judaism Without Embellishment." In Kiev, 1957, the Ukrainian Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge published in the Ukrainian language in 39,700 copies a 48 pp. textbook by Kichko entitled "The Jewish Religion, its Origins and Character." The publication has no scientific validity whatsoever, but merely uses Judaism as a pretext for crude allegations against Israel, Zionism and the Jewish people. Judaism, it says, "has always served, by the nature of its creed, the plundering policy of capitalism . . . Jewish clergy have thereby actively assisted the foreign imperialists . . . Judaism has pitched the Jews against other nations . . . Zionist leaders (were) collaborators with Hitler in his crimes against the world," etc.

Then there is the anti-semitic article by Kichko which appeared in *Voyovnichy Ateist*, the Kiev atheistic monthly, in December, 1962 to which attention was drawn in our last newsletter (*Jews in Eastern Europe*, Vol. II, No. 4 of February 1964). Under the title "What Do Jewish Ethics Teach," Kichko told Ukrainian readers that the teachings of Judaism "are permeated by a hatred toward work and scorn of the working man"; that its religious teachings were filled "not with the concept of work, but with a narrow practicality, how to make profit, love of money and the spirit of egotism"; that "the entire Jewish cult is business translated into the language of religion"; that a Jew's "secular cult" is business and his "secular god" money; that the Jews were excited to "venomous hatred against all other nations" and were taught to be "cruel and bloody misanthropes," etc.

For Whom Are They Writing ?

These few examples are sufficient to show that Soviet spokesmen are mistaken when they explain away "Judaism Without Embellishment" as an isolated indiscretion, or when it is argued that anti-semitism may unfortunately occur in an Ukrainian book by an Ukrainian author but could not exist elsewhere in the U.S.S.R. It occurs, in fact, as far north as Murmansk, is found in Lithuania, Latvia, Moldavia, Central Asia and many other parts of the Soviet Union, and occurs most frequently of all perhaps in the capital, Moscow, itself. It is published by State publishing houses for politics, science and culture, as well as by atheistic magazines and newspapers; has even been found in official organs of the Soviet Communist Party (see for example, the "Jews drink Moslem blood" story in *Kommunist*, party newspaper in Buinaksk, Dagestan, August 9, 1960). The numbers of people involved in the dissemination of anti-semitic propaganda—writers, editors, boards of management, party functionaries, printers, proof-readers, etc.—is therefore seen to be a notable cross-section of Soviet society and certainly does not justify the complacent reassurance that there is nothing to worry about.

At this stage, one is bound to examine the motives of those responsible for this propaganda. It has been—surely naively—suggested that the writers

and publishers of "Judaism Without Embellishment" and other anti-Judaic works, were mainly exercising their right to make propaganda for atheism, even though there were grounds for criticism of the way they did so. But whom are they hoping to convince that Jews are taught "the bloody extermination of peoples of other faiths", that "God recommends real racial discrimination to the Jews" and that the Jews' "secular god" is money? Surely not the Jews themselves, who will immediately recognise such things for what they are. These writings will not convert one single Jewish believer to unbelief, nor confirm one Jewish atheist in his non-belief.

It is clear that such books, pamphlets and articles are no more written for Jews than were "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" and the race-theories of the Nazi philosopher Rosenberg; they were written to nourish the prejudices of existing anti-semites and to engender hatred of Jews among those still free of it.

It must be evident that anti-semitic literature cannot exist in a controlled society unless there are factors in that society to which it is related. In the extreme instance of Nazi Germany, where anti-semitism was part of the basic ideology of the state, the organs of mass-opinion allocated a great deal of resources to its dissemination and used systematic methods of indoctrination in schools, universities and by means of institutes of "racial science" to obtain the quiescence of the population to the destruction of Jews.

In the Soviet Union there is, of course, no ideology of race but the very reverse, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government being fully committed to a philosophy of respect for peoples regardless of ethnic origin or colour. It would be unjustifiable, therefore, to assume on the basis of such publications as are listed above that the U.S.S.R. is governed by an anti-semitic regime or that hatred of Jews is compatible with the ideas of Communism. In fact, the deeply shocked reaction to "Judaism Without Embellishment", which has been compared to the literature published by the Nazi journal *Der Stuermer*, makes it necessary to reject irresponsible analogies between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. What then are the factors which licence the functions of an Osipov or a Kichko?

Communist theory, evolving under the influence of 19th century social conditions, has regarded the Jews as an anomaly among nations and looked to assimilation or, as it is officially termed, "integration" to "correct" the situation. This theory became doctrinal in the standard work on the national question, written some 50 years ago by Joseph Stalin and still accepted by Soviet ideologues. As a result, hostility developed to the existence of group Jewish identity with its international affiliations, and this became intensified during the long years of isolation when Soviet contacts with the outside world were confined to a minimum. (Even today, when Soviet isolation has been ended, Jews are still quarantined from contacts with Jewish communities outside the U.S.S.R., including those in other Communist States).

It has proved exceedingly difficult to compartmentalise this hostility. Under Stalin, it led to a situation in which Jews were suspected of group loyalties incompatible with loyalty to Soviet communism and thence inevitably, to an undifferentiated persecution of Jews. The war, Nazi occupation and the last years of Stalinism reactivated traditional anti-semitism. But they also strengthened the Jewish sense of common interests and common identity and this has led to the Soviet authorities to persist in the Stalinist policy of enforcing assimilation on Soviet Jews by denying them the instruments of Jewish national life and culture.

Although anti-semitic propaganda is a by-product of this situation and not a matter of deliberate policy, the same cannot be said for the considerable volume of anti-Jewish material that is featured in the Soviet press. Soviet policy has determined that there should be attacks on Judaism and synagogues, on Israel and Zionism, and on "vestiges of the past" that are said to exist among Jews. The distinction between legitimate political criticism and crude anti-Jewish prejudice is seldom observed and depends to some extent on the skill or malice exercised by the writer, but is predominantly the result of the attitude of the Soviet security services, who choose to foster the impression among the Soviet public that Jews are somehow alien to the values of their society. In the climate this creates it should surprise no-one, least of all the Soviet authorities, that ingrained anti-semites find a convenient cover for their activities in books or articles that purport only to attack Judaism, economic offenders or Israeli "machinations."

How this affects the general population is not fully known. The Soviet authorities officially deny the existence of anti-semitism, or dismiss it as negligible. They do nothing, therefore, to investigate it, nor do they conduct public education against it. But, quite apart from the publication of "Judaism Without Embellishment" and similar books, enough is known to discount this complacency. Synagogues have been stoned and set on fire; police have arrested Jews on the mediaevalist suspicion of using blood of non-Jewish children in religious rituals; militia have broken up prayer-meetings of elderly Jews with brutality; respected Soviet intellectuals have expressed their disquiet over the existence of anti-semitism in Soviet society. Kichko's book has inadvertently focussed world attention on the fact that such things exist in the U.S.S.R. It will have performed a paradoxically valuable service if it alerts the Soviet authorities to the activities of anti-semites and the danger of unchecked anti-Jewish propaganda both to the Jewish people and the Soviet Union itself. The logic of the event is that an educational programme on a nation-wide scale is needed to combat this racial prejudice.

But no fundamental improvement is possible until the supervision of "Jewish affairs" is taken out of the hands of the Soviet security forces, the K.G.B., which in itself tends to set the Jewish minority apart from others. Although the fact of this supervision is not officially acknowledged, it is known to exist as a continuation of an old Russian tradition. In Tsarist times,

when the Jews were regarded as a foreign element, the Tsar's secret police, the Okhrana, was responsible for their supervision and frequently organised scapegoat pogroms against Jewish communities. Under constant suspicion as of dubious loyalty, in the first World War tens of thousands of Jews were driven from their homes in frontier regions by the Okhrana. In Stalinist Russia, the N.K.V.D. performed a similar function in its prosecution of the campaign against "Jewish cosmopolitans." The Soviet secret police under Beria became a bastion of anti-semitism and thousands of its officials are now functioning once again the K.G.B., performing their traditional role of "keeping an eye on the Jews."

Informed people regard the role of the K.G.B. as the most significant single factor in the Soviet Jewish problem. There is nothing haphazard about the way the K.G.B. functions. It has important influence in the Government and Party, initiates press campaigns, controls investigations and prepares prosecutions. The prominence of Jews in trials of speculators has been specially noted since the K.G.B. took over responsibility for prosecutions from the Soviet economic police. As long as the K.G.B. remains active in Soviet policy towards Jews there will still be scope for hidden anti-semitism in the U.S.S.R.

“JUDAISM WITHOUT EMBELLISHMENT”

EXTRACTS FROM UKRAINIAN SCIENCE ACADEMY'S BOOK

“Judaism Without Embellishment” was published in Kiev in 1963. It's cover shows a “rabbinical” figure, with hooked nose and thick lips, leaning out of a pulpit with a pile of gold coins held in one of its claw-like hands. On page two there is the following legend :

“The author of the book reveals to the reader the actual essence of the Jewish religion (Judaism)—one of the ancient religions of the world, which has collected within itself and condensed everything that is most reactionary and anti-humane in the writings of contemporary religions.

“The book contains many instances showing how honourable Jews are definitively breaking away from the Torah and Talmud, because they have come to understand that these are a means for insidious deception of the faithful.

“The book is intended for a wide circle of readers.”

The names of the author and his associates are then given, as follows :

Kichko Trofim Korneyevich

Judaism Without Embellishment

(in the Ukrainian Language)

Editor: V. S. Chumachenko

Artistic Editor: V. M. Teplyakov

Designed by artist M. O. Savchenko

Corrected by I. D. Alekseyeva

Technical Editor: N. S. Krylovs'ka

Published by Publishing House of Acad. Sci. UKSSR. L'viv. Stefanyka, 11.



During the years of the Hitlerite occupation, the Zionist leaders served the Fascists

(One of the most blatantly anti-Semitic cartoons ever to have appeared in the USSR.)

"Taking seven-mile steps toward the achievable heights of communism, we cannot tolerate remnants of the past which have still remained in the consciousness of some people . . ." the foreword declares.

"Among the other religions which obscure the consciousness of the workers, not the least is Judaism. As is known from history, it always served the interests of the wealthy classes, using them to distract the attention of poverty-stricken Jews from struggling against social injustice. In recent times Judaism has acquired particularly reactionary colouration after the establishment of the state of Israel, where it was proclaimed the official religion.



Bonn-Gurion

(The document reads: "An agreement to supply arms to the Bundeswehr." "Bonn-Gurion" is an accepted Ukrainian way of referring snidely to the alleged military alliance between Israel's former Premier Ben Gurion and West Germany. The ghost of Auschwitz is trying to stay Ben Gurion's hand.)

"Deceived by the enticing promises of bourgeois agitators, people from seventy-four countries assembled there. Although all are Jewish by descent, they have nothing in common except the Jewish religion; they speak the languages of the people among whom they have lived for ages and whose culture they have assimilated; they have different customs and tastes. Therefore, the Israeli government, more than any other, is assisting the flowering of religious obscurantism in every possible way, with the hope that it will aid in uniting the different groups of immigrants into 'one' nation. On this platform Judaism is not only closely tied to Zionism, but is, so to speak, the trump card in the dirty game being played by the Israeli bourgeois poli-



**The Ensnaring Nets of Judaism
Are Being Torn Up**



**Profiteering Near the Ark of the
Law**

(The words "Ark of the Law" are rendered in mocking, scornful Ukrainian transliteration of the Yiddish expression, Oren Koy-desh.)



**The Jewish Child-Buyers—
Enemies of Youth**

(Caricature heading a chapter claiming that religious Jews ensnare youth into religion by offering bribes.)



**Torah and Talmud—The Webs of
Obscurantism**

ticians who are trying to ensnare the greatest possible number of faithful common people: after all, the new capitalistic state needs cheap labour; it needs soldiers to accomplish its aggressive military plans.

"Zionism is the Jewish bourgeois-nationalist movement which arose at the end of the last century and today continues to play its evil reactionary role in the life of the Jewish people . . .

"In revealing the reactionary essence of the Jewish religion, the author shows the counter-revolutionary and anti-Soviet activities of the Jewish clergy in the past. The book divulges how representatives of the clergy served as informers for the Tsarist Okhrana, for which they were highly rewarded; it tells how rabbis justified the brutal exploitation, supported oppressors and thus strengthened the autocratic rulers, while opposing workers disposed to revolution and opposing the dissemination of the socialist idea among poverty-stricken Jews . . .

"However, even in our times the servants of Judaism preach reactionary anti-scientific sermons to their faithful, they cultivate superstitions and prejudices, contrary to the interests of the Soviet people who are building communism.

"There is no doubt but that the profound and substantial work by T. K. Kichko, which contains a tremendous amount of factual material, conscientiously and scientifically analysed, will be a valuable manual for propagandists of atheism in their daily work and will assist wide circles of readers in appraising questions regarding the Jewish religion."

(Signed) Doctor of Historical Sciences,
Prof. A. Vvedens'ky.
Writer Grigori Plotkin.

Some characteristic quotations are given below:

On the Mishna

Page 34—"The Mishna consists of 6 chapters according to thematic principles. The chapters are divided into 63 treatises, the treatises into chapters, and the chapters into separate verses, or paragraphs. The most important part of the Mishna is the Abot (declarations of the fathers), or a treatise 'concerning principles.' The texts here, just as in other treatises, are written in a religio-nationalistic spirit . . .

"Quite characteristic is the interpretation of the Decalogue—the Ten Commandments of the Bible: You may not steal from or cause any other damage to your khavers only (neighbours), i.e., the Jews. As to how this applies to "goys," to those of different religions, the Jews are free to take from them, because, as Judaism teaches: 'Jehovah delivered all of the wealth of non-Jews to the use of the Jews. If the Jews did not take everything into their hands, it was because in doing so they would have been deprived of many productive forces with the help of which the Jews profit from non-Jewish peoples without exerting any particular effort."

On the Talmud

Page 37—"In humiliating working people, the Talmud at the same time glorifies persons of wealth; in downgrading agriculture, it praises trade and usury. According to the Talmud, even the prophet Moses made a fortune through trade machinations which he practiced by speculating with community property. 'Moses grew rich by selling pieces of sapphire which broke off during the cutting of the stones for the Ten Commandments', says the Talmud.

"The Talmud morally corrupts people, instilling in them the spirit of commerce and extortion. An example of practitioners of extortion are the priests themselves, the teachers of the law—the rabbis, who supervise adherence to the religious prescriptions which permit common people (am ha-aretz) 'to be cleaned like fish'."

Page 40—"The Talmud is saturated with contempt for work and for the common people, 'am ha-aretz' . . . The Talmud takes an especially negative position toward the work of peasants . . ."

Page 61—"The Talmud sanctified and continues to sanctify dividing people into masters and slaves: it developed the legislation for the caste system; it divided people into distinguished persons and common people who were limited in their rights. The Talmud implants the thought that poverty is supposedly a method of obtaining a better fate in heaven, in the other world, and to cast off poverty—is a sin.

"In the hands of the rabbis, these ideas are the chief spiritual weapon with whose help even today reactionary ideas are propagated, nationalistic



Ben Gurion At Work

(Ben Gurion shown erasing the word "not" from the Commandments, "Thou shalt not lie," "Thou shalt not commit murder," "Thou shalt not steal.")

illusions are implanted about the exclusiveness and God-like image of the Jewish people—which in essence supports an ideology inimical to our people.”

Jews and Money

Pages 86-87—“Judaism considers a person to be moral if, not working for the good of society, he devotes all of his free time to prayer and to the performance of religious rites. For Judaism, not work but prayer is the highest manifestation of morality. Furthermore, all of Judaic ideology is impregnated with narrow practicality, with greed, the love of money, and the spirit of egoism.

“What is the temporal basis of Judaism?—wrote K. Marx. ‘Practical necessity, self-interest. What is the temporal cult of the Jew? Commerce. Who is his temporal God? Money. What was the actual basis of the Jewish religion? Practical needs, egoism. The God of practical need and self-interest—is money. Money—is the jealous god of Israel before whose face there must not be any other god.’

“The entire Judaic cult—is the translation of trade and commerce into religious language. The sale of matzah, the auction of chapter-readings of the Torah (“aliye”), burial rites, circumcision, marriage and divorce—in all of these money is of prime importance, as is contempt for productive work.”

Jews Taught “False Witness” and “Dishonesty”

Pages 91-92—“The Jews like to talk a great deal about the Commandment which forbids them to bear false witness. However, when the



God destroyed all the first-born of Egypt

(Illustration of reference in the text to the bloodthirst of the Jewish God.)



No, Not From the Rib is Woman

(Illustration for chapter dealing with the alleged debasement of women in Judiasm.)



The Zionist Lies

(Caricature of the Jewish capitalist-imperialist and the religious Jew. Judaism is thus presented as subversive — a charge never made against other religions in the USSR.)



All sorts of swindlers and cheats find refuge in the synagogue

(A Stuermer-type Jew wearing phylactery—a religious article used by Jews at morning prayer—grabbing synagogue funds.)



Opium for Some—Pocket Money for Others

(Another Stuermer-type caricature of the religious Jew wearing a religious cap and a prayer shawl.)

welfare of a Jew is in question, false witnessing and even false oaths are permissible . . . While giving a false oath, it is only necessary, the 'Holy Scripture' teaches, to negate the oath in the heart and soul, and therefore the oath is meaningless. But this must be done in such a manner 'that the glory of the name of the God of Israel, the honour and worth of the Jewish religion and the people of Israel do not suffer.'

"One of the Commandments of Judaism is 'do not steal.' However, as the 'Koshen Mishpat' interprets, it is only from Khavers (i.e., from your Jewish neighbours) that you must not steal. But you can steal everything from others, because, as it is written in the 'Sacred Scriptures', Jehovah handed over to the Hebrews all the wealth of non-Jews. If the Jews did not take everything into their own hands, it was because they did not want to lose the labour power of non-Jewish workers. Moreover, Judaism teaches the believer that his exclusive purpose is to study the Torah, and if the Jews always engaged themselves only in studying the law of Moses, then God would force other people to work for them.

"Although the commandments of Judaism teach not to steal, nevertheless in many places of the Old Testament recommendations are made for the people to resort to common theft."



The Rabbis' Vengeance on Opponents



Their Heavenly Guardian
Jehovah

Page 93—"The ethics of Judaism do not condemn such disgraceful actions as hypocrisy and bribery. The well-known commentator on the Talmud, Rashi, teaches: 'Based on Biblical teachings, the Jew at the very outset must work with bribery in order to tempt his enemy, and in other cases he must resort to a variety of artifices.'"

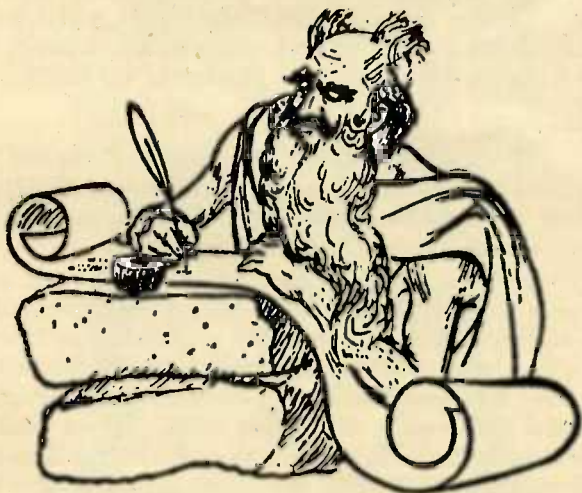
Synagogues and Speculation

Page 96—"Speculation in matzah, pigs, thievery, deception, debauchery—these are the real characteristics of many synagogue leaders. Shrewd operators convert the synagogues from religion into their own personal feeding-grounds; they make free with the contributions of the believers, and become wealthy from them."

Passover "Harmful"

Page 135—"Under modern conditions the Passover holiday harms us in a great number of ways, through engendering disrespect for work and fostering elements of nationalism among the Jewish workers. In celebrating the Passover the believers do not go to work for several days; thus they hinder production plans and violate work discipline.

"The celebration of the Passover is especially harmful because the entire Passover legend, all the prayers, orient the believing Jews toward returning



I died in the Land of Moab
and no one knows where I
am buried

(A mocking reference to
Moses, to whom Jewish tradi-
tion attributes authorship of
the Pentateuch — including
the final portion which relates
his death.)

to Israel which is now the centre of Judaism and Zionism. The Passover prayers urge the believing Jews 'May God grant that we meet in Jerusalem next year.' Invitations summon the Jews to move to Israel where they—free workers of our country—will become slaves, will become cannon-fodder for Ben-Gurion's clique and for his imperialistic masters."

"Cosmopolitan" "Anti-Patriotic"

Page 143—"Foreign Judaists, together with Zionists, are attempting in every possible way to activate nationalistic propaganda among the believers in our country . . .

"The Israeli Zionists are openly striving to use Judaism for the activation of Zionism, are trying to incline believing Jews toward a useless expectation of a fictional Messiah, toward cosmopolitanism and anti-patriotism, and are trying to divert the believing Jews of our country from the cause of building communism."

"Contempt and Hatred" for Others

Page 144—"The cruel rite of circumcision has been filled with a reactionary meaning by the Jewish religion. It proclaimed circumcision as a unique mark of Jewish nationalism itself; in other words, it endowed it with a clearly expressed religious-nationalistic character. It is not difficult to substantiate the latter again by texts from the Bible. Acquiring a mark of belonging to 'their own people', to the Jews, a mark which would simultaneously inoculate them with contempt and even hatred toward those who do not possess this rite—this is the basic meaning of the rite."

Jews and Zionism

Pages 171-172—"Taking advantage of the legends of the Old Testament, the Jewish capitalists and their ideological parasites—the Zionists—together with the rabbis in Israel, kindle religious-nationalistic passions, and incite the Jews against other peoples who inhabit Palestine . . .

"A union between the financial oligarchy of the West and Zionism has been in existence for several decades. As is known, the English and American monopolists subjugated Zionism when it first appeared, when it only dreamed of creating a bourgeois Jewish state in Palestine. Long before the Second World War, after the reorganisation in 1929 of the executive committee of the International Organisation of Zionists which began to call itself the Jewish Agency, the Rothschilds, Jewish bankers, backed the Zionist organisation in England. They also financed the French Zionists. Oskar Wasserman became the supporter of the Jewish Agency in Germany; he was the director of the German bank which at one time controlled the concession for constructing the Baghdad railroad. All of these Zionist businessmen invested their capital in Palestine with the aim of obtaining colonial gains at the expense of the Jewish as well as Arab population.

"American bankers, just like their English, German, and French partners, viewed Zionism as a convenient colonial business. Founding in 1926

the syndicate Palestine Economic Corporation (PEC), the American-Zionist colonisers engaged in creating a modern state of Israel.

"The history of relations between American capital and Zionism cannot be understood if one does not consider the affairs of the billionaire Rothschilds, who for several decades had been attempting to grab a part of Palestine—the Negev desert and its oil deposits. In 1919, immediately after the First World War, an agent of the American Petroleum Combine Standard Oil and a technical employee of the commission for developing American policy for Palestine, declared that although England would obtain a mandate in Palestine, with the help of Zionists the U.S.A. would actually rule there.

"And that is what happened. After World War II the Zionists in Palestine discontinued recognising the supremacy of English imperialism, while the Rockefellers became strongly entrenched. At the present time, Israel, and its Zionism and Judaism, is considered as its outpost by the American imperialists, as a reserve cannon for bombarding the Arab world."



The swindlers in religious articles brawl among themselves over the division of the spoils in the synagogue

(Speculation in matzoh, pigs, thievery, deception and debauchery are portrayed as the real characteristics of many synagogue leaders.)

WORLD REACTION—SOVIET CONFUSION

WESTERN COMMUNISTS JOIN IN PROTESTS

On February 24, 1964 the first copy of "Judaism Without Embellishment" to be publicly seen in the West was shown to a press-conference in New York by Morris B. Abram, president of the American Jewish Committee. The reaction was one of incredulity. The cartoons were so offensive that some people found it difficult to believe that they would be permitted in an officially-sponsored Soviet publication and were inclined to treat their authenticity with caution. There were behind-the-scenes attempts to obtain confirmation or denial from Soviet quarters in America without success. At that stage, Soviet officials took refuge in silence and the American press did little more than note the existence of the book or refrained from mentioning it altogether.

Almost three weeks later, on March 14, 1964, a copy of the book was shown in a Swedish television news broadcast. It aroused an immediate storm of protest in the Swedish press. "Not since the time of the disgusting Jew-baiter Julius Streicher has anything comparable been published, in words or pictures," wrote Olof Starkenberg, foreign editor of the Liberal newspaper *Expressen*. "Only the Nazis were so vulgar," said the Social-Democratic newspaper, *Aftonbladet*, in an editorial. "Protests from abroad are unavoidable and must not cease," said another editorial in the leading Liberal daily, *Dagens Nyheter*. Journalist Tore Zetterholm, writing in *TV-Aktuellt* on March 15, 1964, said: "It is racist propaganda of the coarsest kind . . . When I was in the U.S.S.R. a month ago I asked members of the Russian Peace Committee, our hosts, what truth there was in charges of anti-semitism in the U.S.S.R. They categorically denied its existence . . . I preferred to believe my Soviet friends. But this book is undoubtedly a revolting thing and I can hardly believe that it is a forgery."

The day after the book was shown on Swedish television, March 15, a Soviet spokesman in New York finally admitted its authenticity. He was Professor Pioter Nedbailo, the Ukrainian representative in the U.N. Human Rights Commission, who acknowledged that "Judaism Without Embellishment" had been published by the Ukrainian Academy of Science but denied that the book and its cartoons were anti-semitic. Referring to the cartoon of a "Jew" bending to lick a Nazi boot, Professor Nedbailo argued that the picture "refers to Dr. Kastner who was a Quisling . . . We all had our Quislings—there were Ukrainian Quislings and Jewish Quislings. This shows a Jewish Quisling." He made no comment about other cartoons, and the improvised nature of his interpretation is shown by the fact that there is no reference of any kind to Kastner in the book. The Austrian representative

on the Human Rights Commission, Felix Ermacora, said it reminded him "of the Nazi occupation of Austria."

On March 22, 1964 Edward Crankshaw wrote in the London *Observer*: "Anybody who still believes Mr. Khrushchev when he insists that there is no such thing as anti-semitism in the Soviet Union would have his faith shaken . . . by a small book recently published in Kiev under the auspices of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. This book . . . is a vicious and scurrilous attack on Judaism illustrated by cartoons which might have been taken straight from the pages of anti-semitic journals published in the heyday of Nazism . . . deliberately calculated to exacerbate anti-Jewish opinion . . . This sort of thing has been written and published in all countries. But only in Nazi Germany, and now in Soviet Russia, has it been given the seal of official approval and the imprimatur of a State publishing house."

The volume of protest escalated as "Judaism Without Embellishment" was discussed by leading newspapers throughout the world. But the Soviet authorities, besieged by requests for an explanation, still maintained a stolid silence.

On March 22, 1964 the New York Yiddish Communist daily, *Morgen Freiheit*, disclosed in a full-page editorial that three weeks earlier—on March 1—it had cabled its Moscow correspondent, Solomon Rabinovitch, "to investigate reports regarding a book or pamphlet published in Kiev entitled 'Judaism Without Embellishment'. In a second cable we asked for a copy of the book." No reply had been received, the newspaper reported. "We regret it. Our correspondent in the Novosti Press Agency owes us an explanation about that." Confirmation of the book's authenticity, *Morgen Freiheit* went on, had since come from the Ukrainian delegate at the U.N., Pioter Nedbailo, but "his interpretations cannot be accepted." The caricatures in the book "it must be stated openly" were "reminiscent of the well-known caricatures of Jews in anti-semitic publications."

For the sake of that candour necessary "if one wants genuinely friendly relations between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.", the newspaper declared that "criminals of an anti-semitic type" existed among "remnants of the past" in the Soviet Union. It cited the publication of Holbach's "A Gallery of Saints" as an example of the machinations of such "criminals," called for an educational campaign against them "coupled with a drive to exterminate them, to mete out punishment for anti-semitic expressions or action."

Having dealt with the specific question of anti-semitism, *Morgen Freiheit* then discussed general Soviet Jewish grievances in plainer terms than ever before. People in the United States, particularly Jews, were deeply disturbed not only about the Kichko cartoons but also about the failure of the authorities to allow religious Jews the right to be supplied with Passover unleavened bread. "*It will surely be a serious mistake to dismiss all these with the argument that it is merely cold war propaganda.*" (my italics—Editor,

Jews In Eastern Europe). The blunders in the anti-religion drive as well as—or even more so—the serious errors in the restoration of the Jewish cultural institutions destroyed during the Stalin cult (more correctly, the non-restoration of these institutions) are matters that disturb many honest people, friends of the Soviet Union,” the newspaper declared, citing “Lord Russell and Dr. Linus Pauling, and many others who point out these blunders.”

On the same page as the above, *Morgen Freiheit* published a statement by the American Communist Party leader, Gus Hall, under the heading: “Gus Hall Condemns Book’s Cartoons As Anti-Semitic.” This said that because of “a number of enquiries, a reporter for *The Worker* asked Gus Hall if he had any comments “about the Kichko book. Mr. Hall replied: “I have not read or seen the pamphlet. I have seen only reproductions of portions of it in papers and magazines. Nor do I have any way of knowing whether the copies circulating in this country are forgeries or not. There is no doubt in my mind, however, about the anti-semitic character of what I have seen. Such stereotyped, slanderous caricatures of the Jewish people must be unequivocally condemned, whatever their source. And certainly they can have no place whatever in Communist or progressive literature. No matter what the intention of the artist who drew them, such stereotypes have a very specific, unquestionable anti-semitic meaning, and their use has exactly the same effect as when it is engaged in by those imbued with and motivated by the crassest anti-semitism. Such a pamphlet is, moreover, a gross distortion of the actual position of the Soviet Union . . .” The same statement was also published in the American Communist Party organ, *The Worker*.

“How Was It Possible?”

A week later—March 29, 1964—the editor of *Morgen Freiheit* Paul Novick, one of the foremost Jewish intellectuals in the Communist movement, wrote an analysis of the Jewish situation in the U.S.S.R. under the heading: “Discussing the Question, How Was it Possible?” This question, he said, arose in the minds of people as a result of “the sad story” of the Kichko publication. “Anti-Soviet elements” for whom the Soviet Union was “the embodiment of all evil” had a simple answer—it was an anti-semitic country. Because of the noise created by such elements, Novick explained, friends of the Soviet Union had reacted by denying everything. He excuses this attitude on the grounds that it arose because of the activities of “the anti-Soviet fabrication industry” and because “there were bright sides, great historic achievements (during the Stalin period) as was admitted by a serious analyst, Edward Crankshaw, in the *New York Times*.” In the circumstances, “friends of the Soviet Union . . . being unaware of the crimes and rejecting fabrications, had no desire and were not ready to pose questions about things that appeared incomprehensible and disturbing.”

This situation ended in 1956, Novick said, after the exposure of Stalin’s crimes when people told themselves that friendship for the Soviet Union

should not rule out the right to criticise. But after 1956-57 people reverted to their former positions and "the case of the Kiev book should make it clear, once and for all, that such an approach is incorrect." Cold warriors would continue to exploit the matter but "not all who ask questions, come forward with arguments, are cold war people. They may even be principled opponents, but . . . not fabricators and cold warriors."

The writer goes on to explain that "the cry 'Soviet anti-semitism' is a calumny because the two ideas, 'Soviet' and 'anti-semitism' definitely exclude one another," but there were the remnants of Tsarism, of fascist and pro-fascist regimes, of the Nazi occupation and of the Stalin period. It was perhaps arguable whether "anti-semites had a hand in the Kiev booklet" but there was no doubt that "the atmosphere of the dark period made itself felt there." He criticises the damage caused by ill-conducted religious propaganda which crossed the border of anti-semitism, and those anti-religious writers and cartoonists who forget, "while speaking of propaganda with regard to the Jewish religion that there was a Hitler and a Streicher, that there were six million Jewish victims . . . We speak of one-third of our people that was destroyed only because they were Jews!"

"Why Close Synagogues?"

"The matter concerns not only the Kiev booklet," Novick continues. "That the cartoons in that booklet must be condemned and that the perpetrators thereof must be called to responsibility—that is clear. But this subject must be broadened. What about the book by Paul Heinrich Holbach (1723-1789), published in Moscow in 1962—the book we wrote about? (*Morning Freiheit*, March 17, 1963: 'Anti-religious propaganda and anti-Semitism') . . . This leads to another matter. We recently read in an article by the *Novosty News Agency* that the synagogue in the city of Lvov (Lemberg) was closed down because among its leaders there were discovered some speculators. If the synagogue is necessary because there are still those who like to have it, who need it, then why close it? And suppose a manager of a hotel were caught as a speculator, would that mean that the hotel has to be shut? Of course, speculators should be called to responsibility, but an institution is an institution. And another thing. Recently we printed a letter written by the president of the second largest synagogue in Moscow, Zvi Leib, to the Editors of the *Day Morning Journal*. He exposes the writing of certain 'hands' in their newspaper. Amongst other things, he shows that not only has he not refused to accept prayer-books and prayer shawls, but that he actually asked for prayer books and prayer shawls from friends abroad and he receives such. Very well. But why should not the synagogues have the opportunity to provide the members with prayer books and prayer shawls and Jewish calendars, so that they should not have to get them from abroad as presents?

"The newspaper *Trud* wrote recently that a certain representative of the Israel Embassy distributed a Jewish calendar that contained anti-Soviet

propaganda (and that the calendar did not tell of May First.) Of course, such a calendar should not be distributed. But why should the synagogues not be able to provide their members with calendars? This would have eliminated the ground for the anti-Soviet propagandists, no matter who they are; it would have eliminated the ground for moods about discrimination with regard to the Jewish religion. And this, of course, includes the matter of *matzot*. Until 1962 this was no problem at all. It is difficult to conceive what benefit there is in the tumult raised by the changes. And if there was found a way out—that the synagogues should have their own bakeries, then this certainly should have been done in due time.

“A fair conclusion is, that the issue of the Kiev book should serve as an opportunity for a broad review with regard to many subjects. In such a review the rebuilding of the Soviet Yiddish culture should take a prominent place. And, of course, in the first place there should be put forward the problem of the anti-Semitic remnants. That they are an anti-Soviet element, is quite clear. And nobody certainly will not vouch that they have no connections abroad. The Petlura elements certainly seek to establish ties with somebody. Anti-Semitic aberrations serve their purposes, both there and here, as we have seen . . . It is quite certain that all these incidents, misunderstandings, and crimes, which must be eliminated per se, tend to obscure for many people the historic role of the Soviet Union in the forward march of mankind . . .”

French Opinion Agitated

In the meantime, the Kichko book had aroused agitated feelings among members of the Communist Party in France. Prominent Jewish Communists sought assurances from the Party leadership that representations would be made to Moscow over the affair. “Judaism Without Embellishment” had an explosive effect on the important Jewish section of the French Communist Party, who were already in a state of upheaval over Soviet anti-Jewish activities. Only a few days earlier, on March 6, after a bitter internal discussion, a number of leading Jewish Communists joined the French non-Communist Jewish representative organisation, Crif, in signing a secret letter to Mr. Khrushchev protesting against the Soviet ban on unleavened bread and threatening to make the letter public if no reply was received. This action created some consternation in the European Communist movement. The Jewish section of the party in France was relatively large, (larger—for example—than the entire Communist Party membership in Israel) and noted for its staunch support of the Soviet Union in all circumstances (particularly in its claims that there was “no discrimination” against Soviet Jews). Moreover, their protest to the Soviet Union over Passover unleavened bread, which symbolically reflected the bitter conflict inside the party over the entire situation of Soviet Jews, was an unprecedented action on the part of a Communist body. This crisis was now sharpened by the public disclosure of Communist misgivings about the permissive Soviet attitude to anti-semites

shown in the Ukrainian Scientific Academy's publication of "Judaism Without Embellishment."

On March 16, *Naie Presse*, the Paris Yiddish Communist daily, opened its attack by publishing as a front-page editorial a letter the newspaper had sent to the *Novosty Press Agency*. This urgently requested *Novosty* to "inform us of the whole truth about this pamphlet—whether it actually appeared in Kiev and, if so, what are the views of the Soviet authorities about it and what measures will be taken to ensure that propaganda for free thought should not degenerate into something which is liable to increase anti-semitic attitudes as well as anti-Soviet propaganda." On the following day, *Naie Presse* published another front-page editorial in the form of an answer to "an old subscriber, J. K., who asks us to withhold his name." "J.K." defended the Soviet Union against alleged "propaganda that Jews were being massacred there," but described the Kichko book as a "scandal." His letter concluded: "To be honest, there are certainly anti-semites and idiots in the U.S.S.R., but how is it possible that something like this should have been published and with such irresponsible cartoons? You must do something about it and see that the Soviet Government should punish such deeds." The editorial answer, stripped of its mandatory genuflections to Soviet history, ideology, achievements and so on, was contained in its uncompromising headline: "We Condemn The Pamphlet 'Judaism Without Embellishment'."

L'Humanité Joins In

On March 24, *Naie Presse* announced that it had received a reply from the *Novosty Press Agency* which would be published the next day. No indication was given about the nature of this reply, but that it was unsatisfactory could be inferred from a rather sensational development in the official French Communist newspaper, *L'Humanité*. Also on March 24 when, it can be assumed, the Party leadership had been shown the *Novosty* reply, *L'Humanité* published an editorial note which, in effect, constituted a demand that the Soviet Government withdraw the Kichko book. It did this by calling attention to the fact that the publication had provoked a number of commentaries, "the most serious of which we reproduce." It then reprinted the *Naie Presse* attack and demand that the book be disavowed. As the English newspaper *The Guardian* pointed out on March 25, this was "a traditional device used by Communists to associate themselves with a protest while observing the formal bounds of party discipline."

On the next day—March 25—it was not only regular readers who hurried to open their copy of *Naie Presse*. French and other European Communists, the French national press, Soviet and Communist affairs reporters in many countries, all were curious to know in what terms the *Novosty* agency had replied to the *Naie Presse* editors. In fact, they were not given the precise text, which *Naie Presse* published in paraphrased excerpts. It

was, however, clear that far from condemning the book at this stage the Soviet information service was instructed to defend it, and to argue that people had used it as a pretext to stir up anti-Soviet propaganda. The *Novosty* statement explained that Kichko had exercised his legitimate rights under the Soviet constitution to conduct anti-religious propaganda, just as the constitution "guaranteed the right of religious worship." The only concession to critics in the statement was a comment that Kichko "had not carried out his task in the best way." In characteristic fashion, the Soviet authorities chose to circulate this defence of an anti-semitic book under the signature of a Jew, Chimon Katz.

Naïe Presse rejected the *Novosty* statement as "far from satisfactory." It pointed out that a book of this kind would only irritate religious Jews, not educate them. Its caricatures would appeal to anti-semitic feelings and at the same time serve the purposes of anti-Soviet elements throughout the world. It insisted that "the pamphlet should immediately be withdrawn from circulation as harmful to the U.S.S.R.; that an investigation should be made to discover how it was possible the pamphlet and cartoons could have appeared; that proper measures should be taken to see that such pamphlets would never appear again in the Soviet Union." To underline the point, and demonstrate that this criticism was supported by the leadership of the French Communist Party, *Naïe Presse* carried in its front page a photographic reproduction of the critical article from *L'Humanité* that the latter had itself reproduced from *Naïe Presse*.

So far, the Paris Yiddish Communist newspaper was in the unusual position of being the only recipient of a Soviet statement on the book, for other enquiries had been met with silence. As a result, the editor, M. Vilner, was himself being requested for information by other western journalists. In an interview published in the *New York Times* on March 25, he said: "I have found as much indignation over the book in Communist circles as in Jewish circles." The *Novosty* explanation was "totally inadequate," he added, the only acceptable Soviet response would be an official investigation into the circumstances surrounding the publication, its suppression and the punishment of those responsible for it.

L'Express—"Jews as Scapegoats"

A particularly wide-ranging assessment of "Judaism Without Embellishment" had appeared a few days earlier in the influential Socialist weekly *L'Express* (on March 20). Seldom in its history had *L'Express* published so outspoken a criticism of the Soviet authorities. It said: "Paradoxically, this lampoon has the merit of bringing into broad daylight, and thus impelling a search for a solution to the profound contradiction existing between the Soviet Union's evolution since the 20th Communist Congress and the present situation of Soviet Jewry." Discussing "economic" trials of Jews and the numerous executions, *L'Express* stated: "It looks as if certain Soviet leaders, embroiled as everyone knows in economic difficulties, have picked the tradi-

tional scapegoat—the Jews . . . Over and above that there is the conflict going on ever since the 20th Congress between the demoted secret police and the ordinary force, and scores between the two police forces are manifestly being settled through the classical Jew-hunt. The tactics are plain to see: the K.G.B. secret police is able to make a comeback thanks to economic difficulties and particularly through recourse to 'vigilance' against enemies of the State who are identified with Jews." *L'Express* adds: "Many Soviet leaders are immune or hostile to anti-Semitism, but it remains strong among certain strata of the masses. Kichko's Ukraine furnishes the Stalinists with a particularly fertile field of manoeuvre." In conclusion, the paper notes that various reactions against anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, notably Yevtushenko's appeal to Premier Khrushchev not to deny or ignore the problem of Jew-hatred, "seem to pass unheeded."

By now, the French pro-Communist Left was in ferment. On March 25, *L'Humanité* quoted a communique issued by the "Movement Against Racism and Anti-Semitism" which declared that the book had aroused all the more emotion since it was "notorious" that the Soviet constitution and laws forbid attacks directed against the honour and dignity of any national or ethnic group. The following day it reprinted *Naie Presse's* rejection of the *Novosty* reply. The French Democratic Defence Committee energetically protested against the recrudescence of anti-semitism in the U.S.S.R. The newspaper *Liberation*, on March 26, also published a strong protest pointing out that the *Novosty* explanation that "the author is neither a representative of the Soviet Government nor the spokesman of the opinions of this government" was unacceptable "for anyone who knows Soviet legislation on racism and anti-semitism." The Socialist daily *L'Populaire*, also on March 26, carried an article pointing out that Socialists were not necessarily anti-American when they denounced events in Jacksonville, nor should they be regarded as anti-Soviet for condemning the Kichko book. "I would wish deeply", the writer Claud Fuzier pointed out, "that Mr. Krushchev and the Soviet leaders should be as outspoken in this sorrowful affair as Messrs. Kennedy and Johnson have been in their struggle against racial segregation."

In the next few days more groups from the French Left joined in the protests and besieged the Soviet Embassy in Paris with enquiries. Once again, *L'Humanité* opened its columns to the subject by reprinting criticism of the Soviet Union from various pro-Communist groups. *Liberation* published a powerful editorial which recalled the long history of anti-semitism in the Ukraine. It declared that while the issue would inevitably be exploited by anti-Soviet elements, "there are also some sincere friends of the Soviet Union, we are among them and this is why we claim the right to receive clarification and satisfaction."

Indignation was now being publicly expressed throughout the world and, one after another, Communist spokesmen hurried to join in the protests. In Britain, John Gollan, the Communist Party general secretary, said that

reports of the Kichko book he has seen in the British press "contains material and illustrations capable of being interpreted as anti-semitic." The illustrations reproduced "shocked all those in Britain who have insistently campaigned against anti-semitism. The booklet is said to have been published to explain the Marxist attitude to Judaism and Zionism. While such an aim is perfectly legitimate, it must, of course, be done in a principled way. . . . British Communists would certainly dissociate themselves from the illustrations said to have appeared in the Ukraine publication. I have written to the Soviet Communists on this matter" (*Daily Worker*, March 25, 1964).

Italian Communists Protest

In Italy, the Communist Party newspaper *Paesa Sera* on March 25 wrote in an editorial that no excuse could justify "classically anti-semitic" cartoons whatever the text that accompanied them. It requested that the Soviet authorities withdraw the book on the basis of the laws banning anti-semitism. At the same time, to emphasise its critical position, *Paesa Sera* carried a report from its Moscow correspondent about the denial of unleavened bread to Soviet Jews, pointing out that bureaucratic restrictions in this respect tend to deny the value of Soviet affirmations of religious freedom in the U.S.S.R.

Giancarlo Vigorelli, general secretary of the pro-Soviet European Writers Community, on March 26 cabled the Soviet Writers Union as follows: "Many Italian and foreign writers, deeply shocked and grieved by the anti-semitic libel published by the Ukrainian Academy of Science, protest strongly. I give expression also personally to my sorrow and stupefaction. The European Writers Community await your explanation. More than anything else we ask you to intervene to repair moral, cultural, political damage brought about by such a publication." On March 30, the official Italian Communist newspaper *L'Unita* also openly discussed Soviet anti-semitism, blaming it on Stalin and warning that failure to combat it would damage Soviet prestige throughout the world. "Stalin, particularly in his last years, spread a certain nationalistic and therefore anti-semitic spirit among the people in general but also—and perhaps this counts most—among intellectuals, government officials and even officials of the Communist Party," *L'Unita* wrote.

Other Communist Protests

In Holland, at the annual convention of the Dutch Communist Party, on March 30, president Paul de Groot strongly protested against the anti-semitism of the Kichko book in his opening speech. The Dutch Auschwitz Committee sent a direct protest to the Soviet Government against "anti-semitic measures and publications" in the Soviet Union. In Sweden, Communists protested and public disavowals of Kichko also came from Denmark and Norway. The Stockholm Young Communists published an open letter

to Soviet Young Communists expressing "surprise and protest" at the anti-semitic character of "Judaism Without Embellishment".

During the course of the next few weeks further protests were registered by Communist parties in other countries, and direct representations made to the Soviet Government by Communist and pro-Soviet groups all over the world are too numerous to record. Of some note is the publication in the Canadian Communist newspaper, *The Worker*, of April 21, 1964, of the declaration by the national executive committee of the Communist Party of Canada that "We condemn this booklet as anti-semitic", after the committee had obtained a copy of the book and examined its contents. The statement goes on to say: "We also know that in the march to a new social order of human liberties and justice, remnants of the dark past persist in socialist countries, and must constantly be combatted by science, education, culture and the law. We are confident that the Soviet authorities will take all the necessary measures to bring to task those responsible for the publication of this booklet, and draw the necessary lessons from this episode to strengthen the struggle against remarks of the past."

Another comment worthy of note is that of *Tribune*, organ of the Communist Party in Australia. Some time ago a Mr. Judah Waten published an article in this newspaper which claimed that anti-semitic publications in Soviet newspapers were, in fact, complete forgeries. It suggested that entire copies of alleged Soviet newspapers were faked in the United States and these blatant forgeries were circulated by, among others, the editor of *Jews In Eastern Europe*. Neither the newspaper, nor the author of the article, nor their appointed representatives accepted an offer to inspect copies of these Soviet newspapers to determine for themselves whether they were authentic or not. Rather more belatedly than elsewhere, and more tortuously, the Australian Communist Party organ finally published a comment on "Judaism Without Embellishment" on April 20. It waited, prudently, until the Soviet authorities themselves criticised the book and withdrew it from circulation, therefore making it impossible for Mr. Waten to claim that the publication had been forged in the United States.

"Anti-Semitism wherever and in whatever form it appears" deserved to be condemned, *Tribune* wrote, and it was therefore understandable that "many people throughout the world, including friends of the Soviet Union," had criticised the publication of Kichko's book by the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. These people would have been "impressed by the very important fact" that the Soviet authorities had withdrawn the book from sale, and the newspaper sees this as proof that anti-semitism in the Soviet Union—contrary to Australia, the U.S.A. and other capitalist countries—is against the law and cannot make headway. Nevertheless, "Australian communists are confident . . . that the Soviet Government and Soviet Party will continue to take all legal, ideological and political steps against anti-semitism wherever it appears. . . . Occasionally manifestations of anti-semitism such as Kichko's

book . . . have a certain historical logic, but remain a cause for deep concern. Protests help the Soviet leaders in their struggle against this evil", etc. The newspaper, however carefully it walks its tightrope, makes a perceptive point when it declares: "Because of centuries of suffering in Christian Europe, the Jewish people attach to their faith an emotional significance transcending purely religious limits. Therefore people scientifically criticising Judaism have a special responsibility to guard against forms of expression which can rekindle anti-semitic ideas."

Also worthy of notice is the change in attitude of the official newspaper of the Norwegian Communist Party, *Friheten*. On March 26, 1963, the newspaper referred to Earl Russell as "a conscious liar" and a "senile philosopher" in an article by a certain John Kjellstrom commenting on Bertrand Russell's appeals to the Soviet authorities against anti-Jewish discrimination. On April 17, 1964, discussing the implications of "Judaism Without Embellishment", the newspaper carries an article by Tore-Jarl Bielenberg which endorses Earl Russell's observations and confirms that anti-semitism exists in the Soviet Union and Jews still suffer under the lingering effects of Stalinism.

Other Press Reactions

Apart from the volume of Communist press discussion on the Kichko book, the subject of Soviet Jewry was widely discussed in newspapers and magazines of every shade of political opinion. Space allows us to quote only a few typical comments:

The British Left-wing journal *Tribune*, on April 3, 1964: "The difficulties and restrictions which many Soviet Jews have had to face in the last few years have been known here for a long time. . . . 'Judaism Without Embellishment' has come as further reminder that not only is anti-semitism still alive in the Soviet Union, but is unfortunately given official encouragement from time to time."

The New Leader, United States, March 16: "As late as September, 1960, when *The New Leader* published a special report by its editors entitled 'Jews in the Soviet Union', few persons were aware that the subject warranted special concern. . . . With increased tourism, it is difficult to hide the fear in the eyes, the boarded-up synagogues, the absence or forced decay of virtually everything distinctly Jewish—in sharp contrast to the condition of the culture and the religion of other Soviet minorities. . . . Yet few are the individuals who have raised their voices against the Soviet treatment of their Jewish citizens, and fewer still the heads of State."

The Economist, London, April 4: "That silly pamphlet on Judaism . . . may do some good after all . . . French and Italian communists were moved to protest. Last week the Soviet authorities felt compelled to criticise the pamphlet, at least in a Ukrainian paper and through *Tass*, the Soviet

news agency, for the benefit of people abroad. The pressure, if kept up, may yet force the Soviet government to clarify and maybe even revise its policy on the complex and painful Jewish question."

The Socialist *Arbeiderbladet*, Oslo, April 28: "The Soviet Union's political theories and its national constitution are free from racial theories. In principle there is full equality for all citizens, and the various national groups enjoy considerable minority rights. But in practice the Jews are placed in an unfortunate and special position. They do not enjoy the same possibilities as other national groups in the Soviet Union to serve their culture and religion, and both books and newspapers give nourishment to anti-semitism."

The pro-Communist *Jewish Currents*, New York, May, 1964: "Now that an effective dialogue on the Soviet-Jewish question has been opened between Soviet and U.S., French, British, Italian, Israeli and Swedish communists, one may expect that the resultant review of the entire situation will lead to real solutions, based on an historical materialist approach to the history of the Jewish people."

The independent monthly, *The Minority of One*, New Jersey, U.S.A., May, 1964: "As in the past, we clearly dissociate ourselves from allegations of official Soviet anti-Semitism. As in the past, we condemn the organised attempts to misrepresent the situation of Soviet Jews for the purpose of fanning hatred of the U.S.S.R. As friends of the Soviet Union, however, we also consider it to be our moral duty to help alert her to her own mistakes. It is therefore that we raise our voice against what we believe to be attempts of the Soviet authorities to determine what shall be the content of Soviet Jews' Jewishness and whether there shall continue to exist any such separate content altogether. Each Russian Jew should have a right to determine these things to the extent that they involve him, and he should be free from any state coercion in the process of deciding. This freedom is needed for the sake of justice, for the sake of the people directly involved and for the sake of the Soviet Union."

SOVIET REACTION — "SERIOUS ERRORS"

After the admission by the Ukrainian U.N. representative of the authenticity of "Judaism Without Embellishment" and his blundering attempt to justify the book, the Soviet authorities reacted to world protests with an embarrassed silence. Western correspondents in Moscow unavailingly sought some official reaction. Some were given the misleading information that the book had been withdrawn from Moscow bookshops, but the gesture was meaningless as the publication, written in the Ukrainian language for Ukrainian readers, was not on general sale in Moscow.

Not until March 27, 1964, was any attempt made to meet criticism and then the method chosen was indirect. On that day *Tass* distributed 'in

its foreign services excerpts of a review of "Judaism With Embellishment" which had just appeared in the Kiev paper, *Radianska Kultura*. This was immediately reproduced in Soviet information journals in the West. The English-language *Soviet Weekly*, on April 2, 1964, is a characteristic example of the attempt then made to play down the whole Kichko affair.

"A large number of column inches in the Western press have been devoted recently to lurid accounts of a booklet on Judaism, published in Kiev," *Soviet Weekly* wrote. "'Russia publishes attack on the Jews' was a typical headline. Surprisingly little space, however, has been found to quote *Soviet* criticisms of the same booklet!" ("Surprisingly little space" was an overstatement. The Western press, at that stage, had given no space at all to Soviet criticisms of Kichko for the simple reason that none had existed—Editor, *Jews in Eastern Europe*).

The newspaper went on to explain that it was the constitutional right of Soviet citizens to conduct propaganda for atheism, "just as it is their right to conduct propaganda for some religious doctrine." The "detailed review" in *Radianska Kultura*, a "major Kiev newspaper", by B. Lobovik and I. Yampolsky, "notes some positive features in the booklet "but criticises its shortcomings," *Soviet Weekly* declared in its summary of the review.

"Not Good Enough"

It soon became clear that this indirect censure would not satisfy opinion in the West. A typical comment was that of Victor Zorza in *The Guardian*, on March 28, 1964. Under the heading: "Russia tries to pacify foreign opinion," he wrote: "Feeble Moscow criticism yesterday of the anti-semitic book recently published in the Ukraine falls far short of the demand of many foreign Communists that the book should be withdrawn. . . . The criticism, in the form of a review of the book in the Kiev *Radianska Kultura* was distributed yesterday by *Tass* in its foreign services without any mention of the furore produced by the book in the West, but obviously in reply to it. *Radianska Kultura*, one of the Soviet Union's more obscure papers, is not usually quoted by *Tass*. The placing of the 'review' in this paper rather than in one with a wider circulation suggests that the Soviet authorities are prepared to make some effort to pacify world opinion and foreign communists without, however, making it clear at home that publications of this type are officially regarded as scurrilous and are not therefore to be produced."

More emphatic, and occasionally indignant, was the comment in the New York Yiddish Communist *Morgen Freiheit*, which has taken the leading role in pressing for Soviet redress. On March 31, 1964, the newspaper announced that its editorial board had obtained the full text of the *Radianska Kultura* article—"and it must be said that what the article says is good, but not good enough by far!"

There was appreciation in *Morgen Freiheit* for the fact that the review

in *Radianska Kultura* had mentioned the "tens of thousands of Soviet Jews awarded orders and medals" of whom "40 were awarded the Order of Hero of the Soviet Union." As Kichko's book, "with its false un-Marxist anti-religious propaganda also casts a shadow on the role of Jews in general, such statements are most important," *Morgen Freiheit* declares, expressing satisfaction that the review criticised the way Kichko had "cast a shadow on the entire population of Israel" and had unjustifiably dragged in the role of Israel as a State and its international policy in a book on religion.

"So far so good," the newspaper says. "But what about the anti-semitic cartoons? All the writers have to say about them is that they are 'on a low artistic level and can only give offence to religious people'. If this is all the writers can say about the cartoons, and if *Tass* has confined itself to excerpts from their article, we declare that the reply does not give any satisfaction at all. On the contrary, it must cause surprise, astonishment and even indignation. Were it not that the matter is so serious, one could say that it is ludicrous to talk about the 'artistic level' of the cartoons. Where does an 'artistic level' high or low, come in when the point in question is anti-semitic cartoons? One does not look for art in cartoons of that kind . . . such cartoons are deeply offensive, and not only to religious people. Non-religious and anti-religious persons, Jews and non-Jews alike, were shocked by the cartoons, and something must be very wrong if the two writers were not shocked.

"However, the two writers are not the point. The point is that in certain circles they should sit up and take notice and pay attention to the anti-semitic character of the book. The question is, what steps should be taken against those guilty of compiling and publishing the anti-semitic 'Judaism' book, as we have already said in our leading article of March 22 . . . the deplorable case of this book goes to show how urgent it is to intensify the fight against anti-semitism and the anti-semitic remnants of times past—the times of the tsar, the Nazi occupation and the times of the Stalin cult. . . .

"The fact that there have been repercussions in Moscow and Kiev about the 'Judaism' book, is to be welcomed as a favourable reaction. But at the same time it should be stressed that the reply is far from satisfactory, that additional measures are needed that, together with the punishment of the guilty, an extensive enlightenment campaign should be launched and a decisive battle fought against anti-semitic survivals."

Criticism Stepped Up

By now, with individual, group and newspaper protests pouring into the Soviet Union in many languages, the affair had gone too far to be relegated to the columns of a provincial newspaper in the Ukraine. In its first foreign news broadcasts of April 4, 1964, *Tass* reported that "Judaism Without Embellishment" had been strongly criticised at a session of the

Ideological Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. for "serious mistakes". The Commission seems to have been convened for the specific purpose of making this criticism. *Tass* said: "It was stressed that in their efforts to expose the reactionary essence of Judaism, the author of the book and also the authors of the preface had wrongly interpreted some questions concerning the emergence and development of this religion. A number of mistaken propositions and illustrations could insult the feelings of believers and might be interpreted in the spirit of anti-semitism. But there is no such thing in the U.S.S.R. and cannot be. Nikita Khrushchev said once: 'Since the day of the October Revolution, the Jews in our country have had the same status in every respect as all other peoples of the U.S.S.R. There is no Jewish question in our country and those who invent it echo alien voices'."

A similar report appeared in *Pravda* on the same day (see full text below), but on April 5 *Izvestia*, whose columns have not in the past been inhospitable to anti-Jewish propaganda, had reservations about condemning Kichko's book outright. Under the title, "Concerning An Incomprehensible Uproar", the newspaper wrote: "In certain newspapers in the Western countries in recent days there has been an unusual crop of anti-Soviet articles. For what purpose are pens cracking and ink flowing this time? It turns out that it's in 'defence' of the Jewish religion. . . . The Soviet reader has the right to be puzzled. After all, it is well known that freedom of religion in the U.S.S.R. is guaranteed by the Constitution. What then is the matter? It turns out that the bourgeois press has become alarmed by a small book that has lately been issued by one of the Ukrainian publishing houses. The booklet, written by T. Kichko, is called 'Judaism Without Embellishment'. Let us say at once that the book contains errors.

"The intention of the booklet, by itself, can evoke no doubts. Judaism, like any other religion, can and should be subjected to scientific criticism. This is just what is being done in our scientific and popular literature, which exposes the reactionary essence of all religions, whether Christian, or Jewish, or any other. In particular, in the Ukraine as well as in other allied republics, a number of books on anti-religious subjects have recently come off the presses.

"T. Kichko analyses the reactionary essence of Judaism as one of the forms of religious ideology, and corroborates his argument with new facts. However, along with correct positions, his booklet contains historical and factual errors, inaccuracies and confusions, which may be interpreted in a spirit contrary to the policy pursued by our State towards religion and the Church. Many of the drawings contained in the booklet can only offend the sensibilities of the devout. Some of the shortcomings of the booklet have already been criticised. The newspaper *Radianska Kultura* published critical comment concerning the incorrect theses advanced by the booklet. But the initiators of the anti-Soviet propaganda campaign are speculatively using the very fact that the booklet has been published in order, so to say, 'to throw

shadow on the bright day' and to discredit the policy pursued by the Soviet State on the nationality question."

Still Not Enough

Most of the world Communist press greeted the Ideological Commission's statement with relief, but there were still reservations. On April 7, 1964, *Morgen Freiheit* approvingly published the text from *Pravda*, but ignored the story in *Izvestia*. "While welcoming the statement of the Soviet Communist Party," *Morgen Freiheit* commented, "stress should be laid on the great importance of the protests by friends of the Soviet Union against the Kiev book, particularly the protests of the Communist parties in the United States, France, England, Italy and other countries. . . . The Kiev book was condemned by the highest court of the Soviet Communist Party, so to say, and a warning was issued all along the line of propaganda and enlightenment. At the same time, it is clear that the statement has not solved other problems which have come to the fore in connection with the book." *Morgen Freiheit* then takes specific issue with the Ideological Commission's quotation of Mr. Khrushchev's claim that since the October revolution Soviet Jews had equal rights in every respect to those of all the other Soviet peoples. "There is no question but that the October Revolution ensured this complete equality," the newspaper agreed. "But a great number of Lenin's precepts of the October revolution concerning many peoples and particularly the Jews have been criminally offended against during the Stalin cult. This has a bearing on Jewish culture whose equality of rights granted by the October revolution has not been entirely restored to this day. It has also a bearing on other problems that have arisen due to misconstrued directions and wrong practices in matters of religion. This relates, *inter alia*, to the matter of *matzot*. To be sure, there exists no 'Jewish question' in the sense that it did in former times or as it still does in certain capitalist countries. But a number of problems are there, and they must be solved. The statement of the Soviet Communist party about the Kiev book coincides with the intensifying of the battle fought by the party against the Stalin cult and its crimes. The friends of the Soviet Union, the Jewish masses in general—and not only the Jewish masses—expect that several problems that have come up on this occasion, will find their solution."

Another reservation that found expression amongst Communists and Soviet supporters was that there seemed to be no move to prosecute Kichko and others responsible for "Judaism Without Embellishment" under the Soviet law forbidding anti-semitism.

At this unfortunate moment the editor of *Izvestia* arrived on a visit to Paris. Alexis Adzhubei, who is Mr. Khrushchev's son-in-law, was besieged by questions. In an interview on April 6, 1964, on *Radio Europe No. 1*, he was told by Julian Besancor, the questioner, that the radio station had received countless telephone calls from members of the public who wanted questions

to be asked about Soviet Jews. Mr. Adzhubei expressed "surprise", stating that since his arrival in France a few days before he had been constantly questioned on the subject. Anti-semitism could not exist in the Soviet Union, he said, but admitted that "vestiges" could be found. "In every society, including ours, individuals can be found who have been contaminated by such feelings." The Kichko book should have been treated "with the indifference it deserved, not played up as an issue. We had to condemn it but the best method would have been to ignore it altogether." Half of the 40-minute radio interview was preoccupied with the problem of Soviet Jews, which was a major subject of discussion in the French press at the time.

According to the Paris-correspondent of the London *Jewish Chronicle* (April 10, 1964) Mr. Adzhubei told a prominent pro-Soviet French Jew, Andre Blumel, that Mr. Khrushchev called for a copy of the Kichko book because of the storm it had aroused in the West. He was angered by it and said the author was "stupid, an imbecile, even worse". The *Jewish Chronicle* also reported Mr. Adzhubei as telling a press-conference that Jewish children in the Soviet Union could be taught Hebrew and Yiddish in Soviet schools if parents desired it. On this, at least, the editor of *Izvestia* is badly informed. The statement is quite untrue.

Ukrainian Official Speaks

That the questions raised by the Kichko book have still not been answered to the satisfaction of all Communists is shown in an interview with Luka Y. Kizya, the Permanent Representative of the Ukraine at the United Nations, published in *Morgen Freiheit* on May 10, 1964. The interview was conducted by the newspaper's editor, Paul Novick. Mr. Kizya was asked four questions: What was his opinion about "Judaism Without Embellishment"? How could a book "of such low quality" appear in the Ukrainian S.S.R.? What could be done to prevent the publication of such books? What could he say about the relations between Jews and Ukrainians?

To the first question, Mr. Kizya replied that the book had "received overmuch publicity as a result of the noisy campaign" that had been conducted in the West. The Ukrainian reader would scarcely notice it among the vast number of books published in the republic in the current year. "Certain questions relating to the emergence and development of the Jewish religion are brought out by the pamphlet in a wrong light while certain erroneous statements and drawings could insult the sensitivities of the devout and could be interpreted as anti-semitic. It is these mistakes that the adversaries of the Soviet Union are now trying to exploit." The "errors" reflected neither Soviet ideology, policy, nor public opinion. "In reality there is no anti-semitism whatsoever neither in the Ukraine, nor in the Soviet Union as a whole. There is no racial persecution or discrimination at all."

The book had appeared because "the question was not treated seriously enough by the publishing house, the author of the book, its editor and the

authors of the preface." There were no other reasons, Mr. Kizya said, because there was no anti-semitism or discrimination in the U.S.S.R., and he quoted the constantly reiterated remark of Mr. Khrushchev that "there is no 'Jewish question' in our country and those who invent it sing an alien tune." To guard against publication of such books as Kichko's required "only one condition: the approach to publishing must be more careful and more responsible."

As for relations between Jews and Ukrainians, Mr. Kizya said relations between all peoples of the U.S.S.R. were those of "brotherhood and equality in all spheres of human life and activity". He did not admit that anti-semitism was even an historical phenomenon in the Ukraine, and listed a number of examples where Ukrainians had shown sympathy for Jews and their problems, condemned Tsarist massacres and oppression of Jews, and defended the Jewish population from the Nazis. He also listed a number of Jews who "take an active part in the cultural life of the Ukraine", some of whom had become "famous Ukrainian writers, composers, artists and musicians". Among the names listed he included that of Grigori Plotkin, one of the authors of the flattering introduction to "Judaism Without Embellishment" who is noted throughout the Jewish population of the U.S.S.R. for "anti-semitic" style writings on Israel.

These answers, not unexpectedly, failed to satisfy *Morgen Freiheit*. Paul Novick, although observing the diplomatic courtesies, rejected the substance of Mr. Kizya's reply—"some of the remarks of the Ambassador are hard to understand". Briefly summarised, he commented: In the United States also "thousands of good books appear annually, but when an anti-semitic book or booklet is published, and by an institution like an Academy, we raise a row". He did not accept that there were no anti-semites in the Ukraine. As people were occasionally caught committing economic and other crimes, so "it stands to reasons that here and there criminals of an anti-semitic type may be uncovered." He pointed out that during the Occupation, the Ukraine "was saturated with anti-semitic propaganda", that until 1939 parts of the Republic were ruled by "anti-semitic, pogromite regimes", and asked: "Is it possible that no remnants are left of those periods? Have all Nazi collaborators been cleaned out?"

Not only anti-Soviet elements and Ukrainian "Nazi-collaborators" in exile had agitated over the Kichko book . . . "we must mainly have in mind the *honest* people, including progressive elements, peace fighters who were outraged . . . particularly among Jews. At the 42nd anniversary of *Morgen Freiheit* on April 12, attended by 2,000 people, the booklet was condemned and the demand put forward that the culprits—the writer, the cartoonist, the publishers—be placed on trial and punished."

It was not "just a case of a poorly prepared work." The fault lay "in a false and harmful approach that has permeated anti-religious propaganda in the U.S.S.R. generally," Novick wrote, recalling his newspaper's criticism

of "A Gallery of Saints", by Baron Holbach. He reminded "certain people in the U.S.S.R. engaged in anti-religious propaganda" that there were now "clergymen, rabbis and priests who are for co-existence and oppose the cold war" and were in the front rank in the struggle for Negro rights in the U.S.A.

The editor of *Morgen Freiheit* concludes: "It is to be hoped that after a closer acquaintance with the moods of the Jewish people of this country, as well as the American masses generally (Mr. Kizya) will be convinced that the 'noise' around the Kichko booklet was fully justified, as well as the demand that the culprits be called to account."

"SHORTCOMINGS" AND "ERRORS"

TEXTS OF SOVIET CRITICISMS OF KICHKO BOOK

The first Soviet criticism of "Judaism Without Embellishment" appeared on March 26 in *Radianska Kultura* (Soviet Culture), under the heading "A Book About the Reactionary Nature of Judaism", and excerpts from it were given world circulation by *Tass*. *Radianska Kultura* is the Ukrainian-language organ of the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture and appears twice weekly. The authors of the review, B. Lobovik and K. Yampolsky, find "a great deal" of value in the Kichko book and their criticism is relatively restrained by Soviet standards, where books and their authors regarded as ideologically in error are often abusively handled. In the present instance, contrary to the impression given to world public opinion by *Tass's* choice of quotations, the reviewers actually endorsed the book and do not condemn it. They conclude their article as follows: "All these shortcomings unquestionably reduce the value of the book under review, which, to reiterate, merits on the whole a positive evaluation as a thorough examination of the reactionary nature of the Judaic religion."

The full text of the *Radianska Kultura* article is given below:—

One of the most important tasks set by the C.P.S.U. Programme in the sphere of communist upbringing is the formation of a scientific world outlook. The raising of all workers to the level of politically conscious creators of the communist society is a necessary condition for the successful building of the very best, the most just order on earth.

A component part of this task is the intensification of anti-religious propaganda, of the atheistic education of the population, and an active struggle against survivals of the past, including religious superstitions, in people's consciousness.

A number of books and pamphlets devoted to exposing the reactionary nature of the religion and to the working out of contemporary problems of atheism have been published recently in our republic. Among these is the book "Judaism Without Embellishment," by T. K. Kichko.

By presenting a great deal of factual material the author exposes the antiscientific nature of the Judaic religion and the reactionary activities of Hebrew theologians and Jewish bourgeois nationalists—Zionists—and shows the hostile attitude of Judaism toward the revolutionary transformation of society.

The religious leaders of Judaism and Jewish bourgeois-nationalist historians and philosophers attempt to depict Judaism as the primordial religion of the Jewish people, which, despite isolated instances of more precise definition, allegedly remains basically immutable, represents the

greatest "cultural value" and has retained its nature and meaning throughout all time.

On the basis of a thorough analysis of numerous facts and materials, the author convincingly demonstrates that Judaism is not the primordial religion of the Jewish people, since it appeared only at a certain stage of their social development; it lacks an orderly system, being filled with contradictions and fabrications; Judaism did not arise as the result of the "divine revelation" of some "great lawgiver" but was created by people.

Originating in deep antiquity as the result of a distorted and fantastic interpretation of surrounding reality, and completely dependent upon the elemental forces of nature, the Judaic religion, like other religions, traditionally served the ruling exploiter classes. It spun strong webs around the masses of religious Jews, striving to divert them from their class struggle against Jewish and non-Jewish oppressors.

An essential feature of the Judaic religion is that it has become closely interwoven with the reactionary nationalistic movement of the Jewish bourgeoisie, Zionism. This process is thoroughly illuminated in the book under review, which also shows how Judaism and Zionism united in opposition to the socialist ideas that spread among the Jewish poor and to the participation of Jewish workers in the revolutionary movement. Having entered the service of world reaction, the religious leaders of Judaism and Zionist leaders, together with the clergy of other faiths and the nationalistic parties, came out in opposition to the achievements of the October Revolution, formed a united front of reactionary obscurantism against the young Soviet republic, and actively supported the remnants of the smashed exploiter classes.

Many pages of the book are devoted to exposing the antiscientific nature of the Judaic dogmas and laws presented in the Bible and the Talmud, the reactionary nature of the Judaic holy days and ceremonies that entangle the believer from the cradle to the grave, and the immoral behaviour of spiritual leaders of Judaism.

As the author correctly points out, the profound socio-economic changes that have taken place in the U.S.S.R., the world-historic victories in the building of socialism and communism, the rapid development of science and technology and the unprecedented flowering of culture have led to the mass departure of workers from religion. Having realised the untenability and perniciousness of religion, the majority of the Jewish inhabitants of our country have forever broken with religion; as a result of the influence of the entire structure of our life, of the practice of communist construction, and as a result of the tremendous educational work that is carried on by the Party and public organisations among the workers, they have freed themselves forever from the opiate of religion and are conscientiously working for the good of the homeland.

In striving somehow to preserve their influence over believers, the spiritual leaders of Judaism are forced to take notice of these changes and to adapt themselves to the new conditions. This tendency to conform is a manifestation of the spiritual leaders' attitude toward those fundamental social and class changes that have taken place within the country as well as beyond its borders. However, it is perfectly clear that this tendency in no way alters the reactionary nature of Judaism.

As the book correctly points out, the tendency to conform is manifested in the division of the Judaic religion abroad into three factions: orthodox, reformed and conservative (or fundamentalist). In characterising each of these trends, the author convincingly demonstrates that they all reflect the interests of different Jewish bourgeois circles and in their own way attempt to halt the inexorable process of the decline of religious influence.

As far as Judaism in the U.S.S.R. is concerned, its tendency to conform is manifested in its attitude toward the state and toward the struggle for peace, in its striving to reconcile religion with science, in its increased efforts to influence the moral principles of people, etc. But no matter how Judaism adapts to the new conditions, no matter how strenuous its spiritual leaders' attempts to strengthen their influence upon believers and entangle new sections of the workers in their ideology and moral system, the religion that arose from darkness will descend back into darkness.

In recent times bourgeois ideologists, disturbed by the mass desertion of Judaism by believers, have been raising a howl about the "persecution of Jews in the U.S.S.R.," intentionally distorting the situation of Jews in our country, and have been conducting a campaign of slander against us. A worthy reply to the slanderers was given by N. S. Khrushchev in his March 8, 1963, speech at the meeting of Party and government leaders with representatives of literature and the arts. N. S. Khrushchev said: "From the days of the October Revolution, the Jews in our country have had equality with all other peoples of the U.S.S.R. in all respects. We do not have a Jewish question, and those who dream it up are singing an alien tune . . . Our Leninist party consistently pursues a policy of friendship among all peoples, rears the Soviet people in the spirit of internationalism of intolerance of any and all manifestations of racial discrimination, of national hostility."

Developing this thought, the author of the book shows how Jewish workers, together with toilers of other nationalities of our country, selflessly worked on the new construction projects of the five-year plans and fought against the Hitlerite invaders during the years of the Great Patriotic War, and what contributions they are making to the nationwide cause of building communism. Tens of thousands of them have received orders and medals, 40 have been honoured with the title of Hero of Socialist Labour and 99 have received the title Hero of the Soviet Union—Maj. Gen. D. A. Dragunsky has been awarded this high honour twice (p. 179). Jewish workers in the

U.S.S.R. enjoy all the rights provided by the U.S.S.R. Constitution. Works of literature by classical and contemporary Jewish writers are published in large editions. The all-Union magazine *Sovetishe Heimat** (Soviet Homeland) is being published. All this attests to the triumph of Lenin's national policy.

While giving T. K. Kichko's work as a whole a positive evaluation, at the same time we also wish to point out essential shortcomings in it.

So thoroughly analytical a work as the one under review should have contained a historiographical preface with an analysis of the literature used, and bibliographical references to recently published printed material on this subject, including that published in the Ukraine.

The most important question giving rise to the necessity of publishing one or another book on an atheistic theme is the question: What is the harm in religion today, under the conditions of the full-scale building of communism? Unfortunately, this question is not properly examined in the present book. The author aims his arrows primarily at the disclosure of the reactionary role of the Judaic religion in a society of exploiters. Very frequently he cites quotations from the Bible and the Talmud, occasionally without the slightest necessity for so doing; he presents numerous statements by the theologians, rather than demonstrating the unsoundness of religion by the facts of contemporary life. As far as the harmfulness of religion in our circumstances is concerned, the author reduces everything to a description of the indecent behaviour of a few religious leaders of Judaism and expresses a number of rather general reproving statements concerning the fact that those believers who do not perform any work during religious holy days "impede the fulfilment of production plans and violate labour discipline" (p. 135).

The book makes far from adequate use of the achievements of modern science for refuting religious ideology. In a number of instances, the author simply presents the ideas of theologians on the "community" of religion and science without subjecting them to proper evaluation or substantiated criticism, limiting himself to declarative statements on the order of: "Of course, all this is nonsense" (p. 71).

The chief shortcoming of the work under review lies in that the question of the nature and forms of the manifestation of the survivals of Judaism in our times is not elaborated at all. A number of circumstances should have been mentioned in this connection that are favourable to the strengthening of the survivals of Judaism in our country. Included among these are family traditions, the great losses suffered by the Jews during World War II, individual psychological causes (illness, loss of relatives, family conflicts, confusion resulting from complex life situations, etc.), conservatism of religion, the force of tradition, habits, the emotional influence of the syna-

* Reference is intended to the Yiddish bi-monthly *Sovietish Heimland* (Editor, *Jews in Eastern Europe*).

gogue atmosphere, the religious leader's tendency to conform, the influence of bourgeois ideology—including that of Judaic and Zionist centres abroad—etc. Unfortunately, nothing is said about this in the book.

In his description of Zionism the author has overlooked the evaluation V. I. Lenin gave to this reactionary movement, particularly in the essay "The Situation of the Bund in the Party" ("Works," Vol. VII).

A number of important questions are incorrectly interpreted by the author. One cannot agree with his assertion that the ancient Hebrews, as conquerors, made no outstanding contributions in the spheres of industry, in agriculture and culture (p. 19). This is disproved by the facts of science. Prof. V. I. Avdiyev points out in his book "History of the Ancient East" that handicraft production determined the economic standard of life of the country. Subsequently considerable specialisation—the woodworking, brick-making, and pottery industries and stonemasonry—appeared. The building of palaces, churches and roads developed rapidly. Metallurgy was developed, as is evidenced by the discovered remains of ovens for smelting iron. Communal ownership of land increased. Products of agriculture and animal husbandry were exported to neighbouring lands. This is related in detail in the first volume of the "World History" (Academician V. V. Struve, author of the chapter).

In our opinion, the author's assertion that in the slave-owning period of Judaea the relations between man and wife lacked the shameless hypocrisy that now exists in Israel is doubtful (p. 110). It is sufficient to recall that in those times a man was permitted several wives, where as now this is prohibited. As a rule the situation of the woman in Israel, as in other capitalist countries, is a difficult one. This is something that should have been discussed.

The book contains another erroneous assertion—that following the appearance of Zionism, the spirit of nationalism enveloped all strata of the Jewish population (p. 153). This is contradictory to historical facts, contrary to Lenin's thesis on two nations within each nation. From the fact that a certain portion of Jewish craftsmen at one time fell under the influence of Zionism, it in no way follows that all sections of the population were infected by the spirit of nationalism. On the contrary, the Jewish proletariat and the progressive portion of the intelligentsia took an active part in the creation and operation of Social-Democratic organisations, in the revolutionary movement, and courageously exposed Bundists and Zionists, as well as other nationalists. And one of the causes of the appearance of Zionism was the struggle of the Jewish bourgeoisie against the socialist ideas that were at that time penetrating as deeply among working Jews as they were among the workers of other nationalities.

Nor can it be tolerated that the author, in criticizing Zionism as a bourgeois-nationalist movement, extends this criticism to the internal life of the state of Israel. After all, it is known that in addition to Zionist organisa-

tions in Israel there are also democratic, progressive workers' organisations that advocate peaceful coexistence and democratic freedoms and that oppose colonialism and imperialism. In general, it seems to us an incongruity that a book devoted to problems of criticism of religious ideology should contain appraisals (and not always correct ones, at that) of the activity of Israel as a state and its role in international relations.

Due to insufficient exactingness on the part of the author and the publishers, slipshod formulations occur in the work, which occasionally lead to a distortion of the meaning of individual assertions. Thus on page 103 it is said that "the basis of exploitative society" have been eliminated in the countries of the socialist camp, although it is known that the exploitation of man by man has long since been done away with altogether in the U.S.S.R. and the other people's democracies. On page 9 the author erroneously maintains that Zionism has its roots in Judaism. Yet it is known that the roots of Jewish nationalism, like those of any other bourgeois nationalism, lie in social rather than religious causes. The reasoning that in all capitalist countries the rabbinate serves a common cause with the Zionists—the strengthening of the state of Israel—is inaccurate (page 157). First and foremost, the rabbinate serves the strengthening of the existing order, the struggle against the revolutionary movement in its own country, and the distraction of the Jewish masses from defending their own class interests.

The book contains errors of a factual nature that are completely intolerable, and all the more so in a work on the subject of atheism. On page 85 the author erroneously asserts that Ecclesiastes is part of the Torah, although earlier, on page 26, he correctly remarks that this book is to be found in the third section of the Bible. It is incomprehensible why the term "Torah—Bible" is used (pp. 98 and 105), since it is known that the Torah (or "Pentateuch") is only a part of the Bible. The origin of the tefillin ritual is incorrectly explained (p. 117). On page 179, the number of Jews who were awarded orders and medals of the Soviet Union during the years of World War II is given incorrectly. There are a considerable number of errors in religious terminology and in the names of documents and persons. It is a pity that in a number of places the book was poorly edited.

The art work in the book gives grounds for serious objections. Many drawings in the book, as well as its covers, are pretentiously executed, slovenly, on a low artistic level and can only offend believers.

And these shortcomings unquestionably reduce the value of the book under review, which, to reiterate merits on the whole a positive evaluation as a thorough examination of the reactionary nature of the Judaic religion.

Elimination of these shortcomings will raise the scholarly level and practical importance of the book and will contribute even more to the intensification of atheistic work among believers, will help them to liberate themselves from religious survivals and join the ranks of active and politically conscious builders of communism.

Ideological Commission Resolution

The C.P.S.U. Central Committee's Ideological Commission's resolution, which led to the withdrawal of "Judaism Without Embellishment", was published in full in *Pravda* on April 4, 1964. The text is as follows: The C.P.S.U. Central Committee's Ideological Commission has examined the question of scientific atheist literature.

The commission noted that central and local publishing houses have published a number of useful books and pamphlets in which various trends of religious ideology are subjected to well-reasoned criticism on the basis of the achievements of modern science and in which the experience of atheistic work in the U.S.S.R. is illuminated. The publication of such books and pamphlets contributes to the formation of a materialist world view among Soviet people.

The session of the commission called the attention of press organs, publishing houses and scientific institutions to the need for a further rise in the ideological and scientific level of atheistic literature.

Useful publications have been issued in recent years, including the popular textbook "Conversations on Religion and Knowledge," the course "Popular Lectures on Atheism," the reader "About Religion," the anthology "Thoughts About Religion," A. Osipov's books "The Catechism Without Embellishment," A. Chertkov's "From God to People," P. Kurochkin's "Orthodoxy and Humanism" and many other atheistic works. At the same time, certain poorly prepared books and pamphlets that harm our ideological upbringing work have come off the presses.

In particular, the participants in the session criticized the serious mistakes made in T. Kichko's "Judaism Without Embellishment," published late in 1963 by the Ukraine Republic Academy of Sciences Publishing House. The book's author, as well as the author of its foreword, in striving to expose the reactionary essence of Judaism, incorrectly explain certain questions linked with the rise and development of this religion. A number of the book's erroneous statements and of its illustrations may offend the feelings of believers and might be interpreted in a spirit of anti-Semitism.

But, as is known, such a question does not and cannot arise in our country. "From the days of the October Revolution," N. S. Khrushchev has said "the Jews in our country have had equality with all other people of the U.S.S.R. in all respects. We do not have a Jewish question, and those who dream it up are singing an alien tune."

The mistaken tenets contained in the book contradict the Party's Leninist policy in questions of religion and nationality and only give our ideological opponents, who are trying to create a so-called "Jewish question" at any cost, food for anti-Soviet insinuations. It is precisely for this reason that the mistaken parts of T. Kichko's book cannot but evoke opposition on the part of the Soviet public.

The Ideological Commission recommended that officials of the press and publishing houses be more careful in their approach to the publication of literature on scientific atheism.

SOVIET LAW AND RACIAL PROPAGANDA

Below are the relevant Articles from the Soviet Constitution and Penal Code relating to national equality and the dissemination of propaganda which can incite national or racial hostility and discord:

Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—Article 123

"The equality of rights of citizens of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, public, cultural, social and political life, is an irrevocable law. Any direct or indirect restriction of rights, or, conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusivity, or hatred and contempt—are punishable by law."

Constitution of the Ukraine Soviet Socialist Republic—Article 103

Identical to Article 123 of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (see translation above).

Penal Code of the U.S.S.R.—Section : on the criminal responsibility for State Crimes.

Article 11—the violation of national and racial equality

"Propaganda or agitation aimed at inciting national or racial hostility or discord, as well as the direct or indirect restriction of rights or establishment of direct or indirect privileges for citizens on account of their race or nationality—is punishable by deprivation of freedom for a period from six months to three years—or exile for a period from two to five years."

Penal Code of the Ukrainian S.S.R.—Section : on the criminal responsibility for State Crimes.

Article 66

Identical to Article 11 of the U.S.S.R. Penal Code (see translation above).

These two Articles appeared in "Penal Legislation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Republics", Tome I, issued by the State Publishing House for Juridical Literature, Moscow 1963.

Also worthy of notice is the following excerpt from Conference Room Paper No. 84, December 13, 1961, submitted by Mr. Hernan Santa Cruz to the Commission on Human Rights Sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

Study of Discrimination in the Matter of Political Rights—Summary of Information relating to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic

13. The Government states:

"Article 56 (21) of the Penal Code of the Ukrainian S.S.R. provides:

Propaganda or agitation aimed at inciting national or religious hostility or discord, and the dissemination or the production and possession of literature of such character are punishable by the deprivation of liberty for a term not exceeding two years."

JUDAISM

... AND PHAROAH HARDENED HIS HEART

The denial to Jews of unleavened bread for Passover is as impossible to justify as anti-semitic propaganda against Judaism. Western Communists, friends of the U.S.S.R., human rights organisations, and religious and political groups of all denominations raised the question of *matzot* in their protests over "Judaism Without Embellishment." Both matters—the publication of the book and the harassing restrictions on baking *matzot*—infringe the constitutional rights of the Jewish people and trespass beyond the legitimate area of atheistic education.

Even those whose ideological affinity with the Soviet Union is close can find no rational justification for Soviet action in this respect. The authorities have shut down most of the synagogues in the U.S.S.R.; deny Jews facilities for *kosher* food, consecrated burial, prayer-books, Hebrew bibles and ritual articles of all kinds. Judaism, more defenceless than other recognised religions, is more severely oppressed and knows little of the freedom of worship guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution to believers. Elderly synagogue worshippers carry the stigma of persecution with them—afraid to openly speak with foreign visitors, afraid to accept gifts of ritual articles unobtainable in the Soviet Union, afraid to publicly express their affection for Israel, afraid they may be accused of religious profiteering, speculation, or "unseemly behaviour" of some other kind "beneath the vaults of the synagogue".

In these circumstances, it seems almost vindictive that, in addition, Jews are prevented from obtaining the sacramental food they have eaten throughout their history as a symbol of freedom from captivity. Soviet representatives, asked what possible harm it can do their country if a few thousand people eat unleavened bread during the annual festival of Passover, can only fall back on stereotyped evasions. What can they say when Stalin did not impose this particular affliction on Soviet Jews, even at the peak of his terror?

Since 1957, the restrictions had steadily increased. First the authorities prevented Jews in certain provincial regions from obtaining unleavened bread. Then they included other regions in the ban. Finally, the ban was made nation-wide. Even synagogues which possessed their own bakeries, such as Leningrad and Riga, were not allowed to use them. And last year, the trial and imprisonment of groups of Jews in Moscow, Vilna and Riga for baking *matzot*—the state called it "speculating in foodstuffs"—effectively intimidated those who might wish to solve the problem on a collective basis.

This year, the fourth since the Soviet authorities imposed the ban on the baking of *matzot*, there was some hope of relief. The authorities had seldom been explicit in acknowledging that a ban existed. Some spokesmen had stated it bluntly, but the usual practice was to talk as though there was some temporary difficulty—a bakery in need of repair, or (Moscow's Chief Rabbi Levin's disclosure during last year's trial of Jews for "speculating" in *matzot* of another official excuse) that "unfortunately, the State cannot provide you with *matzot* at the moment because it has neither place nor equipment for it" (explanation to the Chief Rabbi by Mr. Andreyev, an official of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults).

The embarrassment concealed by such flimsy excuses engendered the hope that the Soviet Government might see that nothing was to be gained by continuing the restriction, or lost by lifting it. At the beginning of the year this hope was encouraged when Soviet representatives in Western countries informed their licensed parcel agencies that there would be no objection to *matzot* being sent to relatives and friends in the U.S.S.R. If Soviet Jews could not bake the food themselves, it would at least mitigate the situation if they were permitted to receive it from abroad.

Appeals for Aid

As Soviet representatives had only referred to parcels for relatives and friends, which excluded many thousands of Soviet Jews without family contacts abroad, Jewish religious leaders wrote to find out if *matzot* could be despatched to Soviet Jewish communities for distribution among synagogue members. The Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth, Dr. Israel Brodie, received the following cable on February 28, 1964: "Felt touched by your letter of February 17. Send any number of parcels 5-10 kilograms. Will distribute among Moscow congregations." It was signed by Rabbi Nathan Olevski, of the Marina Roscha Synagogue in suburban Moscow, and by George Lieb, the secular chairman of the synagogue. Chief Rabbi Brodie, on the same day, cabled assurances that quantities of *matzot* would be sent to reach Moscow in time for Passover. It was subsequently discovered that similar cabled appeals had gone from the Marina Roscha to Jewish religious leaders in other Western countries.

On March 3, Chief Rabbi Brodie received another cable from Moscow, as follows: "Your telegram of February 28 read at Saturday service in synagogue. Accept heartfelt gratitude of congregation. Earnestly beg besides 150 parcels to my address. Also send Rabbi Leib Levin (Chief Rabbi, Moscow), Rabbi Olevski and Morduch Khazin to their home addresses one parcel each." The cable was signed by George Lieb, Chairman of Marina Roscha.

Such messages communicated a sense of extreme urgency. Jewish communities in Western countries hurried to meet the crisis and despatched many tons of *matzot* to the Soviet Union by air. In the meantime, hopes

revived as a result of a statement made on March 2, 1964, by Leonid A. Gouliev, First Secretary to the Soviet Mission to the United Nations. It was a curious business altogether, with the Soviet spokesman "explaining" that State bakeries had stopped baking unleavened bread because it was not ritually prepared. Mr. Gouliev told a delegation of Jewish students that: "Until 1961 the State baked *matzot* in State bakeries. But because it was not prepared in a *kosher* manner the Jewish population would not buy it. In addition, other nationalities began to demand that their traditional food be prepared. Since this was impractical, the production of all religious food was stopped. . . . This past week the government decided to resume baking *matzot* because they realise how difficult it is for small communities to make *matzot* on their own." This statement, from a senior Soviet official, was clearly understood to mean that the government of the Soviet Union had revoked the ban on baking unleavened bread, particularly as the statement followed a highly optimistic report in the *London Jewish Chronicle* on February 28, 1964.

Under the heading: "Moscow Relents on Matzot", the *Jewish Chronicle* printed as its main news story of the week "from a special correspondent" in Moscow that "Jews in Moscow will be able to bake *matzot* for the coming Passover. They have been given permission to rent a bakery specially for this purpose. An official of the community told me on Wednesday that it had not yet been arranged exactly where the baking would be done." The newspaper then proceeded to quote a *Novosty* news agency report which had been widely circulated earlier in the week in the world Communist press and in American newspapers. In this, it was additionally stated that the rented bakery was situated in "a Moscow suburb". The Soviet news agency promised that this year "Jewish believers will be ensured supplies of *matzot*. Each religious community, depending on local conditions and possibilities, is ensuring supplies."

The *Jewish Chronicle* report and the statement by Gouliev differed in one essential detail. Gouliev had said that the *government* had decided to resume baking of unleavened bread, whereas the Soviet *Novosty* agency had spoken of the Jews *themselves* preparing the food in a *rented* bakery. But this inconsistency in official Soviet statements provoked no comment: there was great relief that the crisis would soon be ended.

Confusion Grows

From this stage on, however, reports became more and more confused. Soviet information services began an energetic campaign to show the world that Soviet Jews were being well looked after for their Passover needs. In the Moscow Central Synagogue, on March 7, 1964, Chief Rabbi Yehuda Lieb Levin told his congregation that those who could bring their own flour to the synagogue would have *matzot* baked for them. The *Novosty* press agency was there to report him as saying: "My announcement met with

the approval of the members of the community. Within two days 2,000 kilograms of flour were brought to the community warehouse." The flour, commented David Miller, New York *Herald Tribune* Moscow correspondent, must have been saved up gradually. Flour was otherwise unobtainable: he had visited four stores and the collective farm section of the Moscow central market and found none for sale.

On the morning of Wednesday, March 11, the rented bakery was said to have opened and, again according to David Miller in the New York *Herald Tribune* (on March 16, 1964), "by mid-afternoon Wednesday the *Novosty* press agency had distributed a press release and a packet of pictures to a number of American correspondents." The *Novosty* press release quoted Naum Paler, chairman of the Moscow Jewish community, as saying that the bakery would produce 300-400 kilograms a day and "with 17 days remaining to Passover, we are in a position to produce 6,000 kilograms." Mr. Paler estimated that 30,000 Jewish families in Moscow of a total Jewish population of 500,000 practised their faith (at an approximate average of two children per family, this would make a total of about 120,000 practising Jews—Editor, *Jews In Eastern Europe*) and that it was planned to bake about 10 kilograms of unleavened bread "for every believing family in Moscow".

These optimistic reports from *Novosty* were sent to newspapers all over the world and were widely reproduced. In the event they turned out to be worthless, a farrago of propaganda. For on March 15, 1964, Western reporters in Moscow cabled that the rented bakery, on which so much hope had rested, had been closed by the Soviet authorities after two days of operation. Chief Rabbi Levin said that Soviet fire officials had closed the premises "temporarily" because of "unsanitary conditions". The bakery had produced a grand total of 200 kilograms of *matzot* in the brief period it had been allowed to function.

Henry Tanner, *New York Times* Moscow correspondent, reported (*N.Y.T.* March 16, 1964): "The action came at a time when it had become clear that there would not be nearly enough *matzot* to satisfy the need of devout Jews during Passover. There were angry scenes at the Central Synagogue this morning as elderly Jewish men and women, who had come to collect their share of *matzot*, had to be turned away empty-handed. Many of these persons said they had turned in the flour for their *matzot* at the synagogue and been promised an equivalent amount of unleavened bread. *Matzot* supplies are also reported to be insufficient in Leningrad and Kiev, two other Soviet cities with large Jewish population. In Leningrad, the Central Synagogue has not been able to bake *matzot* even though it has its own baking facilities, according to unofficial reports."

The New York *Herald Tribune's* report of the incident on March 16 from its correspondent David Miller, described the scene as follows: "News of the bakery's closing was given to several dozen Moscow Jews who

called at the Moscow Central Synagogue yesterday morning expecting to pick up *matzot* for which they had contributed flour. At least a dozen angry men and women, most carrying handbags or shopping bags, surrounded synagogue officials and demanded *matzot*. Rabbi Levin, whose office was closed to most visitors, sent word to return later in the week when he would have more information. But few in the synagogue seemed satisfied. One man explained: 'They open the bakery with one hand then they close it with another.' Then he put a finger over his lips in a sign of silence." After a protracted delay, the rented bakery was reported to have resumed baking, but, as the authorities refused to divulge its location, there were no witnesses of its operations.

Contradictory Messages

In the meantime, additional confusion was being created by the receipt of contradictory telegrams from Soviet Jews. In London, Chief Rabbi Bordie received messages from George Lieb, Chairman of the Moscow Marina Rosha synagogue who had previously cabled urgently for *matzot* to be sent, asking him to withhold further consignments as the Moscow communities had plenty of their own supplies. At the same time as the British Chief Rabbi was being told this, cables from Moscow Jewish authorities were received by other Western Jewish leaders urging them to send even more parcels of unleavened bread.

Further difficulties were created by the Soviet agencies responsible for parcel mailing procedures. From one day to another, they changed the regulations governing the despatch of *matzot*. On March 17, Soviet instructions were given to Jewish relief organisations that increased the air mailing charges for the parcels by well over 100 per cent, imposing a crippling burden on the resources of the relief bodies. But the volume of *matzot* to the Soviet Union did not slacken, it being a point of honour with the Jewish organisations involved that everything possible should be done to meet the Passover needs of their fellow-Jews in the U.S.S.R.

On the same day—March 17—the Soviet authorities made it unmistakably clear that the difficulties the Jews were experiencing with *matzot* were deliberately created as an instrument of official policy. An article appeared in the Tashkent newspaper *Pravda Vostoka* which constituted a sharp warning that Jews should not collect parcels addressed to them. "These 'presents', the practically worthless rags collected by foreign 'philanthropists', are nothing but mere ideological subversion. And they are not really philanthropists, but saboteurs."

"Ideological subversion" has an intimidating ring and the threat was effective. Many Jews were afraid to collect their parcels; and, to emphasise that the warning was not confined to Jews living in Uzbekistan alone, on March 21, it was reproduced—slightly abridged—in the central Soviet newspaper *Izvestia*, then followed, on March 22, by a similar article in

Sovetskaya Belosussia, the leading Russian-language newspaper published in Minsk. During the course of the next few days, the warning articles appeared in many places, all hammering home the point that it would be sabotage to eat *matzot* sent from abroad. Some of the newspapers in which these appeared are: *Birobidzhaner Shtern*, March 25, *Sovetskaya Moldavia*, March 26, *Tiesa* (Lithuania) March 26, *Sovetskaya Litva*, March 26, *Golos Rigi* (Latvia), March 27, *Sovetskaya Latvia*, March 27, and *Vecherniy Kiev*, March 28.

Throughout the Soviet Union Jews were placed in a poignant dilemma, faced with the prospect of not being able to properly celebrate the ancient Jewish festival of freedom and hope without its staple symbolic foodstuff, or with collecting the parcels addressed to them and risking punishment, possibly loss of employment and obloquy as collaborators in ideological subversion.

Cat-and-Mouse Game

The Soviet authorities had played a cat-and-mouse game with them, for only a month before the Soviet Embassy in Washington had officially stated that consignments of *matzot* to individual recipients would be permitted and listing five firms in the United States specifically licenced by the Soviet authorities to accept such consignments. This had encouraged many people, in Britain and the United States particularly, to write to relatives and friends in the U.S.S.R. promising that they would send them parcels. Nevertheless, before the threatening articles appeared, it is known that many Soviet Jews had collected *matzot* sent to them from abroad. And many more took the risk of collecting them even after the warning appeared.

The article in *Pravda Vostoka* and *Izvestia*, "Hidden Benefactors" was, as usual in these cases, signed by a Jew, described as A. Tankhelson, "business secretary of the newspaper *Leninsky Put* (Lenin's Path)." He quoted "letters" from Jews in Samarkand rejecting parcels from Britain, sent via "the British firm Dinerman" from "Zionist organisations" ... "their aim is to prove, common sense and truth to the contrary, that Jews are 'oppressed' in the U.S.S.R."

Mr. Tankhelson, who describes this as "ideological subversion," writes: "I remember the spring of 1962. At that time Samarkand was literally flooded with parcels from Israel." He quotes a letter from "teacher Abram Shimunov" to the newspaper "on that occasion" which said "this handout was an insult to my human dignity." The teacher wrote that he was born and grew up under Soviet rule, was educated in a Soviet school, graduated and is now sending his children to the same school. If it had not been for Soviet rule "could I have received a higher education?" Also he had been very ill and Soviet doctors saved his life. "What would have happened to me, a simple teacher, had I lived in a capitalist country, for instance,

in Israel? . . . Would I be alive today?" He had a wage of 120 roubles and a pension of 42 roubles, plus his father's pension of 31 roubles. "Now judge for yourselves whether my family needs your trash. You would do better by helping those poor people of whom you have so many in Israel."

The writer cited another letter "from S. Normatov, a participant in the Great Patriotic War". "I received notice of a parcel from Israel. The address included my mother's first name, my grandfather's surname and my brother's address, with the brief explanation: 'to a grandfather in the countryside'." It is not clear how, in the circumstances, "S. Normatov" received notice of the parcel which was allegedly addressed to his brother's home and did not even bear his name, but he goes on to write: "Take back this parcel, we ask you to stop these disgraceful actions, which insult the honour and dignity of Soviet citizens."

All this "has taught the provocateurs something," remarks Mr. Tankhelson. "Now the parcels are not coming directly from Israel but from Britain . . . Wherever these ideological manoeuvres originate, they will fail . . . But what do these parcels contain? Well, some nonsense, an 'expensive present' for Passover. One kilogram of *matzos* worth 90 kopeks. Or a rag of the same value. You are supposed to accept the 'generous' gift and praise those who sent it in your Passover prayers. But . . . the 'philanthropists' have suffered another defeat with their ideological tricks."

The author of the article inadvertently discloses that the indignation he records is not exactly spontaneous and voluntary when he reports what "pensioner Zalman Nektalov said at a meeting of tenants of the East Quarter" on March 9, 1964. The calling of meetings of tenants in a particular quarter by Party officials is a common practice in the Soviet Union, a method of drawing attention to party orders, of organising loyal messages, of obtaining "spontaneous" resolutions of indignation, and so forth. It has been frequently used to force the closure of synagogues at the "spontaneous" request of Jewish residents of the district in which the synagogue is situated. On this occasion, *Pravda Vostoka* reports "pensioner Nektalov" as saying: "Who needs *matzos* from Britain? Don't we have our own? Does anybody forbid us to make them? East your own *matzos*, gentlemen, and leave us alone."

In the circumstances, the "tenants of the East Quarter" must have been unconvinced by this rhetoric at a time when, for the fourth year in succession, the Soviet authorities were preventing them from having their own *matzot*, but it does explain how afterwards "notice after notice" was returned "to the Samarkand post office" together with letters to Britain expressing "surprise and indignation" that parcels of unleavened bread had been sent to the writers (of which only three are briefly quoted). "One day the Samarkand post office received ten such statements at once."

The article goes on to ask: "How did these gentlemen get this idea, to 'help' Jews living in the U.S.S.R., why just Jews? They want to give new currency to the fairy tale about anti-semitism in our country and,

simultaneously, about 'material privations' of Soviet people. But nobody believes these fairy tales even over there . . . That is why they urgently need facts. But there have not been any facts. There aren't any. There won't be any . . ."

"Provocation, Insult to Soviet Man"

The article in *Sovetskaya Belorussia* of March 22, 1964 was similar in style, based on two letters received "in the editorial office," one from "Boris Kogan, Vitebsk," the second from "Minsk resident, David Belnik." Boris Kogan writes: "Don't the heads of the Jewish spiritual authorities in London know that the Jews of my generation, born under the Soviet regime and governed by the nice Communist Party, afforded genuine human happiness for the first time in history, have nothing in common with religious remnants of the past, with the religious cult?" The sending of the parcel was "a provocation, an openly insulting onslaught not only against me but against other Jews, too" and he advised "the London gentlemen" to help "the thousands of unemployed in your England to find work, to get rid of poverty and hunger." He goes on to say that his sons receive free schooling; that in Vitebsk "there are quite a few people of Jewish nationality" among engineers, doctors, teachers and professors, and asks "the London gentlemen from the Chief Rabbi's office" if they "can boast of such achievements." The second letter, from "Minsk resident David Belnik," asks: "... what is their aim in sending such 'presents'? Who needs them? Do they really think that Jewish believers in the Soviet Union can't provide *matza* for themselves? . . . Such presents lower the dignity of Soviet man, insult his feelings," and he suggests that the mailing firm "Dinerman & Co., better think of the unemployed and needy in England."

Commenting on these letters, "the editorial office" describes the sending of *matzot* as "subversive activities." It refers to "the series of parcels with second-hand clothing recently despatched by unbidden benefactors from Western Germany to Soviet citizens of German nationality. And now the spiritual pastors from London have decided to shower a batch of provocative parcels with *matza* on Soviet people of Jewish nationality." Judging from the fact that the newspaper could find only two letters to quote, it would seem that not many Jews in the densely Jewish-populated area of Belorussia agreed with the editors that "every parcel with second-hand clothing or *matza* from abroad (is) an insult to the honour and dignity of Soviet man."

Sovetskaya Moldavia, in a similar article, could also only find two Jews prepared to complain that the gift parcels were "ideological subversion" and revived the myth of anti-semitism in the Soviet Union."

To add to the irony, the one Yiddish-language newspaper in the U.S.S.R.—the thrice-weekly, four page *Birobidzhaner Shtern*—reprinted the

article from *Pravda Vostoka* with indignant editorial comment, The fact is only of technical interest. *Birobidzhaner Shtern* circulates in 1,000 copies in the Siberian "Jewish Autonomous Region" of Birobidzhan. It is Jewish only in typography, otherwise mainly reproducing items from the local Russian-language newspaper. For this reason, it has been called "the least read newspaper in the U.S.S.R."

"Celebrate With Peas and Beans"

Clearly, it was going to be another bitter Passover in the Soviet Union and, with the first public disclosure in the West of the existence of Trofim Kichko's "Judaism Without Embellishment" three days before the festival began, the full plight of Soviet Jewry was brought home to public opinion in the West.

In its Passover issue of March 27, 1964, the London *Jewish Chronicle's* front-page story told of the newspaper's last-minute attempts to find out the situation in Moscow. It reported a telephone conversation with Moscow Chief Rabbi Levin on Tuesday evening, March 24. "In general, not everybody will have enough *matzot* for Passover, but everybody will have some," Rabbi Levin said. "A little" *matzot* was being baked all the time in the oven rented by the community. He had also received 204 parcels from abroad and was advised to collect some more on Wednesday morning. "It was clear," said the *Jewish Chronicle*, "that the Moscow community would not receive anything like the minimum of 150-180 tons which the Chief Rabbi said would be necessary to meet the needs of observant Jews in the Soviet capital. Altogether, Jewish communities throughout the world have sent 90,000 lbs. of *matzot* (about 40 tons) to the Soviet capital. By Tuesday, the total amount known to have been received by the Chief Rabbi and Mr. George Lieb, president of the Moscow suburban synagogue of Marina Roscha, was 3,580 lbs. (materially less than two tons).

"Chief Rabbi Levin was unable to say how much *matzot* had been baked communally, but it is clear that the total which will be available for Moscow Jews will be far short of their basic requirements. On the assumption that 5 lbs. of *matzot* would provide a token observance of the festival per family, the amount known to have been received from abroad by Tuesday would serve only 716 families.

"Mr. Lieb, in a letter to the *Jewish Chronicle* dated March 17 said that the baking of *matzot* in the bakeries of Jewish congregations of our country, parcels of *matzot* from kind relatives and friends in various countries, parcels from Rabbi Israel Brodie, from the Agudas Israel organisation—give to all the religious the opportunity to solemnly celebrate *Pesach* (Passover)".

But Mr. Lieb had indulged in wish-fulfilment. As the ancient Jewish festival of freedom, celebrated without interruption since the exodus from captivity in Egypt, joined Jews throughout the world in celebration, the

New York Times (March 28-29, 1964), published the following despatch from Moscow:

"Soviet Jews eat peas, not Matzoh"

Unleavened Bread is Missing for Passover Holiday

"MOSCOW, March 27 (AP)—Moscow's 500,000 Jews began the Feast of the Passover today with beans and peas filling many of their plates instead of the traditional *matzot*. Four hours before the beginning of the holiday, men and women complained in the synagogue that they still had no unleavened bread to begin the feast commemorating the Jews' safe escape from Egypt under Moses.

"It was the fourth successive year that Jews in the Soviet Union had been obliged to observe the feast without being able to buy their supplies in the stores, as they had for years past. So angry was one Jew in the synagogue today that when a man evidently of some authority tried to quiet him, he said: 'You are afraid to speak out. I'm not afraid to speak out. Call the militia if you like.' But nobody was disposed to call the militia to add to the confusion about *matzot*.

"Until 1961 *matzot* were sold in bakeries, as in western capitals. That year Government bakers stopped baking it. There are no private bakeries. A little bakery on the outskirts of Moscow recently accepted flour from the congregation, but its capacity was reached when about 4,000 pounds was offered.

"The Jewish community includes an estimated 20,000 to 30,000 devout Jewish families. Each of them needs about 20 pounds of *matzot* for the eight days of Passover. The little bakery, which some Soviet agencies held up as the solution of the problem, could produce barely one per cent of their requirements.

"Earlier this week Rabbi Yehuda Levin granted a dispensation under which Jews who could not get *matzot* might eat beans and peas instead. But both are scarce items on the Soviet market, although peas often can be found.

"A synagogue spokesman tried to quiet the Jews complaining to foreign correspondents. He told the correspondents that the people could bake their own *matzot* in their homes. But when pointed questions were directed at him, he turned away. Many families do not have private ovens in their homes, and it has been nearly impossible for months to buy the flour needed to make *matzot*, due to last year's crop shortage.

"Nevertheless, the Passover service began in the synagogue, not far from Red Square, early in the evening."

Making do with peas and beans instead of the ritual unleavened bread, Soviet Jews still thronged all the available synagogues for the Passover services. The central Moscow synagogue, the two smaller places of worship in the suburbs, the synagogues in Leningrad and other main centres of Jewish population, were filled beyond capacity.

There was a postscript to the depressing events. On April 17, 1964 the London *Jewish Chronicle* reported that "about 260 parcels of *matzot*, sent to Moscow for Passover" had been returned to London by the Soviet authorities. About 20 tons of *matzot* from the United States alone, worth about \$100,000, lay in the Soviet customs, the authorities having refused to release them. Parcels for Jews in Kiev, Tashkent, Samarkand and other places had not been delivered. As a result of the press campaign in Moscow, some Jews had even been afraid to claim the *matzot* baked from their own flour in the rented bakery. A visitor from London to Moscow had watched people queuing at the main synagogue to receive three pieces of *matzot* each—barely sufficient for a single meal for one person.

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