TWENTY YEARS OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ORDER

by R. Saltzman

The ~~leaders~~ leadership of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order, ~~the National Board of Directors~~ ~~are represented in~~ ~~have~~ has gathered together in this, ~~the~~ twentieth year ~~of~~ since the establishment of the International Workers Order, ~~to~~ We shall consider the most important problems facing ~~the Order~~ its both as a result of its continuous growth and development and as a result of the present world and domestic ~~conditions~~ situation.

In the two decades that our Order has ~~existed~~ been in existence it has undoubtedly trodden, and we might say paved, a unique path. It will be of interest to take a brief glimpse of this path, ~~and~~ of the problems ~~which~~ it has had to deal with, and the problems which it is still facing ~~at the present moment~~ and which it must ~~seek~~ attempt to solve.

Although we gather at a memorial moment ~~when the sky~~ in history of our country ~~is covered over with cloud dark and ominous clouds~~, we all ~~know~~ feel certain that this atmosphere cannot last much longer. Night must pass and clear daylight will come, which will forever dispel those sinister clouds with which fascism sought - and was unable - to to cover the entire world.

~~xIxxx

country into some sort of fascist state. This we can observe from the vicious attacks upon the labor movement, from the rise of anti-Semitism and the increasing arrogance of the anti-Semites, the renewed attacks against the Negro people, the offensive against the foreign born, the witch hunts directed against every progressive person. The chief aim of all these reactionary forces is to drive our country towards a third world war, a war which threatens the destruction of civilization itself.

To our great sorrow some of these sinister elements are also found in Jewish life. They want us to forget the six million Jewish lives destroyed by fascism. They want us to forget that fully one third of our kin have perished in the most terrible wholesale massacre in history. That is why it is of the great importance that the present gathering of our leaders seriously devote itself to the question of how we can carry out

the promise we gave in those ~~tragic~~ solemn days when we were sending ~~our sons and daughter~~ our sons and daughters upon the battlefields of Europe and Asia: the promise that we shall never rest until fascism shall have been completely destroyed ~~upon the face of the earth~~ throughout the world. Yes, one of the cardinal problems facing us at the present moment is ~~through~~ by what methods and means we can make the greatest contribution to smashing the ~~secret and open plan not so secret~~ plans for a third world war and to ~~the~~ establish~~ment of~~ a durable and secure peace throughout the world.

Twenty Years Ago

At this time it is well to remember those difficult, but happy, days twenty years ago when we laid the foundation for the birth of our International Workers Order. ~~Before my eyes~~ I can still see the delegates assembled in Irving Plaza Hall, New York, ~~to~~ at the conference on October 11, 12, 13, 1929. On the

one hand it was a great sorrow to us that we were forced to leave an organization which we had helped to build, an organization to which most of our delegates had devoted the best years of their lives. And for what purpose were they giving of their energy, their time, their money, ~~their welfare~~ to this organization? To make of that organization a great constructive force in Jewish life, ~~to serve~~ for the interests of the Jewish worker and middle class person. But what happened? This organization got into the hands of elements who served the purposes of reaction. They persecuted the best and most forward-looking of the members and brought about a situation in which it was impossible for these members to work. Every delegate at that historic conference declared that he no longer wished to work in an organization which lies in the arms of reaction and which from being a constructive force in Jewish life and a real aid to its members has become a disruptive

force. Today we can say that the experience of the past twenty years, the depths to which that organization and its leadership have sunk, have fully borne out the ~~sentiments~~ attitude we expressed at that historic conference.

I can still feel the enthusiasm and the determination on the part of the delegates to build a progressive, independent fraternal order. But

In those days we had not yet visualized the complete structure of the ~~organization~~ edifice we were intending to erect. There were many among us, even some ardent friends devoted to progressive ideals, who had many misgivings and doubts. Some of them asked ~~this~~ these questions: Will we be capable of building a new order ~~such as~~ we ~~wanted to see in that organization~~ that ~~we left?~~ ~~Whence~~ Where will ~~come~~ we secure ~~the~~ funds to pay the first week of sick benefits? Will we be able to establish a medical department to serve our

members? ~~And some asked each other anxiously, whisperingly, because it was too upsetting to speak about it in the open.~~ Suppose one of our members dies? Will we be able to meet our obligations? And other people asked: How do we envisage our new organization as a social and cultural institution?

It is necessary to remind ourselves that there ~~have~~ has always been no lack of ~~agents~~ foreign in the labor movement. We still remember the appearance of the late leader of the Socialist party, Morris Hilquit, before the Commissioner of Insurance demanding that no charter be granted us because we really ~~do~~ did not wish to build a new organization ~~we merely wish~~ but merely to destroy the Workmen's Circle.

Well, you know that the only aim of our leaders during the past twenty years has been to build our splendid Order, our splendid affiliated institutions, cultural and social, whether

they be children's schools, ~~glee clubs~~ choruses or, theatre groups, ~~or what have you.~~ And our efforts forced the leaders in other fraternal organizations to maintain their own similar institutions, despite the fact that often it was against their own desires. ~~We can therefore truthfully say that our birth and our existence have at times influenced the leaders of the Workmen's Circle to engage in worthwhile activities.~~ The facts show that we were a constructive, not a disruptive, factor in Jewish life.

Today, at the anniversary session of the National Board, we are filled with pride that we have contributed mightily to the building up of the International Workers Order. Ours is a most unique organization, consisting of fifteen national group societies of different languages and cultures yet united in one fraternal and united organization. These different national societies are united not only to achieve the aims of better insurance, better sick

benefits, and better medical aid; ~~but~~ they have also united to help labor improve its conditions, to integrate their own national cultures with the cultural life of our country, to fight against race prejudices and race discrimination, to defend the rights of minorities, to protect ~~immigrants~~ foreign born against persecutions, to fight for the rights of ~~millions of~~ the Negroes people in our country, to fight to preserve the cherished traditions which the American Revolution has bequeathed to us, the traditions embodied in the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights.

~~Yes~~, We may say with the ~~fullest assurance~~ utmost sincerity that we have built an organization which fills us with pride, which has fulfilled all our dreams of twenty years ago. ~~Twenty years ago~~ In 1930 we started with but 5,000 members. But soon we were joined by the Hungarian Sick Benefit Society, the Russian Mutual Aid Society, and the Slovak ~~Labor Order~~ Workers Society. And in the process of growth and development

we added ~~an additional~~ eleven other ~~language~~ national groups societies to our ranks. So that today the International Workers Order consists of fifteen national societies together comprising 165,000 members, of which the Jewish People's Fraternal Order has 55,000 members.

The financial growth of ~~distance~~ ~~between~~ twenty years ~~ago and today~~ may be measured by the fact that whereas in those days we had no funds whatsoever, we have paid out close to $15,000,000 ~~in~~ during these twenty years and have a reserve fund of about $6,000,000.

Let us also add that we have during these years become an important ~~social~~ cerci and cultural force in Jewish life. Our Jewish Children's Schools are the largest secular Jewish school movement in the United States. We have dozens of choruses, a splendid Yiddish Theater Ensemble, a maginificent women's movement - the Emma Lazarus Women's Division - and the beginnings of a fine youth organization.

But let no one think that our existence was a bed of roses. On the contrary, it was beset with many difficuties. Our enemies have persistently attempted to put stones in our path. Nevertheless we have withstood all the attacks ~~made against us~~, and we will undoubtedly also ~~conquer~~ overcome the latest series of attacks now directed against us. We will continue to build our beloved Order and fashion it into an even more effective instrument for the benefit of labor and the ~~toiling masses~~ working people.

Our Anniversary Celebrations

From what we have said ~~above~~ it seems reasonable that our desire to make the twentieth anniversary celebrations of the Order a most fitting tribute to our organization~~s~~ is justified. It is our aim that the anniversary be celebrated in every corner of the land, in the largest and most imposing public auditoriums, and ~~that we aim to~~ reach the widest possible groups in Jewish life.

It is also clear that the anniversary celebrations must not be limited to one evening, or one week, or even one month. The entire year 1950 must become an anniversary year. All our various institutions, the children's schools, choruses, orchestras, the theater ensemble, etc. must become strengthened and developed during this year. The Emma Lazarus Division must become a most important factor in the progressive women's movement during this year, and above all must become a cultural and social force among the Jewish women of our country. Our youth organization must break out of its swaddling clothes and enter the second phase of its development, so that by the time of the anniversary date it will have developed various influential social and cultural institutions as part of the progressive youth movement in the United States.

Another important task in connection with the anniversary is to enlarge and improve our cadres, on a local as well as national

scale. We are preparing for our anniversary celebration a lavish Almanac, which will be an important and dignified contribution to Jewish culture. Another important ~~task~~ responsibility in our anniversary year is to reach thousands of new members. The sloggn adopted at the seventh national convention ~~is~~ was that ~~at~~ by the time of our next national convention in 1951 we must become the largest Jewish fraternal organization in the United States. Our work in the coming year must be directed towards the realization of this slogan.

The Struggle for Unity

~~I can state without fear of controversion that~~ The struggle for unity is of the greatest ~~moment~~ concern at the present time, not less important than during the war against fascism. At that time it was necessary to destroy the fascist beast that had begun the world conflagaration, ~~and~~ had destroyed millions of lives, and had

sought to turn the clock of history back to the dark ages. The unity of all freedom loving nations, the unity of all anti-fascists made it possible to give the death blow to fascism.

Today the problem is to prevent an even greater and more devastating catastrophe, which a new reactionary coalition (composed partly of elements who in those days were forced into the underground) is seeking to bring about - a third world war, an atom war. The question arises, what must be the tasks of a true antifascist in such a period? The answer is, to unite with all those who perceive the horrible danger of such a catastrophe and together with them to stop the march of these sinister forces that are willing to destroy the world in order to preserve their power.

For this reason alone we must declare that unity, even if it is just for this specific purpose alone, is the most important

task before us ~~for~~ to which we must bend all our efforts.

Let us observe what the reactionary forces are doing now. Their first and most important task is to destroy every vestige of unity in the ranks of labor, to destroy the unity between labor and other progressive forces in the country. This, peculiarly enough, ~~was~~ were also the ~~Hitlerian~~ NAZI tactics. Our immediate program must ~~therefore~~ concentrate around this one point: Against war and for a durable peace.

We can and must unite with all those elements who can agree to such a program. The stronger and deeper this unity, the less chance there will be for reaction to carry out its nefarious plans.

This is of fundamental importance for all antifascist forces throughout the world and in our country. And this is likewise of fundamental importance for the Jewish people.

The reactionary forces have gained dominance also in Jewish

life. In line with the aims of ~~the~~ reactionary ~~policies~~ they seek to make the Jewish people forget the ~~outrages~~ anguish and the sufferings of the European Jews; to forget that had the late war continued for another ~~little~~ while not a single Jew would have been left in Europe; to forget that had fascism continued its conquests in the East not a Jew would have remained alive in Palestine. Our task in the building of the united front must be not to allow the Jewish people to forget for one moment all these things and to impress upon them the fact that these horrible days ~~would~~ will return if reaction and neo-fascism are allowed to carry out their diabolic plans.

We must remember too that Jewish reaction has been successful, as the general reaction in our country has been, through nationalist and partly chauvinist slogans to destroy the positions of unity that had been gained during the second world war. How important

these positions would have been today can very well be realized.

The reactionary Jewish ~~bourgeoisie~~ forces has been successful in destroying the American Jewish Conference and ~~to prevent~~ in preventing it from becoming a true people's organization. A united Jewish mass organization was against the interests of the Jewish ~~bourgeoisie~~ reaction, because it seeks ~~t~~ sole dominance in Jewish life under all circumstances.

Jewish reaction was able, and let us hope only temporarily, to destroy the unity in the American Jewish Congress, which had in the war years become a progressive factor in Jewish life. When the Congress sought to extend its organizational basis with the aim of becoming a truly mass organization for the interests of the Jewish people, the reactionary leadership which had the upperhand in the Congress prevented it from pursuing this aim.

At the World Jewish Congress in Montreux, Switzerland the

reactionary forces were able (although in an underhand fashion) to divert the Congress from its progressive path and thus jeopardized its continued existence as a progressive instrument for the interests of the Jewish people throughout the world. The actions of the leadership after the Congress in Montreux were of such a nature as virtually to destroy the unity in Jewish life which had been built up so painfully. Returning from Montreux these reactionary leaders of the American Jewish Congress sought to exclude the progressive organizations from the Congress, thus continuing their splitting tactics and endangering the continued existence of the Congress as a mighty force for peace and progress.

The American Jewish Congress recently held a convention. It is not possible for us now to make a detailed analysis of all its deliberations and decisions. However, I wish to assert that despite all the maneuvers of the reactionary leadership of the

Congress to ~~achieve a confirmation~~ get the approval from the convention for the exclusion of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order they nevertheless did not dare to bring this question clearly and openly before the delegates.

The Congress leaders were even afraid to allow the representatives of the Order and of the American Jewish Labor Council to bring their appeal before the convention, as they were entitled to do in accordance with the constitution of the Congress and in accordance with the promises given by the leaders themselves on several occasions, at the Executive Committee, at the Administrative Committee, and even at the convention itself that the ~~expulsion~~ question of the expulsion would be given a place in the discussions around the report of the Resolutions Committee. The leaders were afraid to allow this question to be discussed for the very good reason that there was a danger that if the convention would be informed of all

their ~~shady~~ maneuvers ~~tactics~~ the expulsions might not be approved. They therefore smuggled in the approval for expulsion in the report of the Executive Secretary, which virtually ~~completely~~ avoided the question.

Despite all the preconvention maneuvers of the Congress leaders - the expulsion of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order, and the Jewish Labor Council, the expulsion of the Detroit chapter of the Congress, the disruption of another Congress chapter in the Bronx, the granting of more delegates to "loyal" chapters than they were entitled to in accordance with the rules - despite all these things, 169 progressive delegates were nevertheless represented at the convention and they fought staunchly for a progressive program which we would have supported wholeheartedly. The program proposed by these delegates was fully in line with the program adopted at the convention of the Congress two years ago, a

program which was responsible for the growth and the prestige of the American Jewish Congress and which stimulated many important actions among the Jewish people in the United States.

These 169 delegates represented fully a third of the delegates at the convention, and among them were some of the best leaders, ~~and~~ activists, and founders of the Congress. They ~~symbolized~~ expressed the best traditions which the late Stephen S. Wise ~~represented~~ symbolized.

From all this our attitude to the American Jewish Congress becomes quite clear. As I see it, it may be expressed as follows:

First, we must continue to make clear to the members and chapters of the Congress, what the true significance of the expulsion of the Order and the American Jewish Labor Council ~~means~~ is. We must do this in the same manner that we had planned when we were preparing to bring ~~it~~ the question before the councils and chapters of the Congress had we been allowed to do so. We must propose resolutions calling for a

cessation of the splitting policies of the leadership, for the inauguration of a policy of unity, and for the reinstatement of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order and the ~~Jewish Labor Council~~ AJLC. The American Jewish Congress must again become a progressive force for unity in Jewish life.

Secondly, we must appeal to all the ~~chapters~~ ~~organs~~ bodies in the Congress, from the chapters right up to the Administrative Committee, to take the initiative to organize the widest united front in the struggle against anti-Semitism and for introducing ~~in the~~ in the national legislative body an effective bill against anti-Semitism and racism.

Thirdly, we must continue our efforts in the direction of making the American Jewish Congress, all its ~~branches~~ chapters, and most particularly the Women's Division, an important factor in the struggle for peace.

Fourthly, we must support with all our energy and every progressive action which the Congress undertakes, whether it is for the denazification of Germany, for an independent Israel, or other actions undertaken under the pressure of the progressive membership must be fully supported by us ~~with all our energy~~ and made a vital and energizing enterprise ~~demonstration~~ of the Jewish people, irrespective of whether we are inside or outside the Congress.

However, it would be wrong if we were merely to sit and wait for the American Jewish Congress to build a unity ~~united force~~ in Jewish life. There are grave dangers that the present leadership of the American Jewish Congress will continue to travel upon the reactionary road and increasingly fall under the influence of the American Jewish Committee and the Jewish Labor Committee. The latter two organizations have consistently and persistently fought against every sort of unity, even during the war years, and they

are naturally continuing their reactionary and disruptive policies

Now even more energetically than ever before. If this should come

to pass and the reactionary leaders ~~of the Congress will~~ succeed

in making ~~it~~ the Congress merely another American Jewish Committee ~~but~~ with

a progressive mask, then we will be forced to seek other means ~~whereby~~

to achieve unity in Jewish life on the basis of the program

proposed by the progressive elements at the recent convention;

i.e., struggle for peace, against anti-Semitism, denazification,

etc.

I would therefore propose that we should seek ways and means

to achieve an understanding about such a program with the

progressive trade unions, the American Committee of Jewish Artists and

Writers, the Ambidjan, the Ykuf, the American Jewish Labor Council, the

progressive landsmanschaft organizations, and all other

progressive Jewish organizations that are prepared to unite in

the widest possible movement for the solution of the pressing

problems facing the Jewish people at the present time.

Unity of Negroes and Jews in the Struggle against Racism

The long martyrdom of the Jewish people throughout the world has taught us that persecutions ~~against our people~~ of Jews always ~~took~~ came ~~place~~ in the darkest periods of human history. History has shown more than once, and ~~more~~ too often ~~than~~ for the relationship to be purely coincidental, that whenever a nation was been dominated by reactionary rulers the existence of the Jews in that land has ~~also~~ been made miserable and unbearable. Thus it ~~was when the~~ was during ~~Jesuits dominated Spain~~ the Spanish Inquisition, thus it was when Czarism reigned in Russia, and thus it was under Hitler~~ian~~ ~~rule~~ the regime. ~~At such times~~ The poisonous snake of anti-Semitism is ~~always~~ always fed by ~~the ruling~~ reactionary ruling circles.

At the present time, when reactionary forces are gaining the upper hand in the United States, all sorts of anti-Semitic movements are beginning to flourish. ~~Parellel to~~ Simultaneously with these movements

~~has been developing~~ ~~the~~ ~~long existing organization which is~~ has sought to return the Negroes to a status of slavery has also been rejuvenated. EFFORTS ~~seeking to bring back slavery for the Negroes.~~ The fascist forces behind these medieval movements are not content merely with spreading racist theories. ~~of superiority of the White race.~~ No, from theory, from propaganda they have gone over to deeds. This we can see from the brutal attacks ~~made~~ in Peekskill, on ~~the~~ South Side, Chicago, and lately in Lynn, Mass., where the Jewish boy Larry Goldstein asks his mother: "Why did they beat up a Jewish child?" and "Why did my father give his life in the last war?" ~~And~~ Let us also bear in mind that the sinister reactionary forces ~~has~~ have virtually admitted that these are only "rehearsals." It is clear that if they should succeed in ~~getting away with~~ perpetrating these attacks with impunity they will continue with even more vicious attacks. Their newest technique is to attack both Jews and Negroes simultaneously.

The race haters in our country have begun to coordinate their racist and anti-Semitic policies ~~with the hope~~ hoping and ~~expectation that~~ expecting ~~they will~~ to be able to extend their movement and perhaps receive ~~official help~~ aid and comfort from the ~~rulers~~ official rulings of our country, as ~~this~~ it was the case in Germany. The facist and racist co~~m~~bra is being ~~amply fed~~ given ample ~~from~~ nourishment by all kinds of sources.

Peekskill was not merely an attack upon the most devoted and most ~~illustrious~~ ~~light~~ sons of the Negro people, ~~one~~ one of the most outstanding personalities of the American people - Paul Robeson. No, this was not merely an attack upon ~~a person.~~ an individual. This was a well planned action which aimed at spreading race hatred, and ~~at the perpetration of~~ perpetrating even greater outrages against the fourteen million Negroes in our country, who live under such difficult economic and social conditions and are virtually without civil rights. These same racists likewise intend to foment a widespread

wave of anti-Semitism. The lynch actions in the South are closely linked to planned pogrom actions in the North.

If the race haters have not entirely succeeded in their plans it is not entirely their own fault. They can nevertheless rest content that they have made a good beginning.

What do these events teach us? They teach us that it is of the utmost importance to organize an effective united struggle against anti-Semitism, against white chauvinism, against the lynchers, against Jim Crow. We must arouse the American people to this horrible evil in our land. But especially must we exert our efforts in arousing those sections of the population whom these things touch directly - the Negroes and the Jews. They must stand in the front ranks of this struggle.

That is why we have placed this question ~~on top~~ at the head of the agenda of the National Board meeting. At the same time we must emphasize

that if we of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order wish to be successful in the campaign for unity of Negro and Jew we must, as the first prerequisite, ~~clean out the~~ sweep white chauvinism and Jim Crow from our own ranks; and not in an abstract manner, but in a very concrete manner.

I know that some people will say that I am making a too serious accusation when I assert that the plague of white chauvinism may also be found in our own ranks, let alone the Jewish population as a whole. I wish I could say that ~~this was~~ they are right. ~~not true.~~ I would be most happy to be able to declare that among the Jewish people, and particularly among ~~the~~ JPFO members, such prejudices do not exist. But unfortunately the ~~surrounding~~ poisoned atmosphere surrounding us is far too strong, and whether consciously or unconsciously white chauvinist acts occur from time to time even in our own ranks. ~~If we would therefore carry~~

Such a ~~action of~~ cleansing of our ranks from the poisonous doctrines of racism ~~we would greatly~~ is therefore a must in facilitating our efforts for building Negro-Jewish unity.

The second prerequisite is that ~~we must carry on~~ this fight against discrimination and racism must be carried out in a united manner. The Negroes and Jews in the United States together comprise about twenty million people. This is a mighty force capable of ~~forcing~~ exerting great pressure upon ~~the rulers of our country~~ to pass legislation outlawing racism and anti-Semitism.

The Jewish People's Fraternal Order must take upon itself this task with the utmost ~~amount of~~ ~~devotion~~ seriousness. This great and sacred task of establishing closer relations between ~~the~~ Jews and Negroes. This can be accomplished in several different ways.

Firstly, ~~to~~ we must carry on a joint struggle for federal and state laws to prohibit race discrimination and anti-Semitism; a joint

struggle for the rights of the Negro and Jewish people in the economic, social, and political ~~fields.~~ spheres.

Secondly, ~~to~~ we must bring to American public opinion a knowledge of the great contributions which the Negroes and Jews have made to American culture.

This ~~would~~ should become our strongest weapon in the struggle against the race haters, in the struggle for ~~the~~ full equality of the Negroes, Jews, and foreign born. This ~~would~~ should also enable us to strengthen our own cultural institutions and raise them to an even higher level of achievement.

I am not prepared at the present moment to bring to you a detailed plan and point out how we can put this activity in the very center of our work and link it with our general struggle for unity. ~~But I do know~~ Let us derive inspiration from the fact that the Jewish People's Fraternal Order was the father of our united Order, and that on many

occasions we were the pathfinders for the entire International Workers Order in finding a solution to many pressing problems, ~~and that~~ this time too we shall find ways and means to implement our generalized program.

We ~~would~~ should then be proud indeed if our JPFO ~~should~~ would succeed in making ~~an important contribution~~ an important contrinbution in this field. This would encourage all our other national ~~language~~ societies and the entire IWO in joining the struggle against the bitterest enemy of the Negro and Jewish people. ~~I wish to~~ Let us hope that we will succeed in transforming our decisions at this ~~conference~~ meeting into actual deeds.

Some Important Cultural Problems

On the occasion of our twentieth anniversary it is particularly fitting and proper to consider our cultural work, or at least some of its most important ~~problems~~ aspects. It is at this time worthwhile to refresh our memory of what we said concerning cultural work at the founding of our organization. This was

embodied in our Declaration of Principles as follows:

~~"The IWO recognizes~~

"The IWO recognizes that there is one ~~field~~ sphere in which it can particularly develop a fruitful activity, and this is in the ~~field~~ sphere of culture."

~~The~~ Twenty years existence of the IWO have taught us that cultural work is the very fundamental basis of our entire ~~work~~ functioning; that cultural work is a means whereby we raise our fraternal and social activities to a higher level and whereby we ~~beautify~~ enhance and improve our collective as well as our individual lives. The twenty years ~~life and~~ of existence of our Order have confirmed the correctness of ~~this attitude.~~ the Declaration of Principles.

It is therefore necessary ~~that we should~~ to examine our cultural institutions, their functions, ~~and~~ their place in the entire scheme of our ~~activity,~~ functions, activity as well as the immediate tasks facing us in our ~~cultural work that we wish to plan for the~~ anniversary year. We will begin with the cultural tour which we organize annually.

This year, as ~~we have done~~ in the past, we are sending out on tour throughout the country a group of artists ~~who will perform~~ in a ~~fine~~ varied artistic program. In this program are included two larger works: a one-act playlet which is a condensation of the ~~vigorous~~ dynamic and timely drama, "~~Die Nekome Nemer~~," which our Yiddish Theater Ensemble has performed two years ago in New York. This one-acter depicts fascism in its nakked brutality and in its ultimate destruction. The other major work is a group of folk songs embodying the best in that genre.

The reports which we have received from those cities in which the group has already performed are full of enthusiasm and thank~~ing~~ us for the privilege ~~and~~ of seeing and hearing such a fine artistic group performing such a splendid program.

This tour may properly be considered an important contribution to our cultural work. However, let us add a word of criticism.

It seems to us that this tour is not being utilized as well as it could in the smaller centers which need such programs most vitally. This is also true of the larger cities where there is an opportunity of bringing thousands of people ~~to such concerts~~ who would gladly come to enjoy an evening of ~~Yiddish~~ Jewish culture. We are convinced that with a little exertion on the part of the local JPFO leaders we would be able to reach a dozen or so more cities and thus ~~reach~~ an audience of thousands more. But it seems to be very difficult to conduct a tour such as this with the success it deserves. Unfortunately many of the local leaders do not ~~apprehend~~ fully appreciate the great cultural and social significance of such a tour as a constructive measure for the widening of the sphere of influence of the JPFO.

Incidentally, we might add that this concert tour costs us a good deal of money. If all the cities and centers would accept

the tour we would not have any deficit, and we could use the sum now spent in covering the deficit for other important cultural work, while the cities accepting the tour would also make some money for their own purposes, ~~as those cities have done that have recognized the great importance of the cultural tour and have accepted it.~~

But let us emphasize that it is not only a question of money. The most important fact ~~that~~ is that such an important and vital part of our cultural work suffers from this patronizing attitude and thus does not achieve the results it should ~~is capable of achieving.~~

I therefore wish to propose that all our lodges in the smaller cities and the city committees in the larger centers should make the greatest efforts to accept the tour ~~that~~ during this anniversary year. ~~not a single city should forego the concert tour.~~ We will thus be able to strengthen this cultural institution so that it may ~~better and~~

more effectively serve our Order throughout the country.

Now a few words about our Theater Ensemble. First I wish to announce that ~~of~~ the fifteen weekly performances which the Ensemble has scheduled ~~will perform~~ this winter ~~they~~ have all been sold out.

The appointment of Brother M.A. Suhl brought good results. This was an important step in the direction of laying a permanent foundation for the Theater Ensemble. Those who have visited the rehearsals of the play "The City of Tommorrow" ("Die Shtot fun Morgen") which will be performed this year tell us that the play is an important contribution to the ~~artistic~~ serious Yiddish theater in the United States. ~~So far of the favorable tidings.~~ ¶ Now a few words of criticism.

Firstly, the Ensemble has no firm foundation. The JPFO leadership of the ~~Manhattan~~ New York Districts ~~exerts~~ pays no attention to this important cultural institution. Unfortunately, the ensemble

still depends for its support upon the national office, while it is really a ~~purely~~ New York institution. The first small effort that was made to link the Ensemble more closely with the lodges has shown ~~the markings~~ marks of success, as we have indicated above. Now just envisage the situation if the Ensemble would become transformed into an institution of all our New York districts and lodges. We would then be able to build up a truly splendid, artistic ~~labor~~ people's theater. Needless to say that the decline of the commercial Yiddish theater demands of us that we make strenuous efforts to build and develop our own theater ensemble and place it upon a secure foundation.

Can we in this, our anniversary, year achieve what we have not been able to achieve in previous years? If we carry out the decision to place the Ensemble directly under the leadership of the New York Districts I believe it is possible. I do not wish

to say that the National Office will become completely absolved from all resposnsibility. This would be a mistake. ~~in my opinion.~~ Ideological leadership as well as financial aid must come from the National Office. But the Theater Ensemble, if it ~~wants~~ is to continue ~~its further development,~~ to develop, must become linked with the ~~organization~~ city apparatus, and thus with the lodges in New York. ~~The Ensemble must become an integral part of our New York organization.~~

At the same time the Ensemble must become more closely linked with our youth organization ~~and from there receive the~~ whence it can draw new creative and artistic forces.

~~We wish to recommend today one concrete matter: That~~ the districts of Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, and Queens should therefore immediately take up this problem, and not in an abstract manner, but with the determination immediately to adopt all ~~necessary~~ steps for ~~the~~ ~~necessary changes to be made.~~ putting these recommendations into effect. Thus only will the Ensemble become

rooted in the life of the Jewish people in New York and an institution of which we can be justly proud. We will then also have made a significant contribution to the development of a truly artistic Yiddish ~~labor~~ people's theater in the United States.

Speaking about the cultural institutions of the JPFO we may say without fear of contradiction that our choruses occupy a unique place in our organization. On the one hand they beautify all our affairs. On the other hand they bring the Yiddish song, the labor and folk song among the Jewish people, and furthermore provide an outlet for those who ~~likextoxsingx~~ express their deepest feelings through singing.

What we have just said concerning our choruses may also be said concerning the mandolin orchestras and dramatic groups. All of them contribute to our general store of Jewish culture and they are all entitled to far more attention from us than we have given

them hitherto.

The most flattering thing we can say concerning our choruses is that despite this inattention on our part, as well as on the part of the district leadership, they have grown and developed ~~in our organization~~ and have become a most important factor in our cultural life.

At this time I wish to point out that it would be improper to think that a barrier has been created between our choruses and the Philharmonic People's Chorus. Who are the singers in the Philharmonic Chorus if not our own JPFO members? The fact that the Philharmonic Chorus in New York and other choruses have remained independent, the fact that they were among the first to bring the folk melodies to the ~~laboring masses~~ working people, is ~~a fact~~ something which we all recognize. The Philharmonic Chorus and other choruses occupy an outstanding position in the progressive labor movement.

The Yiddish Music Alliance, ~~inasmuch as it lends~~ while providing leadership and ~~gives~~ direction to these choruses, does the same for the JPFO choruses. ~~Therefore,~~ Closer relations should therefore be established between the two bodies. We must aid all these choruses to solve the problems which have ~~grown up~~ developed in the past few years, to help them recruit new ~~members~~ singers and strengthen their position in our own organization as well as in Jewish life generally.

The Yiddish Music Alliance is not sufficiently close to the leadership of our Order. This central institution must become an integral part not only of our choruses but of our National Educational Committee. Let us remind ourselves ~~that the~~ their reserves ~~for their bodies must~~ can come only from our lodges and that only through close cooperation with us will the Yiddish Music Alliance, which has played such an important role in the ~~first years of the existence~~ formative years of the choruses, be able to continue playing its vital role.

This is especially important now when our choruses are extending their ranks among wider and wider circles of members and friends. I would therefore make the following recommendations in connection with our twentieth anniversary:

First, to reach no less than 500 singers in all our choruses in New York by the time of the anniversary celebration on May 20, 1950, in Madison Square Garden.

Secondly, that at the anniversary celebrations in the larger centers, such as Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Boston, Detroit, Cleveland, and wherever else we have choruses, we should strive to increase the number of singers in those places in the same proportion as in New York.

Thirdly, that in our plan for 1950 we should include the building of five new Yiddish-English choruses based on a Yiddish and English repertoire.

Fourthly, that during the period of our membership drive, that is during the months of January through ~~June~~ May, we should allot one month especially for recruiting new singers in the choruses, ~~and ahieve~~ with the aim of achieving the above mentioned ~~aims~~ goals during that month.

~~It is my deepest conviction that if we will carry out these proposals we will be able to come to our celebration in Madison Swuare Garden with new achievements in this field.~~

Unfortunately I cannot enter at this time into a detailed analysis of our other cultural activities. However, I wish to say that in our publishing work we have not made any progress. On the contrary, to a certain extent we have gone backwards. Instead of publishing more pamphlets and books we have narrowed our work in this field. The leadership classes, which are so vitally important for our organization, have also been curtailed, and therein lies our problem concerning new leadership cadres.

We have a wealth of human material, in our Yiddish-speaking lodges as well as in our English-speaking lodges. We ~~will~~ must therefore during the coming year ~~have to~~ organize leadership classes on the widest possible basis.

You will notice that I have not touched upon the most important problem in our organization, the problem of the inner life of the lodges. This is one of our ~~most~~ cardinal problems. I have not touched upon it for the simple reason that I believe ~~that~~ the problem can be solved not from the top, but from the bottom. This question must be discussed in detail in all our city committees. As a result of such thorough discussions the question must be then brought to the National Board ~~with the aim of aiding the carry~~ for its help in carrying out the decisions made by the lodges and city committees. The solution cannot lie in an abstract plane. It can only be a concrete solution, because the problems of the inner life of the

lodges is in no two places alike.

The Jewish Children's Schools

I now come to one of the most important cultural institutions in our Order, ~~an~~ the institution which guarantees a healthier and better life for us in the present and in the future. This is our Jewish Children's Schools.

The situation in the secular Jewish school movement outside our own schools cannot be said to be a very ~~optimistic~~ healthy one. ~~There are~~ Pessimistic notes are heard in every organization: the Workmen's Circle schools are declining, the schools of the National ~~Labor~~ Workers Alliance are in poor condition, the Sholem Aleichem schools have been reduced to a very small group of schools in New York. Only in the schools of the JPFO are there ~~are~~ significant indications confirming our ~~the evaluation that we gave~~ assertion ~~we made~~ ~~at the National Board of Directors meeting~~, November ~~18-~~20 that ~~there~~ exist tremendous possibilities for building our school movement.

¶ Besides growing in size ~~At the same time~~ we have not failed to improve our schools. ~~internally~~. The leaders and teachers of the schools are always anxiously seeking to improve the subject matter as well as the methods of teaching, so that we may better imbue our children with the best traditions of the labor movement and the culture of ~~our~~ the Jewish people.

Let me indicate briefly how we have been able to extend our schools movement. It is necessary to emphasize that this was done ~~de~~ despite the vicious attacks ~~made~~ against the JPFO and against its schools.

Let us recall what occurred last winter. Jewish reaction, headed by the notorious ~~former~~ ~~unrocked~~ ex Rabbi Schultz and the Educational Director of the Workmen's Circle, had embarked upon a campaign which aimed at nothing else than the destruction of our schools. Rabbi Schultz had at his service the English press as well as the

"Forwards." First a barrage of ~~the most~~ vicious lies and libels was spread, thus preparing the ground for the charges brought before the Board of Education. For this purpose ~~the rabbi~~ Schultz utilized all sorts of anti-Semitic organizations, ~~as well as~~ and anti-Semitic elements of the American Legion and the Catholic Church. Under the impact of the hysteria existing in the country and with the aid of anti-Semitic persons in the Board of Education itself the Schultzes and the Chanins succeeded in barring the doors of the public schools to the Jewish Children's Schools of the JPFO.

The reactionaries were ecstatic with joy. They thought that they had already achieved their aim of destroying our schools. But, ~~then, ever~~ as in previous years when they attempted to destroy our Order, their dreams did not quite come true.

The JPFO and school leaders accepted the challenge ~~thrown to them by the~~ of reactio~~nary forces in the land~~. They ~~and~~ gathered around the

schools with ~~even~~ greater zeal and devotion than ever before.

The result is that we lost did not ~~not~~ a single school. On the contrary, we have even succeeded in opening a number of new ones.

Once more its was ~~shown~~ made clear that the Chanins and the Schultzes do not ~~scrupl~~hesitate to work ~~together~~ with known anti-Semites if ~~it~~ the aim is ~~in order~~ to destroy the JPFO and its children's schools.

From New York ~~Rabbi~~ Schultz flew to California for the purpose of destroying our school movement there too. He flew there not only with Chanin's blessing, but probably with his material aid. But there ~~their~~ his defeat was even greater. Last season our schools in Los Angeles had 250 children. Today this number has been more than doubled, and we have opened there a number of new schools. Sister Sadie Doroshkin informs us that they are determined even this year to achieve 750 children in the schools. For the coming year they are aiming to open up new schools and to reach a figure

of no less than 1,000 children.

Speaking of our achievements in these difficult times we must not fail to indicate our weaknesses. There is no doubt that what we have been able to achieve in Los Angeles ~~we~~ might have been achieved also in other places, as ~~we have a few years ago been able to do in Brooklyn.~~ The failure in Brooklyn consisted in the fact that we have not been able to ~~gai~~ hold our gains ~~there~~ and to go forwards. However, I have no doubt that with the splendid leadership that we have in Brooklyn we can once more make big strides forward.

We have the right to ask of Chicago why it is that there we have gone back instead of going forwards. We cannot accept the excuse ~~account for it by the fact~~ that other children's schools in that city are also going back. The JPFO and the schools in Chicago must ~~must~~ find a solution to their problems. ~~of extending the school movement.~~ It

is clear that the situation ~~must not~~ cannot remain as it is. Our gains in New York and Los Angeles must not blind us to our failures elsewhere.

Our schools are today the only progressive ~~Yiddish~~ Jewish schools in the United States; they ~~schools that~~ link the children to the parents, ~~that~~ and prevents the ~~tragedy arising~~ tragic situation which arises from the fact that ~~both~~ children and parents live in different worlds. How ~~many tragedies~~ much suffering ~~have~~ has arisen because of this situation? And, on the contrary, how much joy and comfort have parents derived from the children who attended our schools and who as a consequence remained close to them?

These facts must be brought home to the Jewish people. This is the best method of recruiting thousands of new children into our schools.

In the year 1950, when we are preparing to celebrate our 20th

anniversary and when we are setting our selves certain aims, ~~in this year~~ our entire organization must become permeated with the determination and consciousness to realize this slogan: 150 schools and 8,000 children by May 20, 1950.

start here - Stenlyn

In order to achieve this aim we will have to make a serious effort to reach the progressive unions and other progressive organizations in the United States. It is important to arouse the consciousness among the leaders and members of such organizations ~~to~~ of the necessity of sending their children to our schools. We ~~have~~ built the schools not for ourselves alone. It must become our serious ambition that ~~in~~ our school movement become the ~~schools~~ property of the entire progressive Jewish front in the United States. We are convinced that we can achieve this in the near future.

9a

The Coming Membership Drive

All our membership campaigns hitherto have been important political, ~~and~~ social, and ~~activities, as well as important~~ cultural activities. It is almost axiomatic that had ~~they~~ the campaigns not borne this character they ~~these campaigns~~ would not have been as successful as they have actually been. It would have been ~~clearly~~ impossible to ~~build~~ make our Jewish People's Fraternal Order ~~to become~~ the second largest Jewish fraternal organization in the United States.

The coming membership drive, which is to start January 1, 1950, will take~~s~~ place at a time when reaction has undertaken its greatest attack against us ~~, and is now awaiting for the outcome~~. The aim of this attack was ~~is~~ to induce our ~~the~~ members to leave their organization and to isolate us from American, and particularly from Jewish, life.

We can ~~may~~ say that both these aims have ~~so far~~ not been achieved. Only a very small part of the membership has become ~~been~~ frightened. The

membership as a whole has remained loyal and steadfast ~~to the organization which they love with the utmost devotion.~~ ~~Reaction has~~ The reactionary forces have also been unsuccessful in isolating us from Jewish life, and that is why the ~~reactionary forces~~ are so angered. But it would not be ~~altogether~~ correct to say that we have entirely contained these attacks. I don't know what "gifts" the reactionary elements are planning to bring us for our twentieth anniversary. But there can be no doubt that they are planning something. And there can be equally no doubt that our Order must be prepared to answer any and all attacks.

What would be the best answer? In the introduction to ~~the~~ this report ~~we submitted at the plenary sesession of the Board~~ I stated that the seventh convention of the JPFO issued ~~to~~ the slogan that ~~our Order~~ we must become the largest Jewish fraternal organization in the United States. This slogan is today even more valid than it was in 1947. That is why we propose that every ~~city and town~~ District, every lodge imbue ~~our~~ its members

with the consciousness and ~~the~~ determination that our twentieth anniversary ~~membership~~ drive ~~far~~ must surpass in its results ~~even~~ the most successful membership drives we have ever undertaken.

If we should be able, in New York and throughout the country, to mobilize even as ~~little~~ few as 1,000 of our 55,000 members into a national club, to be ~~named~~ called "The ~~Twenty for Twenty~~ 20-20 Club," we ~~could~~ would easily be able to recruit 20,000 new members. Such ~~an action~~ a performance would have the ~~greatest effect~~ most wonderful repercussions ~~upon~~ throughout the country, and ~~it~~ would be ~~the~~ a most fitting answer to reaction.

Certainly this is possible and desirable. However, I wish to add that despite the fact that the opportunity exists, I would not dare to make such a proposal at this moment. I would be satisfied with a club of 500 such builders. This, I believe, is entirely feasible, ~~and would be no less an outstanding achievement, and it would bring us closer to the goal set for us by the last convention.~~

~~These aims, which we presented at the National Board of Directors,~~

~~we therefore now propose for our entire leadership and membership.~~

We firmly believe that these aims can be achieved. Why? Well, in the first place because our last membership drive, which did not concluded ~~not~~ in such an imposing manner as we are planning to do this time - in Madison Square Garden in New York, and in large halls in ~~the~~ other cities - nevertheless brought us 5,200 new members. ~~Let us also bear in mind the decision that~~ The anniversary celebrations will ~~must~~ take place ~~in every city and town~~, wherever ~~there~~ exists a lodge of the JPFO, and will ~~must~~ become festive occasions of the Jewish people as a whole. ~~If this decision will be carried out properly~~ We will thus be able to reach new masses of people.

Secondly, let us remember the elections, true local elections, that have recently taken place in many important cities and states throughout the country.

Many citizens ~~voters~~ dared to vote for progress, against war and reaction.

In New York alone there were hundreds of thousands of such progressive voters. All these are potential members of our Order. We must only find a way of reaching them during the membership drive.

Thirdly, we have great confidence in the vanguard of our membership, those elements who have built the Order ~~throughout~~ since its ~~existence,~~ inception, as well as those leaders who have come to the front in recent times. With the proper mobilization we can most certainly hope for the greatest success in the membership drive.

~~At the plenary sessions of the National Board~~ We have decided not to set any quotas for the districts. We ~~have left~~ are leaving it to each district to decide upon its own quota, basing it upon a realistic evaluation of all factors, including those we mentioned above, the ability to mobilize its own leaders and members, the results it obtained in 1947, etc. If they will take all these factors into consideration, I feel certain that they will set themselves a quota which will do

14

their organization honor and ~~which will~~ enable them to come to the anniversary celebration with ~~the greates t~~ magnificent results.

Knowing our leadership, ~~knowing all of you, national as well as local leaders,~~ I am confident that you will take up the question of our membership drive with the proper zeal and enthusiasm and imbue the very last member in our organization with the same zeal and enthusiasm. I feel confident that the ~~coming membership~~ drive will be concluded in ~~the~~ manner ~~that~~ befitting the present serious times, ~~deserve,~~ befitting ~~in the manner which~~ our JPFO, ~~which has contributed so much to Jewish and American life, deserves.~~

Home for Our Members

We are gathered in the home of our members. And, by the way, ~~I hope~~ I hope that this will be its name, not the home for our aged members only, but the home for all our members, to serve their various needs. All of you undoubtedly still remember the words

15

we used at our seventh national convention in speaking about a home for the aged members. We said then, and it is still correct today, that we do not intend to establish a home wherein the member arrives to "live out his last years." This is not the kind of a home we intended to build. We want to build a home for our members in which they will find a warm ~~and intimate~~ atmosphere, a home in which ~~he~~ they can truly feel at home, a ~~home which they deserve to have~~. That is why we wish to transform this magnificent ~~park~~ estate of 70 acres ~~of land~~ into a place which will ~~be able to~~ serve all our members, the old ones, the ~~young~~ youthful ones, and the very young ones as well; a place which can be utilized both for winter and summer vacations, ~~and~~ which can serve as a rest home for all our members and as a home for the aged. ~~members.~~

~~Let us refresh your memories that~~ According to the decision of the last convention a detailed plan for ~~xxxx~~ the establishment of such a home ~~in the nearest possible future~~ was supposed to

16

have been ready by ~~brought to~~ the eighth convention, ~~in~~ 1951. But the leadership of the JPFO realized the importance of not waiting until 1951. ~~convention time.~~ A plan was therefore devised in a such a manner that by the time of the eighth convention all that will be necessary to decide would be the date ~~month~~ of the opening of the home for the aged members.

This once more confirms the fact that our leadership is ~~wide~~ aware of ~~awake to~~ the interests of the ~~our~~ members. I am proud of the fact that instead of introducing a ~~a~~ plan on paper at the next convention, ~~of the JPFO,~~ a plan which would have taken several more years to bring into actuality, we are ~~will be~~ able to report definite achievements even now. ~~at the convention.~~

We therefore wish to set a ~~now the date for~~ possible date for the opening of the home in Ridgefield, Conn. and to instruct the Resident Board to take all necessary measures that by the end of

17

1951 the home should ~~have~~ definitely be~~en~~ established.

~~Now I can divulge the~~

Now I can divulge the "secret" that our special Home Committee has appointed one of the most outstanding architects to draw up a building plan for the home for the aged, with instructions to make it ~~a~~ most comfortable and ~~well appointed~~ beautiful home.

I am therefore recommending that the National Board empower and instruct the Resident Board to proceed with the utmost dispatch to prepare all necessary plans for the buildings that will have to be constructed. ~~Also~~ Secondly, that the Resident Board be empowered to launch a campaign for the funds necessary for the establishment of such an institution. Thirdly, that the Resident Board be empowered to ~~adopt~~ take all necessary measures so that the Ridgefield Resort, as it is being operated now, should serve as an ~~all~~ year-round vacation resort, ~~and so that when our aged members will finally be established there they will feel that all their dreams~~

~~have actually come true~~.

From the report which Brother Harry Schiller, the manager of the resort, has submitted to us, you can already see the first steps that have been taken in the direction of establishing such a home~~, a home which is entirely different from similar homes established by other Jewish institutions~~. These are pioneer efforts we are making in this sphere. We have been pioneers in building a different sort of fraternal organization in the United States. We are also pioneers in building a different sort of home for the aged, and we are mighty proud of this. We want to express the hope that we will receive the copperation of our entire leadership and membership throughout the country in these efforts.

The "Morning Freiheit"

Is it still necessary at this late date to recount the tremendous contribution which this newspaper has made to the founding of our organization, and to its development in ~~and during~~ the twenty years of ~~our~~ its

19

existence? You all know how loyally and selflessly the "Morning Freiheit" has served our Order ~~throughout its existence.~~ in all its work. It is therefore no wonder that our leaders and members have always responded most gratefully to the appeals of the "Freiheit." In fact, they have ~~xx~~ been the backbone of this fine newspaper, always ~~helping out in its financial~~ helping it out in its financial ~~straits~~ emergencies, ~~and have prevented the realization of one of the fondest dreams of Jewish reaction - the demise of the "Morning Freiheit."~~

~~I feel confident therefore that~~

I feel confident therefore that, as in previous years, the devoted friends of this labor paper will carry out the coming financial drive with the utmost success, ~~which begins January 1, 1950,~~ ~~1950.~~ I do not doubt that the contribution which we will make this year will be at least not ~~less~~ smaller than in any previous years.

But there is one problem which disturbs me seriously: Three times a week, ~~one full page and two half pages,~~ the "Morning

Freiheit" devotes two half pages and one full page to the Jewish People's Fraternal Order. the material for these pages ~~are~~ is furnished and edited by us, ~~and~~ the~~ir~~ editor ~~is~~ being our own Brother R. Yukelson, one of the national leaders of the JPFO. If all our Yiddish-speaking members would read these pages there is no doubt that ~~our~~ the achieve-ments in our various cultural and social undertakings would be far greater than they are. ~~at the present time.~~ But it is precisely in this that we have failed greatly.

What can we do to correct this situation? I believe that if our leadership would recognize the tremendous importance ~~for our organization of~~ that our members read~~ing~~ the "Tribune" in the pages of the "Morning Freiheit," and would really make a serious attempt to win new readers we would achieve notable results also in this sphere.

I therefore wish to propose, that in ~~conformity with~~ the plans which we are going to work out for the activities of the coming

21

year we include the question of stimulating interest among those of our members who as yet do not read the "Tribune." ~~for doing so.~~ Our practical aim~~s~~ should be to reach at least one thousand new readers for the "Tribune." This would mean that one thousand new members would become better acquainted with our activities, our aims, and functions. And this, in turn, would infuse new blood into our leadership. ~~on a local as well as district scale.~~

I am convinced that we can achieve this aim. Certainly you will agree with me that we must make every attempt to achieve it.

Conclusion

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

My report ~~to you today~~ is plain and straightforward, unadorned and unexaggerated. I have not sought to slur over the difficult problems facing us. But at the same time I have attempted to point out the great opportunities existing for us and of the means whereby we may overcome these difficulties. I feel confident that you will

consider the report in all its aspects and find the best solution for the problems facing us.

Facing the difficulties realistically and without attempting to run away from our problems, we nevertheless know that time is with us, life is with us, the future is with us. In this lies the best guarantee that our Order will emerge from its present difficulties strengthened and improved and will be able to inscribe more glorious chapters in the history of labor and in the history of our country.

Accept, brothers and sisters, my best wishes for a better and happier year. Let us all together enter the year 1950, the 20th anniversary of our Order, with determination and confidence to build our organization to greater and greater heights.

The Campaigns for Rehabilitation

The Joint Distribution Committee, ~~which denotes itself to aiding~~ WAS ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE AID TO Jews overseas,

IT has been in existence ~~in the United States~~ for the past three and one-half decades.

~~I~~

The ~~Joint Distribution Committee~~ JDC receives its funds from the United Jewish Appeal.

The latter organization receives the widest support from the Jewish people. ~~and~~ IT has increased its ~~demands~~ APPEAL for funds every year, so that by now the annual sums ~~it~~ raised from the Jewish ~~population~~ community in the United States amount almost to ~~a government's~~ the government budget of a small country.

In the last ~~few~~ several years many elements in Jewish life have begun to express deep dissatisfaction with the work of the United Jewish Appeal, and particularly with that of the Joint Distribution Committee. The dissatisfaction ~~with the latter~~ has arose not only among the Jewish people in the United States, but also - ~~and particularly~~ - ~~among the Jewish people of~~ in the various countries where the Joint operates. The criticism of these organizations has not always been brought out into the open because it was feared that such criticism might hinder the campaigns

for rehabilitation so vital for the Jews ~~overseas~~ abroad. The leaders of the Joint in particular always b~~itterly~~ condemned anyone who dared to utter a word of criticism under the pretext that such criticism would ~~harm~~ hinder their fund raising campaign. In the meantime the conditions giving rise to ~~this~~ criticism went from bad to worse.

A bureaucratic machine has evolved in these above mentioned organizations which carries out a policy of discrimination against all those countries whose ~~political~~ government ~~regime~~ ~~this machine~~ does not favor, meet the favor of the Joint Bureaucracy. ~~These organizations have been able to fasten themselves upon the Jewish people in this country and strengthen their undemocratic activities overseas.~~ The leaders of the Joint Distribution Committee do not even consider it necessary now to give ~~a~~ clear ~~and honest~~ statements of its activities ~~to the Jewish public;~~ ~~the people~~ they do not ~~an~~ account for ~~of~~ the funds raised in the United States from the entire Jewish population, the progressive elements included, and of their ~~activities~~ allocations overseas.

The Jewish mass organizations that ~~xxxxx~~ have made and are making the various campaigns of the Joint Distribution Committee possible have absolutely no voice in

in the determination of how these funds shall be expended and distributed. But it is not only the ~~Jewish~~ Jews of the United States who have no say in the matter; very little account is also taken of the needs and desires of the Jewish communities overseas. We could even go further and say that very often the work of rehabilitation is done directly contrary to the real interests of the Jewish people ~~overseas~~ abroad.

Let us give just a few examples in support of our ~~assertions~~ statements. During the second worldwar, when the facts of fascist destruction, not only of ~~great~~ cities and villages, but of millions of lives, became known to the world and a tremendous desire arose among the American people to aid the victims of nazi barbarism, the Russian War Relief and later ~~the~~ As Jewish Council ~~for Soviet Aid~~ arose. The Joint Distribution Campaign utilized this sympathetic sentiment in behalf of the Jews overseas, and particularly those in the Soviet Union, to the widest extent in raising funds. We must remember that the Soviet Union in those days was saving the lives of thousands of Jews and a widespread sentiment existed among the Jewish people in the United States to aid the Soviet Union. The Jewish Council for Russian ~~Aid~~ Relief at

that time called upon the leadership of the United Jewish Appeal and the Joint Distribution Committee to utilize the tragic conditions of Jewish people overseas not only for the purposes of raising money but for the purposes of concretely aiding those Jewish communities ~~overseas~~ struggling and making every effort to rehabilitate themselves.

The committee calling upon the United Jewish Appeal and the Joint consisted of such prominent persons as Judge Anna Cross, ~~the then~~ New York City Councilman Stanley Isaacs, the community leader Louis Levine, and the writer of this report. In its turn the Joint Distribution Committee set up a committee consisting of its president Berwold, its general secretary Levitt, and others. Our committee presented such a strong case that it seemed at that time that all opposition to sending aid to the Jews in the Soviet Union had been squelched. The committee felt that of the tens of millions of dollars raised by the Joint a large proportion will be distributed in accordance with the recommendations of our committee. But what happened? Years passed and the Joint Distribution Committee did nothing. It did

5

not even consider it necessary to reply officially to the inquiries of our committee.

Or take another case. After the Red Army freed Poland the first truly people's government in Poland was established in Lublin. Dr. Zamerstein sent an appeal to the Jews in this country to aid the remnants of Jews remaining in Poland, who were coming out of the forests, ~~bunkers,~~ and other hiding places, completely destitute and starving, as well as the repatriated Jews saved by the Soviet Union and now returning ~~being sent back~~ to Poland. These Jews were coming back ~~returning~~ to Poland, to their home land ~~country~~, in the hope of ~~reunite~~ finding and reuniting with their families. It is difficult to imagine under what conditions these repatriated Jews were being returned. But was Dr. Zamerstein's appeal answered immediately? No, it took more than a year until the Joint Distribution Committee finally decided to extend aid to the Polish Jews.

~~I remember that~~ when I arrived in Poland in July of 1946 with what pa~~inful~~ bitterness the leaders of Polish Jewry recalled that it had been only one month that

6

the Central Committee of Polish Jews had been receiving some sunbstantial aid from the Joint Distribution Committee. Until July, 1946, with the exception of some old clothes and shoes which were hardly usable, no aid arrived.

Here is still another case. I remember when I arrived in Rumania in March, 1948, which is after the Soviet Union the largest Jewish community in Europe. What harmful policies the Joint Distribution Committee was pursuing in that country. In the first place, the fund allotted were miserably small. Secondly, the aid was extended not for the purpose of enabling the Jewish masses in Rumania to become productivized, to become a vital and integral part of life around them. No, the aid was extended in order to be able to create a panic atmosphere so that the Jews would be eager to get out of Rumania.

If you will add to that the fact that the Joint Distribution Committee has been carrying on its activities in such a manner that in many Jewish communities overseas it has been told very plainly and frankly: Don't give us your honey and don't give us your poison, we can readily understand that the leaders of the Joint

are not taking into consideration the actual needs, and interests, and feelings of the Jews overseas, who will not swallow any aid thrown to them as charity. Such aid is the exact opposite of fraternal help.

Here in the United States the funds raised among the Jewish population is being used to maintain organizations which the Jewish people detest and hate. One example is the Jewish Labor Committee which used the money not in order to help build Jewish institutions overseas but in order to destroy them. It is ~~carrying on a policy~~ using moneys in this country to carry out a very harmful policy in the United States, ~~to maintain a colossal~~ apparatus, ~~and~~ In addition millions of dollars are used to bribe organizations in this country to carry out activities which are to the liking of the reactionary leaders of the Joint Distribution Committee and to stifle any voice of criticism of the policies conducted by the Joint.

Large sums are also being expended to maintain its own bureaucratic apparatus. The salaries paid in the Joint are fantastic. We do not wish to go into details on this question. This should be done on another occasion. But it is important to

consider all that we have said above and from it to draw the following conclusion: The progressive movement among the Jewish people must pose the question whact can be done to organize a broad united front movement to carry on a struggle for the democratization, from the top to the bottom, of the relief work in the United States? How can we bring all these facts to the Jewish people?

We are now entering the tenth anniversary of our rehabilitation campaigns. If we had the time to give a complete evalutation of the significance of our relief and rehabilitation campaigns you would have only a small concept of the splendid aid we afforded Jews overseas. You would see before you one the most glorious chapters in the history of our Order.

Our heart is filled with pride and joy when we remember the aid extended to the orphanages in France, Belgium, and Poland bearing our name, to the kindergartens in Israel; to the Jewish cooperatives in Poland; when re remember that the lynotype machines we have sent to Warsaw, Bucharest, Tel Aviv will help publish newspapers, periodicals, books which will bring light into countless Jewish homes. This is only

a very small part of what our rehabilitation campaigns have made possible.

Just ~~Ust~~ reflect with what love the leaders of Jewish life in Europe & Israel ~~overseas~~ ~~have~~ received our small aid, compared to that distributed by the Joint, and ~~that~~ although they need the support of the Joint Distribution Committee they are willing to go without it. You will then understand why they call upon us, their brothers and sisters, to continue our constructive efforts and to help them rehabilitate their life. Whenever we visted them and brought them our aid we would say: "These are the limits of our modest help. Let us together discuss for what purposes our help can best be used." Our dollars, therefore, although not many, were increasingly used to better and better purposes and brought increasingly better results.