

LOS ANGELES: PORTRAIT OF PROSPERITY

By EDWIN SAMUEL

ON my recent visit to Los Angeles, where I spent a few days fundraising for the Hebrew University on my way from Japan to New York, I was surprised to find that, with no fewer than 450,000 Jews, the city has the second largest Jewish community in the United States, after that of New York. It exceeds in numbers even the Jewish community of Chicago.

The city of Los Angeles proper covers 93 square miles, with a total population of just under three million. If all the adjacent townships that make up the whole metropolitan area of Los Angeles are included, its population reaches almost seven million! The State of California, of which both Los Angeles and San Francisco form part, has a total of 17.3 million inhabitants, already outstripping the previously most populous State in the Union — New York State.

Los Angeles was first settled in 1769, by Spaniards. The first Jews arrived there in the 1840s, but the growth of the Jewish community was slow. Even as late as 1942, there were only 100,000 Jews in the city. Yet today, there are 435,000, or five times as many.

The reasons for the attraction of Los Angeles are, first, the climate of California which is warmer all the year round than say that of New York or Chicago, even though the air is often foggier. secondly, Los Angeles has several economic advantages, one of which is a fine natural harbour. As a result of its rapid expansion, it offers a wide range of employment possibilities — for example, on the construction of private houses, apartment houses, offices and industrial plants. Tens of thousands of men and women also get good wages in heavy industry — for example, steel, machinery, automobiles and aircraft. Although the role of the film industry is less vital today than in the past, large numbers of technicians, script-writers and actors, many of them Jews, are still employed in this field.

Many Jews are also to be found in Los Angeles in the professions —

as teachers in the State University of California (Los Angeles branch) and in the independent University of Southern California, in the same city.

There are naturally many Jewish students at these two universities and at other Los Angeles institutions for higher learning (such as technical colleges). Among them are a large proportion of approximately one thousand Israelis. They help to keep the Israeli Consul-General, two Consuls and a Vice-Consul extremely busy. Many Israeli V.I.P.s also pass through Los Angeles. In recent months they have included Mr. Abba Eban, the Minister of Education and president of the Weizmann Institute; Mr. Eliahu Elath, the president of the Hebrew University; and the archaeologist, Dr. Yigal Yadin.

In addition to Jewish teachers in the Los Angeles area, Jews are strongly represented in many other professions — scientific research, law, medicine, architecture and accountancy. Los Angeles Jews are, of course, prominent in business, in particular in property and construction, in banking and insurance; and, now, even in heavy industry — a new field of activity for Jews (for example, the Harvey aluminum corporation). Thousands of Jews work as salesmen or are owners of small or large stores or big department stores: many work on the business side of the film industry.

The Jewish Community of Los Angeles is well-organized, under a Jewish Federation Council with an extensive office block of its own and a good communal library. The United Jewish Welfare Fund of Los Angeles raises some seven million dollars a year to pay for all its communal institutions and activities, in addition to large amounts raised by individual Jewish synagogues and by other non-affiliated charitable undertakings. The Jewish Medical Centre of Los Angeles (formed by the recent amalgamation of The Cedars of Lebanon and the Mount Sinai hospitals) receives

a grant of \$700,000 a year from the Federation; raises a further million itself towards its own maintenance costs and collected last year \$7,500,000 towards its \$10,000,000 building fund.

There are several Hebrew secondary schools in Los Angeles, with a total of only several hundred students — a very small proportion of the age group concerned. Many Jewish children — at least until they are Bar Mitzvah or Bat Mitzvah — go one day a week to "Sunday Schools" run by the synagogues of all three trends — Orthodox, Conservative and Reform. Many of these synagogues, too, have expensive rebuilding programs.

There are two Jewish aged homes in Los Angeles, not supported by the United Jewish Welfare Fund.

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They raise about 300,000 dollars each a year to cover their expenses.

The two Jewish country clubs of the Los Angeles area have a total membership of some 850, which includes a few non-Jews. There are four privately-owned Jewish periodicals in the area with a total circulation of about 30,000 copies, largely for advertising local Jewish concerns.

The Jewish Community of Los Angeles — like those in most other English-speaking territories throughout the world — is deeply involved in fund-raising. First, as good American citizens, they contribute handsomely to local non-sectarian charities (for example, the American Red Cross and to building schemes for the two Los Angeles universities). Then they cover the annual budgets of the United Jewish Welfare Fund of Los Angeles and of the other local Jewish institutions already mentioned. In addition, there is a vast amount of activity on behalf of Israel. Israel State

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The Anglo-Jewish Academic

By LIONEL KOCHAN

A GREAT DEAL has recently been written about the Anglo-Jewish student; relatively little, however, about the Anglo-Jewish academic. These few remarks, then, are an attempt to redress the balance. We all know what Lucky Jim was like. But what do we know of his Jewish counterpart, Lucky Yankl?

He is, of course, neither numerous nor affluent enough to warrant the formation of a J.P.A. group. For all that, his presence is a significant feature of the contemporary Jewish scene.

First of all, however, to avoid misunderstanding, let us try to answer this question: is it reasonable to argue that the Anglo-Jewish academic does not, in fact, exist?

How, it will be said, can you attack the same label to the Fellow of All Souls and to the temporary assistant lecturer at Redbrick? How can you group under the same category men whose special interests range, shall we say, from the etymological basis of Middle High German to the problems of low temperature physics, from the history of the middle years of the reign of Charles V to the occupational structure of a suburb in Northampton?

Yet even these and no doubt countless other individual differences cannot entirely obliterate Lucky Yankl's existence. There still remains a number of common characteristics, which, although they may not withstand a strict sociological scrutiny, do make it meaningful to talk of the Anglo-Jewish academic as a more or less recognizable entity.

What are these characteristics? In the first place, Lucky Yankl is probably something of a pioneer. The academic profession is the last of the major professions to be followed in any number by young Jews. One would hazard a guess and say that only since the war has it made any great appeal as a career. There were, of course, outstanding exceptions during the inter-war period — one thinks automatically of such personalities as Alexander, Brodetsky, Namier — but as a general rule it seems undeniable that the academic profession was comparatively spurned in those pre-war days.

Why should this have been so?

The answer, I believe, suggests another characteristic of the Anglo-Jewish academic. In all probability, he (or she) is the offspring of parents who settled in this country in the successive waves of immigration from the 1880's onwards. In other words, the academic is likely to be first — or second — generation British. The older Anglo-Jewish families, again with notable exceptions, have produced proportionately fewer entrants to the profession.

This is all the more surprising, as a certain time-lag is inevitable before a Jewish community, anywhere, becomes sufficiently acclimatized of its chosen environment to be able to venture forth with confidence

into that environment. Commerce, shall we say, is international and abstract in a way that study of literature or history or philosophy is not. Most people will require to have behind them a generation or more of uninterrupted contact with the relevant intellectual and cultural environment before they can have absorbed sufficient of its intangibles to appreciate, for example, the literature or the philosophy produced as part of that cultural environment.

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