Israelis at Fault, Argues Tel Aviv Attorney:

Chasm Widens Between U.S.-Israeli Jewry

By Z. ABRAMOV

Tel Aviv.

THE CULTURAL barrier resulting from the limited knowledge of the Hebrew language in America is, of itself, not the determining factor in the deepening chasm between Israel and Democratic Diaspora. As there was an active cultural Jewish life in Alexandria in the days of the Septuagint and an active intercourse with the centre in Judea, so there can and should flourish an Anglo-Jewish culture in the Anglo Saxon world of today. Whatever is significant and enduring in contemporary Hebrew literature is capable of being rendered into the English tongue, which tongue will remain for many generations "the Jewish tongue" in the sense that it will be spoken by the majority of the Jews. Unfortunately, the notion that the Hebrew language was, in the last generation, the medium for extensive literary creativeness is unfounded, and the task of translating what is really significant in contemporary Hebrew literary effort presents no insurmountable difficulty.

I venture to suggest that in the next generation, it will be American Jewry that will feed Israel in matter of general and Jewish culture rather than vice-versa. The idea that for the material benefits bestowed upon us Israelis by American Jewish generosity we are reciprocating by way of "exporting" Jewish culture, is, for the time being, wishful thinking rather than a reality. Here in Israel we are undergoing a process of spiritual impoverishment, and as yet there is no force in sight to avert this process. Consequently, inadequate knowledge of Hebrew on the part of American Jewry is not that serious cultural factor which undermines the principle of "the peoplehood of Israel, that is the unity of the Jews wherever they reside."

The deepening chasm between Israel and American Jewry is a real and alarming fact, a political and spiritual menace to Israel and a potential shock and disappointment to that Jewry whose exertions on behalf of Israel will forever be inscribed in letters of gold in the annals of our history.

The root cause, in my opinion, is to be found in the social-moral aspects of the emerging civilization in Israel. The chasm between Israel and American Jewry is bound to widen parallel to the chasm between the respective social ideals and values of the two communities. Your civilization stems out from a set of moral principles which Prof. Myrdal designates as "the American creed"; its roots lie deep in the Judeo-Hellenic traditions of Western culture. It was nurtured by the creative scepticism inherent in the Protestant Reformation, a scepticism that makes for tolerance, freedom of inquiry, and a rational approach to the problems of life. Consequently your civilization is eminently creative, truly individualistic and substantially democratic. "The American way of life" is the daily application of a set of social and moral values.

The emerging civilization in Israel stems out from a pseudo-religious source, fanatical in its essence, intolerant in practice and irrational in character. These characteristics create a climate that is congenial to the growth of a totalitarian system and inimical to material and spiritual creativeness. We are, (Cont. on page 93)

" . . . it will be American Jewry that will feed ISRAEL in matters of general and JEWISH culture . . . "

Israel heads towards "totalitarian systems . . inimical to spiritual creativeness"; America is "eminently creative, truly individualistic, substantially democratic."

Great Britain as a Mandatory power "served as a check on the assertion of (Israel's) totalitarian and irrational tendencies . . ."

These unrestrained and almost shocking thoughts merit consideration not because of the sensational nature of their content, but because of the prestige of the man who makes them . . . a man who is one of Tel Aviv's distinguished citizens, a leading member of the bar, and a dominant figure in the Tel Aviv Israel-American Friendship League.

Mr. Abramov's charges appeared first in The Reconstructionist as a letter to the editor, in reply to an article accusing American Jewry of chief responsibility for the widening cultural rift between U.S. and Israeli Jewry. — The Editor.

ISRAEL PRESS EXCERPTS

Compiled by and reprinted from Israel Youth Horizons, Jewish Agency Jerusalem.

VOCABULARY

Why is this?	על מה זה?
quarter	שכונה
be distinguished	מצטיין
quietness	שלווה
reign	שרר
tumult	מהומה
was in confusion	היתה כמרקחה
at dawn	עם עלות השחר
the stones of the walls cry out	אבן מקיר תזעק
daylight would come	יאיר היום
inscription	כתובת
the more	כל כמה
they read	שקראו יותר
"Down with the warmongers!"	"הקץ למחרחרי המלחמה"
the Almighty	השם
fever	חרחור
hands off	אספו ידיכם
cannon-fodder	בשר־תותחים
Wall Street	וול סטריט
Yemenite teacher	מארי
traditional book on Hebrew words	"ערוך השלם"
he was confused	נתבלבלה עליו דעתו
excitement	התרגשות
wonder	פליאה
liable to happen to them	עלול להתרגש עליהם
because of	בגלל
recently arrived	מקרוב באו
finally	לבסוף
to confuse the devil	לבלבל את השטן
to avert the evil decree	לקרוע את רוע הגזרה
to present themselves	להתייצב
as before (lit. yesterday and the day before)	כתמול שלשום

מה זה ועל מה זה?

שְׁכוּנַת „הֲדַר שָׁלוֹם" הִיא אַחַת מִשְּׁכוּנוֹת עוֹלֵי תֵּימָן בָּאָרֶץ. תָּמִיד הִצְטַיְּנָה שְׁכוּנָה זוֹ בְּשַׁלְוָה וּבְשֶׁקֶט שֶׁשָּׂרְרוּ בָּהּ.

אַךְ יוֹם אֶחָד נָפְלָה מְהוּמָה בְּלֵב הַבְּרִיּוֹת וְכָל הַשְּׁכוּנָה הָיְתָה כְּמֶרְקָחָה. בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁהִשְׁכִּימוּ אַנְשֵׁי הַשְּׁכוּנָה עִם עֲלוֹת הַשַּׁחַר לִתְפִלָּה, רָאוּ וְהִנֵּה אֶבֶן מִקִּיר תִּזְעָק: בְּאוֹתִיּוֹת אֲדֻמּוֹת וּגְדוֹלוֹת נִכְתְּבוּ עַל קִירוֹת בָּתֵּיהֶם דְּבָרִים שֶׁלֹּא הֵבִינוּ אֶת פֵּרוּשָׁם. אָמְרוּ: יִכָּנְסוּ קוֹדֶם לְהִתְפַּלֵּל וּבֵינְתַיִם יָאִיר הַיּוֹם וְיוּכְלוּ לִקְרוֹא הֵיטֵב אֶת אֲשֶׁר נִכְתַּב עַל הַקִּירוֹת.

לְאַחַר הַתְּפִלָּה, יָצָא כָּל אֶחָד לִקְרֹא מַה שֶּׁנִּכְתַּב עַל קִירוֹת בֵּיתוֹ. כִּי אֵין בַּיִת אֲשֶׁר אֵין שָׁם כְּתֹבֶת. קָרְאוּ וְקָרְאוּ, וְכָל כַּמָּה שֶׁקָּרְאוּ יוֹתֵר, הֵבִינוּ פָּחוֹת. לְמָשָׁל, עַל בֵּיתוֹ שֶׁל [illegible] הָיָה כָּתוּב: „הַקֵּץ לִמְחַרְחֲרֵי הַמִּלְחָמָה" [illegible] אֶת הַכָּתוּב. לְמַשׁ: „[illegible]". עַל קִירוֹת [illegible] כָּתוּב: „אִסְפוּ יְדֵיכֶם [illegible]" — [illegible] לְהַסְבִּיר לוֹ. [illegible] קוֹרִיאָה.

אֵצֶל [illegible] כָּתוּב: „[illegible] לְתוֹתָחִים". — [illegible] — מִי יוּכַל לְהָעִיד [illegible] בְּשַׂר [illegible] לִי כְּשֵׁר אֲפִילוּ לְשַׁבָּת!

[illegible] הָיָה כָּתוּב: „הַקֵּץ לָאִימְפֶּרְיָאלִיזְם [illegible] וּוֹל סְטְרִיט".

כֵּיוָן שֶׁשּׁוּדְיָה לֹא יָדְעָה קְרֹא וּכְתֹב, בִּקְּשָׁה מֵרֹאשׁ הַשְּׁכוּנָה, מָארִי שָׁלוֹם, שֶׁיִּקְרָא וְיֹאמַר לָהּ מַה [illegible] וּמַה [illegible], וְהִיא רַק [illegible]. וְכֵיוָן שֶׁגַּם מָארִי שָׁלוֹם לֹא הֵבִין אֶת הַמִּלִּים הַקָּשׁוֹת הָאֵלוּ, חִפֵּשׂ בְּמִלּוֹן הָעִבְרִי וּב„עָרוּךְ הַשָּׁלֵם" וְלֹא מָצָא, נִצְטַעֵר וְנִתְבַּלְבְּלָה דַּעְתּוֹ.

וּבֵינְתַיִם גָּדְלָה הַהִתְרַגְּשׁוּת וְגָבְרָה הַפְּלִיאָה בְּקֶרֶב אַנְשֵׁי הַשְּׁכוּנָה שֶׁלֹּא יָדְעוּ מִי כָּתַב אֶת [illegible] הָאוֹרָאוֹת. וּמִי יוֹדֵעַ מַה עָלוּל לְהִתְרַגֵּשׁ עֲלֵיהֶם בִּגְלָלָן: וּמַה פִּשְׁעָם וּמַה חַטָּאתָם, כִּי יַאֲשִׁימוּ אוֹתָם בִּדְבָרִים מְשׁוּנִים, וְהֵם רַק עוֹלִים חֲדָשִׁים מִקָּרוֹב בָּאוּ.

לְבַסּוֹף, הֶחְלִיטוּ פֶּה אֶחָד:

א) לְהַכְרִיז עַל תְּפִלָּה בְּצִבּוּר עִם תְּקִיעַת שׁוֹפָרוֹת כְּדֵי לְבַלְבֵּל אֶת הַשָּׂטָן וְלִקְרֹעַ אֶת רֹעַ הַגְּזֵרָה.

ב) לְקַלֵּס אֶת חַבְרֵי הַוַּעַד לְהִתְיַצֵּב לִפְנֵי הַמֶּמְשָׁלָה וְלִשְׁמֹעַ מִפִּיהָ, מַה זֶּה וְעַל מַה זֶּה.

ו[illegible] וְשָׁקְטָה הַשְּׁכוּנָה כִּתְמוֹל שִׁלְשׁוֹם.

יאיר לוי (מתוך „פרוזדור")

PUBLICATION OF THIS HEBREW COLUMN SPONSORED BY MAIMONIDES COLLEGE AND DEPT. OF JUDAIC STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Jewish Writers Take TIME To Task on Finkelstein Story

Time Magazine's by now famous Oct. 15 front-cover story on Dr. Louis Finkelstein, president of the Jewish Theological Seminary of Amecirca, caused little rejoicing among Jewish journalists. There follow excerpts from two of the leading critiques thus far published. — The Editor.

MENACHEM RIBALOW IN CONGRESS WEEKLY

ON THE OCCASION of the High Holy Days TIME magazine devoted considerable space to a discussion of Judaism, the Jewish Theological Seminary and its President, Dr. Louis Finkelstein, who was especially interviewed for this purpose. In the course of that story (Oct. 15, 1951) many strange and puzzling things were said. It would be interesting to discuss them all, but one of them aroused our particular concern. This appears under the caption "Zion Trouble" and begins as follows: "As an administrator, a prominent citizen of the Jewish community, Finkelstein was bound to come to grips with Zionism." There is an implicit connotation in this remark that Zionism is something essentially un-American with which any American Jew must (Cont. on page 75)

THE 'EDITORS' IN THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST

THE ARTICLE IS chock-full of boners. Featuring Dr. Louis Finkelstein, the journalist describes him as standing before the reading desk (ostensibly on Rosh Hashonah or Yom Kippur), with the Torah scrolls lying before him, while he beats his breast "in the traditional gesture of sorrow." The Ten Days of Penitence become 'Yamin Noraim'; Orthodox Jews are alleged to be "required to be indoors" on the Sabbath; the candles are said to burn for 24 hours; the Reform Jews are said to have abandoned the idea of the Chosen People. We are tempted to wonder whether the rest of the magazine is no more reliable.

As for the views expressed by Dr. Finkelstein, there is one to which we must take vigorous exception. According to him, Hitler came upon the world to cause Jews to repent. He (Cont. on page 15)

Martin Buber: His World and Work

Discoverer Of Hasidism

By JACOB S. MINKIN

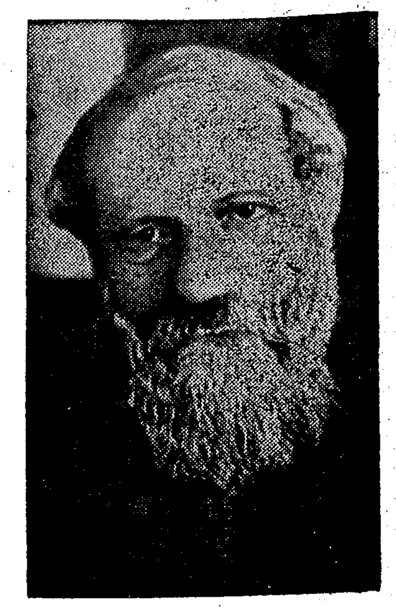
PROBABLY NO OTHER contemporary Jewish scholar carries greater prestige than Martin Buber, now in the United States for a series of lectures at the Jewish Theological Seminary and other institutions of learning. For fifteen years Professor of Social Philosophy at the Hebrew University, he had been a vital and vigorous influence among the Jews in Germany for many years before he took up his residence in the Holy Land. He is the last and foremost of a generation of the Jewish spirit, which included Professor Hermann Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig and Ahad Ha-am, with all of whom he worked and collaborated, and all of whom he may be said to have excelled by having evolved a new orientation to life and religion.

Martin Buber is one of the truly extraordinary Jewish figures of our time. An intensely spiritual personality, who speaks and writes with prophetic fervor and persuasiveness, he has been a rare guide of the perplexed of our time who ignited more souls and influenced more Jewish lives than perhaps any other man now living. Philosopher and theologian though he is, he succeeded in clothing his thoughts in such arresting and often poetic form, that he is one of the most widely read writers of his kind. His pages are never cold, dry or abstract; he breathes a spirit of reality into every written word. Indeed, reading Buber, one feels to be not only in the presence of a great prophetic spirit wrestling with himself, wrestling with God, westling with his people, but face to face with a literary artist of rare distinction.

Professor Buber writes with extraordinary ease and fluency, being one of the most prolific serious writers of his time. Scarcely a year passes when not one but several volumes come out from his extremely deft and fertile pen. The dozen volumes or so which during the past few years appeared in this country and in England, far from exhaust Buber's literary output; some of the most enriching and stimulating products of his spirit will await translation into English.

There was chaos and confusion upon the Jewish scene in the German-speaking countries of Europe when Martin Buber first appeared. Thousands were ready to scuttle the ship of Judaism which they thought was no longer seaworthy and was sinking. The currents of the Hebrew Renaissance in Eastern Europe had not yet penetrated to them; the names of Pinsker and Ahad-Ha-am they had not heard; 'Rome and Jerusalem' was a little-read book; they knew nothing of Graetz's and Dubnow's many-volumed chronicles of three thousand years of Jewish achievement. They were swept away by a philosophy of an awakened nationalism, but they failed to sense its Jewish implications; great and heroic men labored for the creation of a 'Wissenschaft des Judentums', but the creative, living word had not come from them, and the Reform Jews shrewdly devised a denationalized Judaism as the surest means of escaping its handicap.

There were great and luminous Jewish minds in Martin Buber's generation and in the years directly before his time, but they either spoke in abstractions or were not at home with the swiftly-moving currents of the times. Thus the saintly Samson Raphael Hirsch sought to stem the religious nihilism of his age by trying to fit life to the Law, and wrote his 'Nineteen Letters' as a kind of "Guide for the Perplexed" in reverse when there was neither the atmosphere nor vitality of Jewish religious consciousness. Professor Hermann Cohen was a great scholar and thinker, but paradoxically he probed for God in 'Vernunft', and in his early career he agreed to the change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday, deprecated Zionism, and regarded Jewish nationhood as treason to the countries Jews lived in. Franz Rosenzweig, one of the rare and exquisite Jewish souls whose influence on his contemporaries had been cut short by his tragic premature death, was Hermann Cohen's friend and disciple in both his Jewish passions and prejudices. While he brilliantly surveyed the whole gamut of Jewish intellectual and spiritual creativity through the ages, he was unqualifiedly opposed to political Zionism as a secularization and ultimate assimilation of the Jewish spirit. (Continued on page 92)



PROF. BUBER

RUBIN'S MURAL ON DAVID AND JONATHAN

A Notable Cultural Accomplishment

IT IS NO disparagement of the Hebrew Fraternal Lodge to say that their handsome mural of David and Jonathan would grace the walls of the Manitoba Art Museum, and probably set a record for high interest were it to hang there for a period.

Zigmond Rubin, who had not done a "serious piece of painting for twenty years," according to his own testimony, and spent "at least 400 working hours" on the mural, has produced a piece of work that on its artistic merits, and in terms of the delight it brings the viewer, must stand as one of Winnipeg Jewry's notable cultural accomplishments for all time.

The subject is taken from the Old Testament, Frst Book of Samuel, Chapter 20, verse 18: "To-morrow is the new moon; and thou shalt be missed because thy seat will be empty." This is Jonathan speaking to David.

Mr. Rubin says he read the chapter over dozens of times to steep himself in the atmosphere of the story of Jonathan's love for David . . . a love which had to shield the young shepherd from the wrath of his father-king Saul, whose maniacal seizures made him turn with sword and spear on David in whom he foresaw his successor.

The meaning of Jonathan's words are this: he senses Saul's fitful mood, and sends David off to hide from the king in the wilderness for three days, after which Jonathan will signal with arrows whether the king's temper has altered.

Rubin chose the Jonathan-David theme because in all the world's history there is no more touching story of fraternal love between men; no more fitting theme to be found for the Hebrew Fraternal Lodge, with its accent on fraternalism.

David's lament upon the death of Saul and Jonathan, (to be found in Chapter 1, The Second Book of Samuel) is the most beautiful elegy in world literature. Not without reason does every school child in Israel know the selection by memory.

On viewing the bodies of the two, flung out in shame upon the battlements of Beth Shan, David laments:

Thy beauty, O Israel, upon thy high places is slain!
How are the mighty fallen!
Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.
Ye mountains of Gilboa,
Let there be no dew nor rain upon you,
Neither fields of choice fruits;
For there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away,
The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.
From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.
Saul and Jonathan, the lovely and the pleasant
In their lives, even in their death they were not divided;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.
Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights,
Who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!
Jonathan upon thy high places is slain!
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan;
Very pleasant has thou been unto me;
Wonderful was thy love to me,
Passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!

Rubin has conceived the setting in a manner reminiscent of Persian miniature painting, and Arthur Szyk's masterful revival of that style. The large canvass is done in dry tempera rather than oils to convey a tapestry impression, which it does very effectively, the grain of the canvas reinforcing the impression. Embroidered collars, embossed armour plate, shields and scabbards. (See page 96)

A mural painting of David and Jonathan was unveiled and dedicated recently at the Hebrew Fraternal lodge. The artist, Zigmond Rubin, here describes his work after the dedication ceremony by Rabbi Arthur Chiel. Others shown are: Mrs. Sam Pollock, president of the ladies' auxiliary of the lodge; Judge L. S. Madin, chairman of the unveiling; Rabbi Chiel, and Bert Goldberg, lodge president.