



Middle East: Nixon's Opening Gambit

Dosh: Maariv

The U.S. Communist Party Cracks the Whip

THE Communist Party of the U.S.A. has apparently decided that the few Jews remaining in its ranks are an unreliable lot who oppose Negro and Polish antisemitism, Arab destruction of Israel and the disability of Jews in Russia, and is taking steps to force them into acquiescence with its slavish pro-Soviet line on pains of expulsion.

It has declared war on two Jewish publications to the left, ordering them to get into line, or else . . .

The "or else" is left unspoken, but the tone of a "Letter to the Membership on the Jewish Question and Internationalism" from the National Committee of the C.P.-U.S.A. leaves no doubt that it will use every means at its command to undercut these publications in the eyes of their readers if they do not conform—and to close them down if need be—and if possible.

The publications are the Yiddish language daily, *The Morning Freiheit*, whose editor is

Paul Novick, a member of the Central Committee of the party, and *Jewish Currents*, an English-language monthly whose editor is Morris Schappes, one of America's leading Jewish historians who has suffered severely at the hands of witchhunters and now is finding that there are hunters also on the left.

Both Schappes and Novick have stated their independence in reply to the party's letter, and have said that their editorial policies are determined by themselves and no one else.

There are reports that several leading Jews in the party have been expelled, but this has been denied by our sources. Neither has there been any action taken to remove Novick from the Central Committee, but this may come when the Committee meets in May—unless he toes the line meanwhile.

The Yiddish saying is that one criticizes the daughter when one means the daughter-in-law, and so it is with the C.P.-U.S.A. Its main thrust against the two publications is on their

position taken in the recent teachers' strike and their criticism of the black antisemitism that welled up during it, whereas it really meant the repugnance they showed to the occupation of Czechoslovakia, their defense of Israel and their dismay at the events concerning the Jews of Poland and Russia.

The National Committee's letter quotes the *Freiheit's* editorials and news stories concerning the school strike with distaste and says that they give a "false impression" that antisemitism was "rampant in the black community" and that the net effect was "racist."

It quotes—or rather misquotes—an article in the newspaper which attacked black racism, and an editorial which declared, "Condemn and silence them!" (the black antisemites).

With this language, the party's letter charges, "which is ordinarily reserved for the rabid antisemitism of the Ku Klux Klan, the *Freiheit* makes itself part of the racists' crusade against black militants and the black community as a whole.

"This it does in the name of 'fighting antisemitism.' Indeed, the *Freiheit* outdoes in its zeal even some of the more conservative Jewish groups."

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The Charges

Similar criticism is levelled at *Jewish Currents*. Failure of both publications to show "what is really happening" in the Jewish community is an error, the party declares. The "undifferentiated, non-class portrayal of the Jewish community as a whole (their emphasis) is wrong at any time. It is especially so at a time when the growth of racism among the Jewish people is increasingly becoming a source of widespread alarm."

One would hesitate to go to the party to learn what was happening in the American Jewish community, if a statement issued some two years ago by its Jewish "expert," Mr. Lumer, is a criterion. It could have been written at the turn of the century for all the "information" it gave concerning the "Jewish working class" and all the other clichés with which the party has been burdened all these years and without which it apparently cannot do.

The line of the two publications is "crassly chauvinist" and their conduct is "unprincipled and intolerable." It must be "repudiated and censured." They have abandoned the "Marxist

principle of proletarian internationalism." There is a "growing adherence to an ideology of narrow Jewish nationalism which sees only the interests of the Jewish peoples although, needless to say, it does not truly serve even those interests.

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"Nationalistic Outlook"

"It is a result of the rejection of a class approach to the question of antisemitism, of viewing it not as Jewish Marxism but only as Jews. . . ."

This same "nationalistic outlook" also influences the two publications even on the Middle East, and they follow "a position which is totally at odds with that of the party." (One aches to interject, thank heaven!)

"The National Committee (the letter goes on) has on two separate occasions strongly condemned the attack launched by the Israeli ruling circles on the Arab countries as a war of aggression. We therefore strongly disagree with both the *Freiheit* and *Jewish Currents* since they have from the outset joined with bourgeois and Zionist (at last, that word!) circles in supporting it as a 'war of self-defense.'"

The Communists' hierarchy is also angered over the fact that the two publications call the Arab terrorists "terrorists" and "bandits" and not resisters "to the Israel occupation." On the other hand, the publications "treat the rulers of Israel sympathetically" and picture them "in the most favorable light."

The party objects to calling the late Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol, an "apostle of peace" while Nasser and the other Arab leaders are "repeatedly painted as obstacles to peace." All this despite the fact that Egypt and Jordan "have shown a readiness" to accept the November, 1967, resolution whereas "Israel has refused to do so"—a statement that is as far from the truth as the National Committee itself has shown itself to be.

It is not Nasser "but the Eshkols and Dayans who are the worst enemies of Israel," the C.P.-U.S.A. declares.

All this is compounded by the *Freiheit's* and the *Jewish Currents'* support of the Communist Party of Israel of Shmuel Mikunis and Moshe Sneh "which our party has repudiated as unworthy of being any longer regarded as a Marxist party." It is a "politically degenerate group" which has become "indistinguishable from the left-wing Zionist of Israel."

Mrs. Meir Carries On

LEVI ESHKOL was the right man at the right time for Israel—the kind, calm, *heimish* man who could give the state a respite from the flamboyance and the almost one-man-rule of Ben Gurion. And yet, Eshkol was also the man who could lead his nation in war as in peace, a man who could forge a Government of National Unity and keep it functioning. It was also under him that the unity of the labor parties was forged, and with this the first chance of governing without political deals with coalition partners.

Meir Yaari, the general secretary of Mapam, put it succinctly when he said in the Knesset:

“If we are to judge by the current reports in the press and by public opinion polls of a certain type, we must conclude that during these past five years, Levi Eshkol’s government had no leg to stand on, and that all the people of Israel could not wait for the moment when the one-man rule of a charismatic personality should be restored.

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The Truth at the Bier

“We had to stand at the bier of the deceased in order to discover to what extent the whole nation loved, trusted and identified itself with him. It is true that this people do not go around collecting signatures (*a slap at Moshe Dayan and the petition campaign for him now going on—Ed.*), but I am confident that when the time for a democratic decision comes, these people, in their hundreds of thousands, will show their true opinion.”

The government of the new Prime Minister, Golda Meir, is a continuation of Levi Eshkol’s, and the country seems to be uniting behind her fully. She, too, was the right person at the right time—to keep the competition between Dayan and Yigal Allon for the Prime Ministership from breaking out into a bitter fight and perhaps breaking the party apart in the process, thus playing into the hands of the rightists and the hawks.

We wish her health and strength to carry on. She will need both in this arduous period which Israel is going through.

The “real Communist Party” is that led by Meir Wilner and Tewfik Toubi, which is either ignored or criticised by the *Freiheit*. The reason the party prefers the one over the other is that the Mikunis-Sneh party backs, generally, Israel’s policies regarding the Arab states, including the necessity to obtain secure and agreed-upon boundaries through direct negotiations, while the other party is part of the Arab-Soviet chorus demanding Israel’s withdrawal from occupied territories without peace or guarantees for her safety.

The attitude of the two publications towards the events in Poland and the Soviet Union is condemned as leading to “outright anti-Sovietism” and their charges that the Polish Government is antisemitic are “false,” as are their criticisms of Russia for both its Jewish policy and its invasion of Czechoslovakia.

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War is Declared

It is “more than time,” therefore, “to open an ideological campaign in the ranks of the party against all such tendencies and actions.”

The campaign against the two publications is an attempt to destroy them. The C.P.-U.S.A., which has been turning its face increasingly to the Negroes—and not successfully—is apparently embarrassed by its “Jewish” Jews, those to whom antisemitism is antisemitism, whatever name the party calls it, and any attempt to harm Jews, as in the Middle East, stirs their Jewish hearts, as indeed it stirred the hearts of the Mikunis-Sneh Communists in Israel when their country stood in danger.

Paul Novick, who is close to eighty, has been put on a bad spot. If he bows to the party, the estimate is that his paper, which has only about 6,000 subscribers, will lose eighty percent of them. If he does not toe the line, then the pressures on him might become intolerable, and he may have to quit anyhow.

As for *Jewish Currents*, its editor, Morris Schappes, is apparently prepared to stand and fight. He has a loyal readership, and has not compromised his fight against antisemitism here or anywhere else regardless of what the party line has been, nor has he moderated his position on Israel vs. the Arab states.

The Jews apparently have been a thorn in the party’s side. It now believes it is high time to get rid of them, except for the congenital sycophants and self-haters.